WALKER, CORETTA ROSEBORO, PHD. Still I Rise: The Role of Social Capital On the Experiences of African American Women Senior Administrators in Higher Education. (2020)
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While the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States of America's overall population (especially the college student population) are expanding at unprecedented levels, the leadership within higher education's Ivory Tower has remained consistent for the past 300 years. At the highest levels, leadership remains largely monolithic – this is both White and male (Pratt-Clarke & Maes, 2017). African American women are severely underrepresented in senior level leadership positions. Defined as being at the Director level or above (Bertrand Jones et al. 2012), these types of administrative positions include titles such as Director, Associate Vice President/Chancellor, Associate/Assistant Dean, Vice President/Vice Chancellor, Provost and President/Chancellor.

Whether teaching in the classroom or serving as an administrator, the narrative remains the same. In the classroom, African American women account for 8.04% or 25,114 of all full-time faculty members at degree-granting institutions (Johnson, 2017). Women faculty outnumber their male counterparts, but males are more likely to have tenure (Johnson, 2017). This trend is also true for African Americans. While there are fewer African American men than African American women faculty members (19,032 men compared to 25,114 women), over one and half times as many African American men have achieved full professor status – 4,010 versus 2,710 (Johnson, 2017).

According to Gagliaradi et al. (2017), only 8% of college or university Presidents across all institution types identified as African Americans in 2016. This is just a 2% increase, as the statistic has held relatively static from 2001 to 2011 (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). At the same time, women comprise only 30% of all Presidents, with only 5% of college Presidents identify as women of color (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). It should be noted that this statistic includes women in all major ethnic groups, again silencing and flattening the experiences of African American women.

For African American women in these roles, they experience significant barriers to gain entrance into these roles while leading their respective units. Two of the most significant barriers are structural – racism and sexism. This study utilized social network analysis (SNA) to study the structures of African American women's formal and informal networks to learn more about the attributes that had the greatest impact on their success. The researcher used an online Qualtrics survey that yielded a sample of 140 African American women.

Using the SNA measure degree centrality, findings highlight that mentors and supervisors were the most popular roles in their networks while the title of Directors and Vice Chancellor/President/Provost were the most popular position titles. Of note, 61.5% of all mentors (120 out of 195) were African American with 75.8%, or 91of the 120, identifying as African American women. This finding suggests that homophily is significantly present in the sample. Homophily is the tendency to be connected to people who are similar to them.

Overall, members of respondents' informal and formal networks supported them by building capacity and confidence, assisting them with work-related matters, and advocating for an opportunity with new responsibilities. When asked which resources supported their ongoing success in their role, faith/spirituality/religion, professional organizations, and family support were the most influential using the brokerage SNA measure.

Future research is needed to study more about the absence of sponsors and White males in their networks. Additional research can be completed to test if homophily is present in other minority populations.

STILL I RISE: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON THE EXPERIENCES OF

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER

EDUCATION

by

Coretta Roseboro Walker

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Approved by

<u>Dr. Laura Gonzalez</u>

Committee Chair

DEDICATION

To my late grandmother, Cora Willie Dixon,

"Thank you" feels inadequate given your level of influence in my life. You've set the

example of being a leader in all rights – in your home, in your family, in your church, in

your community, and in the classroom. I am honored to be your namesake and pray I

carry your legacy well.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Coretta Roseboro Walker has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Jeremiah 29:11 reminds me "'For I know that plans I have for you', declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (King James Bible, 1769/2017). I owe this moment to my heavenly Father and Creator. Who am I that you chose me? Lord, thank you for birthing this dream in me and bringing this degree to completion.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The American dream is built upon opportunity, equity, and access. If you work hard and follow the rules, success is sure to follow. But for whom? A meritocracy only works when everyone's contributions have equal merit and consideration. For minoritized populations, the American dream remains elusive. Racism and sexism are so embedded in American institutions such as education, employment, housing, and banking that we are often numb to their damaging effects (Deggans, 2020).

Higher education can open the door to the American Dream. Millions of students are embarking on this journey with hopes of increased professional opportunities and the ripe social networks that can lead to professional and personal capital. While the racial and ethnic diversity of our country's population (especially college students) are expanding at unprecedented levels, the leadership within higher education's Ivory Tower has remained consistent for the past 300 years. At the highest levels, leadership remains largely monolithic (Pratt-Clarke & Maes, 2017). Senior leadership is White or male and usually both. With increased numbers of diverse students entering higher education and completing degrees, why are diverse leaders noticeably absent at the top?

This introductory chapter will analyze how African American women engage throughout the higher education pipeline with a particular focus on their inclusion in senior-level leadership positions in higher education and how their presence is affirmed or limited in certain settings. After reviewing the presence of and the experiences of African American women in senior leadership positions, barriers to their success and patterns of their exclusion will be included. The introduction will then expand to reviewing the importance of social networks and who is excluded from higher education's current pipeline to senior leadership roles. I will then explore mentorship and sponsorship as two vehicles of social capital and offer ways that I will study the role

of social capital in the experiences of African American women senior leaders in higher education.

African American Women & the Higher Education Pipeline

Regardless of the higher education setting, African American women are working to establish their place in a system that was not created for them. Upon entrance in higher education, African American women expect an optimistic future. Higher education should provide equal opportunity and access to accomplish one's goals. Advancement should be a meritocratic series of predictable, sequential steps. In higher education, this pipeline begins with the completion of a baccalaureate degree.

Women have outpaced men in undergraduate college enrollment rates since 1998, representing 58% of the 16.8 million students in Fall 2017 (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). African American undergraduate women represented 8.4% of all undergraduate students while outpacing their African American male peers at every level. Within their racial designation, African American women earned 64% of bachelor's degrees compared to 36% for African American men; African American women earned 70% of master's and 66% of doctorate degrees (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). Interestingly, the National Economic Council found that only one in 14 women earned more than $100,000 compared to one in seven men, despite the fact that women are completing college at higher rates (Davis & Maldonado, 2015).

African American women are going to college and graduating at record levels. During their tenure in college, African American women may see university presidential cabinets full of White men and see few professors of color in the classroom. Staff of color may be more heavily concentrated in service and staff roles and positions with limited influence (Bell & Nkomo, 1994; Turner, 2002). This lack of racial diversity sends implicit messages about what is normal and reaffirms for students of color that African American women do not belong in university leadership long before their career begins.

Unprecedented access and success should lead to increased numbers of professionals who are qualified with the baseline curricular requirements for greater

access to higher education's leadership and higher levels of influence. There are more African American women graduating at the bachelor's, master's, and doctorate level with the credentials for higher education careers (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). However, a ceiling exists that is consistently shutting them out of the highest ranks of higher education leadership (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2011). The patterns of inequity that African American women experience when applying to, enrolling in, participating in, and graduating from higher education institutions continue in their professional pursuits, which is the focus of the current study.

African American Women: Exclusion from Senior Leadership Roles in Higher Education

When African American women enter a career in higher education, they are socialized to be the only woman or person of color in the room, navigate chilly spaces, and fight to be seen as an equal. African American women are conditioned to being the other and working harder than majority populations to fight systemic oppression, barriers, and roadblocks. Even though there are a greater number of African American women in the pipeline, there seems to be a blockage preventing access to the top of the ivory tower of higher education (Lloyd-Jones, 2009).

Glass ceilings are defined as a set of impediments or barriers to career advancement (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2011). Instead of a glass ceiling, African American women experience a plantation roof. Pratt-Clarke and Maes (2017) offer this more culturally relevant analogy that recognizes that there are systemic barriers to their success based on their location as a double minority. An African American woman senior administrator details her experience of the plantation roof:

> My parents had taught me several key lessons: racism is real; sexism is undeniable, and that as a Black woman, I will need to work twice as hard, be twice as good, and even then, I may not get what I deserve. They told me that there was a 'system' that I had to fight. I heard that word all my life…'the system, the system, the system.' It was not, however, until I began to

experience the operation of this system in my life that I knew what they were talking about. It was the 'no's", the closed doors, the salary disparities, the 'you can't', and the 'I won't let you.' It was the stop signs and the red lights. It was the microaggressions in meetings by White men and White women. It was emails of disrespect. It was the advancement of lesser qualified White men and women. It was the exclusion and lack of mentoring. It was my experience of 'the ceiling.' (Pratt-Clarke & Maes, 2017, p. 12)

The rates of underrepresentation of African American women in university administration are pervasive and disappointing. Whether teaching in the classroom or serving as an administrator, the narrative remains the same: in the classroom, African American women account for 8.04% or 25,114 of all full-time faculty members at degree-granting institutions (Johnson, 2017). Women faculty outnumber their male counterparts, but males are more likely to have tenure (Johnson, 2017). This trend is also true for African Americans. While there are fewer African American men than African American women faculty members (19,032 men compared to 25,114 women), over one and a half times as many African American men have achieved full professor status – 4,010 versus 2,710 (Johnson, 2017). This credential opens additional opportunities to advance into leadership, as some faculty members may later transition into senior level administrative roles in other areas of the university. When considering the pipeline to senior positions within academic affairs, this disparity in reaching full-professor status continues to widen the chasm for African American women. With increased access to full-professor status, African American men continue to build a set of progressive responsibilities that can lead to successive roles such as Dean, Provost, and President. This is another indicator that education alone is not enough to overcome the systemic barriers of being a member of two minoritized populations.

According to the American Council on Education (2017), only 8% of college or university Presidents across all institution types identified as African Americans in 2016. This is just a 2% increase, as the statistic has held relatively static from 2001 to 2011 (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). At the same time, women comprise only 30% of all Presidents and only 5% of college Presidents identify as women of color (Gagliaradi et al., 2017).

It should be noted that this statistic includes women in all major ethnic groups, again silencing and flattening the experiences of African American women.

Across university functional areas that include Facilities, Athletics, Business, Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, and Development, women only comprised at least 50% of the chief officer positions in five areas – Student Affairs (52%), Institutional Research (55%), Public Relations (55%), Library (58%), and Human Resources (74%) (CUPA-HR, 2019). Of the five areas with over 50% of women in leadership, the Student Affairs functional area is one example of the conundrum that exists between its functional aim and lack of equitable representation.

Student Affairs was created to provide structure and support for students' pursuits outside of the classroom. This profession recognizes how the student's emotional, psychosocial, racial, and cognitive development impacts their overall college experience and empowers the student to find sustainable and developmentally appropriate resolutions. The field is centered on supporting the holistic development of diverse students and challenging systemic oppression that binds the potential of underrepresented populations (NASPA, n.d.). The equitable access and advocacy to dismantle oppression seemingly evaporates beyond the student level. Within the leadership ranks of the Student Affairs profession this problematic trend continues. Even within this caring, supportive environment, 19% of the Chief Student Affairs Officers in a recent survey identified as African American (up from 13% in 2014) while 73% identified as White (NASPA, 2020).
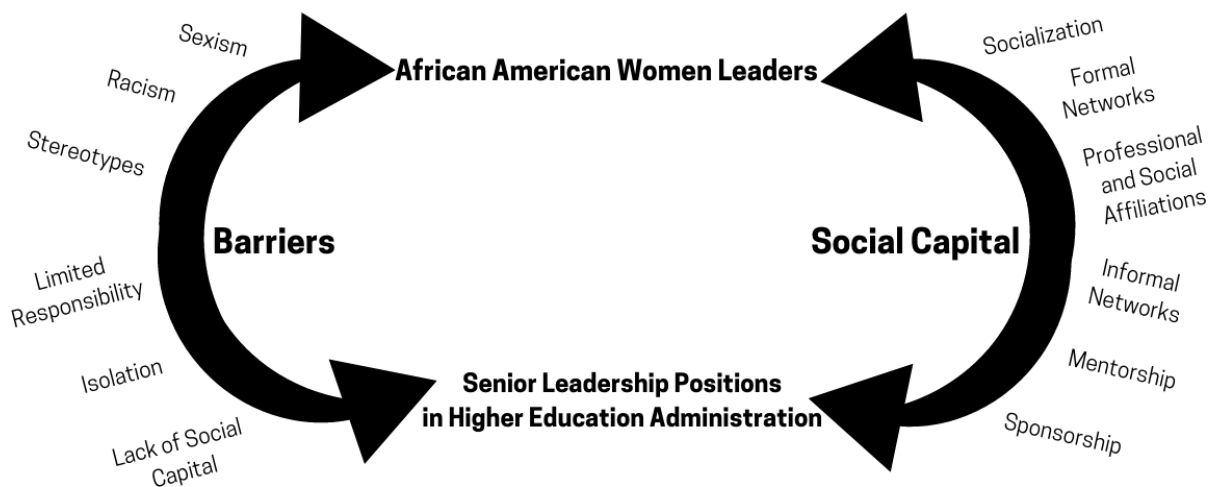
Figure 1

Conceptual Framework: African American Women Senior Leaders in Higher Education

The conceptual framework above (Figure 1) reflects the cyclical patterns that African American women experience as they advance in their higher education career. There is great fluidity and multidirectionality as they encounter various barriers that will create chilly environments based upon their salient identities. Given the resistance they face, African American women may choose to leave the field or persist to positions with increased responsibility. On their quest to senior-level leadership roles, these women will need to simultaneously pursue the social capital necessary to ensure they are obtaining requisite experiences and approval from key decision makers. Access to these informal and formal networks can be limited. African American women who are able to navigate the various barriers and gain access to key social capital networks ultimately gain greater access to senior levels of leadership in higher education administration. The remaining portions of Chapter One will outline the components of the conceptual framework to problematize the lack of African American women in the pipeline and provide an outline to study the role of social capital in the advancement of African American women senior leaders in higher education administration.

Barriers to Senior Leadership in Higher Education Administration

Universities set the White, cisgender male as the standard for the campus experience. There is a designated clear path to leadership for men, namely White men (Jackson and Harris, 2007). This clear, deliberate path is non-existent for minority populations (Dixon, 2005). Looking at the demographics of the chief leaders of higher education institutions across the United States, there is a clear, painstaking pattern. Most of the members in our country's university leadership are White men (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). What helps to open the door to their path to leadership but closes it to other populations?

There are increased numbers of minority populations graduating from college and working on our campuses. Even still, their heightened presence is not impacting the monolithic pipeline to university leadership (Gasman et al., 2015). In many cases, African American women may be the only woman or person of color in specific spaces, which may lead to a chilling effect. The culmination of biased policies, inconsistent unspoken leadership expectations, racism, and sexism can cause African American women to be further isolated, dismayed, and professionally distanced from opportunities that may further their career.

The pattern of inequity for African American women leaders confirms the presence of the structures and systems that open doors for some and close doors for others (Evans-Winters & Love, 2015). There is an inherent bias that reinforces particular types of skills and experiences and devalues others. Barriers to success may include racism, sexism, isolation, lack of access to social networks, loneliness, and a lack of trust (Lloyd-Jones, 2009). African American women are overrepresented in lower roles where they are charged with implementing policy instead of creating it (Crawford & Smith, 2005), experience a lack of representation of leaders who look like them (Davis & Maldonado, 2015), identify having a lack of opportunities (Hannum et al., 2015), and experience more stress to fit in (Evans-Winters & Love, 2015). "Black women have to

meet higher demands than any other group. Compared with Black and White men, Black women have to be better qualified, more articulate…and they have fewer opportunities than men and White women" (Lloyd-Jones, 2009, p. 612). While each of the aforementioned barriers are significant, this chapter will explore sexism and racism in greater detail, as they are most directly related to the discrimination experienced due to their location within gendered and racialized social structures.

Sexism

Sexism, as a barrier, is experienced in a variety of ways. With the White male set as the standard, sexism is a part of the double handicap that African American women face. Given the facts that African American men receive fewer degrees and are still overrepresented in senior leadership roles, the binds of sexism are real. Davis and Maldonado (2015) suggests that bias in gendered leadership may contribute to the lack of opportunities for African American women. A dichotomy emerges where leadership is presented as two sides of the same coin: one's leadership is either seen as good or bad as compared to the male standard. Hoyt (2014) asserts that gendered leadership is a learned performance that reproduces performances deemed to be masculine or feminine.

Our society is socialized to measure a good leader as someone who makes good decisions, is organized, assertive, and strategic. Conversely, women's leadership style is gendered and typically described as being sensitive, caring, compassionate, responsive, democratic, participative, and nurturing (Clayborne & Hamric, 2007; Davis & Maldonado, 2015; Hoyt, 2014). Mariko Silver, President of Bennington College from 2013 to 2019 and an Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of Homeland Security under President Barack Obama, described this distinction. In a Chronicle of Higher Education article, Silver described that a woman leader is often described as a woman first, a clear acknowledgement that there's tension between the two identities. Silver added, "A woman who is a physicist is more likely to be referred to as a 'woman

physicist,' whereas a male physicist –unless gender is directly relevant to the discussion – is called simply a physicist" (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2018, para. 2).

Women leaders also tend to be more collaborative and inclusive (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). This skill is extremely important when creating supportive environments. However, the male standard – being more direct and assertive – is valued and rewarded, thereby designating the female style of leadership as inferior. Given that their leadership styles are presented as opposites, it is hard for women to demonstrate a full complement of skills. Hoyt (2014) adds that women must balance their identity to be masculine and tough but not too manly in their leadership. Men in leadership are the standard and are not asked to adapt their leadership style to advance their career. Yet again, women are presented with a challenge and tension solely because of their identity. This bias is not based upon the qualifications women bring to their work but upon an unfair assessment that creates discriminatory work conditions (Davis & Maldonado, 2015).

Racism

While the distinctions of gendered leadership inform a portion of the limitations placed upon African American women, there are racialized dynamics as well. Much like the lived experiences during the Feminist Movement of the United States in the 1920s, African American women's experiences were often overshadowed, muted, or erased to the benefit of their White counterparts (Guy-Sheftall, 1995). In fact, it is often noted that White women would often form coalitions with African American men – to the exclusion of African American women – to push progress on race instead of their gender. African American women pioneers such as Fannie Barrier Williams, Mary Church Terrell, and Pauli Murray generated enough organized anxiety that began to rock our country's institutions. Through organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women and other women's clubs of the early 1900s, African American women leaders worked to create sites of possibility given the lack of advocacy from their White female and African American male counterparts (Cooper, 2017). This "dignified agitation" was an

active site of resistance to being ignored, overlooked, and forgotten 100 years ago and continues today (Cooper, 2017). There is burgeoning literature studying the specific lived experiences of African American women. Again, African American women are charged with fighting to create a path for themselves and increasing access for their narrative.

The lack of access in literature mirrors the lack of access in senior-level leadership positions for African American women. Nettles (1990) reminds that fewer African American doctoral students receive teaching and research assistantships than their White and Latino peers. A Ph.D. is often a prerequisite for senior leader positions. Lack of access to these types of positions can impact job prospects after graduation and extend to other areas, including social networks. Influential networks in organizations are usually composed solely of men, which can be difficult to penetrate (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). Mehra et al. (1998) succinctly stated the "lack of access to informal networks may be one reason that women and minorities (e.g., African American women), who are entering organizations in unprecedented numbers, are still underrepresented, especially in upper-management ranks" (p. 441).

Social Capital: Trends of Inclusion and Exclusion

Not only do the systemic racist and sexist structures impact the daily lived experiences of African American women, but they also impact their access to critical social capital needed to enter the networks of senior leadership. Social capital is the transference of key information through one's social networks and is the sum of the resources embedded in social networks and helps to explain how social elements impact individual and collective behaviors (Lin & Erickson, 2008). Bourdieu (1977) is one of the most cited social capital theorists but his theory is grounded in Eurocentric and individualistic approaches. On the other hand, Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth is a description of social capital that is more applicable to diverse audiences, including the population being studied in this dissertation. Yosso's (2005) Community

Cultural Wealth model is a type of critical race theory that grounds communities of color as its primary focus away from a deficit perspective and towards an asset-based model. Community Cultural Wealth is comprised of six interconnected and interdependent types of capital – aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital (Yosso, 2005).

Yosso (2005) extends the conversation on social capital by challenging Bourdieu's (1977) distortions that "White, middle class culture" is the "standard, and therefore all forms and expression of 'culture' are judged in comparison to this 'norm'" (p. 76). My study will center African American women as the experts while also elevating the value of their lived experiences. Their cultural wealth is not solely a function of their professional title but integrates the lessons learned along their journey.

Of particular importance, Yosso (2005) notes that one key aspect of transmitting cultural capital is that communities of color tend to give this information back to their communities. Yosso's (2005) social capital, in juxtaposition to Bourdieu's (1977), provides peer and other social contacts the fundamental support to thrive in society's inequitable institutions. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model highlights multiplicity and emphasizes the need for resources and community to challenge the binds of racism and sexism. This type of communal social capital is essential for African American women, as their lack of representation within the academy is pervasive; the system is created and maintained for the benefit of White males and existing networks seldom challenge it.

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model informs the selection of social network analysis as a methodology because it acknowledges the importance of shared relationships and resources that support each leader's professional advancement. This model places a significant emphasis on the cultural wealth embedded in our networks that may challenge what is stereotypically valued in White, mainstream society. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model firmly plants people of color as the expert and acknowledges that our social capital is created in community, which challenges our nation's individualistic views.

Social network analysis is rooted in social capital theory. In outlining applications, Scott (2013) notes that social network analysis can be used to investigate relational data such as kinship patterns, community structure, and interlocking directorships. Social network analysis is built upon the premise that "social life is created primarily and most importantly by relations and the patterns formed by these relations" (Scott & Carrington, 2011, p. 11). The chapter goes on to provide a framework for the application of this research which acknowledges the importance of the connections we take with us as we move from institution to institution (or organization to organization). This movement allows for increased and deeper connections that may occur later in one's professional career. Moreover, these ties are associated with the system and not the individual. My research will identify African American senior women leaders, study their social network patterns, and then use this data to learn more about their experiences.

Social Capital: Applications Through Mentorship and Sponsorship

Social capital has a variety of applications in professional settings such as socialization, mentorship, and sponsorship. Socialization is an essential way that higher education leaders learn more about the organization's values, expectations, and biases. Dixon (2005) defines professional socialization as a continuous process of adaptation to and personalization of one's environment. Curry (2000) extends this definition by adding that professional socialization is the ongoing opportunity for professional growth and development resulting from professional grooming, formal and informal relationships, and social and professional socialization. For African American women, socialization can be key to helping them learn more about their campus' culture, identify key influential leaders, and design a path to gain increasing responsibility. African American women with a higher number of colleagues were also more likely to agree that they experienced greater socialization to their organization's values (Catalyst, 2006). The earlier the career socialization happens, the faster one learns about the values and

expectations of their field. With a shorter learning curve, newly hired professionals are better able to assess their fit and make decisions about their success and features in an organization. In addition to early socialization, support networks and mentoring help to form deeper, more intentional connections (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2011).

Mentorship is well documented as being beneficial across a variety of industries including business, research, and education (Catalyst, 2006; Crawford & Smith, 2005; Ehrich, 1995; Hilsabeck, 2018). Mentorship and sponsorship are a few of the key ways to include more African American women in the senior leadership pipeline. Mentorship is a form of socialization that supports the professional learning of newer faculty and staff, facilitating a positive entry and equipping them to adapt effectively both personally and culturally (Dixon, 2005). Whether formal or informal, mentorship allows junior members within an organization or field to learn key skills for success from senior members. The accelerated socialization for specific privileged identities shortens the learning curve and reproduces the standard for success. The impact of mentorship, particularly for women and African American women, is well documented (Clayborne & Hamrick, 2007; Crawford & Smith, 2005; Davis & Maldonado, 2015; Dixon, 2005; Parker, 2003). Mentors can provide ongoing support and direction that sharpens their professional identity in preparation for progressive professional responsibilities. Clayborne and Hamrick (2007) add "mentoring, one of the most salient factors to leadership and professional success, has also been problematic since in many primarily white institutions, Black women administrators are left on their own, without mentors, having to learn the institutional culture through observations, guile, and intelligence" (p.125).

Sponsorship, though similar to mentorship, involves a deeper investment. Mentorship is an ongoing relationship where little is expected in return between the senior and junior members. Both mentorship and sponsorship include relationships where the senior professional offers advice, guidance, and feedback. Hewlett (2013) sets the distinction that mentors give, and sponsors invest. The junior professional must earn the sponsor's trust and investment before the sponsor delivers high-octane

advocacy (Hewlett, 2013). The sponsor is willing to take a chance on the junior professional, is an advocate for their promotion, encourages risk, and expects stellar performance and loyalty (Hewlett, 2013). Hewlett (2013) in her landmark text, *Forget A Mentor, Find A Sponsor: The New Way to Fast-Track Your Career* boldly claims that women and people of color "stand to benefit most from this book because sponsorship has long been the inside track for Caucasian men. Men are 46 percent more likely than women, and Caucasians are 63 percent more likely than professionals of color, to have a sponsor seeing to their success" (p. 24).

The transference of social capital comes in both formal and informal ways. The more senior, more connected leader has the power to open doors for those they believe in and close doors for those who are perceived to be inferior and less prepared based upon the inaccurate, misplaced, and oppressive assumptions based on their race and sex. This subjective analysis of preparedness is the product of very intentional grooming over the course of the junior member's career (Hewlett, 2013). Preparation comes in the form of quick introductions to powerful people, careful mentoring about how to handle critical issues, coaching about adjusting their leadership styles, feedback to attend specific institutes or graduate programs, encouraging leadership in specific professional organizations, and being chosen for key positions that follow the expected pipeline for the vice presidency and presidency (Hewlett, 2013).

African American women lack access to this type of intentional social capital that often begins in the earliest parts of higher education's educational and career pipeline. As noted earlier, African American women are entering higher education at increasing rates and obtaining advanced degrees at rates higher than their African American male peers. They are earning the qualifications and entering the pipeline to higher education senior leadership and yet are missing at the top. At the same time, African American women are experiencing discriminatory work experiences and seeing monolithic representations of senior leadership across their careers. Within social capital relationships, White males have greater access to resources and relationships primed with increased responsibility, the introductions to the right power players, and feedback

about what is necessary for career advancement. Clayborne and Hamrick (2007) found that African American women had little to no grooming by their supervisors or others on campus and noted that they had very limited substantive contact with senior level administrators.

The lack of social capital is a key limitation to the career advancement of African American women in higher education (Dixon, 2005). It is not happenstance that generations of higher education leadership reproduce the same result – White men. The power of their networks helps to ensure that candidates have the requisite skills and networks to ascend the ranks of higher education. Minorities, specifically African American women, are kept outside of these networks and the informal access to senior leadership roles. Mentorship and sponsorship are key ways to extend social capital to those typically left behind. Dr. Menah Pratt-Clarke (2013), currently the Vice President for Strategic Affairs and Vice Provost for Inclusion and Diversity at Virginia Tech University, reflected on the power of social networks:

> I have seen the power of networking and relationships that often allow unqualified male and White candidates to obtain unmerited advantages over women and minorities. Unfortunately, since African Americans often do not have the breadth or depth of contacts and connections that create opportunities, relationships, and positive references, we must be more aggressive in securing this vital key to opening doors for leadership (p. 149).

