STONY THE ROAD THEY TROD: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF THE LIFE

JOURNEYS OF PRESIDENTS AT SELECTED UNITED METHODIST-AFFILIATED

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

by

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(Under the Direction of Timothy Reese Cain)

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study focused on the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to

the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black

colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative inquiry.

Narrative inquiry enabled participants to tell stories and organize their understanding of

experiences through narratives. Specifically, the use of the paradigmatic form of

narrative inquiry enabled the researcher to explore the life journeys of presidents at the

selected institutions using personal narratives. The personal narratives were gathered

through a series of up to three sequential interviews, where the participants shared their

lived experiences through uninterrupted stories. Using thematic analysis that involves

coding and text reduction, the following themes were found: 1) the significance of role

models/mentors in each participants' journey; 2) the importance of social awareness and

an understanding of the politics at an organizational level; and 3) the abiding sense of

being a president at these institutions as a calling or vocation in life. There are

implications from this study for both aspiring United Methodist-affiliated historically

Black college and university presidents and governing boards at these institutions. These

implications include the benefits gained from forming significant mentoring relationships

with seasoned presidents. Implications for governing boards include the benefit that can

be gained from understanding the connections between presidents' decision-making

processes and their life journeys.

INDEX WORDS: Historically Black colleges and universities, Higher Education,

Presidential Pathways, Narrative Inquiry, Church-Related,

Leadership, Mentoring

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2017

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December 2017

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Fannie Poe Mosley. Although she did not enjoy the privilege of pursuing education beyond middle school, she never discouraged me from chasing my wildest dreams. At the tender age of 14, I approached her with a request that ultimately changed my life. I asked, and she consented, to go away to attend a newly formed residential high school for gifted students in the state of Mississippi. From that point forward, and with every other seemingly wild educational dream and/or pursuit, she always quietly affirmed my decisions. I am certain it was not easy for her to allow me to go off to so many unfamiliar places, but I believe that deep down inside, she knew that I would grow and reap many ripe harvests along the way. I shall forever be grateful for her silent, but strong spirit of resolve, and for her belief in my abilities.

…And we know that all things work together for the good to those who love God and are called according to God's purpose… (Romans 8:28)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to explore the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative inquiry. Exploring the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities is a timely and worthwhile endeavor, especially considering the recent rash of presidential terminations and retirements on these campuses, and the protracted struggles to find suitable replacements. For instance, between January of 2014 and January of 2015, there were presidential vacancies at over seventy percent (8 out of 11) of the United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Presidents of this inimitable subset of historically Black colleges and universities, many of whom, in previous generations, served long tenures and wielded considerable influence in African American society, are central to the life of these institutions (Albritton, 2012). Because of the often overall less than excellent fiscal and financial health of some historically Black colleges and universities, extreme care must be exercised in selecting those who assume the mantle of leadership at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Revolving doors and high turnover rates of presidents weaken these institutions further.

Until the relatively recent past, there has been scant research examining the various facets of presidential leadership at historically Black colleges and universities,

including the pathway to the presidency of these institutions (Ezell & Schexnider, 2010; Freeman & Gasman, 2014; Gasman, 2010). Jackson (2000), noting the dearth of research regarding the journeys and pathways of leaders of historically Black colleges and universities, sought to offer an analysis of presidential journeys of African Americans in higher education, and to examine the significant characteristics and experiences (both personal and professional) of African American presidents. Likewise, Freeman and Gasman (2014), pointing to the lack of research about journeys and pathways to the presidency of historically Black colleges and universities, sought to capture the background characteristics of historically Black college and university leaders.

Even less scholarship has been dedicated to studying presidential pathways and the life journeys of presidents at private, religiously-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Research that examines presidential pathways and life journeys for leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities is essentially nonexistent. Given the venerable and significant role of historically Black colleges and universities, and the numerous contributions they offer, their continued existence, which is often predicated upon the type of leadership available to guide them, is essential to the African American community. The recent high percentage of turnover among leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, along with the anticipated retirements of long-tenured presidents at the three institutions not experiencing transition in 2014-2015, are causes for great concern. This narrative inquiry into the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities helps to inform what type of leaders are needed to ensure the long-term strength and survival of these crucial institutions.

Studies Addressing the Problem

Numerous scholars and practitioners in higher education have sounded an alarm by asserting there is a leadership crisis at the nation's historically Black colleges and universities (e.g., Freeman & Gasman, 2014; Schexnider & Ezell, 2010; Seymour, 2008). Issues with accreditation, violations of principles of shared governance, financial mismanagement, and declining enrollment are just a few of the more pressing problems that historically Black colleges and universities contend with regularly. Others maintain that the game of musical chairs for incompetent and poorly prepared presidents will be the last nail in the coffin for some historically Black colleges and universities already teetering on the brink of extinction (Phillips, 2002). There are also scholars who comment on the style of presidential leadership, or in some cases, even the lack of preparation of presidents as the primary source of the crisis transpiring at historically Black colleges and universities (Hamilton, 2002; Minor 2004; Schexnider & Ezell, 2010; Strickland, 2009). Whether the crisis is real or perceived, the aforementioned studies underscore the significance of properly equipping those who eventually emerge as leaders of historically Black colleges and universities, and especially as leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Lessons gleaned from the life journeys, both professional and personal are vital in the selection of future leaders who aspire to serve as presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Success, within the context of this study, is gauged by the length of presidential tenure and health indicators of the institution (e.g., growth of the endowment and steady enrollment growth).

An initial review of the literature reveals substantial research on the nature of the college presidency and pathways to the presidency for leaders of predominantly White institutions (PWIs), both public and private (e.g., Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Corrigan, 2002; Fisher & Koch, 1996; Moore, Salimbene et al., 1983). There are also a number of presidential pathways and life journey studies for specific gender and professional demographic groups, including female college presidents (Welch, 2007), university vice presidents (Maitra, 2007), female college deans (Guidry, 2007), and community college deans (Sypawka, 2008). However, there is scant research examining the unique professional and personal life journeys of private, religiously-affiliated historically Black college and university leaders. Further, these particular presidents are often excluded from larger studies on the broad nature of college and university presidencies. With the exception of a handful of biographies and autobiographies of some of the more notable and celebrated historically Black college and university presidential figures (e.g., Willa B. Player and Benjamin E. Mayes), there is virtually little that details the life stories and journeys of those who soared to the top office on historically Black college and university campuses (Mishra, 2007; Nichols, 2004). While similarities between the professional and personal life journeys for leaders of predominantly White institutions and historically Black colleges and universities may exist, the uniqueness of private, religiously-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities necessitates additional study to ascertain a fuller understanding of the nuances of the journeys taken by these institutional leaders.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically

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Black colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative inquiry. An analysis of the literature concerning college and university presidents is reflective of and dominated by Caucasian males leading predominantly White institutions. There is a clear void in the literature reflective of the personal and professional journeys of leaders of historically Black colleges and universities. The following research questions guided this study, and contribute to the understanding of the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities:

1) How have life journeys impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidencies?

2) What is the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and careers?

3) How have different life events and priorities influenced the participants' career trajectory?

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to be of great significance in that it would contribute to the sparse literature regarding pathways to the college and university presidency by focusing specifically on pathways to the presidency for a unique subset of historically Black colleges and universities. Jackson and Nunn (2003) asserted that serious scholarly research on historically Black college and university presidents, as a stated group of leaders in higher education, has yet to occur. Moreover, they stressed that until this type of research is made available, a vacuum will continue to exist regarding knowledge of the types of leaders who emerge as presidents of historically Black colleges and universities.

This study is also significant because it could potentially benefit those who aspire to lead private, religiously-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, and especially those related to the United Methodist Church. As a religious denomination, the United Methodist Church has started, and continues to support, the largest number of historically Black colleges and universities of any religious movement in this country. The 11 historically Black colleges and universities that are currently sponsored and supported by the United Methodist Church are unique in the sense that they each sprang from, and continue to be associated with, a mainline, majority White Protestant religious tradition. In fact, African Americans comprise only 6% of the total membership of the United Methodist Church. These 11 institutions, whose student populations are largely drawn from Black United Methodist congregations scattered around the United States, are quite different from public historically Black colleges and universities and other private historically Black colleges and universities related to historically Black religious traditions. Having a clearer understanding of the experiences, self-identities, challenges, non-work lives, and pitfalls, both personally and professionally, of selected current leaders of these unique institutions will serve to benefit those who aspire to lead United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities in the future. In addition to benefiting prospective leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, this study could also assist boards of trustees and search committees in their efforts to identify future presidents by noting specific information (i.e., personal and professional attributes, leadership characteristics, etc.) that can be gleaned from exploring the life journeys of current leaders.

Conceptual Framework

Nancy K. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) is used as the conceptual framework for this study. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition allows for an exploration of how the participants experience and handle transitions throughout their professional and personal journeys. Transitions, according to Schlossberg, are defined as "any event, or non-event, that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles" (Goodman, Schlossberg, et al., 2006). To gain a fuller appreciation for and greater understanding of transitions, Schlossberg notes that it is imperative to consider the type, context, and impact of transitions. The literature suggests that presidents experience considerable transitions, both in their personal and professional lives. No doubt, the journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities include transitions that may have been planned, such as the transition from a previous professional position to that of president. The journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities also include transitions that were unanticipated, such as the unexpected promotion to the office of president. Additionally, these journeys may have also included non-event transitions where the president expected a transition to occur, but for whatever reason, the transition does not come to fruition. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) is effective in determining how presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities experience and handle transitions throughout the course of their life journeys (both professional and personal). This theory aligns with the research design for the study, and it reinforces the study's approach through the reflective process associated with managing, coping with, and accepting transitions.

Audience for the Study

This study is intended for several audiences, including, but not limited to the following: aspiring United Methodist Church-affiliated historically Black college and university presidents, individual United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the United Methodist Black College Fund, individual governing boards of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, and the broader higher education community. Aspiring United Methodist Church-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities presidents will be informed by this study as a result of learning about the lived experiences of current presidents at United Methodist Church-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Through stories about transitions along the journey to the presidency, aspiring leaders will gain a better understanding of what they can do to better position themselves for future presidency roles at these unique institutions. While this study focuses specifically on United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, this study also has the potential to inform aspiring presidents of many different institutional types. If current turnover trends in the office of the presidency continue, this research could serve as a valuable resource for those who have pondered attaining a presidency, particularly in a historically Black college and university setting.

Individual United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities can benefit from this study in a variety of ways. As aforementioned, the study apprises them of the characteristics, experiences, and transitions to consider when searching for presidential successors. The data also underscores significant indicators of what is

essential for an individual to have experienced to be prepared for a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university presidency. This study also highlights professional development opportunities that institutions should ensure are made available to aspiring leaders.

Individual governing boards of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, along with the United Methodist Black College Fund, will benefit from this study. Chait, Holland, and Taylor (1991) note that presidents play a crucial role in "encouraging, or undermining, effective board functioning" (p. 121). It is critical for boards and presidents to have properly functioning relationships in order to maximize the potential of the institution and the effectiveness of the president. When a president devotes considerable care and attention to educating, nurturing, and communicating with board members, those boards have a deeper appreciation for the president's role and the distinct circumstances surrounding the president's work. This study provides board members at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities with information that could potentially spark conversations with presidents with which they work that, in turn, could create a deeper relationship between the parties that positively impacts the work of the board. This study also informs board members of the benefits of knowing the details of their president's career path, which adds context to the ideas and decisions of their presidents. Finally, this study has the potential to benefit the broader higher education community by adding to the body of literature related to historically Black colleges and universities, and the body of literature related to presidential leadership at these institutions.

Researcher Positionality

As a leader in higher education, and specifically a leader in United Methodist-affiliated higher education, I am keenly interested in the topic of life journeys of presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. The majority of my higher education experiences, both as a student and as a professional, have been in United Methodist-affiliated institutions. These experiences have played a significant role in shaping and molding me into the individual leader that I am today. The profound influence of United Methodists upon me is part of what has directed my entire life, even to the point of becoming an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church.

My career experiences in United Methodist-related higher education settings has taken me to the following institutions: Millsaps College, Duke University, Albright College, Gammon Theological Seminary, and Bethune-Cookman University. My experiences at Millsaps, Duke, and Albright brought me in close proximity with the Office of the President at each of these institutions. These interactions with the president's office in the early years of my career served to bolster my interests in the individual presidents and their journeys to their role. Although Millsaps, Duke, and Albright are all predominantly White institutions, more recently I have been privileged to serve in senior level leadership roles at two predominantly Black United Methodist-affiliated institutions. While I have always had a unique interest in United Methodist higher education, my work with Gammon Theological Seminary and Bethune-Cookman University has shifted that interest to the role the Methodist movement has played, and continues to play, in the education of people of African descent in this country.

Founded in 1872 by the Methodist movement, Gammon Theological Seminary was for years this nation's only historically Black accredited graduate school of theology. Similarly, Bethune-Cookman University, also with roots dating back to 1872, was founded by the Methodist movement, and both institutions continue to receive substantial financial support from the United Methodist Church in the present. My work with Gammon Theological Seminary and Bethune-Cookman University has led to countless hours of personal study and reflection upon the life journeys of the leaders of these two historic institutions. My view from the inside, as it were, facilitates the necessary access to presidents at these unique institutions, and it enriches this study from the perspective of one who has spent an entire career in United Methodist-affiliated institutions of higher learning.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for use in this research:

Black College Fund refers to a unique funding entity within the United Methodist Church that is specifically designated to support the work of the United Methodist Church's eleven historically Black colleges and universities. The Black College Fund, which is resourced from a complex national funding process within the United Methodist tradition, provides funding for faculty development, infrastructure, and direct student scholarship at the following eleven United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities: Bennett College, Bethune-Cookman University, Claflin University, Clark-Atlanta University, Dillard University, Huston-Tillotson University, Meharry Medical College, Paine College, Philander Smith College, Rust College, and Wiley College.

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Chief Academic Officer is defined as the principal leader and manager of the academic programs of an institution of higher learning. In many cases, the chief academic officer serves as the second-in-command, and often has oversight of institutional operations beyond academic programs.

College/University President is the chief executive officer of an institution of higher learning. A college/university president is expected to lead a "complex organization in an environment of increasing pressures from a diverse group of constituencies" (American Council on Education, 2007, p. xi). College and university presidents are expected to be visionary and creative strategic thinkers who have the intellectual capacity, passion, and energy to lead an institution of higher learning. College and university presidents are also expected to enact forward-thinking, student-centered, and innovative leadership qualities. Additionally, college and university presidents are expected to be a visible member of the campus community, the local community, and communities beyond the institution's immediate vicinity. While presidential duties vary, some of the key responsibilities of presidents in most settings include fundraising, community relations, budget management, and strategic planning.

Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) is an association of non-profit independent colleges and universities found in 1956 to serve the more than 630 member institutions. Member institutions in the CIC include selective liberal arts colleges, medium-sized private universities, religious colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, and single-sex institutions. The CIC aims to provide its member institutions with skills, tools, and knowledge that address aspects of leadership, financial management and performance, academic quality, and institutional visibility. The CIC

also offers a number of unique developmental programs designed to prepare mid-level administrators for potential executive-level leadership positions at private, independent colleges.

Life Journeys refer to the professional and personal happenings the participants experienced during their professional years prior to earning a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university presidency.

Lived Experiences are any experiences that a participant shares as a first-hand account of an occurrence or event that had a significant impact upon their life.

Narrative Inquiry is a methodological qualitative research approach first used by Connelly and Clandinin (2000) to describe the personal stories of teachers. Since its initial introduction, narrative inquiry has evolved to include the telling of stories and the organization of understanding of experiences through narratives. When individuals tell stories, they reveal how they structure their thinking and reflect on their own experiences. Narrative inquiry explores a research problem by understanding the experiences of an individual while including their own voice as part of the process.

United Methodist Church is a mainline Protestant religious denomination that was formed in 1968 as a result of a merger between the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church. When the United Methodist Church was formed in 1968, it had approximately 11 million members, making it one of the largest Protestant churches in the world. Since the denomination's founding in 1968, the United Methodist Church has become increasingly aware of its international presence as a result of significant growth and expansion in Africa, Asia, and Europe. The United Methodist Church continues to represent the confluence of three streams of tradition: Methodism, the

Church of the Brethren in Christ, and the Evangelical Association. The Social Principles and the Social Creed of the United Methodist Church acknowledge the denomination's historic role of taking an active stance on many key issues in society. For example, one of the United Methodist Church's predecessor bodies, namely the Methodist Episcopal Church, was a fierce opponent of institutional slavery. Other predecessor bodies of the United Methodist Church also favored and advocated for the ordination of women when other Protestant traditions were adamantly opposed to such. In its present expression, the United Methodist Church is known for its belief that God's love for the world is an active and engaged love, a love seeking justice and liberty for all of God's creation. The United Methodist Church has become known as a denomination involved with people's lives, with political and social struggles, and with a desire to impact local and international issues.

Summary

This study focuses on the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative inquiry. Until the relatively recent past, there has been scant research examining the various facets of presidential leadership at historically Black colleges and universities. Research that examines presidential pathways and life journeys for leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities is virtually nonexistent. Given the venerable and significant role of historically Black colleges and universities, and the numerous contributions they offer, their continued existence, which is often predicated

upon the type of leadership available to guide them, is essential to the African American community.

This dissertation consists of five chapters: Chapter 1: Introduction; Chapter 2: Literature Review; Chapter 3: Methodology; Chapter 4: Results; and Chapter 5: Discussion. The literature review frames the study and provides an historic overview of the role of Methodism in the educating process of people of African descent in the United States. The literature review also offers an in-depth analysis of career paths, transitions, and journeys experienced by college and university presidents. The third chapter discusses the research design in its entirety by offering a thorough review of the narrative inquiry process, the data sources, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness criteria, and various ethical considerations. Chapter four contains profiles of each of the participants, inclusive of an analysis of their personal, educational, career, and professional/developmental journeys. Additionally, these profiles each contain specific information about various transitions the participants have experienced in their personal and professional lives. Chapter four also contains pertinent thematic results that arose from the study. The data from the study revealed that the life journeys of the participants in the study have profoundly impacted their career paths to the United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidencies. The data from the study also revealed that each participant was cognizant of the interplay between their personal lives, self-identities, and careers. The convergence of a number of factors, including the role of family members and other influences, and personal characteristics, combine to impact the participants' careers. Finally, the data points to several common themes from the experiences of the stories relayed by the participants. These common themes illumine

some of the personal and professional attributes and leadership characteristics that can be useful to those desiring to serve as leaders at United Methodist-affiliated Black colleges and universities in the future. These common themes include the significance of role models/mentors in each participants' journey, the significance of a possession of social and political awareness, and the significance of the notion of a sense of calling to the work of the presidency in these specific types of institutions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVEIW

This literature review highlights relevant research and scholarship that speaks to the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. A review of the unique historic relationship between the Methodist movement and people of African descent in the United States is offered as a way of more clearly understanding the religious affiliation of the presidents that are included in the study. The Methodist movement's interest in providing educational opportunities for newly freed slaves is also explored. The Methodists' attention to the educational needs of newly freed slaves led to the eventual founding of the selected institutions in the study where the presidents currently serve. Although United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities represent only 10% of all historically Black colleges and universities, they account for nearly a quarter (22%) of all private historically Black colleges and universities in the United States.

This literature review also proffers a brief overview of the historical and contemporary context of historically Black colleges and universities in order to gain a deeper understanding of the distinctiveness of these institutions within the landscape of American higher education. Similarly important to understanding the history and role of historically Black colleges and universities in the American higher education landscape is a review of the evolution of the role of the college president over the course of this

country's higher education history. Following the examination of the evolution of the role of the college presidency is a review of literature related to the pathway or journey to the presidency. Literature specific to the demographics, roles and responsibilities, and career paths of college presidents is included to illuminate the overall professional and personal journeys of those who attain a college presidency. A brief review of the journey to and the nature of the office of the presidency is offered for private, independent institutions, particularly considering the uniqueness of these specific institutions. Since this study deals exclusively with presidents of historically Black colleges and universities, an examination of literature specific to the pathways and journeys of historically Black college and university presidents is also integrated into this review.

This review also explores literature and research that addresses many of the professional challenges encountered by current presidents at historically Black colleges and universities, and how efforts at addressing these challenges are impacted by the various aspects of the president's professional and personal journey to the office. Finally, a thorough review of Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) is also included. The literature surrounding this theory aids in the understanding of how participants experience and handle transitions throughout their professional and personal journeys to the presidency of a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university.

Methodism and People of African Descent

Understanding the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities requires an understanding of the unique historic relationship between the Methodist movement and people of African descent in the United States. John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism,

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insisted that this movement should, above all else, specifically serve society's outcast and marginalized. In the young American republic, this emphasis upon serving the most vulnerable of society proved to be lucrative in terms of the spread of Methodism, especially among slaves.

Initially, enslaved Africans were not receptive to the brand of Christianity offered by missionaries from the Church of England on the shores of the burgeoning New World (Knoll, 1992). The rigid worship practices and the complex articles and doctrines of faith could not be reconciled with traditional African religious practices that often entailed demonstrative expressions that were prohibited in the stern faiths of the Western world. These differences of culture and language effectively prevented the transmission of Christianity to slaves until the advent of evangelical Methodist leaders like George Whitefield and John Wesley (Richardson, 1976). The Methodists offered a message of personal experience with God as opposed to the tedious process of indoctrination presented by the Anglican missionaries. Whitefield, especially, spoke of a heartfelt conversion, which was often accompanied by outward expressions of joy and happiness. This message of personal experience and the vociferous expression of one's emotions resonated with the slaves, thereby attracting numerous converts. The evangelical fervor of the Methodist movement offered many of the slave converts a religious experience that was reminiscent of their ancestral homeland (Raboteau, 1995). The Methodist version of Christianity afforded the slaves an opportunity to construct parallel worldviews and analogies between African and evangelical styles of worship, and to gain meaning out of an experience that had initially appeared to be completely foreign and meaningless.

Some of the early Methodist itinerant preachers took special note of this appeal of Blacks to Methodism. Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishop in the colonies, was so moved by the response of the slaves that he declared: "I perceive God is no respecter of persons" (Richardson, 1976, p. 44). As Asbury traveled from settlement to settlement, he discerned the interest and serious response of slaves to the message of Methodism. Richard Boardman, who had been sent to America as a missionary by Methodism's founder, also marveled at the enthusiasm of slaves toward Methodism. In reporting to John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, Boardman related how the number and the countenance of the Black converts impressed and affected him (Richardson, 1976). Other early itinerants, such as Freeborn Garretson and Thomas Rankin, also noticed the enthusiastic response coming from Blacks to the message of Methodism. Unlike the brand of Christianity offered to the slaves by other religious movements, there was something unique about Methodism's message that forged what has become a long and historic relationship between Blacks and the Methodist movement.

Prominent African American historian Lewis Baldwin attempted to explain this special affinity between Blacks and Methodism. In Baldwin's summation, there were several reasons that accounted for the success of evangelization among the slaves. These reasons also offered an explanation for the rise of Black membership in many of the early Methodist societies (congregations). First, Baldwin contended that there were similarities between the African traditions of the slaves and the revivalism of the Methodist movement. Unlike the Church of England and the Puritan churches, Methodism allowed for freedom of expression. Many of the slaves who were brought to this country brought

with them practices and traditions from West Africa. These traditions were blended with the relatively free style of Methodist worship, and Baldwin noted that in the Methodist movement slaves were permitted to "sing, pray, preach, testify, groan, weep, shout, and dance" (Shockley, 1991, p. 26). Somewhat similar to this simple and free style of worship was the notion of simple doctrine and teachings. Most of the slave converts were illiterate. Therefore, creeds and articles of faith would not have served much of a purpose in attracting slave converts. Baldwin noted that the Methodist evangelists focused on religious experience (religion of the heart) as opposed to an intellectual understanding of the faith (religion of the mind). For the slaves, who had been violently seized from their homeland, gaining a new relationship with a tradition whose deity permitted effusive displays was far more important than learning and reciting creeds (Shockley, 1991).

