RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS AT A DOCTORAL INTENSIVE RESEARCH ONE UNIVERSITY IN THE SOUTHEAST AND THE ASSOCIATED FINANCIAL RESOURCES: A CRITICAL CASE STUDY

by

ROSWELL LAWRENCE, JR.

(Under the Direction of Sheneka M. Williams)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examined the recruitment and retention of African American students in a Predominantly White Institution in the Southeast and the associated financial resources needed to do so. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used to explore Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) related to African American students in higher education. The five prominent tenets of CRT as noted by Delgado & Stefancic (2012) and DeCuir & Dixson (2004) are: racism is normal, whiteness as property, interest convergence, social construction, and unique voice of color. SEM is a "comprehensive approach…to achieving the optimal recruitment, retention and graduation of students" (Kalsbeek, 2013). Literature and empirical data suggest that institutions of higher education are more racially diverse after implementing a strategic plan that explicitly includes minority enrollment (Drew et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2015; Burt et al., 2016). Policies are only as great as the character and fortitude of the leadership in authority to implement and enforce change with sustainability.

This case study found that African American recruitment and retention efforts were largely treated the same as recruiting and retaining White students. The participants did not

identify any specific budgetary line items earmarked for African American recruitment and/or retention. The research revealed African American recruitment and retention efforts are negatively affected by the culture and climate of the institution, the politics of higher education, and the economic impact within society. Findings from the study suggest that African American recruitment efforts were largely the same as recruiting White students. African American students were primarily responsible for their own retention. Financial supports for recruitment and retention of African American students exist at the institutional level, yet the case study did not reveal funding specifically identified within the colleges, schools, institutes and/or units. Additionally, the study found a need for more communication between administrators, faculty and staff related to African American recruitment and retention.

INDEX WORDS: African American, recruitment, retention, higher education, critical race theory, case study, strategic enrollment management

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DEDICATION

I am incredibly thankful to God for orchestrating the completion of this Ph.D. This accomplishment simply would not have happened without the privilege, guidance, persistence, confirmation, strength, comfort, grace and mercy provided by God through my savior Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

I dedicate this dissertation to my dad, Rev. Roswell Lawrence, Sr., who passed away during this Ph.D. journey but has continued to inspire me. I can still hear his voice instructing me by saying, “Don’t let anyone think for you”. His directive reminds me to remain honest to what is on the inside, the lessons from my village, life’s experiences and the education I have been afforded.

This dissertation is dedicated to those who I never met, but dreamt of me doing my part to help African Americans strive beyond their circumstances. The energy of ancestors I never had the privilege of knowing is just as responsible for this and future constructive deeds as I am. Although the grave preceded their doctoral studies, my spirit is filled with gratitude as I understand just a fraction of their sacrifice to make this moment a reality for us. God has given me the privilege of feeling responsible not only to my ancestors, but also to the young people who in some way will benefit from this and future work done both inside and outside of academia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Students represent the soul of higher education (Doscher & Landorf, 2018). Virtually all components of an institution are directly or indirectly influenced by students (Black & Williams, 1998). Without scholars the institutions will no longer have a useful purpose. Research surrounding the recruitment of students into institutions of higher education continues to be relevant for the vitality of colleges and universities (Tinto, 1993; Dolence, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Gaertner & McClarty, 2015). After recruiting and enrollment, retaining students as they matriculate toward graduation is the collective goal of administration and faculty (Nora et al, 2012). Retention is mutually beneficial for institutions and students. Student retention provides a financial resource for the institution and securing funds for higher education is pivotal for each student to continue their educational journey (Johnstone, 2005). Collectively the chapters within this dissertation uniquely illuminate the graduation line for African American students from high school to beyond attaining a bachelors' degree. The documents distinctively employ the perspective of university senior leadership when considering potential solutions. This first chapter will examine the problem related to recruiting and retaining African American students along with the importance of this foundational research for higher education. Next, the particular research questions that shape this dissertation will precede definitions of significant terms. The terms *African American* and *Black* will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

Statement of the Problem

Educational freedom remains at the forefront of multiple legal, ethical, civil rights, and economic fights today. Oppression of African Americans and White privilege have been historical issues since the involuntary arrival of Blacks on the conquered land we call the United States (Garfield, 2014). From White Supremacy and the Aryan movement to the ownership and enslaving of African Americans by their White counterparts in America, Blacks have been viewed and treated as inferior to Whites (Salenius, 2016). Systematic reinforcement of White supremacy in laws, policies, and procedures has led to inequality in the most basic human entitlements, including freedom, voting, workforce, and education (Egerton, 2018). Current racial tensions also negatively affect minority comfort on college campuses. According to Heim of *The Washington Post* (2018), groups labeled "white-nationalist hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center" have "directed campaigns at more than 200 college campuses in 42 states." The tragic racial history that continues to be an unfortunate part of the presence of America perpetuates the necessity for Black students to battle for equal educational opportunities.

The path to acceptance in institutions of higher education in America has historically been tenuous for minority students (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Recruiting and retaining African American students has always been essential for higher education institutions in the United States. However, for the aforementioned reasons and more, recruiting African American students has become increasingly problematic (Vedantam, 2013). The issue is even more evident at predominantly White institutions (PWIs). The flagship universities in the southeastern United States have their founding roots between 1785 and 1858 but did not admit their first African American undergraduate student until, on average, 1961 (University of Alabama – 1963, University of Florida – 1958, University of Georgia – 1961, Louisiana State University – 1953

[he left after 55 days] 1964, University of Mississippi – 1962, University of South Carolina – 1963, University of Texas – 1956). Once accepted, the struggles for Black students generally continue within the institution. The primary issues facing African American students on majority White campuses are "those arising from isolation, alienation, and lack of support (Allen, 1988; Smit & Allen, 1984, as cited in Allen, 1992). However difficult, the public good that is education should be accessible to all (Letizia, 2015). Public higher education has a social obligation to provide high quality educational experiences to all who desire such enlightenment regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, etc.

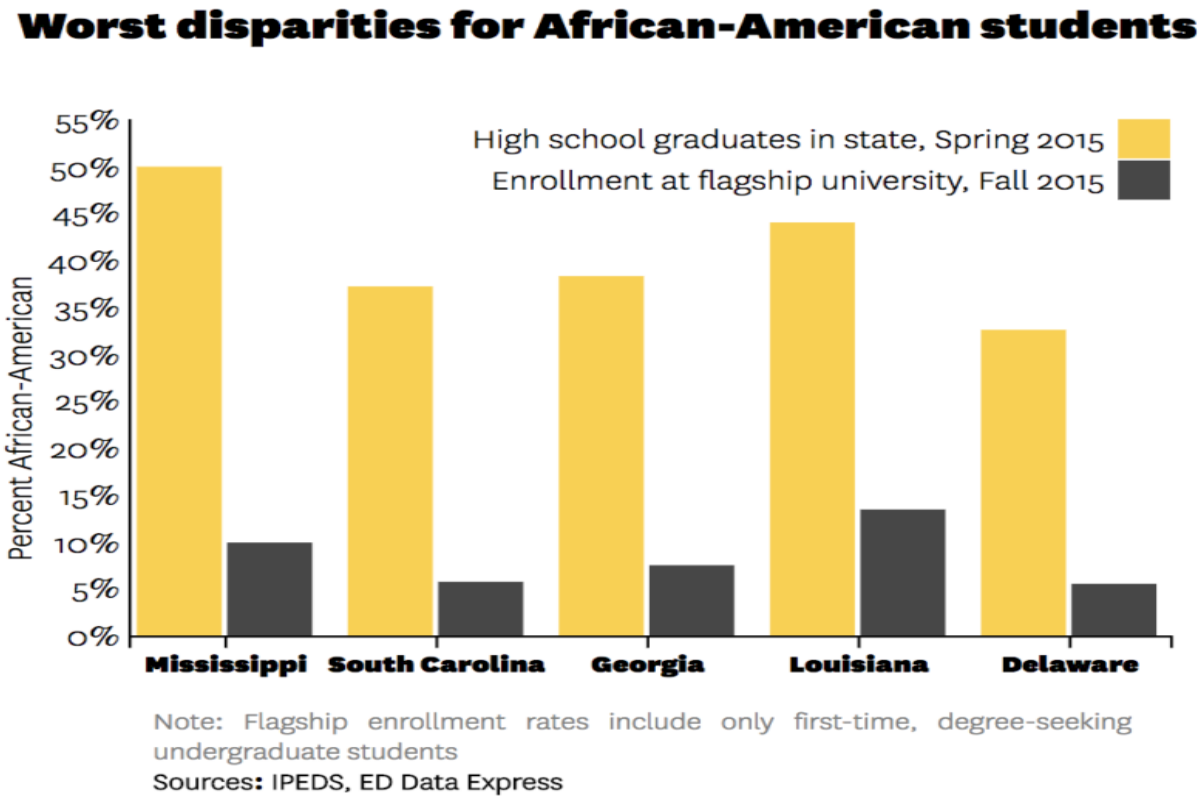

Figure 1. Worst disparities for African American students.

Reprint from The Hechinger Report by Meredith Kolodner, retrieved from https://hechingerreport.org/many-state-flagship-universities-leave-black-latino-students-behind/.

African American students in the Southeast represent a small amount of the first year students at flagship universities (University's Office of Institutional Research, 2018). The graph below shows that four of the five largest disparities in the United States for African American students who graduate high school from a public school and enroll in the flagship university for their state are in the Southeast (Kolodner, 2018). Mississippi, South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana have this unattractive distinction along with Delaware.

Significance of the Research

This research examines the road to higher education for African American students through a critical lens focused on doctorial intensive research one (R1) universities because they represent some of the most prestigious higher education institutions in the United States. Data from a study of 4,400 colleges and universities by the U.S. Department of Education Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) revealed that although White students make up 82% of new enrollment for the 468 most selective institutions, African Americans represent only 9% (Fryar & Hawes, 2012). Overall, roughly 70% of Black students enroll in non-selective schools (Gaertner & McClarty, 2015). Community college is the destination for over 30% of Black students with a grade point average (GPA) higher than 3.5 (Gaertner & McClarty, 2015). Fryar & Hawes (2012) note that only 57% of African American students who scored greater than 1200 on the SAT (max score 1600) attend and graduate college—any college. These statistics speak to the need to better understand recruiting and retaining African American students coupled with implementations that are grounded in the research.

It is important that this study examines universities in the South, given the college-going rate of African American students has declined in the South for doctoral intensive R1 institutions (McGill, 2015). This comes as no surprise – the South has always lagged behind other states in

providing equal educational opportunity for African American students (Patterson, 2002; Kluger, 2004). For the aforementioned reasons, the topic of African American recruitment and retention is and should be of utter importance to society and, in particular, to the higher education community (Sanchez, 2018). More research is being done around the topic of minority access to higher education in general. However, little to no exploration has been done to understand how the delegated authority of the senior administration of an institution can alter the recruitment and retention for African American students in the Southeast. This research examines this perilous concern and ways to address the epidemic, thus marking a considerable contribution to the current literature.

Current significance of the research is evident by the number of protests and rallies at PWIs across the country related to racial (in)justice. The University of Missouri, Brown University, Syracuse University, Ithaca College, the University of Kentucky, and Georgetown University were all campuses where students took a stance related to the sense of belonging for people of color (Thornhill, 2018). Even the University of Alabama, the University of Florida, the University of Georgia, Louisiana State University, the University of Mississippi, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Texas–Austin, which are in southern states, dealt with student body unrest around this polarizing issue. The research takes a critical look at senior administration's ability to impact change. Students ultimately look to the senior administration to improve the racial climate of their campus. This was crystal clear a few years ago when nearly 200 student protesters at the University of South Carolina locked arms and marched to the USC's administration build and presented demands to senior administration. One of the demands included "improving and expanding minority student and faculty recruitment efforts" (Shain, 2015).

This dissertation further contributes to the research by reassessing the problem of African American access and retention in higher education. As referenced in the Review of Literature (Chapter 2), many of the most relevant articles on the topic are becoming dated. Useful research such as Freeman's *Increasing African American's Participations in Higher Education* was published over two decades ago. Both articles—*Academic Story-telling: A Critical Race Theory Story of Affirmative Action* (Adalberto) and *Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students* (Solorzona, Ceja, & Yosso)—were contributed in 2000. Although aging, the critical theories and research methods used by these and other academic warriors (Harper, 2009; Decuir, & Dixson, 2004) to address recruitment and retention produced valuable information. The research in this dissertation uses many of the same methods: semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observations. African American males and females, predominately White institutions, and financial components are overlapping topics of this and previous literature.

The geographic focus of the research fills a gap in the current literature. The Southeast as defined for the purposes of this research includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. These regions have not been collectively analyzed previously with a direct focus on higher education recruitment and retention for African American students. These states self-selected by originally choosing to succeed from the Union during the Civil War. Additionally, scholars have recommended including African American through programs, policies, statements, and practices. This research limits the issues revealed from the data related to recruitment, retention, and financial resources for African American students to recommendations within the delegated authority of university senior administration.

Key Research Questions

The overarching research question for this study is: How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeastern recruit and retain African American students and what financial assistance support those efforts? The primary question can be deconstructed into three separate but correlated questions.

1. How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast recruit African American students?
2. How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast retain African American students?
3. What financial supports are available at a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast for the recruitment and retention of African American students?

After careful probing, analyzing, and investigating the research questions, higher education senior officials (along with others) will be better equipped to understand and hopefully persuaded to help recruit and retain African American students.

Key Terms

The key terms are defined after careful review of the literature. In some cases, a working definition was derived though empirical data and the lack of explicit examination in the literature on the term.

African American

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines African American as “an American of African and especially of Black African descent” (African American, n.d.). Only participants who self-identify as African American will be included in the research conducted with students, faculty,

and staff. However, it is not necessary for administrators who participate to be African American. *Black* is also used interchangeably with African American in this paper.

Predominantly White Institution (PWI)

Institutions of higher education with more than 50% of their student body identifying as White are referred to as predominantly White institutions (PWI) (Lomotey, 2010). These colleges and universities are also known as historically White institutions. Small numbers of other ethnicities (African American, Asian, Hispanic, etc.) may also be present at predominantly White institutions.

Recruitment

The literature explains recruitment as finding people to fill the necessary vacancies who have the skills, experience, and knowledge the institution desires (Australian Human Resources Institute, n.d.). Some colleges make first contact with an aspiring student during their junior or senior year in high school. The literature would argue this is not effective recruitment (Partridge, Balestracci, Wong, Hebden, & McGeechan, 2015). The goal is to actively seek and pursue students over a time period that will allow the recruiter and the student to learn more about the character of both the student and the institution. For the best results of properly identifying aspirants, the courtship should begin earlier in the students' schooling.

Given how the literature broadly defines recruitment and incorporating what higher education recruitment should not be, the researcher has surmised the following definition: Recruitment identifies potential students, informs them of opportunities, fosters a relationship of trust, and provides a range of materials and activities to help them decide if the institutional choice offered is right for them. This definition of recruitment provides direction to higher education and avoids the pitfalls of settling for selection when the goal is to recruit students.

Doctoral Intensive Research One Institution (R1)

Colleges and universities in the United States rely on the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education for classifying institutions of higher education. Doctoral intensive, also referred to as research one, institutions are those that award a minimum of 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during the year evaluated (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2001). Professional practice doctoral degrees such as the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, and similar degrees are excluded when calculating the number of doctoral degrees. Doctoral intensive research one universities typically have the highest level of research activity.

Retention

Retaining students is essential for any institution of higher education to carry out its mission. Retention is defined relative to student persistence at their particular institution. Retention rates are often calculated by how many students continue from year to year and culminate into completion or graduation rates. A student who leaves college prior to graduation is often counted toward attrition or dropping out. Institutions must be careful to properly account for students who transfer to another institution, take time off for various reasons (raise a family, work, refocus, illness, etc.), and then reenroll. Students see these reasons for leaving as normal progressions while the initial institution where the student enrolled views the student as a dropout (Nora et al., 2012).

Southeastern United States

Generalizing about people in particular locations can be misleading, however certain areas in "the United States have unique cultural characteristics" (Chapman, 2014, p. 234). For the purpose of this research, the southeastern United States is defined by the following states:

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. After their secession from the Union, these seven states were known as the original Confederate States of America (Confederacy, 2017). These southeastern states (along with others who joined later) formed their own government and elected Jefferson Davis (Mississippi) as president and Alexander Stephens (Georgia) as vice president. The dominant issue that made the southeastern states furious to the point of withdrawing from the United States Constitution was their insistence on the continuation of slavery. Leaders and others from these states were willing to leave the Union, form their own government, and fight a war for the opportunity to further enslave African Americans (Levine, 2005). Given this historic stance, I have decided to focus my research within this geographical landscape while studying the recruitment and retention of African Americans in higher education.

Conclusion

The context of this dissertation will focus on the roles of recruitment, retention, and financial resources for African American students. Critical Race Theory and Strategic Enrollment Management are used to direct the study. The research completed for the dissertation involved interviews, observations, and document analysis. More will be said concerning the methodology and methods in the Review of the Literature chapter, which immediately follows this section with specific detail in the Research Design and Methodology chapter.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter two provides a brief synapsis of legal cases in the United States that are pertinent to the journey of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education and continue to provide credence for studying and using it as a paradigm and a theoretical framework. Next, a dissecting of Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) will guide the study from a conceptual framework perspective. A discussion of select literature interconnected to African American recruitment and retention in higher education will also be examined.

Theoretical Framework

The chosen research uses Critical Theory as a dominant worldview with some scholars specifically identifying Critical Race Theory as their paradigm. The necessity of critical research will be juxtaposed with landmark court cases as I trace the history of CRT in education research. Primary criticisms of CRT will also be addressed as I explore the strengths and weaknesses of using the theory to examine the recruitment and retention of African American students in higher education. This and similar research are vital to the success of African Americans and America as a whole.

The Legal Road to Critical Theory

"Land of the free" is part of the last sentence of the United States of America's national anthem, adopted by the country in 1931 (Sonneborn, 2004). The freedom discussed in the anthem is not reality for many Americans, particularly African Americans. African Americans first had to engage in a battle for basic human rights before educational equality. Systemic bias

has formed a "racially hostile legal system" that benefits the White majority while disadvantaging people of color (Daniels, 2013). The racial preferences inherently present within the laws gave rise to Critical Race Theory through Critical Legal Studies before being integrated in education (Tate, 1997; Landson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and other disciplines such as women's studies (Wing, 1997) and sociology (Aguirre, 2000). Prior to defining Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory, I will briefly discuss selected landmark legal cases that were precursors to Critical Theory and others that surround the inception of Critical Race Theory.

Civil Rights Act – 1875

The Civil Rights Act of 1875 ultimately passed after a final push from the death bed of Senator Charles Sumner. The law stated:

> That all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement; subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law, and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude (Civil Rights Act of 1875).

I cannot fathom the jubilation of minorities and abolitionists alike—there was now a much needed legal confirmation of equal rights in public places for all U.S. citizens. The Civil Rights Act helped African Americans establish basic human rights that would lead to a fight for educational equality.

Legal Cases and African American Students in Higher Education

Just eight short years later, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896). The ruling paved the way for additional legalized separation based on race. In subsequent years, several states adopted the doctrine of "separate but equal." Louisiana actually passed a law to provide separate but equal accommodations to Black and White people (Jager, 1969). It was in that same state in 1896 that the Supreme Court used

Plessy v. Ferguson to confirm states may continue using and passing laws separating its citizenry based on race (History.com Staff, 2009). State and local Jim Crow laws were chief among the litigation that furthered racial separation and the notion of African American inferiority.

On the heels of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, Associate Justice John Marshall Harlan opposed Associate Justice Brown in his belief that the Separate Car Act had the purpose of keeping Whites separated from Blacks, which is consistent with the well-known societal structure of keeping Whites socially elevated above non-White citizens. Consequently, Justice Harlan believed this established a "badge" of bondage amongst Blacks. He also noted that "Our constitution is color-blind," but to the detriment of African Americans, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled by majority that "separate but equal" was indeed constitutional. The law would remain in effect for nearly 60 years until finally being overturned by the breakthrough case *Brown v. Board of Education* (Lewis, 2016).

In the years leading up to 1954, school segregation was prominent in most states across the Unites States of America (Klarman, 2007). *Brown v. Board of Education* as we know it today is the combination of five revolutionary cases concerning school segregation. The cases are *Briggs v. Elliot* (SC), *Bula v. Gebhart* (DL), *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* (VA), *Bolling v. Sharpe* (DC), and finally *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka* (KS) (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954). All of the cases were about addressing the issues of desegregation, but although most of the cases concerned vast inequalities among White and Black schools, *Brown v. Board of Education* addressed solely the matter of the law mandating segregation in schools to be deemed unconstitutional.

In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court had to decide if they would overturn the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson,* which ruled that segregation was constitutional as long as it was "separate

but equal" (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896). Although *Plessy v. Ferguson* did not concern school segregation specifically, it was used to reinforce a vast number of federal and state segregation laws while directly causing other racially isolated practices (Cobb, 2005).

There were several arguments provided during the case to explain the inefficiency and unfairness of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling. One argument presented by the plaintiffs was that segregated schools were unable to become equal under the funding constraints set forth by states and the economic disadvantages in predominantly Black communities (Patterson, 2002). Also, when *Plessy v. Ferguson* was decided in 1896, the education system in America differed greatly than in the 1950s. The court probed the physical, socioeconomic, and psychological effects of segregation on Blacks. It was determined that students in African American schools were being denied equal educational opportunities in a segregated environment. Given the history of America's court system, the case was still very much in limbo until the final opinion was read. It was stated by Chief Justice Warren that:

> Segregation of White and Colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the Colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law, for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954).

Chief Justice Warren wanted everyone to understand that there were new dimensions of consideration that did not exist during the time of *Plessy v. Ferguson* and that the psychological detriments of segregation needed to be considered in ways that did not exist in education at the turn of the previous century. When Chief Justice Warren delivered the final opinion of the court in the case, he clearly concluded that "in the field of public education, the doctrine of separate but equal has no place" (Cobb, 2005). This ruling on May 17, 1954, forever shifted the structure of education in America.