In 2012, Amy Gutmann, President of the University of Pennsylvania, was asked about the lack of people of color in senior-level positions within her administration. At that point, there were no people of color in her cabinet. Gutmann supported diversity at the student level but noted that the lack of the diversity in her cabinet was due to the lack of qualified diverse candidates (Gasman et al., 2015). Given the number of women and people of color with terminal degrees, it is hard to believe that there are no qualified candidates. This is often coded language that minoritized populations lack the social capital. This type of response is often officially characterized as 'fit' (Gasman et al.,

2015). An intentionally vague and ambiguous term, fit is not connected to the candidate's qualifications but instead is connected to the intangible qualities that are typically addressed and adjusted in a key mentoring relationship. Gasman et al. (2015) connect fit to a candidates' ability to show that they "will be pleasant in social situations and hold similar intellectual and cultural views" (p. 2).

Without the support of mentors and sponsors and well-connected networks, the possibility of leadership opportunities for African American women decreases. Access to social networks is a key barrier to advancement for African American women who aspire to be a senior leader (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). African American women face exclusion from informal social networks and do not have card-carrying memberships to the 'good old boys' club', an unofficial group typically held for only White males (Hannum et al., 2015). Again, African American women must fight to be included in this social capital dense resource. There are a number of possibilities for gaining access.

Networking is noted as a coping strategy for African American women and can serve as an entry point into key social network structures. Securing sponsors who are willing to advance African American women's careers could provide strategic opportunities for career advancement. "These sponsors were often White men who were the decision makers and had positions of authority in the organization" (Davis & Maldonado, 2015, p. 59). For African American women, this bottlenecked access is problematic. The bottleneck may seem to place African American women's career advancement at the will of White men. Moreover, this challenges that African American women will continue to be creative in creating counterspaces that support their advancement while creating opportunities for others.

Yosso (2005) reminds us of the interconnectedness and importance of sharing information within of populations of color. On the contrary, the bottleneck also challenges those currently in power to reflect on the racial and gender composition of their networks and the biases that have limited its composition, and to seek opportunities to network with more diverse professionals. Expanded social networks will help senior leaders improve their cultural understanding of their staff, how they

approach their work, and how to improve engagement, retention, and career advancement. In addition to access to key sponsors, African American women and the contributions they bring to their work and their universities must be valued and rewarded. The combination of dedicated sponsors and mentors can have a significant impact on the quantity and quality of opportunities to advance in their career. This dissertation will study how patterns of social capital, particularly through mentors and sponsors, impact the career advancement of African American women.

Problem Statement

There is a systemic pattern of underrepresentation of African American women in senior leadership positions in American higher education (Hannum et al., 2015). Their suppressed presence in higher education is also evident in the scholarship that studies their experiences. A lack of representation leads to overlooking the need to research the existence of African American women in the field, the barriers to their success, and the climate necessary for their professional and personal success. American higher education was created and is maintained for White males. To study the experiences of those who are neither male nor White helps to challenge dominant narratives and attend to perspectives not widely accessible to the academy. Past literature (Winkle-Wagner, 2015) looks at what African American women can change and does not critique the oppressive structures that limit their potential. This study broadly aims to continue to challenge the dangerous narratives that success in higher education administration is monolithic while broadening the research about African American women senior leaders.

Despite having increased levels of education and obtaining the prerequisite educational credentials for senior leadership roles in higher education, African American women are consistently left behind for their male, specifically White male, counterparts. Social capital, specifically through mentorship and sponsorship, can connect African American women with resources and people who can improve their preparation and access for increased leadership opportunities. How can the same Ivory Towers that

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welcomed them as students now limit their career opportunities and place a ceiling on their professional advancement? As students' ethnic and racial demographics continue to grow in the near future, American higher education will grow more diverse. There will be increased pressure for leadership to reflect the students they serve. This study is important in that it can provide both practical and theoretical applications to diversify higher education leadership.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how social capital networks impact the career advancement of African American women senior leaders in higher education.

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?

2. What are key characteristics of the social and professional relationships between African American senior women administrators and their most influential supporters?

3. Which resources, such as professional organizations, family, and community involvement, are most important for success for an African American woman senior administrator?

Significance

This study is designed to inform scholarship and impact practice to further diversify the higher education leadership profile. The literature on the experiences of African American women senior-level administrators remains limited (Townsend, 2019). Of the studies I have reviewed (Alexander, 2010; Dixon, 2005; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Smith & Crawford, 2007; Townsend, 2019), the majority used a qualitative methodology

with a small sample size of less than ten. This study aims to complement their findings by being one of the few to examine this phenomenon using a quantitative focus, specifically aiming to be the first to study the experiences of African American women through social network analysis as a methodology.

Given the importance of social capital in career advancement, this study will look for networking patterns in African American women who have ascended to senior-level positions. These women have accomplished a great feat in the face of the binds of racism and sexism. This study looks to center the voices of African American women and the resources essential for success in the senior ranks of higher education leadership. This approach hopes to describe important aspects of social capital for those aspiring to reach the senior ranks by analyzing the patterns of who is most influential to their ascension. Particularly, this study will look to identify how resources such as mentors, sponsors, and professional associations impact the advancement of African American women. This study will expand the understanding of the role of social capital and networks of community cultural wealth – especially for African American women – who realize that they are one of the few people of color or the only woman in the leadership ranks of their organization. This study will extend the literature base with a larger sample size and a quantitative methodology. This study may encourage the expansion of professional institutes dedicated to impacting the diversity of the future higher education administrators.

Definitions

Throughout this dissertation, the author will use a variety of key concepts that can be interpreted in a variety of ways. To ensure clarity, the following definitions are used throughout the study.

- African American – Often used synonymously with Black, this racial group includes Americans who are descendants (in whole or in part) of those from the African diaspora (Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel, & Drewery, 2010). If another term is used by a different researcher, the author will reflect their respective choice.

- Women – A self-designation, this term includes adults who are identify as a woman and are cisgender or transgender.
- Senior administrator – Employed in a higher education institution in the United States of America, a senior administrator is someone employed as a Director or level above in administrative functions (McClinton & Dawkins, 2012; Parker, 2003) or at an Associate Professor or above (in an academic capacity).
- Career advancement – Increasing and progressive responsibility in professional positions earned and occupied during one's career. Other terms may also include ascension, moving up, or promotion (Onyango et al., 2016). Given the complexity of higher education, the author acknowledges that some of these professional roles may be outside of the traditional higher education enterprise.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five chapters ending with a reference section and appendixes. The dissertation will be outlined in the following order. Chapter 1 will provide an introduction to the topic and provide an overview for the importance of this study. Chapter 2 will review the current literature around African American women senior leaders and how social capital impacts their lived experiences and career advancement. Chapter 3 will introduce social network analysis as a methodology and describe the instrument that will be used to learn more about the social capital patterns of African American women senior leaders. The findings of the data and an analysis of their implications will be included in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will include a summary and conclusion, describe limitations, and offer recommendations for next steps in both practice and research.

Reflexivity

The author recognizes that research does not happen without some level of subjectivity. Responsible, ethical educational researchers must consistently incorporate

reflexivity to increase transparency and ensure that consumers of their work clearly understand the author's orientation toward the given topic. Mindful consideration of this reflexive labor is paramount in all types of research. I identify as an African American woman who is a mid-level administrator in higher education. While my salient identities are influential individually, the power and vulnerability lie in their intersectionalities. My Christian faith guides my unfailing faith in possibility, hope, and growth. I have been impacted by my ancestors and a legacy of strong Black women including my maternal grandmother who earned her master's degree from New York University in the 1940s, my mother who was selected as the first African American and the first woman to lead a governmental agency in a racist, rural county in the South, and by my two young daughters who are looking for me to set boundaries for their possibilities. I am pushed by my maternal grandmother and mother and pulled by my impressionable and attentive daughters.

This orientation towards the healthy disregard for the impossible – and one's role in their path to reach it – has influenced my interest in researching the professional paths of African American women higher education leaders. Bourke (2014) suggests that positionality represents a place where objectivity and subjectivity meet. This masterful intersection is where I connect my salient identities to my research interests: learning more about the role of social capital in the advancement of African American women senior leaders.

My relationship to this topic is personal. It matters to me because I have goals of reaching the senior levels of leadership in higher education administration. It matters to me because I want to make an impact on the opportunities available to African American women in the future. It matters to me because I want to remind our field there is still work to do to truly achieve equity. It matters to me because I want to elevate the resilience, courage, and drive it requires to be a professional of color in higher education administration. It matters to me because I have two young daughters who are counting on me to accomplish my dreams and give them the courage to chase their own. The title of my dissertation reflects the power of African American women and an

acknowledgement of my duty to honor African American women who have laid the foundation for freedoms that I sometimes take for granted.

Poet Maya Angelou (1978) reminds us,

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

African American women have all too long sat on the fringes of American society. African American women recognize the limitations that society has placed on them and consistently rise above the challenges they encounter. On the journey to overcome oppression, African American women have worked to establish their place as public intellectuals and equal contributors to society. Higher education is no exception. This study aims to examine how social capital impacts the experiences of African American women senior leaders in higher education. This work extends studies of African American women in academia as well as administrators embedded into various functional areas across higher education. Regardless of their role within higher education, African American women make an indelible mark on their campus, on the students they serve, on the colleagues they partner with, and the research they conduct.

Acknowledging & Addressing the Double Handicap

Mary Church Terrell, one of the few women to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), likened being an African American woman to having a "double handicap" due to her membership in two minoritized populations (Cooper, 2017, p. 67). Terrell continues, "A white woman only has one handicap to overcome – that of sex. I have two – both sex and race. I belong to the only group in this country, which has two huge obstacles to surmount" (Cooper, 2017, p. 67). Her sentiment first echoed in 1940 still rings true today. African American women must contend with the binds of both racism and sexism in our American culture still dominated by White, male norms.

It was not until the early twentieth century that African American intellectuals such as Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells, and Fannie Barrier Williams challenged the absence of the Black female voices in literature, in the arts, and in our larger society. These pioneers called for the systematic study of African American women because they were "invisible within the intellectual dictates of traditional knowledge production" (Cooper, 2017, p. 38). Without the power to control the narrative and how African American women are portrayed, they lay prey to the mischaracterizations of being lazy, intellectually inferior, and inadequate. White dominant ways are celebrated while eliminating and minimizing women of color.

Anzaldua (1990) adds,

> Because we are not allowed to enter discourse, because we are often disqualified and excluded from it, because what passes for theory these days is forbidden territory for us, it is vital that we occupy theorizing space, that we do not allow white men and women solely to occupy it. (p. xxv)

This quote serves as another reminder that African American women's perspectives have been intentionally discarded by the academy which thereby limited access and perpetuated narratives of inferiority. Frances Beal (2008) further challenges this fixed notion of Black womanhood and clearly names the types of oppression and singular narratives for African American women. Per the constraints of our society, African American women, without protection from her African American male counterparts, have been exploited by White colonizers, served as the White woman's maid to the detriment of her own children, and suffered from a maligned image (Beal, 2008).

Limiting Narratives: Controlling Images

American society continues to mischaracterize and minimize the experiences of African American women through the use of controlling images (Collins, 2000). Controlling images further implicate and validate dangerous stereotypes. African American women embody two salient identities are that are historically marginalized:

being a woman and being an African American. There are centuries old systems of oppression in our country aimed at limiting the potential of either of these identities. The power of the combination of these barriers impacts the way society views African American women's contributions, the edges of their potential, and the value of their existence. A tool of domination and a central tenet of Black Feminist thought, controlling images are damaging stereotypes designed to limit their potential, objectify their contributions to society, and normalize these extreme characterizations (Collins, 2000). Controlling images such as the mammy, race lady, and strong Black woman place African American women into very narrow boundaries and reinforces African American women's place as outsiders (Collins, 2000).

The idea of controlling images is bound in the tension of a binary. Binaries present opposites of a dominant and submissive position. Binaries present opposites where one is the dominant, positive standard while the second is subjected to an inferior, negative narrative (Perea, 1997). African American women must negotiate thriving and oftentimes surviving in a world that is created for the dominant identities of White and male. Controlling images help to further the idea that African American women are inherently inferior and unworthy of access to the American Dream. Controlling images also presume that these limiting stereotypes are the only ways of being.

One of the more pervasive controlling images is the mule – one that addresses the ways African American women are exploited through paid and unpaid means. With roots dating back to agricultural and domestic work in slavery, African American women are expected to carry unreasonable loads oftentimes with expectations on par with their male counterparts (Collins, 2000). Their objectification dehumanizes their existence and diminishes their economic worth. These loads, once limited to the fields during slavery, now extend to the academy. African American women administrators are tasked with service to the institution often masked as mentoring disproportionate number of students of color, serving on diversity or equity focused committees, and advising

minority student groups without equal consideration to how this diversion of their time and expertise impacts their professional advancement (Harley, 2008).

A seemingly benign controlling image, the Black lady is a middle-class Black woman who worked hard, has advanced education, and has reached significant achievement (Collins, 2000). This woman has to work "twice as hard" and has a career so "consuming that they have no time for men or have forgotten how to treat them" (Collins, 2000, p. 81). This stereotype purports that these "highly educated women are deemed to be too assertive" because they are regularly and *successfully* completing with men for top positions (p. 81, Collins, 2000). The drive to succeed and the need to compete against men, namely White men, can leave the Black lady viewed as less desirable and feminine. As a result of affirmative action policies, the Black lady is accused of taking jobs from more qualified White men (Collins, 2000) not because of their merit but simply because of their race. The Black lady controlling image inserts yet another negative narrative into the lived experiences of African American women. African American women must work hard to disprove this stereotype by affirming they possess the qualifications to occupy positions of leadership.

Intersectionality & Resistance

There is more to life than the controlling images of having children or working in domestic professions. Beal (2008) implored that African-American women "must take an active part in bringing about the kind of world where our children, our loved ones, and each citizen can grow up and live as decent human beings, free from the pressures of racism and capitalist exploitation" (p. 176). African American women are consistently forced to be the agents of change against a system that does not fully recognize their worth and contributions to society.

Again, African American women were forced to insert their narratives into academic spaces. In 1832, Maria Stewart problematized how race and gender are experienced for African American women (Jordan-Zachery, 2007). One hundred and sixty years later, another significant benchmark occurred. In studying the lived

experiences of African American women, Kimberlé Crenshaw was one of the first to define the interlocking impacts. Intersectionality hopes to elevate the experiences of African American women and foster inclusion by acknowledging that race and gender can place African American women at comprising positions where racism and sexism converge (Crenshaw, 1991). Antiracism work aims to create racial equity; Feminism efforts are designed to equalize opportunities for women. Both efforts create significant deficit. Intersectionality is designed to elevate the overlapping impacts of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991).

Intersectionality interrogates oppression at the system level and deepen one's understanding of how types of connected discrimination can impact someone's lived experiences (Jean-Marie et al., 2009). American social structures are dependent on maintaining singular narratives. Centered in White supremacy, American social structures aim to reproduce White as the dominant narrative connected to racial and ethnic identity and women – namely White women – as connected to gender. African American women occupy two salient identities that are counter to those ideals. Intersectionality adds verbiage to the tension experienced as African American women navigate systems every day. In the case of this study, I frame higher education as the central system. However, African American women are experiencing the intersectional discrimination daily in seemingly benign ways – the ways her appearance are judged against European standards, the ways she is judged by her name before she enters the room, the ways her contributions are silenced in meetings, the ways her lived experiences are missing from academia, and the ways her presence is missing from the highest levels of higher education. When occupying senior-level administration positions in higher education, intersectionality provides language to the limitations that African American women exist and acknowledges that true solutions must occur at the system level.

For African American women, leadership is an active site of resistance where they choose to face the systemic barriers of racism and sexism head on instead of actively trying to avoid their realities. African American women must consistently create

safe spaces for themselves in places that were not designed for them and counter centuries of oppression while members of the majority are able to walk into spaces with greater ease and less resistance. Introduced by Collins (2000), the term 'outsider within' describes the experience when African American women work in positions where they interact with White employers in positions such as the nanny, maid, or housekeeper. White men are permanently kept in the center, thereby holding the most power in our society's systems. Systemic and structural oppression lies in the margins where minority groups are devalued. By keeping minorities away from the center, majority populations are able to limit power and access to resources. Outsider within extends to African American women's place in higher education. From application to graduation to career, they are working to create spaces where they are affirmed, valued, and appreciated. This persistent need to create supportive spaces has existed across the history of higher education and, over time, creates exhaustion and fatigue.

African American Women's Historic Path Into American Higher Education

African American women have fought to forge a place in higher education in spite of the systemic barriers of racism and sexism. In 1837, Oberlin College in Ohio opened their doors to educate African American women, with Lucy Sessions being the first to earn a college degree in 1850. Mary Jane Patterson and Fanny Jackson Coppin followed in 1862 and 1865 respectively (Evans, 2007). Rebecca Lee Crumpler was the first Black woman to earn a Doctress of Medicine in 1865 with Jan Ellen McAlister being the first to earn a Ph.D. in education in 1929 (Williams-Burns, 1982). The heart, determination, and sheer will power to overcome challenges before them was essential for the firsts and it remains characteristics for leaders today.

As education expanded to increased numbers of African American women, so did the need to serve our campuses. Fanny Jackson Coppin later became the principal of the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia and was known for being the first Black woman to lead a higher education institution in 1865 (Coppin, 1913). In 1904, Mary McLeod Bethune pioneered to found the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training

School for Negro Girls, which later became Bethune-Cookman University (Brown, 1998). Dr. Willa B. Player, of Bennett College, became the first Black President of a four-year liberal arts college in 1946 (Brown, 1998). With this path in academic affairs leadership, African American women also created a path in Student Affairs administration. Given her "deep concern for women students and their needs," Lucy Diggs Slowe served as the first Dean of Women at Howard University in the 1920s (Wolfman, 1999, p. 160). Deans of women and similar types of positions allowed African American women to support students' learning outside of the classroom and ensure they had the skills and confidence to succeed after graduation. Their influence was clear and indelible and inspired students impacted by their work to consider higher education administration as a career.

African American Women's Current Place Into Higher Education

Following the trend of graduating college at higher rates, there are more women than men employed in American higher education. In fall 2016, there were 1,781,955 men working across all areas of higher education compared to 2,144,625 women (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017). Of those 2,000,000+ women, 763,575 were employed as a faculty member serving their campuses by completing instruction, research, and service. As of Fall 2017, there were 121,001 women working in Student Affairs (National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 2017). Of the women working in Student Affairs, only 16,389 or 13.5% identified as African American (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017). The proportion of representation was more dismal in the classroom; only 63,598 or 8.3% of faculty identified as African American (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017).

American higher education should seek to serve and represent the populace we serve. When we look to our country's racial and ethnic demographics, our country is growing more diverse. According to the United States Census Bureau (2018), our American population identifies as 60% White, 18.3% Hispanic, and 13.4% African American. The trend will continue, resulting in a minority majority population as early as

2045 when the population is projected to be 49.7% White, 24.6% Hispanics, and 13.1% African Americans (United States Census Bureau, 2019). As early as 2022, only 49.8% of children under 18 are projected to be non-Hispanic White (United States Census Bureau, 2018). This will surely have a dramatic impact on higher education – the students we serve, the families we support, and the programs we provide. The need to reflect our country's racial and ethnic demographic begins at the senior levels of leadership where decisions are made, influence is exerted, and possibility models are affirmed.

African American Women's Place In Senior Level Leadership Positions

In American higher education, the college presidency is a prestigious position. Charged with leading a higher education institution, the President provides strategic leadership, determines priorities, and serves as connector to both internal and external constituencies (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). While our country's racial and ethnic diversity is growing, this representation is not reflected in the presidency. The American Council on Education's American College President Survey reveals problematic trends about the diversification of this position. As recent as 2017, the American College President Survey contains concerning narratives that continue to position White males as the standard and reveal the patterns of exclusion that are present in other places in the academy. Progress to racial parity is slow; of the 1,546 Presidents who responded to the survey in 2016, only 8% identified as African American compared to 83% of those who identified as White (Gagliaradi, et al., 2017). For African Americans, racial parity with the college presidency is expected to increase 1.5% per year but will not happen until 2050 (Gagliaradi, et al., 2017). Within the ranks of the Presidency, earned education is not an equalizer. Male presidents outnumber their female counterparts seven to three, but women presidents are more likely to have earned a Ph.D. or Ed.D. Eighty-six percent of women Presidents hold a terminal degree compared to 77% of men (Gagliaradi, et al., 2017). Interestingly, women of color Presidents are less likely to

be married (68% versus 89.7% of White men) and are the youngest (an average of 59 years old versus 62 years old for men) (Gagliaradi, et al., 2017).

Women are underrepresented at the executive level across areas of higher education. According to the College & University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), women comprise less than 30% of professionals in facilities, athletics, and information technology (CUPA-HR, 2016). Women represent less than 50% of executives in business, finance, enrollment, academic affairs, development, and legal affairs (CUPA-HR, 2016). These fields are typically those with larger fiscal responsibility, greater impact on the institution's external-facing image and greater connection with faculty members, skills that are often essential for senior-level leadership positions. Given these positional responsibilities, these positions often pay more than those where women comprise more than 50% -- student affairs, institutional research, library, and human resources (CUPA-HR, 2016). For women of color, there is some overlap between the underrepresentation at the intersections of race and gender. Women of color comprise less than 15% of executives in development, public relations, facilities, business, athletics, finance, academic affairs, information technology, institutional research, and enrollment (CUPA-HR, 2016).

Impacts of Disproportionate Representation

Women's lack of representation is coupled with lower pay rates as well. Women are paid 80 cents for every dollar a male earns. This results in an average loss of $10,086 per year or $403,440 during a 40-year career. It will take 15 months for a woman to earn the same amount a man earns in one year (National Women's Law Center, 2020). The National Women's Law Center (2020) details that unequal pay is present in 97% of occupations. This overwhelming statistic confirms that almost all women – regardless of their profession – will be underpaid to do the same work as their male counterparts. This gap exists on both ends of the wage spectrum: women are overrepresented in lower-wage positions and underrepresented in higher paying roles. In higher education specifically, African American women are overrepresented in staff

positions compared to their White women managers with more advanced portfolios leading to increased responsibility and career advancement (Bell & Nkomo, 1994).

For low-wage jobs, or those paying less than $11.00 an hour, women make up 47% of the overall workforce but 58% of the low-wage workforce (National Women's Law Center, 2020). Women make $9, 200 to $22,000 less a year than men, which adds up $368,000 of missed income over a 40-year career (National Women's Law Center, 2020). On the other end of the spectrum, women comprise 35% of high-wage positions, or those making $48.00 an hour or $100,000 annually (National Women's Law Center, 2020). In North Carolina, women earn an average of $83,000 a year which is $27,000 less than men in similar roles, amounting to $1.1 million less in 40 years (National Women's Law Center, 2020).

These statistics are more dramatic for African American women. Compared to White males, African American women earn 61 cents for every dollar (National Women's Law Center, 2020). Even African American women with doctorate degrees are underpaid: they earn 60% of their White males counterpart's salary, resulting in an annual loss of $49,000 or more than $1.9 million over 40 years (National Women's Law Center, 2020). In North Carolina, Black women earn 62 cents for every dollar a White man earns (National Partnership for Women and Families, 2020).

The lack of African American women administrators sends clear messages about a number of micro-inequities, a term first coined by Mary Rowe (2008). While they may appear to be benign, over time the impact is hard to ignore. Rowe (2008) provides a number of examples, including misidentifying someone's race, not introducing certain types of people at meetings, jokes about disabilities, and assuming that staff are all of the same religion or sexual orientation. Over time, micro-inequities favor already-favored groups (Rowe, 2008). Sandler (1986) offered that these micro-inequities pose significant challenges, including: a) small numbers of women which heightens their visibility; b) social etiquette is often inappropriately interjected into the professional setting; c) women's abilities are more likely to be questioned, downgraded, or trivialized;

d) increased feelings of isolation; and e) women's communication patterns are interpreted as less powerful than their male counterparts.

The lack of support for African American women higher education administrators is well-documented (Bates, 2019). Stokes (1984) found that 87% of female administrators felt excluded from informal networks; 87% felt that they worked twice as hard as their male colleagues; 79% believed they had less influence on supervisor's decisions; and 74% said it was difficult to receive recognition for their accomplishments. Additional authors build upon these findings. Greguletz et al., 2019 identified work-family conflict and homophily as an extrinsic barrier for networking for women. Homophily is the tendency for people to choose to remain in groups that are similar to themselves (Bacharach et al, 2005). Over time, increased child care responsibilities provide less time after hours to socialize, which can have a negative impact on women's abilities to build sustainable relationships with key power brokers (Greguletz et al., 2019). Townsend (2019) noted that in a study of five African American women senior leaders in higher education, the women felt their White and Black male colleagues were more quickly promoted or recognized for subpar work.

On the whole, African American women are underrepresented and underpaid in higher education administration. Their systemic absence reflects a larger concern. African American women have the requisite education, experience, and have a desire to advance their career in the academy (Glass, 2000; Grogan, 1996). They are overrepresented at the lower levels of administration but are missing from the pipeline to executive positions. Their absence is more than a function of numbers: their absence sends a clear message that the African American female viewpoint is undervalued. For the African American women who are entering college and those considering careers in higher education, this absence serves as a reminder that they are not welcomed. Incoming college students are increasingly racially and ethnically diverse and deserve leaders who reflect their salient identities.

Leadership Studies and Applications For African American Women

Leadership study evolved as a function of those who were seen as leaders –
White men centered on a paramilitary model of control and competitive behavior (Liang
& Peters-Hawkins, 2016; Loden, 1985). As the study of leadership expanded to include
female voices, racial minorities with intersecting identities remained left out. These
models characterized women as using greater intuition in decision making, greater
collaboration, increased empathy, and a greater connection to teamwork (Loden, 1985;
Rosener, 1990). The assumption that women across racial and ethnic minority groups
experience leadership in the same way flattens their experiences and ignores racism's
impact.

Leadership studies have been generalized where both the masculine and
feminine assumptions are centered by White voices. Parker and ogilvie (1996) argue
that the presumptive race-neutral studies that led to the masculine instrumentality and
feminine collaboration models were built on White, middle-class principles. Again, the
view of minoritized populations are ignored. Masculine models of leadership posit that
characteristics such as risk-taking, rationality autonomy, control, and strength are
valued (Connell, 1995; Eagly, 1987; Gartzia, 2011; Loden, 1985, Van Emmerik et al,
2011). Male communication patterns such as being assertive and being direct are
praised (Marshall, 1993). In contrast, feminine leadership standards typically focus on
relationships and a strength in interpersonal communication punctuated by empathy,
participative communication, and nurturing (Grant, 1998; Eagly, 1987; Marshall, 1993).
Women leaders are stereotypically described as weak, emotional, caring, indecisive,
creative, subjective, informal, frivolous, and not suitable for educational leadership
(Grant, 1998). Men are labeled as aggressive, decisive competitive, objective, formal,
and rational while women's leadership characteristics were criticized and viewed as
undesirable (Liang & Peters-Hawkins, 2016).

