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Money, Power, Respect: Philanthropic Giving Of African American Alumni Of Predominately White Institutions

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MONEY, POWER, RESPECT:
PHILANTHROPIC GIVING OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ALUMNI OF
PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Education

by

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B.A., Appalachian State University, 2008
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August 2015

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This work is dedicated to the memory of my twin sister and to all those who have loved, supported, and encouraged me to go farther and climb higher. Thank you for pushing me and for being the foundation for which I have achieved so much.

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The path that has brought me to this point in life was filled with champions who supported my endeavors every step of the way. Each of you contributed a piece of you towards helping me succeed and achieve my dreams and aspirations and for that I am sincerely grateful for all that you have done and will continue to do. Thank you to my best friends for always guiding me through my stubbornness and tough times. I am grateful for your love, admiration, and your kindness regardless of the day, time, or place. Thank you to my mentor, Carllos for pushing me to always achieve greater feats and for always providing an open ear and an open heart. To my family, I love you all and know that this is a success for all of us. No one can say that we didn't succeed through years of adversity and life. Thank you to all of the educators, administrators, and community members who never gave up on me and for those who continue to break down barriers in the lives of youth often forgotten or discarded by the system. To all of my former students, success is yours and never let anyone take that from you.

This is for you: JC, AY, KM, AE, DT, AC, NJ, KT, and SG. I love you all.

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ABSTRACT

As colleges and universities throughout the United States face economic downturns that translate into budget reductions, hiring freezes, and academic program dissolution, it is becoming increasingly more pertinent to secure valuable alumni donations to meet the financial and budgetary needs of these institutions. African American alumni of Predominately white Institutions (PWIs) have often been an overlooked resource for colleges and universities soliciting philanthropic donations.

This study will explore the relationship between African American alumni and their Predominately white alma maters and how this relationship affects philanthropic giving to the institutions. In addition to exposing the stimulus for giving to their alma mater, the study will also explore the experiences of the alumni as undergraduates that motivated their desire to give. Through use of case study methodology and a cross-case analysis, the researcher will capture the narratives of participants selected from a population of African American alumni of Acme State University and A&M College. The researcher will apply a cross-case analysis when exploring the data in the hopes of exposing commonalities that influence the alumni/alma mater relationships as well as themes that impact philanthropic giving of African American alumni to their Predominately white alma mater.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Higher education can’t be a luxury; it’s an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford” (President Barack Obama, January 2012 State of The Union Address). Colleges and universities in the United States continue to face insurmountable odds caused by the financial woes associated with decreased funding and increased demand for affordable, high quality education (Clark, 2009). In the aftermath of the most recent financial recession, colleges and universities felt the full effects of the bleak financial climate as their endowments reflected a fraction of their original standing and as the funding they initially received from state and federal governments was cut and, for some institutions, recalled (Holmes, 2009). On average, higher education institutions lost 25% of their total endowments between 2007 and 2010 (Clark, 2009). In 2011, President Obama proposed an \$89 billion cut in higher education spending over the next decade, resulting in reductions to federal Pell and research grants (Lauerman, 2011). The recession affected much more than education spending from the federal government. It also affected the funding that colleges and universities receive from state governments. On average, state funding per student in higher education decreased 28% according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013). As endowments and government funding dwindled during this period of financial turmoil, colleges and universities were forced to look for alternative means to offset losses and secure revenue. Philanthropic donations have become a vital revenue source for college and university operations. According to the Council for Aid in Education (2013), alumni donations accounted for nearly 27% or \$33.8 billion of the total voluntary support received for higher education institutions.