Although the ruling was unanimous amongst the justices, the decision was far less popular in states content with the status quo of not allowing African Americans to have access to the same educational facilities as White students. Desegregation was often extremely slow, which in some localities allowed generations of students to be educated in segregated schools even post *Brown v. Board* (Pratt, 1992). *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka II* mandated that local public school had to implement the ruling in *Brown I* "with all deliberate speed" (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1955 as cited in Williams & Houck, 2013). The case should have been viewed as an advancement for all people with educational policy makers at multiple levels (local, state, national) taking notice (Williams & Grooms, 2016). Nevertheless, additional legislation was necessary to mitigate centuries of legally justified oppression toward African Americans, which in turn gave rise to Affirmative Action in employment and higher education decisions from the 1960s on.

As we define Affirmative Action, it is deeply rooted and linked to the era of oppression where race was not simply defined as the color of your skin but was an institution that defined an individual's very being (Rubio, 2009). Affirmative Action stems from the necessity for equality, fairness, and merit while admitting these freedoms were denied to African Americans (Fleming, 2000). It was originally designed to ensure contractors would no longer discriminate on the bases of creed, race, nationality, nor color. President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925 for equal employment opportunities related to federal contractors in 1961; this was a ray of light to help African Americans in higher education but many institutions lagged far behind in African American enrollment (Parry & Finney, 2014).

On the heels of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act in 1964, Affirmative Action was expanded in 1965 by Lyndon B. Johnson, who argued for "equal opportunity, not

preferential treatment." President Johnson stated America cannot take someone who "has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say you are free to compete with all the others" and expect that race to be entirely impartial (Executive Order 10925, 1961) Some institutions of higher education began to take greater steps of affirmative action to increase the number of African Americans in their student body.

The University of California at Davis held two admissions policies for its medical school in the early 1970s. The traditional procedure rejected all students with grade point averages (GPA) below 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Then the applicants went through an interview process where they were scored by the committee members on their science courses' GPA, Medical College Admissions Test scores, extracurricular activities, committee members' summary, and several other criteria. The institution also had a separate special admissions policy, which earmarked 16 of the 100 slots for disadvantaged minority students per enrolling class (Wingeier-Rayo, 2008). A white applicant, Allan Bakke, filed a lawsuit in 1974 after receiving rejection letters from the medical school in two consecutive years. He claimed the special admissions policy violated his rights under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (*California v. Bakke, 1978*). Mr. Bakke had superior scores compared to the sixteen minority students accepted to the medical school when he applied.

After a decision and appeals by both sides, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* in 1978 paved the way for post-secondary education to consider race in admission policies. The court did rule that the university's admission policy was illegal but Justice Lewis Powell explained that although race should not be the only criteria for admission, an institution of higher education can constitutionally seek to have a diverse student body (*California v. Bakke*, 1978). Part of seeking diversity can include race identification but

other factors must also be considered in the decision. This ruling paved the way for post-secondary education to consider race in admission policies.

The University of Michigan Law School used an admissions policy that allowed a variety of criteria to be considered for admissions, including diversity. After being denied, a White applicant claimed the policy used race as a "predominant" factor and disadvantaged her. The courts found that this use of race in admissions to increase diversity was not prohibited by law (Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003).

Until 1996 the University of Texas used an admissions system called the Academic Index (AI). This AI determined a student's admission possibility by calculating the applicant's SAT score and their academic performance in high school; it also gave some preference to racial minorities (Fisher v. University of Texas, 2016). The University of Texas stopped using race as a component of their admissions policy in 1996 after doing so was ruled unconstitutional in *Hopwood v. University of Texas Law School*. The Texas Legislature passed the "Top 10 Percent" plan in response. The plan automatically allows the top 10 percent of graduating high school students in Texas admittance to one of the University of Texas's campuses. Their admissions policy was reexamined in 2003 after *Grutter v. Bollinger* reversed the 1996 decision in the Hopwood case. Once again, the University of Texas began using race in their competitive admissions decisions but this time for 25% of their enrollment and used their Top Ten plan for the other 75%.

In 2008, Abigail Fisher was denied full admission to the University of Texas at Austin but was admitted through their Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP). The CAP program allows students to complete certain required courses at another Texas system institution and then transfer to the University of Texas at Austin to complete their bachelor's degree (Liptak, 2016).

Instead of accepting the conditional admittance, Fisher sued the university, claiming her rights under the Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause were violated because the university uses race as a factor in their admissions process. The ruling in 2011 from the district court favored the university, as did the United States Court of Appeals. The case was then routed to the Supreme Court, where they did not render a ruling but found issues with the Court of Appeals' handling of the case and sent it back to them. The Supreme Court also noted the burden of proof was on the university and their admission policy should be given a closer look. The Court of Appeals upheld their acceptance of the University of Texas admission plan again in 2014 (Francis, 2017). The persistence of the Fisher camp was unwavering—they asked the Supreme Court to review their case for a second time. The Supreme Court's opinion in July of 2016, partially read:

> The University of Texas at Austin has a special opportunity to learn and to teach … different approaches to admissions [that] may foster diversity or instead dilute it. The University must continue to use this data to scrutinize the fairness of its admissions program; to assess … the need for a race-conscious policy; and to identify the effects, both positive and negative, of the affirmative – action measures it deems necessary (Fisher v. University of Texas, 2016).

Under the Equal Protection Clause, the race-conscious admissions policy at the University of Texas was deemed lawful. The findings also placed the burden on university administrators to take the necessary measures to ensure they have a diverse student body.

There are many other cases that have significantly contributed to African American student access to higher education and to the necessity of Critical Race Theory such as *Gratz v. Bollinger*, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, and many others. The litigation mentioned previously directly relates to the legal struggle for African American students to receive access to education. The details of the cases reveal a power structure aimed to benefit the White majority. According to Horkheimer (as cited in Bohman,

2016) theory is “critical” if it seeks to address human liberation from acts of injustice, to seek “emancipation from slavery” and to generate a balance of power that does not disadvantage the people. The research provided through Critical Race Theory acknowledges and illuminates systematic racial inequalities while seeking to generate solutions geared to produce a more equitable world for all people.

Critical Theory

I have chosen critical theory as my theoretical framework. Critical Theory was chosen because I approached the research from a lens that prejudice and privilege are systemically embedded into American society. The theory also supports my research topic as I explore the impact on African Americans who represent the vast minority at a particular university. Critical Race Theory proved beneficial as I explored how resourced are used differently for African Americans and other students in the institution. This worldview is centered on the relationships of power in society and the normalcy displayed in marginalizing one group of people. Critical theory is well equipped to guide my study of African American recruitment and retention at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) in the Southeast. “The critical traditions are best characterized as a set of intellectual positions that examine social arrangements through the lenses of power, domination, and conflict” (Prasad, 2005, p. 109). With a dual purpose, critical theory both pursues analysis of the social dynamics and asserts positive change.

Critical Theory seeks to provide a cultural critique (Prasad, 2005). It argues from the epistemological perspective that the world operates in such a way that it affords some people advantages while disadvantaging others. Researchers within this worldview insist social norms were created by the dominant culture only. Thus, there is a need for additional knowledge generated from the perspective of the minority culture. Knowledge is generated in Critical

Theory by examining the hegemony present in societal structures that marginalize a particular minority group. Methods often used to produce this knowledge are interviews, observations, document analysis, narratives, and story-telling. The understanding gained is then leveraged to produce potential solutions. The axiology of Critical Theory is providing a voice for the suppressed culture. Critical theorist value being the tools needed to display the platform of the overlooked and forgotten. The ontology of critical theory is accepting the reality that hegemony exists within races in our society. Our ontological view exists within the chosen epistemology. Analyzing the systems in place that support the assumed one-dimensional culture gives credence to the overarching premise of inequity (Prasad, 2005). With the notion that communication is asymmetric, critical theorists then use communicative action as a bridge to solution-oriented activism. Interaction with the marginalized group is also a key concept of critical theory.

Understanding research through the necessity of praxis was novel until Karl Marx expounded that the purpose of research should be to change the world (Prasad, 2005). Marx was a visionary philosopher who advocated for greater responsibility within research in the mid- to late-1800s (Barry, 2016). According to Prasad (2005), Marx was not without his critics—some researchers opposed his assumptions related to racism, sexism, and imperialism. Nevertheless, it would be negligent to omit Karl Marx in the history of Critical Theory. Other contributing scholars to Critical Theory include but are not limited to George Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci, and Paulo Freire.

Critical Theory has several versions derived from Karl Marx. The different versions are Orthodox Marxism, Structural Marxism, Cultural Marxism, and Radical Feminism. The variations all hold true to the fundamental tenets of seeking to analyze and resolve societal injustice. They differ in their degree of solution implementation. From the Cultural Maxism

version of critical theory, the Frankfurt School was established in the late 1920s (Bohman, 2016). Key scholars within the Frankfurt School include Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, and Jurgen Habermas (Prasad, 2005).

Critical Race Theory's History in Education Research

Birthed from Critical Theory is Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is rooted in the notion that race is embedded within society (Landson-Billings, 1999). CRT was introduced through the field of Critical Legal Studies by Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman in the 1970s following the civil rights era. "Serving Two Masters: Integration Ideals and Client Interests in School Desegregation Litigation" and "Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma" are articles by Dr. Bell that cleared a path for CRT in education. Bell argued that the attorneys for the Black plaintiffs were torn in two directions. Lawyers fought for integration while also needed to do what was best for their client which was to have additional educational resources and not simply integration (Bell, 1975). Bell went a step further in Brown v. Board of Education (1980) and reasoned that for the courts to advance toward racial justice the decision would be in the interest of the White majority. In the late 1980s, Dr. Lani Guinier argued that voting systems were structured to advantage some over others. She further found that race played a large role in determining the results of the elections (as cited in Tate, 1994). Elections shape political influence and education is often at the mercy of the political opinion leaders. Research from Ladson-Billings, Grant, and Tate is littered with CRT as they analyzed the history of school desegregation. Publications by Tate (1994) in *Urban Education* and *Teachers College Record* from Ladson-Billings (1995) challenged the traditional conceptual understanding and offered Critical Race Theory as a resource to better comprehend matters dealing with race.

Most notably in recent years is Adrienne Dixson's (2014) *Researching Race in Education*, a book that declares discussing race in education is the answer to demolishing the macroaggressions of racism. Authors in the book note the rising diversity of students while public school K-12 teachers remain "mostly White, monolingual, and middle class" (p. 25). The racial academic achievement disparity between African American students and their counterparts is a mounting concern in education (p. 134). The book argues (p. 143) that the deficit views about Black students have contributed to racial microagressions. These vital issues of teach racial disparity and the achievement gap directly affect African American student's ability to earn scores in high school necessary to enter a doctoral intensive research one institutions. If admitted, the deficit model expressed through university administration, faculty and staff are barriers to retention.

"Critical" Litigation for African American Access to Higher Education

The timeline in this section is a visual illustration of when the selected legal cases and milestones in Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory occurred. It is important to notice the emergence of Critical Race Theory within Legal Studies after *Brown v. Board* and the introduction of Affirmative Action. After a strong civil rights push in the 1960s and early 1970s, many scholars felt the movement was losing steam. There was a need for a new theory that could address the microagressions and subtle racist forms within the justice system geared to benefit the White majority. Critical Race Theory served that purpose and enlightened the field of education after *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, which allowed race to be one of the factors considered in higher education admission decisions (Bakke, 1978). More scholars (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Farber & Sherry, 1997; Solorzano, 1998) continued to press the critical thought process within education as the new millennium approached. Adrienne

Dixson is one of several experts currently expounding on the importance of Critical Race Theory in her research. Some of the pivotal sources are: *Researching Race in Education— Policy Practice, and Qualitative Research* (Dixson 2014), *The Resegregation of Schools—Education and Race in the Twenty-First Century* (Pellegrino, 2015) and the *Handbook of Critical Race Theory* (Bernier, 2014). The last two works mentioned were both edited by Donner and Dixson and Lynn and Dixson, respectively. Tate and Ladson-Billings provided a bridge from Bell's critical legal theory to education. The two scholars worked to show the necessity for education to focus on the connection between inequality and race. Dixson adds to the work of Ladson-Billings by using CRT to examine current variables in education. A few of the variables are the increasing diversity in the student body with a homogenous faculty, examining middle class Black family and their perspectives on public school and providing a status update on CRT in education since 1995.

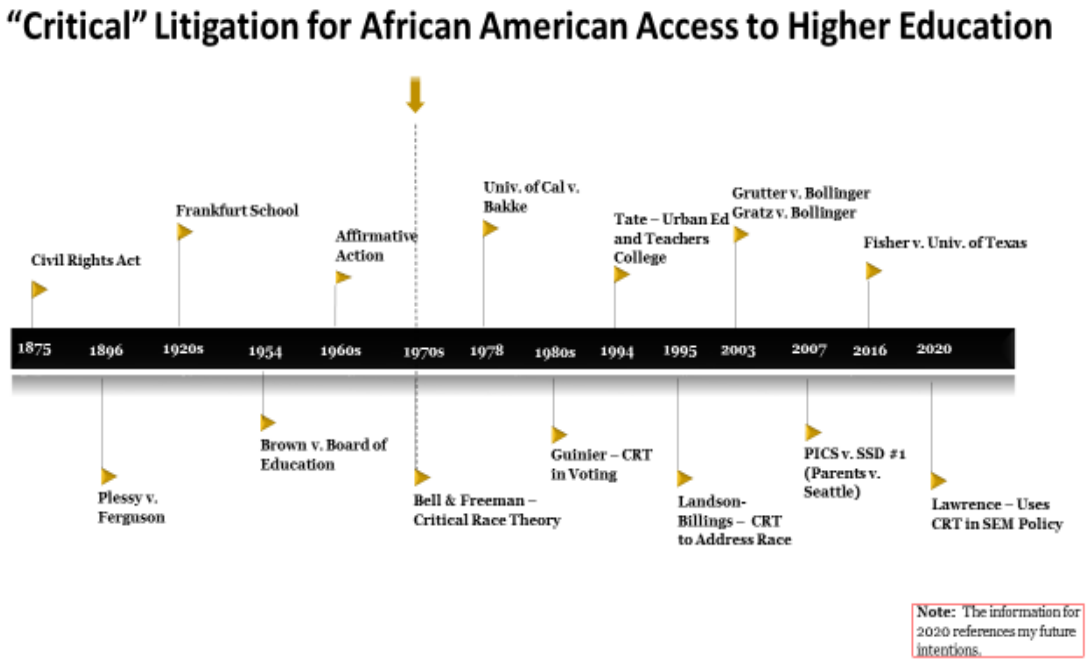

Figure 2. "Critical" litigation for African American access to higher education.

Figure 2 is a timeline of litigation that has profoundly affected African American access to higher education. The gold down arrow indicates the introduction of Critical Race Theory into the literature in the 1970s by Bell and Freeman.

Defining Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Researchers who choose CRT argue that race is embedded at the core of American society and they hope to expose racism that has become normalized. The scholars see a need to no longer accept 'this is how it has always been done' as an acceptable response to discriminatory policies, procedures, and traditions. CRT seeks to illuminate issues surrounding race and racism that are marginalizing a particular group of people (Hiraldo, 2010). Customarily these issues have surfaced through race, class, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, and others. This theory goes beyond being a voice for the oppressed and seeks to rectify the issues of the marginalized group. CRT researchers see the narratives, experiences, storytelling, family histories, and biographies of people of color as evidence of the daily injustices habitually perpetuated by a culture of White supremacy (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

Critical Race Theory is a worldview that embraces issues of power, race, culture, exploitation, history, economics, and bias and "incorporates both a theory of change [and] purposing to which change should be directed" (Heck, 2004). Discussing race openly in society is often viewed as taboo. The Black community has always discussed racial issues at "homes, neighborhoods, churches, barbershops, and communal gathers" (Howard, 2008). CRT is a scholarly voice with an inclusive paradigm that centers on race yet provides space to analyze gender, social class, sexual orientation, and other differences used to exhibit hegemony among the races.

Critical Race Theory affects admissions by marginalizing the educational opportunities of African Americans which negatively affects the ability for these students to access increasingly selective institutions of higher education. The educational disparity is substantial when evaluating Black and White students and makes CRT an important research lens for this study. A review of select literature using CRT to study recruitment and retention is near the end of this chapter.

Tenets of Critical Race Theory

The five prominent tenets of CRT as noted by Delgado and Stefancic (2012) and DeCuir and Dixson (2004) are: racism is normal, whiteness as property, interest convergence, social construction, and unique voice of color. These concepts give critical theory credence as its own paradigm. Explanations of these five prominent tenets of CRT are:

1. Racism is Normal

   > Racism is as American as apple pie, baseball, and the stars on the United States flag. CRT takes a realistic view of society that acknowledges the prevalent racist culture. The injustice never sleeps and rarely hides—it negatively affects people of color daily. When overt racism is not present, we often still have racial microagressions that negatively influence the minority group (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Bell is noted in Delado & Stefancic (2012) as summarizing the racism by saying some would rather hire a White college dropout than a Black Ph.D.

2. Whiteness as Property

   > Whiteness as Property can be better understood as White privilege. Racism benefits the White majority economically, financially, and psychologically. Therefore "society has little incentive to eradicate it" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The privilege is enjoyed, owned, shared, and transferred almost exclusively within the White majority (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). Ladson-Billings (1999) argues that being White is akin to owning property and enjoying the privileges of ownership while renters (non-Whites) are not privy to such benefits. The privilege extends to education because the best teachers, curriculum, facilities, access, exposure, and support are generally available to White students.

3. Interest Convergence

Concessions allowed to people of color usually only occur if it is in the best interest of the White majority or at least the White elite (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). The landmark victories won and gains earned by people of color such as legally attending public schools, voting, and being considered a 'full' person—as opposed to three-fifths of a person as the U.S. Constitution (1787) originally stated—were all rights White people have always enjoyed in America. Since desegregation, countless Black educators, administrators, and schools have closed, which financially cripples the Black community (Hornick-Lockard, 2015). Once people of color were allowed to vote, laws and rules were established like absurd tests to cast a ballot to restrict voting access. And just for good measure, the "U.S. prison population is largely drawn from the most disadvantaged part of the nation's population [and is] disproportionately minority" (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). The examples all show the "gains" of people of color coinciding with the interest of White people. Even within the article "So When It Come Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There," the Black freshman young man recounts being asked how fast he ran the 40-yard dash prior to anyone asking him his name. It is yet another example of the majority being more interested in how they can benefit from the presence of people of color; in this instance the benefit was entertainment value (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004).

Sometimes viewed as a separate tenet but closely related to interest convergence is differential racialization. This concept equates to having friends that only come around when you have money to freely spend. One group of people of color is depicted as "happy-go-lucky" while they seem content staying in "their" place below and behind White people, but when conditions change, that same group is viewed as barbaric, out of control, and animalistic (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). As long as the perceptions and actions of the minority group are benevolent and submissive to the majority group, there is no uproar from the White majority.

4. Social Construction

Races were created by society on limited similarities to cluster and establish a hierarchy. Skin color, facial features, and hair texture are enough to categorize a person for life. Society takes very little stock in the other things that make the human, such as personality, kindness, and intelligence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Furthermore, it is difficult for individuals to change their rank within the hierarchy, which causes immobility within the social structure. No amount of wealth or knowledge will likely preclude a Black man from being stigmatized in certain parts of any state in America.

5. Unique Voice of Color

> People of color are seen as experts in race relations. They become the de facto diversity representative in circles where there are few minorities. "Minority status … brings with it a presumed competence to speak about race and racism" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). DeCuir and Dixson's (2004) research is a prime example because it depicts a school "dedicated" to diversity and changing the racist culture of their entire school. The solution for the school was to hire one Black diversity coordinator for the school who will be singularly responsible for teaching all multicultural courses, programming, and professional development. This short-sided or calculated approach will yield minimal results in changing the culture, if it has any effect at all.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Using CRT

All theories have subjective aspects with various ways of comprehending their application in different fields. Critical Race Theory is not an exception. Next I will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using CRT to examine the recruitment and retention of students of color.

Strengths of CRT.

Critical Race Theory provides a critical race consciousness of the reality for students of color in higher education (Bell, 1980). The spotlight cast by CRT increases the probability that institutional structures maintaining negative racial ideologies will be exposed. The theory has the perspective that racism is an ordinary part of life embedded in the fabric of society (Freeman, 1978). This belief is paramount to the examination of recruiting and retaining students of color because many of them hold the same belief and cite systemic racism as a hindrance to higher education (Freeman, 1997; Solorzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2000; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Howard, 2008; Harper, 2009). Possibly the most impressive strength is CRT's assumption that those who are oppressed have the ability and power to recreate social structures that currently perpetuate inequalities. This notion is why researchers are currently submitting articles using CRT for

publication, why high school students are applying to PWIs that did not recruit them, and why legal rulings such as that in *University of Texas v. Fisher* are all helping construct an equitable educational system. The last strength I will mention is intersectionality. Kimberle Crenshaw's work through CRT allows other concepts beyond race to be addressed, such as gender and mental illness, among others. (Crenshaw, 2010). Intersectionality will allow researchers to continue using the critical race perspective while analyzing the intersection with strategic enrollment management that affect African American recruitment and retention in higher education.

Weaknesses of CRT.

A theory rooted in addressing race inequalities created and sustained by the White majority has attracted its share of critics. Scholars have condemned their colleagues who use CRT for not applying all tenets of the theory in their research (Subotnik, 1997). Others have denounced particular tenets directly. Liberals have attacked the notion of interest convergence as too harsh a reality to galvanize behind. They believe student activists and young lawyers would rather pursue more inspiring endeavors. CRT's stance of being unapologetic concerning the use of subjectivity and its focus on narratives cause naysayers to long for a more objective and rule-oriented theory. Some would argue CRT should have never departed from legal studies, where the guidelines were clearly defined by the majority (Farber, Daniel, & Sherry, 1997). Critics have argued that CRT scholars use counter-narratives mainly to align the data gathered from participants with the theory, regardless of the content collected (Barlow, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) is a "comprehensive approach … to achieving the optimal recruitment, retention and graduation of students" (Kalsbeek, 2013). The primary

elements of SEM are recruitment, retention, and ensuring student success. Beyond increased applications, admissions, and yield, a robust SEM system will also increase student satisfaction and success and engage alumni (Henderson, 2017). The idea of strategic enrollment management continues to be shaped with each shift in the supply and demand for students and institutions in higher education. Currently, there are shifting national demographics that must be considered when institutions ponder the shape of their next class of enrollees. Additionally, higher education finds itself receiving fewer federal and state resources than ever before. Colleges and universities around the globe are using SEM to attain their most prized resource, students. Some institutions are looking for a certain type of scholar and/or a particular number of students, yet the common denominator is the need for students.