Within socialization designed around White, middle-class social norms, African
American cultural views are often in conflict and seen as deviant, negative, and
devalued (Lubiano, 1992; Parker & ogilvie, 1996). In these dominant-culture
organizations, African American women must reconcile the contradictions between their

self-definitions and those reproduced through patriarchal systems of domination and subordination (Collins, 1990). Again, the burden of creating a successful, inclusive environment rests on African American women. It is best to apply a culturally relevant model from the African American female point of view instead of applying the White-male model. African American female perspectives should inform the theoretical applications of their leadership. Conceptualizing leadership starts during childhood. For African American young girls, they are often socialized to be strong, assertive, self-confident, and independent, which resembles socialization of White men (Collins, 1990; Parker & ogilvie, 1996). These characteristics are forming the foundation of the Black lady controlling image.

To this end, Parker and ogilvie (1996) created a model of African American women executive leadership. Their model considers leadership context for African American women executives that includes factors such as racial discrimination, gender discrimination, and devalued leadership ability (Parker & ogilvie, 1996). The model then inserts socialized behaviors, traits, and styles such as being self-confident, strong, assertive, and independent that drives predominant leadership strategies such as biculturalism, avoidance, and confrontation (Parker & ogilvie, 1996). On the whole, those factors result in African American women leadership behaviors such creativity, risk taking, boundary spanning, divergent thinking, and behavioral complexity. Gender then impacts two functions of leadership – whether leaders have participative or nonparticipative decision-making orientations and how the leaders' communication skills influences others (Parker & ogilvie, 1996).

In a study of 17 African American women college presidents, Jones (1992) found that the women were more likely to describe their leadership style as transformational than transactional, characterized as being participative, empowering, focused on the team, and having a hands-on supervision style. Jones (1992) also detailed the importance of affirming messages from parents and other influential adults throughout childhood. Messages such as "Set the standard, don't follow the crowd" and "Always

push the system" affirm that African American girls activate their own agency to drive their potential (Jones, 1992).

Barriers to Inclusion in Senior Level Leadership in Higher Education

In spite of drive and resilience, African Americans still face significant barriers such as homosocialability and glass ceilings to executive leadership in higher education. Homosociability is the practice of consistently hiring the same types of candidates (Blackmore, Thompson, and Barty, 2006). Barriers such as isolation, loneliness, and racially motivated victimization impact their lived experiences (Crawford & Smith, 2005). Additional barriers included lack of representation at the highest levels and lack of trust in equitable treatment. Jackson and O'Callaghan (2011) added that people of color experience a number of additional disadvantages, including significant gaps in earning, slower promotion rates, and artificial ceilings that limit their mobility within an organization.

Townsend (2019) describes the impact of discrimination at the recruitment, retention, and ascension levels for African American women. Even if African American women are identified through the recruitment stages, gatekeeping can serve as an additional pipeline blockage (Chang & Wang, 1991; Mickelson & Oliver, 1991). Gatekeeping monitors access into a given group (Crawford & Gilroy, 2013). Gatekeeping has positive impacts including maintaining professional standards of practice, which allows leaders in power to limit access based on bias (Crawford & Gilroy, 2013). Black employees are deemed less credible (Eager & Garvey, 2015) and filters of racism are used to exclude people of color (Brunner, 1998; Patitu & Hinton, 2003). Searches are closed because of a lack of qualified candidates, a veiled disclosure that signals that the pool has a high proportion of minority applicants (Jackson & Harris, 2007).

Another significant barrier is homosociability. When studying the selection of school principals, Blackmore et. al (2006) identified homosociability as a hiring reproduction model that creates an expected pattern of candidates. In practice,

homosociability happens when hiring decision makers exclude those who do not fit the stereotypical prototype of a leader in exchange for the "selection of people like oneself" (Blackmore et. al, 2006, p. 309). Furthermore, hiring teams would often "choose their own" to "guarantee that new appointees 'fit' a preferred mold or were deemed able to be molded" (Blackmore et. al, 2006, p. 102). Applied to higher education leadership, this affirms that the reproduction of White males as the singular monolith is a product of the binds of racism and sexism. Homosociability limits access for women in leadership roles. Bias was evident in a number of ways as candidates who did not fit the assumed intellectual, cultural, and social norms were systematically excluded (Blackmore, 2014).

When considering the need to diversify the highest levels of university or college administration, homosociability is a barrier. Social networks serve as a mitigating agent to increase the possibility of access to the highest levels of administration. Ibarra (1995) confirmed the significance of this form of capital, reminding that a lack of network access resulted in disadvantages such as restricted organizational knowledge and challenges in forming alliances. Those with greater connections to more powerful people have access to information of higher quantities and qualities (Fadil et al., 2009). Specifically, social networks that contain professionals in higher positions have been found to contain essential access to those who have the ability to influence career success. Social networks are proven to have a positive impact on advancement (Ibarra, 1995). Central network positions in influential professional networks are positively associated with increased access to information and opportunities for career advancement (Tsai, 2001).

Patterns of limited access and their resulting exclusion for women looking to gain executive positions create a glass ceiling. Viewed as a set of impediments to career advancement, glass ceilings create limitations for women looking to actualize their personal and professional goals (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2011). The narrative and underrepresentation of women continues: even after controlling for education, experience, and professional field, women are less likely to hold management positions (Rosenfeld et al., 1998). Again, the research on the impact of the glass ceiling is

centered on White voices. The literature is becoming more inclusive and challenging White women as the standard for critiquing the glass ceiling.

The glass ceiling is more pronounced for African American women. For African American female supervisors, they are less likely to have a significant wage increase associated with increased education and job responsibilities, are more likely to be subject to racial and gender discrimination, and earn significantly (about 14%) less than their African American male peers after controlling for background and worker characteristics (Mitra, 2003). The lack of African American women who hold positions with decision-making power is yet another concern in the pipeline to leadership. While there are limited examples, there are women who earn senior leadership positions. For those women who are able to enter the pipeline to senior leadership and successfully break through the glass ceiling, they may be unfairly placed into precarious situations. Ryan et al. (2016) explored the connections between women leaders and the types of leadership positions they occupy. A glass cliff is a complex phenomenon where women are more likely to be appointed to companies in precarious situations (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Women are placed in organizations at times where there is more to lose and the risk to fail is higher. Women are more likely to be promoted to the top positions in weakly performing companies and organizations. This trend has been studied and shown in corporate settings (Cook & Glass, 2014a), public school districts (Smith, 2014), and federal organizations (Smith & Monaghan, 2013). Prominent examples of this phenomenon are Carly Fiorina, appointed CEO of Hewlett Packard after the technology bubble burst; Anne Mulcahy, chosen as Xerox's CEO after the company bordered bankruptcy, and Marissa Mayer who stepped up to lead Yahoo in 2012 when it was in steep decline (Ryan, et al., 2016). Of particular interest, women were appointed in times of crisis when there was a history of male leadership. When a company had a history of chief female leaders, the glass cliff was non-existent, as women and men have an even probability of being selected as the next successor (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010).

Social Capital

Bourdieu's (1984) social capital theory posits that social and cultural capital are reproduced because some communities are culturally wealthy while others are not. Social capital theory is centered on Anglo-Americans and one's ability to exercise control over one's future (Postone et al., 1993). A form of power, capital is the accumulation of connections that defines social trajectory and reproduces class distinctions (Postone et al., 1993). In American contexts, Bourdieu's (1984) social capital theory reinforces its Anglo-American orientation. Applied to higher education administration, Bourdieu's (1984) social capital theory does not assign wealth or its associated power to minoritized populations.

Critical race theory (CRT) continues to challenge the dominant theories that elevate and normalize the White, male experience by asking whose knowledge counts (Ladson Billings, 2000). Similar to the pioneering work of Cooper, Wells, and Williams one hundred years ago, scholars of color are still grappling with centering African American narratives alongside the dominant ways of knowing. There are four key constructs that undergird Critical Race Theory: race is a social construct, skepticism of colorblindness, racism as an advantage and disadvantage, and the importance of adding the voices of people of color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). As a critical theory, CRT emphasizes the ideas of structural power, systematic advantage and disadvantage based on racial categories, and privilege versus oppression.

Critical race theory is more than an approach or academic discipline. Critical race theory contains an activist dimension and is oriented towards challenging systems and impacting change (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Racism is pervasive and requires that our society critiques systems and actively finds ways to dismantle oppression. Interest convergence, or material determinism, is a central CRT theme and offers one approach towards equity (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Interest convergence occurs when racial equity meets the interests of Whites. Applied to this study, the inclusion of African American women at the highest levels of leadership in higher education will become a

priority for White leaders occupying executive leadership roles when it meets their needs and not solely based upon the benefit of public interests.

One of the central tenets of CRT is that this work challenges our society's bias towards "objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race, neutrality, and equal opportunity" (Yosso, p. 73, 2005). CRT acknowledges and problematizes the role of systemic racism within dominant culture and opens the door for expanding epistemologies. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model is a type of CRT that grounds communities of color as its primary focus away from a deficit perspective and towards an asset-based model. The model pushes the boundaries of activism and calls us to consider the contradiction that education can both oppress and emancipate (Yosso, 2005). Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model is comprised of six interconnected and interdependent types of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital.

Of the six types of capital in Yosso's model (2005), there are three – aspirational, social, and navigational -- that are most connected and inform this study. The first, aspirational capital, orients towards the future and encourages one to maintain hope through adversity (Yosso, 2005). Aspirational capital draws upon the reality of cultural barriers and historical limitations and looks to the next generations to aspire for greater. Yosso (2005) adds that aspirational capital is realized "in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals" (p. 78). Given the history of African Americans in the United States, this type of capital acknowledges racism's systemic impact on limiting the potential of multiple generations.

Social capital centers the wealth found in networks and in community resources. The survival, growth, and potential held in the power of social capital informs the design of the study. In the context of higher education administration, social capital can "provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions" (Yosso, 2005, p. 79). Social capital is transmitted through peers, other contacts, and systems. Of particular importance, Yosso (2005) notes that one key

aspect of transmitting social capital is that communities of color tend to give this information back to their communities. Yosso's (2005) social capital, in juxtaposition to Bourdieu's (1984), provides peer and other social contacts who provide fundamental support in order to thrive in society's institutions.

Navigational capital combines the aspiration to overcome challenges with the social networks to gain access. With institutions that were not created with people of color in mind, navigational capital honors the skills necessary to maneuver them successfully. This type of capital infuses resilience as a "set of inner resources, social competencies, and cultural strategies that permit individuals to not only survive, recover, or even thrive after stressful events, but also to draw from the experience to enhance subsequent functioning" (Stanton-Salazer & Spina, 2000, p. 229). Here, the emphasis is placed on the individual and their respective agency to navigate the oppressive system in spite of hostile environments.

Yosso (2005) extends this conversation by challenging Bourdieu's (1984) distortions that "White, middle class culture" is the "standard, and therefore all forms and expression of 'culture' are judged in comparison to this 'norm'" (p. 76). My study hopes to center African American women as the expert of their experiences while also elevating the value of their lived experiences. Their cultural wealth is not solely a function of their professional title but involves the lessons learned along their journey.

Critical race theory provides space for intersectionality which is fundamental to my population of interest. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model emphasizes the need for resources and community to challenge the binds of racism and sexism. African American women's lack of representation within the academy is pervasive: the system is created and maintained for the benefit of White males. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model informs the selection of social network analysis as a methodology because it acknowledges the importance of shared relationships and resources that support each leader's professional advancement, and the way those relationships generate power.

Social Networks

Networks, whether informal or formal, serve to connect people to one another and provide access to information and support. The transfer of social capital can be as simple as quick introductions to powerful people:

> "a White 'father' 'adopt[ed]' a 'White' 'son' at work…They were introduced to powerful people; were mentored about critical issues; were trained in management styles; were informed about key policies, procedures, and rules. They were taught about the structure of the institution, as well as schooled and socialized in the fine art of career development, planning, succession, and success" (Pratt-Clarke, 2013, p. 152).

Without this adopted fatherhood, Pratt-Clarke (2013) had to redefine her professional boundaries. She shifted her community to include other women of color who she defined as 'othermothers' (Collins, 2000). A common practice term in the African American community, the term othermother dates back to slavery and occurs when women go above and beyond to extend virtues such as caring, ethics, and a supportive relationship to those who are not their biological daughters (Collins, 2000). Othermothering happens in a variety of places in higher educations including between colleagues and between faculty/staff and students. "To be a successful leader as a Black woman, mothers and sisters are critical…Mothers and sisters create a space for wisdom" (Pratt-Clarke, 2013, p. 153).

Access to networks is power. With greater access to information, members can expect stronger professional reputations and heightened organizational influence (Tyran & Gibson, 2008). Informal networks are an increasingly important resource in career advancement (Combs, 2003). Informal networks include professional colleagues but can also extend to family members, neighbors, and civic groups. Combs (2003) offers that informal networks are often more salient than one's formal systems, particularly when studying the influence of race and gender on the advancement of African American women. Education and work experience are two substantial factors that

should have a positive relationship with advancement. Yet, African American women are excluded from senior-level positions. Even with more education and similar work experiences, African American women hold a substantially lower percentage of administrative positions (Combs, 2003), which may be related to networks and access.

Yoder and Aniakudo (1997) found a similar pattern of exclusion for African American women firefighters. African American women reported distinct social interaction patterns and work context compared to their African American male and White female peers. African American women were excluded whereas African American men (based on their in-group gender status with White males) and White women (based on their in-group racial status with White males) reported deeper levels of engagement. African American women reported negative impacts with training, performance evaluation, socialization, and career advancement (Yoder & Aniakudo, 1997).

It is clear that workplace discrimination extends beyond gender. If advancement was based on gender alone, all racial groups would be equally represented in upper-level administrative positions. Compared to African American women, White women are still poised to occupy a higher percentage of senior-level leadership roles, which suggests that their identity as a racial majority has a positive impact on their professional advancement (Combs, 2003). African American women face prejudice and discrimination that can result in a lower amount of psychosocial and instrumental support. Bova (2000) adds that this lower support can lead to reduced opportunity for career-enhancing informal networks.

In 2006, Catalyst published *Connections that Count: The Informal Networks of Women of Color in the United States* after finding that lack of access to networks of influential colleagues was a key barrier to success. This is particularly heightened for women of color. Catalyst (2006) found that while White women occupy 14.2% of corporate roles, only 0.9% are African American, 0.4% are Asian, and 0.3% are Latino. "Those women of color who actually make their way into top positions often report relying on a mentor, a sponsor, or an influential network of colleagues to guide them to important career assignments" (Catalyst, 2006, p. 4).

Elliott and Smith (2004) found that Black women, compared to Latina and White women, were less affected by perceived workplace discrimination due to their effective use of networking strategies to offset the disadvantageous position of being both Black and female in a workplace environment. Their study found that Black women's opportunity for career advancement from worker to supervisor increased by 39% when they effectively utilized network assistance; their transition from supervisor to manager increased by 500% when they effectively negotiated network assistance (Elliott & Smith, 2004).

> One African American woman senior employee adds:
> "There is not a lot of familiarity in [my company] with a Black female who is relatively sharp, who clearly manages a huge piece of the business – it's just not normal. It's not ordinary. But most things are not done by presenting the facts and making a decision. Things are done by negotiation, by compromise, by friendliness, and by establishing a comfort level between people. So the things that depend on that, which is everything, require more time" (Catalyst, 2006, p. 4).

African American Women & Composition of Social Networks

Women of color tend to use two strategies - either blend in or stick together. Blending in means that women of color form relationships with White men who typically hold power in the organizations. Blending in networks contain higher numbers of White people, men, and colleagues (Catalyst, 2006). Sticking together encourages people to connect with those who are racially or ethnically similar. Sticking together networks tend to have a greater concentration of those of similar races, women, community members, family, and friends (Catalyst, 2006).

Catalyst (2006) found that African American women reported the lowest percentage of White members (29%) in their social networks compared to African Americans (65%). The study confirmed that African American women perceived the highest levels of workplace exclusion (43%) compared to their Latina (21%) and Asian American (27%) counterparts as measured by the extent of stereotyping, sexist or racist

commentary, and discomfort exhibited by their colleagues (Catalyst, 2006). Higher rates of blending in were associated with higher promotion rates. African American and Latina women with more colleagues of the same race in in their organizations felt more connected to their work. For African American women, having more women, specifically more African American women, in their informal networks were positively linked to their promotion rate (Catalyst, 2006). Despite feeling excluded at work, African American women still flourish because of the strength of their networks. Additionally, the greater number of colleagues in their informal networks were linked to greater organizational commitment for African American women (Catalyst, 2006).

Tichy (1981) offers that informal and formal networks differ based upon their composition, origin, and interaction patterns. Informal networks – from creation to maintenance – are voluntary. On the other hand, formal networks, whether connected to one's campus or one's professional organizations, provide additional sources of social and navigational capital. Formal networks can form at various points in one's career but expand through the acquisition of graduate education, service to professional organizations, and participation in professional development opportunities. There are a number of professional development institutes across the country that bring together seasoned professionals who share the lessons they have learned in their career with junior professionals who are looking to deepen their understanding of what it takes to advance professionally (see Appendix A for a listing). Literature also suggests that mentoring and professional development are ways to make a positive impact on the pipeline into senior level positions (Bertrand Jones et al., 2012).

Given the lack of other African American women professionals along the pipeline, racial and gender-affiliated subgroups provide additional social support and, in some cases, provide a possibility model as members watch other African American women ascend the ranks of professional organizations (Dixon, 2005). Combs (2003) added that formal networks are distinguished by prescribed links and the associated accountability between organizational members relating back to an organizational chart either in the work or professional organization setting. Examples include advisory

committees and supervisor/supervisee relationships (Combs, 2003). In a study of five college African American women presidents, Dixon (2005) found that all five were members of organized formal networks integral to the African American community such as historically Black sororities, the National Urban League, the NAACP, and Jack and Jill.

More often than not, social networks remain largely homogenous (Catalyst, 2006). In higher education administration, African American women struggle to gain access to the largely White and male influential networks in higher education. The double binds of racism and sexism are present in networks too. The absence of race was a hindrance for African American women wanting to gain access to these same networks. Walker and Melton (2015) found that White women, specifically White lesbians, were able to gain access to the White male social networks. In addition, Wallace et al. (2014) found Black women in academic and administrative positions lack access to informal networks given to their White counterparts. Specifically, Turner (2002) identified that women of color in the professoriate experience multiple marginalities that show up as the pressure to conform, social invisibility, isolation, exclusion from informal peer networks, limited sources of power, fewer opportunities for sponsorship, stereotyping, and personal stress. This is an explicit and implicit indication of what success looks like. Women in these positions serve as a possibility model for aspiring professionals while experiencing great stress.

Socialization

Socialization, and its systems and structures, works to set the norms of what one can expect in a given process (Dixon, 2005). Oftentimes, the normalized standard with traditional institutions support the advancement of men and limit opportunities for women and other ethnic minorities, particularly in relationship to leadership positions. Socialization is a continuous process where professionals receive ongoing feedback about their performance, their professional identity, and their potential (Dixon, 2005). Socialization is a series of interactions that can include formal policies, networking, and

mentoring. When looking to build a skillset of increasing responsibility, Parker (2003) provides a helpful definition that extends socialization to the quest for senior level leadership. Parker (2003) defines executive leadership development as a lifelong emergent socialization process that includes leadership development and organizational socialization.

Inherently based on a system of rewards, those who are different from the set of norms are viewed as deviant and less valuable. Given the inherent racism and sexism in higher education, African American women's socialization into the field is critically important but not guaranteed. In addition to socialization, Jackson and O'Callaghan (2011) identified mentoring and establishing support networks as key early career interventions. If African American women leaders receive consistent messaging that they are deviant or ineffective, this impacts their confidence and professional presence. Over time, this consistent negative messaging can lead to attrition as they begin to feel that they do not fit into a system that is created for White males. For optimal professional success, African American women must receive positive messaging and feedback about their place in higher education. In addition, they will need developmental, constructive feedback from supervisors, mentors, and sponsors who can help ensure they are prepared for increased responsibility and the expanding portfolio requisite for senior level leadership.

Dixon (2005) states that professional socialization is measured by five components: 1) professional socialization experiences in high school and college; 2) professional socialization experiences through affiliations with community organizations; 3) professional socialization through educational organizations; 4) internship and other professional development opportunities; and 5) formal or informal mentoring experiences. Dixon's (2005) first point reminds us that African American women are receiving messages about their worth and place in the Ivory Tower as early as high school and their undergraduate career. Greater affirmation as college students serves as a powerful reminder that bolsters their confidence that they matter and that a career in higher education is a promising possibility.

Mehra et al. (1998) succinctly stated the "lack of access to informal networks may be one reason that women and minorities (e.g., African American women), who are entering organizations in unprecedented numbers, are still underrepresented, especially in upper-management ranks" (p. 441). Socialization within traditional institutions typically support the advancement of men and limit opportunities for women and other ethnic minorities, particularly in relation to their leadership position (Dixon, 2005). Professionally, socialization extends to professional affiliations such as membership in educational organizations, formal and informal networks, social affiliation such as membership with community organizations, sororities, other volunteerism, and mentoring relationships (Ehrich, 1995). Jackson and O'Callaghan (2011) suggest a number of next steps to study race and ethnicity's impact on the attainment of senior-level positions, including discerning which type of mentoring and support networks are more beneficial to people of color in the academic workforce and understanding the role of graduate school and early career socialization in exposing professionals to the values and expectations of the academic workforce (Tull, Hirt, & Sanders, 2009).

Mentorship

Mentoring takes social networking one step farther. Mentorship is a form of socialization that initiates the professional learning of new professionals facilitating their positive entry and thus equipping them to adapt both personally and culturally to their new communities (Knight & Trowler, 1999). Mentoring implies a close personal connection and relationship between two or more individuals and at its core a mentoring relationship is comprised of honesty, relatability, and trust (Knight & Trowler, 1999). Professionals who experience mentoring have more opportunities for advancement and achievement (Ruth, 2012). Mentors offer a more ongoing professional relationship where the senior professional connects with the junior professional and serves as a sounding board, helps to build their confidence, and expects little in return (Hewlett, 2013). Mentors can provide valuable socialization tips to improve a mentee's transition to a new environment, thereby encouraging their success. Moreover, mentors offer

vision and purposefully guide and support each protégé, make a strong commitment to meeting regularly, and provide psychological and emotional support in the pursuit of career and professional development.

The importance of mentoring and its influence on advancement is well documented (Hilsabeck, 2018; Jones & Dufor, 2012; Masden, 1998; Parker, 2003; Wood, 1994; Wright Myers, 2002). Social capital follows the path of social networks. Career advancement is not simply a function of acquired skills or educational credentials. Christiansen et al. (1989) remind us that success in academia depends not only on what you know but also who you know for support, guidance, and advocacy. And while mentors may not guarantee career success, they are invaluable in ensuring that the junior members will be socialized into the formal and informal norms and rules of the organization (Crawford & Smith, 2005). Levinson et al. (1978) was one of the first studies to demonstrate the importance of mentoring relationships in young men's adulthood. Their landmark study found that mentorship is "crucial for enhancing an individual's entry and advancement, for welcoming the individual into a new occupational and social world and acquainting the individual with its values, customs, resources, and role players" (Levinson et al., 1978, p. 54). Mentoring can be used as a tool to enhance job satisfaction and advancement while providing greater responsibility and visibility (Crawford & Smith, 2005; Siple et al., 2015).

The lack of mentoring is a barrier to the advancement of African American women (Clayborne & Hamrick, 2007; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Joseph, 2016; Souto-Manning & Ray, 2007). Jackson and Flowers (2003) add that mentoring can be a significant retention tool for African American administrators at Predominantly White Institutions. When studying five African American women college Presidents, Dixon (2005) found that all of the participants identified at least one mentor who provided assistance, direction, or support, with many identifying more than one mentor. In addition, Dixon (2005) found that members of her sample were able to name an influential or supportive woman in their career path and vowed to do the same for women who were currently aspiring to be a college president.

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Mentoring is seen as a way to pay it forward and is valuable for promoting career growth to the next generation of leaders (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). But for whom? Effective mentoring is dependent upon establishing and maintain effective and trusting relationships over time. Mentorship provides the skills to play the proverbial game which can change depending on the salient identities we bring into our work. Lack of representation at the highest levels can create barriers for those looking to building same race and gender relationships. More often, mentorship happens with members of the same race and gender which allows for deeper cultural connections (Grant, 2012). Thomas (1990) studied the patterns of mentor and protégé relationships within a major public utility company. Thomas (1990) found that most White men were mentored by White men; White women were mentored by both White men and White women; Black men were mainly mentored by White and Black men, then Black women; Black women were mentored by White men, Black women, White women, and Black men, in that order. This study will study the mentorship patterns of African American women senior leaders, particularly to see if there is a significant difference of their mentors' race and gender.

African American women with one or more mentors reported having greater job satisfaction (Dreher & Ash, 1990, Riley & Wrench, 1985). In addition, women who have mentors report higher levels of self-confidence, opportunities for creativity, and opportunities for increased development of their skills (Reisch, 1986). Key administrators who completed the Black Female Administrator Survey noted that mentors were most helpful in the following areas: personal development, career advice, support with work-related issues, and establishing appropriate professional behavior (Jones & Dufor, 2012). However, in places where there are limited professionals of color in senior leadership roles such as higher education, staff cannot simply look for those who look like them to serve as mentors. Women in business and education are more likely to have male mentors, specifically those who are older (Luna & Cullen, 1994). African American women may have to develop a broader base of mentors (Thomas,

1990) or engage in boundary spanning (Bell, 1990) due to their exclusion from key organizational networks (Parker & ogilvie, 1990).

Senior-level staff of color are often called on to serve in various capacities beyond their full-time responsibilities in order to support other staff of color, represent communities of color in public settings, and serve as retention tools for staff of color (Brunner & Peyton-Caire, 2000). Over time, racial battle fatigue causes real mental, emotional, and physical strain (Brunner & Peyton-Caire, 2000; Smith et al., 2011). Schmidt and Wolfe (2009) noted that a "lack of suitable mentors for up-and-coming young professionals…can be seen as a dangerously limiting condition for the profession as well as individuals" (p. 380). There is a pattern: the institution continues to ask for more from African American professionals while investing less. Mentorship provides one level of engagement that provides an investment in the professional and a greater return to the institution and the field.

Sponsorship

In comparison to the softer, more delicate feedback that mentors offer, sponsors typically give more direct feedback while providing intentional options and contingency plans for the junior professionals' growth. Because the sponsor's investment is an indication of their own professional brand, the junior professional is given structured grace to take calculated risks and meet the sponsor's expectations (Hewlett, 2013). Sponsors typically have greater influence and direct access to career advancement opportunities. Their vetting places the junior professional into an increasingly more sophisticated social network which shortens one's learning curve and path to senior leadership roles.

