Women of Color in Educational Leadership Programs: An Emic Phenomenological Perspective

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education in
Educational Leadership

by
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The Dissertation of Kimberley Henderson Stiemke is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego
California State University, San Marcos
2012
DEDICATION

First, I thank God for revealing his purpose in my life and surrounding me with people to aid me on my journey. I am dedicating this body of research to those closest to me - my family. My family has supported me before and during this journey, and they will continue to support me after this journey is complete. I have to start with my mom, my first teacher. Mommy, thank you for encouraging me to ask questions and making sure I had everything I needed to be successful. Daddy, thank you for always bragging about my accomplishments and teaching me not to sweat the small stuff. I get my sense of humor from you. Thank you, also, to my sister Keshia for keeping me humble and laughing at my flaws, "All that education!" and to my brother Jhamal for his incessant teasing. Being a "nerd" has benefits.

I also dedicate this work to my children. Zakariyya, you inspire me with your hard work and commitment to everything you do. You have a very bright future ahead. Khailil, I am amazed by your creativity and compassion for others. I look forward to watching you use your talents. Kaycee, you are the best student I know. Thank you for being my "research assistant" and reminding me to have fun. You are beautiful inside and out. I have no doubt that you will succeed at whatever you do. Last but not least, I dedicate this work to my husband Kevin for his unconditional love and unwavering support. I am not sure what is more challenging, pursuing a doctorate or being married to someone pursuing a doctorate. Kevin, your patience never ceases to amaze me. I am truly grateful that God chose you to be my life partner. Because of
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"I am because we are; we are because I am."

-African Proverb
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VITA

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Women of Color in Educational Leadership Programs:
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by

Kimberley Henderson Stiemke

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

University of California, San Diego, 2012
California State University, San Marcos, 2012

Professor Lorri Santamaría, Chair

Due to unique challenges and barriers, women of color continue to be underrepresented in academia as doctoral students and faculty, especially in positions of educational leadership. As a result, women of color remain on the fringes of educational leadership to the detriment of schooling in our society (Felder, 2010; Gay,
2004; hooks, 1989). Using an appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological approach, this study aimed to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which a public university system supports or constrains them based on the quality of faculty/student relationships, relevance of program curricula, quality of collegial relationships, and the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions. The experiences of 78 doctoral students representing 7 universities throughout a diverse state were surveyed followed by 8 appreciative interviews with women of color. To gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, this research drew upon critical race theory, feminist theory, and critical leadership to explore the intersection of race, gender, and class, and its impact on women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership (hooks, 1989; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Santamaria & Santamaria, 2011). Findings suggest that although women of color are being supported, they are not being supported to the same degree as other women, particularly in terms of faculty mentoring and outreach. So, despite greater diversity than many higher educational contexts, women of color continue to have the most constraining educational experiences, hindering their degree completion and subsequent career advancement (Gay, 2004). This study has the potential to impact leadership in higher education, making it a more inclusive environment for all.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

As a little Black girl growing up in public housing projects, I was taught that "knowledge is power" and "education is the key that will unlock doors of opportunity." As a woman of color, I have learned that power is in the position where unlocked doors remain closed, particularly in positions of educational leadership. The best way to describe this phenomenon is with the metaphor of a swinging door. Although the door is unlocked, there are two opposing forces at work - supports on one side and constraints on the other. Supports that may open doors of opportunity for women of color in higher education include educational equity, mentoring, social justice, networking, access, affirmative action and career assistance.

Constraints that may keep doors of opportunity locked often manifest themselves in the form of racism, sexism, classism and other opposing forces. The swinging door keeps the majority of people of color out, but if pushed with enough force and timed just right, it will open long enough to let a "token" or two through, only to close shut on the others. If there are enough supports the door will open for a brief moment before closing infiltrating the known and unknown as well as named and unnamed barriers. The swinging door metaphor represents the experiences that college educated women of color face in gaining equal access to educational and economic opportunities and reflects the history of women of color in America. If forces of opposition outweigh supports, women of color will continue to be oppressed in the U.S. Not only does the swinging door metaphor represent the experiences that
college educated women of color face in gaining equal access to educational and economic opportunities in American society, it also reflects the history of women of color in America.

**Statement of the Problem**

For over a century, women of color have silently struggled emotionally, physically, psychologically, academically, and socially in doctoral programs in the United States (Aryan & Guzman, 2010; Benjamin, 1997; Chamberlain, 1988; Gay, 2004; Patton, 2009; Turner, 2002). As a result, women of color continue to be underrepresented in academia as doctoral students and faculty, and remain on the fringes of educational leadership positions. In this inclusionary age of looking toward educational research to support change and affect public policy, a program of study in a higher education institution that specifically examines issues of social justice and diversity, may be of worth. Doctoral completion among women of color is a critical step in obtaining educational leadership positions, which could constitute a substantive change that will positively affect the future of education for generations to come.

Within U.S. institutions of higher education, women of color have experienced "historical legacies of exclusion" (Felder, 2010, p. 455) and marginalization (Benjamin, 1997; Gay, 2004; Grant & Simmons, 2008), often being left to their own devices to scaffold their way to degree completion with limited cognitive maps (Hawley, 1993; Lovitts, 2001). This is especially true among first generation college students (Lovitts, 2001). A lack of support for this group within higher education translates into low doctoral completion rates and lack of diversity among college faculty leadership. Unless there is a transformation in the policy and structure of
university doctoral programs, women of color will continue to be on the margins of educational leadership to the continual detriment of schooling in our society.

**Context of the Study**

Although the U.S. has seen increases in the number and types of degrees awarded to all racial and ethnic groups, only about 10% of all doctorates awarded in the 2007-2008 school year went to people of American Indian, Black, and Hispanic descent, despite being 1.6%, 13.2%, and 15.4% respectively of the total U.S. population (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008b). Approximately 4,053 out of 63,712 doctoral awards were earned by women of Native American, Black, or Latin descent in 2007-2008 representing 6.3% of the total number of doctorate degrees earned. Native American women earned 157 or a small fraction of a percent. Latina women earned 1,302 or 2% of the total recipients. Black women earned the most doctoral degrees compared to other non-European descent groups, male or female, with 2,594 or approximately 4.1% of the total (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008b).

Since the inception of the United States, women in America have been treated as second-class citizens and denied basic civil and human rights. Women's suffrage leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton clearly articulated the injustices committed against women in her 1848 address titled the "Declaration of Sentiments" which she delivered at the First Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. Prior to the suffrage movement, women "had the right" to be obedient and subservient. Their duty was to be seen and not heard. They were denied basic human rights from owning property and voting to being subjected to harsh and unfair divorce laws. Domestic
abuse was an accepted practice as was denying women access to their own money. Further, women were also prohibited from holding leadership positions such as elective office, and from attending college, which was considered the gateway to better opportunities (Freedman, 2007; Rothenberg, 2007; Rovitch, 2000).

While women share a history of oppression in the United States, people of color have endured unimaginable persecution. Historically, people of color have been considered less than human and were treated as such. Most Black Africans were enslaved. Native people were considered “Indian” savages, and Latina/os were perceived as aliens or illegal whether or not they were actually U.S. citizens. Individuals of color were often regarded with hostility. For example, Africans were purchased and sold as goods and Native American lost their lives and land as a result of forced removal and mass genocide. During the Jim Crow era, people of color continued to receive second-class treatment. They had the right to separate and unequal participation in all aspects of human life, which sadly was an improvement from no rights at all.

Women were denied basic rights because of their gender, but unlike White women, women of color faced more suppressants because of their race. Although marginalized, White women enjoyed more privileges and freedom than women of color. For example, white women were able to learn how to read and write because they had access to superior schools and facilities. On the other hand, it was against the law to teach slaves how to read or write or show Blacks respect by using such titles as Mr., Miss, Mrs., Sir, or Ma'am. These practices were against the law. Consequently, the intersection of race and gender coupled with socioeconomic status created
additional and long-term barriers for women of color whose impact would be felt for generations to come.

Although African American, Latina, and Native American women have different cultures, values, and languages, and there is tremendous diversity within each sub group, they share common experiences and a history of disenfranchisement in America based on institutionalized racism and sexism. Today people in the United States, women in particular, still bear and experience ramifications from the scars and burdens of shared legacies of slavery, genocide, discrimination, racism, and social injustices of every kind (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2011). Chamberlain (1998) supports this assertion, "Minority women do have one thing in common: They all fall way behind white males in terms of educational and economic achievement, and they have not, for the most part, achieved parity with white women" (p. 36). It is these conditions that further delineate the experiences of women of color from those of white women and men and thus provide the impetus for this inquiry.

**Purpose of the Study**

Research suggests that positive and successful experiences of women of color in doctoral programs may be a unique phenomenon (Grant & Simmons, 2008). Not enough research has focused on how women of color have achieved educational success in spite of barriers and challenges (Grant & Simmons, 2008; Patton, 2009). Literature is rife with examples of marginalization and deficit models for women of color in graduate education. Given the proper supports; however, this group is experiencing limited success (Espinoza, 2007; Rogers, 2006; Shotton, 2008). In response to the documented and previously cited research on the underrepresentation
of women of color in educational leadership, this appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry aims to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which Ed.D. programs within a public university system support or constrain these women based on the quality of faculty/student relationships, relevance of the program curricula, attainment of promotions and leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships.

**Significance of the Study**

Women of color are rarely considered for leadership positions within institutions of higher education, yet they lead from the margins without the titles or pay associated with "leadership" positions. While universities struggle to meet the needs of growing populations of people of color (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001), women of color are sidelined, benched, or left out of critical leadership teams tasked with ensuring success for all. Women of color, specifically non-immigrant women of African, Latin (in this case Mexican), and Native American descent, are perhaps the most under valued and under used assets in educational leadership (Carroll, 1982; Harley, 2008; Mabokela & Green, 2001). Educational institutions may be struggling to meet the needs of diverse student populations by denying women of color opportunities to lead. Certainly, more women, specifically more women of color in positions of educational leadership would constitute a substantive change that will positively affect the future of education.

**Theoretical Lens**

To gain a better understanding of this issue, this research drew upon critical race theory, feminist theory, and critical leadership to explore the intersection of race,
gender, and class, and its impact on women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. This research was grounded in several theories that may stand alone, or merge with others in a non-linear iterative process. The first theoretical frame is critical race theory. The second is feminist theory with a strong emphasis on third-wave feminism. The third theoretical frame is an emerging grounded theory called critical leadership (hooks, 1981, 1989, 2000a, 2000b; Hill-Collins, 1998, 2000; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Santamaria & Santamaria, 2011; Solorzano, 1997, 1998). The latter comes from the traditions of transformational leadership and critical pedagogy as perceived through the lens of critical race theory.

**Research Questions**

The following questions will be used to guide this inquiry:

1. In what ways does the quality of faculty/student relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

2. In what ways does the relevance of program curricula support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

3. In what ways does the quality of collegial relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

4. In what ways do the Ed.D. programs in educational leadership contribute to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions?
Overview of the Methods

An exploratory mixed-methods design was used for this study incorporating quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis, and findings. This emergent design sought to explore the best ways in which Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system support or constrain women of color. This approach is necessary to gain the greatest understanding of the phenomena under study. The rationale for the quantitative portion is to provide the "big picture" of the research problem by gathering and analyzing large amounts of quantifiable survey data (Creswell, 2008).

An appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry design was used for this study (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Moustakas, 1994; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). Qualitative methods are dependent on the voices of the participants, which are often missing from quantitative research (Creswell, 2008). As such, qualitative methods were used for this particular inquiry, which evolved into a study that relied more heavily on phenomenological and constant comparative methods for data analysis because of the theoretical emphasis that provided the solid frame for this study. The appreciative nature of the design was to ensure that the study focused on the success and positive experiences of women of color in select Ed.D. programs in educational leadership (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006).

Purposeful sampling was selected to identify individuals and institutions that could inform an in-depth study thus providing a platform for increasing the diversity of individuals that inform the research. All Ed.D. students in educational leadership programs within a public university system were invited to participate in the
descriptive survey regardless of race, ethnicity, and gender to provide information on
the context in which the sub population is based. Nine self-identified women of color
in stand-alone Ed.D. programs in educational leadership, within a public university
system, accepted the invitation to voluntarily participate in the interview portion of
this study. The goal was to gain a greater understanding of the women's programmatic
experiences.

Survey data was collected from all Ed.D. students in educational leadership
programs who accepted the invitation to voluntarily participate. A sub population of
women of color was identified through the survey data for follow-up with interviews.
Data sources included descriptive survey data and narratives of the women's
experiences corroborated by interviews. This data was based on and designed around
the research questions guiding this study. Triangulation and member checking, as
well as constant comparative analysis, was used to validate the findings (Creswell,
2008).

Assumptions

Similar studies examining the experiences of women of color in graduate
programs have been conducted in primarily white institutions or "PWIs." Findings
indicate that universities can do more to support women of color on their educational
trajectories resulting in greater equity and diversity in the academy (Dickey, 1997;
Felder, 2010; Gay, 2004; Gonzalez, 2006; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Holmes, Land, &
Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Patton, 2009; Turner, Myers, &
Creswell, 1999). This body of research is significant because the Ed.D. programs at
the participating institutions, unlike others, seem to value diversity and
multiculturalism in that 37% of program enrollees are White, 21% are Latino, 17% are African American, 1% are American Indian, 9% are Asian, and 15% self-identify with other, or they declined to state. These statistics have the potential to produce a significantly higher than the average number of women of color earning doctorates as described earlier. Considering the growth in graduate school enrollment, there is an assumption that graduate education is highly valued in the U.S. Based on current literature, women of color in doctoral programs may share common experiences, many of which are unique and sets them apart from the men and White women in similar programs (Chamberlain, 1988; Gandara & Contreras, 2009; Solorzano, 1998). Race, gender, class, and ethnic identities shape these women's experiences.

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter 1 describes the problem, context of the study, purpose of the study, significance, theoretical lens, research questions, methodology, assumptions, and definition of terms. Chapter 2 gives a review of relevant literature on the experiences of women of color in higher education. Chapter 3 describes the methods used for conducting the study.

**Definition of Terms**

*American Indian /Alaska Native* - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The terms American Indian and Native American were used interchangeably through this study to reflect terminology used in previous research.
Appreciative Inquiry - "A group process that inquires into, identifies, and further develops the best of 'what is' in organizations in order to create a better future" (Preskill & Catsambas, 2006, p. 1).

Black/African-American - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The terms Black, Black American and African American were used interchangeably throughout this study to reflect terminology used in previous research.

Chicana/Chicano - Terms used by Americans in reference to U.S. citizens of Mexican descent.

Constant Comparison Method - A qualitative technique, also referenced as constant comparative analysis, in which a researcher carefully examines data in order to identify distinctive characteristics among topics, categories, or patterns by noting similarities and differences (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997).

Doctoral student - Those students who are currently pursuing either the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. This study focuses solely on the Ed.D. in educational leadership. The literature reviewed; however, reflects the experiences of both Ed.D.s and Ph.D.s.


Hispanic or Latina(o) - A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture of origin, regardless of race (U.S. Census Bureau,
The terms Hispanic, Latino, and Chicano have been used interchangeably to reflect the terminology used in previous research.

**HSI** - Hispanic Serving Institution - Degree-granting public or private non-profit institutions with at least 25% or more full-time undergraduate Hispanic students. In addition, at least 50% of a college or university's Hispanic population must be considered to be low-income (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1993).

**Minority** - Any person from an underrepresented ethnic group such as African American, Latino, Asian, and Pacific Islander. The terms minority and underrepresented were used synonymously for the scope of this study.

**MSI** - Minority Serving Institution whose chief aim is to educate underserved populations. MSIs are comprised of HSIs, HBCUs, and Tribal Colleges. (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 1998). Their aim is to educate underserved student populations.

**PWI** - Predominantly White Institution

**TCUP** - Tribal Colleges and Universities Program — serve America's native populations (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1993)

**Underrepresented population** - racial and ethnic minorities

**White** - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

**Women of color** - refer to non-immigrant women of African, Hispanic, Latina, Mexican, or Native American descent.

**Summary**
There needs to be greater focus on the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs to help combat the increasing underrepresentation of this vulnerable population in higher education. Often "invisible" in higher education leadership, women of color have untapped capital that may help make education more equitable for all (Carroll, 1982). Although much of the literature written about women of color in higher education concentrates on African-American women, Juanita Johnson-Bailey (2004) posits in her study that the experiences of black women in academia mirror the experiences of other women of color. Other researchers concur with her assessment (Chamberlain, 1988, Gandara & Contreras, 2009; Solorzano, 1998).

Educational leaders and researchers have upheld the notion of the "achievement gap" between white students and students of color (Black/African-American, Latino/Mexican, and Native American) in K-12 education for decades, but little transformation has taken place in higher education, especially in educational leadership to help narrow that gap (reverse that trend). The very people with the capital to transform schooling in our society, namely women of color, are often locked out of that opportunity due to the oppressive nature of higher education.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study along with relevant literature and background information. The significance of the study was presented as well as the statement of the problem. Critical race theory, feminist theory, and critical leadership theory were presented as theoretical frameworks. An appreciative mixed-methods inquiry design was introduced using phenomenological and constant comparative
approaches for data analysis. Definitions were given for key terms used throughout the study.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This chapter begins with the researcher’s interpretive paradigm, the theoretical frames that undergird the study, and the research-based literature that best supports the study and furthers what is known about women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. The researcher approached this work through a feminist theoretical lens. The theoretical frameworks include feminist theory, critical race theory, and critical leadership theory. Literature supporting this study includes a historical overview of women in educational contexts; higher education supports and constraints for women of color including faculty-student relationships, relevance of program curriculum, quality of collegial relationships, and support for the attainment of promotions and leadership positions.

Interpretive Paradigm

Personal Resonance with Feminist Theory.

"Now, woman has always been man's dependent, if not his slave; the two sexes have never shared the world in equality" (de Beauvoir, 1953, p. xxvi).

This worldview resonates with me because as a woman of color I feel I have as much a right as men to fulfill my potential. In the lens through which I view the world, women of color should not be limited by the reality of individuals or organizations wielding power. Nor should we prescribe to others’ expectations of who we should be. In the feminist tradition, women exist for a purpose and should be...
supported as men are to fulfill their (woman)ifest destinies. In this manner, feminist theory aims to understand the nature of gender inequality. Ultimately, I agree with bell hooks (2000b), a self-described feminist theorist, cultural critic, and renowned scholar, in her assertion that feminist thinking is more than an understanding of an oppressive system, it also encompasses finding solutions to change the status quo.

**Theoretical Framework**

![Theoretical Framework Diagram](image)

Figure 2.1. *Theoretical Framework*

**Feminist Theory.** Although feminists may disagree on how "equality" is conceptualized (Evans, 1994), a fundamental belief of feminism is that women and men are inherently of equal worth and should be granted the same opportunities to reach self-actualization (Freedman, 2003; hooks, 2000a). Poststructuralist feminist thinking has shifted over time and is characterized in three waves: first-wave, second-
wave, and third-wave, with the third-wave being most strongly aligned with this inquiry.

**First-wave feminist theory.** First-wave feminists were concerned with gaining political identity and social emancipation in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Early feminists, seeking equality with men, within the existing system, were perceived as men haters, lesbians, and hard core angry women who wanted to be men and radicals (hooks, 2000a). Much attention was placed on gaining access and equal opportunity for women by promoting equivalent contract law and property possession while opposing ownership of married women (and their children) by their husbands (de Beauvoir, 1953; Krolokke & Sorensen, 2006). They fought for the right to vote, property rights, access to higher education, and equal pay (Hughes, 2002).

**Second-wave feminist theory.** Second-wave feminism began in the 1960's and continued through the late 1980's addressed many of the concerns from the first wave. The second wave; however, is marked with greater political and social awareness and an emphasis on the theory of patriarchy as a system of power and domination resulting in the systemic oppression of women (hooks, 2000b). This second wave also recognizes the glass ceiling, wage inequalities, and women as second-class citizens on a global scale (Freedman, 2003; Friedan, 1963). Women were denied access to the top of employment hierarchies, leadership positions, and subsequent decision-making power (Hughes, 2002). Betty Friedan's (1963) *The Feminine Mystique* was a catalyst for this political awakening.

Second-wave feminists recognized the intersection of gender, race, and class, which may have been a reflection of the simultaneous movements that took place
during the 1960's. The feminist movement, the anti-Vietnam demonstrations, the black power movement, the push for educated women, and calls for gay, lesbian, and civil rights characterized this period. There was a feeling of individual and collective empowerment spurred by a belief in the power of sisterhood and shared disdain for capitalism and imperialism. It was during this era, particularly during the sexual revolution, that the women's rights movement gained momentum and for advocates' rejection of men's ideals of womanhood. Women began defining themselves on their own terms (hooks, 2000a; Krolokke & Sorensen, 2006).

Many feminists did not consider race and racism as an issue in the struggle for equality. The feminist movement benefitted the elite few but did very little for the masses of women, especially women of color, who remained marginal, inside and outside of the workforce. The modern feminist movement began at a time of racial segregation. Yet women of color lacked "formal" leadership positions in both the civil rights and women's liberation movements, thus prompting the need for third-wave feminist theory (hooks, 1981, 2000b).