The Enrollment Management Association (2017) argues that the primary forces shaping enrollment management are the economy, demographics, education options, technology, consumer behavior, assessment, and fit. Economics and demographics were most influential in why institutions moved from a traditional admissions model to enrollment management model. The ability to predict future enrollment with a certain degree of certainty is a major advantage of SEM (Henderson, 2017). Proactive analysis will capture foreseeable issues and melt (those students who change their mind and attend a different institution) by using the proper technology. The benefit technology provides SEM is that enrollment professionals are able to understand granular details about the previous year's enrollment and set aggressive goals (Kilgore & Wagner, 2017). The overall data gathered may uncover the desires of students, analysis of competitor institutions, current institution competencies, and weaknesses. When applying SEM, the discussion of ethics is often absent and this is a weakness of how the model is applied. Ethical implications of SEM and other institutional models should be routinely

deliberated by the board, president, and senior administration (Fiske, 1981). Another key shortcoming of SEM is the unintended consequences that may negatively impact a subset of students (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015).

Enrollment decisions are not made in a singular vacuum. Various constituents are routinely vocal about the imperative need for a certain type of student. Faculty will overwhelmingly say there is a great need for better quality students while those connected to the financial health of the institution are concerned about the sheer quantity (Dolence, 1998). If today represented the grand opening of a university, what would be the desired composition of the student body? Does it matter if the institution is a large research one school, public/private, or selective/non-selective? What if it represents the flagship university for the state? Should we consider the political affiliation of the governor and university president? Who actually sets the agenda of the president's office? How do internal and external interest groups manipulate admissions? These are just a few questions to illustrate the broad scope of strategic enrollment management and the externalities that influence institutions of higher education.

Key Components of SEM

Key components of SEM include (1) systematic process of admissions, (2) reality of fees and tuition, (3) disbursement of financial aid, and (4) student retention (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). Michael Dolence (1998) does a good job dissecting his similar definition of SEM in the *Handbook for the College Admissions Profession* while providing guidance for empirical use. Common goals within SEM include strategically using financial aid in the ever-changing financial landscape. Attracting quality applicants while maintaining a desired rate of selectivity is important to most admissions officers. Strategic enrollment management can allow institutions to diversify their student body by targeting select groups of students. Targeted student groups

may include transfer students, diverse scholars (ethnicity, race, gender, geography, age, religion, etc.), children of alumni or donors, honors students, athletes, and more.

Based on Hossler and Bontrager (2015), I derived the following figure to further explain strategic enrollment management:

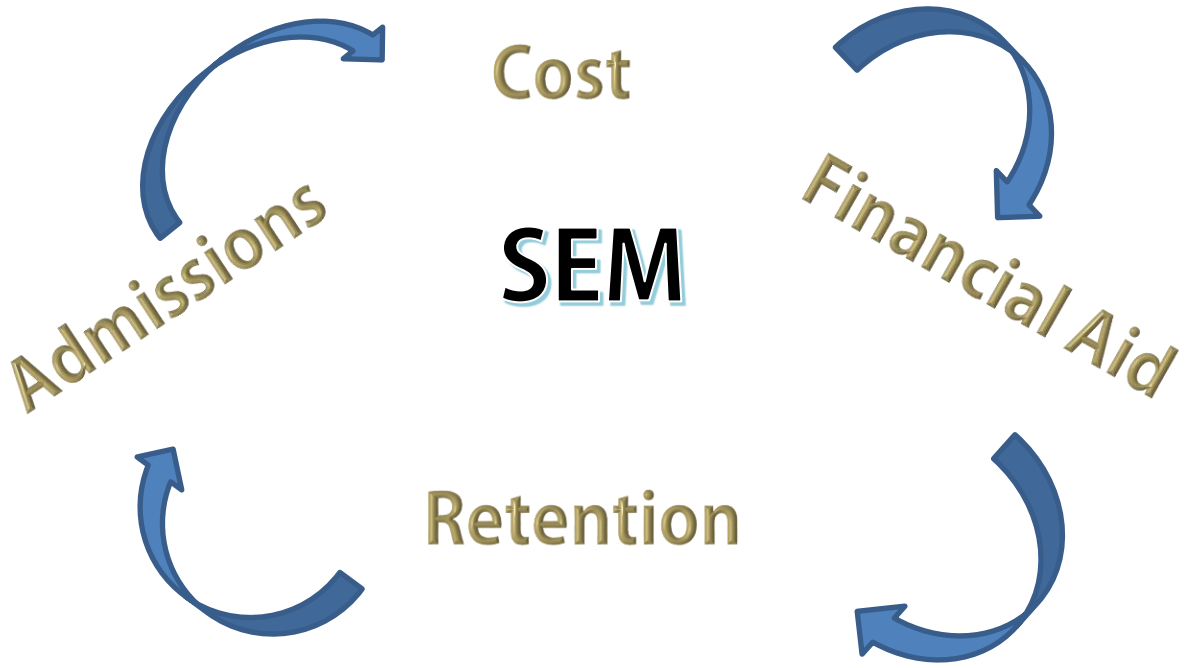

Figure 3. Continuous SEM cycle.

Figure 3 denotes a continuous SEM cycle. Admissions include identifying particular types of students to target and actively recruiting these students from application to the institution through their enrollment. Cost covers any tuition or fees charged to students that are contrary to financial aid offered to students; typically, this consists of scholarships, loans, waivers, and grants. All programs and environments dedicated to student comfort and

matriculation represent retention. Admissions, cost, financial aid, and retention should continually evolve to best serve students and the institution.

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Defined

Having a set of principles, concepts, and guidelines surrounding enrollment should be fundamental within the discipline of higher education. The definition of strategic management enrollment (SEM) is a "comprehensive approach … to achieving the optimal recruitment, retention and graduation of students" (Kalsbeek, 2013). The definition is broad and open for interpretation. Every institution could use this very same definition, have completely different student enrollment demographics, and declare they have obtained their "optimal" enrollment. Michael Dolence (1998) does a good job dissecting his similar definition of SEM in the *Handbook for the College Admissions Profession*. I will analyze Dolence's definition of strategic enrollment management through a critical lens.

"Comprehensive" Within SEM

The first significant term within the SEM definition is *comprehensive*. Comprehensive enrollment plans take an all-inclusive approach when selecting each incoming class of students. Careful consideration is taken of the proper complement between quality and quantity along with how to assess academic excellence. This thinking goes beyond the general expectation that "everyone will be a recruiter of minorities" to more progressive tactics that create holistic and alternative practices to aid minority enrollment (Black, Cortes, & Lincove, 2015). Many universities are using various non-cognitive measures for admissions policies in an effort to attract qualified students who have been historically omitted (Hoover, 2013). The university studied defines SEM through a guided understanding from senior administration of the type of incoming class desired. Admission is determined heavily by academic performance displayed

through a student's GPA, SAT and ACT scores. Strong consideration is also given to their performance in advanced placement courses and joint enrollment. Extracurricular activities, essays and recommendations are also factors for student enrollment at the researched institution.

"Optimal" Within SEM

How we define *optimal* shapes the essence of the future student body. With the increased power of minority students to vote through their choice of institution, a strategic enrollment management plan's definition of optimal should include seeking racially diverse students. American education was started with homogeneous layers of reactionary integration, which explains why there is a need for minority recruitment today. Low numbers of minority students in post-secondary education has a direct impact on all races and influences a multitude of externalities such as economics, politics, income, health, safety, socialism, safety, and more. Higher education now has a plethora of options from various types of colleges, universities, and online institutions, so the market should become extremely competitive to attract and retain each and every student (Crocombe, Crocombe, & Commonwealth Secretariat, 1994).

Funding and benefits follow students, whether referring to the federal and private tuition dollars or the increased institutional ranking from a class of academic overachievers. Minority students will have choices and the institutional climate relative to diversity will play a large role as they make enrollment decisions. It is in the best interest of administrators in higher education to understand the importance of recruiting, enrolling, and retaining minority students (Davis & Warfield, 2011). To maintain current students and increase student enrollment numbers, minorities must play a larger role given the steady increase in the minority population. Ultimately, the definition of optimal within SEM is determined by the institution's administration and/or the governing body. The researched institution relies on senior

administration to adjust what "optimal" mean for them each year. There may be a different focus from year to year.

"Recruitment" Within SEM

The underappreciated notion of *recruitment* will be defined as identifying potential students, informing them of opportunities, fostering a relationship of trust, and providing a range of materials and activities to help them decide if the institutional choice being offered is right for them. A personal encounter found me at what was advertised as a recruitment event for high school Black male students. After speaking to dozens of young African American men invited to attend, I quickly learned that were all seniors with multiple college acceptance letters to highly selective schools; many were Ivy League institutions. This was not a recruiting event but what is referred to as "selection." Selection is when institutions select which students they offer acceptance after the admissions criteria have previously been accomplished by the scholar (Cole, 1973). The goal of recruitment is to actively seek and pursue students over time, which will allow the recruiter and the student to learn more about the character of both the student and the institution. For best results at properly identifying aspirants, the courtship should begin earlier in the students' schooling.

Recruiting under-represented students has become increasingly problematic (Vedantam, 2013). Some of the problems include government mandates to racially integrate and create policies of equality and inclusion and multiple lawsuits leading to court decisions reversing affirmative action in many states. However difficult, the public good that is education should be accessible to all (Letizia, 2015). Higher education has a social obligation to provide high-quality educational experiences to all who desire such enlightenment. For that reason, the topic of

minority recruitment and retention should be of utter importance, especially to those related to higher education (Sanchez, 2018).

Recruitment is personal and recruiters must adjust their angle of persuasion based on the interest of the aspirant student. They must speak the language of the student, understand their desires, and meet their needs (Foster, 2003). Unless our recruitment and retention with low-income students and students of color improves, "we can't meet President Obama's 2020 goal of once again leading the world in college completion rates" (Tucker, 2014). Multiple research studies reveal and confirm the best ideas, teams, administrations, groups, clubs, and organizations are composed of heterogeneous members (Bennett, 1986). Recruitment for the researched institution consisted of targeting high schools that produced a large number of enrolled students in the past. Lesser outreach was used on other areas of recruitment to complete the targeted outreach.

"Retention" Within SEM

Once the enthusiastic student begins their first semester draped in the school colors, administrators must focus on retention. Retention in the most straightforward definition refers to students who stay in school until they receive a degree (Seidman, 2005). Taking a deeper look, institutions must consider the educational goals of each student. Although the goal of most students will be to earn a degree, others may choose a different path. Some students could enroll wanting to eventually transfer to another institution. Others could leave school after realizing their future is calling for a different type of experience to prepare them for success. Thus, having some flexibility with the retention definition is warranted. College should be a place for students to learn about themselves and the type of citizen they want to be as they increase their academic knowledge. Giving students the freedom to change their mind and their educational goals is

permissible as long as there is no attempt to group all students under a rigid definition of success that is only reached if they earn a degree (Liao, 2015). Multiple professions are saturated with successful employees and managers who are not working in their college field of study nor using the degree they earned. Similar to many highly selective institutions, retention efforts for the researched university are not robust. The institution believes recruiting the proper students will help retention efforts.

Graduation Within SEM

In America, access to higher education has always been an issue for minorities, especially access to the more selective institutions. Enrollment rates for minority students in post-secondary instructions have increased over the decades. However, those numbers have regressed in the last few years (Scott, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2015). Low-income and minority students are enrolling and matriculating through institutions of higher education at a slower rate than White students (Gladieux & Swail, 1998). Nevertheless, strides are being made so all people see an avenue to college if it is part of their life goal. Minority students bring a diverse perspective to campus that will enhance the learning experience (Burt, 2015). Educational communities are at their best when multicultural experiences are an everyday occurrence.

The economy will also prosper as more focus is placed on educating minorities and increasing graduation rates. The Pew Research Center in a 2014 study found that college-educated millennials' financial outlook was better than their peers who were not college educated. The findings show that those who are college educated did better in basically every economic measure. The report findings stated, "The median annual salary for full-time workers ages 25 to 32 who possess bachelor's degrees is roughly $17,500 higher than for those with high school diplomas alone, the widest education-related earnings gap in modern history." College

graduates also have significantly lower unemployment rates, 3.8 percent compared to 12.2 percent, and report being more satisfied with their current jobs. The analysis is based on a nationally representative survey of 2,002 adults, supplemented with economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2015). Having more financially stable citizens will lead to advantages for all of us. Educating minorities will allow more people to pay into the government programs that are designed to help the destitute, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program; Social Security Administration; Food Assistance for Women, Infants, and Children; and many more. Minorities currently make up a significant number of people reliant on these public services and increased access to higher education will reduce this group's usage (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

The human capital theory supports the qualitative research mentioned. Human capital theory declares people who invest in higher education and training will be rewarded with increased productivity in the labor market, enabling them to earn higher wages (McCall, 2015). The cost associated with the theory as it relates to education includes books, tuition, fees, and living expenses while attaining a degree. For many minorities these costs are insurmountable and serve as barriers to entering higher education. Some minority students have the added responsibilities of providing financially for their family (Scott-Clayton & Minaya, 2014). Institutions must find ways to eliminate and/or reduce the direct and indirect cost associated with post-secondary education. Recruitment efforts are stifled by potential students weighing the option of more immediately gratifying opportunities in the job market.

Once an enrollment plan defines *comprehensive*, *optimal*, *recruitment*, *retention*, and *graduation* and links the terms to the mission, academic vision, and strategic plan of the institution we now have strategic enrollment management (Wilkinson, Taylor, Peterson, &

Machado-Taylor, 2007). To the previous point in retention, highly selective institutions often rely on the stringent admissions process to admit academically gifted students will are motivated to graduate.

Why Use SEM

The history of Strategic Enrollment Management dates back to the 1950s and the Government Issue (G.I.) Bill. The bill provides millions of veterans with financial aid for college along with low-interest rates on home loans, small business loans, and much more. Although signed into law in 1944, higher education began to strongly feel the effects of the bill in the 1950s when thousands of soldiers returned from war and drastically increased the number of people seeking post-secondary education (Goldsmith, 2016). Institutions were able to be more selective until the growth of community colleges during the 1950s and 1960s. During the 1970s, institutions were competing for students and this battle for scholars heightened with roughly a 42 percent decrease in traditional-age college students. It was during this time the term "enrollment management" surfaced in higher education as colleges employed targeted recruitment. The 1980s and 1990s started a debate (that continues today) regarding whether higher education is a public good (Wilkinson, Taylor, Peterson, & Machado-Taylor, 2007). Retention and graduation began to be analyzed as part of enrollment management and became a strategic part of institutions. Several other countries (Brazil, Germany, Finland, France, Norway, Slovenia, and Sweden) treat post-secondary education as a public good—some version of their programs are offered at no cost (Jilani, 2014). The 2000s saw the growth of enrollment data and multiple ways to reach SEM goals, so the SEM professional was added to the president's cabinet (Enrollment Management Association, 2017).

The literature as well as the empirical data suggest institutions of higher education are more racially diverse after implementing a strategic plan that explicitly includes minority enrollment (Drew, Oli, Rice, Ardissone, Galindo-Gonzalez, Sacasa, ... & Triplett, 2015; Smith, Handley, Zale, Rushing, & Potvin, 2015; Burt, Haacker, Batchelor, & Denning, 2016). Policies are only as great as the character and fortitude of the leadership in authority to implement and enforce change with sustainability. Critical race theory serves as a conduit for the conversation of strategic enrollment management while grappling with power and marginalization in higher education.

SEM's Use in Various Sectors of Higher Education

SEM will manifest itself differently at various institutions depending on the school's mission, geography, and academic offerings (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). The early adopters of SEM mostly included private colleges and universities. As time passed, SEM conferences are now attended by flagship, four-year, and two-year public institutions. There is also a growing contingent of international higher education institutions present.

Public schools are using SEM more than ever to confront two glaring issues—decreased state funding and the ever-pressing need for quality students. Public institutions have seen decreases in their state appropriations in recent years, leaving them more dependent on tuition dollars from student enrollment (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). State funding of yesteryear will like not return. Strategic thinking is now an ongoing process for administrators rather than a periodic exercise (Hearn & Ciarimboli, 2017). Meanwhile, public institutions must keep costs low, which means maintaining modest tuition rates for a multitude of reasons. Private schools are also scrutinized (maybe not to the level of public schools) for their cost of attendance. From 1990 to 2000, private universities increased tuition by 70 percent while public institutions

increased by 84 percent and two-year schools by 62 percent (Johnstone, 2005). The current climate is hypersensitive to the amount of loans students are accumulating. The societal concern over student loans has caused some colleges and universities to use discounted rates. Non-selective schools have much smaller endowments compared to selective schools, which makes them susceptible to accruing debt at high levels. There are more students with inadequate financial aid because tuition and other higher education costs have increased faster than family income over the past decades (Breland et al., 2002).

The retention rate aspect of SEM has various types of institutions interested in learning more about strengthening their own SEM commitment. Retention rates increase with the level of degree. The higher the degree, the higher the retention rate. This general rule tends to hold true except for elite private liberal arts colleges. Even with limited degree offerings, elite private liberal arts colleges have higher retention rates than many institutions offering masters and doctoral degrees (Long, 2004).

More SEM models are incorporating student mobility as a vital component to retention. Students who are full-time, between the ages of 18 and 23, and live on campus have higher retention rates than nontraditional students. Traditional students are more likely to be found at selective institutions with non-selective schools enrolling more non-traditional students. In addition to the risk of non-selective schools accruing debt, the high level of minority students they enroll have lower graduation rates and are prone to be part-time students, full-time employees, older students and commuters (Rigol, 2004). It is important to mention students at non-selective schools may have different academic goals than students at more selective institutions. SEM senior leaders are using more analytical data at both two-year and four-year schools that have mobile students and students who are coming to them as their second

institution. Capturing transfers who attended another school rather than those who drop out is finding its way into SEM.

SEM Effectiveness

The success of SEM hinges on the reporting structure of the senior enrollment officer (who is included in the SEM organization), how the SEM organization is arranged, and its functionality (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). However, Hossler and Kalsbeek (2013) reported that there is no evidence that the "composition of enrollment units influence their effectiveness (p. 7)." Effective SEM units tend to have their senior officer included in the president's cabinet. This reporting structure gives enrollment issues a greater likelihood of remaining part of the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the institution. While being part of the senior management team, the enrollment leader should form effective relationships with other members of the cabinet to help foster success. Last, an effective SEM organization should include admissions, registration, financial aid, and a research component (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015).

Strategic Enrollment Management is responsible for securing students that represent a sizable portion of an institution's income through tuition dollars (Dolence, 1996). Tuition is a source of operating budget and academic scholarships. In the past two decades, SEM models have been effective diversifying the student body at universities and colleges. Undergraduate students of color (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska native) increased from 2.5 million in 1990 to 6.4 million in 2010 at degree-granting colleges and universities (Jones, 2015). This is a 13 percent increase in students of color over 20 years.

SEM Risk

Strategic Enrollment Management is not a panacea. It takes hard work by units throughout the institution to accomplish the goals of optimal enrollment. As mentioned in the SEM effectiveness section, enrollment for students of color has increased but the persistence rate for these students remains a problem. The African American graduation rate is unpromisingly lower than that of their White counterparts (Roach, 2013). The Stubborn Racial Gap in Degree Attainment Rates in the United States (2019) reported that only 38.9% of Black students who enrolled in a four-year university for the 2011 – 2012 academic year received a bachelor's degree as of 2017. Meanwhile, 64.8 % of White students within the same criteria were awarded a bachelor's degree. The risk within SEM is it may artificially signal a solution to the lack of students of color with higher degrees. In essence, the gains reported are typically isolated to enrollment. Administrators should diligently research ways to understand the lack of persistence for students of color while implementing programs and policies that help student retention through graduation. "Institutions retain students and students persist" (Hagedorn, 2006, p. 6). To further illustrate this point, data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) compared six-year graduation rates by race from a cohort in 1996 and 2004. The results show the graduation rates for "African American students in the 2004 cohort was only 0.06 percent higher than the graduation rates of African American students in the 1996 cohort" (Jones, 2015, p. 246).

Merely enrolling more students of color is not good enough. Institutions should do several things through SEM to further their retention efforts. Universities and colleges should (1) enhance their efforts to foster a campus environment that affirms the "cultural background and traditions of students of color," (2) implement policies and practices that "facilitate interactions

among diverse students [faculty, staff and administrators] to make campus more inclusive," (3) work with student affairs to "promote student engagement," and (4) "leverage their relationship with students to help encourage their active involvement on campus" (Jones, 2015). Diversity and inclusion are essential to gaining equal opportunities, but they lack substance without striving toward equity.

Viewing SEM Through the Lens of CRT

African Americans and other minorities have encountered a multitude of roadblocks while navigating their way in and through the highways of higher education (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Enrollment is far from an exact science and if not properly monitored can result in a host of institutional issues. Docking and Curton (2015) declare that some administrators attempt to manipulate variables for a particular outcome while moving forward instead of making sizable changes to correct the framework. Institutions exist with student bodies that are homogenous, consisting of nearly all one ethnicity, or of the same social class, or from a similar geographical territory (Taylor, 2014). Most universities are somewhere along the enrollment pendulum seeking the proper mix of student type. The tragic racial history of America provides the necessity to battle for equal education and the present need to recruit, enroll, retain, and graduate minority students. Critical race theory serves as a conduit for the conversation of power, marginalization, and strategic enrollment management in higher education.

The Connection Between CRT and SEM

As the cost of higher education continues to increase, families who earn the least are impacted the most. When African Americans attend post-secondary institutions they disproportionately find themselves at low-quality schools (Clark, 2016). Many Black families cannot afford for the student to attend their first-choice school. Beyond the fact that Blacks often

earn less than Whites, if we take Black and White families who earn the same, the White family on average has seven times the net worth of the Black family (Conley, 2001; Dew, 2018). Highlighted in CRT is that racism as a normal part of society that marginalizes African Americans, which remains present in the cost function of SEM. Current research (Mortenson, 2003) indicates many flagship institutions are enrolling students from high-income families at an increasing rate. "Both 2-year and 4-year institutions appear to have deemphasized the recruitment of underserved minorities" (Breland et al., 2002). The purposeful lack of diversity in admissions during a time when there are increased college-age students of color reflects a sense of institutional ownership by the current White majority and demonstrates CRT's whiteness as power tenet.