According to Baldwin, a third factor that enabled Methodism to spread so rapidly among slaves was its "egalitarian impulse" (Shockley, 1991, p. 26). The idea of Blacks and Whites being equal in the sight of God fostered a sense of congeniality, whereby slaves and slaveholders alike could receive God's grace. This egalitarian impulse was taken to a higher level and it led many of the Methodist evangelists to preach against the institution of slavery. The paradoxical nature of this institution was all too obvious to the Methodist itinerants. Whites in this country were complaining of the bondage imposed upon them by England while simultaneously holding another people in bondage. The Methodist missionaries caught the ear of people of African descent with their message of opposition to slavery. As these slaves heard and received the good news they themselves became evangelists and brought others to this unique faith. These factors account for the

relatively successful evangelization among the slaves and these factors also explain the prevalence of Black members in the early societies (congregations) that would eventually become the Methodist Episcopal Church (Paris, 1995). An understanding of how the unique historic relationship between the Methodist movement and people of African descent aids in understanding the life journeys, including personal religious affiliation, of presidents at the selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities that will be included in this study.

Methodism and the Education of Freedmen

During the first thirty years following Emancipation, many religious denominations established schools for the Freedmen, many of which have evolved into some of the best private Black colleges in the nation. It is probable that no religious denomination did as much for the education of Freedmen, and subsequent generations of Blacks, as the Methodist Church (Brawley, 1974). Early on, with the influx of countless slaves and former slaves to the Methodist movement, there were efforts aimed at providing the new adherents to the faith with as many incentives as possible. Perhaps the most notable of the incentives was education.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Civil War, the Methodist Episcopal Church (a predecessor body to the United Methodist Church) initiated its efforts to provide education for newly freed slaves throughout the South, especially those that populated the Methodist congregations. In fact, by 1869, just four years into the postbellum period, the Methodists had established a total of 55 educational centers distributed throughout the states of Tennessee (7), Georgia (20), Alabama (5), Kentucky (2), Mississippi (8), North Carolina (1), South Carolina (9), and Virginia (3) (Brawley, 1974). Considering the fact

that it was illegal for people of African descent to learn to read or write during slavery, these early educational centers were essentially elementary schools designed to provide the most basic of instruction. By 1873, the Methodists began investing heavily in developing Normal Schools for the purpose of equipping newly freed slaves to serve as teachers (Brawley, 1974). At this point in history, there were enough former adult slaves who had received adequate instruction at the elementary level to progress on to the normal level, and to eventually assume the role of teaching others.

In addition to its emphasis on preparing teachers, the Methodists also devoted considerable resources to preparing religious leaders through the establishment of theological schools. Many newly freed slaves were attracted to the Methodist movement because of its willingness to provide them with educational opportunities, and because of its early emphasis upon improving the economic conditions of those who became adherents to the faith.

The continued swelling of the number of newly freed slaves in the Methodist movement was accompanied by a corresponding need for leaders of burgeoning Black Methodist congregations that sprang up throughout the South. As a result, by 1875 the Methodist Episcopal Church had launched at least 4 theological institutions: Baker Theological Seminary (now Claflin University), Clark Theological Seminary (now Clark-Atlanta University), New Orleans Biblical Institute (now Dillard University), and Bennett Seminary (now Bennett College). With the exception of Gammon Theological Seminary, which the Methodist Episcopal Church founded in 1883, all of the other educational enterprises for newly freed slaves eventually morphed into regular colleges (Brawley, 1974).

By 1900, the Methodists owned and operated 20 historically Black colleges and universities in the postbellum South, 11 of which continue to exist to the present day. Stories of the demise of the 9 other United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities center largely around incompetent and ill-prepared presidents, leading ultimately to cases of gross financial mismanagement, crumbling infrastructures, and dwindling enrollments (Brawley, 1974). The 11 extant United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities include the following institutions: Bennett College, Bethune-Cookman University, Claflin University, Clark-Atlanta University, Dillard University, Huston-Tillotson University, Meharry Medical College, Paine College, Philander-Smith College, Rust College, and Wiley College. These 11 United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, unlike any other group of private historically Black colleges and universities, are supported by a comprehensive denominational fund known simply as the Black College Fund. In many instances, the allocation from this fund accounts for upwards of twenty-five percent of an institution's annual operating revenue.

The Methodist movement's interest in providing educational opportunities for newly freed slaves has benefited generations of individuals who have studied and earned degrees on the campuses of these historic institutions. No doubt, the life journeys of the presidents at the selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities that are included in this study have, in some form or another, been impacted by the movement's attention to the educational welfare of Black Americans.

Historical and Contemporary Context for Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The Higher Education Act of 1965 defined a historically Black institution of higher education as "any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary of Education to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation" (White House, 2010). Historically Black colleges and universities were founded and developed in a hostile environment marked by segregation and isolation of African Americans from mainstream American higher education (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Most historically Black colleges and universities were birthed as a result of a disagreement between White Northern missionaries, who believed it was their God-given duty to educate Blacks, and White Southern leaders, who believed that former slaves were inferior and would be a detriment to society if they received an education (Anderson, 1988; Franklin & Moss, 2000). As a result, most historically Black colleges and universities were developed by Northern White-controlled foundations that expressed a desire to provide education for newly freed slaves following the Civil War. There were a few historically Black institutions founded prior to the Civil War, namely Cheyney University (founded in 1837), Lincoln University (founded in 1854), and Wilberforce University (founded in 1856). For the most part, however, White Northern missionaries' insistence that Blacks were capable of learning and were intellectually equal to Whites led to the establishment of some early institutions to train Blacks (Franklin & Moss, 2000).

The South's inimical atmosphere toward its former slaves made admission to White institutions impossible for Blacks. Many of the South's White institutions of higher learning explicitly barred Blacks from admission. Historically Black colleges and universities, therefore, were established with the daunting task of educating a mass of newly freed people who could supposedly and eventually participate in a free society (Williams & Ashley, 2004). Shortly following the Civil War, and during the Reconstruction Era, Northern religious groups that had been active in abolition efforts continued their support for Blacks in the South by pouring immeasurable financial resources into these newly formed institutions for Blacks. Because White philanthropists were the principal drivers behind establishing historically Black colleges and universities, many of the institutions were initially led by White presidents (Anderson, 1988; William & Ashely, 2004). Most of the historically Black colleges and universities began their existence by providing instruction at the elementary and secondary levels in order to meet the needs of their newly-freed slaves who had been prohibited from learning to read or write (Jackson & Nunn, 2003).

The Second Morrill Act of 1890 led to the creation of 17 land-grant historically Black colleges and universities (Jackson & Nunn, 2003; Samad, 2005). The 17 historically Black colleges and universities that were created as a result of the Second Morrill Act of 1890 were established with the expressed purpose of keeping Blacks out of the White land-grant schools. The public historically Black colleges and universities, the initial 17 land-grant institutions established in 1890, were forced to contend with state and federal regulations to secure financial resources while simultaneously dealing with the social and political status of Blacks in America. Consequently, public historically

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Black colleges and universities, which received far fewer state and federal resources than their White counterparts, were rendered second-class institutions (Jackson & Nunn, 2003). Evans, Evans, and Evans (2002) argued that "Historically Black colleges and universities were not designed to succeed, rather they were established to appease Black people or to serve as holding institutions so that Black students would not matriculate in historically White colleges and universities" (p. 3). On the other hand, the development, evolution, and operation of private historically Black colleges and universities were greatly influenced by the financial gifts of White philanthropists (Watkins, 2001). In the early development of higher education opportunities for Blacks in this country, private historically Black colleges and universities were afforded the opportunity to have a greater impact because of the freedom that came from not having to deal with a state and federally-sanctioned system of separate and unequal (Gasman, 2007). Even so, given the hostile racial climate against Blacks, private Black institutions, much like public Black institutions, faced formidable odds in their early developmental years.

Aside from the Second Morrill Act of 1890, perhaps the other most significant piece of legislation impacting Blacks and historically Black colleges and universities was the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, referred to in common parlance as the G.I. Bill. Like the Second Morrill Act of 1890, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 greatly influenced the direction of higher education and provided greater access to higher education for Blacks in this country.

Corresponding with the passage of the G.I. Bill in 1944, which offered support mostly to public institutions, was the founding of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). The UNCF represented the collaborative efforts of the nation's private Black

colleges to raise funds and share scarce financial and human resources. The UNCF was critical to the survival of private historically Black colleges and universities, many of which would not have succeeded apart from the financial assistance and leadership training/development offered by the UNCF (Maxwell, 2003).

Despite the meager and disparate funding that public historically Black colleges and universities received from state and federal sources, and despite the struggles of private historically Black colleges and universities to secure the necessary funding for their continued existence, the original mission of both public and private historically Black colleges and universities was quite similar in scope. They were both established to educate African Americans, and to better prepare them to be productive citizens of their communities and the world. Even as historically Black colleges and universities continue to evolve, this original mission continues to be a formidable undertaking.

Presently, there are 105 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States, the overwhelming majority of which are concentrated in the southeastern part of the country. Of the 105 historically Black colleges and universities, 49 are private four-year institutions, 40 are four-year public institutions, 11 are two-year public schools, and five are private two-year schools. Approximately 60% of the 105 historically Black colleges and universities are located in the following six states: Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas (White House, 2010).

African Americans are no longer restricted to attending historically Black colleges and universities like it was when most historically Black colleges and universities were founded. However, as African Americans exercise greater choices about where to attend college, this has created a potentially significant issue of survivability for historically

Black colleges and universities. While historically Black colleges and universities comprise only three percent of this nation's colleges and universities, they produce 28% of Blacks who hold baccalaureate degrees. The most recent figures available indicate that roughly 280,000 students are enrolled in the 105 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States. This figure represents an increase of nearly 26% over the past 20 years of data collection for student enrollment at historically Black colleges and universities (Harvey, 2004). This is a remarkable achievement considering the fact that many predominantly White institutions compete for the best and brightest Black high school graduates by offering full scholarships.

Public historically Black colleges and universities enroll nearly 80% of all students attending historically Black colleges and universities, and these institutions produce the largest share of professionals in the fields of engineering, business, mathematics, computer science, environmental sciences, nursing, teaching, and journalism (Fort, 2013). A recent quantitative economic study, which used data from the National Survey of Black Americans, found that historically Black college and university graduates outperformed non-historically Black college and university graduates on direct labor market outcomes and self-confidence (Price, Spriggs & Swinton, 2011). Price, Spriggs, and Swinton (2011) indicated that their findings were in contrast to those of a recent study by Fryer and Greenstone (2010), who noted that the relative returns on graduating from a historically Black college or university were negative. Price, Spriggs, and Swinton (2011) also contend their research shows that historically Black colleges and universities continue to have a compelling educational justification, and that the results of their study complement the recent research of Mykeresi and Mills (2008), who found that

historically Black colleges and universities have a positive impact on the long-run labor market earnings of all African Americans, but most especially African American men.

Beyond the potential economic advantages that graduates of historically Black colleges and universities share, there are also social and cultural advantages associated with historically Black colleges and universities. Price, Spriggs, and Swinton (2011) indicated that historically Black colleges and universities have a comparative advantage in nurturing the self-image, self-esteem, and identity of their graduates. This particular finding complements previous longitudinal research conducted in the 1990s that indicated historically Black colleges and universities enhance and build the self-esteem of African Americans who attend them, and as a result of this positive experience, many graduates of historically Black colleges and universities go on to pursue graduate and professional studies (Allen, Epps, and Haniff, 1991).

Though historically Black colleges and universities produce extraordinary results for many of their Black graduates, the complicated social history of historically Black colleges and universities gives context for the current fiscal challenges that many historically Black colleges and universities contend with regularly. Even so, through their lengthy and arduous history, many historically Black colleges and universities continue to survive and achieve their mission of tooling and socializing the communities they were founded to serve (Albritton, 2012; Allen, 2002; Brown, 2001; Henderson-King & Kaleta, 2000). The tooling functions are aimed at preparing citizens to translate the internalized values of the community into an economic reality for achieving maximum well-being. The socializing and politicizing functions are aimed at creating, maintaining, and propagating the political and social values and interests of the Black community.

Given the fact that historically Black colleges and universities were created in an era of intense racial segregation, and the fact that they struggled for survival against significant odds, it is no small wonder that these institutions continue to serve their communities. The historically Black college or university of today has, in part, fulfilled its mission by the production of highly competent Black citizens who have no ambivalence about who they are and how they should use their skills and talents to further the interests of the Black community (LeMelle, 2002).

Since the mid-1800s, historically Black colleges and universities have been a critical component of the higher education landscape in the United States. These unique institutions serve as pathways to opportunity and success for many in the African American community who might not otherwise have access to post-secondary educational experiences (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Historically Black colleges and universities are largely responsible for the creation of the African American middle class. Additionally, these distinctive institutions, among fulfilling other crucial functions, act as custodians of African American historical, social, and cultural traditions (Nichols, 2004). Brown (2001; 2007) noted that historically Black colleges and universities also play a considerable role in engaging students in the political and social arena, and providing students with a sense of responsibility in strengthening Black communities. An overwhelming majority of African Americans, and women in particular, involved in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields are products of historically Black colleges and universities (Owens et al., 2012; Perna et al., 2009).

Without a doubt, historically Black colleges and universities have left an indelible positive imprint upon African American society, and the larger society in general.

Notwithstanding all of these contributions and significant functions, many historically Black colleges and universities continue to struggle and constantly face the fear of closing. The future prosperity of historically Black colleges and universities depends, as do all higher educational institutions, on the development of quality leaders who will be capable of navigating the many economic, social and political pitfalls that accompany the office of the presidency at these unique institutions.

The American College/University President

The college presidency in the United States represents a meandering development that has evolved primarily from European academic traditions. An examination of the history of American higher education from the colonial period to the early 20th century reveals the use of several titles to refer to heads of academic institutions, including that of chancellor, rector, proctor, principal, and president. As researchers have noted, all of these titles originate within European academia (Cohen & March, 1986; Dennison, 2001). The early roles and responsibilities of the leaders of colleges and universities can be generally described as task master, rule maker, and ultimate decision maker. These early presidents were viewed as courageous decision makers who had to face the challenges of society head-on, and many times, by themselves. They were very well respected, and were often viewed as being an intricately important part of the community and world in which they lived. In many cases, the early presidents wore several prominent hats in society, and their positions alone demanded considerable respect from others (Dennison, 2001; Tunheim & Goldschmidt, 2013).

Early American colleges were closely aligned to religious denominations, resulting in the appointment of leaders who were often members of the clergy (Altbach,

Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011, p. 284). In the very earliest colonial institutions, the president or leader was "first among equals in a faculty of resident masters; the position had no previous training or career ladder, as individuals came immediately from a faculty position to become president" (Altbach et. Al, 2011, p. 284). Also, during this colonial period, successful presidents "from the start had to be entrepreneurs in the broadest and best sense of the word" (Thelin, 2011, p. 34). At the time of the American Revolution, college presidents exercised several roles simultaneously, including those of professor, chaplain, librarian, recruiter, fundraiser, registrar, and even groundskeeper (Brubacher & Rudy, 2004). While the position required a broad set of skills, the most influential piece of any presidency during the American colonial times was the president's character, which was directly impacted by his role of being a clergyman. Nearly all college presidents before the American Revolution were members of the clergy (Brubacher & Rudy, 2004).

By the mid-1800s, with the country continuing to expand westward, nearly 1,000 charters for post-secondary institutions existed in the United States (Bogue & Aper, 2000). This rapid growth in the number of collegiate institutions necessitated a need for additional individuals to lead these oftentimes nebulous entities. Individuals with recognizable credentials, most often symbolized by some form of a degree from an existing college, became the preferred leaders for colleges. Many faculty members, whose role required an academic degree, advanced to the presidency during this era (Brubacher & Rudy, 2004).

An additional evolution of the role of college presidents began to occur by the early 1900s (Rudolph, 1990). Most colleges no longer aimed to solely develop future

clergymen, but were also charged with educating and training a wide array of students for specific professions. Due to the wider purpose of attending college in order to gain skill training, a more diverse student body began to surface on college campuses following World War I (Rudolph, 1990). Changes in the curriculum and the philosophical purpose of American colleges ultimately led to changes in the types of desired individuals to lead these institutions. With the exception of a segment of religiously-affiliated institutions, most other higher education entities were opening the chief executive's office to leaders from the world of business, politics, and even the military (Leslie, 1992).

By the conclusion of World War I, many colleges and universities in the United States began to adopt complex corporate structures with various layers of administrative roles and officers (Gruber, 1975). The nature of the college presidency experienced its most noticeable changes before, during, and shortly after this era because of the remarkable bureaucratization of higher education in the United States. The stature of the college/university presidency grew tremendously with the addition of numerous administrative layers that removed the president from the mundane daily operations of institutions. As colleges and universities grew, they began to seek out leaders who "would be akin to the captains of industry and finance, and thus less intimately steeped in students and student discipline, the curriculum, and other educational affairs" (Altbach, 2011, p. 285).

After World War II, there were more than 1,900 colleges and universities in the United States, and enrollments were booming (Bogue & Aper, 2000). The role and responsibility of the president became broader and more external, especially as institutions delved into the flourishing business of government-funded research (Altbach,

2011). Shared input, both internal and external, became a central feature of the way the

American college/university president led their campuses. Presidents were not only

beholden to their faculties and students that they served, but they were also now

accountable to a variety of coordinating boards and other financial stakeholders who

demanded a voice in the future direction of institutions of higher learning (Amey, 2002).

While the title remained the same, the roles and responsibilities of college presidents

have shifted dramatically since the early colonial period in the United States. The once

revered image of a wise and scholarly school master has been replaced by that of an

executive charged with securing substantial funding, avoiding scandals, and employing

principles of business in the overall management of the institution (Ungar, 2006).

General Presidential Journey

College and university presidents are as varied as the types of institutions of

higher learning in the United States. From research intensive universities to private

liberal arts colleges, the American higher education landscape is littered with a plethora

of varieties of institutions of higher learning. The life journeys and experience of leaders

of this wide array of institutions is as varied as the institutions themselves. Birnbaum and

Umbach (2001) noted, however, that leaders of the nation's more prestigious institutions

tend to have similar professional journeys that include incremental leaps from the faculty

to chair to dean to provost to president. In a study with a similar professional pathway,

but a distinct cohort, Corrigan (2002) noted that a majority of female presidents rose

through the ranks from being a faculty member to the chief academic officer, followed by

the presidency. The American Council on Education's (2012) recent pathway to the

presidency study used a 50-question instrument, *The College President's Survey,* to

gather information on the professional journey to the presidency. The study contains data

from 1,662 presidents, identifying the degree to which they perceived their university

preparation as effective in preparing them for the position of president. The ACE study

(2012) gathered data pertaining to education, career paths, and length of service, as well

as personal characteristics such as age, marital status, and religious affiliation. ACE's

study revealed that 31% of college presidents in 2012 had served previously as provosts

or Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs. Of the 1,662 presidents participating in ACE's

survey, 54% previously served as presidents in other institutions. The average length of

service for U.S. college presidents was seven years as compared to the average of 8.5

years found in the 2006 survey. ACE's study also shed light on the educational

attainment of presidents participating in the 2012 survey, noting that while the vast

majority have terminal degrees, fewer than 50% have either earned doctoral degrees in

education or higher education. Finally, the most recent ACE study revealed interesting

information about the gender gap within the college/university presidency. Of the 1,662

presidents included in the study, 432 were women, equaling roughly 26% of the

presidents in the study. Within the group of women presidents, only 72% reported

having children, compared to 90% of their male counterparts.

 Maguire (2013), in a study that slightly resembled the ACE study (2012), sampled

nearly 400 presidents and chancellors. Maguire's results noted that the office of

president closely resembled that of a corporate chief executive. Maguire also found that

the office of president was overwhelmingly dominated by White men over the age of 60

who rose through the administrative ranks. This study also pointed out that 27% of those

included in the survey have held the role of president for 10 or more years. Additionally,

Maguire's study indicated that fundraising, budgeting, and diminishing state support to public institutions were listed as the most significant issues to presidents. Finally, Maguire's study found that 58% of the participating presidents held a Ph.D., and 73% had at one time been a fulltime faculty member and senior academic administrator.

All of these previously mentioned studies in this section on general presidential pathways share several commonalities, the first of which relates to career path. In the majority of the cases from each study, presidents followed a similar professional trajectory that usually included a faculty appointment at the beginning phase. The next step in the progressive climb to the top includes service as either a provost, or vice president for academic affairs, followed by the attainment of the office of the presidency. All of the previously mentioned studies in this section on general presidential pathways also share commonalities with regard to experience and educational attainment. In each of the cited studies, a majority of the presidents served previously as a president, and an overwhelming majority also possessed some form of a terminal degree.

Journeys of Independent/Private College Presidents

Several studies have focused specifically on the intricacies of presidential leadership at independent and private colleges and universities. Included below is a summary of the study of characteristics of presidents by institution type conducted by the Council on Independent Colleges:

	Public Two-Year	Public BA/MA	Public Doctoral	Private Doctoral	CIC
Demographics					
Age (in years)	60.0	62.7	63.3	62.6	60.3
Women (%)	32	24	24	20	25
Minority (%)	14	21	19	5	6

Currently married (%)	88	90	91	79	83
Has children (%)	85	85	87	85	83
Education					
Has PhD or EdD (%)	86	88	90	92	80
Fields of highest degree earned					
Business (%)	3	6	4	3	4
Education or higher education (%)	68	28	13	8	31
Humanities/fine arts (%)	7	21	9	13	20
Law (%)	2	6	8	8	7
Religion/theology (%)	1	2	1	8	11
Social sciences (%)	6	18	27	36	15
STEM (%)	12	15	27	26	10
Immediate prior position					
President/CEO (%)	25	21	19	23	19
Chief academic officer (%)	40	44	42	49	29
Other academic officer (%)	7	11	19	18	11
Non-academic officer (%)	14	11	5	0	13
Faculty/Chair (%)	1	2	1	0	3
Outside higher education (%)	5	7	8	5	15
Years in present job	7.1	6.9	6.0	6.8	7.1
Holds a tenured faculty position (%)	5	61	88	70	28
Years of experiences in:					
Primarily in the classroom/lab	5.5	7.7	11.4	11.5	6.5
Primarily a full-time administrator	21.7	19.5	16.0	18.5	17.0
Split between academic and administrative duties	2.5	4.0	5.6	5.4	3.2

Table 1
Characteristics of Presidents by Institution Type, 2012
Source: Song & Hartley (2012, p. 4)

The selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities

included in this study are all, of course, private, independent institutions. Further, all of

the selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities

included in this study are also members of the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC).

CIC's study indicates that the typical president at an independent private institution is on average a sixty year-old married White male with an earned doctorate degree. Seventy-five percent of CIC presidents are male, while the percentage of women presidents at CIC member institutions has remained consistent at 25% since 2006. The overwhelming majority (83%) of men and women serving as presidents at CIC member institutions are married. This statistic is very similar to the larger data set of the *2012 American College President Study*, which indicates that 85% of all presidents are married (American Council on Education, 2012). Both studies demonstrated that more than 75% of college and university presidents have earned doctorate degrees.

The roles and responsibilities of presidents at all institution types are incredibly complex and varied. A revealing component of the CIC study was a roundtable discussion with presidents who had served in their specific role for a minimum of ten years. During this roundtable discussion, the participants identified 16 major job functions that dominated the majority of their time. This select group of CIC presidents identified their three most time-consuming duties as fundraising, budget and financial management, and enrollment management (Song & Hartley, 2012). Teaching courses, serving on governing boards of other entities, and being active in professional organizations were identified as other areas of responsibility that consumed an inordinate amount of time for CIC presidents. Connected to their roles and responsibilities, CIC presidents also identified a number of challenges associated with their work as leaders of their respective institutions. These challenges included the faculty's resistance to change, insufficient funding to implement innovative initiatives, insufficient time to reflect upon overarching challenges of the work, and occasional dissention with governing boards

(Song & Hartley, 2012). Table 2 summarizes the time-consuming duties, as noted by

sitting presidents included in the study.