**Third-wave feminist theory.** Third wave feminism, ushered in by such well-known scholars as bell hooks (1981) emerged in the early 1980’s. It is more racially and sexually diverse and continues to focus on empowerment much like the second wave. This more modern version of feminism is more inclusive of the range of women's experiences and challenges the over-emphasis on the experiences of upper middle-class white women that characterized the first and second waves (Freedman, 2003). Third-wave feminists focus on "micro-politics" and questioning the preceding waves' paradigms and motives, seeking instead to negotiate a space within feminist
thought for consideration of race-related subjectivities (Anzaldúa, 2003; Avila, Davalos, Perez-Torres, & Sandoval, 2002; hooks, 2000a). The third wave is distinguishable by its humanist approach (Patton, 2009), and it is from this perspective and, more specifically of black feminist theory, that this current work is being constructed.

Of note is that Alice Walker (1983) and other feminists pointed out that black women experienced a different and more intense kind of oppression from that of white women. Attention to this perspective, in fact the liberation of black women, would entail freedom for all people, since it would require the end of racism, sexism, and class oppression; an argument worthy of exploration today (Ladson-Billings, 2009). To examine leadership, which is the place, position, and vantage point from where women are absent and is the focus of this present study, a critical leadership perspective is necessary and will be presented next.

There are several reasons why feminist theory was chosen for this study. First, data about women's experiences were traditionally absent from interdisciplinary theory and research, denying social reality (Schwandt, 2007). Feminist theory helps to understand and critique gender inequality as a social construct in a hegemonic, patriarchal society by focusing on the lives and experiences of women. This research discusses the historical and institutional barriers that prevent many women of color from completing their doctoral programs, which prevents them from assuming leadership positions. Second, feminist theory is associated with the fight for women's rights as they see them, with a belief in shared power. In this case, the power is in the position. Another reason for this approach is it seeks to honor the contributions of
women throughout history by acknowledging the role they play and dispelling the notion that women are merely physical objects. Finally, feminist theory, black feminist thought in particular, empowers women to fight sexism, racism, and classism, which all affect the experiences of women of color as they work toward doctoral degree completion and subsequent leadership positions.

**Critical Race Theory.** Critical Race Theory (CRT) is one of the frameworks used to explore how the intersection of race and gender affect the educational experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system. Racism has been accepted as normal, a fact of life in American society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). Not only is racism prevalent and embedded in all aspects of society, it generally intersects with other forms of oppression such as sexism and classism (Delgado & Stefancic 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano, 1997), masking its effects on the experiences of people of color. Until recently, race has been un-theorized, over-simplified, and underdeveloped in comparison to other social constructs such as gender and class (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Through the works of pioneers Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman in the 1970's, Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). Daniel Solorzano, an acclaimed critical theorist, defines CRT as "a framework or set of basic perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural, cultural, and interpersonal aspects of education that maintain the subordination of scholars of color" (Solorzano, 1998, p. 123).

With its roots in critical legal studies (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000), CRT is based on the premise that realities are socially constructed (Crenshaw, 1995; Grant &
Simmons, 2008) to the benefit of white men and detriment of women, particularly those of color. CRT attempts to understand race as a social construct, its impact on power and equity, and the systemic oppression of people of color (Grant & Simmons, 2008; Solorzano, 1997). Women of color have not had the option of shaping their own realities. Their voices have been silenced, unheard, and marginalized; their realities dictated by a dominant culture that is often dismissive of other realities and truths (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT challenges the status quo and dominant ideology within societal institutions such as education by rethinking and reconsidering traditional epistemologies (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano, 1997, 1998).

Not since the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's has there been a mass movement to fight racial injustice. Fifty years later, discussions about race and racism are still taboo in American society. Race is ignored or absent from discussions regarding educational equity and educators have failed to acknowledge race and racism as factors contributing to the educational achievement gap between whites and students of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT is applied when there are patterns of disenfranchisement, be it institutional or otherwise, against specific racial and/or ethnic groups such as the continual underrepresentation of women of color doctoral degree recipients. CRT is based on the social justice premise of equality for all, regardless of race, and seeks to end racial discrimination (Solorzano, 1997).

People of color are silenced early in their schooling experiences and taught that their voices are invalid by being blatantly ignored, or by having their experiences and opinions trivialized (Delpit, 1988; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). They grew accustomed to not speaking their realities and whites grew oblivious to their
circumstances. This paper posits that by the time they reach higher education, women of color have internalized so much rejection, endured so much psychological trauma that they may be more likely to give up on their pursuit of a terminal degree. Although there have been very few studies pertaining to the experiences of women of color in doctoral programs, the existing literature speaks to the continual oppression of women of color, particularly at predominantly white institutions (Felder, 2010; Gay, 2004; Gonzalez, 2006; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Patton, 2009; Shotton, 2008; Solorzano, 1998; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001; Turner, 2002).

Critical Race Theory provides the framework for closely examining the experiences of women of color in educational leadership doctoral programs, and the challenges they encounter based on their socially constructed positionality within society. CRT also challenges the status quo by placing value on the experiences of marginalized populations (Grant & Simmons, 2008; Solorzano, 1997). It also recognizes the experiential knowledge of people of color as a strength that is critical to the understanding, analysis, and elimination of racial oppression within societal institutions, particularly education (Solorzano, 1997, 1998). Considering the fact that people of color often lag behind their white peers in "educational achievements" and the disproportionate number of women of color who enroll and subsequently graduate from doctoral programs makes CRT essential to unpacking injustices in education.
Figure 2.2. Critical Leadership Model (Santamaria and Santamaria, 2011, p.8)

Critical Leadership Theory. Feminist theory provides a lens for examining the gender inequities between women and men, but it does very little to address the racial discrimination experienced by women of color. However, feminist theory coupled with critical race theory provides a solid frame for examining the issues of women of color in educational leadership programs. Merely understanding the challenges of this group does very little to transform their circumstances. Traditional transformational leadership paradigms disregard the realities of gender and race. Therefore, applied critical leadership, an emergent framework will be introduced.

An understanding of the ways in which the principles of transformational leadership, critical pedagogy, and critical race theory interface and intersect is in the nature of how transformational educational leadership can be re-conceptualized as applied critical leadership. Findings from eleven phenomenological case studies to
which grounded theory data analysis was employed indicate an organic leadership style that is context specific, informed by individuals’ experiences and worthy of further exploration. Application of this type of leadership practice might support the inclusion of more women of color in educational leaders in positions. From their scholarship, Santamaría and Santamaría (2011) propose a strengths-based model of leadership practice where educational leaders consider the social context of their educational communities and empower individual members of these communities based on the educational leaders’ identities (i.e., subjectivity, biases, assumptions, race, class, gender, and traditions) as perceived through a CRT lens.

The model proposed by these researchers is strengths-based vs. deficit-based wherein leaders have been found to identify and consider the positive attributes of their identities that contribute to their leadership practice. For example, what works as opposed to what does not work for a Chicana dean in higher education based on her propensity to rely on social networks, or a male high school principal of African/Jamaican descent who has undeniable physical “presence,” or a Native school psychologist able to access people based on her position in the community on and off the reservation. A strengths-based vs. deficit perspective identifies the positive leadership attributes of an Arab female high school teacher and university professor grappling with the residuals of racism and discrimination from 9/11, as well as those of a higher education assistant vice president who chooses to purposely surround herself with people of all races and social classes in order to balance her perspective, choices, and leadership practices. The consideration of critical leadership is a potential "game-changer" in educational leadership applications.
Literature Supporting the Study

Historical Overview of Women in Educational Contexts.

*A silent struggle.* For over a century, women of color have silently struggled in doctoral programs in the United States. From America's founding, women were treated as second-class citizens, and people of color were considered less than human. As a result, women were denied basic civil and human rights such as the right to own property, participate in a democracy via the right to vote, hold leadership positions such as elective office, or attend college (Mobley & Holcomb, 2010). Women of color were denied other rights as well. Therefore, the intersection of race and gender coupled with social economic status created additional barriers for women of color whose impact would be felt for generations to come. This overview includes sections on the marginal status of women in education, a collective leadership response to their status, institutional sexism in higher education, slow and steady progress, a significant set back, and the current lay of the land. "Minority women do have one thing in common: They all fall way behind white males in terms of educational and economic achievement, and they have not, for the most part, achieved parity with white women" (Chamberlain, 1998, p. 36)

It is these conditions that segregate the experiences of women of color from white women and their male counterparts. Throughout the years, all women have made significant gains in their fight for equal rights, but they continue to suffer from the impact of systemic oppression. Women of color are still denied access to leadership opportunities that involve decision-making power and the authority to have an institutional impact on issues of social justice and equity. Educational leaders have
a critical role in transforming schooling in our society to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Unfortunately, educational leaders are taught in schools of education that do not reflect the populations they serve and cannot generate collective capital from absent and silent voices. Supporting women of color in doctoral programs will go a long way toward leveling the playing field and bringing needed diverse epistemologies and leadership to university campuses.

**Marginal status.** From America's inception, women in higher education have been relegated to a marginal status and this is most prevalent amongst the leadership ranks. In the beginning, women were denied the opportunity for higher education. They fought profusely for equal access to education and it still took over two hundred years after men enrolled in colleges for them to have the opportunity. More than 200 years after the establishment of Harvard University, America's first college in 1636, women were formally allowed to enroll in an institution of higher education, Oberlin College in 1837 (Graham, 1978). Although women were admitted to colleges as undergraduate students, they were schooled in the art of domesticity and how to be a "good wife."

**Leadership as a response.** Women continued to fight for the right to be highly educated and through tactical leadership collectively applied pressure to the status quo. They infiltrated higher education after the Civil War through their personal relationships with male professors (Rossiter, 1982). They first gained access to graduate education by attending university lectures as guests of male feminist (hooks, 2000a; Rossiter, 1982). They also gave great consideration to the schools they felt would give them the greatest access. After a collective movement, women were
admitted into graduate programs as "special students." This status, given only to women, allowed them into graduate programs as invisible people. They attended classes, completed assignments, and earned doctoral degrees, but the degrees would never be awarded for fear of setting a legal precedence of women having the same high level of education as men (Rossiter, 1982). They attended universities and successfully completed doctoral programs with no records of their attendance or proof of their qualifications placing them in marginal positions and allowing men to benefit from their capital. Dissatisfied with this arrangement, women turned to the "modest universities" who where more likely to award doctorate degrees to women than "elite institutions" (Rossiter, 1982).

**Institutional sexism.** Institutions were given more credibility by denying access to women, as if by having women enrollees meant a downgrade and less rigor of the school, which made them less competitive. Female doctoral students were denied access to colleges and universities solely based on their gender, which ignited political campaigns. Women had to assume leadership roles to fight the anti-feminist sentiment that was prevalent in American society. Women had no choice but to lead; they led out of necessity (Rossiter, 1982). Women soon realized they were more effective challenging the status quo collectively. They applied pressure (Rossiter, 1982).

The Civil War caused a shortage of male students, which prompted schools to reconsider admitting women as a way to recover lost financial support (Graham, 1978). This was significant because earlier, women were rejected from institutions regardless of financial support (Rossiter, 1982). They were also given very little
consideration for their career aspirations. However, life for women began to change around 1920. The ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting women the right to vote took place in 1920 improving the quality of life for women by giving them a voice and decision making power.

_Slow and steady progress_. By 1920, women comprised almost 50% of undergraduate student enrollment and 45% of the professional work force. The 1920s was very significant for educated women. "During that ten year period, women achieved their highest proportion of the undergraduate population, of doctoral recipients, and of faculty members" (Graham, 1978, p. 764). The success experienced by women during the 1920's was short-lived. About a decade later, the hegemonic, patriarchal America converged upon the idea of common cultural standards, especially as they pertained to women's virtues (Graham, 1978).

In the 1850s, female virtues as created by men, comprised of "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" (Graham, 1978, p. 770). Despite the short-lived success in the 1920s, by 1950, women's virtues remained almost unchanged "youth, appearance, acquiescence, and domesticity" (Graham, 1978, p. 770). These virtues are a direct contradiction to the notion of women as leaders. Women were to be seen and not heard, and her place was in the home. It was okay for women to go to college in the mid 1900s because that was the ideal place to meet a spouse. It was also okay for them to be smart, as long as they maintained their physical appearance and remained sexually attractive.

_A cog in the wheel_. In the 1960's, 90% of college professors were men and pursued sexual relationships with female graduate students, which had significant
psychological implications (Graham, 1978). America as a patriarchal society expected women to be sex objects not professionals, and definitely not leaders. This pervasive attitude and sexual objectification created barriers for women in graduate schools, which was the gateway to a professional career and potential leadership opportunities. To reconcile society's expectations with personal and professional aspirations, women graduate students married and had children, which was significantly different from a previous trend (Graham, 1978).

In 1972, Congress passed Title IX legislation offering protection to girls and women from gender discrimination in federally funded educational arenas (Mobley & Holcomb, 2010). Even with this protection, women and girls of color continue to face greater degrees of sexism and racism than their White female counterparts. A national report conducted by the NEA on the status of women supports the fact that gender disparity and institutional racism and sexism exists.

The lay of the land. Statistics show that over one hundred years after the first Black woman received her college degree, there is still significant underrepresentation of Black women in colleges and universities, especially at the doctoral and leadership levels (Bush, Chambers, & Walpole, 2009). The same holds true for Latina and Native American women as well. Although there are more women of color attending college and entering doctoral programs, the numbers are still dismal in comparison to their White female and male counterparts. It is also important to note that many of the women of color who begin a path toward doctoral degree completion, often do not finish the process based on a number of barriers that stem from racism and sexism.
America's past reflects a time when women and people of color were excluded from receiving a formal education based on their race and/or sex (gender). Women of color, Black women in particular, were excluded from schools and discouraged from learning through terrorism. During slavery, it was against the law to teach a slave (Black woman) how to read or write. Whites in power were fearful that if slaves could read and write, they would revolt, causing an economic upset, which threatened their opportunity for prosperity (hooks, 1981).

When Blacks were allowed to learn, it was under inferior, oppressive, hostile and segregated conditions. They endured the horrors of slavery and the subsequent Jim Crow era of terror, yet they were "inferior" and unwelcome in the very land they were forced to toil for the prosperity of their oppressors, the very land that was stolen from the natives. It was clear through many acts of terrorism on the part of hate groups and individuals that Blacks were unwelcome and unwanted, creating a big movement to go back to Africa.

The hatred and hostility toward Blacks was apparent in all societal institutions, with the law and education being the most pervasive. Laws have changed to be more fair and equitable, but the disparities in education have changed very little. For example, the achievement gap in K-12 education with Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans consistently scoring the lowest scores, and whites scoring the highest on standardized achievement testing. Now, there are several factors for the discrepancy, but the fact remains that the achievement gap has persisted for decades. Within higher education, there is a disparity between who has access to a college education, who gets
the support needed to scaffold their way to degree completion, and who makes the decisions.

Higher education in the United States has a history of exclusion when it comes to women and people of color. As a result, women were not afforded the same opportunities as men in terms of educational and employment opportunities (Holmes, Land & Hinton-Hudson, 2007).

The intersection of gender and race coupled with class creates unique barriers for women of color in higher education. Research conducted on graduate doctoral programs identify several barriers that are unique to women of color, primarily based on the experiences of Black women, one of several marginalized populations.

**Higher Education Supports and Constraints for Women of Color.**

*Faculty-student relationships.* Research suggests that with the proper supports, women of color successfully complete their doctoral programs. One form of support consistent across disciplines is mentoring relationships. Many professionals are successful in their careers because of mentoring relationships; this premise also holds true in graduate doctoral and professional programs. The mentoring of graduate students can positively impact their initial job placement (Welch, 1996). Faculty mentors are "insiders" and "gate-keepers" of knowledge, especially in academia, yet mentoring relationships are not a built in component of many doctoral programs leaving some students unsupported. While some doctoral students are able to establish mentoring relationships on their own devices, others struggle to make the needed connections to scaffold their way to degree completion. Women of color, the group with the greatest need for support is also the group least likely to receive it. For
example, in a qualitative research study conducted by Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson (2007), study participants believed race and ethnicity played a role in their development or lack of development in mentoring relationships.

Several qualitative research studies have identified the women of color's need for mentors. Mentoring relationships between graduate students and professors is critical to the successful completion of graduate programs inclusive of doctoral programs (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001). Researchers suggest that mentors can help break the barriers that hinder degree completion by contributing to a sense of belonging/family and helping to navigate cultural issues and conflicts (Felder, 2010; Patton, 2009; Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson, & Mugenda, 2000). Having supports such as mentors increases success rates for degree completion; however, race, gender, and ethnic identity play a role in the quality of mentoring relationships established.

Based on the social constructs of race and gender and the impact they have on identity and forging relationships, scholars have questioned whether or not traditional mentoring practices are enough to support women of color. In a traditional mentoring situation, the relationship is hierarchical in nature, with one person deemed more superior than another based on perceived capital. Reciprocity or co-mentoring does not exist in traditional mentoring relationships. The protégé is perceived solely as a learner with nothing to contribute to the relationship (Holmes & Rivera, 2004).

Traditional mentoring is not enough for women of color (Tillman, 2001). Women of color face unique challenges in higher education based on a history of oppression and marginalization; therefore, conventional support strategies that may work for other students, may not work for this group (Grant & Simmons, 2008).
example, although mentoring provides significant benefits (Menges & Associates, 1999; Larke, Patitu, Webb-Johnson, & Young-Hawkins, 1999), additional layers of mentoring are needed to combat years of historical oppression (Grant & Simmons, 2008). Conventional mentoring practices are not effective for meeting the needs of women of color (Dolly, 1998) because they have been relegated to subordinate positions throughout society.

Patton's (2009) qualitative study on the mentoring experiences of 8 African-American women in graduate and professional schools, the participants voiced the need for mentoring relationships in their programs. Because there are very few African-American women of color on university faculty, especially at predominantly white institutions, mentoring relationships for women of color by women of color are rare. Among other issues, this study explored the significance of having faculty mentors with the same salient identity, which has been a topic of interest among scholars.

Several research studies propose the need for mentoring by those with salient identities; same sex and race or ethnicity (Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson, & Mugenda, 2000; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Lee, 1999; Patton, 2009; Tillman, 2001; Welch, 1996; Williams; 1997). Lee (1999) acknowledges there is a preference for same race and gender mentors however unlikely at a PWI. Faculty mentors with the same salient identity can help navigate cultural issues and conflicts that stem from racism and/or sexism, which increases their overall completion rates (Tillman, 2001; Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson, & Mugenda, 2000).
In "Race Still Matters: Considerations for Mentoring Black Women in Academe", Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson (2007) suggest mentors with the same race, gender, and ethnicity are the optimal choice for some; however, they also acknowledge the benefits of having white mentors. For example, Latrice, a student in the study states,

I told you before my mentor was a White guy named Tom. He is originally from the east coast and grew up in an upper middle-class Jewish family. I grew up in a struggling poor Black family in the Midwest. I have to give it to him though, Tom taught me how to conduct research, write a manuscript, present at conferences, even how to put a syllabus together and teach a class, but he was simply out of his element in trying to prepare me, a Black woman, on how to work and maneuver in one of these White public research institutions. Because there are some things he simply has not had to deal with him being male and White (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007, p. 112).

Grant and Simmons (2008) echo this sentiment in their study. White mentors are helpful to women of color; however, they are limited in their ability to understand and counsel when issues such as racism surface. Bova (2000) asserts White mentors provide career support, but are unable to meet the psychosocial needs of this vulnerable population. Patton (2009) speaks to the ambiguity that women of color feel about having a White mentor. In one sense they feel supported, but there also remains distrust on the part of the proteges. In some respects, White mentors have proven to be effective and supportive when meeting some of the needs of African-American women. Respondents felt that having mentors of the same race & gender is less significant that having someone who can guide their career trajectory (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007).
Regardless of identity, mentors are critical and influential to the success of proteges; however, there are few known models for supporting women of color at PWI's (Grant & Simmons, 2008). There is a prevailing assumption that Blacks at PWI's want to mentor other Blacks (Lee & Watkins, 2004), and proof that in some cases, women of color are more successful with mentors who have a salient identity as mentioned earlier. Research suggests there is no consensus on same race/gender mentors.

Relevance of program curricula. Curriculums and classroom interactions have the power to attract and retain students of color in higher education or push them away, further contributing to the underrepresentation of women of color in educational leadership programs. Solorzano (1998) documents in his study on the experiences of Chicana and Chicano scholars that curriculums that validate the experiences of White men while invalidating the experiences of women, especially women of color, creates feelings of alienation. It is no wonder that curriculums favor White males considering their dominant presence in educational leadership and the fact that curriculum is influenced by the values of faculty members (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995). "The curricula of educational administration preparation programs commonly include little or no scholarship from (or concerning) minority perspectives" (Young & Brooks, 2008, p. 405). Therefore, the values of the dominant culture continue to replicate itself, even within institutions of higher education.