As part of her foundational text, Hewlett (2013) researched the impact of a sponsor through the Center for Talent Innovation. The Center for Talent Innovation (Hewlett, 2013) defines a sponsor as having at least two of the following characteristics: expands their perception of what they can do, promotes visibility, provides stretch opportunities, makes connections to key customers and senior leaders, and shares

critical feedback about skill gaps. Junior professionals with sponsors experience a more accelerated path towards their goals. Notably, women with a sponsor report even higher levels of success (Hewlett, 2013). The Center for Talent Innovation found that 44% of sponsored women will request to be placed on a highly visible team compared to 36% of mentored women (Hewlett, 2013). Sixty-eight percent of sponsored women felt they were progressing through their career at a satisfactory rate, compared to 57% of women without a sponsor (Hewlett, 2013). Interestingly, 85% of sponsored women who are mothers and employed full-time remain employed compared to 58% without sponsors (Hewlett, 2013).

In higher education, sponsorship begins in a variety of ways including informal and formal networks gained through professional organizations, participation in institutes, and graduate school programs. Sponsorship continues with the introductions to key leaders in our field at professional conferences and organizational meetings as well as access to high-profile assignments. With access to the right networks, professionals gain visibility to influential networks and establish trusting relationships with search firms and key decision makers so they are primed and prepared when positions are vacated or created. This influential cycle of introductions to the right networks, acquisition of the requisite skills, and access to key decision makers is a valuable combination. Sponsors can ensure that this combination leads to selection in senior leadership roles.

With access to knowing which skills are needed for senior leadership, access to providing the right opportunities to high-profile projects, knowledge of available positions, access to create positions, and influence with the decision-making authorities, sponsors can have a seismic shift on the number of advancement opportunities for junior professionals. For African American women dealing with decreased presence at the executive level and potential access to the social capital in those networks through their sponsor, entry into senior-level roles is a precious opportunity. The true reality is that often times those with access to the necessary social capital are White men who have historically limited access to the networks and thereby senior-level positions to

those who do not look like them. When framing sponsorship's significance, Hewlett (2013) stated "There's never been a better time, that is, for accomplished, ambitious women and people of color to show they're eager to move into leadership roles, because the business sector is competing for them worldwide" (p. 25).

Conclusion

Higher education is a system that is created and maintained for the success of White men. The lack of African American women at the highest levels of leadership in higher education is clear (Townsend, 2019). Progress to racial parity is slow and not happening as quickly as it should. Social capital, whether accessed through informal networks, formal networks, socialization, mentorship, or sponsorship, contains the power to shift the higher education landscape. Hence, the expansion of African American women leaders' networks is one way to impact access to the senior-level positions.

The lack of social capital for African American women executives is well documented (Combs, 2003; Dixon, 2005). To shatter the glass ceiling, Davis & Maldonado (2015) found that African American women "who demonstrated resilience, integrity, intrapersonal characteristics, and social skills were more likely to climb the ladder within their respective organizations, with the support of a mentor and/or sponsor" (p. 60). Furthermore, Catalyst's (2006) survey "Advancing African American Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know" found that 43% of Black women surveyed cited lack of an influential sponsor/mentor; 36% cited lack of informal networks; 31% cited lack of company role models of the same racial/ethnic group, and 29% cited lack of high-visibility projects as barriers on a scale of great extent to very great extent. Previous qualitative research on the experiences of African American women in higher education has clearly identified the importance of mentors (Jordin, 2014; Townsend, 2019). However, the study of their mentors ends here. This study would complement further qualitative studies by learning more about the major demographics of those who are most influential to their success.

Yosso (2005) reminds of the wealth embedded in the social networks of people of color. Dixon (2005) confirmed that networking is key to gaining leadership skills but inserted that some of these opportunities happened outside of the formal organizational structure. Specifically, women may also be active within the ethnic minority subgroups of larger national professional organizations (Dixon, 2005). Here, African American women were able to connect with other minority women to create supportive communities that were then resources once they return to their campuses.

Visibility at the highest levels of higher education administration creates possibility models for minoritized populations. Canada (1989) confirms that women are more likely to select careers as a result of having positive role models, given a strong relationship between a person's ethnic background and her prominent role model and mentor. Wellington et al. (2003) add that women do not aspire to senior level positions because they are not aware of leadership positions.

Social networks can give access to possibility models while creating the support for African American women to aspire to senior leadership positions. Given the power of social capital in shifting these problematic trends, this dissertation will study the role of social capital in the advancement of African American women. Social network analysis, the chosen methodology, is built upon the premise that social life is created and maintained by the patterns formed by social relations (Scott, 2013). Social capital is carried throughout one's life and allows one to build increased and deeper connections. Social network analysis will be integrated into an online survey created to learn more about the key individuals who influence African American women's career advancement, the key characteristics of social and professional relationships, and resources that are most important for success in senior-level positions. This study will not only apply a new methodological application to this phenomenon, but it may also serve as a resource for junior faculty and staff members who aspire to reach higher levels of administration, for institutions, and for professional organizations that provide both leadership opportunities and professional institutes.

Perhaps Menah Pratt-Clarke (2017), co-editor of *Journeys of Social Justice: Women of Color Presidents in the Academy* says it best in the text's closing reflections:

What are the lessons we can learn from the experiences of women of color leaders in the academy? Women of color are qualified. These are all exceptional women; they have outstanding histories of achievement, academic excellence, and visionary leadership...We know that the academy is struggling to accept women leaders. The academy was not designed for women, for people of color, or for women of color. Women of color have had to fight for their rightful place in leadership roles, despite being as qualified (if not more) than men. Though the social justice work for women of color presidents in the academy is difficult, we must encourage more women to be light bearers, to take up the torch, and to lead new generation of our society forward (p. 213).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The current study sought to build upon previous work and extend African American women senior leaders' narratives further into newer methodological approaches. This chapter covers the research design, the population of interest, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and limitations. Of the author's detailed literature review, most of the dissertations and published articles used a qualitative framework with a limited sample size to study and describe the experiences of African American women professionals working in higher education. In line with this motivation, this study utilized social network analysis, a quantitative framework, to analyze the social networks of African American senior women leaders in higher education. This work is one of the first to study this population with this methodology and is intended to extend our understanding of the experiences of African American women leaders in higher education. This dissertation was designed to learn more about the key individuals in African American women senior leaders' informal and formal social networks, discover key outcomes of influential relationships, and learn about key resources that are essential for their continued success.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

This dissertation studied the role of social capital in the advancement of African American women senior leaders and was guided by the following research questions:

1. Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?

2. What are key characteristics of the social and professional relationships between African American women senior administrators and their most influential supporters?

3. Which resources such as professional organizations, family, and community are most important for success for an African American woman senior administrator?

Given the current standing of the literature on African American women senior leaders in higher education, the author offered the following hypotheses for each of the research questions:

1. Beginning with the most influential, the key individuals in the informal and formal social networks will be family members, mentors, and sponsors. Regarding title, Vice Chancellor/President/Provost, President (of an institution), and President (of a system) will be most influential.

2. The majority of the most influential supporters will be African American, female, or both. Regarding frequency, mentors will support at least monthly. Sponsors will offer support more infrequently, or at least annually. Family and friends will have more frequent interaction patterns.

3. Professional organizations, faith/spirituality/religion, and professional institutes will be the top three resources that support the success of African American women senior leaders in higher education.

Research Design

Social network analysis (SNA) studies the patterns of relationships within and between individuals, groups, and resources (Scott, 2013). Rooted in social capital theory, SNA recognizes the wealth, important consequence, and power held in connections. When studying individuals and groups of people, SNA posits that individuals tend to create and maintain personal and professional connections of greatest benefit. Killworth et. al (1990) estimated that the personal networks of the

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average person in the United States is 1,700 ± 400 people. This study's design sought to narrow this network to a detailed, specific, and finite group that serve a particular function in impacting and supporting the professional trajectory of African American women leaders. Furthermore, SNA provides visual representation of who knows who, how information is shared, and the most influential connections in a given network (Ramalingam, 2008). The network links are critical to SNA and this dissertation. SNA is motivated by structural intuition based on the links between network members (Freeman, 2004). Moreover, these ties are associated with the system and not the individual. The analytic focus is on the connection between nodes.

Social Network Analysis: A Primer

SNA can be complex and difficult to understand for a novice, as it includes a number of discipline-specific terms and produces a very distinct graphical output. This section will break down key terms and provide clear, applied examples to build understanding that can be used in later parts of the dissertation. Social network analysis studies two types of networks – whole network and egocentric networks (Scott, 2013). Whole networks contain everyone within a certain neighborhood or group. On the other hand, the connections centered on a particular individual are being studied in egocentric networks. In a given egocentric social network, SNA engages specific terminology to describe its components. These terms are listed and defined in Table 1.

Table 1

SNA Primer: Key Terms and Examples

Social Network Analysis Term	Definition	Application to This Study

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Egocentric network	SNA focused on studying the connections to the individual (Scott, 2013)	Centering the individual African American woman senior leader and every person/resource connected to her
Ego or actor	The unit of analysis in an egocentric network (Prell, 2012)	One African American woman senior leader in higher education
Actor	Everyone in a given network (Prell, 2012)	All of the African American women senior leaders and those connected to her (influential supporters and resources)
Alter	The actors tied to the ego (Scott, 2013)	The influential supporters (mentors, sponsors, family, etc.) and/or resources (professional organizations, reading, wellness activities)
Tie	What connects the ego and the alter (Prell, 2012)	African American woman senior leader is *tied* to a supervisor
Name generator	SNA tool where egos are asked to list someone who they share a particular type of relationship; Often asked to include alter attributes (Crossley et al., 2017)	Portions of the survey where the African American women senior leaders are asked to select their most influential supporters and include the alters' respective demographic information
Resource generator	SNA tool where egos describe where they would	Portions of the survey where egos identified resources that

	go for resources (Crossley et al., 2017)	promote their personal and professional success
Nodes/vertices	Each actor on a social network analysis graph (Prell, 2012)	Each woman and her alter(s) normally represented as a circle or square on the graph
Edges	A line (connection) between actors; Line is undirected meaning that there is only one arrow pointing from the ego to the alter (Prell, 2012)	On a graph, the straight line starting with the African American women and ending with an arrow pointing to the alter
Degree Centrality	Number of ties within a network (Scott, 2013)	For example, the number of times a role or title is connected to egos with the higher number of ties resulting in a higher level of degree centrality
Betweenness	A measure of centrality, the percentage of paths that go through an ego (Scott, 2013)	The amount of paths where a particular role, title, or resources remains in the center
Brokerage	Identifies who connects pairs that are not directly connected (Prell, 2012)	Indication of power/influence as this actor serves as a type of gatekeeper
Density	The number of ties divided the number of pairs (Prell, 2012)	In more dense networks, the egos are more tightly connected and social capital flows more efficiently

Homophily	Measures the tendency for egos to forge ties with alters with similar or different attributes; Ranges on a scale from -1 to +1 with -1 (or perfect homophily) means that the ego only has ties similar to themselves. A score of +1, or heterophily, has all ties to alters with different attributes (Crossley et al., 2017)	African American women senior leaders would show strong connections to those with the same attributes (African American, women, same professional title, same institution type, etc.)

There are a number of statistical packages such as R, UCINET, and Pajek used to quantify and describe various aspects of ties such as betweenness, density, and reciprocity. Actor and alter attributes in the current dissertation study will include information such as position title, race, gender, and institution type. This dissertation will focus on an ego network which centers the actors as the ego and then quantifies how egos connect with or are influenced by their alters (Prell, 2012).

For egocentric social network analysis, name generator instruments are commonly used to collect the data (Scott & Carrington, 2011). In this method, the egocentric network is bounded as each person in the sample is asked to produce a list of alters within their network based upon a prompt (Campbell & Lee, 1991; Marsden, 2011). In this study, the egos were asked to produce a list of five people who have been the most influential to their career advancement. Once identified, the respondents were asked for name interpreters, or a set of follow-up questions that provide demographic information and elaborate on the strength and characteristics of their relationship (Marin & Hampton, 2007).

To produce SNA diagraphs, there are a number of statistical and graphing packages such as R, UCINET, and Pajek. A diagraph is a visual representation of nodes, vertices, and lines to their alters (Prell, 2012). Lines can be one-directional (undirected) or bi-directional (directed). After studying and evaluating the major SNA packages, the researcher decided to use UCINET given its ease in identifying key measures of diagraphs, prevalence of use in the literature, and its ability to produce cleaner outputs. The researcher created the example diagraph below as part of a class project. The diagraphs are created to measure a number of metrics including density (linkages between points), homophily (tendency for egos to choose alters with similar characteristics), degree (the number of ties with each node), and betweenness (the bottlenecks of the network) (Scott, 2013; Scott & Carrington, 20011). Table 2 provides an overview of each research question, its affiliated question on the instrument, and the associated social network analysis descriptor that will be used to measure each question. Of note, the second research question was addressed during descriptive demographic statistics, not SNA measures, and is not included in Table 2.
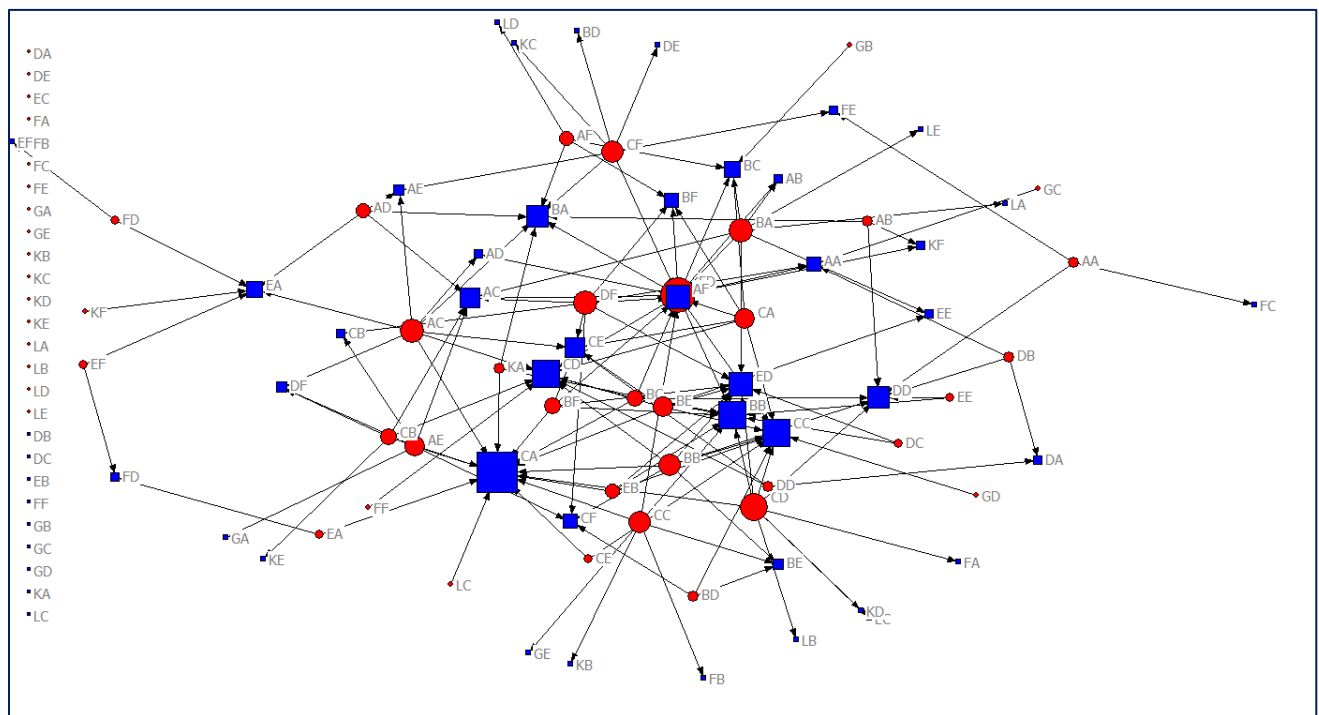
Figure 2

Example of SNA Output

To connect the terms in Table 1 to the example in Figure 2, degree centrality measures the number of ties to other alters. The size of the circles and squares are proportional to the amount of degree centrality. That is, the larger the size of the shape, the more connections this actor has within the network. Conversely, the actors on the periphery of Figure 2 are smallest and have the least number of connections to other alters. A measure of centrality, betweenness measures the alters that are on the shortest path to the greatest number of other alters. Alters AF (blue square) and DF (red circle) have some of the highest levels of betweenness as evidenced by their locations in the center of Figure 2 and the number of ties to other alters. Of note, the blue squares and red circles are connected to the subgroups within the network and are associated with any particular social network analysis measure.

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Table 2

Overview of SNA Measures and Research Questions

Research Question	SNA Measure
RQ #1: Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?	Degree centrality (for alter's role);
RQ #1: Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?	Betweenness (for alter's role)
RQ #1: Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?	Degree centrality (for alter's title)
RQ #1: Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?	Betweenness (for alter's title)
RQ#3: Which resources such as professional organizations, family, and community involvement are most important for success for an African American woman senior administrator?	Degree Centrality (for resources)
RQ#3: Which resources such as professional organizations, family, and community involvement are most important for success for an African American woman senior administrator?	Brokerage

Population and Sample of Participants

The study utilized an unbounded network of African American women who hold senior-level leadership roles in higher education administration across the United States. In social network analysis, an unbounded network does not have fixed membership, which is appropriate given the breadth of institutions and professional functional areas that may be included (Prell, 2012).

The population represented African American women who currently held a title of director or above within higher education. Bertrand Jones et al. (2012) set this standard that includes positions such as Director, Dean, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Associate Vice Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor, and Chancellor. The population extended to African American women across various two- and four-year institutions and institution types such as Predominately White Institutions, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Minority Serving Institutions in the United States of America. Given the lack of representation of African American women leaders across the field of higher education and at any given institution, a national sample was critical to obtaining the goal of 100 responses from an anticipated recruitment pool of 350. For the adequate purposes of the study, 100 responses in the sample would provide an adequate sample of title, years of experience, and institution type for the resulting analyses.

Procedures

The researcher utilized two methods to recruit participants. First, the researcher employed the snowball method (Crossley et. al, 2017; Prell, 2012) to recruit participants both via direct email solicitation and professional social media networking. The researcher sent an IRB-approved recruitment email that included an information sheet and a link to the survey to 143 professional contacts across the country who met the criteria or had access to colleagues who meet the criteria in their social networks. The researcher requested that her professional contacts forward the recruitment email to

their network of additional African American women currently holding senior-level positions. In addition, the researcher requested a list of members who met the criteria from NASPA, the leading professional organization for Student Affairs Administrators. NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, boasts over 15,000 members who represent 2,100 institutions in every state in the United States and many countries across the globe (NASPA Membership, 2020). NASPA produced a list that included 453 African American women across the country who held a variety of roles such as Vice President, Dean of Students, Chief of Staff, and Dean of the College.

To further increase the likelihood of obtaining participants who occupied these roles, the researcher included professionals who were connected to African American women who have completed institutes and symposiums created to improve social capital and prepare them for senior-level positions in higher education. This subgroup of professionals completed a number of competitive and highly selective professional development opportunities such as the National Housing Training Institute, the Mid-Managers Institute, the Ujima Institute, the Alice Manicur Symposium, and the BRIDGES Institute – each drawing from state, regional, and national populations. The researcher is active in a variety of the key professional networks and is a graduate of three of the competitive professional institutes. Particularly, the researcher completed both the Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA) Mid-Manager's Institute and the Ujima Institute within a year of the survey release date, so these networks are newly expended and consistently accessed for a variety of ongoing professional needs.

In addition, the researcher posted this survey to affinity-based social media groups on Facebook, Twitter, and GroupMe with group members who identify as African American professionals in higher education. This approach honors the importance of community in the African American social networks as well as the realization that the women who meet the criteria in the sample will be widely disbursed across the country by institution type and professional functional area. As noted in Chapter 2, African

Americans are underrepresented at the President and Vice President of Student Affairs positions.

Yosso (2005) noted that communities of color tend to share information within their respective networks. The researcher anticipated that women currently holding these positions would willingly share the survey with their extended networks of qualified women as a way to pay it forward and contribute to our field and the scholarship about African American women's experiences. The interconnectedness of this community extended to each portion of the data collection and into the survey completion incentives. The participation incentive of supporting the Zenobia Hikes Award (NASPA, 2020) was a recognition of the duty to honor those who have paved the way while providing an opportunity for someone who is aspiring to become a senior level administrator.

Biannually, NASPA hosts the Alice Manicur Symposium that selects women in mid-manager positions who aspire to become a Vice President of Student Affairs. This intimate experience connects prospective senior-level professionals with women who are experienced senior-level professionals. Of note, the late Zenobia Hikes, an African American woman, served as Vice President of Student Affairs at Virginia Tech during the tragic campus shooting on April 16, 2007 and died a year later due to complications from cardiac surgery (Owczarski, 2008). NASPA's award in her namesake recognizes a woman who has demonstrated a commitment to advancing women in higher education and student affairs and provides a scholarship to attend the Alice Manicur Symposium (NASPA, 2020).

Survey Design

As indicated earlier, SNA is an emerging methodology to study this population. In lieu of an established, well-researched SNA instrument that directly applies in this case, the researcher incorporated expertise from social network analysis and Black women administrators to create her own survey. The researcher searched for example SNA surveys online through university repositories at institutions such as the University of

California Irvine and the University of Canberra. To examine existing tools that study Black women in higher education, the researcher contacted Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones, Associate Professor of Higher Education at Florida State University, and lead author of *Pathways to Higher Education Administrators for African American Women* to gain access to the Black Female Administrator Survey used as the foundation for the text. Combined, the online SNA survey examples and the Black Female Administrator Survey helped to inform the flow and the design of this dissertation's survey.

Given these considerations, the survey began with basic demographic information about the respondent. The opening section of the online Qualtrics survey included information such as gender, race, level of education, length of experience in the field, current title, and institution type. The second section of the survey included the SNA name generator and items that explored all three research questions, including information about their top five influential supporters, description of their interactions, and the resources that are most essential for their ongoing success (see Appendix B).

Before seeking IRB approval, the researcher completed a pilot test to validate survey language and receive feedback. The researcher piloted the survey with one doctoral student and one recent post-doctoral student, both with extensive knowledge about African American women leaders in higher education. After receiving their feedback about clarity and structure of the survey, the researcher adjusted language and survey design before beginning data collection. While this did not create usable data, this feedback strengthened the quality of the measure.

Instrumentation

The online survey was hosted via Qualtrics, an UNCG-supported application. Using best practices as identified by Evans & Mathur (2018), the SNA survey targeted a population that is interested in the research topic, offered an incentive to complete the survey, created a short and concise tool, included an estimated completion time, explained how the collected data would be handled, sent at least one reminder, and was aware of the constraints based on the time of the academic year.

The researcher incorporated best practices for survey research (Evans & Mathur, 2018) in the following ways:

Targeted Populations:

The tool targeted African American women in the researcher's professional network and those identified by NASPA who currently occupied a position in higher education at or above the Directors level. The network included professionals in a variety of functional areas and institution types including two-year institutions, four-year public institutions, and four-year private institutions across the country. This sample reflected the population of interest who have a vested interest in participating in broadening the literature base around African American women leaders' experiences.

Offering an Incentive:

The survey was incentivized in hopes of increasing completion rates and the sample size. Participants who completed the survey were entered into a drawing for two types of incentives – monetary and non-monetary. Four participants were randomly selected using an online randomness chooser to win one of four $25 Amazon.com electronic gift cards. One participant was chosen to have a $50 gift donated on their behalf to the Zenobia Hikes Alice Manicur Symposium Fund hosted by the NASPA Foundation.

Creating a Concise Tool:

The researcher considered the impact of the order of the SNA questions (Pustejovsky & Spillane, 2009) and name generator fatigue (Marin & Hampton, 2007) to create a concise tool with minimal repetition to improve validity and reliability. The women in the sample are also juggling a variety of high-profile tasks, which renders their time very limited and valuable. Creating a concise tool increases the likelihood that they will feel equipped to have the time to be present and engaged in the study. The researcher also met with a Qualtrics expert to minimize repetition within the tool,

decrease the amount of time to take the survey, and improve the respondent's experience.

Sending Reminders:

Aerny-Perreten et al. (2015) noted that after sending reminders, the response rate in their online study increased from 22.6% to 39.4%. The researcher drafted an initial participant list and their corresponding email addresses. After one week, the researcher sent one (1) reminder to complete the survey. This approach has a limitation given that the researcher also employed snowball sampling, limiting her ability to follow up with those outside of her original list. The survey was active for four weeks from July 16 to August 16, 2020. The initial plan was to close the survey when 100 responses were reached. Given the racial and global pandemics happening during the data collection phase, the researcher decided to keep the survey open beyond the first 100 responses.

Completed surveys were stored in the online Qualtrics software package which allowed the researcher to track completion rates, send email reminders, and review the number of completed surveys in real time. Given the sensitive nature of the data provided, confidentiality was most critical. While alters were only identified by their initials, deidentifying the egos was critical as the data contained more ego-centered identifying information. Access to the data was limited to the researcher and those serving on the dissertation committee. To this end, data was stored on a password-protected portal (Box.com cloud storage account hosted at the university) during the research and analysis phases. Key demographic data such as institution type and position title were collected during the survey but later disconnected from identifying information. Once the researcher moved to the latter phases of data analysis and towards publication, deliberate and intentional care was exercised to remove identifying information such as emails, names, and acronyms from the stored data.

Reliability & Validity

When designing the survey, reliability and validity were two significant considerations. Reliability measures the ability to receive the consistent scores on repeated administrations while validity measures the degree to which the instruments measures the intended variable (Crossley, 2017). Specifically, within social network analysis components such as respondent accuracy, impact of various network generators, and network quality have been studied (Hlebec & Ferligoj, 2002). In a metaanalysis, Hlebec & Ferligoj (2002) found that reports of emotional support and informational support were the most reliable in social network surveys. Informational support includes whom respondents would reach out to seek advice and help in defining problematic events and applies to the dissertation's research tool (Hlebec & Ferligoj, 2002). When evaluating question type and reliability, the five-category ordinal scale with all categories labeled was the most reliable (Hlebec & Ferligoj, 2002). Additionally, free-recall techniques (where respondents are asked to produce a list of alters instead of given a fixed list) were found to be reliable when the respondents know each other very well (Hlebec & Ferligoj, 2002). Kogovsek & Ferligoj (2005) studied the effects of reliability and validity on egocentric networks. Smaller networks and frequency-based behavioral questions were found to be more valid (Kogovsek & Ferligoj, 2005). Conversely, respondents who identified as women and older (aged 40 and above) were found to have weaker ties within their larger networks, thereby having a negative impact on validity.