Some scholars (Carnevale & Rose, 2003; Fleming, 2000) have indicated that society no longer agrees with race-based affirmative action in higher education. Instead, they are supportive of income-based affirmative action. Researchers (Karen, 2002; Trent et al., 2003) have stated income-based affirmative action will not lead to equal racial student body representation but SEM is still moving toward a socio-economic focus. Whites do not benefit from race-based affirmative action but many Whites can benefit from income-based affirmative action. The notion of interest convergence in CRT correlates to the financial aid process in SEM that targets income over race. Retention of African American students is aided by having other African Americans on campus (Jones, 2015). Student organizations that honor the heritage of African Americans are a start to mitigating the adverse campus climate endured by many Black students at selective PWIs (Strayhorn, Terrell, Redmond, & Walton, 2012). In some instances, the social construction of CRT speaks to simply being African American, presenting retention problems evident in SEM related to the lack of "belonging" not shared by White students.

The current racial climate is increasing uncomfortable for African American students. The Anti-Defamation League reported a 77% increase in White supremacist propaganda on the campuses of higher education institutions from the 2016 – 2017 academic year to 2017 – 2018 (Zahneis, 2018). Several large predominately White doctoral intensive universities such as Texas State University, University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Clemson University, University of Texas and Michigan State University have garnered national attention for White supremacy activity on their campus over past two years. Even worse, multiple predominately White institutions (University of Kentucky, Carnell University and Baylor University) have experienced racial violence against minorities since the election of President Trump. According to local newspapers, some of the Black and other minority students felt, afraid, threatened, unsafe, humiliated, unwanted, emotional, disrespected and surprised. Even if the African American students continue in their current campus climate and increase the retention rate despite the circumstances, they do so at what cost?

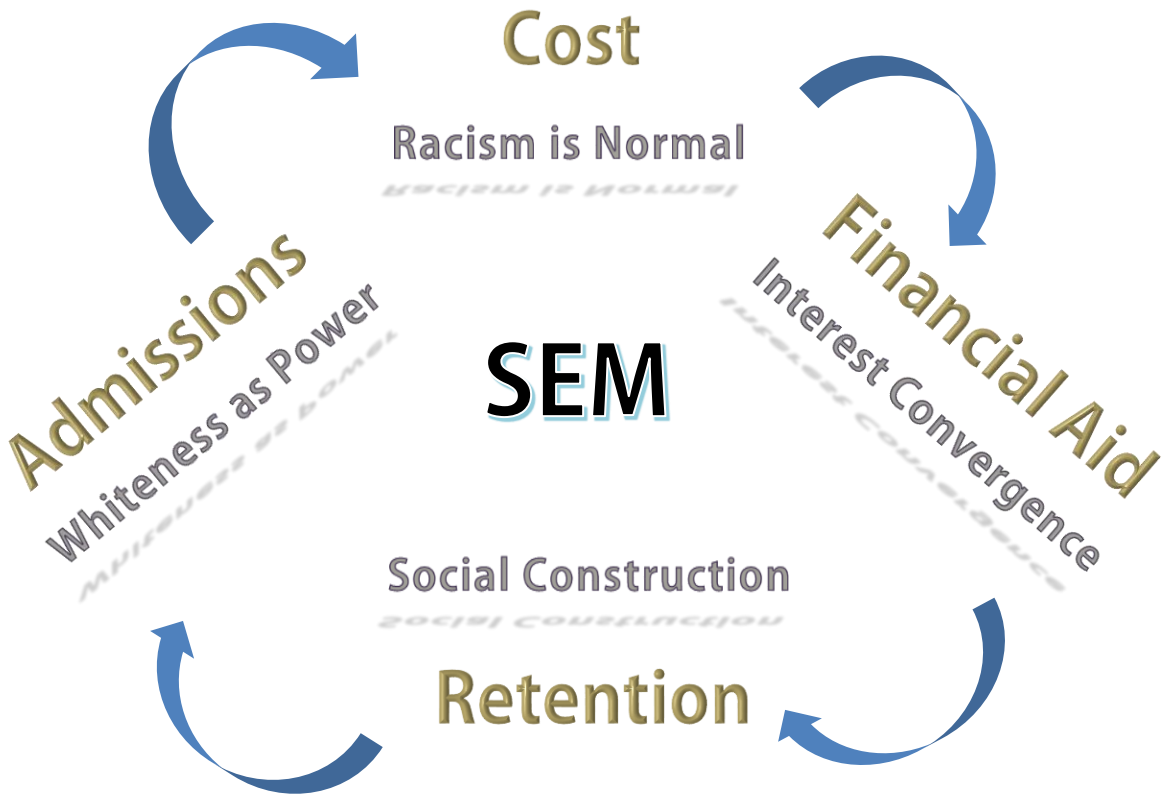

Figure 4. The "Critical" SEM cycle.

The "Critical" SEM Cycle

Figure 4 shows the Continuous SEM Cycle previously displayed now incorporating the tenets of critical race theory present on the cycle. As depicted, the tenets of CRT are present within SEM and literally cast shadows that adversely affect students of color. Racism is normal affects all components of SEM and there is some overlap within the other tenets into multiple SEM components.

Review of Select Research

Literature utilizing CRT and Case Studies

The literature reviews discussed are all case studies that employ the Critical Theory paradigm. The scholars use Critical Race Theory as their worldview when conducting their case studies as they examine the phenomenon of interest in its real-world environment. The research reviewed examines power, privilege, and marginalization related to recruitment and retention in higher education. This research also uses Critical Race Theory and examines a marginalized sub-group and their relationship with higher education. There is a gap in the literature addressing African American access and retention through higher education institutions in the Southeast from the perspective of senior administration. The unique contribution from this study illuminates the responsibility and delegated authority of senior administration to positively affect recruitment, retention, and financial resources related to African Americans in colleges and universities.

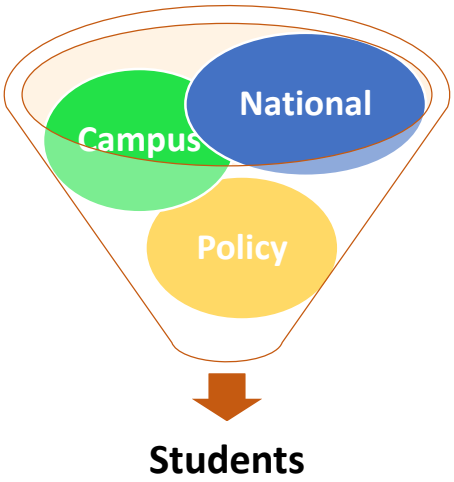

Figure 5. Literature focus funnel of this study.

Figure 5 demonstrates how the literature review is organized. First, there is a review of a nationwide study followed by a study about the norms within the United States. Next the focus is narrowed to the campus of higher education institutions before funneling into a literature review about students. The overlay of national, campus, and policy is intentional because the spheres affect each other and students.

Nationwide Study

Shaun Harper (2009) discusses the deficit theory as it relates to African American males in higher education at predominately White institutions in his article *Niggers No More: A Critical Race Counternarrative on Black Male Student Achievement at Predominately White Colleges and Universities.* This national study declares low expectations coupled with psychological stressors are reality for Black students at PWIs, along with systematic persistence of structured racism. A study conducted by Bonner and Biley (2006) revealed a key factor to Black student attrition is simply being Black. They found that having Black skin was the third largest indicator of negative persistence in higher education.

Harper's (2009) study included semi-structured interviews were conducted in person with 143 undergraduate Black males from PWIs across the United States. Within the large qualitative research study, counternarratives were used to gather empirical data from the participants. Five Black males of high achievement were selected to "challenge the master narrative" (Harper, 2009). Those studied were nominated by senior leadership as student leaders in and outside the classroom. The participants revealed their awareness of the deficit mentality of others projected toward them. How the scholars handled the inequality ranged from subtle responses to direct rebuttals to the person expressing racial undertones. Harper's research sheds light on the mentality of African American students as PWIs seek to retain them through graduation.

Harper's research confirms a finding in the current study that the deficit model is used for African Americans. Harper also adds direct communication with students regarding their thoughts on the way a PWI retains them. This dissertation extends Harpers research and turns to the administrators, faculty and staff to account for how they recruit and retain African American students.

Societal Norms in the United States

The second example of critical race theory I will examine appears in research conducted by Jessica DeCuir and Adrienne Dixson (2004) titled *"So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There": Using Critical Race Theory as a Tool of Analysis of Race and Racism in Education*. The article uncovers societal norms through counter-storytelling, which is a method used in CRT to weaken the typically accepted assertions by the White majority that perpetuate the disenfranchisement of people of color. This method is used to analyze the experience of two students who attend an elite, predominately White high school in a wealthy neighborhood.

One of the tenets of CRT is the assertion that there is a systematic issue perpetuating inequality. The article lends support to the theory by highlighting a concern from the interviewee that "racism is prevalent in all aspects of society, with schools not being an exception" (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). The authors cling to the young lady's reality of racism in her school being such a common accordance that it surprises no one, not the White majority nor those in the minority. The research done in this article reflects the hindrances within high school that some African American students must endure and overcome which further negatively complicates their journey to higher education.

This literature solidifies the claim in this dissertation regarding the need for higher education to do more to recruit African American student. DeCuir & Dixson note the systemic oppression that the dissertation argues is present for Black students, thus institutions must have a different method to properly recruit Black students than they use for White students.

Campus Climate

Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) use Critical Race Theory as the worldview to address the campus climate. The article *Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students* discusses the various subtle insults targeted at students of color. Academic and social settings were observed in three predominately White elite universities with microaggressions consistently present. Thirty-four students participated, 18 females and 16 males.

A clear list is presented of four ways to produce a positive racial culture for students of color: (a) "the inclusion of students, faculty, and administrators of color; (b) a curriculum that reflects the historical and contemporary experiences of people of color; (c) programs to support the recruitment, retention and graduation of students of color; and (d) a college/university mission that reinforces the institution's commitment to pluralism" (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). CRT researchers are solution-oriented because the theory expects a process that identifies the problems and then provides resolutions.

Storytelling is an important research design tool used in CRT. The researchers used focus groups to gather a firsthand account of students who were victimized by microaggressions and to serve as a rehabilitation tool for the injured. Storytelling facilitated a sense of unity, openness, and rejuvenation (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Document analysis was another instrument used to further the research. This article also did an excellent job defining key terms such as

African American, *college students*, *racism*, *critical race theory*, and *focus groups*. This study results offer clear ways to counter racial microagressions that hinder African American recruitment and retention in higher education.

One of the findings in the dissertation was the importance of the culture and climate to recruiting and retaining African American students. Solorzano, Ceja & Yosso had the same finding nearly 20 years ago, also at PWIs which is the case study site of the dissertation research. Like the dissertation, this literature research covered both Black males and females and noted the involvement of administrators, faculty and staff as integral in the solution.

Affirmative Action Policy in Higher Education

The next example of research conducted using critical race theory is *Academic Story-telling: A Critical Race Theory Story of Affirmative Action* written by Aguirre Adalberto, Jr. (2000). The research explains the policy implementation inequity related to an affirmative action policy and methods to correct the negative outcomes for minorities. In short, an academic department in higher education was recruiting for a faculty position. The unit lacked minority representation and was sensitive to using the established affirmative action plan to assist their hiring process.

Through storytelling, the article discussed an affirmative action program that was beneficial to the White applicants by removing the minority applicant from competing for the position. The implementation of the affirmative action program effectively allowed the other White candidates to continue the hiring process while the minority candidate's process now went to senior administration, resulting in a six-week delay (Adalberto, 2000). Meanwhile, the department moved forward with hiring from the shortlist that now only consisted of White candidates. There seems to be an element of a semi-structured interview that was not explicitly

stated. The interviewer in the article was able to ask follow-up questions about the affirmative action tool used by the institution known as Diversity Opportunity Targets (DOT). The interviewer admitted she did not previously know about the DOT program. A substantial portion of the interview focused on information learned from the freedom granted under semi-structured interviewing within CRT.

The research also revealed an issue in the recruitment mentality. "The ability to shift responsibility from recruiting minority faculty between organizational units shields institutions of higher education from its critics, especially minority critics" (Adalberto, 2000, p. 327). The evaluation of the affirmative action plan must shift from the promise of merely having a plan to an inspection of whether the diversity increased and at what rate. By using the method of storytelling, this article describes a vivid account of how affirmative action plans are not the problem but rather their implementation and the bias culture of academia. CRT gave the researcher the latitude to share recommendations to correct the issue. Proper minority faculty representation in a key success factor for recruiting and retaining African American students.

Adalberto's work informs the dissertation study related to the overarching effect of the politics of higher education. This literature shows an example of how the social power structures marginalize African American faculty which directly relate to the findings of the dissertation which argues increased Black faculty is a way to improve campus culture and enroll more African American students.

African American Student Perspective

The final literature selection highlights gaining the perspective of the participants being studied. Kassie Freeman (1997) in her article *Increasing African American's Participation in Higher Education* focuses on this often-overlooked group and their voice. Through the lens of

Critical Race Theory, the study focused on African American students in high school and their perspectives of the hindrances they face during the process of accessing higher education. Her "study is a qualitative inquiry across a range of cities, schools, and family circumstances" (Freeman, 1997). Freeman highlights the necessity of the recruitment process to consider the culture of African American students. This thinking is a shift from earlier works that primarily focused on the college selected by the student and not how multiple variables coexist when shaping the thoughts to attend higher education, and if so, which institution.

Cultural and social capital concepts relating to behaviors of students and their family to position themselves in society were juxtaposed with the econometric model and financial capital. Primary financial rationale cited by the researcher for students attending are expected cost and future earnings. Other channeling components that influence college choice mentioned by Freemen have the ability to intertwine social, cultural, psychological and institutional factors. Freeman concludes that the participants contribute concerns and, equally important, solutions that should be used to improve the process of African American access to higher education. The research argues that the students' voice is a vital component missing from previous discussions concerning how African American students are recruited or generally access college (Freeman, 1997).

The literature helps guide the dissertation by providing the student perspective related to selecting an institution. Freeman addresses one of the recommendation from the dissertation which is to gather feedback directly from African American students and follow-up with action. Freeman's work also addresses finances which is covered in the dissertation within the SEM spectrum.

Conclusion

Critical Race Theory is a worldview that embraces issues of power, race, culture, exploitation, history, economics, and bias and "incorporates both a theory of change [while] purposing to which change should be directed" (Heck, 2004). CRT is a scholarly voice with an inclusive paradigm that centers on race yet provides space to analyze gender, social class, sexual orientation, and other differences used to exhibit hegemony among the races. Strategic Enrollment Management continues to be a tool that can foster optimal student diversity (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). Analyzing SEM through the perspective of CRT provides a context for understanding the recruitment and retention of African American students. The various literature reviewed used case studies and CRT to expound on the access and matriculation of minority students.

CRT in higher education enhances the opportunity for personal and institutionalized displays of maco and micoaggressions. The dissertation seeks to address the personal interest by probing the individual in interviews. The institutional concerns were observed and confirmed through select questions in interviews and document analysis. As noted in my literature review, many scholars study recruitment and retention using CRT, yet other research the topic mainly using enrollment models (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Fryar & Hawes, 2012, Kalsbeek, 2013)

Looking Ahead

The subsequent chapter will explain the research design and methodology embraced during the research project. The explanation for using a case study with qualitative methods is also included. The case study was conducted employing interviews, observations, and document analysis to address the research questions. Chapter three also explains sampling, site selection,

data collection strategies, data interpretation, data quality, how the findings were reported, limitations of the study, and researcher bias and assumptions.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design Overview

The research design outlines how the research questions and the purpose of the research was addressed by using particular methods (Patton, 2015). The methods serve as a key to unlock the truths behind the research questions affiliated with the recruitment and retention of African American students in doctoral intensive research one (R1) universities in the southeastern United States and the associated financial resources. Flyvbjerg (2006) argues, "the choice of method should clearly depend on the problem under study and its circumstances" (p. 226).

Merriam (2002) states case study as an intensive description and analysis of a bounded, single real-life phenomenon. Case study allowed for a significant understanding of a "contemporary set of events" (Yin, 1989) in a single setting the researcher could not control. The unit of analysis for this study is the research one institution's recruitment and retention process. The bounded system is the particular doctoral intensive R1 institution exclusively studied in this research. Several methods were used to provide a deep understanding of the bounded system. Interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, and staff to dissect the recruitment and retention elements of the study. Observations highlighted the interaction of university administrators with students of color, parents, and other family members. This exploration informed the larger question of how doctoral intensive R1 institutions recruit African American students and also has an easily overlooked component that aids retention. Document analysis was continuous and added clarity to all facets of the research questions.

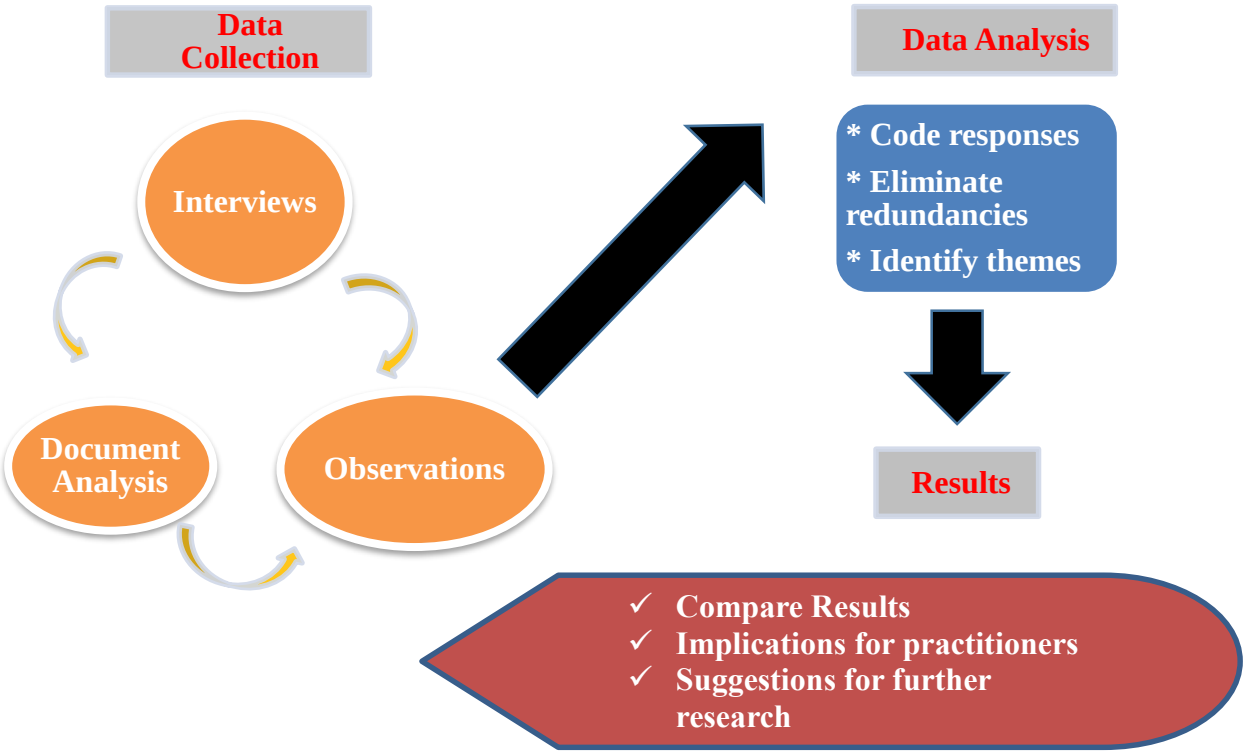

Figure 6. Visual model of the qualitative research design.

Note. Illustration adapted from Creswell & Plano Clark (2010).

Multiple qualitative methods were chosen to gain a deep understanding of recruitment and retention in general and specifically retention and recruitment regarding African American students. Data collection included semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. It was important to triangulate the data to address the research questions and to strengthen the results. Triangulation provides additional evidence to increase credibility in the findings (Bowen, 2009). When using case study, it is typical to also use interviews, documents, and observations as methods to gather evidence. The three methods helped answer Who, What, and Where questions (Rowley, 2002).

Next, the data was analyzed by coding, eliminating redundancies, and ultimately identifying themes. Last, the results for each method were compared and produced implications for practitioners and suggestions for further study. Figure 6 is a diagram of the qualitative research design for the case study.

Research Purpose

The purpose of the research was to better understand how a doctoral intensive R1 institution in the southeastern United States recruit and retains African American students in conjunction with the related role of financial resources. The research vantage point and contribution are from the perspective of higher education senior administration. This applied research highlighted the societal concern of African American access and graduation in higher education while also identifying solutions. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does a doctoral intensive R1 university in the southeast recruit African American students?
2. How does a doctoral intensive R1university in the southeast retain African American students?
3. What financial supports are available at a doctoral intensive R1 university in the southeast for the recruitment and retention of African American students?

Rationale for Using Qualitative Case Study

Qualitative research "tends to see the world in terms of people, situations, events, and the processes that connect these" (Maxwell, 2013). Qualitative research is used for an in-depth study of a phenomenon in its natural setting (Merriam, 2009). Complex issues can be studied with the proper attention because qualitative research focuses on a limited number of cases and can provide individual case findings (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Participant interpretation can

also be greater. Application is more direct with qualitative research because it can study multifaceted processes and respond to a local issue or need. The researcher is used as an instrument in qualitative research (Roulston, 2010).

Case study research has traditionally been the subject of debate among researchers with some identifying a vital need while others minimize its existence (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2009; Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1988). After discussing the rationale for a qualitative approach, there will be a cursory look at the views of case study legends Sharan B. Merriam, Robert E. Stake, and Robert K. Yin. The chapter will then highlight certain portions of a research design. Strengths and limitations of case studies will be outlined prior to revealing methods commonly used in case studies.

The research at hand focuses on the interactions of African American students and administrators and the processes related to recruitment and retention. The analysis centers around how certain events influence various situations. Qualitative research provided a conduit for analyzing the views and perspectives of African American students (Menzel, 1978, as cited in Maxwell, 2013) which was necessary to understand the research questions. A key attribute within the definition of qualitative research is its ability to transform the world (Creswell & Poth, 2018), which was compatible with the transformational perspective of Critical Race Theory used in the current research.