The absence of multiple perspectives in the curriculum has an unfavorable impact on classroom interactions. Pamela Felder (2010) explored the impact of faculty interactions on the success of African American doctoral students through the
use of qualitative data. One of the findings from her study suggests a lack of knowledge on the part of faculty on issues of diversity diminished the potential to explore issues of social justice and equity, which had a significant impact on the experiences of students of color. Given the lack of input on equity issues, students of color would add perspective only to discover their views were not only unwelcome in class discussions, their displays of passion for social justice made some faculty uncomfortable. They did not feel their contributions were valued or respected by their professors. Non-affirming classroom interactions caused self-doubt and lack of confidence by invalidating their work as scholars (Felder, 2010; Johnson-Bailey, 2004). The curriculum lays a foundation for the graduate school experience for which classroom interactions are a major part. A more inclusive curriculum can serve as a support for women of color, one of the most vulnerable populations.

Inclusive curricula are needed to address the issue of underrepresentation among racial and ethnic groups. An inclusive curriculum is one that values multiple perspectives, offers nonbiased texts, emphasizes issues of social justice and equity, as well as stimulates the development of minority graduate students (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995). In order to create a more just society, curriculums need to be revised to include diverse perspectives as they pertain to educational leadership, opening the door for courageous conversations centered around issues of social justice and equity (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Young & Brooks, 2008).

The invisibility of diversity as it pertains to culture, race, and ethnicity in graduate curriculums is a serious problem that leaves students of color feeling isolated, neglected, and marginal. Disturbed by this reality prompted one scholar to suggest
students of color take at least one course in ethnic diversity as a means of cultural validation (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Gay, 2004). Because of the historical and institutional oppression placed upon women of color, additional supports are necessary to assist in successful degree completion. In addition to multiple perspectives, scholars have also suggested including internships or field experiences as part of the graduate curriculum as a means of fully immersing minority students into academic life (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Young & Brooks, 2008). Inclusive curricula are one form of support, and assistance meeting career related objectives is another.

*Attainment of promotions and leadership positions.* Supporting graduate students of color means providing opportunities for career advancement such as attending professional conferences, publishing research, networking, and on the job learning in the form of internships (Young & Brooks, 2008). Women of color in doctoral programs report not feeling adequately supported in terms of career assistance, publishing, and mentoring (Turner & Thompson, 1993).

In the case of Black women, gender intersected with race and class to create a resistance rooted in ideological hegemony woven so tightly that the effects have continued to impede both the personal and professional activities of Black women (and men) in all aspects of life well into the 21st century (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007, p. 106).

Higher education in the United States has a history of exclusion toward women and people of color. As a result, women of color were not afforded the same opportunities as men in terms of education, employment, and leadership (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007). Minority students experience a lack of opportunity at
PWIs with regard to teaching and research assistantships placing them at a distinct disadvantage in terms of career advancement (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Gay, 2004). Without the opportunity to engage in intellectual discourse with peers and faculty, students of color do not develop the scholarship that will aid them in their career advancement (Gay, 2004).

For some, the career trajectory is academia. Very little has been written about preparing women of color to become professors in academia (Gay, 2004). Black women are underrepresented in academia as full-time faculty and the disparity worsens among the ranks of leadership (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007). Chicano scholars feel there is very little pay-off for getting a Ph.D. because it is not enough to convince the establishment of their proof of competence. Having a doctoral degree does not relinquish the burden of racism that Chicanos bear. Mutual respect was not given to them as a bearer of a Ph.D. They had to continue to prove themselves. In this study, Chicanos found themselves disheartened that racism was so prevalent in higher education (Reyes & Halcon, 1997). Solorzano (1998) conducted research on 12 Chicano and Chicana graduate scholars to examine the effects of racism and sexism on their career paths. Findings suggested they felt out of place in the academy because of their race and gender, believed their professors had lower expectations of them, and they experienced subtle and overt racism at PWIs.

**Quality of collegial relationships.** Collegial relationships also referenced as peer relationships in the literature, are a documented form of support or constraint for graduate students of color (Gay, 2004; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Young & Brooks, 2008). Supportive collegial relationships often take on the
form of mentoring. Graduate assistants informally mentor other students by helping them navigate the doctoral process. This proves especially beneficial for students of color because they are likely to be the first generation to pursue a terminal degree in their families and may not have the skills to scaffold their way through on their own devices (Felder, 2010; Gay, 2004; Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Young & Brooks, 2008). These informal mentoring relationships create extended networking opportunities, which positively influence retention in graduate programs. Networking by peers with similar racial identity increased student retention for people of color (Johnson-Bailey, 2004).

Conversely, establishing supportive peer relationships with those who do not share similar identities may be a challenge. For example, African-American scholars experience isolation from their White peers because of their "seemingly controversial research interest" (Grant & Simmons, 2008, p. 503). Issues related to social justice and equity are considered controversial because race and inequity are still taboo topics in the United States, even within learning environments such as educational leadership programs in systems of higher education that house "agents of change" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Sometimes isolation is self-imposed when students of color give up on relationships with their peers because they perceive a lack of understanding of their perspectives and points of view. As a result, their truths and realities may go unheard (Gay, 2004). Students of color also have to contend with the perceptions of their White peers doubting they earned their place in graduate studies and were not there as a token of affirmative action (Johnson-Bailey, 2004).
The cohort model is another way to support students of color (Young & Brooks, 2008). Collaborative cohort models have assisted in building collegial relationships among graduate students in a number of ways. They aid in student motivation and retention because students feel less isolated and receive support from multiple sources increasing the rates of dissertation and degree completion (Barnett, Basom, Yerks & Norris, 2000; Burnett, 1999). Students also gain a more comprehensive and broader knowledge base from studying and critiquing other students' work which also enhances the quality of written documents such as proposals and dissertations overall (Burnett, 1999). Programs are more individualized and tailored to meet the academic needs of the students. More intimate relationships may also develop between students and faculty due to more frequent interactions. Barnett and associates (2000) examined studies that suggest the sense of empowerment one gains as adult learners in cohort models can transfer to their leadership styles in the workplace. There are numerous benefits to collegial relationships and cohort models are one way to establish the necessary connections that are greatly needed to enhance the success of women of color in doctoral programs.

In a qualitative research study conducted by Juanita Johnson-Bailey (2004), Black graduate women cited collegial relationships with their Black peers as a factor in their participation and retention in graduate education programs. One respondent shared her experience:

In some classes, early on, when I was the only Black student, I had trouble. People wouldn't eat with me at break or they wouldn't want to sit by me, or when we'd pair up in groups nobody really wanted to be my partner. It was sort of like being the odd man out. Lately I've been
having more classes with Black women so my interactions have been different. The other Black women are a support (p. 342).

Several themes emerged from the study. Blacks were supportive of other Blacks. Those interactions made a difference and served as an antidote to feelings of isolation. Black students also helped each other by providing insider knowledge such as funding information allowing a disenfranchised population to continue with their studies. For all of the reasons cited and those to be uncovered, supportive collegial relationships contribute to the successes of women of color in doctoral programs.

**Summary**

This chapter presented the researcher's interpretive paradigm, theoretical frameworks, historical overview of women in educational contexts, as well as supports and constraints for women of color in higher education.
CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology used to explore the research questions and the rationale for selecting an appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry based research design. The purpose of the study, research questions, context of the study, data sources, sampling, research design, and phases of research inclusive of data collection, analysis and instrumentation are presented in this chapter. Ethical considerations, limitations of the study, positionality of the researcher, and the significance of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Due to unique challenges and barriers, women of color continue to be underrepresented in academia as doctoral students and faculty, especially in positions of educational leadership. Within U.S. institutions of higher education, women of color have experienced "historical legacies of exclusion" (Felder, p. 455) and marginalization (Gay, 2004), being left to their own devices to scaffold their way to degree completion with limited cognitive maps. This is especially true among first generation college students. A lack of support for this group within higher education translates into low doctoral completion rates for women of color, which impacts the lack of diversity among college faculty, especially leadership. Unless there is a transformation in the policy and structure of university doctoral programs, women of color will continue to be on the margins of educational leadership to the continual detriment of schooling in our society.
In response to the documented underrepresentation of women of color in educational leadership, this appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry aims to explore the ways in which Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system support or constrain the experiences of women of color. This inquiry was guided by an overarching question that was separated into sub-questions. The following overarching question was used to guide this inquiry: In what ways are the experiences of women of color supported or constrained in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

1. In what ways does the quality of faculty/student relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

2. In what ways does the relevance of program curricula support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

3. In what ways does the quality of collegial relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

4. In what ways do the Ed.D. programs in educational leadership contribute to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions?

**Context of the Study**

The proposed study was situated within stand alone Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system in a diverse state. These universities were purposefully selected for this study because of their size, diversity,
and accessibility. An assumption based on the literature reviewed on the experiences of women of color in doctoral programs is, their experiences are quantitatively and qualitatively different than the experiences of other women who are not (Gay, 2004; Solorzano, 1998). Currently, the majority of studies that address the needs and challenges of women of color in higher education focus on predominantly white institutions.

**Data Sources**

Data sources included descriptive survey data with open response items to provide narratives of the women's experiences corroborated by appreciative interviews (Pallant, 2007; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). These data were based on and designed around the research questions guiding this study.

**Sampling**

Purposeful sampling was used for the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study to capitalize on the rich information this group can provide based on their experiences (Creswell, 2008). The context for this study was exceptional and the sample was uniquely situated within that context. Data were gathered from public universities throughout a diverse state representing the northern, central, and southern regions. Stratified random sampling grouped by race/ethnicity based on pre-sorted groups from specific institutions was used for the qualitative phase to gain a more detailed examination of the experiences of the sub population. Three universities, one from each region, were selected for qualitative interview data to document the voices of women of color. The institutions in each region with the greatest number of
participants who indicated their interest and willingness to follow-up with interviews were selected for participation.

**Research Design**

**Mixed Methods Design.**

*Explanatory mixed methods design.* A mixed-methods design was necessary to gain the greatest understanding of the phenomena under study by building on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis, and findings. Over the last couple of decades, research has been dominated by two paradigms (quantitative and qualitative) that were believed to be incompatible until recently. Many scholars now contend that drawing on the strengths of both approaches eliminates the weaknesses of each (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). "Quantitative data provide for generalizability, whereas qualitative data offer information about the context or setting" (Creswell, 2008, p. 558). Therefore, the quantitative portion provides the "big picture" of the research problem by gathering and analyzing larger amounts of quantifiable survey data. The use of this method identifies trends in the research that are cause for further investigation and allows for some generalizability. Scholars of various disciplines rely on qualitative research methods to explore, examine, and describe, a phenomenon (Grbich, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994). For the purposes of this study, qualitative methods were also selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of students through semi-structured, open-ended interviews.

The emergent explanatory mixed methods design sought to describe the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a
public university system and explore how they support or constrain them. The explanatory design indicates a two-phase approach to data collection, beginning with quantitative methods followed by qualitative methods (Creswell, 2008). Quantitative data were collected first to give a general idea of the doctoral student experience regardless of gender, race, and ethnicity, followed by qualitative data, which offered a more detailed explanation of the phenomena (Creswell, 2008).

**Phases of Research**

The data were collected in three phases. The pilot study was conducted during the first phase. The second phase was the administration of the electronic survey and subsequent analysis. The third and final phase included conducting interviews followed by data analysis.

**Phase 1: Pilot Study**

*Participants.* The participants included 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Ed.D. students in an educational leadership program in a diverse state. The student demographics were reflective of the sample population.

*Instrumentation.* The survey used to inform the quantitative portion is a modified version of the Graduate and Professional Student Experience and Satisfaction (GPSES) Survey. The goal of the survey was to build awareness of graduate students' experiences at a large Western university. The survey was initially administered electronically in 2005 with a 37.2% response rate or 1600 respondents, a representative sample of the graduate student population. A total of 178 closed-ended Likert scale and dichotomous questions were constructed around the quality of the student experience in terms of establishing a sense of belonging (community), access
to support services, equity among funding and research opportunities and on-campus living conditions, all contributing factors to student retention.

A modified version of the GPSES survey was used as the pilot instrument to gain insight into the experiences of doctoral students in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership, with greater emphasis on women of color. An essential modification was the addition of open response items to obtain the narrative necessary to understanding the student experience. The survey was administered to obtain demographic information such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, number of years living in the state, current leadership position, marital status, and parenting status. Demographic information allowed for comparisons to be made between identity and student/faculty relationships as the literature suggests. In addition to demographic information, the survey had descriptive items centered on faculty/student relationships, mentoring relationships, collegial or peer relationships, curriculum relevance, and career attainment. The open response items provided an opportunity to discuss their Likert responses in greater detail. The survey was followed up with one open-ended appreciative interview question to measure the alignment between the experiences of women of color and the perceptions of their program directors.

**Quantitative data collection methods.** After seeking approval from the Ed.D. directors of the respective programs, the researcher presented an overview of the study to a group of potential participants. A week later, the survey was administered utilizing surveymonkey.com, an online survey tool. The survey administration required the researcher to create an account in Survey Monkey, prior to developing the survey from scratch. A web link or URL was created to correspond to the survey.
Web links to the survey were sent through participants' emails. Results were transported from Survey Monkey to SPSS for data analysis.

**Quantitative data analysis.** The data was screened and cleaned using SPSS. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to "describe the characteristics" of the sample (Pallant, 2007, p. 53). The results were reviewed line by line and the survey instrument was revised accordingly to meet the needs of the actual study (Creswell, 2008).

**Phase 2: Quantitative Research.**

The purpose of the survey was to offer insight into the experiences of all doctoral students included in the sample regardless of race, ethnicity, and/or gender. In addition, findings from data analysis were used to inform the interview protocol, which yielded some explanation of the data trends.

**Participants.** Students currently enrolled in stand alone Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system were invited to voluntarily participate in this research study. One hundred nineteen students accepted the invitation to share their experiences by responding to the survey. Students had to meet the following criteria to complete the survey: second year and beyond in their Ed.D. programs, and enrolled in stand-alone Ed.D. programs, yielding 78 qualified participants. Survey participants included representation from 7 universities representing the northern, central, and southern regions of a diverse state. The sample population represented diverse positions in the educational arena with K-12 teachers being the single greatest category at 17.7%, followed by principals and directors both at 12.7%.
Figure 3.1. Current Positions of Complete Sample Population

Figure 3.2. Race and Ethnicity of Complete Sample Population
Regarding self-identification, 69.2% identified as female and 30.8% male. Of those students, 48.7% identified as Caucasian, 25% Latina(o)/Hispanic, 9.2% Black/African-American, 5.3% Asian, 2.6% Mixed (non-specific), 1.3% Irish and American Indian, 1.3% Southeast Asian, 1.3% Hatian American, 1.3% Persian/Middle Eastern, 1.3% White and Mixed, 1.3% Asian Indian, and 1.3% Mixed White and Hispanic. First year students who comprised 16% of participants, were subsequently eliminated from the study due to the adjustment period of first year students. The largest group was second year students at 42.6%, followed by third year students at 33%, and 8.6% of the students who surpassed their third year. Most students were first generation college students at 53.8%. In addition, most (72.7%) students were also awarded their Bachelor's degrees from institutions within the state being studied, and 73.4% have lived in that state for over 20 years.

**Instrumentation.** A modified and piloted version of the GPSES Survey was used for this study to explore the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system. The instrument used a variety of questions. Demographic questions were used to assess the personal characteristics of the sample, such as age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, marital status, children, current professional position, campus attending, and year in the program. Likert scale questions were used to obtain information on the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of the participants as they pertained to the role of race and gender in the quality of faculty/student interactions, impact of the program curricula on issues of social justice and equity along with classroom interactions, the quality of collegial relationships and career assistance support received. Closed-ended questions allowed
participants to choose from a set of responses, and open-ended questions allowed for narrative, free of bias. Semi-closed-ended questions provided participants with some choices, but also provided them freedom of expression by allowing them to write-in responses (Creswell, 2008). In addition, there were a few dichotomous questions. The instrument was piloted to students similar to the sample population.

**Data collection methods.** Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted, and Program Director approval was gleaned prior to sending letters of introduction, complete with an overview of the study and guidelines, to all Ed.D. students in the educational leadership program along with research guidelines and consent forms. The electronic survey followed utilizing surveymonkey.com, an online survey tool. It was based primarily on closed-ended questions with some semi-closed-ended and open-ended questions for additional insight. There were 37 questions of varying types with an average completion time of 25 minutes.

**Data analysis.** The data were screened and cleaned using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were run in order to answer the research questions (Pallant, 2007). In addition, Independent samples t-tests were run to gather additional information pertaining to the experiences of women of color and other women (Pallant, 2007). The data were aggregated to hone in on non-immigrant women of African, Latin, and American Indian descent. Responses were coded and categorized for emergent themes using a combination of phenomenological and constant comparative methods, which are described in greater detail in Phase 3. The quantitative data were used to triangulate the qualitative data that were gathered during Phase 3.

**Phase 3: Qualitative Research.**
The final phase aimed to gather in-depth data on the experiences of women of color in Ed.D programs in educational leadership within a public university system. Based on Creswell's (2008) historical accounts of the fundamental need for qualitative research, this phase was appropriate for the following reasons: participants' voices are critical and central to the study; given the exploratory nature of the study, participants need freedom of expression. The appreciative nature of the design was to ensure that the study focused on the successes and positive experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system in a diverse state (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). The results from the quantitative portion guided this appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry. All of the data were brought together in a cohesive whole that will inform the higher educational community of the challenges faced by women of color in pursuit of their doctorate and the ways in which they can be supported.

**Participants.** Self-identified women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership within a public university system, in a diverse state, were the primary sources of data collection. Based on the responses from the quantitative portion, several women of color were asked to participate in semi-structured interviews to provide a more in-depth examination of this phenomenon (Patton, 2002), resulting in nine (N = 9) participants.
Table 3.1. *Women of Color in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Interview Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RACE/ETH.</th>
<th>CAMP.</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>YR. IN PRO.</th>
<th>FIRST GEN.</th>
<th>PAR.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part. 1</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>TOSA</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 2</td>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Beyond 3rd</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 3</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Doctoral Assistant</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 4</td>
<td>Hispanic / Latina</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 5</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 6</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Education Funding Manager</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 7</td>
<td>Irish &amp; American Indian</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Compliance consultant</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 8</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>TOSA</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part. 9</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Program Resource Manager</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Part. = Participant; ETH. = Ethnicity; GEN. = Generation; PAR = Parenting; TOSA = Teacher on Special Assignment; PRO=Program

The sample was comprised of 6 Latinas, 2 Blacks, and 1 American Indian of Irish descent. There were an equal number of participants between the ages of (30-39) and (40-49) leaving one woman between the ages of (20-29). The majority of this sub-population were in their 2nd year, one-third were parenting, all resided in the participating state most of their lives, as well as received their undergraduate degrees from institutions within that state.
**Interview.** Qualitative data consisted of responses to a set of semi-structured, appreciative interviews from women of color at select public universities. The interview protocol consisted of eight open-ended appreciative type questions (Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). The appreciative nature of the questions were designed to ascertain a sense of what programs were doing to support women of color.

**Data collection methods.** Initial contact with participants was made through email. Consent forms were mailed, signed, and returned prior to setting up interviews. One-on-one interviews were conducted via Skype, face-to-face, and by telephone to accommodate the participants. Prior to the start of each interview, the researcher established rapport by introducing herself and providing an overview of the study including purpose, handling of confidential data, and interview structure. She also addressed questions and concerns. During the interview the researcher actively listened, asked for clarification when needed, offered "encouragement probes" and allowed for flexibility (Brenner, 2006; Creswell, 2008). Participants were thanked at the close of the interview. Thank you cards were also mailed to the participants. Interviews were transcribed for data analysis and emailed to participants for review.

**Data analysis.** A combination of phenomenological and constant comparative methods was used to analyze this inquiry. A coding schema was developed based on the literature reviewed and other emerging codes using constant comparative analysis (Boeije, 2002). Documents supportive of the program such as dissertation topics and promotion data were also analyzed. All of the data was brought together in a cohesive whole that may have the potential to change the course of doctoral education for women of color across the nation.
Rationale for phenomenological method. Phenomenology was chosen for this study for a number of reasons. Phenomenology is a way to expose issues that are entrenched in the human psyche. It is an approach, which attempts to understand the hidden meanings and the essence of an experience together with how participants make sense of these. Phenomenology also helps gain insight into people's motivations, actions, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions through understanding the individual and collective experiences (Gribich, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Moustakas, 1994; van Kaam, 1959).

Phenomenological method. In 1959, van Kaam provided a model for understanding the human experience expanding the work of Edmund Husserl. The modified version of van Kaam's (1959) methods as described by Moustakas (1994), were essential to getting at the heart or "essence" of the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. As a qualitative research methodology, phenomenology recognizes the value of participant voice and grounding in personal knowledge. The goal of this study was to identify ways that women of color are supported and/or constrained in their doctoral programs and Moustakas' model provides a framework for finding the "essence" or commonality in their experiences by following four steps:

1. Listing and preliminary grouping (Horizontalization)
2. Reduction and elimination
3. Clustering and thematizing the invariant constituents
4. Final identification of the invariant constituents and themes by application.