Time-Consuming Duties	Public Two-Year (%)	Public BA/MA (%)	Public Doctoral (%)	Private Doctoral (%)	CIC (%)
Fundraising	25	45	53	82	72
Budget/financial management	59	65	58	61	57
Enrollment management	11	20	14	12	31
Strategic planning	16	22	10	30	29
Governing board relations	21	10	27	27	25
Community relations	39	26	18	9	15
Personnel issues (excluding faculty)	34	15	10	9	14
Academic issues	8	9	6	18	12
Faculty issues	16	16	12	12	12
Capital improvement projects	20	7	12	9	11
Entrepreneurial ventures	5	7	6	6	6
Government relations	22	24	23	3	3
Athletics	1	10	24	0	3
Campus internationalization	1	2	0	12	2
Media/public relations	4	7	13	0	2
Accountability/assessment of student learning	8	2	1	3	2
Crisis management	3	5	6	0	2
Risk management/legal issues	5	3	0	0	2
Student life/conduct issues	1	2	5	6	2
Technology planning	2	1	0	0	0

Table 2
Time Consuming Duties of College Presidents, 2012
Source: Song and Hartley (2012, p. 11)

HBCU Presidential Journeys

Hoskins (1978) undertook one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies of

historically Black college and university administrators. The purpose of the study was to

ascertain the differences between Black administrators at predominantly White

institutions and those serving at historically Black colleges and universities. Specifically,

Hoskins offered a comparative analysis of background characteristics, methods of

recruitment and perceptions of the job as an executive in higher education. Hoskins'

study had 457 participants in it, 19 of whom were presidents (18 at historically Black

colleges and universities and 1 at a predominantly White institution). The study found no

major difference between the educational levels of administrators at historically Black

colleges and universities and predominantly White institutions. Hoskins' study also

revealed that leaders at historically Black colleges and universities had significantly more

diverse recruiting and selection procedures than their White counterparts. The recruiting

and selection procedures for leaders of historically Black colleges and universities often

included a matrix of informal networks and word of mouth, as opposed to the formal

systems of search firms and committees that dominate majority White settings. This early

study revealed that historically Black college and university presidents tend to hold a

greater number of positions of seniority, and for longer periods of time, than their

counterparts at predominantly White institutions.

Two other relatively early studies provided additional insight into the journeys

and experiences of those who ascend to the presidency of a historically Black college or

university. Arnold (1994), in a descriptive study involving several Black female college

presidents, suggested that the presidents included in the study felt that their dual status as

Black and female had worked both to their advantage and disadvantage at various points

along their journeys. Importantly, these presidents also indicated that they felt that their

success at attaining a college presidency had nothing to do with affirmative action, but

was related specifically to their qualifications and previous experiences in higher

education. Related to this assertion by the presidents included in the study is a

conclusion drawn by Arnold (1994) that a set of specific inner traits had also contributed

to the success of the women included in the study. Numbered among these inner traits

were a sense of purpose, optimism, self-confidence, decisiveness, and a concern for the community.

Ross and Green (2000), who co-authored early studies on minority presidents for the American Council on Education, concluded that "minority presidents were most highly represented at public master's and baccalaureate institutions, where they led 25% or more institutions in those categories" (p. 13). Minority presidents were least represented at private master's institutions, comprising only 2% of this particular sector. Hence minority presidents were more likely to lead large institutions than small, specialized institutions. Almost half of the African American presidents and more than half of the Hispanic presidents served at institutions with headcount enrollments greater than 5,000. Ross and Green (2000) also explained that Hispanic presidents enjoyed a disproportionately high representation in these positions because they "were more likely to lead public institutions, which tend to enroll higher numbers of students than private colleges and universities" (p.14). Continuing their analysis of statistics for minority presidents, Ross and Green (2000) state: "several differences between people of color and other presidents are worthy of note" (p.15). They cited the fact that minority presidents are more likely than Caucasian presidents to be women. Approximately one in four African American and Hispanic presidents were women, compared to just 19% of women among Caucasian presidents. Further, Hispanic presidents differed from non-Hispanic presidents notably in the type of presidency they held. More than one in five (21%) of Hispanic presidents headed a multi-campus institution or system, compared to just 12 percent of Caucasian presidents and less than 8 percent of African American presidents (Ross and Green, 2000). In their conclusion, Ross and Green (2000) reiterated that

women and minorities continue to increase their share of college and university presidencies. The minority presidents accounted for 11% of all presidential posts in American higher education in 1998, an increase from 8% in 1996.

More recently, Holmes (2004) conducted a mixed-methods study that included 6 African American presidents. The purpose of Holmes' study was to investigate the experiences of the selected presidents and to present descriptive and trend data so that a more comprehensive profile of African American presidents could be developed. The participants in Holmes' study indicated that their families play an important role in their academic and professional achievement. They also noted the significance of the role of mentoring in propelling their careers forward. Another significant finding from Holmes' study is that African American presidents are very similar to their White counterparts in terms of what distinguishes them as viable candidates for the presidency (e.g., educational attainment, prior positions, personal factors, etc.). The majority of the presidents included in Holmes' study held the doctor of philosophy degree and had previously served as a provost or chief academic officer. Both Hoskins and Holmes, through these relatively early studies on historically Black college and university presidential pathways, contribute to the body of literature on a topic that is rarely and insufficiently examined.

Jackson (2004), noting the dearth of research regarding the journeys and pathways of leaders of historically Black colleges and universities, sought to offer an analysis of presidential pathways of African Americans in higher education, and to examine the significant characteristics and experiences (both personal and professional) of African American presidents. Jackson asserted that, because of the paucity of data on presidential

pathways of leaders of historically Black colleges and universities, an examination of the status of African American executive leadership positions was necessary in order to facilitate the development and advancement of the next generation of leaders. Jackson's study contained a three-fold purpose, which includes the following: (a) to report the presidential pathways of African Americans in higher education; (b) to examine significant characteristics and experiences (both personal and professional) of African American presidents; and (c) to offer an understanding of African Americans' participation in shared governance. Jackson maintained that the key positions of dean, vice president, and provost most often form the trajectory to the college presidency for historically Black college and university leaders. He also indicated that there is rarely ever any pre-service or in-service training offered for those who follow this trajectory, which possibly contributes to some of the missteps of new presidents. Another revealing finding from Jackson's study is that the lack of African Americans in positions in predominantly White institutions that eventually lead to the presidency is a reliable benchmark that the majority of African Americans ascending to the presidency will continue to serve at only historically Black colleges and universities.

In a recent study, Freeman and Gasman (2014), pointing to the lack of research about pathways to the historically Black college and university presidency, sought to capture the background characteristics of historically Black college and university leaders. They indicated that although in recent decades research on college and university presidents has grown, this research has largely excluded the experiences of historically Black college and university presidents. Freeman and Gasman presented several research questions in their study. The first of these questions revolved around

capturing the background characteristics of historically Black college and university leaders. A second question was an attempt to understand the role that governing boards and other campus leaders played in selecting presidents. The final question posed by the authors was the role that current historically Black college and university presidents played in grooming the next generation of leaders for these institutions. Freeman and Gasman discovered the answers to their research questions by using a combination of several qualitative research methods, including surveys, document analysis, and qualitative interviews. Their study revealed that there is a recycling of presidents at historically Black colleges and universities, with close to 70% having previously served as presidents. Freeman and Gasman also discovered a disproportionate presence of long-term presidents among historically Black college and university leaders, coupled with little systematic grooming of future presidents. The study also revealed an aging presidency, with the average age of presidents at these institutions between 60 and 70 years old. Additionally, Freeman and Gasman's study revealed that 58% of historically Black college and university presidents held PhDs, 25% held EdDs, 3% held MDs, and the remaining 14% held JDs. Of special note in their study was the fact that 75% of these presidents held degrees in the field of education, which correlates to African Americans' inclination towards social science fields.

Experiences of HBCU Leaders

While this study will attempt to explore the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, there is growing literature that seeks to understand the professional challenges encountered by current presidents at historically Black colleges and universities. There is also a small body of

literature that attempts to explore how efforts at addressing these challenges are impacted

by the various aspects of the president's professional and personal journey to the office.

One of the earliest pieces in this regard was by Phillips (2002), who bemoaned what he

deemed to be an appalling absence of shared governance on the campuses of most of the

nation's historically Black colleges and universities. He noted in particular that faculty

members are absent from policy and decision-making bodies, are denied access to

pertinent information regarding decision-making processes, and are shut out of searches

and hiring of administrative personnel. Further, Phillips contended that the game of

musical chairs for incompetent presidents and underprepared board members flourishes

because of a steeped system of cronyism endemic to historically Black colleges and

universities. Drawing largely from participant observation and in-depth interviews,

Phillips' purpose was to uncover the rationale for the absence of principles of shared

governance at historically Black colleges and universities. He also sought to offer

potential solutions to this problem. One of these solutions, or recommendations, is to

encourage faculty members to acquaint themselves with documents from the American

Association of University Professors (AAUP), regional accreditors, and subject area

accreditors that address faculty members' participation in shared governance. Another

recommendation advanced by Phillips is the need for faculty senates at historically Black

colleges and universities to exercise care in selecting their leaders. These leaders,

according to Phillips, must be sufficiently convinced that faculty must share in academic

decision-making. Phillips' personal experience in environments that do not foster

principles of shared governance probably served as the impetus for his exploration of the

topic. At the very least, this early work provokes thoughtful conversation about the

drastic need for understandings and practices of shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities.

A few years following Phillips' piece, Nichols (2004), noting the lack of research and literature on the topic of shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities, utilized a qualitative research method to delve more deeply into the topic. Nichols conducted in-depth interviews with former presidents of historically Black colleges and universities to garner recommended strategies that will ensure the long-term health and survival of historically Black colleges and universities. Findings of her study included the need for presidents, trustees, and other historically Black college and university leaders to have a greater understanding of the overall academic enterprise, finances, personnel administration, and shared governance. A recommendation stemming finding from Nichols' study was that presidents must readjust their notions of shared governance by involving faculty more in strategic decisions that impact the future direction of historically Black colleges and universities. Nichols' study greatly advanced the understanding of presidential leadership and shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities. This was partly accomplished by use of quotes from the transcripts of interviews conducted with former presidents of historically Black colleges and universities. These quotes add to the richness of Nichols' article, and they also bolster her findings.

Concurrent with Nichols' study on the uniqueness of leadership and management styles at historically Black colleges and universities, is a study by Minor (2004) in which he noted that numerous conclusions are drawn about the shared governance context at historically Black colleges and universities in the absence of actual research. Minor

stressed the significance of researchers attempting to understand the social and cultural context of historically Black colleges and universities before offering negative statements regarding their understandings and practices of shared governance. The contextual aspects that influence decision-making practices should be the focal point for those truly interested in studying the concept of shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities. In this case study, Minor utilized in-depth interviews and document analysis to explore the specific contextual factors that might influence decision-making within a particular institutional setting. His case study involves an urban public historically Black institution in a southern state. Minor's findings include three contextual factors that influence decision-making at the institution under review. The primary one of these is a commitment to teaching. As he noted, faculty members at most historically Black colleges and universities are overwhelmingly committed to teaching, and in most cases, carry exhausting loads each semester that prevent them from participating in decision and policy making activities. The other two findings (changing missions of historically Black colleges and universities and continued racialized climate of historically Black colleges and universities) often create settings where faculty and presidents spar unnecessarily. Minor's recommendation that researchers make an effort to comprehend the distinctive history, nature, and mission of historically Black colleges and universities, without comparing them to predominantly White institutions is incredibly helpful for those who are interested in studying the governance context at historically Black colleges and universities. From this recommendation also comes Minor's assertion that the governance context will vary because the institution types are fundamentally different.

In a piece that appears two years subsequent to Minor's study, Guy-Sheftall (2006) wrote from the perspective of a faculty council chair at a premier historically Black college. Guy-Sheftall noted the existence of a prevailing image of historically Black colleges and universities being president-centric and mired in complicated hierarchical structures that do not foster notions of shared governance. She also exposed an often-overlooked reality about presidential leadership at historically Black colleges and universities. In some instances, robust and heavy-handed presidents were largely responsible for the survival of these institutions in a national climate that has been hostile to their very existence. Although not the principal focus of Guy-Sheftall's article, the role of authoritarian presidents in prospering and sustaining often struggling historically Black colleges and universities is something that she thinks deserves further exploration.

Guy-Sheftall offered several recommendations for those historically Black colleges and universities that are interested in developing a more vigorous process of shared governance. One of the recommendations is to have a strong and active faculty council in place. She also indicated that the faculty council should educate its own members (including those considered junior faculty) about the importance of shared governance through a series of workshops and open discussions. She noted that many faculty members express their desire to participate in academic decision-making, but their lack of understanding about the principles of shared governance makes it easier for presidents to dismiss them. Guy-Sheftall's study offered, for the first time, specific and practical recommendations to jumpstart conversations about shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities. On the otherhand, Guy-Sheftall's study makes the false assumption that there can be a replication of what occurred at her

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institution, an institution that has enjoyed a relatively long history of engaged and active faculty, coupled with presidents who have historically demonstrated a commitment to principles of shared governance.

Ezell and Schexnider (2010) considered the complex, and at times acrimonious, relationship between presidents and governing boards of historically Black colleges and universities. These authors traced the historical development of a number of current challenges facing historically Black colleges and universities, all of which ultimately impact understandings of the differences between administration and governance. Chief among these challenges is the financial health of many historically Black colleges and universities. As Ezell and Schexnider noted, state governments have traditionally underfunded public historically Black colleges and universities, and private historically Black colleges and universities have received tepid support from alums and donors. Using this financially challenged milieu as a backdrop, the authors posed their central research question: how can enacting a viable mode of shared governance at an HBCU contribute to its long-term health and sustainability? Ezell and Schexnider tendered several recommendations from their wealth of experience and knowledge, including the suggestion that governors and legislators establish blue-ribbon panels to vet potential candidates for boards of public historically Black colleges and universities. A second recommendation is that private historically Black colleges and universities exercise extreme care in selecting board members who understand the role of the board, and who are capable of committing time and resources to ensure the board's effectiveness.

In a case analysis dating from the same time-period as Ezell and Schexnider's piece, Gasman (2010) presented a specific example of the complications around

presidential leadership and shared governance at an HBCU in Atlanta, GA. The leader of this institution terminated 55 full-time faculty members in February of 2009 without proper notice. Following this egregious action by the president, the AAUP initiated an investigation, which ultimately led to the institution being placed on AAUP's censure list. In addition to this particular case, Gasman noted that eight historically Black colleges and universities have been censured by AAUP in the past 25 years for violations of academic freedom and shared governance. This number may seem small, but in fact it represents 21% of all colleges and universities censured in the U.S. for the same time period. From her participation as a member of the AAUP committee investigating the actions of the aforementioned president, Gasman offered five recommendations for leaders of historically Black colleges and universities. The first of these is for presidents to practice transparency and communicate openly with the campus community. The second, which might seem obvious, is to respect tenure, which involves viewing faculty as peers, and not simply employees of the institution. Gasman's other three recommendations (respect due process, respect shared governance, and foster a culture of debate) all contribute to a greater understanding of and appreciation for shared governance.

In a more recent study, Lewis (2011), posited the observation that faculty participation in shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities has not been widely researched. She also referred to some of the prevailing assumptions regarding the autocratic leadership style of presidents of historically Black colleges and universities. Like Minor (2004) and Guy-Sheftall (2006), Lewis made the claim that, in some instances, the autocratic leadership style of the president is what may have actually preserved some historically Black colleges and universities. Even still, however, Lewis

affirmed the significance of historically Black colleges and universities fully

understanding and embracing the principles of shared governance. Lewis' study has two

main purposes, including identifying the impact of institutional decisions at historically

Black colleges and universities that exclude faculty participation in the decision-making

process. The second purpose of her study was to specifically name the shared

governance challenges that faculty members and senior level administrators encounter in

their dealings with presidents at historically Black colleges and universities. In this

multi-site case study involving one private HBCU and one public HBCU, Lewis used

qualitative methods to arrive at the answers to her research questions. She also employed

Minor's Functional Model as a conceptual framework for the study. Findings of Lewis'

study reveal that the majority of the participants felt that decision-making was

predetermined by the president, and that top-down actions that continue to exclude

faculty from shared governance are rampant on the two campuses included in the study.

Lewis' study, much like all of those included in this subsection, presents an intricate view

into the oftentimes complex professional challenges encountered by current presidents at

historically Black colleges and universities. These studies also allude to how efforts at

addressing these challenges might be impacted by the various aspects of the president's

professional and personal journey to the office.

Schlossberg's Theory of Transition

To gain a clearer understanding of the life journeys of presidents at selected

United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, Nancy K.

Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) is used as the theoretical framework for this

study. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition enables me, as the researcher, to determine

how the participants experience and handle transitions throughout their professional and personal journeys. The original theory has since been revised in 1995, 2006, and most recently in 2012. This theory has been used to study multiple groups that have transitioned into new settings including retiring faculty members (Goodman & Pappas, 2000), students entering the professional arena (Koerin, Harrigan & Reeves, 1990), and nontraditional students returning to college (Schaefer, 2010). Schlossberg's Theory of Transition came about as a result of the belief that there existed a need to develop a systematic framework that would facilitate an understanding of adults in transition, and direct them to the necessary resources to cope with the "ordinary and extraordinary process of living" (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010, p. 213).

Goodman and Schlossberg defined transition as "any event, or non-event, that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles" (Goodman, Schlossberg, et al., 2006). In order to understand the meaning that a transition has for a particular individual, it is imperative to consider the type, context, and impact of the transition. Schlossberg's Theory described three types of transitions that an individual experiences during the course of a lifetime: anticipated, unanticipated, and non-events. The first of these transitions, anticipated transitions, occur expectedly and predictably. Examples of this type of transition might include graduation from college, marriage, or even retirement from a professional career. The second form of transition is known as unanticipated, meaning a transition that occurs unexpectedly or that is not scheduled. Examples of this type of transition might include the sudden death of a loved one or even the unforeseen involuntary departure from a place of employment. The final form of transition, known as a non-event, are those transitions that are expected to occur, but do

not occur. Examples of this might include failure to be admitted into law school or failure to obtain a highly desired position.

In terms of the context of transitions, Schlossberg's Theory denotes that context refers to the relationship of an individual to the transition (one's own or someone else's), and to the setting of the transition (i.e., professional, personal, etc.). For an individual experiencing a transition, the impact, or the degree to which the transition alters one's daily life is also important. Both positive and negative transitions can produce stress, and multiple transitions happening simultaneously can make coping especially difficult. While transitions may be linked to one identifiable event or non-event, a transition is actually a process that extends over a period of time (Goodman, Schlossberg, et al., 2006). Initially, individuals are consumed by their new role, and gradually they begin to separate from the past and establish new relationships, routines, and assumptions.

Goodman, Schlossberg, et al. (2006) endorsed the idea of transitions having three phrases, which they classify as "moving in," "moving through," and "moving out." When moving into a new setting or situation, people must familiarize themselves with the rules, norms, and expectations of the new system. Once in a new setting or situation, individuals must learn to balance their activities with other areas of their lives as they "move through" the transition. Schlossberg's Theory indicates that moving out is when people end one series of transitions and start to look forward to what's next on the horizon.

Schlossberg identified four major sets of factors that help to define the impact of a transition, and a person's ability to cope with a transition.   The four major sets of factors, known collectively as the 4 S's, are situation, self, social support, and strategies. A

person's effectiveness in coping with transition depends on his or her resources in each area. Individuals have both assets and liabilities as they encounter transitions. In some instances, assets may outweigh liabilities, making adjustment relatively easy, or liabilities may outweigh assets making the transition more difficult to manage. The individual's perception of what is happening affects their account of their assets and liabilities. When assessing the situation, which is the first of the 4 S's, the following significant questions must be borne in mind:

- *Trigger:* what precipitated the transition?

- *Timing:* is the transition considered "on time" or "off time" in terms of one's social clock?

- *Control:* who or what is seen as responsible for the transition, and how is the individual's behavior affected by this person?

- *Role change:* does the transition involve a role change, and if so, is the role change viewed as a gain or a loss?

- *Duration:* is the transition seen as permanent or temporary?

The first "S," situation, provides a comprehensive overview of the different components involved in event and non-event transitions for most individuals.

Factors considered important in relation to the second "S," self, are personal and demographic characteristics and psychological resources. Personal and demographic characteristics include gender, socioeconomic status, stage of life, age, state of health, and ethnicity, and these characteristics "directly affects how a person perceives and assesses life," (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010, p.73). Psychological resources include tools to cope, such as ego development, outlook, personal values, spirituality, and

resiliency. The third "S" includes the sources of support that an individual has access to during transitions. People potentially receive support during transitions from family, friends, colleagues, and institutional communities (e.g., religious bodies, social clubs, etc.). This support presents itself in the form of affirmation, aid, and/or honest feedback.

The fourth and final "S" that Schlossberg cites, strategies, refers to the ways individuals cope with a transition. Coping responses include those that attempt to modify the transition, those that control the meaning of the transition, and those that aid in managing stress following the transition (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). Individuals who want to change their situation or reduce their stress can choose among four coping modes: information seeing, direct action, inhibition of action, and intrapsychic behavior. Goodman, Schlossberg, et al. (2006) emphasized that individuals cope best when they remain flexible and use multiple strategies.

The literature suggests that the transitions college presidents experience are significant, both in their professional and personal lives. The life journeys of presidents include numerous transitions, with each falling at one point or another into one of the three types of transitions described by Schlossberg (e.g., anticipated, unanticipated, and non-event). No doubt, the journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities include transitions that may have been planned, such as the transition from a previous professional position to that of president. Perhaps these journeys also included transitions that were unanticipated, such as the unexpected promotion to the office of the president. These journeys may have also included non-event transition where the president expected a transition to occur, but for whatever reason, the transition does not occur. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition

(1984) assists in determining how presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities experience and handle transitions throughout the course of their life journeys (both professional and personal). This theory aligns with the research design for the study, and reinforces the study's approach through the reflective process associated with managing, coping, and accepting transitions.

Summary

This review of literature highlighted relevant research and scholarship that speaks to the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Although there is a paucity of literature on historically Black colleges and universities and the presidential journeys of leaders of historically Black colleges and universities, the purpose of this review was to provide a thorough, organized summary of current research on issues that influence the life journeys of presidents at historically Black colleges and universities. Additionally, this review reveals insight to potential future presidents and board members about unique leadership traits or characteristics that present themselves in the research as being essential for persons who are attempting to navigate the journey to become a leader of an HBCU. Although each of the studies referenced in the review offers a unique conclusion, there are several broader conclusions to be drawn from this review. The first of these is that, contrary to the popular belief that historically Black colleges and universities are havens for archaic and autocratic systems of leadership, there exist on a majority of the HBCU campuses innovative and agile styles of leadership. As Minor (2005) indicated, presidents of historically Black colleges and universities are often faced with a plethora of issues unseen in predominantly White institutions. These issues include a general

preoccupation with the mere survival of the institution, which often results in the need to employ creative and nontraditional methods of leadership. Future studies would do well to expand upon Minor's research, and to explore the social and cultural proclivities of historically Black colleges and universities that might not be investigated in general studies about institutions of higher learning.

The second conclusion to be drawn from this review is somewhat related to the first. Concurrent with the need for researchers to develop a deeper sensitivity to the history, nature, and mission of historically Black colleges and universities (without comparing them to PWIs), is the need for HBCU leaders to become more cognizant of trends and issues impacting higher education in general. This is especially true in the instance of shared governance. There is a need for HBCU leaders to become more cognizant of generally accepted principles of shared governance. Granted, there are some remarkably egregious examples of violations of principles of shared governance at historically Black colleges and universities, one of which is recounted by Gasman (2010). Perhaps these breaches could be avoided if boards, presidents, administrators, and faculties at historically Black colleges and universities had a greater understanding of principles of shared governance. Even still, this literature review overwhelmingly affirms that historically Black colleges and universities have always been, and continue to be, an unwavering symbol of freedom in education for people of color. Historically Black colleges and universities' strength and stability account for the perpetual rise of intellectuals, professionals, and creative artists so evident throughout Black communities and American society at large.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to explore the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to

the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black

colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative inquiry. The

following research questions anchored the study:

1) How have life journeys impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated

HBCU presidencies?