The methods were selected because they help answer the research questions and are suited for case study. This research informs researchers, administrators, practitioners, parents, and students, thus bringing multiple tools of analysis to the project, which strengthens the results. The study relies on the reality of those who influence student recruitment and retention at predominantly White doctorial intensive R1 institutions in the Southeast. The research uncovers

how the participants perceive the university culture and the impact that has on a student's ability to matriculate in institutions of higher education. Unique events and circumstances shape the belief of each participant and using qualitative research provides the space to maintain the distinctiveness of the small group studied (Maxwell, 2013). Furthermore, the flexibility is needed because semi-structured interviews generate unanticipated data (Fylan, 2005). Understanding the intended audience to be senior-level higher education administrators, accompanying the qualitative research with specific numerical data is essential. Last, the research questions relate to power, cultural dominance, and social status, which align with the critical theory used to frame the research (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Participants & Sampling

Purposeful sampling uses a case that has sufficient data that will elucidate the research questions (Patton, 2015) when considering various institutions to study. The researcher used this method to gather participants who were knowledgeable and experienced in the research interest. The study used critical case (crucial case) to select the precise case study to research. This approach relies on a case that has tremendous evidence that will provide local generalizability and transferable knowledge of highly similar cases (Patton, 2015). The research one institution selected is a critical case because it is a flagship institution tasked with educating its citizenry and it enrolls a small percentage of African American compared to the percentage of African Americans in the state. The case study site has also show sluggish to growth in Black enrollment since desegregation of the institution.

Interviews

The concept of criterion-based case selection was used when only interviewees who held a position directly related to student recruitment and/or retention were selected. Furthermore,

their roles also needed to be highly influential, which speaks to the use of key informants, key knowledge, and reputational sampling (Patton, 2015). The group was both extremely prominent and experts in higher education access and retention. With this information-rich group of participants engaged, the decision was made to add a question to the end of the interviews asking if the participants had any relevant contacts that could contribute to the research. Patton (2015) calls this opportunistic method snowball or chain sampling. Using snowballing exclusively may result in many participants from similar circles of influence. Understanding the homogeneous characteristics that could be present in thought, ideology, and allegiance, the researcher decisively chose professionals that were heterogeneous in age and race. For example, the participants make up five races and range in ages from below 40 to over 50 years old.

Observations

The observations were selected based on schedule availability from preplanned publicly held orientation sessions and public family and relative sessions. Two observations were conducted and lasted roughly an hour each. Special attention was given to visually perceived students of color, however there was no way for the researcher to know the specific ethnicity of the undergraduate students without directly communicating with them, which was not done. The participants in the observations were alleged Black students and their family members, administrator, and faculty. Field notes were taken during the observation to capture the observed data.

Case Study

The site selection for the case study is a doctoral intensive R1 university located in the southeastern United States. The three largest racial groups at the university are White, African

American, and Asian, respectively (U.S. Census, 2017). Geographically the student body represents most of the United States (Institution Facts, 2017). The university boasts more than 10 colleges and schools, enrolls over 25,000 total students, and has more than 200,000 living alumni. This institution has greater than 600 registered student and service organizations (Institutional Facts, 2017). In-state tuition along with housing, on average, is more than $20,000 and out-of-state cost exceeds $35,000 (College Board, 2017). The average first-year student is awarded less than $15,000 (College Profile, 2017). The fiscal year 2015 budget for the university shows less than 50% of their funding is provided by the state (Institution by the Numbers, 2011).

Currently the case study site provides scholarships, social media, attend college fairs, visit high schools and host students on campus as recruitment tools. Student organization, programing and using current students are some of the ways this research one institution helps to retain students. The Admissions office uses information gathered from a third party to target high schools and students based on the analytical data. The institution uses a set criteria that includes standardize test scores, grade point averages and more to narrow the pool of students.

Data Collection Strategies

Within case studies, researchers collect specific information "using a variety of data collection procedures" (Creswell, 2010, p. 43) while bounded by a particular time, activity, and purpose (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The data collected was systematically managed to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and the integrity of the data.

Interviews

The 17 semi-structured interviews lasting approximately an hour each were audio recorded. Each participant was given a specific pseudonym that represented their classification;

Administrator 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5, Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Staff 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. It was important to identify the classification to better understand the perspective of the quotes used to underscore the findings. The researcher also used memoing to capture nonverbal cues such as body language.

All interviews were conducted in office settings. The participants were asked if they would like to have the interview in their office or in the office of the researcher. The interviewees who were less familiar with the researcher elected to meet in their private office spaces. Participants who were acquainted with the researcher met in or near the researcher's office. All locations were quiet and inclusive of only the participant and researcher.

Observations

The observation expanded field notes have a header capturing the name of the field note file, name of observer, date and place of the observation, start and end times for each of the two observations, dates for condensed and expanded field notes, comments, and a key explaining shorthand used in field notes. Each observation was also accompanied with memoing. The codebook I created made memoing more efficient.

Both observations were completed in the same extraordinarily large room with a stage to orient the front of the space with roughly 500 chairs. The observation was of the orientation session for student leaders of the university, accepted students, and parents and family of the recent high school graduates. The same site was used for the parents-only session that was also observed, which included parents and family members of the newly accepted undergraduate students along with administrators. Each portion of the observation lasted approximately one hour. The enormous room had a stage at the front with four massive projector screens, two above the stage and two on the left side of the room. The chairs were arranged in six rows that

constructed four sections. This formation was identical on both sides of the room. The researcher was located in the fourth section from the front. The seat was on the left side of the room, on the second row in an end seat closest to the large middle aisle. The researcher was mindful of their appearance and adjusted their attire to seamlessly integrate in the crowd of parents and family.

Document Analysis

Documents were gathered at the public site of the observations and through other publicly assessable material both hardcopy and digital. Other documents reviewed were gathered though publicly assessable records, newspapers, and higher education Web sites. Bowen (2009) highlights the desire for a variety of documents while emphasizing the importance of quality over quantity. Ethical issues were considered when gathering documents, understanding that a key duty of a researcher is to not do harm to the participants of the study.

During the observation process, two documents were distributed randomly and were used for document analysis. The first document was given to all orientation students. This was a 10-plus page pamphlet printed in color on high-quality card stock paper. The second document reviewed was labeled for family members. This artifact was also 10-plus pages in length and contained useful information for parents and family members to support their students. The observations were at events related to recruitment and retention, therefore the documents collected were viewed as supporting those initiatives.

Data Analysis Interpretation

After the field work was done, the investigator began the important research phase of analysis. More inclusively, "qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data [by] reducing the volume of raw information, sifting the trivial from the significant, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the

data reveal" (Patton, 2015, p. 521). It is beneficial to understand the purpose for the analysis during the early stages to reduce the likelihood of getting overwhelmed by the process. Scholars warn the analysis phase should be twice the time needed to retrieve the data (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993). Using data to support the interpretations makes the analysis valid (Merriam, 2009). Data interpretation should start with an analytic strategy where the researcher is looking through the evidence for themes, patterns, insights, and analytical concepts that address relevant questions and memo writing can extend into this phase (Patton, 2015). General strategies for data interpretation include following the theoretical propositions. The propositions should stem from the research questions and could have already shaped the data collection (Yin, 2014).

The researcher deduced primary summaries during each interview and used member checking as the interview concluded to verify the data collected. Coding the interview data helped to reveal the most relevant information for the study. Next grouping the like codes and reviewing the groups allowed themes to emerge. Coding and grouping were also used to better understand the observation field notes. Developing propositions were also useful in analyzing the observation data. The theoretical framework helped to delineate what data was meaningful.

Interviews

Each interview manuscript was examined to develop concepts from the field data. The researcher used coding to reduce the massive amount of raw data. The codes made it possible to identify the relevant text for the research. After identifying the repeating ideas, they were able to group them and find themes. Creating abstract ideas from the organized themes led to theoretical constructs (Patton, 2015). The researcher used the participants' words as they shared their experiences to address the concerns in the research questions (Auebach & Silverstein, 2003).

Observations

Analytical writing in field notes was used to interpret the observations. During the observations, the personal thoughts concerning those being observed, the setting, temperature, speculations, and other thoughts private to the researcher were captured and labeled "observer comments" (OC) (Merriam, 2009). Observational notes (ON) signify things that were seen or heard (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The comments recorded from the researcher are speculations to make meaning of what has been experienced. This is called theoretical notes (OT). The last category used was methodological notes (MN), which chronicled the process, timing, and instructions/reminders for the researcher (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Qualitative data must be converted to meaningful categories (Patton, 2015). Shorthand codes were created to determine relevant data. The codes started broad and general then became more refined. An example of a general code from the raw data is "AA" for African American. Refining that code several times lead to "AArec+," which stands for a positive statement relating to recruitment of African American students. Grouping and coding data required the researcher to decide which pieces of information fit together (Stake, 2006).

Document Analysis

The documents reviewed were analyzed for relevance to research questions. Special attention was placed on the source of the documents. The artifacts were tracked in an Excel spreadsheet with the following labels: title, author, citation, summary, missing, quotes, and notes. The Excel file allowed for fast reference and analysis of primary documents. Researcher bias was also curtailed by collecting the primary document given by the institution during the observations and including the material in the document analysis. The researcher did not have prior knowledge of the particular documents that were disseminated.

Data Quality

According to Yin (2003), when done properly, case study will provide external validity, internal validity, and reliability, which are all aspects of quality control. Reliability and validity are closely tied to how the researcher gave "careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Establishing trustworthiness in the analysis and findings increases the credibility of the study. Internal validity, external validity, consistency, and neutrality are typically thought of when seeking trustworthiness in scientific studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are discussed as essential for establishing fidelity through qualitative data and the direct parallels to scientific notions of trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, as cited in Patton, 2015).

The current study continued to build on transferability. The term is comparable to external validity and challenges the researcher to provide enough information about the case for the reader to understand the generalization that is justifiable to other similar cases. The case must demonstrate the characteristic along with the phenomena of interest that are similar enough to be generalized with other doctoral intensive R1 flagship institutions in the southeastern United States. Dependability is parallel to reliability, which holds the researcher accountable for documenting the research process. The research displayed a level of dependability by recording the logical research steps and methods used in this project.

A pilot study was conducted and the interview protocols and observation procedures where refined. The pilot study consisted of three interviews, two observations, and two document reviews. The main study continued from the work of the pilot study and added 14 additional

interviews. The added research produced data from a variety of faculty, staff, and administrative perspectives along with recruitment and retention insight beyond the pilot study.

Interviews

The interview protocols were peer reviewed prior to engaging study participants. Themes from the semi-structured interviews were identified that relate to the research questions. The interviews were then regrouped and additional sub-themes emerged. Rigor was enhanced through forming counter-examples. Negative cases helped the researcher remain open to the data. Internal validity was strengthened through triangulation (Denzin, 1978). Patton (2015) proclaimed,

> Being able to report that you engaged in a systematic and conscientious search for alternative themes, divergent patterns, and rival explanations enhances credibility, not to mention that it is simply good analytical practice and the very essence of being rigorous in analysis. This can be done both inductively and logically. (p. 653)

Each interview concluded with the researcher validating what was said by providing a summary of the main themes to ensure the essence of the thoughts shared were accurately recorded. Some information gathered during the interviews was checked during the observations and the documents analysis process. Using three methods to cross-reference the data increases the credibility of the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and connects the data to reality while laying the foundation for deducing helpful implications. Memoing and member checking were used to confirm the essence of the participant's contribution was comprehended properly.

Observations

The observations occurred in public settings to make it easier to execute a covert observation, which increased the likelihood that those observed will behave naturally (Patton, 2015). Memoing was used during all interviews and observations. The researcher worked on

being reflexive to analyze the underline meaning of personal interpretations, which helped infer what was not observed. The strengths of observation contributing to data quality can be summarized by Patton (2015) as "(1) rich description, (2) contextual sensitivity, (3) being open to what emerges, (4) seeing the unseen, (5) testing old assumptions and generating new insights, (6) opening up new areas of inquiry, (7) delving into sensitive issues, (8) getting beyond selective perceptions of others, (9) getting beyond one's own selective perceptions, and (10) experiencing empathy" (p. 335).

Document Analysis

Author subjectivity was considered as documents were selected. The original purpose of the documents was analyzed along with the target audience. The content of the documents was tested by the researcher asking research relevant questions of the documents that were answered by the data (O'Leary, 2014). If the contents did not answer the questions, the document was deemed lacking quality and usefulness. Documents were also reviewed for particular words and phrases present and notably absent from the text.

Table 1. Methods Explanation

Methods Explanation							
	Research Interest Topics			**Targeted Participants**			
Methods	Recruitment	Retention	Financial Resources	Undergraduate Students	Family Members	Faculty	Administration
Interviews	✓	✓	**O**	**O**	**O**	✓	✓
Observations	**O**	✓	**O**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Document Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	**O**	✓	✓

Table 1 shows how the methods were deployed to address specific research questions and the targeted population for each method. The '**O'** mark does not mean that method did not illuminate understanding on a certain topic; it signifies that subject was not the focus for using the method. For example, observations were completed to better understand retention and the interactions of undergraduate students, family members, faculty, and administrators. However, through the observations significant data concerning recruitment was discovered.

Data Management

Interviews

The interview data collected was systematically managed to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and the integrity of the data. All identifying information, including names and places were replaced with pseudonyms in the interview transcripts. The document key linking the real names of the participants and pseudonyms is in a password protected file. Labeling conventions were also used to help organize data. The interview transcripts contain headers that include: name of field note file, name of interviewer, date of interview, place of interview, time interview began, time interview ended, name of transcriber, date of transcription, comments and sociodemographic data. The audio recordings will be deleted from the recorder after final analyses.

The participants all received a consent form outlining the study and further explaining the steps taken to secure their confidentiality. The Participant Consent Form is in the appendix. An interview protocol was used to conduct the semi-structured interviews and can also be found in the appendix. A codebook was used to increase the efficiency of memoing. The codes and descriptions of the Codebook are in the appendix. Memoing was used during the interviews to

capture important points, notable quotes, body language, and the thoughts and observations of the researcher. Member checking was used to verify the primary points of the participants.

Observations

The observation expanded field notes have a header capturing the name of the field note file, name of observer, date and place of the observation, start and end times for each of the two observations, dates for condensed and expanded field notes, comments, and a key explaining shorthand used in field notes. I used memoing to capture the nonverbal data along with personal thoughts generated during the process (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). The codebook I created made memoing more efficient.

How Findings Are Reported

Understanding who the potential audience is essential when considering how to report case study findings (Merriam, 1998). Because of the rather inclusive spectrum of case study (Yin, 2014) and relevance of access and funding for college, the potential audience could be higher education senior administration, policy makers, practitioners, other researchers, community leaders, funders, and others. It will likely require creating a different version of the case study final report to successfully present findings to different audiences. To this end, the form of the report (such as length) should also be completed with the specific audience and their needs in mind. A condensed one-page (front and back) executive summary is included in the appendix as supplementary documentation ideal for administrators. The organization and consolidation of the final report for this case study will consist of background (objectives), evaluation questions (stakeholders' information needs), methodology (data collection and analysis), and findings and conclusions (recommendations) (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990; Yin 1989).

Limitations of the Study

All research designs have limitations. Limits to resources, complexities, and elements beyond the researcher's control will constrain research (Patton, 2015). Time was a boundary that constricted the research. Great breath of research data could have been considered with more time. Scheduling proved to also be a negating factor. The interview participants, researcher and potential participants found it difficult to coordinate schedules. Some potential participants did not participate in the interviews because of the inability to sync schedules. The orientation dates were predetermined and also presented scheduling conflicts with the researcher.

Qualitative Research Limitations

A limitation of qualitative research is that the uniqueness of the study may not be generalizable to other people or settings (Patton, 2015). This study only has generalizability related to the specific case studied and transferable knowledge to other cases that are tremendously similar. Hypothesis testing and quantitative predictions are problematic. Methods in this category generally take more time and have less credibility to some administrators (Maxwell, 2013). This lack of credibility forced the use of multiple methods to secure quality data (Gummesson, 1991). Another limitation of this study includes time constraints, which did not allow for further research and analysis.

Case Study Limitations

Historically, case study has been viewed as lacking objectivity and less rigorous compared to other research methods (Rowley, 2002). Scholars have openly criticized the method for lacking generalizability (Johnson, 1994). Some feel case study does not offer clear objectives that adhere to traditional research protocols. Another limit to the study is that selection is typically not random, and the methodology is nonscientific (Swanborn, 2010). For case study the

disadvantage is also exacerbated by the small sample size. When dealing with a sample of one, the limitation is breadth of study. Case study does not provide research on a hefty range of cases.

Interview Limitations

The face-to-face interviews that were conducted cost more than most methods. The researcher needed to purchase a suitable recorder and high-quality batteries and make multiple trips to meet participants. This method leaves proper data gathering to the hands of the particular researcher who may not have addressed their own bias (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). One-on-one interviews are also time-consuming, which results in smaller sample sizes (Merriam, 2002). In addition to the time for the actual interview, data is typically transcribed, which can introduce an element of error.

Observation Limitations

Although the strengths are substantial, using observation does have some unfavorable aspects to consider. The researcher was mindful to observe in a public setting, making it easier to execute a covert observation that increases the likelihood that those observed behave naturally (Patton, 2015, p. 339–340). Observations can lead to the Hawthorn Effect, the observed behaving differently because they are aware of the observation, causing results of the raw data to be false and produce incorrect analysis. The observation generated several new questions to consider that would require the use of another method to answer them. This added time to the research process. As a result of only being observation and speculation, a follow-up interview with several African American students, parents, and family members would be helpful. Given some of the limitations of observation, a responsible researcher will likely add another research method. Hall and Ryan (2011) recommend a technique called *shadowing*, which involves interviewing and observation and would be beneficial to gain further insight from administrators.

Document Analysis Limitations

Deciphering relevant data through document analysis was time consuming. The researcher had to pay close attention to the type of information in each document and the source to assign credibility and reliability. The documents used were not created for the purpose of higher education assessment and retention research (Patton, 2015).

A brief description of the case study site and participants is provided to ensure their confidentiality. The information was gathered from individuals, events, and documents produced from offices that deal directly with student recruitment, retention, and financial resources. Offices that informed this research include areas within academic affairs, finance, instruction, and senior leadership. A description of the demographic profile for the participants along with the results of the analysis are provided. Useful subheadings are used to distinguish the particular knowledge obtained from each method used.

Demographic Profile of Study Participants

The demographic profile of the study participants is presented using the qualitative research methods: interviews, observations, and document analysis. The institution studied is a large doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast. They have more than 25,000 students. The student demographic profile revealed the majority of the students were White with Asians and African Americans among their minority groups. This institution enrolls and graduates thousands of students annually.

There were 17 semi-structured interviews conducted to gather research related to recruitment and retention in higher education. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each. All participants have a connection to the doctoral intensive R1 case study site. The group represents 11 unique schools, colleges, departments, and units within the institution. Participants

ranged in age from less than 40 years old to over 50 years old. They are currently or have previously served as administrators, faculty, and/or staff members with varying levels of responsibility related to recruitment and retention for the institution. The participants indicated their ethnicity/race as either African, Black, Caribbean, Hispanic, or White. All interviews were held in a comfortable setting agreed to by the participants. The researcher identified three classifications for the participants. The term "administrator" was used for a president, provost, vice president and/or dean. "Faculty" represented full professors, associate professors and/or assistant professors. "Staff" included advising officers, admissions officers, and/or academic officers. Table 2 shows the classification, race and age range of the 17 participants of the interviews for this research.

Table 2. Interview Participants

All Interview Participants			
Count	**Classification**	**Race**	**Age**
1	Staff	White	Less than 40
2	Staff	Black	Less than 40
3	Administrator	White	Greater than 50
4	Staff	Black	Less than 40
5	Administrator	Black	Greater than 50
6	Administrator	White	Greater than 50
7	Staff	White	Less than 40
8	Faculty	Caribbean	40 - 50
9	Faculty	Black	40 - 50
10	Faculty	African	40 - 50
11	Faculty	Black	Greater than 50
12	Staff	Black	Less than 40
13	Staff	Black	Less than 40
14	Administrator	Hispanic	Greater than 50
15	Administrator	Black	Greater than 50
16	Faculty	Black	40 - 50
17	Staff	White	40 - 50

The observation occurred at two portions of a new student orientation section that included university employees, potential students, and the family of potential students. Other groups of participants observed were administrators, faculty, and staff of the institution. These employees participated in the orientation sections and appeared to vary in age and ethnicity/race. Prospective students were observed and also appeared to represent multiple ethnicities/races, however the overwhelming majority of the hopeful students and employees appeared White. The potential college students were already accepted by the institution and either decided to enroll at this particular university or were still deciding between their top choices. There were no interactions with the participants, thus their ethnicity/race was not verified.

Additionally, the interviews were separated into four separate groups of classifications, administrators, faculty, or staff—and analyzed again. This process was repeated using the self-disclosed race of the participants, which divided the interviews into Black, White, or Other. The Other category consisted of participants who identified as African, Caribbean, and Hispanic. Last, the interviews were grouped based on age: less than 40 years old, between 40 and 50 years old, and greater than 50 years old. Nine total sub-themes surfaced from the additional groupings and analysis.