African American alumni of Predominately white Institutions (PWIs) have been an overlooked and often disregarded resource when PWIs solicit alumni donations (Yates, 2001). In recent years, the number of African Americans enrolling and graduating from higher education institutions increased by 50% between 1976 and 2011, and with that increase came the potential for an increase in donations from African American alumni (Yates, 2001). The median adjusted income per household for African Americans in the United States has risen to 59.2% of whites, up from 55.3% in the 1970s according to the Pew Research Institute (Desilver, 2013). African Americans who have attained a college degree are more likely to have accumulated higher levels of wealth (Shin, 2010) and have a higher likelihood of philanthropic giving. Drezner (2008) reported that African Americans donate a higher amount of their disposable income than their white peers regardless of socio-economic status. PWIs rely heavily on charitable donations to fund operating expenses and the success of fundraising campaigns (Holmes, 2009). This tradition of utilizing the generosity and philanthropic nature of wealthy alumni carried over to the United States with the establishment of Henry Dunster as the first President of Harvard University and his understanding that as a college president, part of his role was to assist in soliciting alumni donations (Caboni, 2010). As wealth transfers from one generation to the next, the Center for Wealth and Philanthropy estimates that nearly \$60 trillion of wealth will transfer into the hands of the next generation (Watson, 2014).

PWIs must take advantage of the often forgotten population of African American alumni. However, institutions must determine if developing and implementing a race-specific fundraising campaign is ethical and beneficial (Spears, 2008). All too often, African American alumni are seen as a lost cause when developing a plan for soliciting donations from college and university

advancement offices, but why? Disengagement between the institution and the alumni results in the loss of philanthropic donations that are essential to the operation of colleges and universities.

Since the abolishment of slavery in 1865, African Americans have struggled to be accepted and counted as valued resources in the United States. When James Meredith, the first African American student enrolled at a PWI, walked through the doors of the University of Mississippi in 1962, he established that African Americans were just as valuable to the economic climate of higher education as they were to the social, political, and cultural environment of all PWIs throughout the United States. Philanthropy by African Americans has traditionally been limited to providing financial and physical assistance to institutions that fundamentally exist to educate and support the African American populace. However, as the country desegregated, African Americans began to see the value in providing funding for any institutions that provided a quality education for themselves and for future generations (Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005).

History of African Americans in Higher Education

Since the abolishment of slavery in the late 18th century, African Americans have struggled to capture a foothold in several aspects of the American education system. After the Civil War, the Morrill Act was passed, which provided funds for land grant colleges and universities (O'Hara, 2012). The trend of oppression continues to affect many aspects of life for African Americans in the United States including employment and higher education. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 attempted to clear the way for equal protection and rights for all peoples, but African Americans continued, and still continue, to be treated as a marginalized population that isn't afforded the basic civil liberties that should belong to all citizens of the United States (Wolf, 2014). African American students were not initially given access to higher education due to racism and post civil war attitudes and unfair treatment (Cole & Barber, 2003). The Civil Rights

Act of 1964 was key to changing the college environment by mandating equal treatment regardless of race, color, ethnicity, and sex. The act stated, “No person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program” (MacKinnon, 2004, p. 221). This quote reinforces the belief that no student should be left behind or denied the right to education on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The act helped to break down several barriers to education that existed within American society and also helped give those in higher education more power to encourage and pursue diversity as well as multiculturalism. The presence of African American students on Predominately white campuses encouraged colleges and universities to take either proactive measures to provide an equal learning environment for these students or simply remain in a reactive state; many decided to allow the students to assimilate ‘naturally’ into the greater campus culture with little influence or assertion from the administration (Higsbee, 2005). This assumption was based on the faculty and staff believing that the student groups would just naturally assimilate with one another. Assimilation means becoming more similar to the majority group; “if one’s culture assimilates with another, they would be ‘relinquishing [the] cultural identity’ that makes them unique” (MacKinnon, 2004, p. 225). According to MacKinnon (2004), students at these institutions did not just assimilate on their own, and many of the students felt that they were physically present at the institution, but not part of the institution's culture (p. 225). In fact, some students began to protest, and PWIs were forced to think more fully about multicultural student affairs. As the desire to improve and increase the number of diverse populations entering higher education continues, the need for students of color grows in tandem (Lynch, 2013).