Procedures. The listing and preliminary grouping of the qualitative survey data were examined one question at a time. Individual responses (verbatim) for that particular question were placed horizontally on a sheet of chart paper, for straightforward interpretation. Similar responses were grouped together, based on commonality of word choice or theme, creating preliminary categories. Responses that did not seeming fit into a category, were placed in their own "other" category. A similar process was repeated for each question.

After generating preliminary categories, the data was tested for relevance through a process of reduction and elimination, a critical phase of phenomenology, to find the invariant constituents. To ensure that the voice being transmitted was that of the participants and not that of the researcher, this process involved a great deal of reflection on the part of the researcher as presumed by Husserl (1931).

"Phenomenological reduction is not only a way of seeing but a way of listening with a conscious and deliberate intention of opening ourselves to phenomena as phenomena, in their own right, with their own textures and meaning." (Moustakas, 1994, p. 92).

The questions used to "test" or guide the reduction process as suggested by Moustakas (1994) were:

1. Does it contain a moment of the experience that is a necessary and sufficient constituent for understanding it?

2. Is it possible to abstract and label it?

Responses that were vague, not easily understood, did not address the question, or did not meet the criteria of the questions above were eliminated from the study, leaving the invariant constituents.
Once the invariant constituents were identified, they were clustered and labeled according to theme. The final phase, identification of the invariant constituents and themes by application is the validation process. At this point, the researcher examined the themes again, this time in the broader context of each individual's responses to their complete transcripts. Responses had to be checked for their explicity or implicity, and relevance to the research questions. Once conditions were satisfied for each survey question, the researcher compiled a list of themes that transcended individual survey questions and used those as emergent themes. The themes that emerged using the qualitative data from the open response survey items were used to inform the coding process for the interviews.

*Rationale for constant comparative method.* People are masters at masking facts and feelings consciously and sub-consciously as a defense mechanism when sensitive topics arise in qualitative research. By nature of design, and its emphasis on social problems, qualitative research places the participant in a position of vulnerability. There are many reasons why a participant may want to keep some things private; however, a lack of disclosure or complete honesty may skew research results. Therefore, a combination of research methods must be used to unearth the facts (Glaser, 1965). As Glaser (1965) suggests,

The only way a researcher can obtain any data, or data that is accurate, is some combination of observing what it going on, talking in rather loose, sharing, fashion with the people in the situation, and reading some form of document that they have written (p. 436).

For the purposes of this study, not only were participants interviewed, they provided narrative on their open response survey items. The gathering and comparing of
different data sets to uncover the facts brought forth the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis.

**Constant comparative method.** In his article, "The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis," Glaser (1965) described four stages to the constant comparative method: comparing incidents applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory, and writing the theory. Although the constant comparative method is used primarily for generating theory, it can be used for any qualitative study, not solely grounded theory (Glaser, 1965). This study did not seek to generate theory or answer why, but to explain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. The experiences of women of color in a diverse setting were compared to the experiences of other women in the same context to determine if a more diverse environment offered them greater supports than predominantly white institutions.

**Procedures.** Based on Glaser's (1965) model, Boeije (2002) developed a step-by-step approach to the constant comparative method. First, the transcripts of every participant were coded using pre-existing categories. Every passage of the interviews was studied and properly labeled with the appropriate codes. Each occurrence was coded and compared with other incidents within the same interview. Interviews were checked for consistency, fragments were explored, and categories were developed. Next, comparisons were made between interviews using axial coding, and themes emerged. Finally, comparisons were made between the experiences of women of color and other program participants. The process of coding and comparing was continuous until saturation was reached (Boeije, 2002; Glaser, 1965).
Ethical Considerations and the Role of the Researcher

There are potential risks and inconveniences with any research study, and this one was no exception. The risks and inconveniences as well as the safeguards detailed in this section were conveyed to the participants prior to their consent.

Risks. There were minimal risks to participating in this study. They included the potential to evoke a strong emotional response, fear of retribution, privacy concerns, time, and potential breach of confidentiality. Although every precaution was taken, there was the potential to open "old wounds" and evoke an emotional reaction with some of the questions asked. This is a strengths-based study; however, participants may fear retribution if providing unflattering information regarding their experiences in the doctoral programs. Some questions, although relevant to the study, may feel invasive to some participants. Participants spent an average of 25 minutes on the survey. A select few spent approximately 35 extra minutes participating in an interview. Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the participants; however, there is a possibility that insiders (students or directors in the Ed.D. programs) may speculate on the identities of interview participants.

Safeguards. There were several safeguards put in place to minimize risks which included carefully written questions to minimize emotional reactions. The study was strengths-based by design with a focus on the positive experiences of women of color. Pseudonyms were also used for the qualitative phase. The research data was only viewed by the researcher and her research advisor. The study was also designed to be non-invasive and participants were reminded that their participation was voluntary and they could stop at any time. They were also referred to University
Services at their respective campuses for counseling had the need arisen. Interviews were expected to take about an hour, and were scheduled around the participants' availability. The researcher kept track of time throughout the process. Participants were reminded of the voluntary nature of their participation and given the option to conclude or extend the process. Interviews were conducted at a location of the participants' choice. To ensure confidentiality of the qualitative data, pseudonyms were used to minimize the risk of identification. Participants were also given the opportunity to amend the interview transcript.

Prior to participation in the study, participants acknowledged consent electronically for the survey, and in written form for the interviews after being presented with an overview of the study and opportunity to address any questions and concerns. Full disclosure helped to build trust and allowed the participants an opportunity to opt out of the study. Consent forms were only handled by the researcher and safeguarded in a secure area to protect the identity of the participants. Every effort was made to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants; however, there was the potential of a breach from outside sources, especially when conducting an electronic survey that contained raw data. To limit the potential for harm, the survey was only available for a limited time and restricted to the sample population. The data was deleted immediately after extraction from the researcher and stored on a password-protected computer that was only accessible by the researcher and kept in a secure location. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the qualitative data, pseudonyms were used for each participant. The researcher presented findings in a way that concealed the identity of the participants.
Positionality

The researcher is a Black American female and graduate of an HBCU where Black student success was the norm, not the exception. She primarily attended segregated schools and was a first generation college graduate and attributes much of her success to being mentored, primarily by women of color. In addition, she is a doctoral student in educational leadership; therefore, she may have some insider knowledge about the participants' experiences.

Significance of the Study

Women of color are rarely considered for leadership positions within institutions of higher education, yet they lead from the margins without the positions or pay commensurate of "leadership." While universities struggle with the growing populations of people of color (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001), women of color are sidelined, benched, or left out of critical leadership teams tasked with ensuring success for all. Women of color, specifically non-immigrant women of African, Latin (in this case Mexican), and Native American descent, are perhaps the most undervalued and under used assets in educational leadership (Carroll, 1982; Harley, 2008, Mabokela & Green, 2001). Women of color possess social, cultural, and intellectual capital that is not being accessed (Amott & Mattaei, 1996). According to Becker (2002) "This is the 'age of human capital' in the sense that human capital is by far the most important form of capital in modern economies" (p.3). By not building upon human capital, American democracy and civic engagement is weakened and therefore limited (Sum, Kirsch, & Yamamoto, 2004). Educational institutions may be
struggling to meet the needs of a diverse student population as a result of denying women of color opportunities to lead.
CHAPTER 4

Results

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this appreciative mixed-methods phenomenological inquiry aimed to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which they support or constrain women of color based on the quality of faculty/student relationships, relevance of program curricula, attainment of promotions and leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships. To understand the experiences of women of color, it is crucial to have an understanding of the general context in which these experiences occur. For a more in-depth exploration of their experiences, interviews were conducted for the women of color and the findings will be presented in the qualitative section for women of color.

This chapter presents findings in relation to the doctoral student experience in a specific context by themes in two parts. The first part presents qualitative findings from the open-ended survey questions along with descriptive statistics for the complete sample population. The second part will present both qualitative findings from the interviews with women of color followed by inferential statistics comparing their experiences with other women by way of quantitative data.

An electronic survey was sent to students in Ed.D. programs in a public university system. There were 119 respondents to the electronic survey at select institutions. Respondents who did not fit the criteria were eliminated from the survey, resulting in 78 qualified participants. The participants had to be an Ed.D. student in a stand-alone doctoral program in educational leadership and must have completed their
first year. A modified version of Van Kaam's (1959) method of analysis of
phenomenological data was used as outlined by Moustakas (1994). Upon analysis of
each individual open response question, there were six major themes that emerged.
The following presents evidence of those themes.

**Theme 1: Social Justice, Equity, and Diversity**

**Qualitative findings for complete sample population.** Social justice, equity,
and diversity refers to the examination of the root of power, privilege, and disparity
within a society and advocating for fairness, specifically in terms of valuing difference
as it pertains to race, ethnicity, gender, and beliefs. This theme emerged most
frequently and was woven throughout every strand of this study: quality of faculty/
student relationships, relevance of program curricula, attainment of promotions and
leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships. The participants expressed
a desire for more inclusion with regard to faculty and curriculum. For example, one
respondent stated, "Hire Latino/Black professors," and another responded, "More
diverse curriculum." While some expressed appreciation and an expanded
understanding of "diversity issues," others felt social justice issues were not
adequately addressed. As one student articulate, "Course on student learning and
student development was not comprehensive and glossed over critical diversity
issues." See appendices for more descriptive illustrations of qualitative findings.

**Quantitative findings for complete sample population.** Programmatic
emphasis on social justice ranked 8 out of 10 as an influential factor for beginning the
Ed.D. program. Therefore, it was deemed of little consequence in relation to other
factors in the overall decision to participate in the program, despite the program's
emphasis on social justice. Although not a major consideration for pursuing the Ed.D. program in educational leadership, based on an analysis of the open response items, the principles of social justice clearly had an impact on the overall student experience. On the contrary, 62.5% of students were reportedly influenced by their desire to be change agents.
### Table 4.1. Doctoral Student Experience with Social Justice, Equity, and Diversity in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Means and Standard Deviations (SD) for Complete Sample Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Complete Sample</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My professors are culturally competent.</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors discuss issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.709</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors are knowledgeable about issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.791</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors model leadership as it pertains to issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>.948</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My class is culturally diverse.</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often interact with students in my program who are of a different race or ethnicity.</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to this program, I've taken courses in diversity.</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.368</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum reflects or addresses diversity as it pertains to culture, race, and ethnicity.</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>.915</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum emphasized issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.995</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum offers diverse perspectives.</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates discuss issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.873</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* N=76

Table 4.1 displays descriptive statistics based on the theme of social justice, equity, and diversity in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership for the complete sample population. Based on mean scores, doctoral students report favorable experiences with social justice, equity, and diversity in their Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. They most strongly agree that their classes are culturally diverse, providing them with the access and opportunity to interact with students in their programs who are of a different race or ethnicity. Within the context of diverse
class environments, students agree their professors are discussing issues pertaining to social justice and equity. Although students are in agreement that their professors model leadership as it pertains to issues of social justice and equity, they feel more strongly about what their professors know, than what they practice. Based on the standard deviations, the greatest range of variance reported is with prior courses in diversity taken.

**Qualitative findings for women of color.** Descriptive statistics from the complete sample population determined that social justice was not a major motivation among participants for pursuing an Ed.D. in educational leadership. On the contrary, interview data from women of color reflect a "moral obligation" and "spiritual calling" to "uplift" their people. Some participants acknowledged inequity in education and within their own educational experiences as a driving force to "set an example for others to follow." The desire to be a "change agent" is reflected in their research topics, which are focused on issues of social justice and equity.

The programmatic experiences described by the women of color slightly differ from the complete sample population. From the perspective of this sub-population, the doctoral programs are not living up to their social justice ideals. One particular campus seems to be affected more than others. Women of color described a lack of cultural sensitivity and competence on the part of programmatic leadership as well as cohort members resulting in racial tension and division within their program. A program with an emphasis on social justice and equity yields an expectation of tolerance and a value and appreciation for difference. Some participants discussed physical and social separation by race, which had adverse effects on their
programmatic experiences. While there is evidence the leadership recognized the "racial division" in the program, their methods for resolution were inadequate.

One participant describes the racism she experienced within her program,

Okay. We had a major incident in our cohort, because our cohort is predominately Hispanic female, and there was, there were, let's see, three White ladies who were in the program. And you know Hispanics as a population we come from different walks of life, and we have different life experiences, and some people come from different walks where they speak differently, or have a tone when they speak. And there was an incident where one of our members of our cohort was in a discussion and we were talking as a class about a topic, and she used a cultural vernacular in terms of using her hands and saying what's up with that, and jerking her head back. Well, the three ladies started e-mailing each other saying how it was low class, the way she behaved. Forgetting that they had sent this previous e-mail to another member of the Hispanic group in the cohort, and kept communicating with each other forgetting that they were doing a reply all which included this other woman, who was one of the Hispanic females in our group. So, instead of that person who was hearing all this, taking it to the director, she told the girl who was being talked about that she was low class, and it turned into a real ugly thing, and it has totally divided our cohort, where, to the degree that Hispanics sit on this side, whites sit over there. And I think the university, or the director tried to help by having a get together to talk, but those people weren't included they never came or showed up. They have since dropped the program, because one they couldn't do the work, and I think that was what they were more intimidated by, by the fact that she was knowledgeable, and it was coming out as calling her names, cattiness, but I don't think that it was entirely addressed because they're still a division in our program, and it's still very culturally based. Where the Hispanics don't feel, we don't feel like we're being accepted by the White people in the group. So there's, you would think that we would have gotten past that as a society, but we haven't (Participant 4, interview, September 30, 2011).

When asked if there was a programmatic experience that she wished she could forget, Participant 4 hesitated and asked for reassurance before expressing what was truly on her mind. She expressed a sense of relief after sharing her story, as if the sharing of that experience was cathartic for her. Participant 4 attended an institution
that was classified as an HSI and received significant funding to support Latino(a) students. As she mentioned, her cohort was predominantly Hispanic female, which is rare. She acknowledged that communication styles vary by culture, and a lack of understanding of that notion created conflict among colleagues that seemed to bring out the worst in people. The faculty leadership attempted an intervention, but failed to adequately address the problem. Feelings of alienation and lack of acceptance persisted.

Yeah, and I think we don't address that in the program, we don't address the diversity, and what impact that has on students. I really don't feel like it's truly there. It's skimmed over, where we talk about, 'oh there's minorities, now with NCLB we have to really pay attention to the minority groups, and make sure they are achieving.' That's one good thing that came out of NCLB, but we don't focus on, what do those children bring to the education system that we're not addressing, and it's not built into our programs. It's built, it's more of a statement it's there, but it's not stated as to, how does that play into how we do our jobs (Participant 4, interview, September 30, 2011).

This participant expressed a sense of disappointment in her programmatic experience. She felt issues of diversity in education were not sufficiently addressed. Participant 4 acknowledged that diversity was mentioned in her courses, but they were not presented with tools on how to incorporate diversity into their educational practices. She felt diversity was taken for granted and there was no acknowledgement of the strengths a diverse population can bring to their environments.

I'll give you another example, and these are just little things that irritate me culturally. That I pick up on, and it really pissed me off. My dad is dark, and so he is a dark skinned Hispanic man, and I took him upstairs to the fifth floor at the university, because I needed to pick up some paper work, so he came with me. And so he was sitting there in the chair, and [name omitted] she came out. And I was standing next to my dad, and she goes, 'oh who's this?' I said 'oh this is my father'. She goes,
'Como estás' to my dad, and reaches out her hand to shake his. I said, 'he doesn't speak Spanish'. But she assumed it, because he was dark skinned and had a Hispanic last name and to me, and this is just my personal bias, that's an automatic red flag to me, that that person is culturally insensitive because they didn't know enough to assume that they speak English. And you never assume that somebody speaks Spanish just because of the way they look, and because of their last name (Participant 4, interview, September 30, 2011).

Unfortunately, Participant 4 had several experiences as a doctoral student that she wanted to forget. She was visibly upset and angry about this experience in particular. Here she describes how a simple introduction shaped her view of a faculty leader. She expected the faculty member to be culturally competent with an awareness of her familial identity. She was offended and never thought of this faculty member in the same way.

I'm here because I really feel that I need to go against those statistics that say minorities can't do it, and you know the numbers. And in my case the Latinos are the highest minority population in the United States and the least educated, and that's a huge obligation that I'm willing to take on, just because it is difficult (Participant 1, interview, September 29, 2011).

Her motivation for pursuing her Ed.D. in educational leadership grew out of her concern about the disparities of "minorities" in education. She wanted to set an example for others to follow, particularly Latinas, by demonstrating that success is within reach.

And then we had another example where, or we had a small cohort it was like 20 students, and there became a divide between the older, White students and the minority, younger students, and it was very clear because people would sit on one side of the room and other people would sit on the other side, and we actually had our director of the program come in and say, 'we're going to address this issue, we have a communication problem, and it's clear that we're being racially divided. We've done this ourselves, we've segregated, we've created cliques' and so she said we needed to have intervention, and
so she appointed one of our own cohort members and assigned this person to lead a team building exercise. Which first of all I thought was very inappropriate to assign someone within its own cohort to act as the group leader of an issue that he was a part of, and because that was his forte, his skill, you know I think they were saving money, or they didn't think it wasn't that important enough, that they couldn't hire someone outside of the department to do that, or they took up class time to do this. This could have been something that was done outside of class, and so it was almost like a joke, and I think it was very much perceived that way, that it wasn't important to the program, and so we had an intervention and we discussed the topic, and we tried to integrate ourselves a little bit more, people moved around where they sat, but a week later things were right back to where they were before, and nothing changed after that (Participant 2, interview, September 29, 2011).

Participant 2 also had an experience that she wished she could forget. Her experience with racial division in her cohort was similar to Participant 4's. Not only did she mention there was division based on race, she also alluded to age differences as well. Participant 2 felt the program directors acknowledged division in the cohort and blamed the students for self-segregating. She also believed the handling of sensitive issues such as racial tension was inadequate. Moving bodies like musical chairs did very little to solve their problems.

Many members of our cohort weren't happy with her teaching style, because she gave us too much work, and she was a hard grader. So there was an issue where people wrote up a letter about her negatively, and gave it to her boss, and it was like a big thing, and it was a bad reflection on our cohort, because it just looked like this one professor we've had of color, who has credentials from tier 1 schools, [name omitted], and blah, blah, blah, and that just didn't really sit too well with me, because it made our cohort look bad, and it made us look unprofessional, and we were basically complaining because she gave us too much work, so. I wish I could take that back, because she ended up being our professor for the next two years, or two courses, and just left a bad taste in my mouth (Participant 5, interview, October 4, 2011).
Participant 5 wished she could forget a time when her cohort went on the attack against a female professor of color. In her assessment, the professor was very credible with reasonable expectations; however, her colleagues were not up to the challenge. Participant 5 felt her cohort could have handled their discontent another way. She thought her classmates behaved unprofessionally and that created tension among colleagues.

We actually read that research, and I was, as a high school senior my background from an immigrant Mexican American/Chicano background I identified with it. I was very sad that the number of Latina students it dwindled as they get into high school and then college and masters and doctorate, then when I, I clearly remember now and I don't know if the numbers have changed, but it stated on there that only, I believe it was .5 of a Latino person ever ended up earning a doctorate degree, and I asked myself, like, how is t half a person, that's not even a whole person, that doesn't make any sense. Wow). So I think I made that a goal, and I never told anybody, but I made that a goal to try and change that .5 to at least 1 by trying to pursue a doctorate program, and so I kind of just knew that I was going to do it, and I've continued in school since I was in college obviously. I just continued studying and I haven't stopped, and that was just kind of what motivated me, I started to research, the facts what was the facts back then, probably very similar still now, and I kind of wanted to change that, and that has kind of, that's been the main reason why I have continued on, but as I continue on the journey of studying, I see you know the potential for, the need for change, so that in combination with the research that I initially saw motivated me to continue studying (Participant 6, interview, October 6, 2011).

An early college experience as a high school student planted the seed of social justice in Participant 6. During her reflection, she recalled her feelings of disbelief after learning about the disparities in education and the impact those inequities had on Latino(a) students. She decided at that moment that she would be a change agent by completing her education and setting an example for others to follow.
I think I was unsettled with the way education was set up. Anyway, I think what really got me, I just felt like they need certain people at the table, certain stakeholders, and especially from diverse backgrounds. So my motivation to get my doctorate and go back was to be one of those stakeholders who represented a diverse background, which in this case would be African American, and you know really have an eye for woman too. So that helped motivate me. I think people are trying at it, and you hear this idea about the recycled reform, and it's like we need to get really real about what's going on and not have recycled reform in education, so I'm hoping that somehow my voice, wherever I'm at, is really going to lend itself toward a real genuine talk about what we need to do to support, especially for those in those subcategory groups, you know, African American, Hispanic, Southeast Asians, those groups of people, Native Americans, and I really have a tender heart for African Americans males, you know, because we're losing them. It's catastrophic! It's unacceptable, like genocide (Participant 9, interview, October 7, 2011).

Participant 9 was also motivated by her desire to be a change agent and make education more equitable for the underrepresented and underserved groups. She spoke with focus and vigor about wanting to be a stakeholder for African-Americans and women. Participant 9 believes education continues to perpetuate the same cycles that leave certain racial and ethnic groups on the margins of educational access and attainment. As a mom, she feels a special connection to African American males because they are being lost at alarming rates.