2) What is the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities,

and careers?

3) How have different life events and priorities influenced the participants'

career trajectory?

This chapter presents the research design for the study, along with the data sources, data

collection methods, data analysis, criteria for trustworthiness, the study's delimitations

and limitations, researcher bias, and implications gleaned from the methodology itself.

Research Design

Currently, little is known about the phenomenon of presidents of faith-related

historically Black colleges and universities, and practically nothing is known about the

presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. A

qualitative research design, which allows for the exploration of "little-understood

phenomenon and the forces causing the phenomenon in question," (Marshall & Rossman,

2014, p. 41) is employed for this study. To best understand the life journeys of the participants in the study, their personal stories are used to inform the researcher as to how they have made meaning of their lived experiences. With the goals and purposes of this study aimed at better understanding the professional and personal journeys, as well as the lived experiences of the participants, socially constructed meaning-making is necessary, thereby lending itself to a product that is "richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2002, p.5). Further, the qualitative research method, which involves a search for meaning and understanding, and relies upon the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, permits the researcher to delve more deeply into the research questions guiding the study. This enriching aspect of the qualitative method is made possible because of the use of multiple sources of data, including "interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual information" (Creswell, 2014, p. 185). Additionally, qualitative research, which involves an inductive investigative strategy, leads to an end product that is richly descriptive and highly illustrative (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Finally, Stebbins (2001) described limited qualitative exploratory research as occurring when the investigator searches for something in particular. In this case, the exploratory search sought to describe the life journeys of the presidents of the selected institutions that were included in the study.

Methodologically, this study is guided by narrative analysis. The purpose of this study is to investigate the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. So that the researcher could fully understand this phenomenon, first-hand, in-depth accounts of personal experiences were necessary. Narrative analysis is the appropriate methodology

for this study, as it allows participants to reflect in a deep and engaging way. Through these unfiltered narratives, the researcher is able to gain insight into the life journeys of the participants in a way that is incredibly revealing and insightful. The opportunity for meaning-making to occur through personal stories results in thick, rich descriptions that produces answers to the research questions. As the center of this study, narrative analysis is discussed in a more detailed manner.

Narrative analysis, also known as narrative inquiry, is the specific qualitative design used in this study. Narrative inquiry was first used by Connelly and Clandinin (2000) as a methodology to describe the personal stories of teachers. Narrative inquiry is founded on the idea that people tell stories and organize their understanding of experiences through narratives. When individuals tell stories, they reveal how they structure their thinking and reflect on their own experiences. Narrative inquirers explore a research problem by understanding the experiences of an individual while including their own voice as part of the process. In doing this, the narrative becomes a form of writing that combines experiences rather than being written "from nowhere by nobody" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 734).

Narrative researchers search for ways to understand and then present real-life experiences through the stories of the research participants. The narrative inquiry approach allows for a rich description of these experiences and an exploration of the meanings that the participants derive from their experiences. Narrative inquiry amplifies voices that may have otherwise remained silent. It utilizes story-telling as a way of communicating the participants' realities to a larger and broader audience. By using the narratives format to present findings, researchers can access rich layers of information

that provide a more in-depth understanding of the particulars of the participants' points of view. The knowledge gained can offer the reader a deeper understanding of the subject material and extra insight to apply the stories to their own context. Narrative inquiry has an underlying philosophy and access that enables the illumination of real people in real settings through the 'painting' of their stories. It is a methodology in which the researcher attempts to illuminate the meanings of personal stories and events (Riessman, 2008).

Creswell (2012) identified the ability to "explore an educational research problem by understanding the experiences of an individual (p. 505) as a defining characteristic of narrative inquiry. The emphasis is on the importance of learning through the stories that individuals tell. The stories are data typically collected through interviews or informal conversations (Creswell, 2012). In writing narrative inquiry, researchers include their own unique perspectives in order to permit readers the opportunity to critically interpret the study (Goodall, 2008). When *restorying* (a term used specifically in narrative inquiry) the lived experiences of the participants, narrative researchers become co-participants and co-constructors of knowledge. Narrative inquiry invites the reader to engage in the story and develop new understandings of the human experience. Some researchers see themselves as co-participants in the study, involving themselves equally with participants. Others remain at a respective distance, acknowledging that the relational aspects are less important. Whether the researcher engages directly in the story or remains at a respective distance, the narrative inquiry process provides the opportunity for multi-layered discoveries within the social, political, and cultural contexts of the participants. Because of its interactional basis, narrative inquiry is a collaborative enterprise, and the end-product is the joint effort of narrator and listener.

Contemporary narrative inquiry can be characterized as a combination of analytic

lenses, approaches, and methods that center on stories narrated by the individual who

lives them (Chase, 2005). Narrators engage readers in the stories in order to become

emotionally, intellectually, and morally involved. Stories provide windows to others'

experiences and insights. As researchers listen and develop narratives alongside the

participants, they understand how the storytellers have experienced something, as well as

how they have constructed their understanding of that experience. The words they use

and the way they tell their stories reveal how they have come to understand their own

experiences (Chase, 2005). This approach was used to delve into the feelings, attitudes,

perspectives, and observations of the presidents as they describe their life journeys to

becoming presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges

and universities.

Narrative inquiry can proceed in many different directions. Polkinghorne (1995)

distinguishes two types of narrative inquiry: paradigmatic and narrative. The

paradigmatic type gathers stories for its data and analyzes the data into categories and

themes. Paradigmatic analysis "results in descriptions of themes that hold across the

stories or in taxonomies of types of stories, characters, or settings" (p. 12). The narrative

type gathers events and happenings for its data and analyzes the data by producing

explanatory storied accounts. These researchers "collect descriptions of events and

happenings and synthesize or configure them by means of a plot into a story or stories"

(p. 12). Other approaches to narrative inquiry include developing narratives together

with the storytellers and allow the story to do the talking (Beattie, 2001). Some feel it is

important to stick to stories told by the participants exactly (Conle, 2000), while others

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prefer a more aesthetic approach where the way a story is told is as important as the message itself (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Regardless of the approach, Tierney (2002) suggests that narratives use an active voice, using first person, in order for a more impactful retelling of the story.

This project uses narrative inquiry of the paradigmatic type. The researcher explores the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities using the personal narratives of these leaders as data, and conducting a thematic analysis of the data. The paradigmatic analysis of data seeks to locate common themes or "conceptual manifestations among the stories collected as data" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.13). Additional qualities of narrative inquiry that fit the goals of this study are: a focus on the experiences/journeys of the participants, the researcher situating himself in the space of inquiry, the processes of constructing a personal narrative, constructing an identity, and making meaning of both.

While narrative inquiry is the best-suited qualitative design for this project, it is a method that has its disadvantages. Perhaps one of the more obvious disadvantages is the fact that extensive information about the participants is necessary in order for narrative inquiry to be effective. This extensive information goes far beyond what can be gleaned from a mere review of a curriculum vita or a biographical sketch. Additionally, narrative inquiry necessitates an active collaboration with the participants. This active collaboration permits the researcher an opportunity to gather the extensive background information and other details that are necessary for the study. Finally, as with the hearing and writing of any story, the researcher must consider the possibility that their background could potentially shape how the participants' story is presented.

Sampling Selection

The sampling technique for this study is purposeful sampling, which permits the researcher an opportunity to "discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 96). As the researcher, I utilized purposeful sampling to ensure that the participants have familiarity with the subject matter important to the study's purpose, and to understand more fully the phenomenon under investigation (Borg & Gall, 1989; Creswell, 2007). To this end, I did not explore the life journeys of leaders of all historically Black colleges and universities, but instead restricted my study to four presidents who currently serve at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Though I employed the purposeful sampling strategy, I did not do so at the expense of losing variability in the sample. Of the 11 presidents invited to participate in the study, the four who responded were quite diverse in nature, representing a vast age range and a vast range of years of experience. It must be noted that the available population size is limited to begin with, and that significant efforts were exerted to increase the number of participants in the study. All 11 presidents of the United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities were sent an email invitation to participate in the study in early June. Initially, only two of the invitees responded. These emails were followed up with a second email to the nine who had not responded fourteen days after the first email was sent out. At this point, still only two of the eleven potential participants had responded to the email invitation to participate in the study. Phone calls were placed to the offices of the nine presidents who had not responded, and as a result of those phone calls, four additional presidents subsequently responded and agreed to participate in the

study. Of the six who eventually agreed to participate, only four actually materialized. One of the two potential participants who had initially agreed to participate, and even agreed upon a meeting date and time for the first interview, never showed up for the interview. This was quite disappointing, especially considering the expense incurred from traveling to the potential participant's institution, and display of a lack courtesy from not informing me that he would no longer be able to participate. The other of the two potential participants who had initially agreed to participate eventually stopped responding to emails and phone calls. It was later discovered that this particular potential participant had informed his Board of Trustees of his intention to retire, and most of his energies began to be directed toward concluding the 17-year relationship he had with the institution as its president.

Noting the desire for data saturation in qualitative research (Seidman, 2006), which means that additional information gathered does not add to the findings, the researcher specifically selected sitting presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities who fell into several categories: those with five-plus years of experience as a president, those with less than five years of experience as a president, and those with at least 10 years total experience in higher education in general. Further, the purposeful sampling principle was applied to ensure that there was adequate representation of each gender in the study. Therefore, of the four participants included in this study, two are female, two are male, two have five-plus years of experience as a president at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university, and two have been serving as a president for less than five years at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university.

Data Collection

To conduct the research for this study, a brief review of the 11 United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities websites was essential. This review provided additional information beyond the researcher's previous knowledge about the institutions and/or its leaders. The researcher's familiarity with United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, private institutions of higher learning, and higher education in general were tools that allowed for quick connections with the participants. The development of relationships with participants was extremely important to the effectiveness of this study. The participants' involvement was rather time-consuming, and securing their willingness to participate in this study was, no doubt, influenced by a web of connections and relationships that previously existed both in the world of United Methodist higher education, but also in the realm of historically Black colleges and universities in general. Upon agreement of participation, the researcher provided each participant with the opportunity to review the IRB approval of the study, inclusive of a cover letter and links to the IRB approval from the University of Georgia's website. Data sources and data collection occurred through the use of interviews, document analysis, and reflexive journaling.

Interviews

As far as the primary source of data is concerned, the study employed a series of up to three sequential narrative interviews of at least 30-60 minutes each for each participant. The sequential narrative interview style, as described by Siedman (2006) included an initial interview of a focused life history. In this initial interview, I sought to gather information regarding the participants' life experiences up to the present time.

Specific prompts, in the form of semi-structured questions, were provided in relation to life journey and the participants' career paths to their current presidencies. The second interview in the sequence focused on the participants' lived experiences, including details of their personal journey up to the present time. Some of the prompting questions in the second interview centered upon personal challenges and issues beyond the bounds of office and typical work life. The final and third brief interview in the sequence was reflective in nature allowing each of the participants an opportunity to offer meaning to their journeys. This reflective portion of the series of interviews prompted the participants to ponder the role of specific individuals, events, situations, or episodes that have been critical in their success in obtaining a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university.

The sequential interviews were semi-structured in nature. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) indicate that semi-structured interviews are the types of interviews where "either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions" (p. 110). Additionally, the semi-structured nature of the interview allows for individual respondents to expound upon specific questions based upon the distinctiveness of either their background or the institution that they currently lead. Another unique quality of semi-structured interviews that proved useful to this study is that they are exploratory in nature. With this exploratory quality of the semi-structured interviews, the probing questions often led to frequent prompts for follow-up comments, and they elicited a variety of useful revelations from the respondents about their journeys. As the interviewer, I posed further questions as suggested by the flow of the conversation when the respondent dwelt on a particular issue.

The sequential narrative interview approach was appropriate for this study because of the narrative analysis' alignment with phenomenology. Siedman (2006) described the sequential narrative interview technique as a way to reconstruct meaning from social events from the perspective of the informants as directly as possible. In this process, the interviewer must engage in active listening, while simultaneously minimizing their influence upon the interviewee. Bauer (1996) notes that the self-generating schema for sequential narrative interviews has three main characteristics:

1) Detailed texture: In describing transitions from one event to another, the participant offers deep detail in their story. Story-telling and events are very similar and have to contain great detail to give the story credibility.

2) Relevance fixation: The storyteller must share the story from a point of relevance within their own world.

3) Closing of the Gestalt: The story being told must be complete with a beginning, a middle, and an end. The end does not to be completed yet, but it needs to be in the story to generate flow. A story has a beginning, middle, and an end.

The sequential narrative interview approach provided the participants a forum to engage in "real conversations" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 89), and to make meaning of their lived experiences.

Document Analysis

The second form of data collection for this study was document analysis. Documents, in this case, are defined as any written materials that provide additional information about the subject of the study (Esterberg, 2002). Documents and records

provide evidence to corroborate the responses of the participants of a study. Documents reviewed in this study include the curriculum vitae and biographical sketches of the four presidents at the selected United Methodist affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. The curriculum vitae and biographical sketches were either provided by the offices of each president, or they were retrieved from the institutions' websites. These documents were analyzed to ascertain specific information regarding the presidents' life journeys and how those journeys have impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Additionally, these documents were analyzed to discover the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and careers.

Merriam (2002) notes that "documents often contain insights and clues into the phenomenon, and most researchers find them well worth the effort to locate and examine" (p. 13). The curriculum vitae and the biographical sketches of the four presidents, coupled with the data gleaned from the sequential narrative interviews, revealed the role that different life events and circumstances have played in their career trajectory. These documents also are quite telling in terms of the various transitions that each leader has encountered. As is often the case, the biographical sketches, those of the participants appeared exhaustive in terms of quantity and the length of each, but they also offered valuable insight into the participants' personal lives and self-identities.

Reflexive Journaling

The final form of data collection for this study included a process of reflexive journaling throughout the course of the study by way of audio notes and traditional journaling in a notebook. Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed to the significance of

reflexive journaling, and noted that if properly used, it could provide researchers with an occasion to make regular entries during the research process. In these entries, the researcher records methodological decisions and the reasons for them, some of the logistics of the study, and reflections upon what is happening to them as the researcher in terms of values and interests. This process of reflexive journaling enabled me to record my thoughts and insights, especially following the various interview sessions, and during the document analysis process.

Reflexive journaling also afforded me an opportunity to note specific frustrations and potential roadblocks with the study. For example, prior to the completion of the interviews with the four participants, there were several occasions where other potential participants made arrangements to be interviewed but failed to follow-through on those arrangements. There were logistical decisions that had to be made, and the ability to reflect upon these in a somewhat structured process was quite helpful. Additionally, the reflexive journaling process enabled me to record my questions, decisions on problems encountered in the study, and additional ideas that may have arisen as a result of the interviews (Merriam, 2002, p. 7). The thoughts recorded in this reflexive journaling process significantly impacted the collection and analysis of data for this study.

Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy for this project was influenced by the notion that data collection and rudimentary analysis are somewhat simultaneous processes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Early forms of analyzing the data occur as the data is being collected. In this case, while listening intently to the participants' responses and narration during the sequential narrative interviews, I began to think about rudimentary ways to analyze and

re-story the information being shared. Since the interview data was captured electronically via a voice memo, most of the rudimentary analysis involved making mental and written notes, especially as responses surfaced that related specifically to the study's research questions. More broadly, data analysis in qualitative research involves moving deeper into understanding and representing the data, and also interpreting the larger meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009, p. 183). Analysis that is specific to narrative inquiry can occur in a variety of ways, including thematic, structural, textual, conversational, cultural, political, and performative approaches (Riessman, 2008).

In order to strengthen the research design, it was imperative to employ a data analysis procedure that complements the methodology of the study. The thematic analysis approach was deemed the most appropriate for this specific study given its emphasis upon the exploration of life journeys, transitions and presidential pathways for the participants, and its reliance upon shared stories to answer this exploration. Thematic analysis is concerned with "what" is said, rather than "how" it is said (Riessman, 2008). The thematic analysis approach is useful for "finding common thematic elements across research participants and the experiences they report" (p. 54). Thematic analysis served this study well because it enabled the researcher to glean broad themes from the journeys of the participants related to the experiences, self-identities, and challenges in their presidential pathways. Information about these broad themes can serve to benefit those who aspire to lead United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities in the future. Furthermore, thematic analysis served this study well in that it revealed specific information (i.e. personal and professional attributes, leadership characteristics, etc.) that could be useful to boards of trustees and search committees in their efforts to

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identify future presidents to lead United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities.

Bauer (2000) detailed the thematic analysis process, and defined it as a coding mechanism where text units are progressively reduced through paraphrasing. The first portion of the thematic analysis procedure is transcription. In this study, I employed the services of a summer research assistant that was generously assigned to me by the university where I currently serve. The research assistant and I engaged in the arduous and time-consuming task of transcribing the interviews. Of the total 12 interviews, I personally transcribed the third sequential interview from each of the four participants. The third sequential interview was reflective in nature and was designed to allow each of the participants an opportunity to offer meaning to their journeys. This third interview was, in a sense, the definitive interview because of its prompting of the participants to ponder the role of specific individuals, events, situations, or episodes that have been critical in their success in obtaining a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university. I chose to transcribe this specific set of interviews for the participants because I knew they would allow me, perhaps more than any other way, to be fully immersed in the data. Following the transcription of all 12 interviews by me and the research assistant, I listened to the audio recordings while reading the transcriptions. This provided me greater intimacy and familiarity with the data, and it allowed for editing of the transcriptions to occur (Esterberg, 2002).

The second step in the thematic analysis process described by Bauer (2000) is known as text reduction. In this round of thematic analysis, the texts (transcripts) are progressively reduced through a stepwise procedure. For example, passages were

narrowed to paragraphs, then paragraphs to sentences, and sentences were narrowed to specific themes. The working approach consisted of four columns moving left to right, with full transcriptions in the left column that were narrowed to paraphrased paragraphs, then sentences, and finally themes or code words in the far right column. Naturally, this process yielded a considerable number of categories or themes, some of which were not particularly useful in answering the study's research questions, or in fulfilling the study's purpose. Following the literature about the process of coding, and open coding in particular, exact words or phrases from the participants were used as codes in the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Significant to the process of data analysis, and text reduction, is the notion of how the data is represented (Esterberg, 2002). While the text reduction process provided a forum for thematically coding the interviews, it is imperative in narrative analysis to be mindful of who owns and who can change the story (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). The data in this study is representative of the presidents' accounts of their own experiences. While text reduction takes place to achieve thematic analysis, the intent of this study is to capture first-person accounts of the life journeys presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Therefore, when a specific theme is referenced in the findings, it will be followed by original, first-person quotes from the participants.

Trustworthiness Criteria

There are a number of "goodness" criteria that are deemed acceptable for qualitative research in general, and narrative analysis in particular. Several of these "goodness" criteria were utilized in this study, triangulation, including member checks and maintaining an audit trail. Moreover, this study was conducted in a rigorous,

systematic, and ethical manner, leading to results that can be interpreted by the reader (Merriam, 2002, p.24). As a researcher, I am aware that universal acceptance of findings in a qualitative research study is rare (Polkinhorne, 2007), however, in an effort to produce a valid study that contains trustworthiness criteria, it was essential to use strategies like triangulation, member checks and audit trails.

In addition to the "goodness" criteria, there are other components of a qualitative research study that serve to enhance its reliability and validity. For example, the methodology must align with the research questions, and the research design must complement the methodology (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). In this study, narrative analysis was the appropriate methodology for a study of life journeys that involved participants' experience and perceptions of transitions. Conducting a series of unstructured sequential narrative interviews is directly linked to narrative analysis as a methodology. This linkage is due to the relationship between narrative analysis, interpretivism, and constructivism, all of which focus upon the notion of meaning-making and lived experiences. This alignment of the methodology with the research questions, coupled with the complementing of the research design with the methodology enriches the study's reliability and validity. Following is a brief discussion of the more obvious "goodness" criteria, including informal conversations, triangulation, member checks, and audit trails.

Informal Conversations

In the course of conducting this study, I was privileged with the opportunity to engage in significant and thoughtful conversations with three retired presidents from United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Although my

study focused specifically upon the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of current leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, there was invaluable insight gleaned from informal conversations with retired leaders. I had the unusual advantage of having almost daily contact with one of these retired leaders, who willingly and eagerly served as a sounding board for me throughout the course of the study. The daily stories and reflections shared by him about his life journey and the various transitions along the pathway to his presidency enabled me to reflect much more richly upon the nature of my study.

In addition to the informal conversations with recently retired leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, I also had the uncommon advantage of being in regular conversations with two other leaders at historically Black colleges and universities who are both long-time friends of mine. Although they each serve in historically Black college and university settings, their particular institutions are unrelated to the United Methodist Church. Yet and still, through the process of informal conversations with each of them during the course of this study I was able to glean substantial insight about their own lived experiences and transitions leading to their presidencies. As was the case for the informal conversations with the recently retired leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, the conversations with these two gentlemen who lead non-United Methodist-related institutions proved to be a significant source of information about leaders of historically Black colleges and universities.

Triangulation

Triangulation is defined as a way to get "to the finding in the first place by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p.

267). Triangulation provides an avenue for corroborating evidence by using multiple and

various sources, methods, investigators, and theories (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell

2016). In qualitative research, data is systemically processed in order to provide meaning

to the information that is gathered (McMillian & Wegin, 2002). In this specific study, I

not only interviewed the participants, but I also thorough reviewed their curriculum vitae,

along with any published biographical statements on each president. This collection and

thorough review of the additional documentation and information proved useful in

verifying and corroborating the responses of the participants in the study.

Member Checks

Member checks are a common strategy for ensuring goodness and trustworthiness

in qualitative research (Merriam, 2002). The member check process involves eliciting

the review of collected data by the study participants to assess its accuracy. Creswell

(2014) notes that member checks also afford the researcher an opportunity to solicit the

participants' views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations. In this study, the

participants were allowed to examine quotes made by them to ensure accuracy of the data

before it was analyzed. Further, participants have been afforded an opportunity to

determine if my interpretations and findings are plausible by reviewing an early draft of

the findings section of this project. The early draft of the findings section was emailed to

each of the 4 participants, and with the exception of a few minor editorial comments,

each of the participants affirmed the early findings and significant themes that surfaced.

The member checks process was significant and useful in that it ruled out the possibility

of misinterpreting the meaning of participants' comments and remarks. In narrative

studies, participants should be able to recognize their experience from the interpretation of the data that is presented (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Audit Trails

In addition to triangulation and member checks, I also made use of an audit trail to improve the reliability and validity of the study (Merriam, 2002). As mentioned earlier in the data collection section of this chapter, I maintained audio reflective memos that captured questions about research design, and the overall research process itself. These audio reflective memos enabled me to summarize my "reflections, questions, decisions on problems, and issues and ideas I encountered in collecting data" (Merriam, 2002, p. 7). More specifically, this audit trail enabled me to document methodological decisions for the study, and the reasons undergirding those decisions. The audit trail also provided an occasion for me to summarize decisions on problems that I encountered in the study, as well as additional ideas that arose as a result of potential problems.

Delimitations

Simon (2011) defines delimitations as boundaries of a study that are within the researcher's control. Delimitations of a study might include phenomena that are not being investigated and the reasons for not investigating them, literature the researcher will not review and the rationale for not reviewing it, or populations that are not included in the study along with the justification for excluding those populations. As articulated in the literature, while Methodist higher education has many similarities to other types of institutions, it does include some rather unique characteristics, particularly as it relates to historically Black institutions of higher learning. The Methodist movement's historic interest in providing educational opportunities for newly freed slaves has benefited

generations of individuals who have studied and earned degrees on the campuses of these historic institutions. No doubt, the life journeys of the presidents at the selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities in this study have, in some form or another, been impacted by the movement's attention to the educational welfare of Black Americans. To this end, the participants' perspectives of their career paths and their life journeys may have been slanted towards aspects of Methodist higher education, rather than a more general account of presidential attainment.