The highly sought-after diverse environment that has become integral to creating globally aware citizens continues to fall short of expectations, and a reality of oppression and inequality is promoted. Because of Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF), African American students succumb to the high stress, low support environment of PWIs. Racial Battle Fatigue is defined as the psychological erosion that persons of color experience from their daily battle with racialized micro aggressions, which are subtle bouts against an individual based on race or ethnicity (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2012), discrimination, and assaults (Smith, 2010). Because of this daily battle and the constant war against racialized micro aggressions, RBF has been identified as an equivalent to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), similar to what many active duty soldiers experience as a side effect of war. For African American students at PWIs, the path toward alumni status is filled with barriers, hurdles, and glass ceilings, and the battle for equality is rife with racial micro aggressions and micro assaults that add to their Racial Battle Fatigue. The unwelcoming environment of most Predominately white Institutions creates an unsupportive feeling of alienation and disingenuousness (Philips, 2002). Unlike typical stress, Racial Battle Fatigue is a natural response to living and working under conditions of heightened distress, especially when facing potential perils because of the perception that one's life, personal dignity, or character is being threatened (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007). These constant feelings and experiences add to the barriers that African American students must overcome to succeed in PWIs and academia.

Racial Battle Fatigue affects persons of color working/living/learning in environments dominated by a culture other than their own (Smith, 2010). This ongoing war of micro aggressions and micro assaults, purposeful discrimination, racial avoidance, and verbal attack (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011) has profound implications on the performance and wellness of

African American students and faculty (Soto, Dawson-Andoh & BeLue, 2011). The existence of RBF has been linked to the onset of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) and its multitude of associated physical and psychological effects. Research suggests stress-related diseases result from the fact that African Americans maintain an activated psychological and physiological response system in order to cope with racial micro aggressions (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007). African American students who encounter the environments that promote RBF become disassociated with their institutions as undergraduate students and the lack of connectedness can result in a ‘distancing’ of them from the institution (Smith, 2010).

Barriers to Success

There are several barriers to the success of African American students in higher education. Each of these barriers serves to further extend the reach and effects of RBF. In higher education, racism was made respectable and commonplace by its institutionalization into the fabric of the higher education system, starting with its inception into colonial American society (Bourne, 2001). Even today, African American students are commonly made to feel inferior to their white peers through the micro aggressions that commonly take place in the academic environment (Smith, 2010). Along with the barriers associated with RBF, African American students also face issues of isolation, academic work devaluation, “tokenism”, and misandry/misogyny (*Report on retention*, 2013). The institutionalized racism that exists within the higher education system is not only embodied by administrators as agents, but is also perpetuated by white students who exist in the majority.

African American students and faculty continually fight an uphill battle while attending PWIs. They experience racial micro aggressions, micro assaults, and general anxiety disorders that all culminate in regular bouts with Racial Battle Fatigue. The prevalence of RBF works

against the developmental aims of institutional giving departments as it furthers feelings of oppression and inequity among African American students (Gasman, 2001; Gasman & Bowman, 2013). As the higher education landscape becomes increasingly more diverse and representative of the population of the United States, it is important that institutions of higher education promote inclusivity and diversity among faculty, staff, and students. Since African American students commonly associate themselves with faculty and staff of color and these relationships have a profound effect on the African American student undergraduate experience, it is important to cultivate a positive, equal, and supportive environment, as it has the potential to impact future African American alumni giving.

The success of African American students is associated with the success of the greater academic field and the success of college and university development offices; as more and more African American students experience Racial Battle Fatigue, higher education professionals must acknowledge the challenges that exist in the institutionally racialized community of academia and provide increased support, recruitment, and retention of these individuals. By working to combat Racial Battle Fatigue and African American misandry/misogyny, and by increasing the opportunities for student engagement and satisfaction, predominantly white colleges and universities are more likely to increase the number of African American undergraduates, which will translate into an increase in the giving amount and frequency of giving by African American alumni.

The Influence of Institutional Leadership and Culture on African American Students

Leadership within higher education institutions can highly influence alumni relationships. The leaders of colleges and universities are the representatives who promote the culture and the community for institutions; this community can be supportive and accepting or, in the case of

many African American students, it can be stressful, combative, and isolating (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Leadership in higher education is rooted in several theoretical frames; the three paradigms of social constructivism, postmodernism, and positivism have influenced leadership and provided function and form to the organization (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006).