**Quantitative findings for women of color.**
Table 4.2. *Doctoral Student Experience with Social Justice, Equity, and Diversity in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Independent Samples T-Test for Equality of Means for Women of Color and Other Women*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
<th>Other Women</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My professors are culturally competent.</td>
<td>1.81 (1.167)</td>
<td>1.53 (.774)</td>
<td>.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors discuss issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.50 (1.033)</td>
<td>1.42 (.692)</td>
<td>.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors are knowledgeable about issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.69 (1.195)</td>
<td>1.44 (.695)</td>
<td>.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors model leadership as it pertains to issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.81 (1.167)</td>
<td>1.61 (.871)</td>
<td>.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My class is culturally diverse.</td>
<td>1.63 (.806)</td>
<td>1.23 (.426)</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often interact with students in my program who are of a different race or ethnicity.</td>
<td>1.75 (1.390)</td>
<td>1.37 (.770)</td>
<td>.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to this program, I've taken courses in diversity.</td>
<td>1.50 (1.211)</td>
<td>1.94 (1.347)</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum reflects or addresses diversity as it pertains to culture, race, and ethnicity.</td>
<td>1.88 (1.147)</td>
<td>1.71 (.970)</td>
<td>.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum emphasized issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.88 (1.204)</td>
<td>1.74 (1.053)</td>
<td>.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum offers diverse perspectives.</td>
<td>1.63 (1.088)</td>
<td>1.74 (1.136)</td>
<td>.747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates discuss issues of social justice and equity.</td>
<td>1.75 (.931)</td>
<td>1.54 (1.010)</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data were coded as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = moderately disagree; 5 = strongly disagree. Women of Color, N = 16; Other Women, N = 35

Table 4.2 displays a statistical comparison between women of color and other women using the same variables in Table 4.1 to examine statistical significance in their perspectives and experiences. In examining the group of questions concerned with social justice and equity within the curriculum, there were no statistically
significant differences between women of color and other women. Upon closer examination, the mean scores suggest that all of the women regardless of race and ethnicity were in agreement that the curriculum reflects issues of social justice and diversity. However, attention should be given to the high standard deviations from all the women in general suggesting a wide variety of perspectives in terms of curriculum. When asked if their classes were culturally diverse, women of color reported less cultural diversity as other women. However, they were in agreement that diversity was present; they did not feel as strongly about it as other women. Also noteworthy; however, not statistically significant, other women feel more strongly that their professors model leadership as it pertains to issues of social justice and equity than women of color.

**Theme 2: Access and Opportunity**

**Qualitative findings for complete sample population.** Access refers to having the knowledge, influence, respect, and social networks as a faculty member or colleague to help open doors of opportunity for doctoral students. In addition, it also refers to the ability to build upon the perceived social, intellectual, human, and cultural capital of faculty and colleagues. Not only does access also reference having comprehensive curricula content that addresses issues of diversity and social justice, it refers to the ability to connect to the vital information that is not included in textbooks known as the "hidden curriculum." Access may also refer to provisions for financial resources.

Based on an analysis of the open response survey questions, students want access to a high quality, more diverse faculty that is knowledgeable and meets their
expectations. Students are wishing for greater access to expert faculty and instruction, career opportunities, school administrators, and financial resources. They are asking for "better faculty" with community college and administrative experience. Although many students expressed appreciation for their professors, there was concern about the quality of the faculty. Some faculty were described as "out of touch with the students in the program," "had no demonstrable teaching and/or classroom management skills," lacked social justice principles, "were shockingly weak," and "had zero experience teaching at the community college."

They are also expressing a desire for more rigorous instruction inclusive of dissertation writing support. Students want more relevance and alignment between the course content as well as dissertation writing and completion. More "publishing opportunities," "internship opportunities," and "more networking opportunities" would help satisfy their desire for career support. There is an expectation for faculty to "open doors that help need opening." Doctoral students want faculty to help get them access to the people, positions, and resources that can aide their educational and professional journey. Candidate selection also emerged as a theme. Doctoral students are interested in having "higher ranking administrators in the program." In other words, they want to extend their social networks to those individuals they perceive to be in positions of power. Affordability and financial assistance in the forms of scholarships, fellowships, and stipends have also presented themselves as major desires for students.

**Quantitative findings for complete sample population.**
Table 4.3. Access and Opportunity in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership:  
Means and Standard Deviations for Complete Sample Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Complete Sample mean</th>
<th>Complete Sample SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to attend professional conferences.</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to publish research.</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with networking opportunities.</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with an internship.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided career assistance support.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided publishing support.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to attend professional conferences.</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to publish research.</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like networking opportunities.</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like internship opportunities.</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like career assistance support.</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like publishing support.</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor is generally available when I need to speak with her/him.</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 73

Table 4.3 displays descriptive statistics based on the theme of access and opportunity in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership for the complete sample population. Based on mean scores, doctoral students are receiving minimal, if any, access to career assistance support and internships. They do not fare much better in terms of accessing publishing support. These students are in agreement that they would like career assistance and publishing support; however, they are not as keen on the idea of internship support. Although not in complete agreement, in terms of access and opportunity, doctoral students speak most favorably of their program providing them with the opportunity to attend professional conferences as well as networking
opportunities, which they would like more of. The greatest range of experiences is reflected under the guise of publishing. Overall, students want more access and opportunity to advance their careers.

**Qualitative findings for women of color.** Access and opportunity presented itself as a major theme among women of color and varied greatly by campus. For example, one campus designated as an HSI, received a large sum of grant monies to support Hispanics in higher education, and those students reported receiving more financial support than other students, granting them access and opportunities. On the other campuses, women of color had the same desires for access as the complete sample population. While some students wanted access to a more rigorous curriculum, the quest for rigor had adverse effects on people of color, particularly women, leaving them disenfranchised. Below, four women describe their experiences with access and opportunity at their institutions. One student expresses her desire for more rigor, while another spoke of the unintended consequences of "rigor" through her experience with the qualifying exam. In lieu of the curriculum, other students reflected on access to mentoring relationships and quality faculty.

Actually there are a few. My program I felt like, well first of all, I got my undergraduate education at {name omitted}. I got my masters education at {name omitted} and I chose to go to {name omitted} because of the convenience factor and the low cost of the education and so I sort of prepared myself for what I was about to enter into, because I really didn't have, maybe, very high expectations of what this program was going to be all about. I had read about what it was. It was a three year program, and I knew it was sort of like a quick and dirty doctorate degree, and that's exactly what I wanted, but at the same time, I almost was appalled by the low level of expectations in terms of academic rigor, in terms of the assignments, in terms of the professional development opportunities that were just sort of scattered across the program, and I even had a meeting with my advisor in the
first year, and I said I'm waiting for this thing to start. When am I going to feel like I'm in a doctoral program? When am I going to feel that pressure, and that expectation that I need to produce? And he said, 'you're not going to get that in this program' he said, 'this program was designed for working adults, it was designed for people moving into leadership, and we understand that you have all these other pressures at work, and in life, and this program wasn't supposed to add extra pressure to you'. And I felt sort of like you've got to be kidding me. Aren't we going to produce an article? Aren't we going to research and publish, and do conferences...? And none of that was happening. And I was just sort of like... having that one meeting where he said you need to lower your expectations was like... well fine then, I guess that's what I'm doing here, and there were several instances where even in class, we would have classroom assignments and I would see my fellow students ask to either extend deadlines, or ask to remove assignments, or ask that we cancel certain reading assignments, or ask whether or not we had to buy the books, and to me that was embarrassing especially when this is a person who has entered into a program to be challenged and educated, and they are asking whether or not they have to do the assignment, and that person is older than I am. It was just kind of sort of, like, you have to be kidding me, and so the experience is of the low expectation, and of the lack of professionalism. I mean there were several, it wasn't personal it was just something indicative of the program that it is.

( Participant 2, interview, September, 29, 2011).

When asked if there was one program experience that she would like to forget, Participant 2 reflected on a conversation with one of her professors. Participant 2 graduated from Tier 1 research institutions for her undergraduate and graduate degrees. The cost, convenience, and time frame for completion attracted her to her current doctoral program. Although she initially lowered her expectations of the program, she still felt the lack of academic rigor was appalling. This participant shared her concerns with her advisor, and was even more shocked when it was suggested that she lower her expectations even further. Participant 2 was dismayed by the lack of rigor, low expectations, and lack of professionalism in her doctoral program.
So there is this discourse between, how we were prepared and then how we were being rated or assessed or evaluated. The other thing is, most students went in with a pre-write. This is a trip. They went in, they looked at the rubric they wrote a pre-write. So they went in, folks went in with 30-40 pages written. I didn't understand that, I just thought that was considered cheating. I have ethics. You know, you can't just go in with a pre-write, because you have to write specifically to the case study that you're getting that morning. Well, they decided to go in with a really strong, you know written pre-write, so it was like 30, 40, 50 pages long, then, then what they did was rolled in the specifics of the case so if they say "critical race theory" they made it for the case study, but they already had the general body written, so you have to always write what the broad area is, and then say how you would handle it as an educational leader in that institution. And so people were very clever, and those who went in with pre-writes did pretty well, even with a minimum a re-write. I was one of the few people who didn't go in with their pre-write. My other friend who is Cambodian he didn't go in with a pre-write. Nor did my girlfriend, the older Hispanic gal, go in with a pre-write (Participant 9, interview, October 7, 2011).

Participant 9 hit a roadblock while in pursuit of her doctorate degree. She was the recipient of the unintended or intended (depending on how you look at it) consequences of the quest for rigor. Participant 9 always attended class and had perfect attendance, yet she was not presented with a critical piece of information that may have aided her in the successful completion of her qualifying exams. She lacked access to the hidden curriculum that enabled her White counterparts to be successful. In addition, she perceived the advantage they were given was a form of cheating.

Well, I'll be honest with you, the [name omitted] doctoral program at least at this campus, the educational leadership department, I don't feel is, has a position of being mentor like to us, and I can give you an example of what I mean in a little bit, as far as supported, I get a lot of support from all of the professors here. I'm in the K-12 (program) but I can go to a higher ed professor and I'm just in a unique situation because I am here all day, that I have access to them, and they are always willing to help me with concepts that I may not be understanding or homework, or just research, they will come up to me and they will say, 'yeah I know this is your topic and here are some articles that I found for you', so I do feel very supported in that area,
but I'm not sure I feel valued or empowered, as a colleague (Participant 1, interview, September 29, 2011).

In her position as a research assistant, Participant 1 feels greater access to professors, yet she does not have access to the faculty mentoring relationship that she desires.

The really only need I have is, is assistance, like someone on staff that is readily accessible for quantitative research. That's what I need right now, but as far as before; I never really looked at it, as I needed anything. I just kind of went to class and did the requirements and did what I have to do, but right now, it would be nice to have someone on staff who really is strong on quantitative research, and there is no one that I can think of that's in our program. Everyone is qualitative, or has touched a little bit on quantitative (Participant 5, interview, October 4, 2011).

Participant 5 does not express a need for much; however, she does not have access to the one need that she does have. She needs access to a faculty member who can assist her with her research. The pool of faculty members seems to be limited in their research methodology.

Quantitative findings for women of color.
Table 4.4. Access and Opportunity in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership:

Independent Samples T-Test for Equality of Means for Women of Color and Other Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
<th>Other Women</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to attend</td>
<td>1.73 (1.223)</td>
<td>2.21 (1.175)</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional conferences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to publish</td>
<td>2.87 (1.685)</td>
<td>2.59 (1.282)</td>
<td>.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with networking opportunities.</td>
<td>2.67 (1.345)</td>
<td>2.00 (.985)</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with an internship.</td>
<td>3.87 (1.457)</td>
<td>3.91 (1.234)</td>
<td>.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided career assistance support.</td>
<td>4.13 (1.302)</td>
<td>3.88 (1.094)</td>
<td>.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided publishing support.</td>
<td>3.73 (1.438)</td>
<td>3.09 (1.288)</td>
<td>.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to attend professional conferences.</td>
<td>1.20 (.561)</td>
<td>1.62 (.817)</td>
<td>.045*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to publish research.</td>
<td>1.33 (.617)</td>
<td>1.41 (.743)</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like networking opportunities.</td>
<td>1.27 (.594)</td>
<td>1.50 (.707)</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like internship opportunities.</td>
<td>2.00 (1.254)</td>
<td>2.47 (1.398)</td>
<td>.269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like career assistance support.</td>
<td>1.73 (1.223)</td>
<td>1.88 (1.094)</td>
<td>.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like publishing support.</td>
<td>1.67 (.900)</td>
<td>1.50 (.749)</td>
<td>.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor is generally available when I need</td>
<td>1.88 (1.219)</td>
<td>1.56 (1.021)</td>
<td>.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to speak with her / him.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

Note. Data were coded as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = moderately disagree; 5 = strongly disagree. Women of Color, N = 15; Other Women, N = 34
Table 4.4 displays a statistical comparison between women of color and other women using the same variables in Table 4.3 to examine statistical significance in their perspectives and experiences. In examining the group of questions regarding access and opportunity within the doctoral program, there were no statistically significant differences between the desires and experiences of women of color and other women, with one exception. Upon closer examination, the mean scores suggest that all of the women regardless of race and ethnicity agreed their programs are lacking in terms of providing internship opportunities, career assistance support, and publishing support. Although not statistically significant, there is a vast discrepancy between the networking opportunities afforded other women that women of color are either excluded from, or not accessing. On the contrary, women of color are receiving more opportunities to attend professional conferences than other women. This may be a direct result of their desire to attend professional conferences, which is statistically significantly greater than other women in their doctoral programs. All of the women, regardless of race and ethnicity, agree in their desires for more opportunities to publish research, network, access career assistance support, and publishing support.

**Theme 3: Mentoring**

**Qualitative findings for complete sample population.** Mentoring means voluntarily vesting oneself in the success of another by willingly providing guidance, access to opportunity and the "hidden curriculum", as well as yielding support that is inclusive of, but not limited to, emotional, academic, and professional. Evidence of mentoring emerged within the quality of faculty/student and collegial relationships, as well as relevance of program curricula. Students described their faculty/student
relationships as supportive and encouraging, with some evolving into mentoring relationships. When asked about the role race and gender play in faculty/student relationships, students overwhelmingly said race and gender played no role. A small sample believed race had no significance but gender did, and an equal number of participants reported they were both significant. Gender played a more central role than race in faculty/student relationships. Reflecting on her experience with a faculty mentor, one respondent stated,

Race and gender has a lot to do with how comfortable I am in my relationship with my mentor. Even though we were not of the same race/gender, my faculty mentor is just what I needed. He is someone who knows and understands his privileged background and he is sensitive to the struggles of people/students who are non-white. He makes concerted efforts to help level the playing field by being the agent of change. He helps me understand my position in the bigger scheme of things so that I can also be the agent of change. He knows that he will never fully grasp my struggles and we talked about it. I attended conferences and plan to present my work because of his suggestion. I join other professional, race and/or gender organizations to network myself with others, which he highly recommends. I prefer the relationship I have with my faculty mentor because I learned a lot and I felt that I am working within the system as a change agent rather than from the outside. Working with my mentor gave me the understanding of how other non-Southeast Asian, non-female operates and that to me is very valuable and insightful. I need that kind of mentoring at that/this point in my life.

Participants expressed the need, desire, and benefits of mentoring and suggest mentoring as a built in component to their doctoral programs. "MAKE SURE EVERY STUDENT HAS A FACULTY MENTOR. (This sounds wonderful and would have been a great help for me.) OR, at the very least, consider a mentorship program among more advanced students or graduates from the program." According to the students, the most important qualities of a mentor are willingness and ability to
provide guidance and access to opportunity. One student wants a mentor who is "Willing to be my honest guide through the entire doctoral process- Encouraging persistence and reflection as it is needed-Navigating with me in the journey, with academic brilliance, encouragement, candor, and passion; and letting me go alone when I must." Willingness means caring enough to make oneself available and having the desire to be a mentor. Ability refers to having the expertise and experience to offer guidance. Access refers to having the influence, respect, and social networks to help open doors of opportunity.

**Quantitative findings for complete sample population.**
Table 4.5. *Mentoring Experiences in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership:*

**Means and Standard Deviations (SD) for Complete Sample Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Complete Sample</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor gives me tips and advice on my future career interests.</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My faculty mentor and I are the same race.</td>
<td>1.49*</td>
<td>.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I initiated my own mentoring relationship.</td>
<td>1.35*</td>
<td>.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my psychosocial needs.</td>
<td>2.12*</td>
<td>1.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My relationships with my professors extend beyond campus interactions.</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race is important when selecting a mentor.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender is important when selecting a mentor.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a mentor outside of the university.</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor is within my program/department.</td>
<td>1.28*</td>
<td>.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor serves as my faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.60*</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program paired me with a faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.58*</td>
<td>.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I trust my faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.40*</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my emotional needs.</td>
<td>2.38*</td>
<td>1.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my academic needs.</td>
<td>1.81*</td>
<td>1.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've had opportunities to develop peer-mentoring relationships within my program.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 76, * N = 43

Table 4.5 displays descriptive statistics based on the theme of mentoring in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership for the complete sample population. Based on mean scores, doctoral students are in agreement that they initiated their own mentoring relationships more than being paired with a faculty mentor through their program. Their chair/research advisor generally serves as their faculty mentor. Therefore, faculty mentors are generally within the program/department. Also based on mean scores, doctoral students are in agreement that race and gender are inconsequential when selecting a mentor, and they have a great deal of trust in their
faculty mentors. Students agree their mentors help to meet their academic needs more than their psychosocial or emotional needs.

**Qualitative findings for women of color.** Based on an analysis of the interview data, women of color report a lack of faculty/student mentoring opportunities; however, they report having access to external mentors in the workplace and the community. While one student admits she "craves a mentoring relationship," another believes the faculty has the "inability to mentor" for lack of experience. In addition to being mentored externally, they also speak to their experiences mentoring others. In the passages below, students share their expectations and disappointments with faculty mentoring relationships.

None of the professors that were going really offered me guidance there. Not that I wanted my hand to be held or anything like that, we're all professionals, but when I got there, two of the professors I did see not once did they ask me ... and we were there for a week. Not once did they ask me if I would want to have a cup of coffee to discuss what I was learning, or maybe lunch, nothing like that, and talking to other professors from other universities who actually see me as a colleague, and I've been to conferences since, outside the area, and they're like, 'let's go to lunch, because we need to debrief, I want you to do this, and that, and I want to understand what you learned from here', and I did not get that from my own professors, so I came back disillusioned, because I realized then, that I don't feel we have true mentorship here at least from what I learned at that conference, and what I'm learning from other professors in nearby universities that I work with in other arenas (Participant 1, interview, September, 29, 2011).

When asked to describe an experience where she felt validated, valued, empowered, supported, or respected by a member of the (name omitted) doctorate program in educational leadership, Participant 1 reflected on an experience she had with her faculty at an educational conference. Instead of feeling validated and valued, she felt the opposite. Participant 1 discussed her desire for a mentoring relationship
with her professors, one that went beyond campus classrooms. She felt the conference
provided an opportunity to engage with the professors she sees regularly, but
inattention on their part left her feeling invisible. This doctoral student and faculty
research assistant felt her professors did not treat or view her as a colleague.
However, professors outside of her university did. She was "disillusioned" by the experience.

I don't really feel like my faculty had the ability to be active mentors because the full-time faculty who are in our program, none of them had community college experience, and my field is community college leadership, and the programs emphasis is on community college leadership, yet none of the faculty had ever worked at a community college, or had ever done any work as a faculty at community college or as administration of community college. There were some faculty members who had done research at a community college, but they were hired as expert consultants to work on that community college campus. They were not somebody who was a full time member of the staff or faculty at the community college, so they couldn't help us in anyway when it came to career development, or even practical issues of applying our research to issues at the community college, they didn't have that as a strength. So there was no mentoring from the faculty at all. (Participant 2, interview, September 29, 2011).

When asked about the kinds of mentoring or support she received from faculty, Participant 2 had very little faith in her faculty's ability to mentor her. She was an experienced community college administrator and entered the program with more community college experience than her professors. Therefore she entered the program the expert in her area.

They've been a huge mentor for me, and so has she. I go to every interview with her. I record everything; I take notes. I already know what company to go to for transcription, like all of the little stuff. I get an IRB, so I'm already IRB approved. All that, with her, so it has been a great thing, because now I'm ahead of everyone else, you know. And I'm not so lost. And I've seen a pro, how she does clarifying questions,
how she does probing questions (Participant 3, interview, September 30, 2011).

This participant described a supportive mentoring relationship with a faculty member. Although she is a faculty research assistant within the researcher/researcher assistant paradigm, she feels in addition to on the job training, she is being mentored. She was excited to share how much she was learning from her mentor.

Well that's a hard one. If I had to draw a map of all the people, I think it would be an intertwined web, but with my dissertation chair at the center, because she has been with me. She has been supporting me. I met her when I was doing my master's degree back in 2005 and 2006, and she has always kept in contact with me, and she has been mentoring me even before she became my dissertation chair, so she would be at the center of everything, of all of the support that I've received (Participant 8, interview, October 8, 2011).