Limitations

Limitations of a study include things that are outside of the researcher's control that may create weaknesses in the study (Simon, 2011). With appropriate and adequate attention being paid to potential limitations, it is possible to minimize their impact upon the outcome of the study. With that being said, one of the obvious limitations in this study is the sample size of the participants. At present, there are 105 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States, the overwhelming majority of which are concentrated in the southeastern part of the country. Of the 105 historically Black colleges and universities, 49 are private four-year institutions, 40 are four-year public institutions, 11 are two-year public schools, and five are private two-year schools. Although there are 11 United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, leaders from only 4 of those institutions participated in this study. This limited population does not allow the findings from the study to be generalized to the larger historically Black college and university context. Even though very valuable information can be obtained from an exploration of the life journeys, experiences, and pathways to the presidency from the 4 participants, generalizability could be an issue.

The mere fact that this study is a qualitative narrative inquiry somewhat negates the need for generalizability. Gummesson (2000) noted that the goal of the qualitative method of analysis is not to generalize the findings, but to provide exploratory evidence of the events that are occurring in an environment.

Researcher Bias and Assumptions

Merriam (2002) states that "the human instrument has shortcomings and biases that might have an impact on the study" (p.5). Merriam further asserts that "rather than trying to eliminate these biases or 'subjectivities,' it is important to identify them and monitor them as to how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data" (p.5). For this purpose, I disclose my current biases as they relate to the subject of the life journeys of presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. For starters, I am a life-long member of the United Methodist Church, and additionally I am an ordained member of the clergy of the United Methodist Church. I also happen to serve as the Vice President of the University Senate of the United Methodist Church. The University Senate is an international elected body of professionals in higher education and ministry created by the United Methodist General Conference (the denomination's top legislative body) to determine which schools, colleges, universities, and theological schools meet the criteria for listing as institutions affiliated with the United Methodist Church. There are currently 120 United Methodist-affiliated schools, colleges, universities, and theological schools in the United States. One additional piece of essential information is the fact that I recently concluded a seven-year tenure as the President-Dean (Executive Dean) of Gammon Theological Seminary, a historically African American graduate and professional school of theology that is also

affiliated with the United Methodist Church. At the conclusion of my service at Gammon Theological Seminary, I began service as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Florida. Bethune-Cookman University is one of the 11 Historically Black colleges and universities affiliated with the United Methodist Church.

Additionally, I have a rather close personal and professional relationship with several of the current seated presidents at these 11 institutions. In fact, one of the current presidents is a mentor, and regularly offers advice and guidance to me regarding my professional preparation and positioning to ultimately become a president of one of the 11 institutions. I am also compelled to point out that in addition to my relationship with some of the current seated presidents, I am also acquainted with a number of the trustees from each of the 11 institutions. My acquaintance with the trustees stems mostly from the fact that as Vice President of the University Senate of the United Methodist Church, I have led review teams on these campuses, and I am usually the first point of contact for trustees when questions arise regarding the review process. My intimate knowledge of the institutions' trustees, leaders, and in some instances, even operations, has not caused me to adjust or misrepresent the data gathered in this study.

Summary

This methodology chapter presented an overview of the study's research design, noting in particular the use of the specific qualitative method of narrative analysis. The paradigmatic type of narrative analysis was used to explore the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities using the personal narratives of these leaders as data. The sampling technique for the study is

purposeful, which permitted me as the researcher as opportunity to "discover, understand, and gain insight from a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 96). To this end, the participants in the study are sitting presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities.

Data sources for the study included a series of sequential narrative interviews, analysis of specific documents (curriculum vita and biographical sketches) of each participant, and reflexive journaling. Given that this study was a narrative inquiry, there are specific forms of data analysis relative to narrative inquiry. The form employed in this study is thematic analysis, which is defined as a coding mechanism where text units are progressively reduced through paraphrasing (Bauer, 2000). Following the literature about the process of coding, and open coding in particular, exact words or phrases from the participants were used as codes in the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). The study takes into consideration several trustworthiness criteria, including informal conversations with three retired presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, triangulation, member checks, and audit trails. This chapter also summarizes potential delimitations, limitations, and researcher bias.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This results chapter contains two sections, the first of which contains detailed

profiles of the presidents participating in the study. Interspersed within each of the

president's profile are relevant portions of their narratives that seek to address the study's

main purpose and research goals. Through the use of unfiltered narratives, I was able to

gain insight into the life journeys of the participants in a way that is incredibly revealing

and insightful. The opportunity for meaning-making to occur through the personal

stories resulted in the thick, rich descriptions that are the basis for the results of the study.

Participants relayed a series of critical experiences from their life journeys that propelled

them to the positions they currently hold. The second part of this chapter presents the

results from the thematic analysis of the data. This thematic analysis led to three

significant themes that surfaced in the data from each of the participants. These themes

include: role models/mentors, social awareness, a sense of calling.

Presidential Profiles

The presidential profiles contained within this section of chapter four are

particularly insightful as they each contain specific information about various transitions

the participants have experienced in both their personal and professional lives. The

presidential profiles also offer a rare glimpse, in summary form, of the interplay between

the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and careers. Additionally, these profiles

are included to serve as a personal introduction to each of the presidents, and to bring

context to the findings of the study. These profiles also present somewhat of an understanding of the various commitments that each president values. For instance, as will be seen in the profiles, the participants are quite active in a number of professional, personal, and cultural organizations. Their participation in these various organizations, and the mere fact that they list membership in specific organizations, is indicative of the impact and role that these organizations have played in their personal and professional development. With the goals and purposes of this study aimed at better understanding the professional and personal journeys of the presidents, as well as their lived experiences, the profiles serve the additional purpose of presenting the external perception of the participants. In other words, these profiles, the content of which is either gleaned from the websites of the participants' institutions, curriculum vita of the participants, and other publicly available sources, offer some indication of how each of the participants desires to be seen and known by the public. These profiles are an excellent source of socially constructed meaning-making for each of the participants.

Unlike a typical biographical statement, these profiles have been structured to reflect the specific purposes and goals of this study. To that end, each profile contains four sections: personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey. The personal journey component of the profile relays information about the participants' personal life, including significant experiences and relationships that may have impacted the participants' career trajectory. The educational journey portion of the profile contains information about the participants' educational experiences, and circumstances surrounding those experiences. The career journey component of the profile delineates the participants' career journey leading up to

the attaining of a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university. Dissimilar to the standard curriculum vita, the career journey section also includes specific lived experiences that may have impacted the participants' journey to the presidency. Finally, the professional/developmental journey section of the profile contains information regarding the participants' association with and in various guilds and other professional entities that may have impacted their journey. The profiles are presented in alphabetical order, beginning with Dr. David L. Beckley, followed by Dr. Collette Pierce Burnette, Dr. Phyllis Dawkins, and Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough.

Dr. David L. Beckley, Rust College

Dr. David L. Beckley is in his 25th year as the President of Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Prior to his service as Rust College, Beckley served as the President of Wiley College in Marshall, Texas for six years. Included in Beckley's profile is information regarding his personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey.

Personal Journey

Beckley was born in rural Shannon, Mississippi in 1946. Reflecting upon experiences from his early childhood, and their impact upon his personal and professional journey, Beckley shared the following about his father, a formidable figure in his life:

> Well, my old man was a sharecropper and he worked the land for a man over in Greenville for most of his life. Later on, he saved up enough money and bought his own little country store. He sold basic stuff at the time. You know, flour, meal, stuff like that. He was a no-nonsense man though. He didn't take no junk from anybody. I think that's why he worked so hard to get out of the fields. He didn't like being told what to do, especially by a White man.

Equally influential upon Beckley's formation was his mother, whom he describes as a prideful figure that imparted enduring life lessons to him about a love for learning, hard work, and persistence:

> She was a domestic. A very hard working woman too. She worked for the same family for almost 30 years. I remember when I first became a President, I tried to get her to quit, but she wouldn't do it. I told her she didn't have to work anymore, but she was a very proud woman. She had a little bit more education than he [Beckley's father] did. I believe she went up to the 9th grade, but like I said, most Black folks had to leave school in order to work. But you know, she was always reading books and bringing home books for me to read that she got from the folks house she cleaned. Just about every week, she brought home a different book. I can remember her making me read to her and the old man [Beckley's father] almost every evening. I guess that was her way of making sure that I stayed in school.

Beckley is married to Gemma Douglas Beckley, a 1967 graduate of United Methodist-affiliated Dillard University in New Orleans, LA. Gemma also holds degrees from Atlanta University and Columbia University. She is the Distinguished Professor of Social Work at Rust College and a former Fulbright Scholar. The Beckleys have two daughters, Jacqueline B. Lampley, a public school teacher in Birmingham, Alabama, and Lisa B. Roberts, an associate professor at Tallahassee Community College. They are also the proud grandparents of David and Christian (http://www.rustcollege.edu/president/president-davidbeckley-biography.html).

With the exception of several short stints outside the state, including a tour in Vietnam, Beckley has spent the vast majority of his life in Mississippi. In fact, during his formative years there, Mississippi found itself at the height of the civil rights movement and the struggle toward desegregation. As a young man, Beckley was quite involved in advocating for equal rights and protection for African Americans throughout the state of Mississippi. He was very active in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

(SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), two organizations that were on the forefront in Mississippi's struggle toward racial equality. Beckley served as the Student Government Association president during his time as a student at Rust College, and graduated from the college 1967, just one year prior to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Beckley shared an experience, both related to the continued influence of his father upon his formation, and to the impact of lived experiences upon his future career:

> I came to Rust College without a penny in my pocket. My old man always said I was going to college, but he didn't have any money to pay for it. When I graduated from high school, he drove me over here to Rust and told the President that he wanted me to be somebody. You see, back in those days, you could show up to school without any money, and the President would somehow find money for you. I came here with literally nothing, and didn't know how I was going to even enroll. All I remember is that they told me to have a seat, my old man went in and talked with the President, and the next thing I knew, I was told to grab my stuff from the truck because I was staying. Well, after I got my things out of the truck, I was called into the President's Office myself and I personally met with the President, it was Dr. Earnest Smith then. He asked me if I had any skills or trades? I told him that the two skills that I had could probably benefit him were typing and driving. And I told him that I was willing to work in order to help pay for my education, and he told me that he needed somebody to serve as his driver, and to help with different tasks he had to complete. You see, back in those days, the President of a small school like this did just about everything. He recruited students. He raised the money. He managed the money. He was the HR department. He handled almost every aspect of things at the college. He was constantly on the road visiting little rural churches recruiting students to come to Rust. He didn't have a large cabinet, you know with a Vice President for Enrollment Management, and a Vice President for Development. He did everything – recruitment, fundraising, faculty searches, you name it. And because I could type real good, he told me that I was going to help him with administrative tasks and that I was going to be his driver from there on out. And since I really wanted to go to school, I didn't object. In fact, I guess in retrospect that was a God moment because who would've ever guessed that my very first job as a student was in the President's Office, and now all these years later, here I am sitting in that same space.

The Beckley family is active in the historic Asbury United Methodist Church in Holly Springs, Mississippi, an African American congregation that gave birth to Rust

College in 1866. As a Methodist layperson, Beckley has served in several key positions

throughout the United Methodist Church, including being a delegate to General

Conference, a delegate to Jurisdictional Conference, a member of the United Methodist

University Senate, and a board member for the United Methodist General Board of

Higher Education and Ministry. In addition to what is revealed in his personal journey

about the potential impact of his personal life and self-identity upon his career, Beckley

also offered the following reflection regarding a specific personal attribute that he

believes has shaped and defined his self-identity, as well as his career:

> Everybody knows that I like a joke or two, but they have to be clean or you'll end
> up in hot water (laughter). Seriously though, a little bit of humor goes a long
> way. Things can get pretty gloomy and tense around here at times. I mean there
> are days when you don't even know if you're going to be able to make payroll or
> not. People are depending on you, and it can be very stressful. Their families are
> depending on you. With all of that pressure and with all of that stress, you have
> to stop and laugh every now and then. You gotta find humor somewhere or you'll
> be stressed out of your mind. But I've always been a joker, and everybody knows
> that. That's about the only way you can make it some of these situations I've
> been in.

Beckley's self-description as a comedian of sorts rings true with the various interactions

that I have had with him over the course of the time I have known him. Additionally, on

the several occasions when I have been privileged to hear him offer public addresses,

those addresses were often sprinkled with humor throughout. During the course of our

conversations in the sequential interviews, Beckley often inserted moments and occasions

for laughter.

In addition to humor, Beckley also hinted at another significant characteristic of

his self-identity, and how this characteristic has impacted his career trajectory:

> I learned a lot of discipline from my mother and father, and I got disciplined a lot
> too (laughter). But hard work pays off. Sticking to a schedule pays off. Doing
> what you say you're gonna do pays off. One thing will tell you about me is that I

am a man of my word. If I tell you I'm gonna do something, then that's what I'm gonna do. And I try to do it at the time that I promised you I was gonna do it. Just like today, I told you we could talk at ten o'clock your time, and that's what we're doing. You have to be disciplined and you have to work hard, no matter what. People respect that and they expect it of you as a leader. They know you're not perfect, but for these parents who send their kids here, and all these folks who work here, if they can't count on me, then who can they count on.

The concepts of discipline and hard work have greatly influenced Beckley's self-identity, and not only his self-identity, but also how he projects himself outwardly to others. He shared his understanding of this aspect of his self-identity, and its impact upon his journey in the following way:

> You need to be here before everybody else gets here. Offices on this campus open at 8:00 A.M., and if I'm not out traveling, I'm up here by 7:00 A.M. every morning. And I don't leave at closing time. There have been many evenings when my wife has brought my dinner over here to the office because I was still here trying to figure things out. Trying to solve problems. Trying to respond to every single call.

Educational Journey

Beckley earned a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from Rust College in 1967. As an accomplished and talented student, he managed to complete his course of study for the undergraduate degree in three years. Those who knew Beckley during his time as a student at Rust College recall his commitment to learning, as well as his lighthearted prediction that he would one day serve as President of Rust College. Beckley shared the following reflection about his time as a student at Rust, an institution he would later return to lead as its president:

> I was elected as student body president in my senior year. And not only was I working for the President of the school as his driver and assistant, but I was also now president of the student body. So, I got to spend a whole lot of time with him in different settings. They usually included the student body president on the program to make remarks at different occasions, and people started noticing me. I used to joke and tell my friends that I was gonna be president of the college one

day, and most of them took just as that, a joke. Well, I guess I got the last laugh
from that situation.

In addition to his undergraduate degree, Beckley earned a Master of Education (M.Ed.)

and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from the University of Mississippi

(http://www.rustcollege.edu/president/president-davidbeckley-biography.html).   The

concentration of his Doctor of Philosophy degree is higher education administration.

Beckley shared the following about his experience as a student at the recently

desegregated University of Mississippi, and offers a rationale for why he decided to

enroll in the program:

> The higher education administration program was really a new program at the
> time. And a lot of people who were in it were there because they wanted to hold
> top positions in colleges and universities. I was the only Black student in the
> program at the time, and it was the only place in Mississippi that had a doctoral
> program in higher education administration during that time. I knew I had to do
> this program if I wanted to become a president, so we made the sacrifices and
> that's what I did.

Career Journey

Upon his graduation from Rust College, Beckley began teaching mathematics in a

special high school program on Rust's campus. He taught in this program for two years,

while working simultaneously on his Master of Education degree from the University of

Mississippi. In 1969, Beckley was hired to serve as the college's Director of Alumni

Affairs, which was a new position crafted specifically for Beckley by the college's

president. One year into his new role as the Director of Alumni Affairs, Beckley was

drafted for the war in Vietnam. He served honorably until his discharge in the summer of

1971. Beckley was invited to return to Rust as the college's Director of Public Relations.

It was also during this time that he began work, with support from the college's president,

Dr. William McMillian, on his terminal degree in higher education administration.

Shortly after completing his Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1974, Beckley was promoted to the position of Vice President of College Relations. Roughly ten years later, in 1984, Beckley was again promoted to the position of Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs at the college. In 1987, he was appointed as the 12th President of Wiley College in Marshall, Texas. Wiley College, much like Rust College, is a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution. During his time at Wiley, the college retired outstanding building bonds and federal loans, and renovated all existing campus facilities. Additionally, under Beckley's leadership, Wiley College increased its endowment and the number of faculty holding terminal degrees also increased dramatically (http://www.rustcollege.edu/president/president-davidbeckley-biography.html).

On July 1, 1993, Beckley returned to Rust College to serve as its 11th President. At present, he is the longest tenured senior college president in the state of Mississippi, and one of the longest tenured college presidents among all United Methodist-affiliated institutions of higher learning. In his 24 years at the helm of Rust College, the institution's endowment has grown from $13 million to $23 million. Additionally, Rust has continuously received reaffirmation of regional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and has been granted Specialty Accreditation for the Department of Social Work by the Council on Social Work Education. The college celebrated its 49th consecutive year of a balanced budget with the close of the 2016-2017 fiscal year in June of 2017. Reflecting upon his long career, Beckley shared the following retrospective note:

I've only worked for two institutions in my whole life: Wiley and Rust, and both of them are Methodist schools. Everybody in the Methodist Church all over this country knows who I am because I get around. In a good way (laughter).

Professional/Developmental Journey

Over the course of his long and illustrious career, Beckley has been involved with a considerable number of professional, social, and cultural entities. Since his return to Mississippi in 1993, he has served as the Chair of the Mississippi Association of Independent Colleges, President of the National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church (NASCUMC), Chair of the Member Presidents of the United Negro College Fund, Member of the Board of Directors of the Methodist Health Systems, Inc., Member of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Member of the Mississippi Access for Justice Commission, and Board Member for the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. Beckley is also a member of the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity, Sigma Pi Phi Professional Men's Fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and a 33rd Degree Mason (http://www.rustcollege.edu/president/president-davidbeckley-biography.html).

Among Beckley's recent awards and recognitions are the Silver Beaver Award, Boy Scouts of America; Outstanding Education Alumni Award, University of Mississippi; Outstanding Alumni Award, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education; Citizen of the Year, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.; Service Award, National Collegiate Athletic Association; and President of the Year, National Association of African American Honors Programs. Beckley noted the significance of and priority placed upon involvement in professional associations as being critical not only to his

career trajectory, but also to his remaining relevant in the field. Since this study is designed with the intent to potentially benefit those who aspire to lead private, religiously-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, and especially those related to the United Methodist Church, the following advice from Beckley is exceptionally useful:

> I've been involved in just about every professional association related to higher education. I've been on the University Senate for the Methodist Church, I've been on the Board of Directors for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the Methodist Church, I've led reviews for SACS, I've been a trustee at other colleges, I've done a whole lot of stuff in the higher ed world. You know, you have to be involved. You have to be an active participant in your guild. And you start small, and then you build your way up. People take note of you when you're faithful with your work, and before long, they're appointing you to all kind of stuff. It don't happen overnight. It happens by you putting yourself out there.

The presidential profile of Beckley sheds light on an important component of this study, which is the emphasis placed on life journeys as opposed to just simply tracking a career path. An integral part of the life journey, especially when attempting to inform aspiring leaders of what to anticipate when considering a future presidency, includes the interplay between personal life, self-identity, and career. Beckley's profile relays distinctive aspects of how he understood and processed the connections between his personal life, self-identity (and the identities others have ascribed to him), and his career.

Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette, Huston-Tillotson University

Colette Pierce Burnette was named the sixth president of United Methodist-related Huston-Tillotson University on July 1, 2015. Prior to her appointment as the President of this institution, Burnette served in a variety of administrative roles at several other institutions of higher learning. Included in Burnette's profile is a summary of her

personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey.

Personal Journey

Burnette, born in 1958, was raised in Cleveland, Ohio. Her father's large family migrated to Cleveland from the South in the early 1950s, a period when many African American families escaped the South in search of new opportunities and a better life above the Mason-Dixon line. Burnette's paternal grandmother played a pivotal role in her life during her formative years. Along with other early influencers, Burnette's paternal grandmother instilled within her an unshakable sense of confidence in her abilities, which, no doubt, has been significant in her rise to the presidency of Huston-Tillotson University. Burnette recalls that her paternal grandmother would drill math skills into her mind at a very early age, subsequently leading to her love of math and science. Burnette shared the following reflection about her grandmother:

> When my grandmother went to the meat market in Cleveland, she would ask the butcher for extra pieces of butcher's paper. Shen then wrote multiplication tables and vocabulary words on the paper and placed them all around the kitchen. I remember she always made me toast and English tea for breakfast, but I could not have any of it until I knew all of that day's vocabulary words and math facts. I still carry her with me even to this day. I like to call it the 'Black girl magic'. She taught me the belief that I can do anything that I set my mind to. Little did I know, and at the time I didn't exactly like her drilling me like that, but little did I know that those very experiences started me down a road that was bumpy at times, but I always knew that I could excel.

Although Burnette was a first-generation college student, she never doubted the fact that she would one day attend college. In fact, her parents, both of whom were high school graduates, imbued within her the unquestionable expectation that she would not only attend college, but that she would actually earn her degree.

Burnette met and married her husband, Daarel Burnette, an officer in the United

States Air Force at the time, shortly after completing her undergraduate degree. Early on

in their marriage, her husband's military work had them traveling throughout the world,

living a lifestyle that helped Burnette develop a love of travel and a passion for how it

helped challenge and improve her understanding of the world. The interplay between

Burnette's personal journey, self-identity, and career are heightened as a result of having

an equally successful and ambitious spouse. Burnette shared the following:

> I spent years relocating and moving as a result of his flourishing military career. This was my opportunity to do something that I wanted to do. So, even though his career had been good to me, I wasn't feeling completely fulfilled. I was not feeling like I was living my own story. I felt like I was not living my own purpose. I had gone from job to job, really working wherever he was assigned, but without any sense of a career. I was trained to be an engineer, but I was not always working as an engineer. It all depended on what was available to spouses in the areas where he was assigned. The possibility of his retirement meant that I could finally walk into a destiny that I had dreamed of time and time again. The more he talked about retirement, the more I thought about and the more I talked about my desire to work in a college setting. And I didn't just want to be in any college setting. I was envious of the experiences and interactions he had with his classmates and friends when we attended homecoming at Morehouse. Well, envious is probably not the best word. I actually observed those interactions, and all of the positive energy that we experienced there, and made up in my mind that I wanted to work at a historically Black school. It was so different from my experiences at Ohio State. There something extremely affirming and life-giving about what I saw at Morehouse. One thing led to another, and dream after dream came true for me.

The interplay between Burnette's early personal life, specifically her interactions

with her paternal grandmother and her willingness to temporarily place her dreams on

hold in order to support her husband's career, is fascinating. These factors seemed to

have converged in such a way that they have actually had a positive impact upon

Burnette's career.

The Burnettes are the parents of two adult children, Daarel II, a journalist in Memphis, Tennessee, and Daana, a public relations professional in New York, New York. Following a successful military career, Burnette's husband is now a highly regarded consultant in higher education on matters of finance and fiscal leadership (http://htu.edu/faculty-directory/dr-pierce-burnette).

Educational Journey

Burnette earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from The Ohio State University in 1980. She recalls her time at Ohio State as an incredibly transformative period in her life, noting specifically that she took full advantage of the resources available to students of color, and made connections with classmates from well-resourced high schools in order to adjust and keep up. Burnette earned a Master of Science degree in Administration with honors from Georgia College in Milledgeville, Georgia in 1983. In 2003, Burnette was accepted into and graduated from the Harvard Graduate School's Education Management Development Program. With a desire to earn a terminal degree, Burnette began the process of applying to graduate programs in higher education administration in 2013. Shortly after starting the application process, however, Burnette received a phone call from the Chancellor of the Pierce Community College System in the State of Washington inviting her to join them as the Interim President of Pierce College. As a result, Burnette placed the graduate school applications on hold and began to fulfill her dream of becoming a college president. She spent a year serving as the Interim President of Pierce College, and might have stayed longer if not for one particular meeting she had with other community college presidents in Washington:

> We were all going around the room introducing ourselves and everybody there
> was Doctor something or another. And then it gets to me. Not only am I the only
> Black woman in the room, and one of only two Black people at the table, but I
> was also the only one in the room who was Ms. and not doctor. I know it may
> sound crazy to say this, but I actually felt deflated at that moment. It reminded
> me so much of that day when my former boss at Central State told me that I
> would not be considered for the presidency there because I did not have a
> doctorate. And here I was again. In another situation where I was the standout in
> the room. While I think the rest of my colleagues respected me, I knew deep
> down on the inside that I had to go back to school, and that I simply could not
> allow myself to get thrown off track again.