Given these limitations, the researcher designed the research instrument to incorporate components such as choosing to study smaller networks, using frequency-based behavioral questions, and utilizing free-recall techniques. In typical quantitative frameworks, measures such as p values can be used to identify levels of statistical significance and inform whether or not a null hypothesis is rejected or not. SNA produces non-parametric measures limiting the ability to formally test hypotheses. To be clear, the purpose of this study is not to test statistical significance but to use descriptive statistics to better understand how this study's results align with the findings of previous

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studies on this topic. SNA's resulting descriptive statistics are helpful in learning about the composition of networks but have limited impacting on testing reliability and validity.

Data Collection Procedures

The live surveys were consistently monitored to track completion rates and troubleshoot any concerns. The data was collected in Qualtrics for four weeks from July 16, 2020 to August 16, 2020. With this timeline, the researcher took into consideration typical workflow patterns of senior-level leadership in higher education. During this period of time in the summer, senior-level leaders are often planning, providing direction, and optimizing strategy for the following academic year. During this prolonged period, staff often took advantage of the slower pace by taking vacations. The researcher's initial planning happened in April 2020, months before the COVID-19 pandemic closed campuses and shifted higher education in unprecedented ways. Given the need for senior leaders to lead change during the pandemic, it was hard to predict how their typical pattern in the summer would change and impact their availability to respond to the survey. With the understanding of the complexity of COVID-19 impact on higher education, the researcher was pleased that 100 respondents completed the tool by August 4, just two and a half weeks into the data collection phase. A total of 157 women responded by the August 16, 2020 close date.

Data Analysis

Once collected, the data was cleaned, evaluated for missingness or incomplete data, coded, organized in Qualtrics, and then loaded into the Microsoft Excel program accessed via Box. Keeping the data within Excel allowed the researcher to quickly see trends, sort the data, and served as a reference point if further clarification was needed. The researcher also imported the demographic data into IBM SPSS 26.0 (IBM, 2020). After this check in Microsoft Excel, the data was loaded and saved into UCINET, which is one of the standard options to import SNA data. Within the UCINET SNA package,

NetDraw (Borgatti, 2002) was one of three options to visualize the data and provide key social network analysis measures (see Table 2). Within each respective measure, the graph and its associated statistic for metrics such as betweenness, centrality, density, and homophily were generated for RQ 1 and RQ 3. Data for RQ2 were accessed and analyzed within Excel. Known for its map-like outputs, SNA can produce visual representations of social networks that contain a wealth of information. The outputs for the current study will look similar to the example provided in Figure 2. Because egocentric networks are unbounded, the outputs will not produce graphs that create closed loops (Crossley, 2017).

UCINET & Detailed Analysis Steps

As noted earlier, there are a number of programs such as R, EgoNet, Pajek, and UCINET that can be used to study SNA. The researcher chose UCINET based as the level of supporting literature and the quality of the graphical outputs. UCINET holds another advantage as it has the capacity to analyze both whole and ego networks. UCINET is also connected to the NetDraw program (Borgatti, 2002) which produces the graphical outputs of the social networks. Importing data was the first step. For this study, the study was cleaned and kept in an Excel format. After opening UCINET, you will need to select the following menu options – Data| Import Excel| DL-Type Formats.

Within the DL Editor, load the data file by selecting the open folder (that includes a folder with an arrow). Once the data populates, select the data's format using the *Data Format* on the right-hand menu. After a visual check and selecting the appropriate output options, you can save the data by selecting the blue disk option in the DL Editor.

Once the data is transformed and saved as an UCINET file, one could learn more about the composition of the network using UCINET calculations such as density, centrality, brokerage, and size. To find these calculations, select Networks| Ego Networks| Egonet basic measures. The output will be saved in a text file. To visualize the network, select the Visualize| NetDraw menu options. To import data, select File|Open|UCINET dataset| Network and choose the previously saved dataset.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations inherent in this project. First, Lindauer (2018) warns that there are limitations with using a snowball method. This technique cannot guarantee that the researcher will reach every member of this population. It is very likely that members who are not connected to the researcher, her social network, or the professional organizations will not have access to the instrument, which could introduce bias into my sample. Additionally, as noted earlier, snowball sampling can lead to non-generalizable data. Lindauer (2018) also noted that this technique has positive outcomes, as it may also result in a sample larger than the researcher's initial network.

Additionally, there were a number of limitations pertaining to the data collection. As is customary with online electronic surveys, the researcher expected a response rate between 20% to 40% (Aerny-Perreten et al. (2015). Given these possible limitations, the researcher was proactive in creating a succinct instrument, leaning on the interconnectedness of the African American women community, and offering appealing incentives for completion. By increasing the response rate, the study increased its reliability informed by the researcher's deliberate steps to ensure that the sample included a wide range of demographics and terms that matched eligible elements in the population. An additional limitation was the lack of African American women who currently occupy senior-level leadership positions. At the initial phase of data collection, the researcher aimed to increase the sample size by targeting professional networks with dense concentrations of African American women. They included racial subgroups of professional organizations, alumni of competitive professional institutes, and virtual online communities.

African American women occupy a complex place in the United States. As a double minority, African American women navigate two underprivileged identities. The racial tension caused by slavery and its impact is unparalleled with other racial identities in the United States. In addition, African American women have higher college going rates than other minoritized racial groups which impacts the number of women who have degrees and qualify for employment in higher education (Digest of Education

Statistics, 2019). Therefore, it may be difficult to extrapolate the study's findings to other minoritized populations.

There are a number of other social network analysis limitations. Marin and Hampton (2007) note that the survey may be interpreted differently based on setting. By including time estimates within questions, the researcher aimed to provide a more consistent setting for respondents, thereby increasing accuracy and consistency. DeLange et al. (2004) warned that the tension of high sensitivity and burdensome nature of content may increase non-response rates. The researcher sought feedback on this point during the pilot test and designed the tool that would not take more than 10 minutes to complete.

Conclusion

Social network analysis will provide a rich understanding of the sample's social network and related patterns. SNA is a powerful tool for educational ecosystems seeking to better understand the networks among the individuals and groups that comprise them and the relationships that drive the work. For African American women, this adaptable methodology can expand knowledge about the key influential individuals in their informal and formal networks, the characteristics of their relationship, and the resources they utilize for success in their career.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Introduction

This study examined the relationship between social capital and the experiences of African American women senior leaders in higher education. Chapter 3 included additional information about social network analysis (SNA) methodology and provided a framework for the data collection and data analysis process. This chapter will review the initial data analysis, situate the research questions, include descriptive statistics about the sample and highlight key findings from the study.

Initial Data Analysis

All data was collected using Qualtrics, an online survey platform, hosted by the researcher's institution. Before analyzing the data, the researcher screened the initial raw data to review preliminary trends, identify missing data, and ensure accuracy. There were 157 total respondents who completed the survey. The data was exported from Qualtrics and imported into Microsoft Excel for inspection and cleaning. Of the 157 respondents who consented and completed the survey, 17 respondents were removed from the final data set. One respondent was removed because she identified as a Latina and did not meet the study's requirement of identifying as African American. After a more thorough review, 16 respondents were removed due to missing data. Each of the 16 respondents only completed the survey's demographic data and failed to complete any portion of the instrument's social capital information. Identifying at least one alter and one resource was essential to the overall analysis. Therefore, their responses were removed, leaving 140 viable responses.

Cleaned data was then prepared for the next step of data analysis. Demographic data was imported into IBM SPSS version 26.0 (IBM, 2020). Social network analysis data was imported into and saved in the UCINET program (Borgatti, 2002). The saved

UCINET data was then imported into NetDraw (Borgatti, 2002) to create the social network analysis graphs. To observe trends in the data, the researcher generated the descriptive statistics for the respondents' major demographic categories, the alters' demographic categories, and the types of resources most used by the survey respondents. The trends that emerged will be displayed using tables, figures, and social network analysis graphs.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study and will be explored later in this chapter:

1. Who are the key individuals in informal and formal social networks that influence African American women's career advancement in higher education?
2. What are key characteristics of the social and professional relationships between African American women senior administrators and their most influential supporters?
3. Which resources such as professional organizations, family, and community involvement are most important for success for an African American woman senior administrator?

Demographic Information

The survey yielded 140 viable responses comprising a sample reflecting diverse titles, functional areas, and career tenure within higher education. All of the survey respondents identified as a woman with 94.5% identifying as African American and 5.5% identifying as both African American and another race. Seventy-three or 52.5% of the respondents possessed a terminal degree while a similar percentage (58%) have 11 to 20 years of experience in higher education.

Table 3 highlights the proportions of current professional titles across the members of the sample. The majority of respondents, 56.12%, currently held a Director level position. The next most populated role was the Vice Chancellor/Chancellor/Provost role, representing another 10.79%. In addition, some respondents held positions not captured by the survey's position banding. These respondents represented a diverse set of roles within higher education including Executive Director, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, Chief Diversity Officer, and Chief and Associate Medical Director. Of note, one respondent did not provide a title.

Table 3

Ego's Current Professional Position

	n	%
Director	78	56.12
Dean	9	6.48
Assistant Vice President/Chancellor/Provost	10	7.19
Associate Vice President/Chancellor/Provost	6	4.32
Vice President/Chancellor/Provost	15	10.79
Provost	0	0.00
Executive Vice President/Chancellor/Provost	0	0.00
President/Chancellor (of an institution)	1	0.72
President/Chancellor (of a system)	0	0.00
Not Listed	20	14.39
Total	139	100.00

Note. Additional titles within the sample included Executive Director (6), Associate Dean (4), Assistant Dean (3), Chief Diversity Officer (1), Chief and Associate Medical Director(1), Assistant Professor (1), Senior Director for Student Affairs and Conduct Officer (1), and Department Chair (1). Total percentage exceeds 100% due to rounding.

In terms of their functional areas, 95 or 68.84% are employed within Student Affairs. Twenty or 14.49% identify as an administrator within Academic Affairs with an increased number working in a position outside of the Student Affairs and Academic Affairs dichotomy. Twenty-three or 16.67% are employed in areas such as Advancement/Institutional Advancement (3), Athletics (2), Community Engagement (1), and Human Resources (1).

The survey respondents have a wealth of experience in higher education, particularly in senior-level positions. Over 23% of the respondents (33 women) had more than 21 years of experience in higher education leadership. Conversely, almost 20% (26 women) had less than 10 years of experience in their higher education career. More than half of the survey respondents (63%) are currently occupying at least their second senior-level administrative role. Thirty-six percent have held three or more other additional senior-level positions.

**Social Network Analysis Example Graphs**

The researcher utilized the NetDraw program (Borgatti, 2002) to generate each of the social network analysis graphs included in this dissertation. Social network analysis graphs may be complex, difficult to analyze, and challenging to initially understand. To better explain the graphs included in this chapter, the researcher will offer as an example three of the respondents' ego networks that contribute to the graph of the collective alters' titles.

In all of the following social network analysis graphs, each of the survey respondents are egos in the graphs identified by a random identification number. Each of their respective ego networks are denoted by a unidirectional arrow to each of their alters. Survey respondents were asked to provide up to five alters, so the size of the resulting networks can range from one to five.

Figure 3 displays the data from respondent 49's ego network. She listed her supervisor, mentor, and sponsor as her most influential supporters, so they are listed as

the three alters in her network. She has a unidirectional relationship (as denoted by the one-way arrows) with each of the alters because they were not included in this research project. If they were included in the research project and also noted that ego #49 was one of their top five connections, the ties would be bi-directional and have arrows in both directions. Because ego #49's graph is part of the larger graph of all of the alters' titles, the length of the lines is proportional to the ego's network to the titles included in the larger graph.

mple: Ego network #49
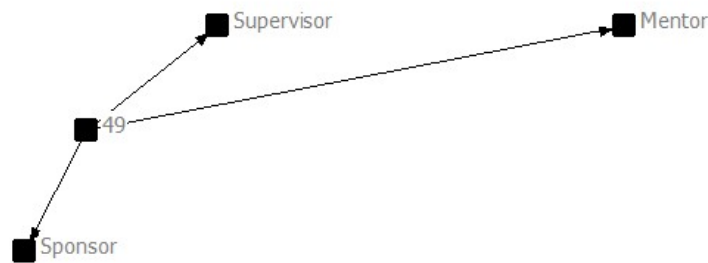
Figure 3

Ego network #49

Ego #55 identified her mentor, friend and sponsor as her three most influential supporters. Similar to ego #49's network, Figure 4 shows the connection between the ego (#55) and her supporters (alters) are represented by unidirectional ties.
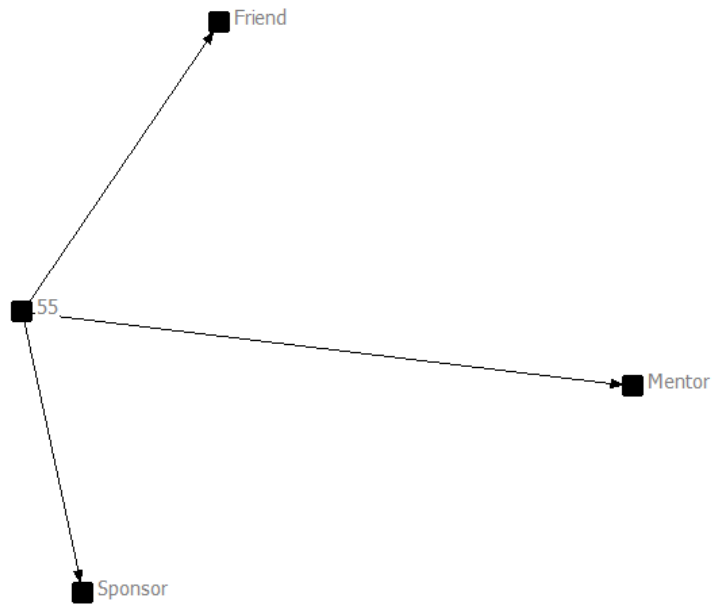
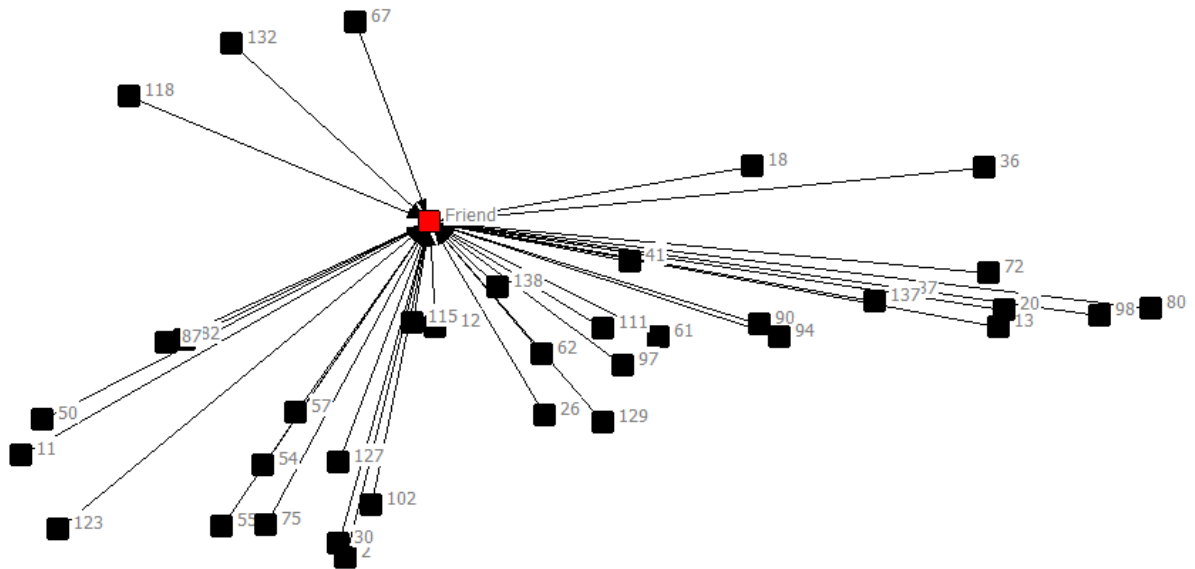**Figure 4**

Ego network #55

When comparing the ego networks of respondents #49 and #55 both identified a mentor and sponsor as two of their key supporters. Figure 5 shows the combined networks of both egos and their alters. This graph provides a pictorial representation of their connection to both the sponsor and mentor ego but shows that ego #49 also has her third connection to her supervisor whereas ego #55's third alter is her friend.
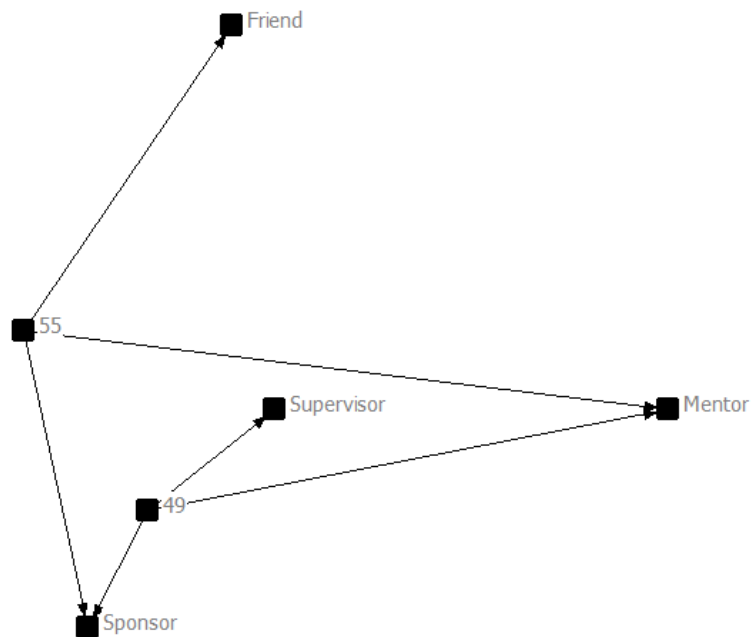
Figure 5

Ego networks of #49 and #55

In addition, each alter's connections can be extracted from the overall graph to show their affiliated egos. In Figure 6, the friend alter has been extracted to show all of the egos who identified a friend as one of her top five supporters. For reference, ego #55 is included in this graph toward the bottom left.

Figure 6

*Alter (friend) ego network*

Findings

The following sections will provide detailed findings organized by the three research questions. Each section will briefly introduce the research question and then describe key findings, data trends, and social network analysis graphs.

Research Question #1: Key Individuals in The Ego's Informal & Formal Networks

The first research question studied the key individuals in the ego's informal and social networks. The women were asked to identify up to five individuals who had the most influence on the advancement of their higher education careers. Seventy-one percent of the respondents identified at least three influential supporters. After identifying each supporter with a chosen set of initials, they also provided a number of

demographic descriptors including their gender, race, length of their relationship, their role in their life, their title, and their institution type.
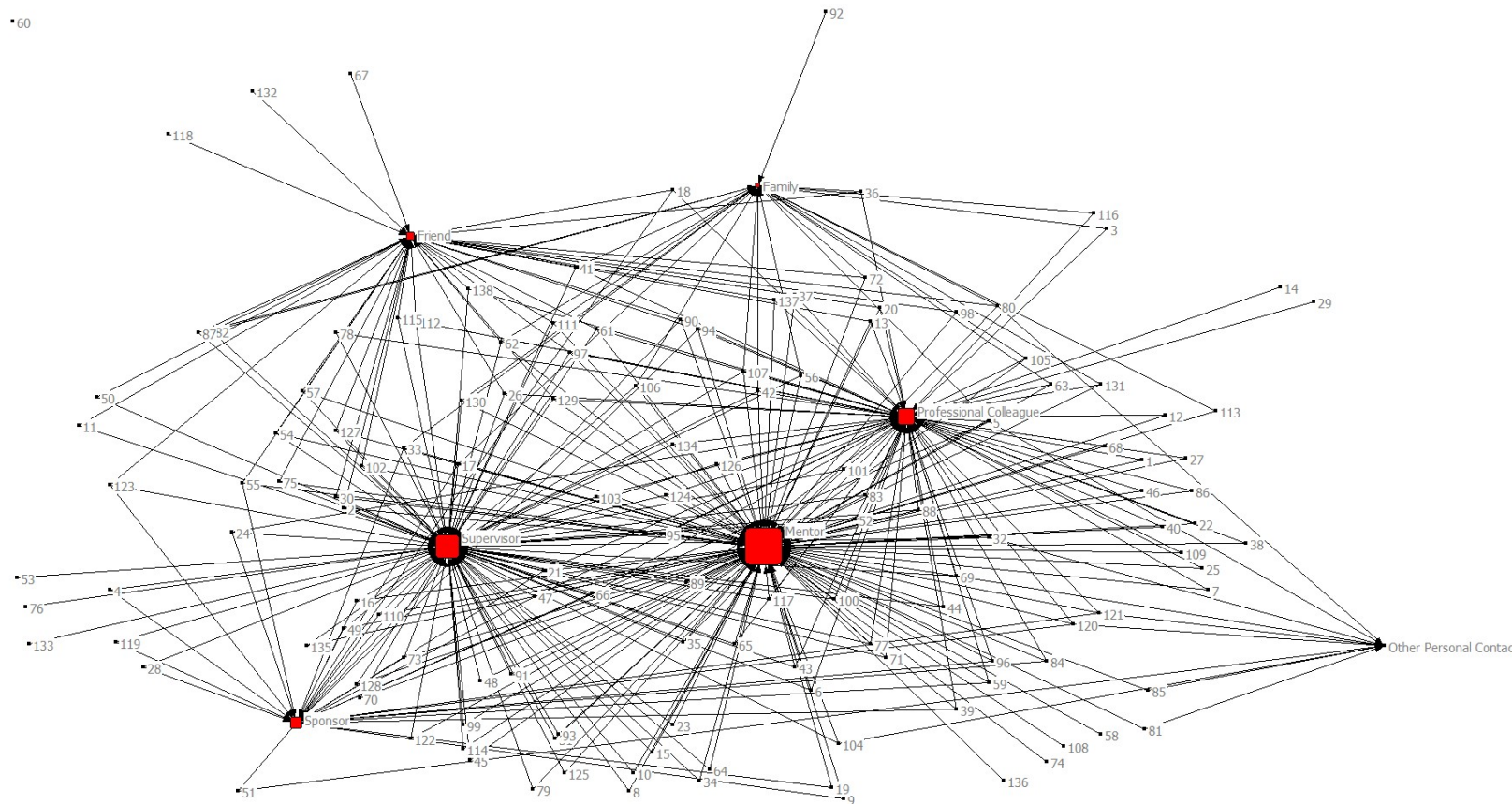
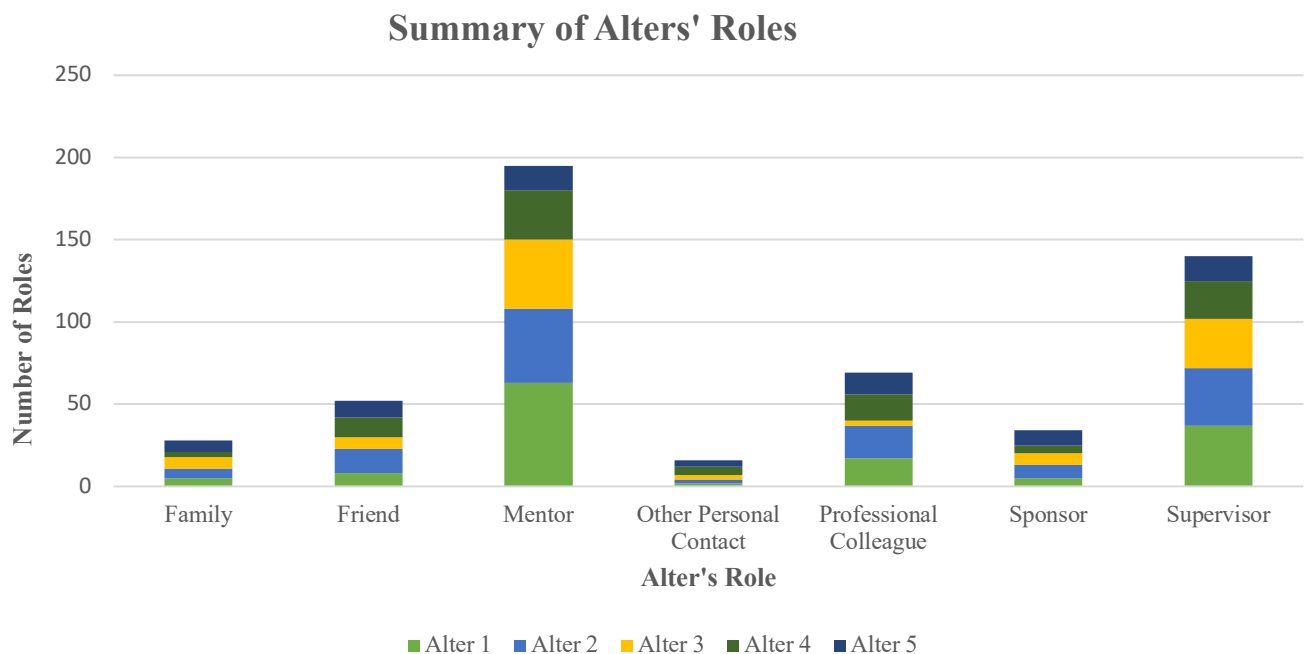**Figure 7**

Most Important Supporters (By Role)

In studying the key individuals in our sample's networks, mentors and supervisors were identified as the most important roles. Their impact is reflected in both the central position within Figure 7 and their connectedness to surrounding roles. Their influence is reflected by the size of the node as they hold the top and second highest positions in our network; SNA measures confirm this finding. Degree centrality measures the importance of the ties held by the egos in a given network. Degree centrality provides information about the most connected roles (Crossley et al., 2017). As the alter's role and impact decreases, the size of the node decreases as well. As

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such, the remaining roles in order of decreasing importance are professional colleague, friend, sponsor, family and other personal contact.

Using UCINET's calculations, the role's degree centrality measures are as follows: mentor (194.00), supervisor (140.00), professional colleague (90.00), friend (52.00), sponsor (34.00), family (28.00) and other personal contact (15.00). Table 4 provides another visualization of the counts by alters and the total number of roles across all alters.

Table 4

Summary of Alters by Roles

Additionally, it is important to know more about the titles of the alters who occupy each category such a mentor, supervisor, or professional colleague. Figure 10 provides additional details about the titles of the alters who occupy the categorical roles included in Figure 7. The ego determines the role of their alter whereas the title provides a more consistent comparison. For example, one alter may list their top supporter as mentor. A

mentor can occupy a variety of titles such as Director, Dean, or Assistant Vice President. To this end, Figure 10 provides additional clarity.