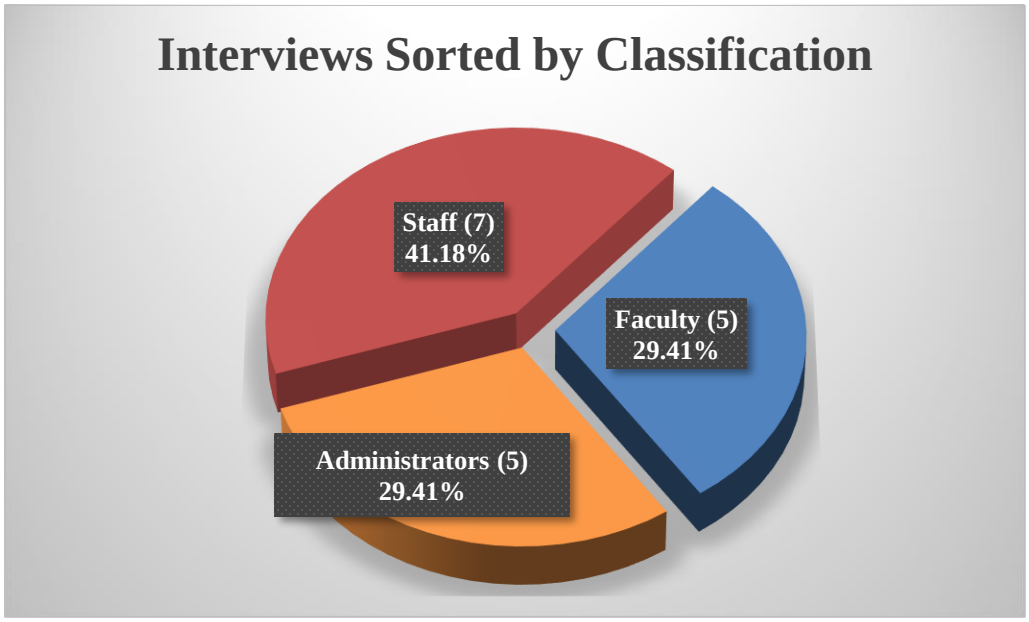

Figure 7. Interviews sorted by classification.

The interviews as sorted by classification revealed five participants were administrators, five participants were faculty, and seven participants were staff members. Figure 7 illustrates the various classification quantities of the participants.

Organizing the interviews by race revealed one participant was African, nine participants were Black, one participant was Caribbean, one participant was Hispanic, and five participants were White. After sorting the interviews by race, they were then grouped as Black, White, or Other. Due to the sample size of these categories, the Other category included African, Caribbean and Hispanic. Figure 8 provides a visual of the racial division of the participants.

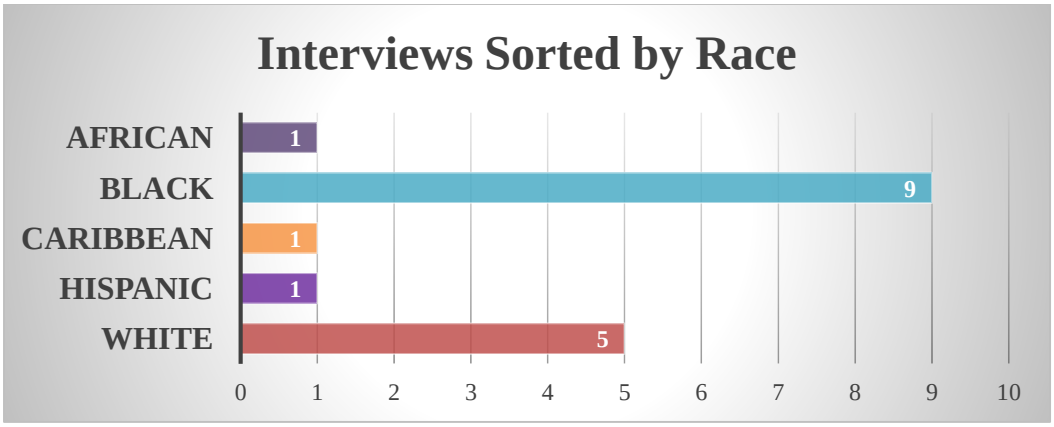

Figure 8. Interviews sorted by race.

Last, the interviews were analyzed by age group. Participants self-disclosed their age as either less than 40 years old, between 40 and 50 years old, and greater than 50 years old. Of the 17 participants interviewed, six participants were less than 40 years old, five participants were between 40 and 50 years old, and six participants were greater than 50 years old.

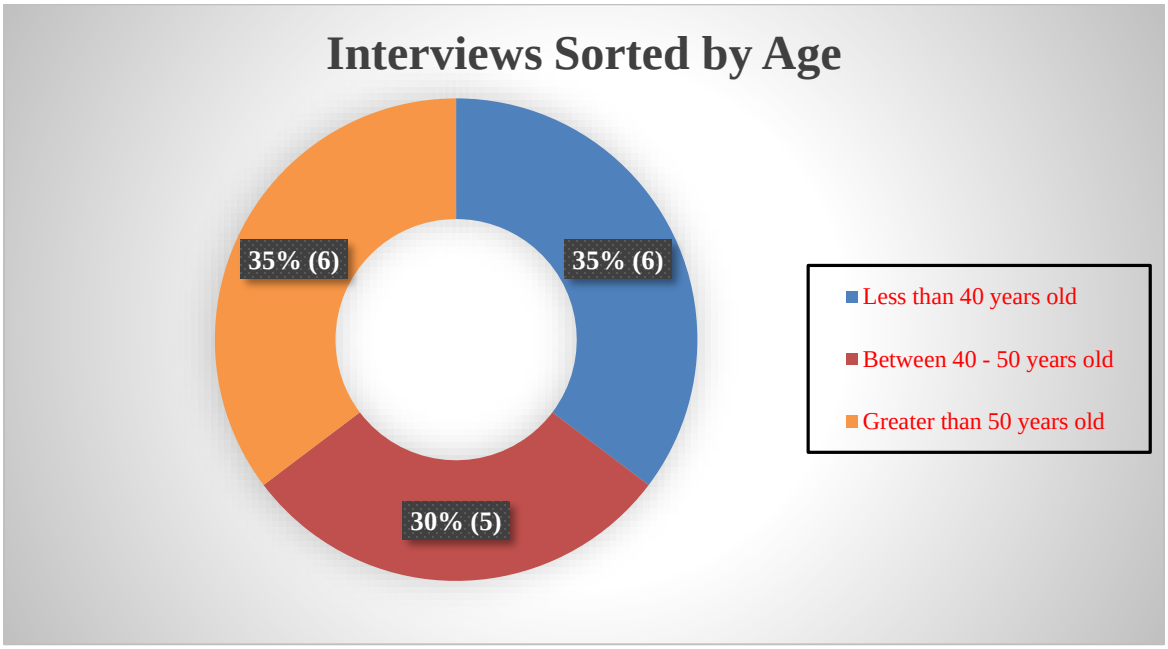

Figure 9. Interviews sorted by age.

Researcher Bias & Assumptions

The researcher is the instrument in qualitative interviews and there is no need to deny who I am (Roulston, 2010). Acknowledging my bias and perspective helps me be intentional about self-disclosing and better addressing the opposing view. My prior experiences are relevant to my chosen research topic. I am an African American male who believes the world operates in a manner that advantages some while disadvantaging others. My experiences lead me to believe more should be done by administrators in higher education to recruit, retain, and graduate African American students from PWIs in the southeastern United States. I also assume my concerns can be understood and solved with knowledge and proper implementation.

I grew up in a rural town less than an hour from a doctoral intensive R1 institution. The university has an African American enrollment rate substantially less than the rate of African Americans represented in the state. The high school I attended was approximately 40 percent Black. I never saw a recruiter from this institution at my high school and the perception in my hometown was that this institution did not particularly want students of color to attend. According to the institution's Web site, they regularly enroll White students from high schools much further away than my hometown. A recruiter would literally drive beyond multiple high schools where African American students are academically qualified to reach the predominately White schools, which represent the majority of their freshman enrollment. As a result of my experiences, I am skeptical whether the administrators at some predominately White universities genuinely desire to increase the percentage of African Americans at the institutions they serve.

Ethics

Member checking will also continue to be used to increase the quality of the data and give participants an opportunity to clarify particular data within the transcript. However, final

decision on how to proceed with the information gathered from member checking will be subject to my discretion as a researcher. The problem with member checking is that it opens the door for participants to review their comments in hindsight and expressed philosophies. This causes some to change the essence of their statements based on perception. As a researcher, my role is to get to the crux of the matter and sometimes that truth differs from the reality an interviewee would like shared. In response, I safeguard the identity of the participants and do not relinquish my power to present findings with the utmost integrity. Other issues with member checking include the time it takes to schedule and get back with everyone. Nevertheless, this means of data management does provide an opportunity to update the data while adding a level of ethics (Patton, 2015).

Looking Ahead

The following chapter will consist of the results from the data collected to address the recruitment, retention and financial resources related to African American student recruitment and retention. The methods utilized are interviews, observations and document analysis. Themes were identified that represent key findings. The study provides enhanced clarity for senior administrators to better use strategic enrollment management for campus diversity.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter contains the results and findings of the case study conducted at a doctoral intensive research one (R1) university in the southeastern United States. The critical case chosen provided extensive evidence that enhanced the understanding of the recruitment and retention of African American students at the institution along with funding to support those efforts.

Results

A thematic analysis of the research revealed six primary themes: (1) the importance of the culture and climate when recruiting and retaining African American students, (2) the negative overarching effect of politics on higher education, (3) the economic impact limits the recruitment and retention of African American students, (4) all students are primarily recruited using the same methods which was shown more effective for White students and less effective for Black students, (5) African American students mainly retain themselves, and (6) there is a need for more communication between administrators, faculty and staff concerning.

Theme 1: The Culture and Climate Matter Greatly when Attempting to Recruit and Retain African American Students

The interview participates discussed the climate of the city sounding the institution as well as the culture throughout campus. It is important for students to feel welcome by the people, programs and curriculum they encounter at their selected college.

> Retention efforts begin for students when they are thinking about being in [college]. Recruitment and retention are often said together in a seamless fashion for good reason. Why recruit someone that won't be able to stay, or [when] you

> haven't created a condition that will allow that person to be able to thrive. I think sometimes when we think about this stuff, we must consider the culture. It's like yelling at a flower for not growing. You wouldn't yell at a flower for not growing. You would change the soil, or you would do something with the environment to help it to thrive. You would put it in light. You would do these things. And so when I think about retention, I think about what are those environmental things that we are using to support the flowers that are our students... Are we creating and sustaining environments that are not harmful to black bodies, minds, spirits (Faculty 5, personal communication, 2018)?

Producing an environment and culture conducive for African American students must be intentional. The institution has to value the experience of Black students enough to create the welcoming environment and continue maintaining the environment over time.

> I'll try to be honest, but I think the biggest barriers are there is this sense of being othered and trying to find a place and voice and feeling even more marginalized in the ivory tower, if you will of academe, than in the general community. And so, to me, that's our biggest barrier is that we're not doing enough to really help our African American and Black students feel like they really do belong. I think I mentioned this a little bit ago, like our campus climate surveys are an initiative to provide us with information that we need in order to address that, and I still don't think that we're addressing it. It's really about that environment and then again, combined with all of the system and societal issues – the parallel of poverty and race, and so that means there's definitely the economic barrier as well (Staff 3, personal communication, 2018).

The racial climate in the community surrounding the university also effects how African American students feel about attending and remaining at the institution. A participant mentioned a student telling them they felt uncomfortable on campus so later that day they left campus to relax, only to be further racially targeted in the community. The faculty member never saw that student again and assumed they decided to transfer.

> Of course, I would say that climate can be a major issue for African American students. I've known students to leave the university because they simply did not feel welcome, or in some cases, they actually felt unwelcome, and in some cases they actually felt that they were not treated fairly or equitably and that they were the victims of discrimination (Administrator 5, personal communication, 2018).

The participants who identify as **Black** gave credence to the need for **multiple levels of African American involvement**. Current African American students, staff, faculty, and administrators can aid the creation of an inclusive culture and climate. This idea expanded beyond the institution into the community surrounding the university. The Black participants saw a need to help students find social and support groups off campus such as churches, barbershops, and soul food restaurants, along with Black professionals including primary care physicians and dentists.

> Involve current Black students more in the recruitment process. Involve Black alumni more in the recruitment process. And, involve Black teachers, professors, administrators more in the recruitment process. Giving people an actual feel for the institution so that when they arrive at the institution, assuming successful recruitment there, [African American students] come with an understanding of what to expect, and I think if you involve [Black] students and faculty and staff and so forth, in these recruitment efforts, you build more of a community. A campus community and off campus community that – as time goes on, it will really become more of a community…I think that there is no substitute for group self-help. That at some point the job has to be a community of particular minorities themselves. At some point Black students have to – and when I say black students, black community students, faculty, what have you – they have to supplement what is offered by the college and university. They have to direct it or enhance it, particularly as it relates to African American students (Faculty 4, personal communication, 2018).

The participants that were **greater than 50 years old** believed that **race matters**. These seasoned experts felt strongly about the need to have African American administrators, faculty, and staff that represent the university well. Participants over 50 years old grew-up during the Civil Rights Movement which may have played a role in the importance of race for this group. This racial commitment at multiple areas of the institution signals a strong commitment to the belief in the ability and necessity of African American contribution to the culture of higher education. Recruitment and retention efforts should include Black and non-Black team members with a prerequisite that they truly care about African American students. Participants in this

group argued that just because your title is "recruiter" does not mean you qualify to recruit African American students.

> I think [African American students] got to see people who look like them on campus. Students, faculty and staff who can talk to them honestly about what it's like to go into stores downtown, and are you followed and assumed to be a shoplifter. What is the racial climate on campus, but I'm also a firm believer that we can't bring African American students to campus, or send people out to schools to recruit African American students who are all African American, because we can't make it look like [the university] is a HBCU. We are not a HBCU. We are predominantly a white institution, and I think it's important for students – not that I don't think students know that, but I think it's really important for African American students to know that there are white faculty, staff and students who care about them being here and want them here. I think there's an important role for African American faculty, staff and students to play, but I think the white faculty, staff and students have to be part of it as well, because we are not an HBCU, and the majority of people they are going to encounter here are white (Administrator 4, personal communication, 2018).

The document analysis enhanced understanding of race relations as it showed a disconnect between the culturally welcoming pictures and the absence of any mention of race in the text. It should not be overlooked that documents also help create the climate based on what is included or excluded. The omission of race relations does not create a welcoming environment for African American students. Along these lines, participants **less than 40 years old** focused on institutional honest.

> …I think the other thing that can drive success is making sure that the message isn't just one that attracts students but is an honest message. Ah, representing the institution for what it truly is rather than what you would like for people to think it is… (Staff 4, personal communication, 2018).

Of the approximately 500 people in this particular orientation session, a total of seven students that appeared to be African American entered the orientation room. Four of the seven students were female and three were males. All African American students, except one, were accompanied by a woman who looked older and African American as well. No Black students

had more than one person with them at the session. A plethora of what seemed like non-Black students were in attendance with multiple people, and based on interactions one could reasonably assume they were multiple family members. During the collective two hours of observing, no students or family who appeared Black had any direct communication with staff, faculty, or administrators. In contrast, multiple students and family members who appeared White did have communication with university employees. The communication was sometimes initiated by the university employee and other times by the student/family member.

Theme 2: Negative Overarching Effect of Politics on Higher Education

The concern for the political spectrum ranged from within the university to the external political forces. The political influencers shape the amount of federal and state aid a public institution is allotted each year which continually make those decision makers extremely powerful as it relates to higher education. Their power may also influence other critical policies and practices surrounding admissions.

> … you have to fight the political battle – if you're inside the university, if you're faculty, I think you have to take more responsibility to look at the – the criteria for admissions and make sure to the best of your ability that the criteria for admissions are free of ethno-centric thinking. (Administrator 2, personal communication, 2018)

Politics surrounding the type of public research intensive institution studied prohibited an administrator from helping minorities students in a more authentic way.

> And I think it makes a big difference for different reasons between public and private R1s. Public R1s – I have a lot of political constraints about what I can and cannot say. So, I may actually have political views that might be much more attuned to what a minority student would want to hear. Furthermore, the political climate of our country certainly has a lot to do with where people sent their children. (Administrator 4, personal communication, 2018)

It was mentioned by a staff member that the politics surrounding the institution may affect how willing the university is to articulate a racial stance both verbally and written, such as in the document analysis artifacts.

The **faculty** group emphasized **understanding and supporting the students as a group** with needed resources. Their sub-theme declared the importance of listening to the current student body and assessing their academic, financial, health, social, and mental needs. The politics surround the institution controls how much resources are distributed to the school and how the various groups are supported. Members in this group were deliberate in saying the institution must move beyond needs assessment and actually meet the needs through the necessary implementation of resources. This sub-theme was communicated in the context of the overarching negative effect of politics on higher education.

> Making providing the necessary resources for students an institutional priority and ensuring that there are resources to support that. Not only just paying lip service to it, but actually backing it up with some firm resources, not the resources that are dependent on other things. Some firm resources (Faculty 2, personal communication, 2018).

Theme 3: Economic Impact Limits the Recruitment and Retention of African American Students

The participants shared how economic disparities for African Americans negatively affect the students' ability to be recruited, lessen the probability to afford attending a selective university and their ability to remain in school through graduation. It was also noted that the scales of economic strength in America heavily favor the White majority. The financial disparity bleeds into higher education with many African American students needing to work while enrolled in college to support their family, themselves, and cover growing cost of attendance.

> I think you've got to start earlier if you want to change your composition socio-economically, because the kids who are from two professional household or one professional and one non-working parent household, upper income are going to go to the right high school. They're going to take the right classes, are going to be socially prepared for college. And if that's how you run in your class, you can start with them their junior year, sophomore year. But if you want to talk about changing the economic composition you better get into the middle schools and start talking to kids who have the ability to do well in your school and helping them set that in their sights. (Faculty 5, personal communication, 2018)

Along with being first generation college student, many African American students often deal with a lack of family financial contribution. Even with the proper grades, scores and academic fortitude, sometimes African American students simply cannot afford to attend selective institutions.

> I believe that one of the barriers relates to the socio-economic status. African American students are simply unable to afford to attend an institution such as the [university in the case study]. So certainly, economics in and of itself is a barrier. (Staff 4, personal communication, 2018).

Participants mentioned knowing that many African American students work to help their families and some use loan money to financially support the necessities at home. The constant financial burden weighs on a student's mind and could hinder their academic performance as they hope they have funding to remain in school.

> Financial aid is extremely important when thinking about retention. Students who obviously were supported financially and could afford to not only pay their tuition, but could afford to pay their room and board, and perhaps have a few dollars left over for books or just to be able to do things socially I think is critically important in terms of retention. I do recall students literally leaving the university simply because they did not have economic resources to be able to support themselves. So certainly, that would be a major factor in retention (Administrator 5, personal communication, 2018).

The case study institution offers several scholarships for under-served and under-represented students. As funding is distributed to each college, institute, and unit, there are

financial resources earmarked for recruitment and retention efforts for all students. Participants said there is **no designated funding for the recruitment and retention of African American students**, although some areas across campus do have specified funding for diversity.

> Yeah, it's a very confusing system [for receiving funding to recruit and retain African American students] that we have here. Incredibly confusing. Now I have asked for a budget and every year I do not get a budget. A budget would allow me to then have the authority to allocate those resources in a really meaningful and strategic way. And then every year evaluate how we use those resources and whether or not they were effective. The way we currently run everything, I have absolutely no way of ascertaining what we spent last year – fully, what we spent last year and how those resources helped us with our retention areas (Faculty 1, personal communication, 2018).

> We have some grants that we've received specifically for [recruiting and retaining African American students], and my school also gives us a little bit of money that is called diversity funds that we can use pretty freely. Whether that's to recruit – like to go to a specific place to recruit, or if it's to pay for Black alums to come and meet with our students. The funding doesn't really have a lot of stipulations as long as it furthers diversity and inclusion. It would sound great, but in actuality, there are a lot of needs that go towards diversity and inclusion and it probably would be better to have like a separate recruitment and retention budget for this (Staff 7, personal communication, 2018).

> In my college the funding to recruit and retain students is one lump amount. We do not separate an amount for African Americans students (Staff 4, personal communication, 2018).

Properly funding recruitment and retention was the common rhetoric from those between **40 and 50 years old**. Providing financial sources should be intentional and reoccurring. They cited financial aid as the chief barrier to recruitment and retention while adding that funding is important to all students but critical for African American students.

When asked about recommendations to better recruit students Faculty 2 stated,

> Increased funding, yeah…absolutely. If you want to attract students, especially targeted populations who might not have a lot of resources, they might need a little support (Staff 2, personal communication, 2018).

Theme 4: The Institution Primarily Recruited All Students Using the Same Methods which were shown more effective for White Students and Less Effective for Black Students

A couple of interviews revealed targeted programs for African American student recruitment, but they also expressed that recruitment efforts were not different from the normal process for White students. The targeted programs mentioned were heavily reliant on student labor and the initiatives did not have sustained funding. Many participates noted the same methods were used to recruit all students.

> I don't think [recruiting African American students] is done much differently than how we recruit other students. Maybe a little bit more emphasis on starting earlier depending upon your location. If I'm a, a Research I institution in a state that doesn't have many African Americans the only way I'm going to admit and enroll is I've got to do a lot of out of state travel. If I'm in a state with a large African American population, that's a plus in that I'm probably better known, students don't have to travel as far to get to me, most students don't want to go beyond 500 miles from where they live to go to college. Some students want to go way beyond that, but the, the general – if you look at the statistics, and it may be lower cost for them to attend because they – for a public institution, they may be paying in state tuition. To recruit so that you enrolled African American students may not be the best use of resources (Administrator 1, personal communication, 2018).

The cohort of **administrators** believed **faculty involvement** was key to recruiting and retaining African American students. They articulated the need to do more with current faculty to improve the climate of the institution along with hiring more African American faculty. Involving faculty in the recruitment and retention efforts gives students an additional connection and resource to help them succeed.

> …faculty don't see the important role they play in helping to attract and retain students (Administrator 1, personal communication, 2018).

> …a tremendous disproportionate low number of African American faculty, and therefore, that does not lend itself, if you will, to those African American students feeling welcome at the institution (Administrator 5, personal communication, 2018).

The group that was non-Black and non-White was labeled "Other" and included participants who identify as African, Caribbean, and Hispanic. This group believed **strong relationships with student influencers** were the key to recruiting and retaining African American students. Recruiters should develop proper relationships with the gatekeepers of potential students such as their family, influential teachers, and guidance counselors. Additionally, retention relationship-building includes culturally sensitive resources for administrators, faculty, and staff.

> Develop a relationship with the school counselor. Develop a relationship with the academic advisors if it's a masters or a PhD or graduate level program. Once you have that relationship established then it's easier for you to make those inroads. At the undergraduate level, make sure that you develop a relationship with a counselor. If it is a specific program that you're recruiting for, for instance, music, then you want to know the music teacher. You send a letter to that person saying I'm going to be at your school recruiting, would you mind sharing brochures with students. You try to get an audition site close to the high school so that way students don't have to travel to you for the audition. You pack up your team and you go to where the students are. It's the same thing like you're recruiting a student athlete. You go and you sit in that person's living room. You don't wait for the family to come to you (Faculty 3, personal communication, 2018).