As a result of this particular experience, Burnette reignited her application process for graduate school, and was accepted into and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a Doctor of Education in 2015.

Career Journey

Shortly after completing her undergraduate degree in industrial and systems engineering at the Ohio State University in 1980, Burnette began working for Proctor and Gamble in Cincinnati, Ohio as an operations support engineer. Due to her husband's military career and the constant relocations associated with it, Burnette held several jobs throughout the United States prior to her transition to the field of higher education. For example, she served as an analyst for the *Washington Post* and even owned an engineering consulting firm called CompuMent during the couple's time in Colorado.

Burnette's transition to the field of higher education occurred as the result of an encounter from one of her husband's associates. Burnette's husband is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, and although his work took their family throughout the country and the world, they returned every single year to Atlanta for the Morehouse homecoming. These experiences at the Morehouse homecoming, coupled with the urging of one of her husband's associates, provided Burnette with a sense of a

college experience that was very different from the one she knew at Ohio State

(http://atxwoman.com/in-the-pilots-seat/). The experience of being surrounded by

educated and confident African Americans who passionately loved their alma mater led

to Burnette's desire to be involved with historically Black institutions of higher learning.

Burnette expressed this specific desire so often and passionately until a mentor of hers

finally encouraged her to make the transition to higher education by taking a teaching

position to get experience in the classroom. Burnette took the plunge, and immediately

left the corporate sector to take a tenure-track position teaching information systems at

Pierce College, a community college in Lakeland, Washington. After her second

semester of being in the classroom, the school's vice president for administration

approached Burnette and offered her the role of Dean of Information Technology. Her

dream of working for a historically Black institution came true in 1999 when she was

hired as the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer at

Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio. Burnette spent nearly 15 years at Central

State University in a variety of senior level administrative posts, ultimately culminating

in the position of Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer. She

summarized her journey to and with Central State University in the following way:

> I spent close to 15 years at Central State. I held just about every administrative
> position that you could hold there. As the Vice President of Administration and
> the Chief Financial Officer, I was essentially the second-in-command at the
> University. I guess I hit what I like to refer to as my own glass ceiling there.
> When the president at the time came to me and shared with me that he was going
> to retire, I initially thought to myself, "wow, I might be in line for this." But
> before I could even finish processing that thought he followed up by saying that
> my chances of becoming the president there were slim to none because I did not
> have a doctorate at the time. He was very diplomatic about it, and went on to
> explain to me that although I had a long and good track record there, the board
> wanted the new president to have what they considered to be the appropriate
> credentials. I was literally at a loss for what to do next. I mean, I remember

googling "Am I too old to get my doctorate?", and half of the search results said no and the other half said yes. My sister finally pushed me to stop throwing a pity party and to just go do it. The situation at Central State was a wake-up call for me. I could remain a Vice President for the remainder of my career, or I could return to school and earn the necessary credentials and possibly be considered as a candidate for a presidency.

The above experience, which occurred in late 2014, brought closure to Burnette's journey with Central State University. Around the same time, Burnette was approached by the chancellor of the Washington State Community College System about the possibility of returning to Pierce College as the institution's Interim President. Shortly after her return to Pierce College, Burnette learned that Huston-Tillotson University, a small historically Black institution related to the United Methodist Church and located in Austin, Texas, was searching for a new president. The strong sense of self-confidence and assurance instilled into Dr. Burnette at an early age proved to be especially useful in what she describes as the "second phase" of her career – the period when she transitioned from the corporate and engineering world to the world of higher education. This factor surfaced again Burnette was being considered for the presidency of Huston-Tillotson University. The lessons imparted by her grandmother, and this time around, the support of a spouse who through early retirement, placed his career on hold to ensure that she would attain her dream are two of the ingredients that cemented the deal in her mind. It was her first official search process, and she entered the process with the thought that this would simply be a practice run for a presidency at another institution later. She recalled the following experience from her campus interview:

> When my husband and I stepped out of the rental car, he said to me, this is not practice, this is real. And as soon as he said that, a strange feeling came over me, and I know this may sound crazy, but I believe it was the presence of my grandmother. And right there in that parking lot, just before walking in to meet with the members of the search committee, I heard these words: 'this is where

you're supposed to be. Stop practicing.' The rest of that visit is really somewhat of a blur to me, but I recall thinking that this is the place for me. This is my destiny. It all began to make sense to me now. Every step in my life leading up to this moment seemed to be guiding me to this place.

Burnette was offered the position, and began serving as President and Chief Executive Officer of the institution on July 1, 2015. Burnette's hiring as only the second female president in the institution's 140-year history was hailed by many, with several published accounts noting her vision, experience and determination as factors that solidified the Board of Trustees' decision to welcome her to Huston-Tillotson University.

Professional/Developmental Journey

Over the course of her long professional and developmental journey, Burnette has remained a strong proponent of civic and community engagement. She is actively involved in a number of mentoring programs, and reflected upon the role of mentoring in her life, while also discussing her personal involvement with mentoring others in the following way:

> I benefited from many strong mentors in my life, and I still benefit from them. I'm involved in BBBS [Big Brothers/Big Sisters], and BBBS's mission is parallel to Huston-Tillotson's. Our organizations exist to build the capacity of others. Brick and mortar are not only tools that advance their work, they say something about its significance. BBBS is building a new mentoring center, and I'm very heavily involved in that process. I give of my time to BBBS, and to this project in particular, because I know that this new center is a symbol of the difference that mentoring makes, and I know that this new center tells children, families and the community that they are worth investing in. Mentoring is transformational. When children and families walk in the door of that new space, they will know that they matter.

Since her arrival at Huston-Tillotson, she has become a member of the Austin Area Research Organization (AARO) and the steering committee for My Brother's Keeper. She also sits on the Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of Central Texas, Leadership Austin, and the Greater Austin Area African American Chamber of Commerce

(http://atxwoman.com/in-the-pilots-seat/).   Burnette notes the intricate connections

between the work of capacity building organizations like Big Brothers/Big Sisters and

Huston-Tillotson University, which is a reflection of how she has attempted to meld

personal and professional priorities:

> At Huston-Tillotson, we do something special, which is a part of mentoring. We
> wrap students up in a cocoon of safety and we help them understand that they are
> special, that they matter, that they are smart and that they can succeed. We give
> them the support and the tools they need to explore, to develop and to grow.
> That's what my grandmother did for me, that's what several other mentors along
> the way have done for me, and that's what we have to do for this generation. I
> would not be where I am today without the support and encouragement of others
> along the way.

Nationally, Burnette serves on the Minority Engineering Advisory Board for the

Ohio State University's College of Engineering, is a member of the National Society of

Black Engineers, the National Council of Negro Women, and Delta Sigma Theta

Sorority, Inc. Burnette has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including

the Thurgood Marshall Foundation Chief Information Officer of the Year Award, the

National Diversity Council Glass Ceiling Award, the Ohio State University Outstanding

Engineering Alumnus Award, and the United States Army Distinguished Civilian

Volunteer Service Medal Award.

The presidential profile of Colette Burnette offers a rare glimpse into the details

of a life journey of an individual who soared to the top office on the campus of a United

Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution. Through the telling of her own story,

Burnette reveals how she structures her thinking and how she has reflected upon her

experiences. Interspersing her narrative throughout the profile enabled me to access rich

layers of information that provide a more in-depth understanding of the particulars of

Burnette's point of view. Burnette's profile also reveals a journey and career path that is

a bit more meandering than that of some of the other participants in the study. Contained within her narrative are several examples of what on the surface appeared to be negative experiences. While appearing to be negative, many of these experiences eventually prompted Burnette to reconsider life choices and goals, and ultimately thrusted her onto a pathway that eventually led to a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution.

Dr. Phyllis Dawkins, Bennett College

Phyllis Dawkins was named the President of Bennett College, a United Methodist-affiliated women's college, on July 5, 2017. Dawkins' appointment as the 18th President of Bennett College follows a one-year stint as the institution's Interim President. Included in Dawkins' presidential profile is information regarding her personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey.

Personal Journey

Dawkins grew up in Lee Walker Heights, one of North Carolina's oldest public housing communities, in the city of Asheville. As a young teen, she was heavily influenced by the connections she made with congregants at Asheville's historic Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church. This particular church, home to many of the city's well-to-do African Americans, provided Dawkins with a view of African American life that was different from what she knew and experienced in the public housing community where her family lived. Dawkins, and her two brothers, were raised by their mother Pauline, who did domestic work for a wealthy and well-known White family in the region (http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2017/07/23/bennett-college-president-

). Reflecting on her journey from the

Lee Walker Heights Public Housing Project, Dawkins shared the following:

> It's a long journey from where I started to this place. But what the journey
> reveals to me is that, if given the opportunity, most of us would probably succeed
> and do well in life. There are barriers, some of which we can escape from and
> some of which we cannot escape from. Poverty is real. Racism is real. Sexism is
> real. I think about all of those children who are now growing up in Lee Walker
> Heights, and part of my responsibility is to be a living testimony to each of them
> of where they can go in life. In the end, it really is all about what each of us can
> do to lift the other one. It's really not about individual accomplishments. Those
> things are incredibly important, but they are not what makes you who you are. If
> as President of Bennett, I can raise funds to help young women attend college like
> I did, then I will proud of my legacy.

Unlike the other participants, Dawkins tended to couch her notions of self-identity and

her understandings of her personal journey in a much broader sense. In other words,

instead of focusing too specifically upon her personal life, Dawkins' expressions of self-

identity tended to speak to her communal contributions. In revealing details from her

personal life and her self-identity, they always circled back to how either she or her story

could influence others.

Dawkins was a member of the first desegregated class at Asheville High School

in 1970. Before integrating at Asheville High, Dawkins attended the all-Black South

French Broad High School for her freshman and sophomore years. At Asheville High,

Dawkins was placed in a college preparatory track, while most of her Black peers were

placed in the vocational track. This, perhaps more than anything else up to that point,

altered the course of her life. As a result of being in the college preparatory classes,

Dawkins began to believe that college was not just a potential option, but that it was well

within her grasp:

> Whereas most of the people from my community were placed in the vocational
> track, I had the unusual experience of being placed in the college track. In fact, I

was the only Black female in that track. I have to admit, it was difficult. Not only did I have to make the adjustments academically, but I also had to make a whole host of social adjustments. What it did for me, more than anything else, was provide me with a different perspective on where I could go in life. Every person in the college track talked constantly about going to college. You were placed in that track for the specific purpose of going to college following high school. Since that's what everyone else talked about all of the time, it quickly became what I talked about all of the time.

Dawkins is married to Bobby G. Dawkins, Ph.D., who recently retired as a Senior Polymer and Fiber Associate in Research and Development from PBI Performance Products, Inc. The Dawkins have two adult daughters: Malia Dawkins, M.A., who is an actress, a writer/producer and an Account Manager for the NCompass International, and Demi Dawkins, M.D., who is in a Neurosurgery Residency at the University of Wisconsin.

Educational Journey

Upon graduating from Asheville High School in 1971, Dawkins enrolled at Johnson C. Smith University, a historically Black institution in nearby Charlotte, North Carolina, from which she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education in 1975. Subsequently, Dawkins was awarded a full fellowship to pursue a graduate degree at the University of Michigan, leading to the Master of Arts degree in physical education in 1976. She noted that upon receiving the letter containing the offer of admission and the fellowship information, there was confusion within her family's household:

> My mother opened the letter for me, and I was so happy that I had been admitted to Michigan. But because neither of us understood what a fellowship was, I resolved that I would simply not be able to attend because we did not have the money to pay for it. Finally, one day my mother happened to take my letter to the home of her employer and shared the letter with her employer. When mother returned home later that day, she burst into the house filled with excitement and joy, and told me that I would not have to pay to go to school. I didn't understand at that moment, but she went on to say that she found out that a fellowship meant that it was covered by the institution. I actually ended up going to Michigan two

weeks after the semester had already started simply because of our confusion around what a fellowship was. We just did not know.

Dawkins ultimately earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree from The Ohio State University in 1984, with an emphasis upon adapted physical education.

Career Journey

Dawkins' illustrious career in higher education spans more than 30 years. Prior to her arrival at Bennett College, she served as the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at the historic Cheyney University in Pennsylvania from 2013 until 2016. Under her leadership, Cheyney's academic policies and practices were revised, their Financial Aid and Admissions offices were overhauled and new/updated articulation agreements were signed with University of the Sciences of Philadelphia, LaSalle University, and the Community College of Philadelphia. Dawkins also reinvigorated Cheyney's International Program, established the Ad Hoc Advisory committees on Retention and Admission Criteria, and promoted a culture of assessment, continuous improvement and data-based decision making. Upon the unexpected retirement announcement of Cheyney's president in the summer of 2014, Dawkins assumed the role of Interim President (http://www.bennett.edu/news/bennett-college-announces-new-president/).

Prior to her arrival at Cheyney University, Dawkins spent two years at Dillard University in a variety of positions ranging from Provost, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Professor, Associate Provost, and Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Technology. Dawkins' longest tenure has been at her alma mater, Johnson C. Smith University, were she worked for 28 years serving as the Chief Academic/Administrative Officer, Dean of the College of Professional Studies, Interim

Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Chair and Professor of physical education. Although she had earned a terminal degree early on in her educational journey, Dawkins conveyed "outsider" sentiments about her life journey to becoming a president at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university. Dawkins had over 30 years of experience in higher education, most of which centered around being Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Even though she had spent years at Johnson C. Smith, Dillard, and Cheyney serving in senior level administrative posts, she recounted what appeared to be an impenetrable wall to the presidency:

> I was involved and known throughout the HBCU world for strategic planning at the cabinet, college, and department levels for years. People knew me as the go-to person for improving instructional technology, faculty development, design and implementation of institutional and program assessment systems, policy revision and development, managing enrollment and improving retention, fiscal development through grant-writing and oversight of grant management. And even with all of that, I still found myself not being able to get beyond a certain point. I mean, I was the President of the Professional and Organizational Development Network, President and Co-Founder of the HBCU Faculty Development Network, and a Board Member of the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association. I was a finalist for a presidency at another HBCU, and I'm not sure if I should share the name of it or not, but I was literally told by one of the members of the search committee that while I had a stellar background, some people just did not see me as a president. They saw me as a Provost. I was dumbfounded. I wanted to say don't you know that a lot of Presidents were a Provost or a Vice President of Academic Affairs before they became a President, but I knew that somehow even if I had convinced them, it probably would not have been a good match anyway. It may have had less to do with my professional background and more to do with some other things, but I won't go there.

The impenetrable wall was finally broken down upon Dawkins' arrival at United Methodist-affiliated Bennett College. Dawkins arrived at Bennett College in November of 2015 to serve as the institution's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Shortly after her arrival, Bennett's President unexpectedly resigned, and Dawkins was

named the Interim President. As she noted, she had been in this place before, but this time something felt different to her:

> I arrived here to serve as the Provost, and I was finally settling into the notion that this would probably be my final stop. The President and I worked well together, and I actually enjoyed being on a smaller campus where I knew everyone and where I could feel the impact of my work. Unbeknownst to me, there were some issues brewing between the President and the Board, and we all received a notification one afternoon that the President was resigning. Shortly thereafter, literally a few moments later, I received a call from the Board Chair asking if I could come over to the meeting room to have a conversation with the Board's Executive Committee. I went over and in what seemed like a whirlwind of introductions and exchanges, I was asked to serve as the colleges' Interim President. I have to tell you that I was hesitant because it was like a déjà vu moment. Literally, the same thing happened at Cheyney. President Vital announced her abrupt retirement on a Thursday, and that following Monday, I was to assume the role of Interim President. I had seen this before. I could not believe that it was happening all over again. But something felt different about this time around. Unlike Cheyney, I knew that Bennett valued the notion of women as leaders. It's a part of the mission of the school. I also knew that as a United Methodist school, they understood and appreciated social justice to the point that they were intentional about seeing women in prominent leadership roles. I agreed to serve as the Interim President, knowing that this could very well lead to me being named the permanent President of the College. While I knew that I had to work extremely hard to earn the confidence of the Board in the long-term, I also knew that there were fewer naysayers in this setting when it came to the ability of an African American woman to lead an institution.

On July 5, 2017, the Board of Trustees of Bennett College appointed Dawkins as the 18th President of the institution. Prior to her appointment as Bennet's 18th President, Dawkins served the institution as the Interim President for just under a year. Her association with Bennett began in November 2015 when she was invited to the institution to serve as its Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. During her time as Bennett's Interim President and as Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dawkins provided leadership for the recruitment of new personnel, launched a leadership institute, restarted academic and living learning communities, increased professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, jump-started distance education courses, and obtained

approval of numerous new policies to increase enrollment and faculty governance at the college. Additionally, Dawkins changed the way Bennett offers its curriculum to ensure students are able to secure the courses they need to graduate within four years. Further, she, along with faculty, promoted a theme across the campus to heighten student, faculty and staff awareness of *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.* In the short time since becoming the president of Bennett, Dawkins has strengthened the college's relationship with its founding denomination, the United Methodist Church, by hosting the Black Methodists for Church Renewal's annual Roll Call Celebration in late July 2017. Her leadership at Bennett, as well as her involvement in and with the greater Triad Region, has generated notable increases in alumnae giving.

Professional/Developmental Journey

During the course of Dawkins' professional and developmental journey, she has benefited from her association with a number of professional organizations. She has also been recognized by a significant number of organizations for her contributions to higher education. Johnson C. Smith University honored Dawkins in 2016 with its Outstanding Alumni Award, and she received the Bob Pierleoni Spirit of POD Award in appreciation of dedicated service and enduring service to the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education in November 2015. Dawkins has twice been the recipient of the Service Award from the HBCU Faculty Development Network, once in 2009 and again in 2011. Additionally, she was recognized as one of the 20 Most Important Leaders in Higher Education by the Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning in 2007, and received the E.B. Henderson Award in Physical Education by the Ethnic Minority Council of the American Alliance of Health,

Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance

(http://www.bennett.edu/administration/president/).

Similar to all of the other participants, Dawkins' life journey also reveals an intriguing interplay between her personal life, her self-identity and her career. Whether it was her childhood living in public housing, or attending newly desegregated schools, or navigating the sexism and racism she has encountered throughout her life, Dawkins candidly reflects upon how these various experiences have not only informed who and what she is today, but also how they have influenced her career. In particular, Dawkins shared a self-definition that was revealing:

> I consider myself a very visionary person. In almost every professional setting I've been in, I was, if not the first woman, one of very few to have ever held the roles I've held. Some people are threatened by this. But I like working with visionary people, successful people, and people who are interested in being leaders. You cannot simply do the same thing over and over again, and expect something remarkable to happen. You have to step out into the unknown at times and envision something that does not exist. That's what leadership is all about. Being a leader means that you not only go before the people, but you have to also see before the people. It's your responsibility to envision a future before that future happens. I've tried to do that in every setting where I have worked, and like I said, some people have embraced it, and others have been threatened by it. But it is who I am.

The interplay between Dawkins' personal life, self-identity and career reveals a convergence of many factors, including the role of family members and other influencers in her developmental process. The goals and purposes of this study were aimed at better understanding the professional and personal journeys of the participants. The participants' personal lives, which often influenced their self-identities (as well as the identities ascribed to them by others), ultimately also influenced their careers.

Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough, Dillard University

Walter M. Kimbrough has spent the past five years guiding United Methodist-affiliated Dillard University as its President. Prior to his appointment at Dillard, he served as the President of United Methodist-affiliated Philander-Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas for close to eight years. Included in Kimbrough's profile is a review of his personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey.

Personal Journey

Kimbrough is a product of an upwardly mobile, middle class community in the southwest section of Atlanta, Georgia. His father, The Reverend Walter Kimbrough, Sr., is considered by many to be the most influential African American religious leaders in the metro Atlanta area. In fact, Kimbrough's father served for 20+ years as the Senior Pastor of the 8,000-member Cascade United Methodist Church, the denomination's largest African American congregation in the United States. Kimbrough's mother, Marjorie Kimbrough, is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of California and an accomplished author (http://day1.org/4187-dr_walter_m_kimbrough).   As the son of an influential United Methodist minister, Kimbrough became acquainted with the denomination's institutions of higher learning at an early age, especially the historically Black ones. Reflecting upon his family's entrenched ties within the United Methodist tradition, and how those ties may have been beneficial to him, Kimbrough shares the following:

> When people meet me, a lot of them ask me if I am the son of 'the' Walter Kimbrough. I jokingly tell them that I am 'the" Walter Kimbrough. But let's face it, my father is very well known throughout the Methodist connection. He pastored two of the denomination's largest churches, and they weren't just large

churches, these were churches filled with the movers and shakers of Black society. So, I don't argue the fact that I probably have benefited from that. When I interviewed for the presidency at Philander, I walked into the room, and knew half of the people in there already. The other half that I didn't know personally knew my father. Still though, I had to bring it. Living up to his name is not an easy task, and people know that he stands for excellence. Plus you to have to remember I grew up in Ben Hill and Cascade. These churches were filled with strong, educated sisters and brothers, and a lot of them had actually gone to United Methodist colleges. It's what I knew as the kid of a popular Methodist preacher.

Kimbrough graduated from southwest Atlanta's crown jewel of public education, the Benjamin E. Mays High School in 1985 as the salutatorian of his class. Gleaning leadership lessons from both of his parents very early on in life, Kimbrough also served as the student body president at Benjamin E. Mays.   He is married to Adria Nobles Kimbrough, a former student affairs administrator and university system general counsel, and currently an accomplished attorney with the Kullman Law Firm in New Orleans. The Kimbroughs are the parents of two young children: Lydia Nicole, 7, and Benjamin Barack, 5. Benjamin Barack was named in honor of President Barack Obama following his re-election to a second term in 2012 (http://www.louisianaweekly.com/dr-walter-kimbrough-44-tapped-to-lead-dillard/).

Educational Journey

Following his graduation from the Benjamin E. Mays High School in 1985, Kimbrough earned a Bachelor of Science in agriculture from the University of Georgia in 1989. He continued his education at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, completing a Master of Science in college student personnel services in 1991. In 1996, Kimbrough earned a Doctor of Philosophy in higher education from Georgia State University. Kimbrough shared a turnabout experience that occurred early in his personal and professional. Kimbrough's childhood ambition had been to become a veterinarian.

However, after earning his Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from the University

of Georgia, and after completing one term of medical school, Kimbrough felt called into

a different life direction. The summer following his first year of medical school,

Kimbrough ran into an Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity brother at a national fraternity

convention. This brother happened to be the renown Dr. Walter Washington, who at the

time was the longest-serving Black college president in the country. Washington

imparted wisdom and advice that impacted the course of Kimbrough's life journey:

> I had planned on not going to the convention that year because I just had too
> much going on at the time, but something told me to go anyway. I was still trying
> to figure out what the heck I was going to do with my life. I mean I knew what I
> ultimately wanted to happen, but I guess I just hadn't thought through all of the
> specifics of it. It's like knowing your destination, but not having the specific
> directions to get there. Anyway, I ended up going to the meeting. We were in
> Nashville, and I stepped in the elevator and there was Walter Washington. I was
> like, 'Good morning, Sir.' I was sort of shocked and caught off guard. At the
> time, everybody knew Walter Washington. He had been the national president of
> our fraternity, and he was probably the most well-respected college President in
> the country. I introduced myself and told him who I was. I thought to myself,
> when will I ever have this kind of opportunity again. So, I went out on a limb and
> asked him if I could meet with him at some point and just get some advice from
> him. To my surprise, he asked me had I eaten breakfast yet. I actually had
> already eaten, but I told him that I hadn't. He asked me to join him for breakfast,
> and so I did. We talked for at least forty-five minutes, and during that time I told
> him that I was struggling with where I wanted to go in my career. I had always
> thought about becoming a veterinarian, but my mind and my heart was beginning
> to change. I grew up in the shadow of Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta
> University, Morris Brown College, and the ITC, and I was beginning to think
> more and more about what it would be like to be a college president one day. I
> told Dr. Washington that I hoped it didn't sound too cocky of me to say that I
> wanna be a college president one day. I will never forget what he said to me. He
> looked me dead in the eyes and said if you don't say it, and if you don't believe it,
> nobody else will. He told me that if I wanted to be a president, I would have to go
> back to school, and he wasn't talking about medical school. So, man I did the
> unthinkable. I left med school, applied for master's programs, and got admitted
> into Miami University of Ohio for their program in college student personnel.
> But it sort of all started with that chance encounter with Dr. Washington. Little
> did I know, Dr. Washington knew my father pretty well from the church. So, I'm
> not so sure if it was a chance encounter after all, but it did get me going in a
> different direction.