To illustrate this inclusion of titles, the titles of the supporters for ego #49 and ego #55 are included below in Figures 15 and 16. For ego #49, two of the three alters are Vice Presidents/Vice Chancellors indicated by the larger node. The larger nodes also reflect the importance within the ego's respective network. Ego #55's supporters are a Vice President/Vice Chancellor, Director, Professor and President/Chancellor. Again, here their decreasing size (in this order) are reflective of their influence in this ego's network. Figure 10 reflects the titles of the most important supporters for all of the survey respondents.
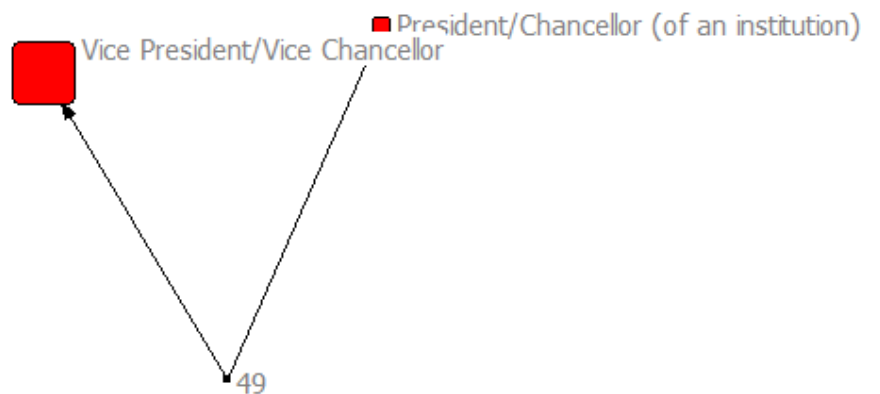
Figure 8

Ego network of #49 (titles included)
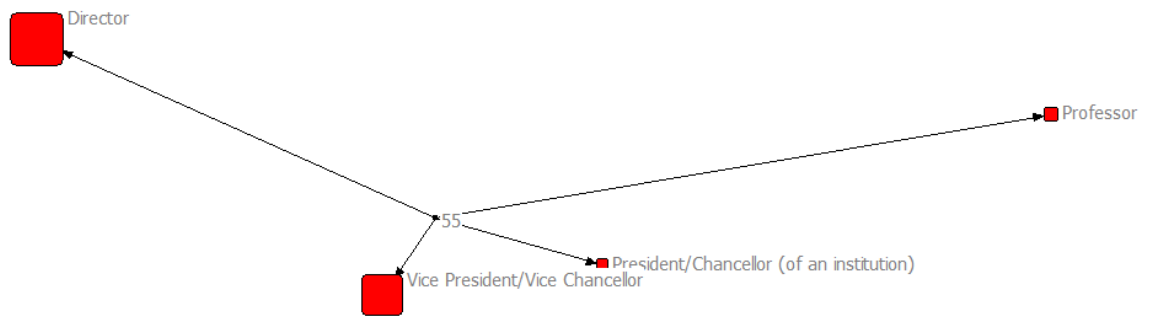
Figure 9

Ego network of #55 (titles included)
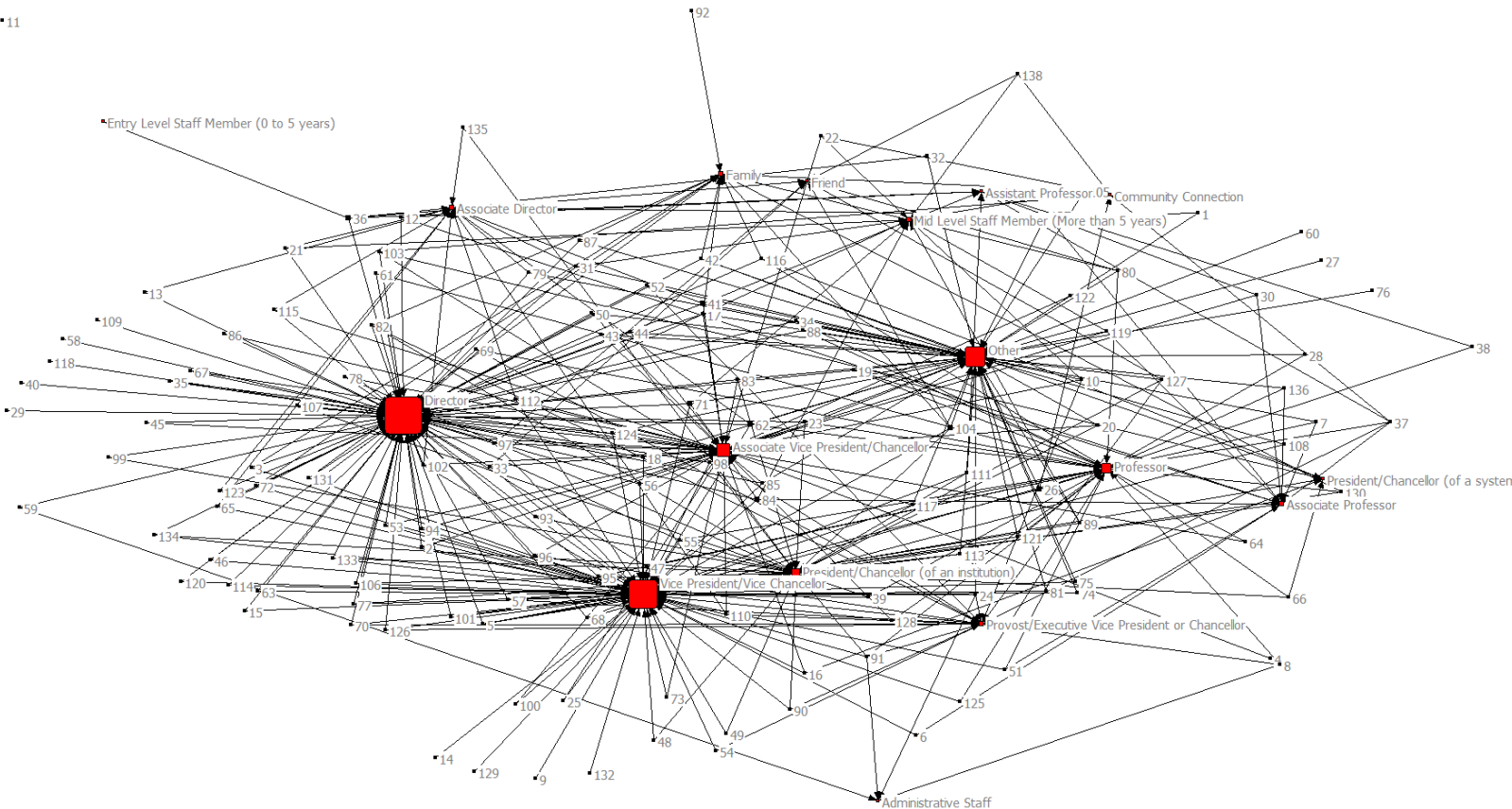
Figure 10

Titles of most important supporters

When analyzing the most influential titles, degree centrality can also be used to measure their impact on the overall network. Visually, Director and Vice President/Vice Chancellor are the largest nodes and have the greatest amount of degree centrality. In decreasing order, the degree centrality measures are: Director (117.00), Vice President/Vice Chancellor (108.00), Other (73.00), Associate Vice President/Chancellor (58.00), President/Chancellor of an institution (40.00), Professor (38.00), Provost/Executive Vice President (22.00), Associate Director (16.00), Family (16.00), Associate Professor (15.00), Mid-Level Staff Member (13.00), Friend (9.00), Assistant

Professor (7.00), President/Chancellor (of a system), Community Connection (6.00), Administrative Staff (5.00), and Entry-Level Staff Member (1.00).

Analyzing the influence of the ties, brokerage deepens the narrative by providing more information about the influence of the title. In decreasing order, the top five are Director (3,003.00), Vice President/Vice Chancellor (2,346.00), Other (1,176.00), Associate Vice President/Chancellor (861.00), and Professor (435.00). Of note, the professor role is fifth in brokerage compared to the President/Chancellor (of an institution). This highlights that the professor has a greater influence in their given networks.

When considering the importance of these connections, the respondents were asked to rank the influence of their top five supporters. Table 5 highlights the demographics of the supporters sorted by rank. A few trends emerge, namely the saturation of homogeneity as it relates to both race and gender. Females and African Americans are over-represented at each rank in comparison to the other categorical variables in their respective category. For the most influential individual, 69% were women and 55% were African American. An African American woman was the most influential person in 40% of their networks compared to 14% who identify a White male as the most influential person. This proportion of over-representation of both race and gender is consistent across all five ranked positions.

Similar to the findings highlighted in Figures 15, 16, and 17, Table 5 provides additional insight about the key roles and titles that are influential in the respondents' journey. For four of the top five ranked individuals, mentors are the most popular (as measured by density) role with supervisors following a close second. For the fifth most influential position, this trend reverses, with supervisors taking the top position and mentors following in second.

The most important titles follow the same trends of Figure 10. Across the five rankings, Directors and Vice Chancellor/President/Provost titles occupy the top two positions, with Director being the top choice for the first, second, and fourth most

influential position. Vice Chancellor/President/Provost is the top choice for the influential person ranked third and fifth.

Table 5

Demographics of alters (in order of importance)

	First	**Second**	**Third**	**Fourth**	**Fifth**
Gender					
Female	69	59	62	52	31
Male	31	38	30	18	23
Race					
African American/Black	56	48	49	40	25
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	1	0	1	1
American Indian/Native American/Indigenous	0	0	1	0	0
Biracial	0	1	1	0	0
Latina/o/x	4	5	3	4	3
Multiracial	1	1	2	0	0
White	39	42	36	26	25
Length of Relationship					
0 to 5 years	12	18	19	13	7
6 to 10 years	28	35	23	18	15
11 to 15 years	26	17	24	15	15
16 to 20 years	12	14	10	13	8
21 to 25 years	9	6	7	5	5
26 or more years	13	8	10	7	4

Role					
Family	10	16	5	2	1
Friend	7	8	10	7	8
Mentor	44	34	29	25	14
Other personal contact	3	2	1	2	2
Professional Colleague	11	15	20	15	6
Sponsor	3	7	4	6	4
Supervisor	24	25	24	14	19
Title					
Administrative Assistant	1	1	1	0	0
Assistant Professor	2	1	1	1	0
Associate Director	4	1	4	2	1
Associate Professor	2	3	2	3	1
Associate Vice Chancellor/President/Provost	12	12	13	7	5
Community Connection	0	1	1	0	1
Director	22	24	14	15	12
Entry-Level Employee	0	1	0	0	0
Family	4	3	3	2	1
Friend	2	2	1	2	1
Mid-Level Employee	2	3	3	1	2
Other	12	11	15	9	12
President (of a system)	1	0	1	1	0
President (of an institution)	4	5	3	7	5
Professor	7	9	8	5	2
Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor	4	4	5	3	1

|					
Vice Chancellor/President/Provost	20	17	18	13	10
Institution Type					
For-profit institution	2	1	0	1	0
Four-year private institution	25	26	24	20	12
Four-year public institution	55	54	54	32	32
Two-year institution	6	5	5	9	3

Research Question #2: Characteristics of Key Relationships

The second research question expands the narratives of the respondents' most influential supporters. The first research question identified mentors and supervisors as the most important roles. Directors and Vice President/Chancellor/Provosts were identified as the most important titles in their networks. The following figures and descriptives add details to the frequency of their interactions, details about how they met their influential supporters, composition of their interactions, and the types of support they receive from their top supporters.

Annually: 129
Less than once a year: 126
Weekly: 131
Monthly: 149
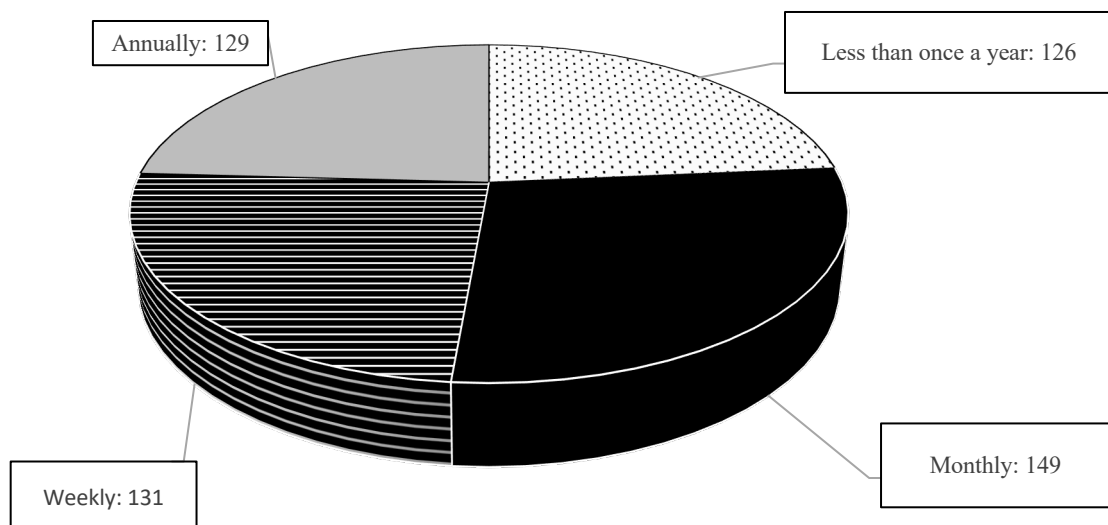
Figure 11

*Overall frequency of contact with alters*

Figure 11 details that egos had a relatively equal pattern of frequency in contacting their alters. The women were in contact with their alters in the following order – monthly (27.9%), weekly (24.5%), annually (24.1%) and less than once a year (23.5%).

Initial Connection to Alters
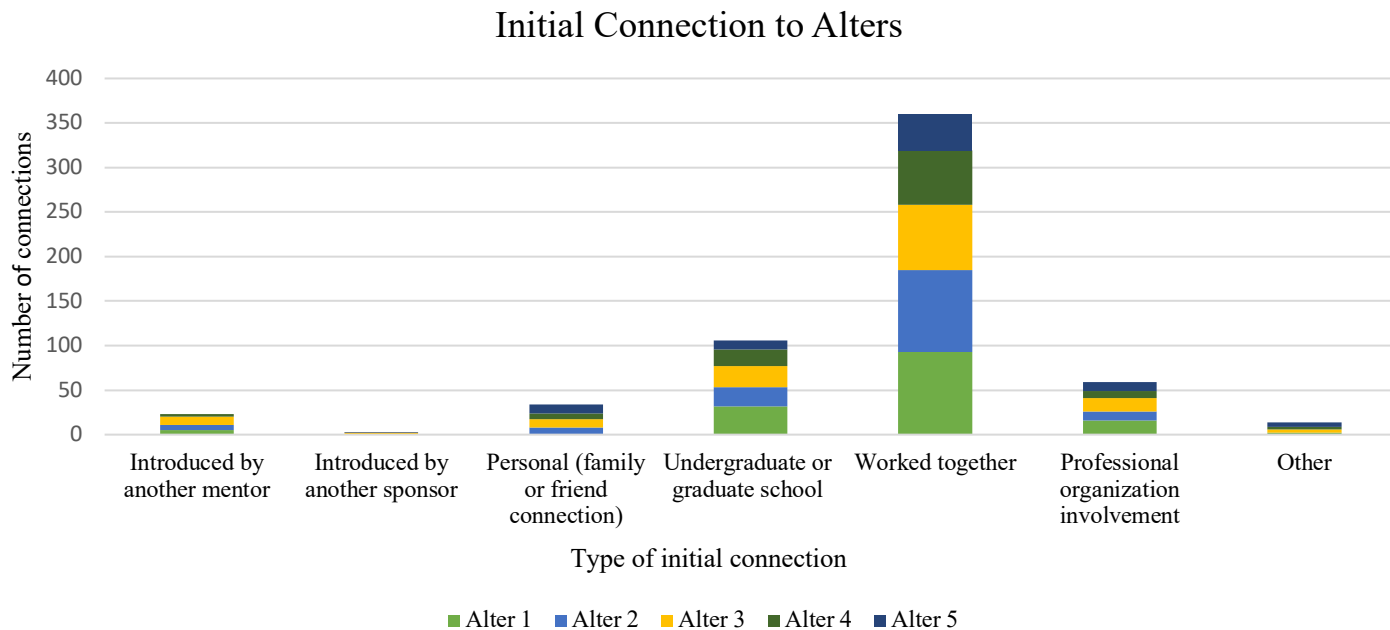
Figure 12

Initial connection to alters

Working together was the top way egos initially connected to their alters. Across all five individuals, 60.1% of the egos first established their relationships working together as colleagues. The second and third initial connections were the only

remaining factors above 6%. Connecting during undergraduate or graduate programs (17.7%) and professional organization involvement (9.8%) rounded out the top three methods of initial connections. In decreasing order, the remaining initial connections were personal – family or friend connection (5.7%), introduced by another mentor (3.8%), other (2.3%), and introduced by another sponsor (0.05%).

Summary of All Alters' Support
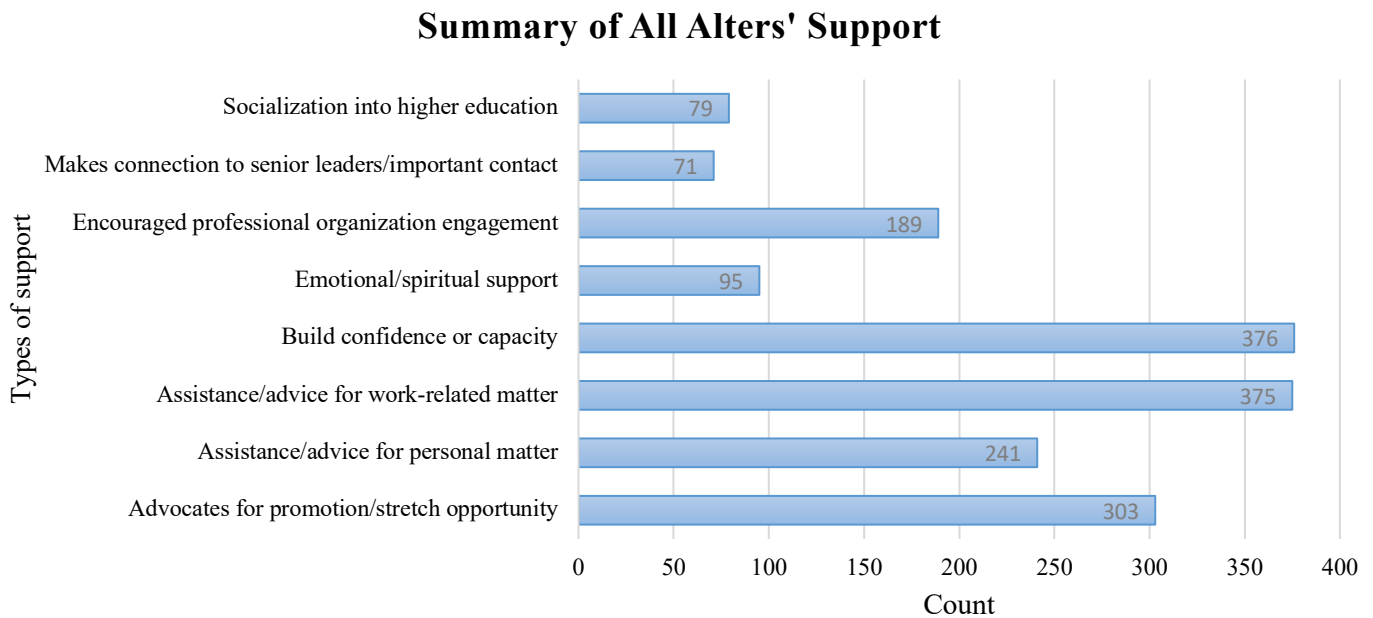
Figure 13

Type of Alters' Support

The research instrument included eight types of support that blended the personal and professional connections between egos and alters. Based upon their interaction with each alter, the African American women selected up to eight of the types of support she received. The top types of support alters offered was building capacity or confidence followed closely by providing assistance/advice for a work-related matter. Advocating for a promotion/stretch opportunity, assistance/advice for a personal matter, and encouraging professional organization engagement rounded out the top five types of support as seen in Figure 13.

94
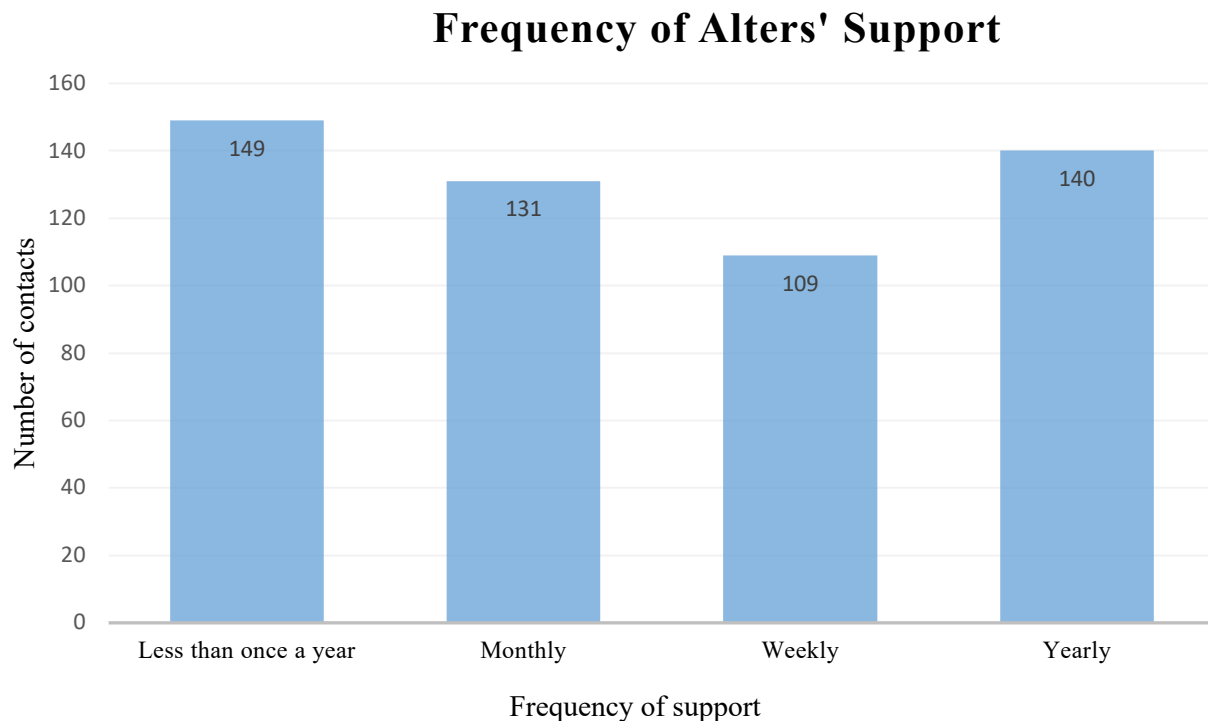
Figure 14

Frequency of Alters' Support

On the whole, egos reached out to their alters on a relatively even pattern for support as each categorical variable represents approximately one-quarter of the trends. Egos received support fairly infrequently. Over half, 54.6%, are supported around once per year. Figure 7 shows that the remaining egos received support on a weekly basis, 20.6%, and on a monthly basis, 24.7%.

Research Question #3: Important Resources

In addition to their influential supporters, African American women senior leaders lean on various support resources for success in their roles. Personal and professional resources such as professional organizations, family support, and community involvement provide additional essential social capital. Table 6 lists the frequency of

interactions between the African American women and their chosen resources. Professional organizations were the most frequent support resource. Person-based resources such as family support, maintaining connections with those she cares about, and friend support provide the next level of support. Her faith/spirituality/religion was the fifth highest count.
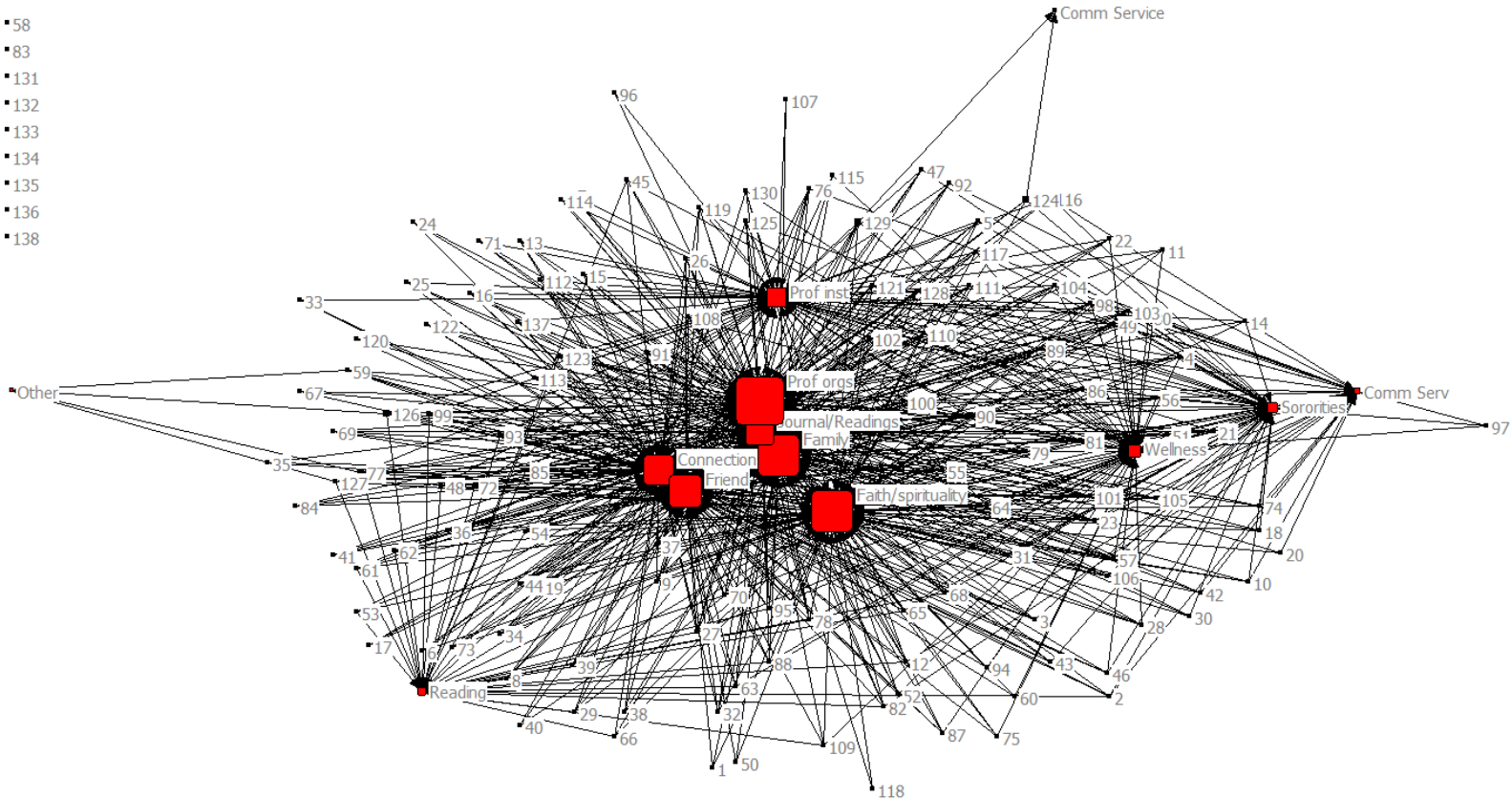
Table 6

Key Supportive Resources

	n	%
Professional organizations	101	12.33
Professional institutes	67	8.18
Sororities, fraternities, civic organizations	43	5.35
Faith/spirituality/religion	94	11.48
Community service	31	3.79
Professional journals/readings	79	9.65
Wellness activities	50	6.11
Family support	99	12.09
Friend support	96	11.72
Maintaining connections with those you care most about	97	11.84
Reading for pleasure	52	6.35
Other	10	1.22
Total	819	100.00

Note: Each respondent was given the opportunity to include up to five resources. The following responses were identified additional resources in the other category: therapy (2), doctoral program (1), gardening (1), mentors(1), mentoring others (1), outlets for creativity (1), networking (1), pets (1) and strategic planning (1).