Different realities exist in social construction and represent the perception of individuals within the group. Collegiality is the foundation, as much emphasis is placed on arriving at a consensus when making decisions. Significance is also placed on achieving input from all involved in the decision making process. A core function of social constructivism is to inspire and empower individuals (Bolman & Deal, 2013). For social constructivist leaders in the institutional administration, much power and influence over the culture of the institution is relegated to the dominant (white) student population (Kezar et al., 2006). Through this transition of power, the dominant student population perpetuates a culture of non-acceptance and segregation for African American students; this creates a hostile environment for the African American students and infects the beginning of the institution/alumni relationship (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007).

A postmodernism paradigm of leadership considers reality to be subjective, and emphasis is placed on experiences that shape perspectives (Kezar et al., 2006). Many of these experiences are generally focused on norms associated with membership in the dominant culture on campus with little attention given to African American students. Cooper & Burrell (n.d.) assumed that knowledge is power and a postmodernist view of leadership seeks to empower marginalized voices. The empowerment for these marginalized voices is traditionally isolated to the confines of

African American student unions, many of which have no authority or influence on the direction, leadership, or representation in the university administration.

The positivist paradigm of leadership places considerable prominence on improving efficiency and effectiveness of leading (Kezar et al., 2006). The positivist idea extols a single shared vision that can be seen as truth (Kezar et al., 2006). This vision can be manipulated by changing variables such as school funding or administrative shifts. The manipulation of variables can affect the perception that African American students feel on campus (Cooper & Burrell, n.d.). The funding, or lack thereof, of programs and services that directly affect African American students such as African American cultural centers, mentoring programs, and retention programs can alter the climate African American students perceive and create a hostile and non supportive environment (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Institutional leaders in higher education hold the responsibility of promoting an attitude of sense making for the administration. Sense making arrives at an intersection of being rational and trying to achieve perfect knowledge before making the final decision (Birnbaum, 1988). While the head of the institution generally holds the responsibility of making the final decision, it can be important to remember that the college/university also stands accountable. Therefore, the actions, or inactions, of higher education institutions toward African American alumni are never an issue of one wrong individual but more the responsibility of the college or university as a whole. Administrators are merely agents acting on behalf of the university.

As institutions continue to operate, there are more instances where they become tightly coupled as a response to the changing environment in which they operate. The recent financial turmoil is one instance in which higher education institutions became more coupled than before. Tight coupling exists when changes in one input directly affect another output, and are seen as

predictable and controlled changes (Birnbaum, 1988). This can be seen when universities are faced with financial crisis, and budgets are altered or amended. Colleges and universities that are tightly coupled, meaning elemental changes have a direct and predictable outcome on other elements, have a stronger culture because of interdependency (Mashland, 2000). The change in the input (money) produced a direct and predictable output (reduced programs and services). Loose coupling exists where inputs become less predictable as outputs to others and they maintain individual identities and some separateness (Birnbaum, 1988). The environments of both tightly and loosely coupled systems have significant influence on the culture of the institution.

President Ronald Reagan stated, “Today's leaders must be willing to challenge traditional notions of higher education and explore an ideological shift in the purpose and value proposition of higher education” (Puzziferro, 2012, p. 3).” In an era of economic contraction and increased competition for educational dollars, leadership in higher education has become a prominent focus for fostering financially beneficial relationships with alumni for the benefit of the institution. In this economy, higher education administrators are attempting to create a ‘culture of giving’ with current students as a means for creating proactive alumni relationships. The culture represented on college and university campuses may have a direct correlation to the leadership in the upper administration; therefore, a culture of institutionalized racism may be a response to a similar culture that exists within the administration (Benton, 2001). Institutionalized racism has become interwoven into the everyday operations of institutions (Bourne, 2001).