When asked to create a visual map of key people who have supported her during her journey, Participant 8 placed her research advisor at the center. She discussed her long-term mentoring relationship she has with her dissertation chair. Participant 8 feels very supported and finds great value in her faculty mentoring relationship.

**Quantitative findings for women of color.**
Table 4.6. *Mentoring in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Independent Samples T-Test for Equality of Means for Women of Color and Other Women*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
<th>Other Women</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor gives me tips and advice on my future career interests.</td>
<td>2.71 (1.532)</td>
<td>1.88 (1.149)</td>
<td>.036*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My faculty mentor and I are the same race.</td>
<td>1.67 (.500)</td>
<td>1.22 (.428)</td>
<td>.024*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I initiated my own mentoring relationship.</td>
<td>1.11 (.333)</td>
<td>1.50 (.514)</td>
<td>.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my psychosocial needs.</td>
<td>3.00 (1.414)</td>
<td>1.69 (1.078)</td>
<td>.016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My relationships with my professors extend beyond campus. interactions.</td>
<td>3.63 (1.586)</td>
<td>2.89 (1.389)</td>
<td>.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race is important when selecting a mentor.</td>
<td>3.75 (1.390)</td>
<td>3.75 (1.296)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender is important when selecting a mentor.</td>
<td>3.50 (1.592)</td>
<td>3.56 (1.382)</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor is within my program / department.</td>
<td>1.22 (.441)</td>
<td>1.33 (.485)</td>
<td>.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor serves as my faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.56 (.527)</td>
<td>1.56 (.511)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program paired me with a faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.78 (.441)</td>
<td>1.44 (.511)</td>
<td>.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I trust my faculty mentor.</td>
<td>1.78 (1.302)</td>
<td>1.33 (.686)</td>
<td>.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my emotional needs.</td>
<td>2.78 (1.563)</td>
<td>2.06 (1.197)</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my academic needs.</td>
<td>1.78 (1.302)</td>
<td>1.82 (1.286)</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've had opportunities to develop peer-mentoring relationships within my program.</td>
<td>3.13 (1.628)</td>
<td>2.34 (1.413)</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p < .05

Note. Data were coded as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = moderately disagree; 5 = strongly disagree.
Women of Color, N = 9; Other Women, N = 16
Table 4.6 displays a statistical comparison between women of color and other women using the same variables in Table 4.5 to examine statistical significance in their perspectives and experiences. In examining the group of questions concerned with mentoring, there are statistically significant differences between the mentoring experiences of women of color and other women. One such finding is women of color neither agree nor disagree that their mentors help meet their psychosocial needs, whereas other women agree. The high standard deviation reflects the variance in experiences among women of color with some having their psychosocial needs met, while others are unsupported. Another finding is women of color agree they initiated their own mentoring relationships and they tend to do so statistically significantly more than other women. They take it upon themselves to start mentoring relationships. They are not sought out to the extent that other women are to build those types of relationships. Race and gender are of little importance to women, regardless of race and ethnicity, when selecting a mentor. Although both groups are in agreement their mentors are of the same race, there is a statistically significant difference with women of color having less opportunity to be mentored by a faculty member of the same race as their female counterparts. The degree to which women receive advice on future career interests is also a significant finding. Women of color receive less career advice from their chair/research advisor, who are most likely their faculty mentors, than other women.

**Theme 4: Transformation**

**Qualitative findings for complete sample population.** Transformation refers to a change in attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and/or behavioral practices. Participants
reported being transformed through their interactions with faculty and students in the program, as well as engagement in course content. As a result of their experiences, participants felt compelled to "advocate for equity." They gained an understanding of what it means to lead, became more sensitive and culturally aware, and felt a sense of validation for their thoughts and leadership practices. When asked, "In what specific ways has the program developed you as a leader?" One participant shared,

1. The way I think about myself, and how I conduct my daily business.  
2. Encouraged me to tackle issues of justice that otherwise I would have avoided.  
3. Encouraged me to stand tall in a room of leaders and give myself value for my thoughts.

In addition to skill development and broadening the scope of knowledge, several courses were transformative in nature challenging pre-existing biases and beliefs, resulting in shifts in attitudes, as well as behavior and practices. One student described their transformation as the result of their participation in their doctoral program, "Diversity in the community stood out for me. It made me look at my practices where I was telling racial jokes. After this class I stopped doing that." The program has increased their knowledge base providing them with additional perspective and greater understanding of organizational systems, which influenced and shaped their leadership practices. For example, one student stated, "I have learned that leadership creates an environment which can persist after the leader enacting/supporting change has left the organization. Leadership is more than the individual leader, it grows followers into leaders."

**Qualitative findings for women of color.** Women of color spoke very little of transformational experiences during the interviews, and when they did, it was as an
observer or participant in someone else's transformation; however, they experienced something equally powerful. Within these Ed.D. programs some women of color felt a sense of validation, which may be as powerful for them as the transformational experiences described by other doctoral students on the survey. Below is an excerpt from an interview describing a transformational experience from an outsider's point of view.

I really felt like a lot of individuals that don't traditionally, how do I say it, maybe individuals that aren't aware of the challenges that we have that you know, people of color, people who come who English as a second language, or have immigration issues, they don't usually think of, they don't realize all the issues that we have to just continue ahead in life, or try and go through, yeah life here in America, we're trying to build the professional life. They don't always, they aren't always aware of all of our issues, and I felt like in that class my classmates who weren't familiar with that, it was eye opening for them, and they I think from that class, some of us validated more than I have had in my life (Participant 6, interview, October 6, 2011).

Participant 6 was asked to describe and experience when she felt validated or valued in her doctoral program. She felt people in general lack an awareness of the experiences of immigrants and people of color. Participant 6 felt course engagement legitimized her experiences which helped her colleagues developed a greater understanding of the immigrant experience.

**Theme 5: Care and Support**

**Qualitative findings for complete sample population.** This theme is characterized by the expression or demonstration (acts of kindness) of a genuine interest and desire to help meet the academic, emotional, professional, social, and psychological needs of doctoral students through outreach, encouragement, and engagement. Based on analysis from the open response survey questions, students felt
included and supported by other students and faculty. One student responded, "I have a very strong relationship with professors in my program. They authentically seek feedback about my progress, frustrations, and suggestions for the program. They also regularly check in to see what support I may need." Many described these relationships as reciprocal in nature.

Students primarily received academic support from their peers, with a significant number also reporting emotional and psychological support, which manifests itself in the form of academic support. These supports further highlight the value students have placed on the cohort model. Most of the students characterize their relationships as positive with a great deal of support and encouragement from their peers. One respondent states, "I am glad I began the program with this cohort. We mesh well and are very ethnically diverse. We support each other, cry if we need to, laugh long and often, and care about each other like family." They primarily describe friendly and collegial relationships, although formal and professional relationships also emerged. Overall, students valued the cohort model. They developed friendships that served as a source of support throughout their doctoral experience. However, there were a significant amount of students who felt disappointed and disconnected from their peers.

Quantitative findings for complete sample population.
Table 4.7. Care and Support in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Means and Standard Deviations (SD) for Complete Sample Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Complete Sample mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My classmates are supportive of me.</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received support for my research topic from my peers.</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>1.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cohort model has supported me throughout this process.</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors are supportive of me.</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* N = 76

Table 4.7 displays descriptive statistics based on the theme of care and support in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership for the complete sample population. Based on mean scores, doctoral students report being supported by their peers and professors, with the greatest variety occurring in terms of the support for my research topic from my peers.

**Qualitative findings for women of color.** The care and support that women of color experience in their doctoral programs vary. They have felt supported, unsupported, and ambivalent about their experiences. In addition to the faculty and peer supports reported by the complete sample population, women of color expressed receiving support from the departmental administrative assistant, financial assistance, outreach, internships, support attending conferences, as well as extended support networks such as fraternities and sororities and other community based organizations. One form of support not mentioned by the complete sample population was the sense of connectedness felt by having peers with a salient identity. Below are examples of the range of experiences had by women of color in their doctoral programs.
The people here are so caring, and they give you the scaffolds to be successful, now you choose not to do the hard work, that's on you. But they are there for you. If you need them on Sunday, they are there on Sunday for us. We need them on Saturday; they are there on Saturday. Whatever time we need them, they are there. And not too many programs are like that. And this program, they let you do things that; they give you opportunities that you can't imagine. We want to go to a conference, they will pay for it. You want to present, they will always say, 'look if you have a proposal, put a preliminary proposal together, present it.' They are always pushing us to be presenters so I think that is just amazing they really want us to come lead (Participant 3, interview, September 30, 2011).

When asked what kinds of mentoring or support she received, Participant 3 felt very supported by the faculty in her program. She felt faculty members were available and provided access to opportunity.

Yeah, I mean, I'm not really close with my cohort. I'm not really that close to any of the professors, except for the one, and I'm not really close to her she just sends me stuff. But it's really, okay my chair, my dissertation chair; he has been supportive. Yeah, he's helped me through the process, he knows, he's just let me do my own thing and then come to him when I need it. That's about it (Participant 5, interview, October 4, 2011).

Initially, Participant 5 could not recall a time when she felt supported in her doctoral program. Eventually, she mentioned the support she received from her dissertation chair. Their relationship was such that he gave her the space to work independently, but he was approachable and available when she needed his assistance. She speaks as if their relationship works for her.

I felt support in as much as I didn't feel unsupported, but I didn't feel active, proactive support, the research I wanted to do, they didn't even discuss my topic, it was almost like, 'yeah sure, that's fine'. They didn't say, 'oh that's a good idea or bad idea' they just said 'okay, so what's your next step?' versus 'oh instead of this, why don't you do it that way' There was no tweaking or nuanced approach, or you know detailed feedback about anything. They were just like, 'okay, go ahead.' You know, just no encouragement, but they didn't discourage me. There
was one part-time faculty, a retired chancellor of a community college district, he was extremely helpful in bouncing ideas about career pathways, but he was not full-time (Participant 2, interview, September, 30, 2011).

Participant 2 felt ambivalent about her experiences with faculty members. She expected greater involvement and faculty support for her dissertation research. When given the opportunity to review the transcript, Participant 2 wanted to add that she did receive assistance from a part-time faculty member who offered career assistance.

Quantitative findings for women of color.
Table 4.8. Care and Support in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership:

Independent Samples T-Test for Equality of Means for Women of Color and Other Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
<th>Other Women</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My classmates are supportive of me.</td>
<td>1.63 (.957)</td>
<td>1.40 (.914)</td>
<td>.425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received support for my research topic from my peers.</td>
<td>1.93 (1.223)</td>
<td>1.77 (1.165)</td>
<td>.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cohort model has supported me throughout this process.</td>
<td>1.31 (.602)</td>
<td>1.35 (.812)</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors are supportive of me.</td>
<td>1.38 (.500)</td>
<td>1.25 (.500)</td>
<td>.409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data were coded as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = moderately disagree; 5 = strongly disagree. Women of Color, N = 16; Other Women, N = 35

Table 4.8 displays a statistical comparison between women of color and other women using the same variables in Table 4.7 to examine statistical significance in their perspectives and experiences with feeling cared for and supported in their doctoral program. In examining the group of questions concerned with care and support, there were no statistically significant differences between women of color and other women.

Theme 6: Respect and Appreciation

Qualitative findings for complete sample population. As it pertains to this study, respect and appreciation means to find value in the programmatic experience as well as faculty and student relationships. Students describe their best faculty/student relationships as engaging, although the engagement varies in degree from professional to collegial; they are based upon mutual respect and appreciation. They expressed
appreciation for their faculty and found them to be encouraging, caring, and supportive.

I feel very blessed to have such an amazing group guiding me through this process. I enjoy the conversations and opportunities presented in each class. I also appreciate that they value my perspective and expertise in areas where I am stronger.

Another example of appreciation was expressed from this participant, "I'm an introvert. However, whenever I share my views, opinions, or ask questions, professors always value my input and treat me with respect. That is very rewarding for myself as a person and makes me really appreciate the program."

Quantitative findings for complete sample population.

Table 4.9. Respect and Appreciation in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership: Means and Standard Deviations (SD) for Complete Sample Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Complete Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor values my work.</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive the same level of respect from my</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professors as my colleagues.</td>
<td>1.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am respected as a leader by my professors.</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 76

Table 4.9 displays descriptive statistics based on the theme of respect and appreciation in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership for the complete sample population. Based on mean scores, doctoral students report feeling valued and respected by their professors and their colleagues.

Qualitative findings for women of color. The experiences of women of color vary as they pertain to respect and appreciation. As reported in the qualitative and quantitative sections, the complete sample population, inclusive of women of color,
felt a sense of respect and appreciation for their faculty, colleagues, and programmatic experience. However, their experiences add multiple dimensions to the idea of respect. For example, one participant spoke of having to prove herself by passing her qualifying exam before gaining respect from her peers. Women of color also spoke of a loss of respect for their faculty and colleagues as a result of their unprofessionalism and inadequate leadership. Below are some of examples of women of color feeling respected or disrespected within their programs.

I think some times when I felt respected are when professors acknowledge my work. Like one time one of my professors sent out one of my assignments and he used it as an example. He called it an anchor paper, that is something that, like a model paper for other students to follow (Participant 8, interview, October 8, 2011).

They are very respectful, everybody is very respectful and we're all learning from each other. Like I don't think there is differences at any level, we have the superintendents, we have principals, we have counselors, we have teachers, and I feel everybody, or at least I feel like everybody has validated or empowered, or someone supported me, not just academically, but emotionally, or socially throughout the program when we started classes (Participant 6, interview, October 6, 2011).

There was a group of people that were very disrespectful. Like when we would do presentations they would roll their eyes, and they were disrespectful with everyone except for themselves obviously. And there was an e-mail that was written and an e-mail was accidently blind copied to a colleague of mine. In this program too, and instead of her taking it to the director which she should have, she showed it to somebody else, it got bigger than it should have....so, all that drama hit the director had to have a meeting with [name omitted] to involve, to help this stuff, and so basically that little group were the ones that left. They didn't have to leave, but because after what happened the cohort discredited, they were very much discredited among us as colleagues. We didn't respect them anymore, we just because, like, just because I wasn't involved like I didn't go to that meeting, I heard what was said about me, but I didn't confront them. But just knowing that they did that. I had lost respect for them. You know. That e-mail should have never been sent out, and it was a very unprofessional thing to do. You
know talking about people, you just don't do that, and that shows you how immature they are, and it's sad that these people are educators and they are working with kids, and to have that mentality. It was just horrible, and it had nothing to do with the program, it was just because they were here in the program when that happened (Participant 3, interview, September 30, 2011).

You know I don't know if I could describe a specific experience more than just overall value in the program. Like when the professors, like my advisor, [name omitted] he always makes you feel like you know what you're doing or giving you the boost that you need like you're headed in the right direction, don't worry, you're doing fine. Just because you always have a lot of self-doubt when you're writing and stuff, but I don't, I can't name a specific experience. More so than just feeling respected overall by the staff (Participant 4, September 30, 2011).

I would say some of the attitudes and the lack of tolerance that I have experienced by my cohort members to some of our teachers in the program...the evaluations of this particular professor were absolutely ruthless, and over the top, and I felt almost like, I felt in one way embarrassed, that they had acted unprofessionally, and I also felt like I had a sibling that needed to be disciplined, and the reason why I say that is because when you develop the cohort relationship, I mean you get to know each other very well, and sometimes people say things that they shouldn't but, they do anyways, and you get to know people, how they think, and in my particular perspective I thought that that, that the behavior and the really ruthless evaluations was inappropriate, and I wouldn't prefer that that had never happened, because it kind of changed my perspective of how these individuals in my cohort would be as future leaders in education (Participant 7, interview, October 7, 2011).

**Quantitative findings for women of color.**
Table 4.10. Respect and Appreciation in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership:

*Independent Samples T-Test for Equality of Means for Women of Color and Other Women*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
<th>Other Women</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chair/research advisor values my work.</td>
<td>1.88 (1.219)</td>
<td>1.38 (.739)</td>
<td>.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive the same level of respect from my professors as my colleagues.</td>
<td>2.33 (1.291)</td>
<td>1.79 (1.008)</td>
<td>.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am respected as a leader by my professors.</td>
<td>1.79 (1.051)</td>
<td>1.71 (.760)</td>
<td>.769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data were coded as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = moderately disagree; 5 = strongly disagree. Women of Color, N = 17; Other Women, N = 34

Table 4.10 displays a statistical comparison between women of color and other women using the same variables in Table 4.9 to examine statistical significance in their perspectives and feelings about respect and appreciation in their doctoral programs. Although both groups agree they feel valued and respected as leaders by their professors, other women reported feeling their work was more valued by their professors than women of color. Other women also reported feeling more strongly about receiving the same level of respect from their professors as their colleagues than women of color.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

This final chapter discusses the conclusions for research questions based on data analysis of the student survey results and appreciative interviews with women of color. Chapter 5 also presents a discussion of the implications for educational practice, study limitations, recommendations for future research, and a closing summary. Researcher remarks conclude this study.

Summary of the Study

Women of color have historically received less support than other groups in their quest to earn doctorate degrees attributing to their continual underrepresentation in academia as doctoral students and faculty, particularly in positions of educational leadership (Felder, 2010; Gay, 2004; Grant & Simmons, 2008). The purpose of this disciplined inquiry was to examine the experiences of women of color and the ways in which they are supported or constrained within their Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. Chapter 4 presented doctoral student survey findings from 78 participants, inclusive of open-ended response items. One-on-one appreciative interviews were also conducted with eight women of color. Several themes emerged from the results: social justice, equity, and diversity; access and opportunity; mentoring; transformation; care and support; and respect and appreciation. These themes were derived using phenomenological (Moustakas, 1994) and constant comparative methods (Boeije, 2002; Glaser, 1965, Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994) with respect to the following research questions:
1. In what ways does the quality of faculty/student relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

2. In what ways does the relevance of program curricula support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

3. In what ways does the quality of collegial relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

4. In what ways do the Ed.D. programs in educational leadership contribute to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions?

Conclusions for Research Questions

The results from the research questions are presented in two parts: supports and constraints. Some elements serve as both supports and constraints, demonstrating the complexities of experiences shared by participants in this study.

Research Question 1: In what ways does the quality of faculty/student relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

Supports. There were several ways the quality of faculty/student relationships supported women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership: providing financial assistance and outreach, being approachable, encouraging, and affirming; as well as providing quality instruction inclusive of faculty mentoring opportunities.
Financial Assistance. Faculty members were responsive to the financial needs of the students. As a show of support, they utilized financial resources to retain students in the program, provide school supplies, offer internships such as graduate assistantships, and sponsor travel opportunities to attend professional conferences supportive of women of color in their program completion. According to the data collected from participants, doctoral studies would not have been a reality for some women of color if it were not for the generous aid they received.

Outreach. Women of color felt supported when faculty reached out to them demonstrating genuine interest, care, and concern for their welfare (Grant & Simmons, 2008). These faculties did not wait for the students to initiate communication; instead they offered their support. As mentioned by one student, if the faculty saw a need that needed to be filled, they filled it. Some faculty were genuine about checking in on students, offering assistance, and inviting them out for coffee or meals making the students feel connected, like they mattered. The research presented in Chapter 4 suggests outreach as form of support; however, these interactions are very limited for women of color.

Approachability. Faculty members were viewed as nurturing and open when they made themselves available for students to approach them for assistance. Approachability was critical in establishing trusting and caring relationships. Approachability not only demonstrates care and concern, it also creates a space for communication and building trust (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008). One student described herself as "broken" professionally when she entered the program. The faculty not only
reached out to her, but they were also approachable so she felt comfortable reaching out to them. She reported receiving lots of care and nurturing.

Approachability may be part of the reason students felt a connection to their program's administrative assistant or coordinator. One student additionally described her administrative coordinator as fulfilling the role of a mentor. She was considered instrumental throughout their process.

"She would pick up the slack of the faculty, basically, the faculty would always be missing deadlines or losing papers, like not getting e-mails, not calling you back, and the secretary would be the one to crack the whip on them." "She's everything!"

Students may relish this individual because they are there to support. They are available and approachable; it is their role to communicate information to the students and help meet their needs.

**Encouragement.** Words of praise and reassurance were very comforting for this vulnerable population. During periods of self-doubt, faculty reminders that they were competent and capable of writing a dissertation and successfully completing the program encouraged and motivated women of color to move forward with their research. Simple words of affirmation validated them as leaders and scholars and boosted their self-efficacy providing them with much needed emotional and psychological support (Johnson-Bailey, 2004).

**Validation.** Encouragement was one form of validation; however, there were others (Johnson-Bailey, 2004). Women of color viewed acknowledgements of their programmatic contributions as a form of validation. Validation of their experiences made them feel special, like they belonged. Some of the women reported being
singled out for certain opportunities, such as presenting at conferences as another form of validation. It let them know that someone recognized and valued their individual contributions to research. Some women of color felt validated and thus supported from being publically honored and recognized for their accomplishments, while others felt any informal praise from their professors was enough encouragement.