African American women senior leaders tell a clear story about the resources that have the greatest impact on their success. Figure 15 shows the social capital connected to the most impactful sources. Those resources, in decreasing order of importance, are professional organizations, family support, faith/spirituality/religion, friend support, and maintaining connections with those they care most about. The size of the ego networks confirms the visual representation in Figure 15. Degree measures are 100.00 for professional organizations, 98.00 for family, 93.00 for faith/spirituality/religion, 86.00 for friend support, and 83.00 for maintaining connections for those the women care most about. For context, the least influential resources are reading (33.00), community service (28.00), and other (4.00).

Brokerage helps us to understand the power, influence, and dependency of a specific actor. As a measure of influence in the network, the higher the number, the greater its influence to connected groups. In descending order, the brokerage statistics for resources are 4,950.00 for professional organizations; 4,753.00 for family support; 4,278.00 for faith/spirituality/religion; 3,655.00 for friend support, and 3,4003 for maintaining connections with those they care most about.
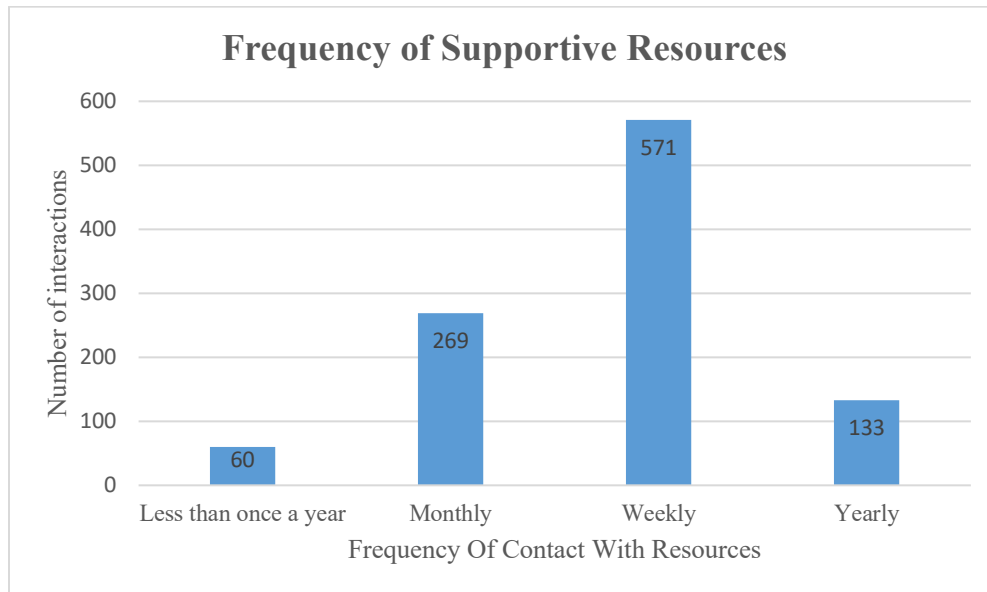
Figure 15

Supportive resources

Table 7 expands this narrative. When asked to rank their most influential resources, almost half of all African American women (43.1%) chose their faith/spirituality/religion as most important. Family support (20.6%) was ranked as the second most influential resource followed by professional organizations (23.4%) and maintaining connections with those they care most (16%). Professional organizations' impact is clear, as it is also ranked as the fifth most important resource with 19.1% of women noting that their professional organization involvement and service added value to her life.

Table 7

Top Five Key Resources (in order of importance as ranked by egos)

	First	**Second**	**Third**	**Fourth**	**Fifth**
Resources					
Professional organizations	7	7	23	14	18
Professional institutes	3	9	2	10	10
Sororities, fraternities, civic organizations	1	3	6	4	6
Faith/spirituality/religion	41	16	7	6	6
Community service	0	2	2	3	5
Professional journal/readings	1	5	8	15	10
Wellness activities	5	4	10	11	8
Family support	21	20	9	1	4
Friend support	9	17	20	16	7
Maintaining connections with those you care most about	7	12	10	19	13
Reading for pleasure	0	2	1	1	7
Other	0	0	0	0	0

African American women engage with their supportive resources very frequently. Over 55% of women interact with the supportive resources on a weekly basis. Monthly interaction adds another 26.0%, for a total of 81% of all interactions happening either weekly or monthly. The more infrequent interactions – yearly and less than once a year – comprise 18.6% or about one fifth of all interactions, as seen in Figure 16.

Figure 16

Frequency Of Contact With Resources

Conclusion

African American women senior leaders in higher education employ social capital in a variety of settings to support their professional and personal aims. Whether identified as a key influential support in their informal or formal network, the women were actively engaged in social capital modalities that included mentors, supervisors, family, and friends on a more irregular basis. Social capital was exchanged between the women and their supporters for a variety of reasons, including building capacity, providing assistance for work contexts, and advocating for a stretch opportunity. When aiming to sustain excellence in their roles, the African American women interacted with essential resources such as faith/spirituality/religion, professional organizations, and family support on a regular basis.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Introduction

African American women senior leaders in higher education often simultaneously occupy contradictory positions. Senior leaders in higher education are homogeneously both White and male.   Therefore, African American women's presence in heterogenous environments is an act of activism, courage, and resilience. The powers of their social networks provide the confidence, encouragement, and social capital to accomplish their professional goals. The networks of African American women represent the wealth of their contributions to higher education. Wealth that open doors for others and holds communities together. Wealth that expands capacity and is currency for generations of other professionals to follow. Wealth that aspires mentees, colleagues, and students to remember they are indeed the dream and the hope of the slave (Angelou, 1978).

The study centers the lived experiences of African American women senior leaders and provides a number of key findings about their lived professional and personal experiences. This final chapter serves as a conclusion to the dissertation by connecting overarching trends to practical applications. After framing key conclusions from each research question, this chapter will close with addressing limitations and identify future research directions and limitations.

Cultural Context

The COVID-19 pandemic provided a moment of reckoning for African American women. As of September 21, 2020, COVID-19 has claimed over 200,000 lives in the United States (Aubrey, 2020). Specifically, Africans Americans are disproportionately impacted. NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro highlights a number of possibilities for the disparity between African Americans and other races including higher rates of living in dense communities, increased use of public transportation, greater exposure to

pollution, and over-representation in prisons and nursing homes (National Public Radio (NPR), 2020). As a result, African Americans are hospitalized at rates four and a half times higher than their White peers and die at at least twice the rate (NPR, 2020).

At the same time, 8 minutes and 46 seconds changed our American landscape. The May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd at the hands of four Minneapolis, Minnesota police officers raised a critical cultural consciousness in the United States and across the world (Hill et al., 2020). Witness videos emerged of officer Derek Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck for the last 8 minutes and 46 seconds of Floyd's life as a result of a claim that Floyd allegedly used a counterfeit $20 bill to purchase cigarettes (Hill et al., 2020). The disregard for Floyd's humanity, along with the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and Rashard Brooks during the summer of 2020, heightened the tension experienced in African American communities. CBS News (2020) found that 164 Black people were killed at the hands of police in the first eight months of 2020. It was a constant reminder that our lives could end for a number of reasons including COVID-19, sleeping in our homes, or jogging through a neighborhood.

African American women cannot separate their racial and professional identities. The weight of leading higher education institutions while also shouldering the weight of being African American during a global and racial pandemic can be draining. Senior leaders are tasked with creating plans and making impactful decisions on how and when campuses reopen. Moreover, African American women are often disproportionately present in roles lower in the organizational strata that are often deemed essential, thereby mandating that they must come to campus in contrast to those who can fully work remotely. The stress of working increased loads while maintaining their well-being is a taxing endeavor.

This cultural context frames the experiences of the African American women senior leaders during the data collection phase in the summer of 2020. In this complex and challenging environment, support through various forms of social capital means even more. In addition, the pandemic reinforced the importance of prioritizing connections to one another, emphasizing our connection to causes that matter, and

being connected to something greater than ourselves. Leaning on the activist dimension of Critical Race Theory, this cultural context is a painful reminder that there is still much work to do to truly accomplish racial equity.

The data revealed a number of trends about how social capital impacts the experiences of African American women senior-level administrators in higher education. When measuring the most important roles in their informal and formal networks, mentors and supervisors were most evident. Of interest, their networks were largely homophilious, meaning other African Americans were overrepresented compared to all other races. While disappointing that there were not more White males in their networks, the literature was clear that homogenous networks are to be expected (Fossett & Kielcolt, 1989; Grant, 2012; Hoffman, 1985; Mehra et al., 1998). Overall, their communication patterns with their most influential supporters were fairly infrequent, with almost half communicating less frequently than once a year.

When studying the resources available to them, professional organizations, family support, friend support, faith/spirituality/religion, and maintaining connection with those they cared most about were the top five sources of support for their success in the role when using the SNA degree centrality measure. When studying influence, faith/spirituality/religion was the most influential in their success. On the whole, African American women had more frequent, regular interaction with their supportive resources than their influential supporters.

Mentorship Is Essential

Using the SNA degree centrality measure, the study identified mentors as the most influential support. Moreover, of the 195 alters identified as mentors, 120 are African American. Specifically, 91 of the 120 African Americans ego mentors are African American women, forming a fairly homogenous community. For each of the top five influential supporters, around 50% were African American and over 50% were women. This trend continues across all five alters.

The literature is clear that there is a paucity of African American women leaders in the pipeline for senior-level leadership positions in higher education (Townsend, 2020; Wolfe & Dilworth, 2016). African American women are leaving higher education for a variety of reasons including the lack of institutional support (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2016), lack of mentoring (Pratt-Clarke & Maes, 2017), and frequent isolation. Mentoring is cited as one of the key vehicles to create support networks and form deeper, more intentional connections (Beckwith et al., 2011). Irby (2014) squarely states that "mentoring that is not culturally responsive to the experiences of historically underrepresented people in the academy, including women of colour, can be destructive" (p. 265).

This finding supports key tenets of Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model that posits that one key aspect of transmitting cultural capital is that communities of color tend to give this information back to their communities. Yosso's (2005) social capital, in juxtaposition to Bourdieu's (1977), acknowledges peer and other social contacts as fundamental support to thrive in society's inequitable institutions. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model highlights multiplicity and emphasizes the need for resources and community to challenge the binds of racism and sexism. This type of communal social capital is essential for African American women, as their lack of representation within the academy is pervasive; the system is created and maintained for the benefit of White males and existing networks seldom challenge it.

Mentorship for African American women has contemporary applications outside of higher education. In September 2020, former First Lady Michelle Obama dedicated two podcasts on her popular Spotify channel to the power of mentorship, particularly for Black women being mentored by other Black women. Specifically, she highlights the importance of mentors serving as possibility models. When describing her mentor Valerie Jarett, Obama extols "Watching you be one of the younger, often only women, oftentimes the only Black person, at a table full of, CEOs, and bank heads, and community leaders, was probably the most powerful thing I could see" (Euceph, p.5, 2020). Former First Lady Obama reflects on the importance of mentoring at various

phases of life: "…formal consistent mentoring can change the trajectory of a child's life. We've seen it again and again and again, even if they don't end up in a certain place, it changes the fabric of who, how they see themselves" (Euceph, p. 14, 2000).

The burden of creating inclusive, heterogenous communities in the workplace should not fall squarely on the shoulders of African American women. It is the duty of the entire higher education enterprise, specifically its While male leaders, to make significant strides towards racial equity in hiring given their influence in key leadership positions. This study suggests that homosociability is present in the sample. A reproductive model that creates an expected pattern of candidates, homosociability produces selection of those who are replicates of the decision makers (Blackmore, 2006). In higher education, homosociability generates monolithic archetypes of White male senior leaders.

Given their current overrepresentation in higher education leadership, the researcher hypothesized that the formal social networks would be more heavily comprised of White males who currently hold the senior level positions. White male senior leaders possess the social capital and decision-making power for those looking to gain access to senior leadership roles. Their absence in the respondents' network, at 11.3% of all mentors, confirms their ability to retain their social capital – and its access to unlocking opportunities for minoritized populations – held firmly for the benefit for those who look like them.

Role of Informal and Formal Networks

The findings clearly noted the importance of both informal and formal networks. Formal networks were more important for reaching their professional goals, compared to informal networks being more important for maintaining success in their roles. As the African American women worked to combat the systemic barriers to gain access to their roles, they were more likely to connect with alters in their formal, or professional, networks. Directors and Vice Presidents were the most central titles for the alters in the sample's formal and informal networks. Given that 56.1% of the egos identified as

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Directors, the Vice Chancellor/President/Provost roles provide aspirational capital, as included in Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth (2005) model. Aspirational capital provides the opportunity for communities of color to remain hopeful and have dreams for the future in spite of barriers and conflict (Yosso, 2005). Having established relationships with other leaders, specifically African American women, inserts hope in difficult environments and joy in finding a brighter tomorrow. Directors as the second most centralized title serves as a reminder of the importance of supporting and retaining peers of color, specifically African Americans. In this exchange of social capital, the African American women currently holding Director titles are leaning upon one another across functional areas and fields. This exchange of social capital fortifies the wealth embedded in their network. Given the dominant presence of racially heterogenous communities, it is clear that these women are seeking homogeneity when they are seeking places of refuge and support (Cutrona & Suhr, 1992).

The researcher hypothesized that mentors and sponsors would be the most central roles in the formal and informal networks of African American women senior leaders in our sample. Moreover, the researcher hypothesized that the mentors and sponsors would include more White men, as they have a disproportionate amount of access and social capital to open and close opportunities for potential senior leaders. This did not bear true in this study. For each of the top five influential supporters, African American women outnumbered White men both in number and proportion. Lack of access to sponsors – and the high octane advocacy they provide – is problematic and remains a barrier for women in the sample for further advancement and is another powerful reminder of the women who will never reach senior level leadership due to the lack of social capital in their respective networks.

In my study, formal networks were more important than informal networks. Informal networks are voluntary and can include friends, family, and community connections (Tichy, 1981). Conversely, formal networks are connected to professional and educational capacities (Tichy, 1981). The relative impacts of informal and formal networks emerged when women were asked to rank their most influential roles. When

studying the networks access for their professional success, the top three most important roles were mentor, supervisor, and professional colleague – all tied to their professional identities. The presence of mentors and supervisors as most important are not surprising given that 60% of the egos met their alters when working together. This finding reiterates the importance of actively cultivating inclusive work cultures where everyone has equal access to social capital and advancement opportunities. Their support connects mostly to their formal work duties (building confidence, assisting with work matters, and advocating for a stretch position).

Notably, sponsors were notably absent in their formal networks, sitting in the sixth place of most popular roles. Sponsors' access to more powerful social networks thereby serves as a cosigner that African American women are prepared for these roles and without it senior leadership level in higher education remains monolithic – either White or male and many times both. Even more the disproportionate racial trends in my study reflects the literature's patterns of people who occupy sponsor roles. A high-octane advocate for professional opportunities (Hewlett, 2013), sponsors engage their social capital to bolster someone else's professional opportunities. Given the overrepresentation of White men in executive leadership in our country, Hewlett (2013) even identified women and people of color as key and needed beneficiaries of sponsorship. This study confirmed there is still much work to be done as both sponsors and White men are not represented at high rates. The study's alters were more likely to be of color and oftentimes, African American women, meaning they are both managing the heaviness of maintaining their individual excellence in their roles and supporting those who look like them. The absence of White people in the findings – and particularly White sponsors – is clear and represents an opportunity for White allies to be strategic to lift the voices of African American women in their networks.

Informal network roles – friend and family – were fourth and fifth when asked to identify their top five most influential roles. While the impact of their informal network was not as prevalent in their top five supporters, it was identified as an important resource that led to success in their role. Of note, compared to the infrequent interaction

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with their top five supporters, the African American women connected more frequently with their resources. Furthermore, personal-related connections were three of the top five resources. Using the SNA degree centrality measure, family support, friend support, and maintaining connections with those they care most about were second, fourth, and fifth. Catalyst (2006) identified that women of color tend to use one of two strategies to engage in professional settings: blending in or sticking together. In my study, the composition of other African Americans in their networks confirm that they utilized sticking together as a method to establish and maintain relationships. Sticking together can limit their access to social networks with heterogenous groups but does identify the need to connect with other women of color for support when navigating chilly environments. The study supports another Catalyst (2006) point – lower percentages of White members in the African American women networks. Catalyst (2006) found that 65% of African American women's networks were made up of other African Americans compared to 29% of Whites. Of all of the alters in my study, 52% identified as African American and 40% identified as White.

African American women remain underrepresented in senior-level positions. For example, Gagliaradi et al. (2017) highlighted that women of color are only 5.1% of all Presidents. The same report found that White men are 58.1% of all Presidents (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). When one considers that the women of color labeling includes women of all minoritized ethnic groups such as African American, Latina, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Indigenous people and yet only account for one in 20 of those who hold the position while White men account for almost six in 10, the stark contrast is another reminder of the realities of the absence of women of color in the highest ranks. Thus, the sample network's homogeneity serves as a professional and ethical challenge to majority populations, namely White men. This challenge calls upon White men to access their campus climate and be ready to respond to what they find. This challenge calls upon White men to listen to the voices of people of color about ways to make their campuses more inclusive. This challenge calls upon White men to problematize individualistic approaches to tenure, promotion, and evaluations. This challenge calls

upon White men to re-evaluate the standards of excellence that are rooted in White supremacy and paternalism and move toward more collectivistic approaches. This challenge calls upon White men to invest in the talent of underrepresented populations and actively look to prepare them for positions of increased responsibility, which includes providing an equitable wage and benefits when they earn the promotion.

Recruiting diverse talent must be an intentional, deliberate strategy and not one left up to chance. In addition to mentorship, Lawson-Borders and Permutter (2020) offer a list of best practices to recruit diverse faculty situated within an inclusive culture. When making these types of commitments, White male senior leaders are sending a clear message that they are actively engaged in broadening access and improving retention for diverse staff.

Lawson-Borders and Permutter (2020) outline practical steps such as building an inclusive brand ahead of time, widening assumptions about qualifications, redefining fit, and laying out the path for long-term success. Shifting the culture and intentionally encouraging diverse voices increases the probability for interaction between racially heterogenous populations. The recruitment process for senior-level leaders is key, as it provides opportunities for candidates to interact with those who can serve as supervisors and possibly mentors, the top two alters' roles in our survey. Again, working in a professional setting together is the top connection point for the participants with their most influential alters. Creating more inclusive work environments is one strategy to improve interactions between White male senior leaders and African American women.

Composition of Support

With mentors and supervisors serving as the most important roles in the formal and informal social networks of African American women's networks, the composition and experiences of their support continues to tell this important story. Building confidence and capacity was the top type of support closely followed by providing assistance/advice for work-related matters. Advocating for promotion/stretch

opportunities, providing assistance/advice for personal matters, and encouraging professional organization engagement round out the top five types of support.

Dr. Lori White, recently appointed as the 21st President of DePauw University on July 1, 2020, shared the importance of mentoring in her career (Johnson & Kindle, 2016). She is first woman and the first person of color to serve in this role and the only African American woman leading a higher education institution in Indiana (DePauw University, 2020). Dr. White's mentors not only built her confidence but also advocated for her stretching for the next opportunity:

> sometimes mentors will tell you it's time to take the step up and are invested in helping you get there. When you do outstanding work where you are, people will reward you for your good work. It's all right to be mindful of 'shining' for the great work that you do, but you also need to be intentional with your supervisors and mentors about identifying experiences that will assist you in reaching that next level. (Johnson & Kindle, p. 183, 2016)

Their connections to each other were embedded in key formal higher education networks—work setting, educational setting, and professional organizations. Given that all of the women currently work within higher education, it may not be surprising that over 87% of the women are initially connected to these centers of social capital. Professionally, these spaces provide formal ongoing interactions with a wide range of potential alters including students, faculty members, colleagues, and supervisors. The overwhelming presence of these three factors underscores the importance of creating safe, inclusive environments across the higher education environment. Affirming messages that she belongs begins as early as her first days in her undergraduate and graduate career. Retained, she then moves to a career in higher education and then transitions her service into professional organizations. By furthering the potential and inclusivity of her curricular experience, her professional experience, and her service to the profession, she serves as a possibility model for more junior professionals.

Even more so, these key networks reinforce the need for counterspaces that serve to disrupt the damaging messages African American women regularly receive in

higher education. Case & Hunter's (2012) counterspaces framework challenge deficit-oriented societal narratives concerning marginalized identities. Counterspaces can take various forms such as Black Faculty/Staff Associations, Sister Circles, or the informal meeting before or after the formal meeting to ensure that her fellow sister feels heard or supported. Research reminds us of the power of homogenous communities for African American women leaders. Howard et al. (2016) found that personalized spaces held specifically for Black women's were often coping mechanisms. University administration should be thoughtful to support and bolster these types of communities. Financial and political support from the highest levels of university administration signal that people of color belong and are appreciated. Intentional recruitment and retention efforts not only support the faculty and staff communities of color, it also sends a clear message to diverse student populations.

Inclusive work environments are essential. For this sample, working together was the initial connection point for the overwhelming majority (60.1%). This statistic underscores the impact of one's working environment on their trajectory. Additionally, institutional departments can create strategic structures to increase interaction between co-workers such as committees, taskforces, and workgroups. These formal structures are not an exhaustive list but these types can lead to more ongoing informal network connections.

The sample's pattern of interaction expands on the story. About half of the egos connected with their alters at least monthly, with the other half contacting their alters annually or less than once a year. This even distribution is surprising. Mentors and supervisors are evenly distributed amongst the frequency categories signaling that these titles are static across the life of a professional and not bound by time.

Resources for Success

The most popular resource, professional organizations, is a key vehicle for professionals to extend their skill set. Hernandez (2016) acknowledges the professional development offered through professional organizations provides educational

experiences and opportunities for senior-level staff to publish. When reviewing the various benefits of professional organization engagement, providing community permeates many of the positive outcomes (Hernandez, 2016). Professional organizations were also the second most frequent initial connection for egos to alters.

When asked to rank their most influential resources for success in their role, the African American women senior leaders identified faith as the top resource. Reeves (2018) defines spirituality as "a connection with God or a higher being" (p. 91). This connection can provide perspective during challenging situations and an assurance that a positive outcome is possible. This assurance is even more important given the perils of experiencing both racism and sexism. One respondent confidently added,

> the peace that you get from knowing that no matter where this is going, there's something more important than all of this. The belief that there is someone looking out for you. If I focus on looking out for Him and then if I listened to that guidance and follow that, no matter what it's going to be all right, (Reeves, 2018, p. 140)

Piña (2016) centers spiritual principles as a foundation "for reacting to serious events in your personal and professional life" that provides a basis for managing stress (p. 151). Spirituality is a complex domain and can show up differently for many women. Pina (2016) offers suggestions such as participating in religious services, spending time in nature, or meditation as possibilities for finding one's center in the midst of stress. In addition to serving as a coping mechanism (Banks-Wallace & Parks, 2009; Patitu & Hinton, 2003), a place for praise, and a place of worship, Reeves (2018) adds that communities of faith provide opportunities for connection, a sense of belonging, and leadership.

Family support was another significant support resource for the African American women in my sample. The second most highly ranked resource, loved ones offer additional encouragement and a steadying force amongst the pressures of leading in the midst of uncertainty, societal pressures, chilly spaces, and isolation. Reeves (2018)

added family support "pushed the participants to think beyond the typical boundaries and labels that had been inherently established. The supporters elevated these women to think bigger, and those individuals within that support system elevated the women's confidence in themselves" (p. 113). Reeves (2018) continues that family support provides a much-needed outlet for work-life balance. Family members were integral to navigating the highs and lows, offering the laughs, words of affirmation, and when needed, that boost of confidence to take the bold next steps at work.

The researcher hypothesized that professional organizations, faith/spirituality/religion, and professional institutes would be the most central resources that positively impacted respondents' success. The study clearly confirmed the role of professional organizations in both how egos connected to their most influential alters but also given the SNA degree centrality measure in resources. Faith/spirituality/religion's place as the highest-ranked resource – and the frequency of its access to capital – was more significant that the researcher anticipated. Given the researcher's geographic location in the South, it is assumed that the heightened presence of Christianity in the 'Bible Belt' impacted this finding. Professional institutes accounted for just 8% of all resources chosen. Given their selective nature and focus on fostering sustainable, long-standing social capital patterns, the researcher was surprised that this was not more heavily represented in the results.

Limitations

The complexity of COVID-19 posed a number of challenges. The survey instrument was launched in July 2020. This summer was abnormally busy as campus leaders rushed to create and implement strategies for a safe return to campuses for students, staff, and faculty. This hectic time forced many leaders to grapple with personal and professional stressors while juggling existing professional responsibilities. With this information, the researcher is confident that the final number of respondents may have been higher in overall number and representation across higher positions if the prospective sample did not have these types of competing priorities.

Additionally, the findings may have limited generalizability. First, the survey included only African American women. Members of two minoritized populations – African American and women – their experiences within the American context are unique. The study's findings may have limited generalizability to other racial and ethnic demographics. In addition, the quantitative approach employed in this study (social network analysis) does not tell the full story. Further research is needed to complement the statistical analyses with more context that provides greater detail.

The researcher's use of snowball sampling introduced another limitation. Lindauer (2018) warns that there are limitations with using a snowball method. This technique cannot guarantee that the researcher will reach every member of this population. At the time of the survey, the researcher could not identify a singular, unbiased source of information with the names, titles, and contact information for all of the African American women senior leaders in American higher education. To optimize objectivity and broaden the instrument's reach, the researcher did request and receive a list of women who met the survey's criteria from NASPA, which is the largest Student Affairs professional organization in the world. However, the majority of responses resulted from the snowball method, likely due to the social capital between the researcher and her list of initial shared contacts.

Committing to Our Professional Future

Higher education possesses a great deal of unrealized potential. The lack of representation of diverse populations – namely African American women – is a structural epidemic caused by over three centuries of intentional structures that rewarded White supremacy and paternalistic ways of being. The women in the study and their narratives tell of the hope we must have moving forward. The hope towards equity. The hope of forgiveness and reconciliation. The hope of true unity. That hope is not easily actualized.