Culture is the matter that holds organizations intact and it serves as a manifestation of values, ideals, and beliefs shared by members of an organization (Birnbaum, 1988). For some

institutions, culture is the driving force regarding the overall direction that leadership takes when instituting policy, strategic planning, and paradigm shifts (Morrill, 2010). The two dominant forces of culture and leadership in higher education can directly influence one another, and higher education administrators are the agents who maintain or change the way the two factors affect each other and the greater institution. For culture to be maintained and promoted, it takes a network of formal and informal roles to perpetuate values, beliefs, rituals, and narratives of the organizational culture. According to Tierney (1988), “Institutions certainly are influenced by powerful, external forces such as demographic, economic, and political conditions, yet they are also shaped by strong forces that emanate from within” (p. 24). Culture exists as the internal force that binds organizations together and creates a community.

The culture of an institution is what binds together the mission, the people, the traditions, and the rituals (Mashland, 2000). If culture provides the glue, leadership must provide the direction in higher education. The intersection of culture and leadership may be composed of administrators whose leadership is guided by the traditions engrained in their home institutions. These traditions are rife with racial micro aggressions, micro assaults, misogyny, and misandry. Leadership largely influences organizational culture, and leadership can be affected by the organizational culture present at colleges and universities (Bass & Avolio, 1993). As mentioned earlier, the culture of an institution is developed through history, traditions, and rituals. Culture has the ability to shape various institutional functions including leadership and governance (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). While colleges and universities have centuries of operation, leadership is temporary and the tenure of any college administrator is not guaranteed through the life of the institution. Leadership acknowledges organizational culture through informed and intentional practices (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Leadership governs the institution that is a symbol for the

students, faculty, and staff (stakeholders). Culture is engrained within the stakeholders, and to combat a culture built on a foundation of institutionalized racism towards African American students, leadership must work to influence those who carry the culture in order to impact the culture. Culture and leadership are two dominant forces in higher education that can directly influence one another, and higher education administrators are the agents that maintain or change the way the two factors affect each other and the greater environment of the institution. The culture of the institution has the potential to affect undergraduate experiences, which can translate into influencing alumni giving.

Statement of the Problem

As the financial solvency of many Predominately white Institutions is jeopardized as a result of financial mismanagement, the recession, and/or a lack of funding, these colleges and universities are in need of securing additional revenue through philanthropic giving from the untapped resource that is their African American alumni. In the beginning, prominent figures like Henry Ford, Andrew Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller pioneered the spirit of philanthropic giving to colleges and universities, and their donations were compounded in recent years by the \$1.1 billion gift to Johns Hopkins University by alumnus Michael Bloomberg (Barbaro, 2013). Philanthropic giving to higher education institutions means more than a check written and a building dedicated; it translates into value associated with a specific demographic of alumni. For large-scale donors, giving money to their alma maters is not simply a sign of gratitude, but it is also a ticket to sit at the table, influence decisions and inputs, and expect specific outcomes (Rooney et al., 2005). The dominant force in alumni giving at PWIs is and has always been white alumni. These alumni lead the charge on frequency, amount, and scope of donations, while African American alumni and their donations are often overshadowed and overlooked

(Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005). Though African Americans give 25% more of their overall income to charities than whites totaling over \$11 billion dollars per year (Carlozo, 2012), white alumni outpace African Americans in higher education giving, and more value is placed on white alumni in addition to future white alumni and their experiences while enrolled as undergraduates at colleges and universities (Gasman, 2001).

As an alumnus of a Predominately white Institution, I experienced first-hand the ‘othering’ by administrators that many African American students experience on PWI campuses. As African American students, they feel undervalued and unheard because their involvement in giving back to the university does not match the financial philanthropy of their white counterparts. As a higher education administrator, I saw first-hand the ‘othering’ that African American students went through when attempting to affect change, seek equality, and pursue equity and furthermore; I personally felt the backlash when racial injustices affected me and were subsequently written off. African American alumni of PWIs have no influence or engagement, nor do they have an open ear to the institution as a result of their status as ‘lackluster’ philanthropists. If allowed to continue, the already marginalized African American alumni populations of white institutions will continue to express distrust and a feeling of unease with their alma maters, and this will further infect the experiences of current African American students enrolled at the institutions and renew this unnecessary cycle. African American alumni serve as mentors, unofficial college recruiters, public relations associates, and a host of other unofficial roles for PWIs, and colleges’ and universities’ continued disregard of their status, as a reputable and beneficial group will have a potentially disastrous affect on these higher education environments.