Start recruiting potential African American students as **early as possible**. The participants varied on when exactly to begin recruiting African American students, but the overwhelming majority believed the recruitment efforts should begin sooner compared to similar recruitment of White students. High school was identified as the typical time to recruit students in general while middle school was identified as the appropriate time to initiate contact with African American students.

> For all students, I think recruitment generally starts in high school, because that's when folks are starting to [consider college] in terms of their thinking. And so, I think that's what's typical. For students that are in sort of marginalized identities and communities, I think recruitment has to start much earlier than that. And so, I think recruitment starts in middle school for those students, because there just are realities about classes they

> need to set up and be kind of on a track to be able to pursue that goal [of college]. (Administrator 3, personal communication, 2018).

Theme 5: African American Students Mainly Retain Themselves

As it relates to how African American students are retained, the participants believe the case study site did not provide a lot of effort in this area. Given the selectiveness of R1 institutions, the argument was made that African American students mainly retain themselves.

> I don't think [the institution in the case study] does a good job of retaining. I wouldn't say they do. I'd say most of the black students that are retained, they do it on their own. They stay because they want to stay, almost with a chip on their shoulder. Like, I'm going to make it, and the – sometimes when a university or an institution is so oblivious to your need, it forces you which is a good thing in a microcosm – it forces you inward and that's how you get small all Black student groups in multiple academic schools across campus. And that's how you stay. Yeah, exactly. Unfortunately, I would say a lot of students would say the institution didn't do anything to keep them (Staff 7, personal communication, 2018).

When a process from the case study site was described for retaining African American students, the idea of a deficit model was illuminated.

> By using a deficit model, and so then pushing – connect with tutoring. You don't even know that I need tutoring, you just know that I'm Black and so you assume that I need tutoring. But that's really what, from my perspective, institutions do. And so again, it's operating from a space of assuming what students need or thinking we know what students need without asking students what they need. And yes, there will be a contingent of Black students that will need tutoring. Just as there are contingent of all students that need that resource, but we often package our retention efforts for Black students from just a sheer deficit orientation. We make a lot of assumptions. How do we allow our Black students the same complexity, the same nuance, the same individualized personality differences and what they need and what they want to engage with in terms of their collegiate experience as we do for majority students? Majority students are allowed to be quirky, a little nerdy or artistic. Black students are just Black. (Faculty 5, personal communication, 2018)

When analyzing the aggregate of **staff** interviews, **individual university student support** was the most prevailing thought. Staff member went beyond the need for the collective student body to have resources to the importance of identifying each student with their particular need. Early opportunities for social engagement in the university community was important along with ensuring African American students who needed academic support were aware of the resources. The group emphasized personal academic advising aimed at the goals of the student and not necessarily the success of the institution. These efforts are believed to help retain African American students.

> I think just real one-on-one talks [are most effective when recruiting African American students], because there's such anxiety in the black community with higher education. A lot are first generation. A lot don't know the questions that they need to ask. A lot of them even though brilliant, don't feel comfortable. They have certain insecurities, and so in a group you can say 'ask whatever question you want', but a lot of times they won't ask you because they don't feel comfortable. So one-on-one with black students, cultivating a relationship where they feel comfortable enough to say, 'I don't know how I'm going to afford to study for the SAT'. …I didn't come from an impoverished background, so I had what I needed, but I didn't know even the questions to ask. So, it would have benefited me [to have] somebody one-on-one asking me 'what do you want to do. How do you want to pay for school? Here are questions that you don't even know you need to ask.' The only way to really do that is to care (a), and (b) to have some type of strategy that allows you to cultivate relationships with people, with schools, with guidance counselors so that you can make space for those types of dialogues to really help students (Staff 7, personal communication, 2018).

Institutional responsibility was the sub-theme **White** participants felt was important. The higher education institution has the responsibility to provide assistance and support for all students they admit. To this end, the group declares that senior leadership crafts the incoming class of students by directing the focus of the Admissions Office. In essence, senior administration shapes the group of students they will be responsible for retaining.

> The biggest, I guess take away regardless of what aspect you're looking at is that theory posits that institutions have a responsibility to provide whatever is necessary to support any student that they admit. And so, I think that's what drives a lot of how I view retention and what we should be doing to support students is if we have offered this student admission to our institution, then whatever it is that they need in order to be successful we should provide. There shouldn't be 'oh well, if you can't do this, then that's on you'. If you can't have chemistry or if you can't – whatever the case may be that is the institution's responsibility to figure out whatever is necessary to support those students toward their academic goal (Staff 4, personal communication, 2018).

Theme 6: Need for More Communication Between Administrators, Faculty and Staff

Improved and increased communication between administrators, faculty and staff will produce a cohesive message to students and families. Furthermore, the communication will indicate the importance of recruiting and retaining African American students to all employees. A faculty member insisted administrators provide the direction for how African American students are recruited and retained but could not discuss now communication is shared to improve efforts. Having two-way communication is needed and desired.

> You can fill a class with students, but are they the students that you wanted? That either your senior administration or your current students or whomever said this is the type of student we want. To get specific students with certain characteristics takes more effort, takes more resources (Faculty 4, personal communication, 2018).

Analysis of two documents collected during orientation revealed a primary **opportunity to provide better consistency in communicating the university's stance related to race relations**. The first document, which was given to students, literally contained pictures of people that appeared to be African Americans on every other page. Similarly, the second document I reviewed also had what appeared to be African American people on nearly every page. Beyond

the images in the two documents, no text specifically discussed the institutional stance on recruiting African American students.

The observations of both portions of the orientation illuminated an **opportunity** for senior administration **to provide better interaction with African American students and family members** while they are on campus during orientation. Beyond this opportunity, the observation exposed two orientation events were no students or family member who appeared Black were directly communicated with by a faculty or administrator.

Potentially Successful Recruitment and Retention Programs

The literature reveals programs and institutions around the country that are positively impacting minority recruitment and retention. Successful aspects from a variety of organizations will be highlighted in this section.

The Posse Foundation

The Posse Foundation was instituted in 1989 to aid in the recruitment efforts to create a diverse group of successful leaders. Deborah Bial, the founder of Posse, realized that intelligent and motivated minority students were going off to college only to return shortly after feeling unsuccessful and unsupported. There was also a need to help bright minority students who may not be on a college's recruitment radar. She started the program on the basis that students needed a diverse group or "posse" of students who were experiencing similar things at the same time so that they could support each other (Blair, 2000). This idea lead to the formation of Posses, which include10 diverse students who worked together on a team from the same city and later attending a college where they would work together to lead that school to develop programs to help the entire student body become more inclusive of students from various backgrounds (Flaherty, 2010). Posse scholars are recruited based primarily on leadership potential and although GPA

and test scores are considered, they are not evaluated in isolation. The recruitment team tries to get strong candidates who may have been overlooked by other selective schools. For Posse students, they dedicate themselves to the program but in return get a full four-year scholarship to a partnering college (Posse Foundation, 2014).

The concept is simple, but the recruitment is what makes this program special. It takes dedicated people to research and go out to recruit top-performing students with leadership potential nationwide. Then, a team must work with top universities and colleges and help them fund and guide a Posse to graduation and beyond. More than 90 percent of students recruited by Posse graduate (Blair, 2000). Additionally, 6,275 students have participated in Posse, earning over $800 million in scholarships since 1989. However, the Posse Foundation's goal is not just for the small group of 10 students who participate in each Posse. It expands to reach thousands of students as the colleges and universities who work with the Posse Foundation aim to make their campus culture more inviting to students from a wide range of diverse backgrounds.

The program works effectively by using five outlined steps: Recruitment, the Pre-collegiate training program, a campus program, a career program, and the Posse access database. Recruitment is mainly done using the Dynamic Assessment Process (DAP), which identifies students who have leadership potential and the ability to succeed but not always the traditional statistics of success used by many colleges. Recruitment teams use the DAP tool to identify the 10 students for each Posse. Students selected to be part of a Posse attend weekly workshops throughout their final semester of their senior year of high school to better prepare them for their roles as team members, scholars, and leaders at their colleges. Once Posse students are on campus, they have tremendous support from campus mentors. They meet with on a bi-monthly basis as well as having Posse meetings and yearly retreats. The career program aids Posse

students in the transition from college to their chosen careers and provides society with more diverse leaders (Alexander & Childress, 2009).

The alumni network is also beneficial to students in the career program because alumni come back to help current Posse students find a career. They offer extensive internship programs and partnerships with companies. The Posse access system is one of the ways that the foundation affects many more students than just those selected. This system allows unselected but talented finalists for the Posse program to show their application profiles to partner colleges and universities to be considered for admission and other scholarships. Because the Posse program uses a holistic approach, colleges are able to see highly qualified students that they may have missed through the regular admission process. The Posse Foundation is funded by a wide range of donors including Fortune 500 companies, private donations, and alumni donations (Posse Foundation, 2014).

Knowledge is Power (KIPP)

Syracuse University uses a plan titled Knowledge is Power (KIPP) to identify, recruit, enroll, and graduate minority students. KIPP is for students who will be the first in their family to graduate college. The students are enrolled in the public charter school. A key component to the program is one-on-one faculty mentoring with the participants of the program (Kirkland, 2012). High school leaders make sure KIPP students have a competitive curriculum. KIPP partners with roughly 40 other colleges who agree to accept 12 to 15 of their first-generation and low-income students to help them adjust to the academic and social climate of the institution. Between 1980 and 2011, total enrollment in undergraduate post-secondary programs increased by 73 percent while minorities increased their enrollment by 300 percent (Kirkland, 2012). The United Sates is steadily moving closer to becoming a majority minority nation. The University of

Syracuse believes focusing on first-generation and low-income students will not only help the economy but increase their international ranking as well.

Students are not forgotten as they approach college graduation. KIPP Through College is a program with 32 participants who meet with administrators and faculty to advocate for their participation in the KIPP program. Selected KIPP students serve as ambassadors, encouraging administrators and faculty to offer internships and arrange mock interviews as part of their career readiness initiative.

First-generation students can be motivated at home, but they cannot receive firsthand advice on how college works (Ellison 2012). A conversation with a parent about what to expect the first month of college can be the difference in the start of a strong semester and thoughts of giving up. An expert in higher education and workforce readiness, Michelle Gilliard suggests wealthy parents are equipped to pay thousands of dollars for private school, tutors, and admissions counselors for their children (Tucker, 2014). These additional resources can help increase SAT/ACT scores, assist navigating the best high school courses, and recommend how to choose the best college for their child. Low-income students do not have this luxury. Gilliard also stresses the importance of faulty engagement and connecting minority students with resources on campus as major contributors to keeping them enrolled and on track to graduation (Tucker, 2014).

Kenyon Educational Enrichment Program (KEEP)

Kenyon College in Ohio is an extremely competitive liberal arts school. The Kenyon Educational Enrichment Program (KEEP) brings 24 students of color to Kenyon College in the summer for intensive writing and data analysis coursework. The students also receive a mentor

from the faculty or administrative ranks. Academic and career planning advice is also given to students participating in KEEP (Jernigan, 2015).

Chief Dull Knife College

A tribal community college in Montana, Chief Dull Knife College is also using a combination of tactics to increase first-generation and minority enrollment and retention. The college uses computerized tutoring, peer feedback, and faculty engagement to enhance mathematic skills for the participants (Ward, Jensen Jepson, Winddison Jones, & Littlebear, 2014).

Morehouse College

An all-male historically Black college in Atlanta, GA, Morehouse College has a peer-led tutoring and teaching program designed to increase the number of students entering and excelling in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses (Adams & Haynes, 2012). The program has increased the enrollment and retention numbers for the institution.

Norfolk State University

Norfolk State University offers a summer program that enrolls participants in its Breakfast Club as a way to support minority students. The group meets monthly for a year with their faculty mentors. The 7 a.m. breakfast meeting also includes career advice, professional development, and additional special guests catered to the needs of the students (Hamilton, 2012).

Learning in Communities for Success (LinCs)

Claflin University in Orangeburg, SC, saw its freshman-to-sophomore retention rate increase by nearly 20 percent (from 77 percent to 95 percent) for students enrolled in their Learning in Communities for Success (LinCs) program. The program takes 25 first-generation

students and essentially treats them as a cohort for a semester, allowing them to take English 101, freshman English composition, and Math 111 together as a group. All students have been accepted into the university but might be identified by admissions counselors as high risk for dropping out. LinCs participants are also paired up with a peer mentor who has completed the program. Students must be invited to join the organization (Tucker, 2014).

Franklin & Marshall College Prep

Franklin & Marshall College has a program that brings together 70 high school seniors from around the country. The students spend three weeks in the Franklin & Marshall College Prep program. Participants are in class together for two hours, four days a week, and they are responsible for completing a research project. The courses are taught by current faculty members. The president of Franklin & Marshall, Daniel Porterfield, said "there's an urgency to build pipelines of college success to far more low-income students attending our educational institutions" (Tucker, 2014, p. 28). Franklin & Marshall have noticed the GPAs of students in their college prep program are on par with the general freshman class (Stern, 2014).

Alternative Explanations

The interviews were rearranged into multiple subgroups and reanalyzed to explore alternative conclusions and rival explanations (Patton, 2015). This inductive analytical practice increased the rigor of the findings while producing additional themes that coincide with the primary results. Searching for alternative explanations seeks to derive a better thought from the preponderance of evidence. Logically, beyond the findings represented, geography could be a contributing factor for African American recruitment and retention at the case study site.

Summary

In conclusion, the various classifications provided some overlap in their responses. However, there were some clear unique views on recruiting and retaining African American students. Administrators focused on the faculty playing a key role and currently not understanding their significance in recruitment and retention. Meanwhile faculty and staff focused on the for resources to support Black students individual and collectively. Black participants argued the need for more African American in administration and faculty while advocating for their involvement in recruitment and retention. White participants were concerned with the institutional responsibility to help anyone enrolled at the university. The over 50 group centered their comments around race, while the younger participants less than 40 were insisted institutional honesty was the key. The participants between 40 – 50 focused on properly funding recruitment and retention.

The results from the case study using 17 interviews two observations and two document analysis artifacts revealed six primary themes that are important when considering the recruitment and retention of African American students. The themes were:

1. Culture and climate of the institution matter greatly when attempting to recruit and retain African American students
2. Overarching effect of politics on higher education
3. Economic impact surrounding the recruitment and retention of students
4. The institution primarily recruited all students using the same methods
5. African American students mainly retain themselves
6. Need for more communication between administrators, faculty and staff

A discussion of the findings that answer the research questions will be outlined in Chapter five along with connecting the results to Critical Race Theory and Strategic Enrollment Management; implications for research, policy, and practice; and future research needed in this field of study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONLUSION

The findings for this case study support earlier research while providing some unique perspectives. In this final chapter, the findings and discussions are specific to those that help answer the research questions regarding African American recruitment and retention for the case study site. Next, a discussion of how the results display a clear connection to Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM). The remainder of the chapter will include implications for research, policy and practice while the discussion on future research will precede concluding thoughts.

Contribution to the Literature

After the United States elected its first Black president Barack Obama for two terms, some felt racism was eradicated. This dissertation provides a current assessment of the racial climate and affirms the need for CRT in higher education recruitment and retention analysis. This research is the start to filling the geographical gap in the literature in the southeast (as defined in chapter 1) taking a critical analysis of SEM at doctoral intensive PWIs. Furthermore, this case study assigns the recommendations. All recommendation from the study are within the delegated authority of senior administration.

Answering the Research Questions Using the Findings

The overarching research question for this case study research is: How does a doctoral intensive research one (R1) university in the southeast recruit and retain African American

students and what financial assistance support those efforts? The question is dissected into three smaller questions and addressed by the findings.

How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast recruit African American students?

Based on the collective research results from the case study, the findings revealed African American students are primarily recruited in the same manner as all students. The typical recruitment process involves the Admissions Office purchasing information from a company that specializes in providing data about high school students. The information generally includes grade point average, SAT scores, and ACT scores (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). The Admissions Office then targets high schools with a high saturation of students meeting some particular criteria. The institution also relies on their social media presence, school website, campus visits and outreach to high schools to produce their incoming class of students. The method of continuing to do what has been done further marginalizes African American students. The institution must be willing to recruit differently if it wants to enroll more African Americans.

The observations support this finding—nothing was done uniquely for African American students to consider the institution and move from being accepted to enrolled. Further, based on an earlier observation of a new student orientation section, the less than ten students of color appeared almost lost and engulfed as the room of 500 quickly filled to capacity. Faculty involvement in recruitment, as identified by the administrators interviewed, could help during orientation but there should also be ongoing efforts to have more accepted African Americans in the chairs during orientation. The document analysis revealed an intentional marketing effort to have diverse images in the material given to students and family members. The document imaging shows a signal from senior administration that race matters but did not translate into institutional honesty given the verbal silence on race during the orientation. The documents were

only distributed to those invited and present at orientation. As observed in Chapter four, fewer than 20 total people of the 500 given the documents appeared to be African American. The research uncovered a need to deliberately fund recruitment efforts for African Americans at the college/school/unit level.

How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeast retain African American students?

The participants interviewed related to the case study site expressed the notion that African American students primarily retain themselves – for better or worse. Given the highly selective nature of the case study institution, even if the environment is not conducive to optimal African American student success, the caliber of Black students admitted will result in some adjusting to the institution and their graduation. Although not ideal, even in a less than supportive situation there will be some Black students that graduate. However, this model reinforces the current power dynamics in society by graduating a larger percentage of White students than Black students (Roach, 2013). This primary theme is congruent with the participants' thought that there is not a lot of effort institution-wide placed on retaining African American students. Sub-themes echo this sentiment by expressing a need to have African American student retention efforts that included faculty involvement and support for Black students individually and collectively. The retention efforts for African American students are seen as an institutional responsibility by the participants interviewed.

What financial supports are available at a doctoral intensive research one university in the Southeast for the recruitment and retention of African American students?

The research revealed financial supports for recruitment and retention of students is extremely important. The case study site provides scholarship and other financial aid incentives at the institutional level. Individual colleges/schools/units may have grant funding to assist in the

recruitment and retention efforts of diverse student. The overwhelming majority of the areas at the case study site represented by the interview participants did not have any funding specifically identified to recruit and/or retain African American students. Two participants mentioned they have a diversity fund at their college level. The observation and document analysis findings did not yield a definition of diversity nor the institution's stance on race relations. The ambiguity of diversity has not helped disbursement of resources that could better retain African American students. Participants expressed their trepidation in not having a line item in the budget for recruiting and retaining Black students. Without dedicated funding, sustained targeted programing for African American students is practically impossible.

Taking a step back to examine this research from a broader view reveals this is a unique time for the case study site to make strides to enhance their African American recruitment and retention efforts. On the heels of open race based violence on college campuses across the country, the current racial climate in higher education has left many in academia longing from social progress. This may have softened political view enough for senior administration to make impactful adjustments that will make the culture and climate more welcoming and nurturing from African American students while maintaining a particular desired political posture.

Now that this research is complete, the case study site senior administration is better informed about the thoughts of employees entrusted to enroll and support Black students. Assessing and bridging the gap in asymmetry of information among the employees will be a major step toward improved service. Administration can also garner insight on how policies and procedures related to recruitment and retention are used in practice. This qualitative study allowed the participants to share their successes and frustrations with the process. Many participants thanked me for asking them to share their experiences. The employees were happy

someone was genuinely interested in their perspective of how and why the procedures for recruiting and retaining African American students were what they are. The study gives the institution momentum and a viable cohort primed to extend the work forward within the institution.

Through this research I discovered there are employees in multiple classifications (administrators, faculty and staff) who want to see more African American students admitted, enrolled, supported and graduated from the case study site. The research showed me that there was not a significant difference in the way this institution recruits and retains Black students. Furthermore, the study forced me to see the connectivity of campus culture & climate, economic impact and politics on higher education and the negative institutional structures within society that marginalize African Americans, which ultimately hinder their ability to attain higher education. The knowledge gained from this particular institution might be transferable to another institution that looks similar.

Connecting Results to CRT & SEM

The thematic analysis in the findings are connected to Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM). CRT embraces issues of race, power, and exploitation as described by a participant.

> This is the case for underrepresented students because of institutionalized racism they often are not tracked into the college ready or not [tracked] into the advanced placement. We've got to attend for institutional racism in our recruitment efforts. If we do the same thing that we do for all students, which is to not attend for [institutional racism] then that leaves us in the same position, and we are recreating institutional racism again for our historically marginalized groups. Unintentionally though, but the outcome is still the same, so our intentions don't matter. (Administrator 3, personal communication, 2018).

Institutional racism as articulated by the participant speaks to an educational system (K-20) that must be addressed for the good of society. America has historically disenfranchised

African Americans. The normalcy of racism both overtly and through microagressions (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) have led to institutional racism. Institutional racism can affect the community outside of the university—student interactions in the grocery store, post office, law enforcement, sporting events, and more. There are also many ways institutional racism can be expressed within the university that negatively affect SEM through program offerings, courses, reading assignments, admission policies, community spaces, and funding allocation, just to name a few.

Funding is paramount in society and higher education is not immune to financial needs. The CRT tenet of whiteness as property expresses the privilege of the White majority economically and other ways (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Cost and Financial Aid are key components of SEM that are affected by the majority dominant culture. Policies that disenfranchise African American directly and indirectly are embedded in SEM. The theme of economic impact has a long history—African Americans have been financially crippled by laws, policies, and procedures in America. This reality leads to Black families often being less financially prepared for college than their White counterparts. Two of the four components of SEM as expressed by Hossler and Bontrager (1998) are the reality of fees/tuition and financial aid. Public four-year institutions have increased their tuition by 131 percent from the school year 1969-1970 to 2012-2013 (Picus, 2015). The African American enrollment issue is greatly exacerbated by the tremendous consistent increase in higher education cost. Understanding the amplified cost, some institutions have offered need-based financial support for students that qualify. Minority families who are trying to navigate post-secondary education for the first time will likely need financial information resources readily available because many are struggling

with information asymmetry. Many African American students are first-generation college students and have no family members with knowledge of navigating the financial aid process.