Similar to the experiences of Beckley, Kimbrough recalled relatively positive encounters and experiences that ultimately impacted his journey to the presidency. This chance encounter in a hotel elevator literally altered the course of Kimbrough's career.

Career Journey

Since 2012, Kimbrough has served as the 7th President of Dillard University, a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution of higher learning in New Orleans, Louisiana. Since assuming his role as President of Dillard, Kimbrough has focused on strengthening connections between Dillard and the broader community, renewing the growth of the University with a highly talented student body, faculty and staff, realizing achievement in all areas of operation, and engaging alumni and friends to refresh the resources for university advancement. Under his leadership at Dillard, physics and film studies have been selected as signature academic programs, and the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Ray Charles Program for Material Culture have each gained national acclaim (http://day1.org/4187-dr_walter_m_kimbrough).   In 2014, Kimbrough helped to launch Dillard's Center for Law and Public Interest, a special program that focuses on advocacy for issues critical to public interest and social justice. In reflecting upon lessons learned from his first presidency at Philander-Smith, Kimbrough offered the following regarding how he approached his journey to Dillard:

> Things are never quite the way search committees and boards tell you during the interview process. I mean, it's really a game of selling a product to you, and some folks are good at packaging it. But when you get home and begin to unwrap it, you discover that this is not exactly what I thought it was. So, for example, when I arrived here at Dillard, we were still dealing with the aftermath of Katrina. Unbeknownst to me, and probably unbeknownst to the board too, were some lingering structural issues with some of our buildings. So, new roofs had been put

on after Katrina, and literally five years later, those roofs start to leak. Not only that, but a week after I arrived, I got a call from Dr. Francis [former president at Xavier University of Louisiana] telling me to take a good look at what was happening with my financial aid because he had started seeing some irregularities with his at Xavier. Well, guess what? We found out that the Department of Education had changed the guidelines for the Parent Plus Loan program, but had done a horrible job of informing schools about it. So, naturally, HBCUs suffered the most from this because they changed it to where the Parent Plus Loans would have to be based upon the credit score of the parents instead of it being a guaranteed loan. That's the kind of stuff you really can't prepare for, you just have to deal with it when you get on the job. And some of it is the sort of stuff that search committees and boards don't even know about at times.

Prior to being named Dillard's seventh president, Kimbrough served as the 12th President of Philander-Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas. Philander-Smith, like Dillard, is also a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution of higher learning. When Kimbrough was named Philander-Smith's 12th President in 2004, he was 37 years old, making him one of the youngest college presidents in the nation. It was during his time at Philander-Smith that Kimbrough acquired the moniker the "hip-hop president," a dubbing that has remained with him even to the present day. His time at Philander-Smith, an institution that is literally just three blocks from Little Rock's famed Central High School and the drama that unfolded there around the Little Rock Nine, was marked by an emphasis on social justice. Kimbrough launched a provocative lecture series at Philander-Smith that drew speakers from all points along the political spectrum, ranging from philosopher and civil rights activist Cornel West to Republican political strategist Mary Matalin. Kimbrough also instituted campaigns to improve graduation rates, mentor Black males, and educate students on the hazards of sexual promiscuity during his time at Philander-Smith College.

Kimbrough's career journey to the college presidency is somewhat unique in the sense that he has never held a faculty position, and the bulk of his professional

experiences prior to being named a president were in student affairs administration. He served as the Vice President for Student Affairs at Albany State University, a historically Black public institution in Albany, Georgia from 2000-2004. Preceding his time at Albany State University, Kimbrough served in a number of student affairs positions at three predominantly White institutions of higher learning, including Emory University, Georgia State University, and Old Dominion University. During his time as the Director of Student Activities and Leadership at Old Dominion University (1996-2000), Kimbrough gained a reputation in student affairs circles as an aspiring and promising future leader for higher education.

Professional/Developmental Journey

Kimbrough's professional and developmental journey has been influenced by a number of social and cultural organizations, many of which he remains closely connected with even to the present day. He is a 1986 initiate of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., the nation's oldest and most distinguished fraternal organization for African American men. Alpha Phi Alpha includes among its membership such luminaries as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Duke Ellington, and Dr. Joseph Lowery. Kimbrough has forged a national reputation as an expert on fraternities and sororities, with specific expertise regarding historically Black, Latin, and Asian groups. He is the author of the book *Black Greek 101: The Culture, Customs and Challenges of Black Fraternities and Sororities.*

Kimbrough has maintained active memberships in several higher education organizations, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Association of Fraternity Advisors. He presently serves as the Chair of the Archives, History and Public Information Committee of the United Negro College Fund

(UNCF), and is a past member of the UNCF's board of directors. In 2009, Kimbrough

was named by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* as one of the 25 To Watch. In 2010,

he made the coveted *Ebony Magazine* Power 100 List of the doers and influencers in the

African American community, joining the likes of President and Mrs. Barack Obama,

Jay-Z, Tyler Perry, and Tom Joyner. In 2013, Kimbrough was named to NBC News/The

Griot.com's 100 African Americans making history today, joining another impressive

group including Kerry Washington, Ambassador Susan Rice, and Kendrick Lamar.

Kimbrough, speaking in general terms, addressed the delicate balancing act and

juggling of several priorities simultaneously. Many of these priorities arise from a series

of life events, and the challenge is to find a workable arrangement between the variety of

life events and professional/personal priorities that influence career trajectory.

Kimbrough shared the following about life events and priorities:

> Both of our children were born during the time of me being a president. I know a
> lot of people probably look at that and wonder how we manage with such small
> children. I see it a different way. I mean think about it for a second. Here are
> two little kids who have the privilege of growing up on a college campus. How
> many people can say that? Plus there's the added benefit of a plethora of potential
> babysitters. But in all seriousness, I think about how awesome it must be to be a
> child growing up on a college campus. And fortunately for me, my wife, even
> though she practices law now, started out in student affairs. Her very first job was
> in student affairs at Cornell, so she gets it. She understands evening and weekend
> meetings, and all of the other commitments outside of the normal nine to five
> timeframe. She understands it, and sometimes she and the kids join me for these
> types of things. People know that we have young children, and I've even had
> trustees say to me, 'you all should bring the children to dinner.'

Kimbrough also shared his belief that if search committees and boards of trustees are

fully honest about their desire for a younger, energetic leader, then they must prepare for

the possibility that such leaders might have children or other priorities. He also pointed

out the fact that these life events and priorities do not have to be antagonistic to one another.

This first half of chapter four presented profiles of each of the participants in order to offer further context to the findings revealed in the thematic analysis, which will appear in the second half of chapter four. With the narratives and the meaning-making of lived experiences being such a personal process, it was important for readers to have some background of the story tellers, which is provided through the profiles. These profiles reveal that life journeys of the presidents included in this study have impacted their career paths to the United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidencies. In some instances, the lived experiences of their life journeys occurred through chance encounters in a hotel elevator (Kimbrough), and in other instances these lived experiences presented themselves in the form of disappointment (Burnette). Either way, the life journeys of the presidents included in this study have greatly influenced their career paths to a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidency.

Armed with the background information provided through the presidential profiles, readers are then able to gain a view of the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and careers. An important component of this study was the emphasis placed on life journeys as opposed to just simply tracking the career paths of the participants. An integral part of the life journeys of each participant, especially when attempting to inform aspiring leaders of what to anticipate when considering a future presidency, included the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and their careers. These profiles also speak to the way that different life events and

priorities have influenced the participants' career trajectory. The life journeys of

presidents include numerous life events and transitions, with each falling at one point or

another into one of the three types of transitions described by Schlossberg (e.g.,

anticipated, unanticipated, and non-event). Life events and transitions also reflect

priorities, meaning when these life events and transitions are brought to fruition, they

represent the participants' priorities. In some instances, however, priorities are revealed

through the amount of time and effort that are devoted to specific activities. The

participants in this study divulged specific life events and priorities that have influenced

their career trajectory.

Themes from the Journey

Through the use of thematic analysis of the data (sequential interviews), I was

able to glean common thematic elements from the experiences and stories relayed by the

participants. One of the goals and purposes of this study is to provide information for

those who aspire to lead United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and

universities in the future. The thematic analysis reveals specific information regarding

personal and professional attributes and leadership characteristics that can be useful to

those desiring to serve as leaders at these types of institutions in the future. The

following three significant themes surfaced across the experiences and stories shared by

the participants: role models/mentors, social awareness, and sense of calling.

Role Models/Mentors

Throughout the sharing of their life journeys, a recurring theme was the

importance and impact of role models and mentors in the lives of the participants. Each

participant shared stories about their role models/mentors being confidants, advisors, and

friends to them along the journey. They also shared stories of how, in some instances,

these role models/mentors have continued to play an integral role in their ongoing

success by often being the person with the necessary connections or by providing them

with recommendations and referrals that aided in acquiring their presidency. The

significance of role models/mentors cannot be overstated from the perspective of the

participants. They each, throughout the course of sharing stories about their life journeys,

eventually harkened back to one or two individuals whose guidance and concern have

been vital to their success. As would probably be expected, the senior president in the

group, Beckley, who has served as a president for over 30 years now, was much more

reflective about the significance of role models/mentors upon his development. Beckley

shared the following regarding the impact of role models/mentors upon him:

> McMillian [William A. McMillian, Rust College's 10th President, who served from 1967-1993] was a great man. He was a model president. He took me under his wings and he really taught me most of what I know today. He was always sharp. Shirts always pressed, suits always clean, and never late for anything. He was in that old classic line of Black college presidents, sort of like Benjamin Mays at Morehouse. But he saw something in me, I guess, and he invested in me. He and Dr. Smith [Earnest A. Smith, Rust College's 9th President, who served from 1957-1967] played a significant role in my life. Both of them were confidants and advisors to me. McMillian much more so because I worked for him for a long time. He was the one who pushed me to go back to school. He said 'if you desire to be a president, then you must prepare to be one.' So, that's what I did. I went back to school, earned my degree, and he just kept pushing me further and further up the ladder. I don't know exactly what he saw in me, but I'm glad he saw something. When he died in 2009, that was a great loss for me. I lost a friend, a mentor, a father-figure really. If you really wanna know how I landed my first presidency at Wiley College, it was because of McMillian. And truth be told, he's probably the reason I was hired here also. When he retired, I guess there was a search process, but everybody sort of knew how things would turn out. McMillian exercised a lot of influence over the board. He was a giant of a man, both in physical stature and in his personality. He saved this place during a really difficult time, and the board felt obliged to do whatever he said. That's the kind of leader he was.

In addition to the significant mentoring and role modeling role played by her grandmother, Burnette ruminated upon the impact of another trailblazer in higher education: Dr. Mary Branch. Branch was the president of Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute (a forerunner to Huston-Tillotson University) from 1930 to 1944. In fact, Branch was the institution's first, and up until the election of Burnette, only female president. In 1929, declining enrollment forced the school to become a junior women's college and, in order to bring enrollment up and turn the school back into a four-year institution, Branch made improvements such as upgrading the facilities with renovations and new construction. Branch also increased the size and quality of the faculty, and permitted the creation of fraternities, sororities, and other social clubs on campus. Although Burnette never had the privilege of personally meeting Branch, of all of Huston-Tillotson's former presidents, Burnette only has a portrait of Branch hanging her office. She has studied Branch's life and legacy, and considers her to be one of the greatest leaders she has ever known about. Burnette, reflecting upon a large beautifully framed portrait of Branch, expressed her sentiments in the following way:

> Wherever I am, in a meeting or if I'm just coming in the office or something, she's looking right at me. On those days when I am exhausted and feeling defeated, Mary Branch stares me right in the eyes, and she says to me 'You have to stay focused.' Her portrait is a visible reminder to me that if she could do this over years ago with all that she was facing, then I have no excuse whatsoever. Her face and her eyes say to me, every time I walk into this office, 'You have to stay on task and keep your eyes on the place where you are trying to go.' Although I've never met her, I feel like I have. We sit here and have conversations about things that are racking my mind. And when those conversations are over, I can hear her say to me again, 'You may have setbacks, but you will also have victories. If you stay focused on the prize, and remain true to your purpose, things will come together. And sure enough, they are slowly coming together.

While the sentiments shared by Burnette are not representative of the typical mentor

relationship, it does speak to the notion of role models, many of which often transcend

time and space.

Kimbrough shared at great length about the influence of one of his former

employers upon his journey to the office of the presidency. Kimbrough was working at

the time as the Vice President for Student Affairs at Albany State University, and the

institution's president, Dr. Portia Holmes Shields, constantly prodded and pushed

Kimbrough to consider the possibility of entering into the presidential search process.

Kimbrough notes that Shields, in an effort to ensure that he was properly equipped and

prepared, would often give him special presidential projects, or she would pay for him to

attend conferences and workshops for aspiring presidents. In so doing, Kimbrough noted

that Shields' efforts were an affirmation of his abilities. While he certainly admired and

looked up to her prior to serving in her cabinet at Albany State, her constant

encouragement and professional nudging of him endeared her to him even more.

Kimbrough communicated the following about Shields' influence as one of his

professional mentors:

> I learned a lot from President Shields at Albany State. She taught me how to be a
> good HBCU president, and really just a good president. I remember sharing with
> her that I wanted to be a president, and she simply said, that's what you're going
> be. From that point on, it was almost like she went out of her way to find
> conferences and workshops to send me to to make sure that I was ready when the
> right opportunity came along.

Much like Presidents Beckley, Burnette, and Kimbrough, Dawkins also mused

over the role and impact of significant people in her professional journey. Dawkins'

reflections were especially poignant, partly, I believe, because of her history of

encountering racism and sexism. Dawkins noted that early in her career there were very

few African American men willing to serve as mentors to African American women. The handful of men who did act as mentors were so highly sought after until they barely had the time to offer any substantive guidance to those they chose to mentor. There was, however, one individual that Dawkins paid significant homage to during the sharing of her reflections:

> Dorothy Yancy [who served as the President of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina from 1994 until 2008] was a godsend to me. When she arrived at Johnson C. Smith, I was the Chair of the Division of Education and Psychology. Within the first month of her presidency, she began to express her desires to diversify the administration of the university in terms of having more women in leadership roles. Over the course of time there as president, she always encouraged and pushed me to the next level. I admired her tenacity and her ability to get things done. She was, and is a no-nonsense individual, and she liked to surround herself by similar people. After observing and watching her for a considerable period of time, I began to express to her my desire to possibly one day be a college president. She said if I was going to be a college president, then I had to do more than serve as a department chair. She promoted me to become Dean of the College of Professional Studies in 2002, and then after that she named me as the university's Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs. She always said to me that I stood a much stronger chance of becoming a president if I had those sort of background experiences. Just before she retired in 2008, she named me the university's Chief Administrative/Academic Officer, with the hope that this would give me that push that I needed to get on the radar for potential presidencies. She started this for me, and in return for that, I have already invited her to serve as the keynote speaker for my inauguration service.

The importance and impact of role models and mentors was a constant theme throughout the data (narratives). This particular thematic element portrayed role models and mentors in a variety of capacities, including as confidants, advisors, and friends. Each participant in the study consistently spoke of the profound impact that mentoring has had upon their personal and professional development. The mentors and role models that the participants referenced reflected the functions and purposes of mentors found in the literature and in previous research by others, as discussed in chapter five.

Social Awareness

A second common theme throughout the data is the broad concept of social

awareness, which is defined as a dimension of emotional intelligence (Goleman,

Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Social awareness provides an individual, or a leader, with

the ability to read the currents, understand the decision networks, and maneuver the

politics at the organizational level. Each of the participants shared quite extensively

about the necessity of a leader, and in this case a potential president at a United

Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution, to have a deep and abiding

understanding of the politics at the organizational level. The journey leading to the

presidency for the participants, and certainly the journey of remaining in the presidency,

has required each of the participants the ability to be able to discern situations and

settings before acting. This concept of social awareness also carries with it the need for

these participants to exercise a high degree of diplomacy. Burnette, who trained as an

engineer and worked previously in the corporate world, offered the following regarding

the broad concept of social awareness:

> During the first half of my career, I was a briefcase-carrying corporate executive.
> I made decisions based upon data, and data alone. Reason and rationality were
> like gods in this world. When I transitioned to higher ed, it was completely
> different for me. While data-driven decisions are still important, I now have to
> think with my head and my heart. I combine my intelligence quotient, my IQ,
> with my emotional intelligence, my EQ.

Dawkins continued by providing reflections on the need for aspiring leaders of

historically Black institutions to be cognizant of the deep political nature of these

institutions. She noted the following:

> I've spent my entire career in HBCUs, and if you know nothing else about
> HBCUs, you have to know that they are very relationship driven places. You can
> be the most knowledgeable individual in the room, with the most adequate and

appropriate experience, but if you don't have the necessary relationships, or if you cannot maintain the necessary relationships, then you won't survive. Some people learn this the difficult way, and for others, it seems to be inherent.

For Kimbrough, whose experience was exclusively in student affairs prior to becoming a president, the notion of social awareness is second nature. Kimbrough maintains an active blog where shares quite regularly about the state of the nation's historically Black colleges and universities. These blogs are often controversial, and in some cases have garnered national media attention because of their content. For example, in a recent blogpost, Kimbrough lambasted rapper JayZ for his $20-million gift to the University of Southern California. Kimbrough noted in the blog the fact that the University of Southern California was already a wealthy institution, and there were many historically Black institutions in this country who could certainly use a donation of that size to benefit the Black community. In expressing these sentiments, Kimbrough has masterfully demonstrated his ability to read the current political and social landscape. He shared the following general comments about social awareness:

> As a leader, you have to know when to speak and when not to speak. And when you do speak, you have to make sure that it's something worth listening to. People started calling me the 'hip hop prez' because I tend to address current social and political issues. A lot of folks had grown used to the fact that a lot of college presidents have been really silent in the recent past about important issues. But when you assume this level of responsibility, especially in the Black community, you have to use it for good.

Kimbrough's tackling of political and social issues at the macro level, as well as his successful ability to maneuver the various micro political venues on the campuses of historically Black institutions, comes from a strong sense of social awareness.

Sense of Calling

A sense of vocation and calling were evident in all four narratives of this study. Of the four participants, only two were educated in historically Black institutions, and

based upon their educational experiences in these settings, expressed a strong desire to serve at a historically Black institution. For the two participants who received their education in predominantly White institutions, they also expressed a sense of calling and service to historically Black institutions. The sense of calling is even more specific, however, in that it relates to the participants' belief that they were called to become presidents at historically Black institutions, and in particular United Methodist-related historically Black institutions. The notion of being a president at one of these institutions as a life vocation is not simply limited to the pre-presidential portion of the participants' journey, but it encompasses the portion of their journey while being a president. Kimbrough articulated this concept well:

> I always knew I wanted to be a president, and since I was Methodist all of my life, I knew of a whole of lot of Methodist colleges and universities. It made sense then that since I wanted to be a president that I should start with Methodist schools. Even though I worked mostly in state schools at the start of my career, I always knew that I would return home to Methodist schools, but I was waiting for the right time. When Philander became open, I felt drawn to it. Think about it. I left a pretty strong medium-sized public HBCU, where I was a Vice President, to take on the presidency of a very small, struggling private church-related school. The same thing happened when Dillard was opened. The search firm reached out to me, and lucky for me, it's also a Methodist school. So, there again, I was able to come here and try to help restore what is really a historic jewel. I mean, I could probably go some other places. With my experience, I could probably even land a presidency at a PWI, but at the end of the day, I care about our schools. If all of us leave and go work at other institutions, who's gonna be left to lead our schools. I don't know what's next on the horizon, but I would hope that it would be another Methodist school, or at least another HBCU.

Other participants also expressed a deep sense of calling to the work of leading historically Black institutions, and United Methodist-related ones in particular. Beckley, a life-long Methodist layperson, couched his understanding of the sense of calling in the following manner:

First, you're not going to get rich leading any of our schools. I think the largest one, at least the largest Black one has close to 4,000 students. So, it's not like some of the larger private schools where you might make more money or whatever. But by the same token, how many people can you give a sense of direction to that you can help. When I was at Wiley, we had about 700 students and most of them I knew by name. I knew their stories. We have close to 1,000 students here at Rust, and I can walk around this campus and speak to almost each and every one of them. You can't do that a large school. Not only do you speak to them, but you get to change their lives. I tell people sometimes that Rust is my church and these students are my parishioners. I have to look out for them and make sure that they get out of here and get a job when they finish. You're not gonna make a whole lot of money doing this, but you can make a big difference.

Beckley noted that his entire professional career has been in United Methodist-related historically Black colleges and universities, and that he never considered the possibility of working outside of that realm. Dawkins, who like Beckley, is a graduate of a historically Black institution, and has spent her entire career in historically Black college and university settings. Bennett is the second United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution that Dawkins has served. She previously served as the Provost at United Methodist-affiliated Dillard University, and it was during her time at Dillard that she began to seriously ponder the notion of leading a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution:

Honestly, I really did not know that Dillard was a Methodist school. Of course, when I started working there as the Provost, I learned more and more about the Methodists and their role in forming Black schools. I was very impressed. I also learned that the Methodists place a strong emphasis on social justice. This was something that I could see at Dillard. Plus, by the time I arrived at Dillard, they had already had a woman president long before a lot of HBCUs were naming women as presidents. The thought occurred to me that maybe I should look at the Methodists, but at the time, none of their schools were vacant. The president at Dillard at the time even encouraged me to look at Methodist schools. Before long, I discovered that there were at least 11 of these schools, and I began to keep an eye on them. I ended up leaving Dillard and going to Cheyney, but I received a call one day asking me if I would be interested in coming to Bennett College to serve as the Provost. My point is that while I did not start out thinking this way, I eventually became aware of the many possibilities available to me in that small Methodist circle.

Each participant in the study expressed a shared sense of calling to the presidency of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institutions. Contained within those notions of vocation were sub-themes of service, impacting others, and purpose in life. Virtually all of the presidents also spoke about identifying and then aligning a person's passion, gifts, skills, and abilities to the needs of others. This sense of service and community impact resounded among all narratives, and was described by Beckley as something that is intrinsic to those who work in historically Black college and university settings. Again, the broad notion of calling, and its connection to leadership, is reflective through previous studies on the topic, and is discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

Summary

This chapter presented the results and findings of the study. Included in those findings were detailed profiles of the participants, each of which contained significant narrative pieces that address the study's main research purpose and goals. The selected portions of the participants' narratives speak specifically to their life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency. These narrative excerpts not only answer the study's research questions, but they also contribute to the understanding of life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. This chapter also presented themes from the journeys of the participants. These themes include the impact and significance of role models/mentors, the importance of social awareness, and the sense of calling. These themes were common in each of the participants' lived experiences and journeys, and these themes also prominently appear in the broader literature and research involving presidential pathways and presidential leadership.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the life journeys, transitions, and
pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically
Black colleges and universities through the specific qualitative design of narrative
inquiry. The following four presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black
colleges and universities were included in this study: Dr. David L. Beckley (Rust
College), Dr. Collette Pierce Burnette (Huston-Tillotson University), Dr. Phyllis Dawkins
(Bennett College), and Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough (Dillard University). These four
presidents are quite diverse in nature, representing a vast range of ages, as well as a vast
range of years of experience. The following research questions guided the study, and as
the results section of this project demonstrates, the responses to these research questions
contributes to the understanding of life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the
presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges
and universities:

1) How have life journeys impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated
   historically Black college and university presidencies?

2) What is the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and
   careers?

3) How have different life events and priorities influenced the participants' career
   trajectory?