**Instruction.** Quality instruction infused with care and scaffolds presented itself as a form of support. Women of color felt care and scaffolds were important instructional components to their learning outcomes. They also benefitted when faculty knew their research interests and shared related articles and other information about the topics. In addition to quality instruction, the modeling of leadership and research practices by faculty were identified as learning supports. Some students were given the opportunity to be included or involved in faculty research projects.

**Mentoring.** Mentoring proved to be a valuable support for women of color; however supportive faculty mentoring relationships were very limited (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001). Initial analysis of the data identified a few examples of faculty mentoring among women of color; however, closer examination revealed the "mentoring" described may be more reflective of their positionality as graduate research assistants and the role they play in working with faculty. The researcher-assistant paradigm necessitated additional instruction and modeling not generated in a classroom.

Some students spoke fondly of the relationships they have with their research chairs, who may or may not be their mentors. Their chairs were excited about their work and showed interest. They also helped them with their committees and navigate
the doctoral process. That is the role of the chair. If those were their only contributions to the faculty/student relationship, there was no mentoring involved. It is the position of this research that mentoring is voluntary and the teaching and learning is "in addition to" formal, structured, learning opportunities.

Some women of color revealed through the survey they have faculty mentors; however, they spoke very little about the support received from faculty mentoring relationships during the interviews. On the contrary, Black and Hispanic women spoke very highly of their external mentoring. The majority received their mentoring support from external sources, particularly work supervisors (Patton, 2009). Some participants were encouraged to pursue their doctoral programs by individuals in superior positions to them who in some cases also sat on their committees directly, voluntarily vesting themselves in the success of these women. Their external mentors also assisted them with networking opportunities. In addition to having work mentors, students had mentors in community organizations, as well as fraternities and sororities.

**Constraints.** This study identified several barriers that hindered the quality of faculty/student relationships: mentoring opportunities, failed expectations, and inadequate programmatic leadership.

**Mentoring.** As the data reflected in Chapter 4, women of color are not being supported to the same extent as other women. They reported a lack of faculty/student mentoring opportunities, which are very limited for this group. While some report having faculty mentors, there is little depth to the relationships. A closer examination of the tensions that exists between women of color and faculty need further exploration. This research indicates women of color have to initiate their own
mentoring opportunities more than other groups. Having to initiate their own relationships suggests professors are not reaching out to them to the same extent that they reach out to other students. What are the faculty perceptions of women of color that would prevent them from reaching out to this group the same way they reach out to others? A lack of outreach translates into a lack of concern, which is a form of marginalization. Literature reveals feeling devalued as one of the reasons women of color abandon their pursuits of a doctoral degree, limiting future opportunities (Benjamin, 1997; Carroll, 1982; Reyes & Halcón, 1997; Solorzano, 1998).

Findings from Chapter 4 indicate women of color receive less career advice from their chair/research advisor, who is most likely their faculty mentor, than other women. Less guidance means less access to opportunity and career advancement, placing them at a distinct disadvantage from their colleagues. Lack of advancement may result in debt from funding their education without the benefit of a pay increase making the pursuit of a doctorate a burden instead of an asset.

The final constraint faculty mentoring presents is a lack of help meeting the psychosocial needs of women of color, meanwhile helping to meet those needs for other women. The assumed inability to meet those needs may stem from having less opportunity to be mentored by a faculty member of the same race as their female counterparts. Research supports the notion that the intersectionality of race and gender provides a unique life experience for women of color, placing them on the margins of society (Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Solorzano, 1998). It is difficult for someone in a position of privilege to help navigate marginality, for that has not been her or his experience. Having a mentor without that shared experience may prevent
them from being able to relate enough to the students to help meet their psychosocial needs.

**Faculty expectations.** Students expected faculty to be experienced and professional with high expectations. Any deviation from these expectations reinforced preconceived notions they were receiving a marginal degree (Felder, 2010). Low faculty expectations in terms of rigor and accountability are indicative of the experiences of some women of color in their Ed.D. programs in educational leadership. Students reported faculties were not holding themselves or their guest lecturers to a high performance standard or accountable for the material they were presenting. The students complained about not having experienced quantitative researchers on staff or having faculty with no community college teaching experience despite programmatic emphasis on community colleges. Some women of color also expressed dissatisfaction with having part-time professors and ill-prepared guest lecturers. Experiencing unprofessional behavior may validate some of their preexisting beliefs about earning a marginal degree, diminishing its value.

**Inadequate leadership.** In the situations described by the students, faculty leadership was unable to resolve racial tension and division in the cohorts. This inability to bring about an effective resolution may have been the result of a lack of cultural sensitivity and competence, or indicative of inadequate leadership. To their credit, the faculty recognized there was a problem, but failed at their attempt to address the issue. Addressing sensitive issues entrenched in bias, racism, and ignorance requires additional skills not often infused in traditional leadership.
paradigms (Dolly, 1998; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2011; Tillman, 2001).

Research Question 2: In what ways does the relevance of program curricula support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

Supports. Based on an analysis of the data collected for this study, inclusion has been the greatest source of support for women of color as it pertains to program curricula in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership.

Inclusion. The perspectives, experiences, and contributions of women of color have historically been absent from educational curricula. The absence of their voices have not only left a gap in education, it has left them on the margins. Therefore curricula that offer diverse perspectives, addresses diversity as it pertains to culture, race, and ethnicity, validating their existence as well as their experiences. It also makes others aware of the experiences of different groups of people. It is this awareness that has the potential power to transform lives and leadership practices (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Gay, 2004; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2011). Women of color reported pursuing their doctorates to change the educational circumstances of disenfranchised students, particularly students of color. Program curricula that address issues of social justice and equity keeps them engaged in the learning process and provide them with the tools they need to reach their goals and effect change.

Constraints. There are several factors contributing to constraining experiences for women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership as they pertain to the relevance of program curricula.
Rigor. Finding balance between too much and too little rigor has proven to be problematic for some programs. Too much rigor without sufficient academic supports, especially when in terms of high stakes testing such as the qualifying exams, may result in the loss of students, too little rigor may lead to feelings of inferiority.

Relevance. According to participants there is inherent danger in providing irrelevant assignments that are unrelated to research or successful leadership practices. When students deem assignments a waste of time, they become disengaged in the process hindering their research and doctoral experience (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007). Further, the more time they waste, the less time these students are invested in examining problems and identifying solutions that can positively change education. Women of color also felt the curriculum did little to help them navigate their leadership positions at work. They felt unsupported in that regard.

Alignment. There is also a danger to providing assignments and curricula that are not aligned with the goals and objectives of the program and courses (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007). For example, promoting social justice as a core value of the program, yet glossing over issues of diversity was viewed as contradictory by participants. Coursework not aligned with qualifying exams have detrimental consequences resulting in the failure and potential removal of women of color from the programs, further contributing to their underrepresentation in higher education, according to the findings.

Lack of opportunities. Mentoring has been proven to be a form of support for doctoral students, including women of color (Larke, Patitu, Webb-Johnson & Young-Hawkins, 1999; Menges & Associates, 1999). It ironic therefore, that an absence of
formal mentoring opportunities from doctoral programs may hinder degree completion for this population. According to participants, lack of opportunities for career support may render the degree useless. For example, when students are not taught how to publish, their academic work may be developed in vain if it cannot reach the intended audiences. When students are not given opportunities to practice what they have learned, nothing is gained; no one benefits.

**Instruction.** The best curriculum is no good without the proper instruction. According to the participants, having the right instructors is just as important as having the right curriculum. Instructors who are inexperienced, ill prepared, unprofessional, culturally insensitive and incompetent, are not only turn-offs for students, they have the potential to hinder their degree completion, further contributing to the underrepresentation of women of color in academe (Felder, 2010).

**Research Question 3:** In what ways does the quality of collegial relationships support or constrain the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership?

**Supports.** The cohort model was reportedly the greatest source of support for women of color in terms of building collegial relationships. Each participant spoke highly with regard to the cohort model.

**Cohort model.** The cohort model provided the opportunity to build relationships along with structured instructional activities that created an environment of trust which served as a foundation for other types of support: academic, emotional, and social. One aspect of the cohort experience that was particularly beneficial for women of color was the presence of others with a similar ethnic or linguistic identity.
Students expressed a sense of comfort in being around other students with a similar ethnic and linguistic background (Gay, 2004). They felt more understood and connected to their doctoral experience. Greater representation from students of diverse backgrounds may enhance the programmatic experience for everyone. (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002).

**Constraints.** Unresolved tension within a cohort can create a constraining learning environment and lead to feelings of disconnect and isolation.

**Cohort model.** Although the cohort model is generally a major form of support, it can also serve as a source of constraint (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000). For example, the cohort model served to be a source of constraint when students exhibited unprofessional behavior. Within the context of educational leadership, there exists an expectation that doctoral students will behave in a manner conducive to teacher leaders, superintendents, principals, and other educational leaders. Women of color reported losing respect for their colleagues who exhibited unprofessional behavior such as sending mass emails with disparaging remarks about cohort members that reflected cultural incompetence and insensitivity, whining about rigor of the workload, low performance expectations, writing collective letters of complaint about specific teachers that were perceived to be unwarranted, unnecessary, and racially motivated. The absence of respect created or added tension to their cohorts, which resulted in the loss of some students.

The presence of "social loafers" also diminishes the quality of collegial relationships within a cohort. The women interviewed for this study were very motivated and focused with a seriousness of purpose and seemed to have very little
patience for some of their colleagues who they perceived to be slackers, not living up to the expectations of doctoral level work. This dichotomy strained collegial relationships and contributed to division within the cohorts. Students felt additional stress when they had to pick up the slack for their peers when they did not perform on group assignments.

_Disconnect_. Feeling disconnected from their peers takes an emotional and psychological toll on women of color and may further hinder degree completion (Turner & Thompson, 1993). For example, in this study some students were left behind as a result of "failing" their qualifying exams. Being separated from their cohorts not only triggered a sense of inferiority, but removed them from the nurturing, trusting, and supportive cohort environment that they helped create, making degree attainment much more difficult. Another example of being disconnected is not having a person in your cohort that you can identify with enough to build a trusting relationship. Underrepresented students often tend to gravitate toward one another for support (Gay, 2004). The presence of one underrepresented student in a course may leave them unsupported.

**Research Question 4: In what ways do the Ed.D. programs in educational leadership contribute to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions?**

_Supports_. Career assistance may contribute to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions for women of color (Young & Brooks, 2008).

_Career assistance_. Programmatic support contributing to the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions is very limited. Students have been
sponsored to attend professional conferences where there have been opportunities to get noticed for their contributions to research. There are also opportunities for networking at these conferences. Networking offers opportunities for professional advancement; however, it is rarely provided, decreasing the likelihood for the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions among women of color.

**Constraints.** A lack of career assistance hinder may hinder the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions.

**Lack of career assistance.** Lack of publishing support is a form of silencing, contributing to the marginalization and invisibility of women of color in higher education (Benjamin, 1997). The inability to have their research shared, is the equivalent of silencing, not having a voice. Research can only be impactful when it is shared. Lack of internships hinders opportunities for practice and subsequent leadership growth which does very little to challenge the status quo in education. Hence, hindering the ideal of equity for all. Networking and mentoring are critical components of career assistance (Turner, 2002). Without them, opportunities for publishing support, internships, and job opportunities are inhibited (Johnson-Bailey, 2004).

**Study Limitations**

Several limitations should be considered when examining this study. Sample size is one limitation of this study. Although the sample is representative of the total student population participating in Ed.D. programs in the university system, the number of participants is relatively small when considering the amount of participants needed to run more complex statistical analysis (Pallant, 2007). The researcher
aspired for greater representation from Black and Native American women; however their numbers in the Ed.D. programs were very small, limiting the pool of potential participants. Face to face interviews may have strengthened researcher-participant collaboration; however, they were not always feasible. Findings from this study may lack generalizability given the unique context of the programs and participants. Based on the researcher's positionality, there may be sample bias. In addition, the modified survey instrument had limited testing.

**Implications for Educational Practice**

There are several ways programmatic leadership can better support women of color on their path to successful doctoral completion: providing mentoring opportunities, fostering an inclusive learning environment, reaching out as a demonstration of care and support, and applying a critical leadership style which considers the tensions that may arise as a result of racism and sexism.

**Mentoring.** Access to a faculty mentor may be the greatest resource a woman of color can have while pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership, yet this opportunity is not embedded in many doctoral programs. Mentoring may provide emotional, academic, and psychosocial support, as well as career assistance supports such as publishing and networking (Holmes, Land & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Welch 1996); however psychosocial support is lacking for women of color. In addition, trusting mentoring relationships may also provide access to the "hidden curriculum" which is critical to successful degree completion (Felder, 2010; Hawley, 1993; Young & Brooks, 2008). There have been studies that suggest mentoring is most effective from persons with a salient identity (Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson & Mugenda, 2000;
Welch, 1996; Williams, 1997); however, findings from this study suggest race and
gender are not as significant in mentoring relationships as genuine care and support.
What matters most in building these relationships is that the person is willing and able
to give their support. Less important is the specificity of race and gender (Holmes,

**Inclusive environment.** Women of color have the potential to thrive in
environments where they feel a sense of belonging, validation, appreciation, and
respect (Jean-Marie & Lloyd-Jones, 2011). Creating a safe space where each voice is
heard, acknowledged, and valued is important to their success. One aspect of creating
such spaces is by modeling social justice and equity by being more inclusive in faculty
and student selection. When considering admittance to a program, leadership may
want to consider the benefits of admitting students from diverse backgrounds (Turner,
2002). Student participants from this study expressed a desire for more ethnic and
racial diversity in educational leadership programs, for that gives them access to
human capital. Doctoral students, who are also educational leaders, expressed a desire
to engage in discourse with faculty and students from different racial and ethnic
backgrounds. They recognize that greater diversity means greater access for everyone.

Multi-dimensional curricula that offers diverse perspectives and addresses
issues of social justice and equity from different points of view helps to create
environments of inclusion for women of color (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Davidson
& Foster-Johnson, 2001). Curriculum shapes social reality (Ladson-Billings & Tate,
1995). Seeing positive reflections of themselves in texts gives them an ally by
validating their existence. A safe space also lends itself to vulnerability where they
can practice their teaching and leadership styles. More attention, although not enough, is being placed on inclusivity and safe spaces in higher education. Contributing to the inclusive environment is the cohort model, which other studies have found. However the cohort is not a panacea. Faculty leadership has to be mindful of the tensions that can and do occur within the group.

**Demonstration of care and support.** Outreach demonstrates a sense of care and concern for others. Having a peer or faculty member show genuine concern for their progress, health and well being, or offer simple words of encouragement is a source of support for women of color. Throughout history, people of color have been devalued, and their intelligence questioned, among other things (Young & Brooks, 2008). Women of color have been stigmatized by prejudice (Solorzano, 1998). They have endured psychological trauma as a result of living in a society where their worth is devalued because of the race and gender. As a result, women of color may try to distance themselves from any perception that may affirm such negative stereotypes. For example, instead of asking for help when needed, they may not speak out for fear of people thinking they are not competent to be there. They may also fear others view them as a token as if they did not earn the right to be doctoral students; they are only in the programs because of affirmative action. In addition to learning the language of academia, women of color also have to process such psychological barriers as fear and rejection. Fear is often a stumbling block for approaching others who may lend support. The idea of being rejected, invalidated and seen that the voice is not of worth, may be too much to bear. Therefore, outreach as a demonstration of care and support is vital to the successful doctoral completion of women of color.
Critical Leadership. To be more inclusive in a demographically changing society, higher education leaders may need to develop greater self-awareness. An awareness of their own personal biases and prejudices as it pertains to race and ethnicity and how they impact their decision-making. To help examine and understand the disenfranchisement of people of color may require educational leaders to use a critical race lens (Patton, McEwen, Rendón, & Howard-Hamilton, 2007). Based on the premise of applied critical leadership theory, upon critical reflection and self-evaluation, those leaders choosing to change the status quo, will need to be open to engaging in courageous conversations around critical issues that may stem from taboo topics such as racism. To do so effectively may require the use of additional epistemological lenses such as critical race theory, or feminist theory (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2011).

Along these lines, there are several ways the leadership can provide more supports for women of color. One is to increase their own awareness and understanding of different racial and/or ethnic groups. Apply the use of applied critical leadership theory to become more adept at handling issues of diversity and racism in higher education. Had the faculty, doctoral program staff, or the women who participated in the study been exposed to alternative leadership theories like applied critical leadership or even transformative leadership, an offshoot of transformational leadership being taught in most programs; there would have likely been more attention given to the mentoring and development of the students of color who shared their experiences.
Programmatic leadership can also do more to recruit women of color as both faculty and doctoral students. They can also develop empathy for the experiences of the historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and acknowledge the contributions of this group.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This research examined the experiences of women of color by exploring by gaining insight into the experiences of all students and making comparisons between their experiences and those of other women. Statistically significant findings emerged particularly as they pertained to faculty/student mentoring relationships. Comparisons between the experiences of women of color and white men may yield even more significant findings. It would also be interesting to explore the experiential differences between women and men, regardless of race or ethnicity.

This study found that women of color initiate their own faculty mentoring relationships significantly more than other women, and faculty tend to reach out to other women more than they reach out to women of color. Research needs to be conducted to examine the tensions that exist between women of color and faculty in terms of outreach. Who initiates communication within faculty/student relationships and how is that communication initiated? Why are women of color initiating their own mentoring relationships more than other groups? Why are faculties not reaching out to them as often as they reach out to other?

Based on participant responses, this study found that some experiences were unique to specific campuses leading to the conclusion that programmatic leadership plays a key role in constructing supportive or constraining learning environments.
Programmatic leadership also needs to be examined in relation to the experiences of women of color in Ed.D. programs in educational leadership.

**Summary**

Women of color have a wide range of experiences in their pursuit to doctoral degree attainment in educational leadership. They are experiencing success; however, in some regards they do not receive the same levels of support afforded to other groups placing them at a disadvantage. Many women of color turn to external support networks to compensate for what is lacking within their doctoral programs. Programmatic leadership plays a key role in whether or not women of color will find themselves in a supportive or constraining environment, which may increase the likelihood that they will be successful in their doctoral pursuit, or hinder their degree completion.

**Concluding Remarks**

Some may ponder this study and deduce that the supports and constraints presented are reflective of the overall doctoral experience. Surely every student may benefit from the supports mentioned, but not every student has access to those supports, namely women of color. Further, the absence of programmatic supports may not be as detrimental to other groups as they are women of color, who continue to be on the margins of educational leadership.

When I embarked upon this journey, I was encouraged by the number of women of color graduating with their doctorates in Educational Leadership from participating universities. I attributed that success to the diversity of the programs, environment, leadership, and emphasis on social justice. I deduced there was
something unique and special about these doctoral programs that deserved formal exploration. In many ways the programs were supportive of all students, including women of color. However, within these programs, women of color are being disenfranchised, a finding I was not expecting.

This study has informed my leadership in many ways. Prior to this study, I thought of myself as culturally sensitive and competent, now I know not to take that belief for granted. I am more aware of the impact of leadership decisions on the academic, emotional, social, cultural, and psychological well being of those being served. I long recognized the value of communication, but through this study I learned the importance of outreach and being more attentive to the needs of those being served. I was most excited about the numerous ways women of color are contributing to leadership at work, school, and in the community. I was most touched by the reports of personal transformations that took place during the doctoral process. These transformations may not have been possible if the leadership had not created the conditions to make it happen. Such changes give me hope that leaders are becoming more attentive to the need for equity in education.
Human Subjects Research Approval Form

IRB #: 2011-000
To: Lorri Santomaria
Kimberley Stemke

Project Title: Women of Color in Educational Leadership Programs: An Ermic Phenomenological Perspective

This letter certifies that the above referenced project was reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations on Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46), including its relevant subparts.

Continuing Review
This approval is valid through the expiration date shown below. If this research project will extend beyond that date, a continuing review application must be submitted at least 30 days before this expiration using the Continuing Review form available on the IRB website. (www.csun.edu/irb)

Modifications to Research Protocol
Changes to this protocol (procedures, populations, locations, personnel, etc.) must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to implementation using the Minor Modification Form available on the IRB website.

Unanticipated Outcomes/Events
The CSU San Marcos IRB must be notified immediately of any injuries or adverse conditions.

☐ Approved Information Sheet or Consent Form(s) are attached. Only approved consent forms may be used to obtain confindient consent.

Approval Date: 5/17/2011
Expiration Date: 5/15/2012

Katherine Haydon, Ed.D.
IRB Chair

The California State University
APPENDIX B

April 22, 2011

Dear Colleague:

The purpose of this letter is to introduce myself and ask for your assistance in a research project. I have gained permission to conduct this study in your departmental program. I am a candidate in the Joint Doctoral Program at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and the University of California San Diego (UCSD).

Briefly, this study aims to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which Ed.D. Programs support or constrain women of color based on faculty relationships, curriculum, collegial relationships, and the attainment of educational leadership positions and promotions.

Data collection methods will include an electronic survey administered to doctoral students in Educational Leadership who have completed their first year, corroborated by interviews for a select group of individuals. This mixed-methods design is necessary to gain the greatest understanding of the phenomena under study by building on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis, and findings.