Financial incentives in the United States are used to manage enrollment by offering funding to optimal students. Typical financial incentives for students are in the form of scholarships or grants. The institution must balance offering funding to reduce financial barriers with a finite number of facilities. This is especially true after reduced governmental funding happened post-1990s (Pickens, 1993). The university can only accept a certain number of students based on limitations in housing accommodations and ideal class size relative to faculty and administrative/staff required to support the institution's needs. The limitation on resources directly stirs the SEM conversation related to recruitment.

The research findings revealed the politics of higher education had far-reaching effect. The politics of education is inevitable and shapes educational laws and policies throughout our country. The impact of politics may influence the culture and climate of an institution. These overarching social drivers filter though what CRT calls "social construction." The societal hierarchy shapes our politics that influences the culture of our higher education institutions. Power resides with the person or group that controls the resources. Resources are not evenly allocated in higher education (Scribner & Layton, 1995).

CRT works to analyze the social undercurrents and also to seek positive change. The previous chapter discussed best practices for recruiting and retaining African American students by a variety of higher education institutions.

Implications for Research, Policy & Practice

A faculty participant said, "institutions have a responsibility to provide whatever is necessary to support any student that they admit." This concept could explain why the gates of

admission to certain institutions are guarded so closely when examining African American enrollment. If they are admitted, then the institution is responsible for helping them succeed. This research is a reflective tool for the case study site to evaluate how they recruit and retain African American students. Implications beyond the evaluation should be adjustments in policies and practice that have not and do not produce the culture and climate conducive for all students. There appears to be a practice of not funding or poorly funding efforts related to recruiting and retaining African American students. The research suggests making sustained financial obligations will enhance the areas that increase enrollment and support for Black students. The study also provides rational to consider hiring policies for positions that recruit and retain students across campus. Like other positions around campus, cultural competency is a needed skill that can be mentioned on the job description in addition to cultural sensitivity training.

Future Research

Future research concerning African American recruitment and retention at doctoral intensive R1 institutions should include additional case studies throughout the Southeast. The research will require additional interviews, observations, and document analysis. “I think the biggest barrier is that there is this sense students have of being othered and trying to find a place and voice and feeling even more marginalized in the ivory tower” (Staff 3, personal communication, 2018). A survey to gain the student voice would enhance the understanding of this research. Finally, shadowing of key administrators, faculty and staff could be fruitful to better understand the results from other methods.

Conclusion

“To recruit so that you enrolled African American students may not be the best use of resources” (Administrator 1, personal communication, 2018). This quote will forever be with me

as a reminder of the importance of scholars who are willing to use CRT when applying SEM and the necessity of economic, gender, racial, and ideologically diverse leaders at every level of higher education. The case study discovered African American recruitment and retention efforts were largely treated the same as recruiting and retaining White students. The participants did not identify any specific budgetary line items identified for African American recruitment and/or retention. The research revealed African American recruitment and retention are tremendously affected by the culture and climate of the institution, the politics of higher education, and the economic impact within society.

There is a growing wealth gap related to college attainment (Pfeffer, 2018). As mentioned prior, federal and state funding for higher education has decreased over the years and universities have responded with increased tuition and fees. Many African American students cannot afford to attend research intensive PWIs (Keister & Moller, 2000). Most African Americans in the United States live in the southeast (U.S. Census, 2010) and virtually every flagship institution of higher education in the southeast has increased their admissions criteria. The actual or perceived cost of attendance is a determining factor for Black students as they select which institution to attend. Scholarships and other financial aid options are paramount for students who are economically disadvantaged. While African Americans are fighting for access legally, economically, and socially, there is an admissions scandal revealing the privilege of the elite and their ability to purchase admission to selective institutions (Camera, 2019). This may be a good time for the case study site and other selective institutions in the southeast to revisit their policies and practices on admitting legacies (the children of alumni), family of generous donors, and the family of politicians.

Following is a list of recommendations for the case study institution that are within the delegated authority of senior administration to enhance their recruitment and retention of African American students:

1. Be deliberate about your goals for African American recruitment and retention.
    - Do not allow the term "diversity" to muddy the waters by allowing the university community, potential students, and the general public to unpack what you mean by diversity.
    - If you are deliberate, you can have a disproportionately higher number of persons of color in your orientation documents, clearly state the purpose and articulate your stance on race.

2. Recruit and retain all students using the methods that work best for African Americans.
    - The methods to recruit and retain African American students work for recruiting and retaining all students. However, recruiting and retaining all students like White students does not work best for African American students.
    - Recruit African American scholars like African American athletes – early and often with multiple opportunities to groom and connect.

3. Mandatory specialized diversity training and implementation for administrators, faculty, and staff – all employees.
    - Each group interacts with students and the public differently and proper training should address the overlap and nuances.

- 86% of the senior administrators and faculty in higher education are white males (Seltzer, 2017) and have not experienced the volume of minority students and minority colleagues now surrounding them.
- Don't be racist. We all arrive with our own biases. Institutions of higher education should challenge us all to learn and expand our realities in a way that moves us beyond racial tolerance into human acceptance.

4. Financially prioritize African American students.
    - Each college/school/unit should have a budget with a line item for African American recruitment and retention that does not pay salaries.
    - Our budget reveals our true priorities. "We say that we are invested [in diversity]. Investment means you're giving often to the point where it hurts and … you're doing that because it's going to pay off in the long run" (Faculty 5, personal communication, 2018).
    - Equality is not equity, therefore, there is a need to target the African American community with federal and state funds. We must address the historic legacies negatively impacting African Americans, which brings us closer to liberation.

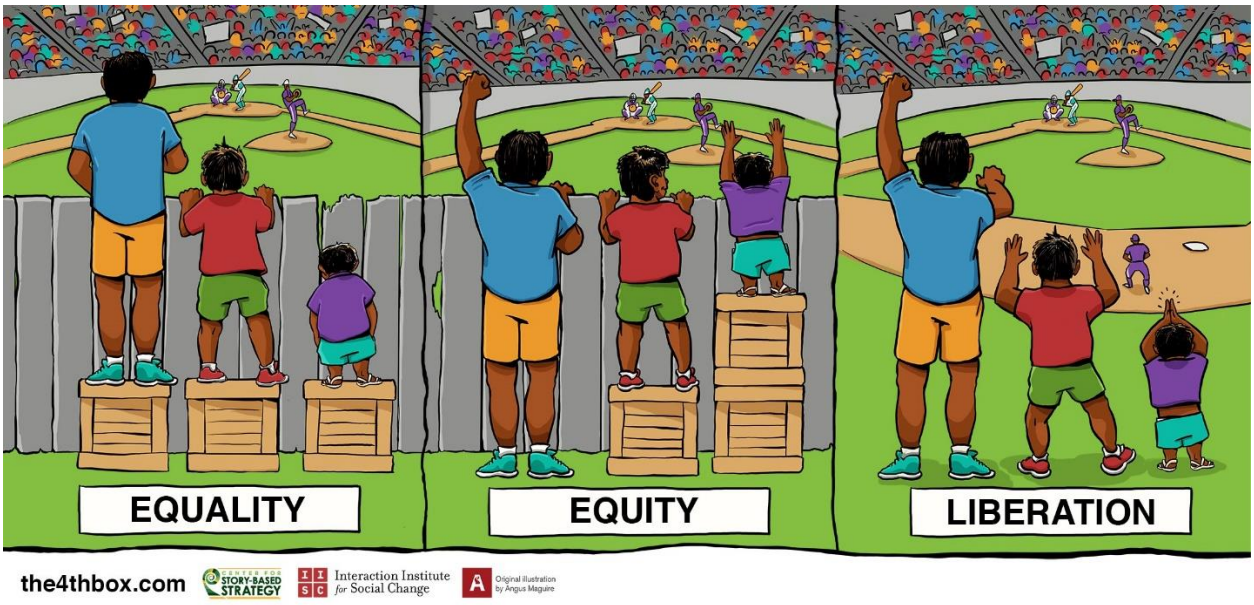

Image courtesy of *Liberation – Rather than Equality or Equity*

5. Hire more African American administrators and faculty.
    - Increasing the number of African Americans in influential positions will positively impact the culture, climate on campus and enrollment of Black students (Jaschik, 2019).
    - The presence of ample African American administrators and faculty signal to students that Black people are welcome.

6. Solicit input from a variety of African American students.
    - Listen to African American students.
    - Prove you heard African American students by tailoring holistic support based on their input.

7. Do not heavily rely on the labor of current African American students to recruit and retain minority students.
    - The current African American students may start to feel like “tokens” as it was noted the same students are used repeatedly
    - Using African American students place an unnecessary burden on them when the onus should be on the institution.
    - Some people are waiting on African American students to be unsuccessful in highly selective institutions. We should not burden them with the responsibilities better suited for a staff person.

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APPENDIX A

CODEBOOK—AFRICAN AMERICAN RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Codebook - African American Recruitment & Retention

Code	Description
AA	African American
AA rec	African American recruitment
AA rec +	African American recruitment statement that is positive
AA rec -	African American recruitment statement that is negative
AA ten	African American retention
AA ten +	African American retention statement that is positive
AA ten -	African American retention statement that is negative
Gen	General statement about all students
Gen rec	General statement about all students related to recruiting
Gen rec +	General statement about all students related to recruiting that is positive
Gen rec -	General statement about all students related to recruiting that is negative
Gen ret	General statement about all students related to retention
Gen ret +	General statement about all students related to retention that is positive
Gen ret -	General statement about all students related to retention that is negative
Sol	Solutions
Sol Gen	Solutions for general students
Sol Gen +	Solutions for general students that are positive
Sol Gen -	Solutions for general students that are negative
Sol Gen rec	Solutions for general students related to recruitment
Sol Gen rec +	Solutions for general students related to recruitment that are positive
Sol Gen rec -	Solutions for general students related to recruitment that are negative
Sol Gen ret	Solutions for general students related to retention
Sol Gen ret +	Solutions for general students related to retention that are positive
Sol Gen ret -	Solutions for general students related to retention that are negative
Sol AA	Solutions for African American students
Sol AA rec	Solutions for African American students related to recruitment
Sol AA rec +	Solutions for African American students related to recruitment that are positive

Sol AA rec -	Solutions for African American students related to recruitment that are negative
Sol AA ret	Solutions for African American students related to retention
Sol AA ret +	Solutions for African American students related to retention that are positive
Sol AA ret -	Solutions for African American students related to retention that are negative
SW	General and African American students were thought about the same way
SW +	General and African American students were thought about the same way and it was positive
SW -	General and African American students were thought about the same way and it was negative
SW rec	General and African American students were thought about the same related to recruitment
SW rec +	General and African American students were thought about the same related to recruitment and it was positive
SW rec -	General and African American students were thought about the same related to recruitment and it was negative
SW ret	General and African American students were thought about the same related to retention
SW ret +	General and African American students were thought about the same related to retention and it was positive
SW ret -	General and African American students were thought about the same related to retention and it was negative

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a project conducted as part of the requirements for research directed in accordance with pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Georgia. For this project I will be conducting an interview related to African American recruitment and retention at doctoral research (R1) institutions in the southeast United States and the associated financial resources. The interview activity will be supervised by the chair of my committee, Dr. Sheneka M. Williams.

The purpose of this interview activity is to enhance the research related to recruitment and retention of students in higher education, in particular African American students. **The information generated will be used for academic research and/or publication.** All information will be confidential and pseudonyms will be used in the transcription from the interview.

For this project, you will participate in a roughly 60-minute semi-structured interview. I will ask you a number of questions concerning recruiting and retaining higher education students in general and African American students in particular. I will delete or destroy the audio-file after the transcription process is complete.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time should you become uncomfortable. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at (706) 319-1414. I hope you will enjoy this opportunity to share your experiences and viewpoints with me. Thank you very much for your contribution to this research.

Sincerely,

Roswell Lawrence, Jr.

_____ _____

Signature of Researcher Date

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Instructor:
Sheneka M. Williams
Associate Professor

Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy

Please sign both copies, keep one copy and return one to the researcher.

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write: Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

How does a doctoral intensive research one (R1) university in the Southeast recruit and retain African American students and the associated financial resources?

A Qualitative Study

Hello**.** My name is Roswell Lawrence, Jr. and I am a doctoral student in the Educational Policy & Administration program at the University of Georgia. I am conducting research on how a doctoral research one university recruit and retain African students in the Southeast and the associated financial resources. Specifically, through this interview, I want to learn more about the methods used, outcomes and ways to improve the recruitment and retention processes for African American students.

The research interest is from my own experience as an African American student who attended a mixed-race high school that did not have recruiters from research one institutions visit looking to recruit students. I did attend a research one university and I am interested in how they recruit and retain African American students. As someone who has experience in this area at a research one institution, you offer a unique perspective that I value. I appreciate you meeting with me today to discuss this concern.

As mentioned in the consent form, information you share during the interview will be kept confidential. I will not use your name or any other identifying information that could allow someone to discover who you are. You may choose not to answer any question and you may decide to end the interview at any point. The interview will take approximately one hour. I will be asking multiple questions but feel free to ask any questions you may have throughout the interview process. At this point, do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Interview Questions

I would like to begin by learning a bit more about you.

1. Tell me about yourself.
    a. Hometown
    b. Ethnicity

Transition:
I would like to understand your experiences with student recruitment and retention. To begin, I have generated several questions to facilitate our conversation but more may arise during our discussion.

Research Question
How does doctoral research intensive (R1) universities **recruit** African American students?

Transition:
The following questions are specific to **general** student recruitment.

Questions are about GENERAL student recruitment:

2. What roles or experiences have you had that has helped you understand student recruitment?
   Probing Questions:
   a. What type of organization?
   b. How would you describe the climate?

3. What is your definition of student recruitment?

4. Tell me how doctoral research one universities recruit students?
   Probing questions:
   a. When should recruiting begin for students?

5. What strategies were most effective for recruiting students?
   Probing questions:
   a. How were the strategies agreed upon?

6. What were the greatest barriers or obstacles for recruiting students?
   Probing questions:
   a. How were these hindrances overcome?
   b. Tell me about key opposition.
   c. Discuss the key supporters.

7. Given your experiences, what are your recommendations to better recruit students?
   Probing questions:
   a. What resources will be needed?
   b. How do we measure success?

Transition:

The following questions are specific to **African American** student recruitment.

Questions are about AFRICAN AMERICAN student recruitment

8. Tell me how doctoral research one universities recruit African American students?
   Probing questions:
   a. When should recruiting begin for African American students?

9. What strategies were most effective for recruiting African American students?
   Probing questions:
   a. How were the strategies to recruit African American students agreed upon?
   b. Discuss any objections to using resources to target African American students instead of resources for students of the dominant culture.

10. What were the greatest barriers or obstacles for recruiting marginalized African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. How were these hindrances to recruiting African American students overcome?
    b. How does racism play a role in recruiting African American students?
    c. Discuss the key supporters to recruiting African American students.

11. Given your experiences, what are your recommendations to better recruit African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. What resources will be needed to better recruit African American students?
    b. How do we measure success for recruiting African American students?

Transition:

Now that we have discussed recruitment for all students, I would like to shift our attention to retention.

Research Question

How does doctoral research intensive (R1) universities in the Southeast U.S. **retain** African American students?

Questions are about GENERAL student retention:

Transition:

The following questions are specific to **general** student **retention**.

12. What roles or experiences have you had that has helped you understand student retention?
    Probing Questions:
    a. What type of organization?
    b. How would you describe the climate?

13. What is your definition of student retention?

14. Tell me how doctoral research one universities help retain students?
    Probing questions:
    a. When should retention efforts begin for students?

15. What strategies were most effective for retaining students?
    Probing questions:
    a. How were the strategies agreed upon?

16. What were the greatest barriers or obstacles for retaining students?
    Probing questions:
    a. How were these hindrances overcome?
    b. Tell me about key opposition.
    c. Discuss the key supporters.

17. Given your experiences, what are your recommendations to better retain students?
    Probing questions:
    a. What resources will be needed?
    b. How do we measure success?

Transition:

The following questions are specific to **African American** student retention.

Questions about AFRICAN AMERICAN student retention

18. Tell me how doctoral research one universities retain African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. When should retention efforts begin for African American students?

19. What programs contributed to the retention of African American students?

20. What strategies were most effective for retaining African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. How were the strategies for retaining African American students agreed upon?
    b. Discuss any objections to using resources to target African American students instead of resources for students of the dominant culture.

21. What were the greatest barriers or obstacles for retaining marginalized African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. How were these hindrances overcome?
    b. How does racism play a role in retaining African American students?
    c. Discuss the key supporters to retaining African American students.

22. Given your experiences, what are your recommendations to better retain African American students?
    Probing questions:
    a. What resources will be needed to better retain African American students?
    b. How do we measure success for recruiting African American students?

Transition:
Now I have just a couple of questions about **funding** for recruitment and retention efforts.

Research Question
What **financial** supports are available for the recruitment and retention of African American students at doctoral research intensive (R1) universities in the Southeast U.S.?

23. How is funding allocated for recruiting and retaining students in **general**?

24. How is funding allocated for recruiting and retaining **African American** students?

Snowballing Question:
25. Is there anyone else you think I should speak with concerning student recruitment and retention?
    a. Administrators
    b. Faculty
    c. Staff

Final Question:
As we conclude the interview, I would like to give you the opportunity to share anything you would like to add. Is there any additional information you would like to share?

Summary Statement:
The themes I noticed throughout the interview included:

-
-
-

Do you think these themes summarize our conversation?
Are there any other themes that stand out to you?

Wrap-Up:
I would like to thank you for sharing your time and perspective with me today. May I contact you with any follow-up questions?

APPENDIX D

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title

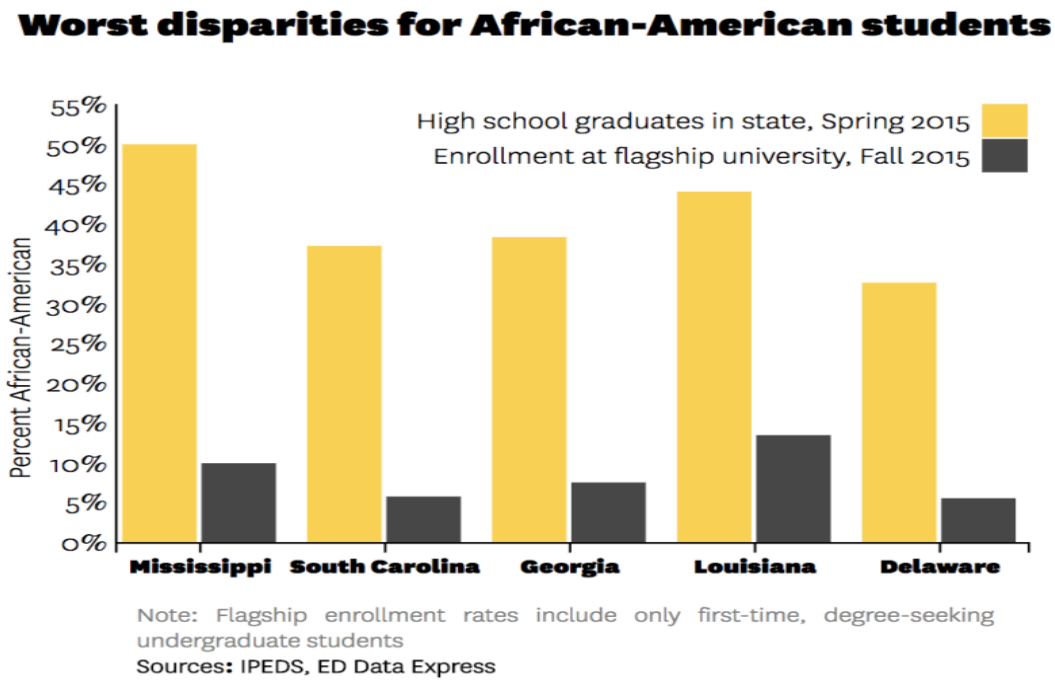
Recruitment and Retention of African American Students at a Doctoral Intensive Research One University in the Southeast and the Associated Financial Resources: A Critical Case Study

Key Research Question

How does a doctoral intensive research one university in the southeastern recruit and retain African American students and what financial assistance support those efforts?

Statement of the Problem

The path to acceptance in institutions of higher education in America has historically been tenuous for minority students (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Recruiting and retaining African American students has always been essential for higher education institutions in the United States. However, for the aforementioned reasons and more, recruiting African American students has become increasingly problematic (Vedantam, 2013). The issue is even more evident at predominantly White institutions (PWIs). The flagship universities in the southeast U.S. have their founding roots between 1785 and 1858 but did not admit their first African American undergraduate student until on average 1961 (University of Alabama – 1963, University of Florida – 1958, University of Georgia – 1961, Louisiana State University – 1953 (he left after 55 days) 1964, University of Mississippi – 1962, University of South Carolina – 1963, University of Texas – 1956).



Current significance of the research is evident by the number of protest and rallies at PWI's across the country related to racial (in)justice.

Findings

The results from the case study using 17 interviews two observations and two document analysis artifacts revealed six primary themes that are important when considering the recruitment and retention of African American students. The themes were:

Themes:

1. Culture and Climate Matter Greatly when attempting to recruit and retain African American students
2. Negative overarching effect of politics on higher education
3. Economic impact limits the recruitment and retention of African American students
4. The institution primarily recruited all students using the same methods which were shown more effective for White students and less effective for Black students
5. African American students mainly retain themselves
6. Need for more communication between administrators, faculty and staff

Recommendations

1. Be deliberate about your goals for African American recruitment and retention.
2. Recruit and retain all students using the methods that work best for African Americans.
3. Mandatory specialized diversity training and implementation for administrators, faculty, and staff – all employees.

4. Financially prioritize African American students
5. Hire more African American administrators and faculty.
6. Solicit input from a variety of African American students.
7. Do not heavily rely on the labor of current African American students to recruit and retain minority students.

Participants

All Interview Participants

Count	Classification	Race	Age
1	Staff	White	Less than 40
2	Staff	Black	Less than 40
3	Administrator	White	Greater than 50
4	Staff	Black	Less than 40
5	Administrator	Black	Greater than 50
6	Administrator	White	Greater than 50
7	Staff	White	Less than 40
8	Faculty	Caribbean	40 - 50
9	Faculty	Black	40 - 50
10	Faculty	African	40 - 50
11	Faculty	Black	Greater than 50
12	Staff	Black	Less than 40
13	Staff	Black	Less than 40
14	Administrator	Hispanic	Greater than 50
15	Administrator	Black	Greater than 50
16	Faculty	Black	40 - 50
17	Staff	White	40 - 50