Through the use of narrative inquiry, I explored the life journeys of the aforementioned four presidents using their personal narratives as data. These personal narratives were collected through a series of up to three sequential narrative interviews with the presidents. Additional data sources included an analysis of curriculum vitae and biographical sketches for the four presidents, along with informal conversations with several retired presidents of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, and a reflective journal containing thoughts and insights captured following each of the sequential narrative interviews. Through the use of thematic analysis of the various data sources, I was able to glean broad themes from the journeys of the participants related to their experiences, self-identities, and challenges. In accordance with the literature related to the process of coding, and open coding in particular, I sought to use exact words or phrases from the participants as codes in the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). The overall data in this study, and thus the results derived at from an analysis of that data, are representative of the participants' accounts of their own experience of the journey to the presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college or university.

Summary of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at four United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Until the relatively recent past, there has been very little research examining the various facets of presidential leadership at historically Black colleges and universities, including the pathway to the presidency of these institutions. Even less scholarship has been dedicated to studying presidential presidential pathways and the life

journeys of presidents at private, religiously-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Research that examines the presidential pathways and life journeys for leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities is essentially nonexistent. This narrative inquiry into the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities helps to inform what type of leaders are needed to ensure the long-term health and survival of these crucial institutions.

This study employed Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) as is conceptual framework. Schlossberg's Theory of Transition (1984) is effective in determining how presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities experience and handle transitions throughout the course of their life journeys (both personal and professional). This theory aligned with the research design of the study and it reinforced the study's approach through the reflective process associated with managing, coping with, and accepting transitions.

The literature review for this study provided a highlight of relevant scholarship and research that speaks to the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Included in the literature review were an overview of the unique historic relationship between the Methodist movement and people of African descent in the United States. Also included in the literature review is an exploration of the Methodist movement's attention to the educational needs of newly freed slaves, which eventually led to the founding of the selected institutions in the study where the participants currently serve. The literature review also proffered a brief overview of the historical and contemporary

context of historically Black colleges and universities in order to gain a deeper understanding of the distinctiveness of these institutions within the landscape of American higher education. Additionally, presented in the literature review is an examination of the evolution of the role of the college president over the course of this country's higher education history. As the role of the presidency has evolved, so has the pathway or the journey to the presidency, which is why a review of the literature related to the changing pathways and journeys was included. The final item covered in the literature review was an examination of the professional challenges encountered by current presidents at historically Black colleges and universities, and how efforts at addressing those challenges are impacted by the various aspects of the president's professional and personal journey to the office.

Methodologically, this study employed the specific qualitative method of narrative analysis, using in particular the paradigmatic form of narrative analysis. The sampling technique for the study was purposeful, which permitted the selection of participants who were current presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Data sources for the study included a series of sequential narrative interviews, document analysis (e.g., curriculum vitae and biographical sketches), informal conversations with retired presidents from United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, and reflexive journaling. The study employed thematic analysis of the data, and used a coding mechanism where exact words and phrases from the participants were used as codes.

The fourth chapter of this study is presented in two parts, the first of which is a series of profiles developed for each of the participants that included an analysis of their

personal journey, educational journey, career journey, and professional/developmental journey. Unlike the typical biographical statement, these profiles were developed and structured in such a way as to reflect the specific purposes and goals of this study, and to answer the study's research questions. In reference to the first research question of the study (how have life journeys impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated historically Black and college university presidencies?), each of the participants relayed a series of critical experiences from their life journeys that propelled them to the positions they currently hold. In some instances, the lived experiences of the participants' life journeys occurred through chance encounters in a hotel elevator (Kimbrough), and in other instances these lived experiences presented themselves in the form of disappointment (Burnette), or in the form of perceived gender bias (Dawkins). These life journeys, including the various transitions that the participants experienced, many of which altered the course of their lives, have greatly influenced their career paths to a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidency.

The answer to the second research question of the study, which explored the interplay between the participants' personal lives, self-identities, and careers, revealed a convergence of many factors, including the role of family members and other influencers in the participants' developmental process. Each participant relayed distinctive aspects of how they understood the connections between their personal lives, self-identities (and the identities that others ascribed to them), and their careers. For example, Kimbrough reflected upon his family's entrenched ties within the United Methodist tradition, and how those ties may have benefited his eventual rise to the presidency of a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution. Other participants in the study offered

additional information related to the interplay between their personal lives, self-identities, and careers. For example, Beckley shared at length about his self-description as a comedian of sorts, and how this aspect of his personality has impacted his career. Further, Burnette and Dawkins also presented narratives that revealed an intriguing interplay between their personal lives, self-identities, and careers. In particular, Dawkins noted the impact of having lived in public housing as a child and the process of navigating sexism and racism upon her life. Dawkins candidly reflected upon how these various experiences have not only informed who and what she is today, but also how they have influenced her career path. In Burnette's case, a series of experiences from her personal life, including the impact of her grandmother, and her self-identity converged in such a way that they propelled her to her first presidency. Burnette noted the lessons imparted by her grandmother, coupled with a supportive spouse, as the two most significant ingredients in her attaining a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institution. The data from the study revealed that each participant was cognizant of the interplay between their personal lives, self-identities, and careers. A carefully constructed self-identity, coupled with the necessary management of the participants' personal lives, has been influential in the progression of their careers.

The answer to the study's third and final research question, which explored the influence of different life events and priorities on the participants' career trajectory, is also revealed through the shared narratives. As noted in the study, the life journeys of presidents include numerous life events and transitions, with each falling at one point or another into one of the three types of transitions described by Schlossberg (e.g., anticipated, unanticipated, and non-event). Life events and transitions also reflect

priorities, meaning when these life events and transitions are brought to fruition, they represent the participants' priorities. In some instances, however, these priorities are revealed through the amount of time and effort that are devoted to specific activities. The participants in the study divulged specific life events and priorities that have influenced their career trajectory. Beckley, for example, referenced the significance of and priority placed upon involvement in professional associations as being critical not only to his career trajectory, but also to his remaining in the field. Kimbrough, on the other hand, addressed the delicate balancing act and juggling of several responsibilities, including personal and family responsibilities.

The fourth chapter also contains several common themes that arose from the experiences of the stories relayed by the participants. These common themes illumine some of the personal and professional attributes and leadership characteristics that can be useful to those desiring to serve as leaders at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Included among these themes is the significance of role models and mentors in each participants' journey to the presidency. They each shared stories about specific role models/mentors who have served as confidants, advisors and friends to them along the journey. The participants' expressed significance about the role of mentoring in leadership was consistent with what the literature has to say about the topic. Most of the literature focusing upon the exploration of the role of mentoring in leadership development is limited to unique populations within the higher education landscape. From a much broader perspective, there has been significant research conducted on the benefits of mentoring in the business sector (McDade, 2005; Wunsch, 1994). Of the mentoring research that has occurred in education, most has taken place in

secondary and four-year college settings (McDade, 2005). There is evidence that community college settings value mentoring programs on their campuses and that those who are mentored describe the relationship as valuable both socially and for their careers (Hopkins, 2003).

Research consistently supports the notion that mentorship is a significant contributor to career development in higher education (Brown, 2002). The positive impact of mentorship on career development is further confirmed by the numerous studies on mentoring relationships across disciplines, such as business, education, and psychology (Wilson & Johnson, 2001). Mentoring also often appears in discussions about the career and leadership development of college and university presidents (McDade, 2005). In the McDade (2005) study, most of the participating college and university presidents report positive responses that the mentor aided the mentee's career development in some way. One specific point from the study was that mentors can help younger community college employees by planting seeds that would empower them to seek college presidencies. Brown (2005) suggested the importance of leaders developing other potential leaders through mentorship by arguing there is no success without a successor. Ragins and Cotton (1993) found that persons with prior experience in mentoring relationships, either as a mentor or mentee, are more willing to serve as mentors than those who lack such experience. Brown (2005) found that mentorship plays a crucial role in advancing female college presidents up the administrative ladder.

In another study on the role of mentoring and leadership development, VanDerLinden (2005) found that career related activities such as furthering one's education, participating in professional development, and cultivating mentoring

relationships impact the career advancement and leadership development of administrators and aspiring executive leaders. VanDerLinden (2005) goes on to say that it is believed that mentoring is the key ingredient that separates successful and unsuccessful administrators, and that mentoring is related to organizational advancement, career development, and career satisfaction. Mentoring can have a significant impact on the career paths of those who aspire to advance in higher education administration (VanDerLinden, 2005). Mentors provided encouragement and opportunities, shared information, acted as role models, encouraged continued education, and taught the protégé how to be politically astute. VanDerLinden (2005) found that over 25% of those who indicated that they had a mentor also indicated that their mentor had assisted them to obtain their current position. She goes on to state that mentors provided encouragement and advice, and provided specific help with aspects of one's career such as serving as a reference and providing exposure to career advancing activities.

A second common theme that the data revealed was the significance of the possession of social awareness, or emotional intelligence. Each participant conveyed the necessity for potential presidents at United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institutions to have a deep and abiding understanding of the politics at the organizational level. The participants' expressed understanding of the concept of social awareness and emotional intelligence's impact upon their ability to lead United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities is consistent with previous research in this area. Brown (2006) notes that effective college and university presidents require extraordinary skill in practicing the following competencies: understanding and navigating the organization; building and maintaining relationships; managing politics

and influencing others; and self-awareness (p. 213). Cherniss & Goleman (2001) provided a detailed overview of emotional intelligence competencies, with a special emphasis on the concept of social awareness. As the third cluster of emotional intelligence, social awareness includes the three specific competencies of empathy, service orientation, and organizational awareness. Empathy requires that leaders understand others' feelings that leads to superior performance and overall success. Service orientation is a competency that allows for better understanding of things such as customer needs and the sacrifice of short term gains for long term relationships with customers. Finally, leaders that possess the organizational awareness skill understand group social hierarchies, and they embody coalition building skills, all of which are key components for effective leadership (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). Fisher and Tack argued that effective college presidents need to possess finely honed human relations skills, and that they should be more "inclined to encourage staff to take risks, to think differently, to be creative, and to share their thoughts, no matter how diverse" (1990, p. 10).

The data from this study revealed that the participants placed a high value on the importance of social awareness and emotional intelligence. The literature also reveals that social awareness and emotional intelligence are two key concepts that distinguish effective leaders from run of the mill leaders. In addition to the correlations to the literature and the findings of this study cited above, Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1998) also found that effective college presidents are quite different from the typical run of the mill leader. They noted that effective college presidents are politically astute, well aware

of their surroundings, and are very thoughtful and pensive about almost every action they take.

The third common theme in the data was the concept of a sense of calling. The notion of being a president at one of these institutions as a life vocation was not simply limited to the pre-presidential phase of the participants' journey, but it encompasses the present phase of their journey as well. In a unique study on gender differences' impact upon one's sense of calling, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011) noted that males tend to view their job as a calling while females rely more on relationships and caring for others as the major impetus behind their life work. In this study, however, there were no differences between the male and female participants' perceptions of their life work as a calling. Both groups expressed a series of episodes and beliefs that the work they currently engage in is the work they were called to do.

The literature around the concept of calling is mostly restricted to the religious community, and even within that community, it is limited to those who express callings to religious leadership. Hunter, Dik, and Banning (2010) suggested that definitions of calling vary considerably – from limiting calling to the work environment to defining the concept broadly to considering it more a lifestyle. Buechner described calling as any place where one's "deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (1992, p. 186). According to Johnson (2012), vocation or purpose in life has the ability to change based on circumstance. Unexpected experiences may lead to the discovery of a new vocation, and the way in which vocation is fulfilled depends on the individual and the call they perceive. Longman et al. (2010) described calling as a continua (internal-external and specific-general). In this continua, an internal validation could be "a strong sense of self-

awareness and self-efficacy" (Longman et al., 2010, p. 269), while an external validation could be in the form of "encouragement from mentors or other important figures" (p. 269). The manifestation of a calling can occur in a specific way, as in a vision, hearing the voice of God, or in answer to prayer, or in a general way, as in a pull towards a career. In this study, each of the participants expressed their sense of calling along this continuum.

In a more recent work, Frame (2013) attempted to demonstrate the relationship between the concept of calling and presidential leadership by studying the work of several groups of individuals. Frame conducted a series of workshops and interviews with retired, current, and prospective college presidents. He concluded from his research that both thrive – joy and energy for the president and institutional transformation for the college or university – when there is a dynamic alignment between the president's personal vocation and the institutional mission. Further, Frame noted that the only way a president can navigate the busy and frenetic pace of the office is with clarity about one's own vocation. The presidency, Frame insisted, is not for those forging a career, but rather it is for those who are faithful to their personal vocation.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have implications for the study's various audiences, including aspiring United Methodist-affiliated historically Black college and university presidents and individual governing boards of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. Through stories about transitions along the journey to the presidency, and understandings of self-identities and lived experiences, aspiring leaders can gain a better understanding of what they need to do to better position

themselves for future presidency roles at these unique institutions. For example, this study revealed the significance of mentors for those who aspire to become presidents. All of the participants benefited from active mentors and role models throughout the course of their journeys. Aspiring leaders should seek out individuals who are willing to shepherd and provide wisdom to them along the way. Likewise, implications for individual governing boards include the fact that this study noted links between presidents' personal lives and their self-identities, as well as the impact of lived experiences upon their journeys. Individual boards can benefit from taking the time to understand the life journeys and lived experiences of their presidents, and how these life journeys and lived experiences might impact presidents' decision-making processes.

This study also contains a number of broader implications that reach beyond its narrowed scope. Leadership development and positional preparedness are concepts that transcend institutional type. While the study focused specifically on aspiring leaders of United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities, there are lessons to be gleaned from the study's results that can benefit those desiring to lead any institution of higher learning. Admittedly, there are cultural proclivities associated with historically Black institutions that might make some of the study's findings more relevant to those particular institutions, I would argue that those are broad enough in nature to apply across the board. For instance, given the unique access mission of many historically Black institutions, there are leaders who may possess a greater sense of calling to serve in these particular types of settings. In this study, each of the participants could, no doubt, because of their impressive educational credentials and professional backgrounds, serve in any type of institutional setting. They have, however, made an

explicit commitment to offer their gifts and abilities to historically Black institutions because of a personal sense of calling that is closely linked to the participants' care and love of historically Black institutions. This notion of a sense of calling can also be applied to those who express their commitment to other special institutional types (e.g., single-sex institutions, community colleges, tribal institutions, land-grant institutions, etc.). There are those who called to specific types of institutions of higher learning, and who purse those senses of calling with a singular focus.

Another set of broader implications derived from this study relate to institutions' practices around professional development and succession planning. Both United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities and other historically Black colleges and universities (public and private) may benefit from information shared by this study's participants about these two important areas. In reference to professional development, the participants all relayed instances of just how significant it is to attend and become involved in professional guilds. Noting the challenges United Methodist-affiliated historically Black institutions have experienced in identifying new leaders during seasons of presidential transition, this study could inform how boards of trustees at these institutions urge potential candidates to participate in professional development activities, and how boards work to strengthen the pipeline of potential leaders.

Recommendations for Future Research

With this study as a foundation, there are many opportunities to grow and expand the knowledge base on the life journeys of leaders of historically Black institutions of higher learning through future research. While many studies examine the nature of the college presidency and pathways to the presidency for leaders of predominantly White

institutions, there are very few studies that investigate the unique professional and personal journeys of leaders of historically Black institutions. This study revealed a significant amount of information pertaining to the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency of leaders at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. There is, however, much more to learn. For example, would the findings of this study be the same across the board for all historically Black colleges and universities? Are there appreciable differences in the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency for leaders at public historically Black institutions of higher learning? An additionally nuanced question for future research relates to the potential differences that may exist across the board within just the 120 United Methodist-affiliated institutions of higher learning in the United States. What are the similarities and differences between life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency for leaders across the board at all United Methodist-affiliated institutions?

An additional recommendation for further research involves the use of the narrative inquiry method for other potential study populations. During the course of this study, I noticed that the narrative inquiry method has mostly been used to explore the life journeys of selected populations, most of which have been either female or minority groups. One of the explanations offered for this was the occasional exclusion of non-White and non-male college leaders from the American Council on Education's presidential survey, which is the standard survey in the industry. How would the study's results vary if the same study design was used with a drastically different population sample? For example, what could be revealed about the life journeys, lived experiences, and presidential pathways of Research I-Institution leaders, who are typically White,

using the narrative inquiry method? What might a narrative inquiry study reveal about presidential pathways that is not noted in pathway studies like those conducted by the American Council on Education? Would it be worthwhile exploring the individual experiences and narratives of leaders of other types of groups and other types of institutions? A narrative inquiry study that includes these types of leaders could add validity to a research design that is often relegated to special populations.

Concluding Thoughts

This study has been one of the most demanding processes of my professional journey. At the same time, however, it has also been one of the most rewarding processes in that it has challenged and stretched me far beyond my normal limits. For example, while I have always attempted to exercise a great level of discipline and to display a reasonable level of perseverance, this study required me to dig deeply within the wells of my being in order to bring it to fruition. Additionally, at the height of my research and data gathering process, I experienced what was initially viewed by me and others as a simple professional transition from one institution to another. Little did I know, but this transition was layered with a number of other significant transitions, including the abrupt resignation of the person who hired me at the new institution, and considerable questions regarding the security of my employment. Thankfully, however, the waves eventually settled, and the months of anxiety have slowly led way to what appears to be a fruitful and bright road ahead.

In the same vein, this study also afforded me the unique opportunity to learn more about the specific four presidents included in the study, as well as the institutions they serve. The gathering of the stories about these four presidents' lives, journeys and

transitions occurred simultaneously with my personal processing of my journey and

transitions. I have expended a significant number of hours reflecting upon the journeys

and experiences of the study's participants, while making a comparative analysis between

my life and theirs. Although these thoughts have previously occupied my mental space,

this study has propelled to the forefront of my mind questions about my future and the

journey ahead.

Finally, I am hopeful that this research contributes to addressing the gap in the

literature concerning the life journeys, transitions, and pathways to the presidency for

leaders of all historically Black institutions of higher learning. These schools, both the

public and private ones, are treasures in this country. Any efforts that can lead to their

survival are to be applauded. It is my hope that this study will provide insight into the

future leadership needs of these special institutions.

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APPENDIX A

EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

Dear [Name],

My name is Albert Mosley, and I am a doctoral student at the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia. I am conducting a narrative inquiry study on the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated historically Black colleges and universities. The goal of this study is to develop a clear understanding of the experiences, self-identities, challenges, non-work lives, pitfalls (both personally and professionally) of selected current leaders of these unique institutions. It is my hope that such discovery will serve to benefit those who aspire to lead United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges and universities in the future. In addition to benefitting prospective leaders of these institutions, this study could also assist boards of trustees and search committees in their efforts to identify future presidents by noting specific information (i.e., personal and professional attributes, leadership characteristics, etc.) that can be gleaned from exploring the life journeys of current leaders.

I need your assistance in order for this study to be effective. I am writing to request your participation in a series of up to three sequential interviews (60 minutes each, for a total of 180 minutes) that seek to understand how life journeys have impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated HBCU presidencies. Additionally, this interview would seek to uncover the interplay between presidents' personal lives, self-identities, and careers. Finally, the series of up to three sequential interviews will explore the impact of different life events and priorities on your career trajectory.

Please find attached to this message a letter with additional information regarding my dissertation study, including your rights and role as a participant, should you choose to be a part of the study.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you and potentially arranging our interview soon. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, or if I can provide additional information.

Thank you,

Albert Mosley

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Institute of
Higher Education
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

June 1, 2017

Dear   :

I am a doctoral student working under the direction of Dr. Tim Cain, Associate Professor at the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia with a research interest in the life journeys of presidents at selected United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges and universities. I am writing to request your participation in this unique study, the purpose of which is to explore how life journeys have impacted career paths to United Methodist-affiliated HBCU presidencies, and to uncover the interplay between presidents' personal lives, self-identities, and careers.

Your participation will involve a series of up to three sequential interviews (30 minutes each, for a total of 90 minutes) with me at a location of your choosing. As mentioned above, the goal of this study is to develop a clear understanding of the experiences, self-identities, challenges, non-work lives, pitfalls (both personally and professionally) of selected current leaders of United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges and universities. It is my hope that such discovery will serve to benefit those who aspire to lead United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges and universities in the future. In addition to potentially benefitting prospective leaders of these institutions, this study could also assist boards of trustees and search committees in their efforts to identify future presidents by noting specific information (i.e., personal and professional attributes, leadership characteristics, etc.) that can be gleaned from exploring the life journeys of current leaders.

As the president of a United Methodist-affiliated HBCU, you can provide valuable insight for my analysis. I am most interested in capturing your reflections about your life journey to the presidency of one of these institutions. If you are willing to participate, and if your schedule permits, I would like to interview you during the month of July 2017. I will make the necessary travel arrangements to your location based upon the date and time that you indicate you are available for the interview.

With your permission, I will record the conversation to help recall what was said, and may site your name and/or specific statements in publications or presentations. The audio files will be destroyed once the study is complete. While conducting the study, I, and possibly a professional transcriptionist, will be the only person with access to the

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

audio files and transcripts. All information will be stored in a locked file or password-protected computer in my office.

Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop out at any time without penalty. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information. No foreseeable risks or discomforts are expected. There may also be no potential benefits for you personally from this study. However, the potential benefits may include a better understanding of the life journeys of presidents at United Methodist-affiliated Historically Black colleges and universities.

If you should have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact me by email at adm74847@uga.edu, or by phone at 215.586.0577. Additional questions regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to the Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, Telephone 706.542.3199, or via email at IRB@uga.edu.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this research study. I would be truly grateful if you would be willing to make the time to participate, as I know your perspective will add value to the study. I will contact you soon to schedule a time for us to talk, if you are willing and available. I will also be able to offer further explanations if you have any questions about the study. Again, thank you for your consideration. Please keep this letter for your records.

Sincerely,

Albert Mosley

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This series of up to three sequential interviews is intended to be unstructured, and to last no longer than a total of 180 minutes (60 minutes for each interview). The sequential interview style, as described by Siedman (2006) will include an initial interview of a focused life history. In this initial interview, I will seek to gather information regarding the participants' life experiences up to the present time. Specific prompts, in the form of semi-structured questions, will be provided in relation to life journey and the participants' career paths to their current presidencies. The second interview in the sequence will focus on the participants' lived experiences, including details of their personal journey up to the present time. The final and third brief interview in the sequence will be reflective in nature allowing each of the participants an opportunity to offer meaning to their journeys. The sequential interviews will be semi-structured in nature. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) indicate that semi-structured interviews are the types of interviews where "either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions" (p. 110).

Interview I: Preparing for the Journey

1. Describe your journey/background in higher education, starting with the very first position up to your current position. Are there any lessons that you have gleaned from your journey that have guided you along the way?
2. Research indicates that the traditional career path of a college/university president involves a series of positions ranging from department chair, to dean, to vice president. How would you characterize your career path? Would you consider it traditional or non-traditional?
3. Can you think of something you specifically invested in along the journey to improve yourself for future leadership roles?

Interview II: Journey to the Top

1. What challenges (professional and/or personal) have you encountered in your journey to the presidency of a United Methodist-affiliated HBCU?
2. Are there any specific transitions (both planned and unplanned) that have left a lasting impact on your journey to the present role you hold? How would you characterize these transitions? Are there specific "seasons" or moments along the journey that you would re-do if afforded the opportunity? If so, what are they?
3. If this is your first presidency, what position did you hold prior to this? Do you view your current role as the apex for your career, or is it a part of a forward journey for you?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview III: Reflections from the Journey

1. When you reflect upon your career in higher education, were there certain episodes, events, or situations that have been critical to your success in obtaining a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated HBCU?
2. Can you share some stories about important people (and their positions) that assisted you along the journey to becoming a president of a United Methodist-affiliated HBCU? What was unique about these individuals? What did they offer that you may not have received from your training and professional experiences?
3. Do you feel you were "called" to higher education, administration, and your current role? What advice, based upon your experiences and life journey, would you offer to those who wish to obtain a presidency at a United Methodist-affiliated HBCU, or at any other HBCU for that matter?