The level of homophily in this study is another reminder that homosociability is real, though often veiled. Chapter One opened with vivid statistics of

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underrepresentation of African American women at the highest levels. Social capital is shared in networks that exclude people of color. Simply put, the college Presidency is 83% White (Gagliardi et al., 2017). Without this social capital, the glass ceiling will not be broken. Gagliardi et al. (2017) predicts that, at our current rate, it will take until 2050 for African Americans to reach racial parity in the college presidency.

Making significant impacts on the pipeline to senior level positions will include the entire higher education enterprise. As noted earlier in Chapter One, African American women receive messages of whether or not they belong the first day they step on our campuses --- decades before they apply for a senior-level professional position. Inclusion and equity must be our ethos as we shift from focusing on what is most important for the individual to what is most important for the institution and generations to follow. This looks like investing in bias training for all employees and connecting multicultural competence to performance evaluations. This looks like having regular audits to study the racial and ethnic compositions of positions and creating measured plans to shift their parities. This looks like normalizing mentorship and sponsorship through a variety of modalities including formal professional institutes, apprenticeships on campus, and encouraging advanced education. This looks like supporting research that studies diverse populations.

Future Research

This study was one of the first to employ a quantitative approach to study the experiences of African American women who currently hold senior-level positions in higher education. Of the literature reviewed, similar studies were consistently qualitative with a small sample size of less than 10. This study can be reproduced within larger populations of African American women senior leaders through social capital vehicles such as professional institutes, racially-centered professional organization subcommunities, and sororities to see if the trends hold.

The study provided a number of key findings but there are a number of recommendations for future research, including expanding the study's framework to

emerging applications. The current study included administrators in Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Athletics, Advancement, Marketing, Human Resources, and Diversity and Inclusion. Townsend (2020) highlighted the lack of support for African American women in the Student Affairs administration as a key contributor for attrition. Future research could further differentiate a sample based upon particular functional areas to look for trends of social capital employed for the most influential supporters and the resources employed for success.

This study is one of the first that examined the behavior of African American women senior leaders in higher education using social network analysis, namely ego-nets. Social network analysis has a myriad of applications to the experiences of African American women in higher education. Yosso (2005) reminds us of the power of connections and cultural wealth embedded in networks. Social network analysis allows for a deeper understanding of the composition of networks, which can have significant impacts on the experiences of African American women senior leaders. The literature will benefit from additional research with larger samples, targeting specific titles/roles, and looking at specific subpopulations. Future SNA research may include looking at the experiences of African American women senior leaders in certain professional institutes, within specific professional organizations, sororities, certain graduate programs, etc. As these narratives unfold, patterns of social capital will emerge and push the literature base to be more inclusive and malleable to the lived experiences of African American women senior leaders in higher education.

In addition to replicating this study based on functional areas, future research could also study these trends by institutional types. This study categorized institution type based on their designation as a two or four-year and a private/public/for-profit institution. This can be expanded to study one of these types or also study the experiences based upon research classifications, populations served, or locations. Research suggests that African American women at predominately White institutions (PWIs) face particularly chilly climates due to microaggressions, normalized racism, and being overworked (Townsend, 2000). Pizarro & Kohli (2018) add Black administrators

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experience shorter tenures at PWIs due to consistent discrimination and microaggressions. Patterns of social capital may emerge based upon the experiences that African American women senior leaders face based upon a number of institutional factors.

Future research could expand this study into a qualitative framework and learn more about the quality of their interactions. Working together was the top initial connection point for the women leaders and their supporters. This study did not go into depth to learn more about which types of experiences were most impactful and led to the establishment of their ongoing relationships. Additional research can provide more detail about the types of shared experiences that deepened their connections while working together and that work to maintain those connections in present day. When provided with the opportunity provide additional feedback at the end of the instrument, five of the survey respondents noted that a few of their most influential supporters had passed. This underscores the importance of the mentors' connections.

Study the role of professional organizations – where are women involved (knowledge communities, leadership etc.). West (2018) studied the role of the African American Women's Summit, a full-day, pre-conference workshop during the NASPA Annual Conference. Dating back to 2004, the African American Women's Summit has provided invaluable opportunities to connect with other African American women including culturally intentional curricula, emotional support, and cultural homogeneity (West, 2018). Given the depth of the support during this transformative experience, African American women leave with more empathy, are inspired by hearing the stories of other women who look like them, and expand their social networks in advance of future needs. With this wealth, women are better equipped to handle the oppression they may face on their campus due to the problematic experiences caused by both racism and sexism.

Given the finding of racial homogenous communities, it would be interesting to replicate this study with other populations, namely African American men who are senior-level administrators in higher education. Even with lower patterns of educational

attainment that is often a prerequisite for senior-level administrators, African American men are more likely to be a college President or tenured faculty member (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). In 2017, the American College President Study found that African American males comprised 66% of African American Presidents compared to 33.9% of women (Gagliaradi et al., 2017). Given their increased access to these roles, their social capital patterns should include higher proportions of men and possibly more White males as they are also overrepresented in senior roles.

Conclusion

This study reinforces social capital as a critical need for African American women leaders in higher education. Expanding social capital through formal and informal networks not only provides access to senior-level positions but it also provides the necessary resources to be retained and thrive in their careers. Minda Harts (2019), author of *The Memo: What Women of Color Need to Know to Secure a Seat At the Table,* beckons Black women to build social capital by securing a Top 8 or an intentional set of supporters who fulfill various roles. Harts (2019) encourages Black women to prioritize building social capital by intentionally investing in relationships with peers, mentors, and sponsors. The Top 8 is built over time and considers all of the types of support Black women will need, ranging from sharing access to professional organizations to providing professional advice to advocating for stretch opportunities.

African American women senior leaders are resilient and lean on their social networks for access to the social capital for thriving, surviving, and aspiring to reach their professional and personal goals. In the face of heterogeneity and sometimes contentious spaces, racially homogenous environments create counterspaces that affirm their worth, capacity, and potential. Their robust social networks provide wealth that is shared and passed along through their networks. This wealth knows no bounds. Four of the respondents even noted the power of their supporters who have died. Their loyalty and indebtedness to the legacy of their beloved mentor was clear. Our access to senior-level leadership positions is a delicate balance of being appreciative of the

sacrifices of those who have gone before us, being present to maximize on the capital of our current colleagues, and being altruistic to prepare the next generation of leaders to follow.

Inspired by the late Dr. Maya Angelou, I end with a reflection and poem patterned after her famous work, Still I Rise (1978):

> *The only one in the room that looks like me*
> *Creating spaces and capacity for the next she who thinks she could be*
> *Stronger together, we stand by her side*
> *Leading higher education - working to shift the tide*
> *We hold the deposit that our ancestors paid*
> *Investing in others for innumerable days and so*
> *We rise*
> *We rise*
> *We rise.*

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APPENDIX A: Professional Institutes for Minoritized Populations

APPENDIX A

Professional Institutes for Minoritized Populations

This list is not exhaustive but is intended to provide a sampling of professional development opportunities offered by leading professional organizations and entities.

- **North Carolina's BRIDGES Institute:** Aimed at women who are employed at four-year institutions across North Carolina, this professional development experience builds confidence in women's leadership, develops a deeper understanding of higher education, and create a professional development plan to benefit their professional development and their institutions.
    - Website: https://fridaycenter.unc.edu/friday-center-home/professional-education/bridges/
- **NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education**
    - Alice Manicur Symposium: This biannual symposium engages middle management student affairs professionals identifying as a woman or those outside of the gender binary considering a move to the Vice President of Student Affairs.
        - Website: https://www.naspa.org/events/naspa-alice-manicur-symposium1
    - Ujima Institute: For African American and Black higher education professionals, this institute serves emerging leaders who aspire for cabinet-level positions and faculty roles to develop culturally relevant leadership skills.
        - Website: https://www.naspa.org/events/ujima-institute

- **American Association of Blacks in Higher Education**
  - o Leadership and Mentoring Institute – An annual institute that prepares American Associate of Blacks in Higher Education members and other African Americans prepare for senior administrative and tenured faculty positions.
  - o Website - http://lmiexperience.org/

- **American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)**
  - o Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership – A partnership between the Presidents' Round Table of African-American CEOs of Community Colleges and the American Association of Community Colleges, this experience recruits community college leaders with at least five years of senior-level experience who are interested in becoming a chief executive officer of a community college.
    - ▪ Website: http://www.ncbaa-national.org/leadership-programs/lakin-institute-for-mentored-leadership/

- **Women's Leadership Institute:** Considered a premier program for women leaders in higher education, this program sharpens their ability to understand campus culture, to create new personal networks, and to adapt their leadership skills in a changing environment.
  - o Website: https://www.acui.org/wli

- **American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE)**
  - o New Leadership Academy Fellows Program: Designed for a senior faculty member or administrative leader, this professional development experience centers a demographic and democratic

foundation that is responsive to higher education's changing landscape.

- Website: https://www.aahhe.org/leadershipacademy/ela.aspx

APPENDIX B: Research Tool

APPENDIX B

Research Tool

Social Capital & Advancement of AAW Senior Leaders

Q70

Research Consent Summary

Dissertation Title: Still I Rise: Social Capital and Its Role in the Advancement of African American Women Senior Leaders in Higher Education

Principal Investigators: Laura Gonzalez, Ph.D., Dissertation Committee Chair | lmgonza2@uncg.edu

Coretta Roseboro Walker, Ph.D. Candidate | crwalke5@uncg.edu

The purpose of this research study is to learn more about social capital's impact on the advancement of African American women who are employed in senior level positions in higher education institutions. You are being asked to participate in this study because you meet three criteria - 1) someone who identifies as African American/Black, 2) someone who identifies as a woman, and 3) someone who currently holds a professional position at the Director level or above.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a short online survey that should take around 15 minutes to complete.

Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential. To protect your identity as a research subject, we will not collect your name or other identifying information.

There are minimal risks associated with this study. There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. Respondents may elect to be entered into a drawing for giftcards or a donation to the Zenobia L. Hikes Award hosted by the NASPA Foundation. If you have any concerns about your rights or concerns, please contact the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG at 1(855) 251-2351.

 If you would like to discuss this research, please e-mail Coretta Roseboro Walker at crwalke5@uncg.edu.

 By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

○ I consent, begin the study (1)

○ I do not consent, I do not wish to participate (2)

End of Block: Informed Consent

Q1 What is your gender?

○ Male (9)

○ Female (10)

○ Transgender (11)

○ Prefer not to respond (12)

Q2 What is your race/ethnicity? *Choose all that apply.*

☐ African American/Black (1)

☐ Latina/o/x (2)

☐ Asian/Pacific Islander (3)

☐ American Indian/Native American/Indigenous (4)

☐ White (5)

☐ Multiracial (6)

☐ Bi-racial (7)

☐ Not listed here (8)

_____

Q3 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

○ High school diploma (1)

○ Bachelor's degree (2)

○ Masters degree (3)

○ MBA (8)

○ Doctorate degree (4)

○ JD: Professional degree (5)

○ MD: Professional degree (6)

○ Not listed here (7) _____

Q4 How long have you worked in higher education (please round up to the nearest year)?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q6 What is your current title?

○ Director (1)

○ Dean (2)

○ Assistant Vice President/Chancellor/Provost (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor/Provost (4)

○ Vice President/Chancellor/Provost (5)

○ Provost (6)

○ Executive Vice President/Chancellor/Provost (7)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (8)

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (9)

○ Not listed here: (10)
_____

Q40 Your current institution type:

○ Two-year institution (2)

○ Four-year public institution (3)

○ Four-year private institution (4)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (5)

Q7 Which category best describes your current position?

○ Student Affairs administrator (1)

○ Academic Affairs administrator (2)

○ Other (3) _____

Q8 How many years have you served in your current position?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q9 Is this your first senior level position (senior level being defined here as the Director level or above)?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q10 If no, how many other senior level positions in higher education have you held during your career?

○ One (1)

○ Two (2)

○ Three (3)

○ Four (4)

○ Five or more (5)

End of Block: Higher Education Professional Experience

Q16 Please identify yourself with a chosen set of initials.

_____

- -

Q17 Please identify up to five individuals who have been most influential in your higher education career advancement and their demographic information. (Choose initials that will be used throughout the rest of the survey)

☐   Individual #1   (6)
_____

☐   Individual #2   (7)
_____

☐   Individual #3   (8)
_____

☐   Individual #4   (9)
_____

☐   Individual #5   (10)
_____

- -

Q18 For the next set of questions, please provide more information about each of your five most influential individuals.

Q25 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}'s sex:

☐   Male (2)

☐   Female (10)

☐   Transgender (11)

☐   Not listed above: (12)

_____

Q36 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}'s race:

○ African American/Black (1)

○ Latina/o/x (2)

○ White (3)

○ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

○ American Indian/Native American (5)

○ Multiracial (6)

○ Bi-racial (7)

○ Not listed here: (8) _____

Q37 How long have you known ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q38 How would you describe ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}'s role in your life?

○ Mentor (1)

○ Sponsor (2)

○ Professional Colleague (3)

○ Supervisor (4)

○ Friend (5)

○ Family (6)

○ Other Personal Contact (7)

_____

Q39 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}'s title:

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (1)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (2)

○ Provost/Executive Vice President or Chancellor (5)

○ Vice President/Vice Chancellor (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor (4)

○ Director (6)

○ Associate Director (7)

○ Professor (8)

○ Associate Professor (9)

○ Assistant Professor (10)

○ Entry Level Staff Member (0 to 5 years) (11)

○ Mid Level Staff Member (More than 5 years) (12)

○ Administrative Staff (13)

○ Family (15)

○ Friend (16)

○ Community Connection (17)

○ Other (14) _____

- -

Q41 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6}'s institution type:

Two-year institution (1)

○ Four-year public institution (2)

○ Four-year private institution (3)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (4)

○ Not applicable (5)

Q46 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}'s sex:

☐ Male (2)

☐ Female (10)

☐ Transgender (11)

☐ Not listed above: (12)

_____

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Q47 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}'s race:

○ African American/Black (1)

○ Latina/o/x (2)

○ White (3)

○ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

○ American Indian/Native American (5)

○ Multiracial (6)

○ Bi-racial (7)

○ Not listed here: (8) _____

Q48 How long have you known ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q49 How would you describe ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}'s role in your life?

○ Mentor (1)

○ Sponsor (2)

○ Professional Colleague (3)

○ Supervisor (4)

○ Friend (5)

○ Family (6)

○ Other Personal Contact (7)

_____

- -

Q50 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}'s title:

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (1)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (2)

○ Provost/Executive Vice President or Chancellor (5)

○ Vice President/Vice Chancellor (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor (4)

○ Director (6)

○ Associate Director (7)

○ Professor (8)

○ Associate Professor (9)

○ Assistant Professor (10)

○ Entry Level Staff Member (0 to 5 years) (11)

○ Mid Level Staff Member (More than 5 years) (12)

○ Administrative Staff (13)

○ Family (15)

○ Friend (16)

○ Community Connection (17)

○ Other (14) _____

- -

Q51 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7}'s institution type:

Two-year institution (1)

○ Four-year public institution (2)

○ Four-year private institution (3)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (4)

○ Not applicable (5)

Q52 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}'s sex:

☐　Male (2)

☐　Female (10)

☐　Transgender (11)

☐　Not listed above: (12)

_____

Q53 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}'s race:

○ African American/Black (1)

○ Latina/o/x (2)

○ White (3)

○ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

○ American Indian/Native American (5)

○ Multiracial (6)

○ Bi-racial (7)

○ Not listed here: (8) _____

Q54 How long have you known ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q55 How would you describe ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}'s role in your life?

○ Mentor (1)

○ Sponsor (2)

○ Professional Colleague (3)

○ Supervisor (4)

○ Friend (5)

○ Family (6)

○ Other Personal Contact (7)

_____

Q56 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}'s title:

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (1)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (2)

○ Provost/Executive Vice President or Chancellor (5)

○ Vice President/Vice Chancellor (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor (4)

○ Director (6)

○ Associate Director (7)

○ Professor (8)

○ Associate Professor (9)

○ Assistant Professor (10)

○ Entry Level Staff Member (0 to 5 years) (11)

○ Mid Level Staff Member (More than 5 years) (12)

○ Administrative Staff (13)

○ Family (15)

○ Friend (16)

○ Community Connection (17)

○ Other (14) _____

- -

Q57 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8}'s institution type:

Two-year institution (1)

○ Four-year public institution (2)

○ Four-year private institution (3)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (4)

○ Not applicable (5)

Q58 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}'s sex:

☐　　Male (2)

☐　　Female (10)

☐　　Transgender (11)

☐　　Not listed above: (12)

_____

Q59 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}'s race:

○ African American/Black (1)

○ Latina/o/x (2)

○ White (3)

○ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

○ American Indian/Native American (5)

○ Multiracial (6)

○ Bi-racial (7)

○ Not listed here: (8) _____

Q60 How long have you known ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q61 How would you describe ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}'s role in your life?

○ Mentor (1)

○ Sponsor (2)

○ Professional Colleague (3)

○ Supervisor (4)

○ Friend (5)

○ Family (6)

○ Other Personal Contact (7)

_____

- -

Q62 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}'s title:

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (1)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (2)

○ Provost/Executive Vice President or Chancellor (5)

○ Vice President/Vice Chancellor (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor (4)

○ Director (6)

○ Associate Director (7)

○ Professor (8)

○ Associate Professor (9)

○ Assistant Professor (10)

○ Entry Level Staff Member (0 to 5 years) (11)

○ Mid Level Staff Member (More than 5 years) (12)

○ Administrative Staff (13)

○ Family (15)

○ Friend (16)

○ Community Connection (17)

○ Other (14) _____

- -

Q63 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9}'s institution type:

○ Two-year institution (1)

○ Four-year public institution (2)

○ Four-year private institution (3)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (4)

○ Not applicable (5)

Q64 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}'s sex:

☐　　Male (2)

☐　　Female (10)

☐　　Transgender (11)

☐　　Not listed above: (12)

_____

Q65 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}'s race:

○ African American/Black (1)

○ Latina/o/x (2)

○ White (3)

○ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

○ American Indian/Native American (5)

○ Multiracial (6)

○ Bi-racial (7)

○ Not listed here: (8) _____

Q66 How long have you known ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}?

○ 0 to 5 years (1)

○ 6 to 10 years (2)

○ 11 to 15 years (3)

○ 16 to 20 years (4)

○ 21 to 25 years (5)

○ 26 or more years (6)

Q67 How would you describe ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}'s role in your life?

○ Mentor (1)

○ Sponsor (2)

○ Professional Colleague (3)

○ Supervisor (4)

○ Friend (5)

○ Family (6)

○ Other Personal Contact (7)

_____

- -

Q68 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}'s title:

○ President/Chancellor (of a system) (1)

○ President/Chancellor (of an institution) (2)

○ Provost/Executive Vice President or Chancellor (5)

○ Vice President/Vice Chancellor (3)

○ Associate Vice President/Chancellor (4)

○ Director (6)

○ Associate Director (7)

○ Professor (8)

○ Associate Professor (9)

○ Assistant Professor (10)

○ Entry Level Staff Member (0 to 5 years) (11)

○ Mid Level Staff Member (More than 5 years) (12)

○ Administrative Staff (13)

○ Family (15)

○ Friend (16)

○ Community Connection (17)

○ Other (14) _____

- -

Q69 ${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10}'s institution type:

○ Two-year institution (1)

○ Four-year public institution (2)

○ Four-year private institution (3)

○ Four-year for-profit institution (4)

○ Not applicable (5)

Q29 Please rank your five most influential supporters from 1 to 5 with the first being most supportive.

	Ranking (from most influential to least influential)
_____ ${q://QID17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (1)	
_____ ${q://QID17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (2)	
_____ ${q://QID17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (3)	
_____ ${q://QID17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (4)	
_____ ${q://QID17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (5)	

Q30 For each of your five most influential supporters, on average how often you contacted them in the last 12 months?

	Weekly (1)	Monthly (2)	Yearly (3)	Less than once a year (4)
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (1)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (2)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (3)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (4)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (5)	○	○	○	○

Q31 For each of your five most influential supporters, on average how often do they typically provide support to you (scaled in the last 12 months)?

	Weekly (1)	Monthly (2)	Yearly (3)	Less than once a year (4)
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (1)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (2)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (3)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (4)	○	○	○	○
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (5)	○	○	○	○

Q32 How did you meet each of your five influential supporters? *Select all that apply.*

	Introduced by another mentor (1)	Introduced by another sponsor (2)	Professional organization involvement (3)	Worked together (4)	Personal (family or friend connection) (5)	Virtual connection (social media, GroupMe, etc.) (6)	Undergraduate or graduate school (7)	Other (8)
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q33 Which types of support do your five most influential supporters provide? *Select all that apply.*

	Advocates for promotion/ stretch opportunity (1)	Assistance/ Advice for work-related matter (2)	Build confidence or capacity (3)	Assistance/Advice for personal matter (4)	Encouraged professional organization engagement (5)	Emotional/spiritual support (6)	Makes connections to senior leaders/important contact (7)	Socialization into higher education (8)
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
${Q17/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Characteristics of Your Influential Relationships

Q34 Which resources have contributed to your success in your current role? *Select all that apply.*

☐ Professional organizations (1)

☐ Professional institutes (2)

☐ Sororities, fraternities, civic organizations (3)

☐ Faith/spirituality/religion (4)

☐ Community service (5)

☐ Professional journals/readings (6)

☐ Wellness activities (7)

☐ Family support (8)

☐ Friend support (9)

☐ Maintaining connects with those you care most about (10)

☐ Reading for pleasure (11)

☐ Other (12)

_____

Q36 For each of your five most influential resources, how frequently have you engaged with them in the past 12 months?

	Weekly (1)	Monthly (6)	Yearly (7)	Less than once a year (8)	Not applicable (9)
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/1} (1)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/2} (2)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/3} (3)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/4} (4)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/5} (5)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/6} (6)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/7} (7)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/8} (8)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/9} (9)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/10} (10)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceDescription/11} (11)	○	○	○	○	○
${Q34/ChoiceTextEntryValue/12} (15)	○	○	○	○	○

Q35 Please rank the top five resources (beginning with the most influential) that have positively influenced your success.

Ranking (from most influential to least influential)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/1} (1)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/2} (2)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/3} (3)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/4} (4)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/5} (5)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/6} (6)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/7} (7)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/8} (8)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/9} (9)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/10} (10)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceDescription/11} (11)

_____ ${q://QID34/ChoiceTextEntryValue/12} (12)

End of Block: Critical Resources For Your Success

Q53 Is there any additional information that you would like to share?

_____

Q55 There are two types of incentives - 1) Four (4) $25 Amazon.com giftcards and 2) a $50 donation to the Zenobia Hikes Alice Manicur Symposium Fund hosted by NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education).

Would you like to be considered for one of these prizes?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

APPENDIX C: IRB Approval

OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY

2718 Beverly Cooper Moore and Irene
Mitchell Moore Humanities and
Research Administration Bldg.
PO Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
336.256.0253
Web site: www.uncg.edu/orc
Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #216

To: Coretta Walker

From: UNCG IRB
Date: 7/13/2020
RE: Notice of IRB Exemption
Exemption Category: 2.Survey, interview, public observation
Study #: 20-0529
Study Title: Still I Rise: Social Capital & the Advancement of African American
Women Senior
Leaders in Higher Education
This submission has been reviewed by the IRB and was determined to be exempt from
further review according to the regulatory category cited above under 45 CFR
46.101(b).

Study Description:

This study will explore the role social capital plays in the experiences and career
advancement of African American women who are senior level administrators in higher
education. Administrators that fit the study's criteria will complete an online survey that

provides key information about their social networks and the resources necessary for success in their roles.

Investigator's Responsibilities:

Please be aware that any changes to your protocol must be reviewed by the IRB prior to being implemented. **Please utilize the consent form/information sheet with the most recent version date when enrolling participants**. The IRB will maintain records for this study for three years from the date of the original determination of exempt status.

Please be aware that valid human subjects training and signed statements of confidentiality for all members of research team need to be kept on file with the lead investigator. Please note that you will also need to remain in compliance with the university "Access To and Retention of Research Data" Policy which can be found at http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/research_data/.

APPENDIX D: Permission To Use Female Administrator Survey

APPENDIX D

Permission To Use Female Administrator Survey

Spartan   **Coretta Walker <**crwalke5@uncg.edu**>**

Checking In & Direction Requested

Tamara Bertrand Jones   Fri, Jan 17, 2020 at 11:36 PM
To: Coretta Walker <   >

Hey Coretta,

So glad to hear about your progress in your doctoral program!! That's exciting, along with the beautiful pictures of your family, things seem to be going well for you.

Attached is the survey we used for Pathways. Let me know if you need anything further. So very proud of you!

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Coretta Walker
Sent: Monday, December 16,
2019 9:27:11 AM
To: Tamara Bertrand Jones
Subject: Checking In & Direction Requested

[Quoted text hidden]

Black female administrator survey- rev 6.23.15.doc 87K

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APPENDIX E: Recruitment Email

APPENDIX E

Recruitment Email

Greetings!!

More than ever, equity in higher education is paramount. Our country is becoming more diverse, but higher education leadership remains monolithic. Specifically, African American women are underrepresented at the highest levels of leadership in higher education. This study aims to explore the role of social capital in the advancement and experiences of African American women in senior level positions at public and private American two-and four-year higher education institutions. Participants will be asked to complete an online Qualtrics survey that should take no more than 10 minutes. The link can be found here - https://uncg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3BKzMtxsvmP2Chf.

To qualify, the participant should: 1) identify as African American or Black, 2) identify as a woman, and 3) currently hold a full-time professional position at the Director level or above at a higher education institution in the United States. Positions across higher education (academic affairs, student affairs, advancement, athletics, etc.) and at two and four year public and private institutions are included.

By completing this study, you will help to contribute to the literature base as well as expand their narratives into social network analysis, an emerging tool in higher education scholarship. Participants who complete the study may elect to be considered for one of four (4) $25 Amazon.com giftcards or a donation to the Zenobia L. Hikes Award Fund hosted by the NASPA Foundation. If you have questions, please contact Coretta Roseboro Walker, Ph.D. candidate, at ███

APPENDIX F: NASPA Distribution List Approval Email

NASPA Distribution List Approval Email

Spartan

Coretta Walker <crwalke5@uncg.edu>

Following Up: NASPA Member List Request For Doctoral Research

Alexis Wesaw<   >   Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 5:48 PM
To: Coretta Walker <   >

Hi Coretta,

Hope you had a nice weekend!

Attached you will find the list you requested. I tried to filter out members who identified as mid-level, but who had a title that was less senior than Director. I think I caught most, but definitely not all, of them. Please let me know if you would like additional information. I'm happy to assist!

I look forward to hearing more about your research in the future!

Walker_Research List July 2020.xlsx 57K