You will be receiving an electronic survey in one week. The coming survey provides additional information about the study. You will have the option to consent or decline participation at that time. Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter. I look forward to your support.

Sincerely,

Kimberley H. Sliemke
APPENDIX C

Consent to Participate in Research

Women of Color in Educational Leadership Programs:
An Ernie Phenomenological Perspective

Invitation to Participate

Kimberley H. Stienke, a candidate in the joint doctoral program at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that aims to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which Ed. D. programs support or constrain women of color based on faculty/student relationships, relevance of the program curriculum, attainment of promotions and leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships.

Description of Procedures

As a current doctoral student in Educational Leadership at (name omitted), you have been asked to voluntarily participate. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire of 50 to 75 questions (depending on how many sections are applicable to you). The estimated time is 20 to 30 minutes. Participation is entirely voluntary and responses to all questions are optional. You may refuse to participate or, once you have started, you may withdraw at any time. There is minimal risk and no direct benefit to you. Upon completion of the survey, you may be given the option to follow-up with an interview.

Risks and Inconveniences

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- Privacy concerns - Some questions, although relevant to the study, may feel invasive to some participants.
- Time - Participants will spend 20-30 minutes on the survey.
- Potential breach of confidentiality - Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the participants; however, there is a possibility that insiders (students or directors in the Ed.D. Programs) may speculate on the identities of interview participants.

Safeguards

Safeguards put in place to minimize risks include:

- Privacy concerns - The study is designed to be non-invasive; however, participants will be reminded that their participation is voluntary and they can stop at any time.
**Doctoral Student Experience Survey**

1. Doctoral Student Experience Survey

Consent to Participate in Research

**Doctoral Student Experience in Educational Leadership Programs: A California State University Study**

**Invitation to Participate**

Kimberly H. Sterne, a candidate in the Joint Doctoral Program at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that aims to examine the experiences of doctoral students in educational leadership programs and the ways in which California State Ed.D. programs support or constrain students based on faculty/student relationships, relevance of the program curriculum, attainment of promotions and leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships.

**Description of Procedures**

As a current doctoral student in Educational Leadership at a CSU, you have been asked to voluntarily participate. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire of up to 40 questions (depending on how many sections are applicable to you). The estimated time is 15 to 20 minutes. Participation is entirely voluntary and responses to all questions are optional. You may refuse to participate or, once you have started, you may withdraw at any time. There is minimal risk and no direct benefit to you. Upon completion of the survey, you may be given the option to follow-up with an interview.

**Risks and Inconveniences**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- Privacy concerns: Some questions, although relevant to the study, may feel invasive to some participants.
- Time: Participants will spend 15-20 minutes on the survey.
- Potential breach of confidentiality: Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the participants; however, there is a possibility that insiders (students or directors in the Ed.D. Programs) may speculate on the identities of interview participants.

**Safeguards**

Safeguards put in place to minimize risks include:

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation is entirely voluntary and responses to all questions are optional. You may refuse to participate or, once you have started, you may withdraw at any time.

**Benefits**

There are no direct benefits to the participants; however, this research will identify ways that colleges and universities can better support doctoral students in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership. The potential impact is an increase in the number of underrepresented groups completing their doctoral degrees and gaining greater access to educational leadership positions. Their immediate communities and society as a large can and will benefit from their unique leadership.

**Questions/Contact Information**

The California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this study. If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Kimberly H. Sterne, stam002@csusm.edu, (760) 560-8394, or the researcher's advisor/professor, Dr. Lori J. Santamaria, santamaria@csus.edu, (760) 560-6020. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB at (760) 750-4029. You may print a copy of this form to keep for your records.
# Doctoral Student Experience Survey

**1. Do you wish to voluntarily participate in this survey?**
- Yes - I hereby signify that I have reviewed this consent statement and that I agree to participate in this study.
- No - I do not agree to participate in this study.

## 2. Demographics

This series of questions is designed to get a composite picture of who you are as an individual.

**2. Are you a student in an Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership?**
- Yes
- No

## 3.

**3. Are you in a joint Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership?**
- Yes
- No

## 4.
4. Which CSU campus are you currently attending?

- [ ] East Bay
- [ ] Fresno
- [ ] Fullerton
- [ ] Long Beach
- [ ] Los Angeles
- [ ] Northridge
- [ ] San Marcos
- [ ] San Bernardino
- [ ] San Diego
- [ ] San Francisco
- [ ] Stanislaus

Other (please specify):

5. In which year of your current graduate program are you (as of June 2011)?

- [ ] First
- [ ] Second
- [ ] Third
- [ ] Beyond third

5.
6. What factors influenced your decision to begin an Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership within the CSU System? (Check all that apply)

- career opportunities
- career advancement
- increased leadership skill development
- emphasis on social justice
- program length of time (approx. 36 months)
- effect change/make a difference
- acquired influences
- personal goal
- funded
- researcher/practitioner model

Other (please specify)

7. Are you a first generation college student?

- Yes
- No

8. What institution awarded your bachelor’s degree?

9. What is your current professional position or title?

10. How do you self-identify in terms of gender?

11. How do you self-identify in terms of race and/or ethnicity?
12. How old are you?

- 20 - 25
- 30 - 39
- 40 - 49
- 50 - 59
- 60 - 69
- 70 - 75

13. Are you parenting or expecting?

- Yes
- No

14. How would you describe your relationship status?

- Divorced
- Married
- Partnered
- Single
- Other (please specify)

15. How long have you lived in California?

- 1 - 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 15 years
- 16 - 20 years
- Over 20 years

6. FACULTY / STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

This series of questions focuses on your experiences with your chair / research advisor.
16. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor is generally available when I need to speak with her/him.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive sufficient and constructive feedback from my chair / research advisor.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor values my work.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable suggesting directions for my own research to my chair / research advisor.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can talk openly about my future career interests with my chair / research advisor.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor gives me tips and advice on my future career interests.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can talk to my chair / research advisor if I have personal problems interfering with my work.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. FACULTY / STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS (cont.)

This series of questions focuses on your mentoring experiences with faculty in your program.

17. Do you have a faculty mentor?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

18. Do you want a faculty mentor?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

9.
### Doctoral Student Experience Survey

**19. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My mentor is within my program / department.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chair / research advisor serves as my faculty mentor.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My faculty mentor and I are the same race.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My faculty mentor and I are the same gender.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program paired me with a faculty mentor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I initiated my own mentoring relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**20. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Moderately agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Moderately disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I trust my faculty mentor</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my psychosocial needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my emotional needs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mentor helps meet my academic needs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 10. FACULTY / STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS (cont.)

This series of questions focuses on your experiences with faculty in your doctoral program.

**21. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Moderately agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Moderately disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My professors discuss issues of social justice and equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>My professors are knowledgeable about issues of social justice and equity.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professors model leadership as it pertains to issues of social justice and equity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My professors are culturally competent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My perspectives and points of view are understood by my professors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My professors are supportive of me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My professors are empathetic towards my experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My relationships with my professors extend beyond curricular interactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My competence is validated by my professors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My professors have included me in leadership opportunities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
22. How would you describe the best relationship you have with a faculty member from the program?

23. What role do you think race and/or gender play in that relationship?

24. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with faculty in your program?

11.

25. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

I have a mentor outside of the university.  
Race is important when selecting a mentor.  
Gender is important when selecting a mentor.

26. What are the three most important qualities of a mentor?

12. COLLEGIATE RELATIONSHIPS

This series of questions pertain to your collegiate relationships within your doctoral program.
## Doctoral Student Experience Survey

27. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My perspectives and points of view are understood by my peers</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates are supportive of me</td>
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<tr>
<td>My classmates are empathetic towards my experiences</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My relationships with my classmates extend beyond campus interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>I often interact with students in my program who are of a different race or ethnicity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My competence is validated by my peers</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My class is culturally diverse</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’ve had opportunities to develop peer-mentoring relationships within my program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My classmates discuss issues of social justice and equity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have felt included in study groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have felt included in social activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have opportunities to engage in intellectual discourse with my peers outside of class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have received support for my research topic from my peers</td>
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</table>

28. How would you characterize your relationships with the graduate students in your department?

29. What kinds of mentoring or support have you received from peers?

30. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experiences with your peers in the doctoral program?

### 13. CURRICULUM/CLASSROOM

This series of questions pertain to your doctoral curriculum and its impact on classroom experience.
31. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cohort model has supported me throughout this process</td>
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<tr>
<td>My reality often goes unheard or unacknowledged during class discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prior to this program, I’ve taken courses in diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum offers diverse perspectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum reflects or addresses diversity as it pertains to culture, race, and ethnicity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My program curricula validate my experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My views are welcomed in class discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My graduate curriculum emphasized issues of social justice and equity.</td>
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</table>

32. What course stood out for you and how did it impact you?

33. If you could change one thing about the curriculum, what would it be?

14. LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

This series of questions pertain to leadership opportunities provided by your doctoral program.
34. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to attend professional conferences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My program has provided me with the opportunity to publish research.</td>
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<td>My program has provided me with networking opportunities.</td>
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<td>My program has provided me with an internship.</td>
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<td>My program has provided career assistance support.</td>
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<td>My program has provided publishing support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to attend professional conferences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like the opportunity to publish research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like networking opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like internship opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like career assistance support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like publishing support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am respected as a leader by my professors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I receive the same level of respect from my professors as my colleagues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have developed my leadership abilities since beginning the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am considering a career in academia.</td>
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</table>

35. In what specific ways has the program developed you as a leader?

36. If you had three wishes for the program, what would they be?

37. Please use the space below to elaborate on any of your answers or address areas not covered by the survey that affect your doctoral experience.
38. Would you be willing to follow-up with an interview?
   - Yes
   - No

39. Please provide your email so you can be contacted regarding your possible participation in an interview.

16.

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your contribution to this body of research is valued and greatly appreciated.

17.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Unfortunately, you do not meet the criteria for this study.
Consent to Participate in Research

Women of Color in Educational Leadership Programs: An Ernic Phenomenological Perspective

Invitation to Participate

Kimberley H. Stiemke, a candidate in the joint doctoral program at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that aims to examine the experiences of women of color in educational leadership programs and the ways in which California State Ed. D. programs support or constrain women of color based on faculty/student relationships, relevance of the program curriculum, attainment of promotions and leadership positions, and quality of collegial relationships.

Description of Procedures

Upon your consent, a date, time, and location will be arranged for you to be interviewed individually. The conversational style interview regarding your experiences as a woman of color in Ed.D. Programs in Educational Leadership will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. You will be provided a transcript of the interview for checking and clarifying and information.

Risks and Inconveniences

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- Potential to evoke a strong emotional response - Although every precaution is taken, there is the potential to open "old wounds" and evoke an emotional reaction with some of the questions asked.
- Fear of retribution - This is a strengths-based study; however, participants may fear retribution if providing unflattering information regarding their experiences in the doctoral programs.
- Privacy concerns - Some questions, although relevant to the study, may feel invasive to some participants.
- Time - Participants will spend 20-30 minutes on the survey. A select few will spend an additional 45-60 minutes participating in an interview.
APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol

1. What motivated you to pursue your doctorate?

2. Describe an experience where you felt validated, valued, empowered, supported, and /or respected as a member of the (name omitted) doctorate program in Educational Leadership?

3. If there were one program experience that you wish you could forget, what would it be?

4. In what ways were you supported or constrained during your research process?

5. What kinds of mentoring or support have you received from faculty?

6. Please create a visual map of key people who support you as you make your way through graduate school.

7. If you had to do it all over again, would you choose the same program at the same institution? Why or why not?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to add concerning your experiences in the program?
# APPENDIX G

## FINDINGS FROM OPEN ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How would you describe the best relationship you have with a faculty member from the program?</strong></td>
<td>Students describe their best faculty/student relationships as engaging, although the engagement varies in degree from professional to collegial, they are based upon mutual respect and appreciation. Students also describe their relationships as supportive and encouraging, with some evolving into mentoring relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What role do you think race and/or gender play in that relationship?</strong></td>
<td>Students overwhelmingly said race and gender played no role in their faculty/student relationships. A small sample believed race played no significance but gender did, and an equal number reported they were both significant. Gender played a more central role than race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with faculty in your program?</strong></td>
<td>Students expressed appreciation for their faculty and found them to be encouraging, caring, and supportive. However, there was concern about the quality of the faculty. Some faculty were described as &quot;out of touch with the students in the program,&quot; &quot;had no demonstrable teaching and/or classroom management skills,&quot; lacked social justice principles, &quot;were shockingly weak,&quot; and &quot;had zero experience teaching at the community college.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the three most important qualities of a mentor?</strong></td>
<td>The most important qualities of a mentor are willingness and ability to provide guidance and access to opportunity. Willingness means caring enough to make oneself available and having the desire to be a mentor. Ability refers to having the expertise and experience to offer guidance. Access refers to having the influence, respect, and social networks to help open doors of opportunity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How would you characterize your relationships with the graduate students in your department?</strong></td>
<td>Most of the students characterize their relationships as positive with a great deal of support and encouragement from their peers. They primarily describe friendly and collegial relationships, although formal and professional relationships also emerged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What kinds of mentoring or support have you received from</strong></td>
<td>Students received primarily academic support from their peers, with a significant number also reporting emotional and psychological support, which manifests itself in the form of academic support. These supports further highlight the value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peers?</td>
<td>the students have placed on the Cohort Model. Overall, students valued the Cohort Model. They developed friendships that served as a source of support throughout their doctoral experience. However, there were a significant amount of students who felt disappointed and disconnected from their peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experiences with your peers in the doctoral program?</td>
<td>What course stood out for you and how did it impact you? In addition to skill development and broadening the scope of knowledge, several courses were transformative in nature challenging pre-existing biases and beliefs, resulting in shifts in attitudes, as well as behavior and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What course stood out for you and how did it impact you?</td>
<td>If you could change one thing about the curriculum, what would it be? Students want more relevance and alignment between the course content as well as dissertation writing and completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what specific ways has the program developed you as a leader?</td>
<td>Students are wishing for greater access to expert faculty and instruction, career opportunities, school administrators, and financial resources. Students are asking for &quot;better faculty&quot; with community college and administrative experience. They are also expressing a desire for more rigorous instruction inclusive of dissertation writing support. More opportunities for publishing and networking would help satisfy their desire for career support. Candidate selection also emerged as a theme. Doctoral students are interested in having more &quot;higher ranking administrators in the program.&quot; Affordability and financial assistance in the forms of scholarships, fellowships, and stipends have also presented themselves as major desires for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you had three wishes for the program, what would they be?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Theme 1: Social Justice, Equity, and Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| "They lead with their heart, not just with their mind. An understanding of equality issues. They have a passion for social justice."
| "Very close even though we are very diverse"
| "Consider cultural differences at the workplace."
| "Embed social justice principles into all courses."
| "Course on student learning and student development was not comprehensive and glossed over critical diversity issues."
| "Move 'Cultural competence class' to the BEGINNING of the program."
| "I would like there to be more on the topic of culture and ethnic differences in the workplace as well as working with diverse children."
| "Hire Latino/Black professors"
| "The most important thing is to ensure that my mentor appreciates diversity."
| "Social justice leadership perspective is missing. No work in critical theory outside of one summer (short) multicultural class. The class was fabulous but we did not have the time to really explore critical consciousness and privilege."
| "Is 'culturally proficient' in every sense of the term."
| "More classes on language diversity such as African American Language"
| "More diverse curriculum"
| "Expanded my understanding of diversity issues"
| "My professors are appreciative of the diversity within our group and I have not observed inequity."
| "I would rate one faculty member very high on the social justice scale, but we have had no discussions about social justice in any other class in the last 3 years."
| "I have enjoyed the diversity of the program."

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APPENDIX H
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Access and Opportunity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;The program needs to be more selective on who they allow into the program. Some of my colleagues are really not doctoral level students.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Either find competent professors to teach technology courses or drop the courses from the curriculum all together.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;I would have liked to have higher ranking administrators in the program.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Open doors that need help opening.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Gave experiences leading groups and presented opportunities to meet and talk to many successful community college leaders.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;More diverse curriculum&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Course on student learning and student development was not comprehensive and glossed over critical diversity issues.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Hire Latino/Black professors.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Again...only practicing school administrators included. Too much time spent explaining procedures, etc. to those who have never taught or have served as an educational leader.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Being a connector to career opportunities.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;More faculty with school leadership experience.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;Experienced administrators as professors.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme 3: Mentoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;Several of them have served as mentors and I can go speak with them regarding professional, school or personal matters.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;Willing to be my honest guide through the entire doctoral process- Encouraging persistence and reflection as it is needed- Navigating with me in the journey, with academic brilliance, encouragement, candor, and passion; and letting me go alone when I must.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;A sense of compassion and understanding Ability to use critical questioning that lead to self inquiry Having a healthy balance of advising and empowering.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Peer review of my work, opportunity to exchange ideas, work collaboratively on projects.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;MAKE SURE EVERY STUDENT HAS A FACULTY MENTOR. (This sounds wonderful and would have been a great help for me.) OR, at the very least, consider a mentorship program among more advanced students or graduates from the program.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Someone who can guide you and pushes you to do your personal best; someone who has the qualities you seek and understands how to motivate people.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;I must trust this person's advice. The person must have experience on which to base the advice. There must be candor between us.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;Study groups for quals, peer editing, idea sharing, holding each other up during intermittent crises.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;I have received emotional and career advice from my closest peers which has been beneficial.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Several of them have served as mentors and I can go speak with them regarding professional, school or personal matters.&quot;</td>
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</table>
Theme 4: Transformation

<p>| &quot;This has been a life-changing experience and I value the friendships and mentors that I have made along the way.&quot; |
| &quot;It has taught me to work with different people and different environments. It has forced me to be more open-minded in collaborating.&quot; |
| &quot;Diversity in the community stood out for me. It made me look at my practices where I was telling racial jokes. After this class I stopped doing that.&quot; |
| &quot;I have learned that leadership creates an environment which can persist after the leader enacting/supporting change has left the organization. Leadership is more than the individual leader, it grows followers into leaders.&quot; |
| &quot;I am more evolved and have gained an increase understanding of how Prek-14 is aligned and misaligned. I feel now as a leader in the field it is my call to action to address growing gaps in education, advocate for equity, promote effective stakeholder collaboration when discussing academic and social needs of California's students.&quot; |
| &quot;1. The way I think about myself, and how I conduct my daily business 2. Encouraged me to tackle issues of justice that otherwise I would had avoided. 3. Encouraged me to stand tall in a room of leaders and give myself value for my thoughts.&quot; |
| &quot;Diversity and equity class. This class has a big impact on my ways of thinking and looking on people from different ethnic backgrounds.&quot; |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Theme 5: Care and Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;My chair pushes me to do better and be better and we have interesting discussions about research and its place in education.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;I am glad I began the program, with this cohort. We mesh well, and are very ethnically diverse. We support each other, cry if we need to, laugh long and often, and care about each other like family.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;We cheer each other on, supplement each others' notes, one person is available to Skype in someone who has to miss class so that the person missing can still get that weeks' lesson&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;We can tell when someone is feeling overwhelmed, either by school, work, or personal issues and go out of our way to help and support. We carry each other along through tough times.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;We find articles for each other, we proof each others work. We talk about work issues&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;I have a very strong relationship with professors in my program. They authentically seek feedback about my progress, frustrations, and suggestions for the program. They also regularly check in to see what support I may need.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;Always there to help and support. Gives advice and feedback on papers and projects in a good timely manner.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;The faculty member encouraged me to apply and present at the AERA &amp; CSCC conference April 2011 in New Orleans and I did. She supported with the entire process both personally and professionally.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;One of the adjunct professor is helping me with my grammar outside of school.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;While I am very academically competent on my own, I have relied on the people in my cohort to support me socially and emotionally.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;Our cohort provides a bulwark of support.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;We vent with each other about everything.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;Some professors have my cell phone and have invited me to coffee.&quot;</td>
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<td>• &quot;Engagement is almost always initiated by me.&quot;</td>
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<td>Theme 6: Respect and Appreciation</td>
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<td>• &quot;The best relationship is with my chair. She is open, honest, direct, and available. She coaches and mentors, but speaks to me as a competent equal which is to say she does not see herself as better than me nor is she trying to gain power over me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;We had the best faculty members and I believe that my success is a testament to their competence and dedication.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;This program has exceeding my expectations. The faculty is cohesive and very supportive of their students.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;I feel very blessed to have such an amazing group guiding me through this process. I enjoy the conversations and opportunities presented in each class. I also appreciate that they value my perspective and expertise in areas where I am stronger.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;One based on mutual respect and interests that will extend beyond the program.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;I'm an introvert. However, whenever I share my views, opinions, or ask questions, professors always value my input and treat me with respect. That is very rewarding for myself as a person and makes me really appreciate the program.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;I get honest feedback and helpful suggestions. I am glad I entered the program at this school.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &quot;The cohort program model has been the highlight. I've learned as much from my peers as from my instructors and studies.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


Carroll, C.M. (1982). Three's a crowd: The dilemma of the Black woman in higher education. In G.T. Hull, P.B. Scott, & B Smith (Eds.), *All the women are
White, all the Blacks are men, but some of us are brave (pp. 115-128). Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press.