Background and Role of the Researcher

For the study and the researcher, it will be challenging to perceive or avoid bias induced by the researcher (Creswell, 2012; Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004). As an African American alumnus of a PWI, the researcher had his own experiences, perceptions, and narrative, which, if shared, possibly could have affected the narrative of the participants. The researcher was not actively participating in providing philanthropic donations to his predominately white alma mater and admitted that his decision not to give back could alter or influence data collection during individual interviews of participants.

Purpose of the Study

As the relationship between Predominately white colleges and universities and their African American alumni becomes even more essential and important to the success of higher education institutions, there is a growing need for research and literature that provides useful information on how to develop, maintain, and improve the missing connection. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between public Predominately white Institutions in the United States and their African American alumni and use the understanding of this relationship, or lack thereof, to further explore African American alumni philanthropic giving towards their alma maters. A key focus was to isolate elements within the PWI/African American alumni relationship that influenced or detracted from the philanthropic activities desired from white colleges and universities. These elements may take place over a longitudinal period beginning with enrollment at the PWI and extending beyond graduation into becoming an alumnus, a person who has attended or graduated from a school, college, or university (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

Context of the Study

The researcher conducted this case study analysis in the region surrounding Acme State University. The researcher utilized established social networks and social media communities (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) to engage and recruit participants for the study.

Additionally, the researcher utilized reserved low-pressure spaces on or off campus that the participants considered neutral to promote an environment that was comfortable and conducive to interviewing. In conjunction with the participants, the researcher identified these ‘neutral’ locations so that unwanted pressure or stress was not evoked on the participants during the individual interview. The researcher only engaged individuals who met the study requirements for participants. To participate in the research study, those individuals met the following requirements:

1. Black (African American) female and/or male alumni of a Predominately white institution located within the United States of America;
2. Achieved alumni status from accredited Predominately white institution;
3. Must have graduated from institution.

Research Questions

The research study was guided by the research question, “What are the experiences and motivations that influence and/or affect philanthropic giving to public Predominately white Institutions in the United States by African American alumni of the institutions? The interview questions that guided the research study were the following:

- How do you think your own experiences as a student affected or shaped the ways you decide to give to the University?

- How have your perceptions regarding the institution changed since becoming an alumnus of the institution?
- Talk to me about when you decided to give back to the institution.
- How was your decision on giving back to the university shaped?

Significance of the Study

In 2012, there were 3.7 million African Americans enrolled in colleges and universities, which constitutes a 28% increase in this population since 2007 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). The United States of America is in the midst of a spectacular transformation in the composition of the student population of colleges and universities. Between 1976 and 2011, the number of African American students enrolled at higher education institutions grew by 50% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). As enrollment growth for African American students continues, it is important for researchers to explore the relationship that is established and cultivated between African American alumni and PWIs. The exploration of this relationship has the potential to yield an improved understanding of African American philanthropic giving to their Predominately white alma maters and why this rate of giving trails that of white alumni. This research benefits a variety of higher education professionals by aiding them to better understand the mindset of African American alumni giving and, furthermore, how to promote a more successful and beneficial environment for African American undergraduate students. For higher education development offices, research into African American alumni giving provides a valuable tool from which new strategies, approaches, and techniques could be developed. This new information has the potential to increase African American alumni involvement in activities as well as donation giving rates and amounts. Student Affairs professionals can benefit from this research since it focuses on alumni relationships and delves into their experiences while

attending the university as undergraduates. The research also focuses on the time spent at the university and how, over the course of one's undergraduate career, it may have influenced their relationship with the university as alumni. This will further increase the likelihood of PWIs improving and increasing relationships with African American alumni, as well as increasing philanthropic giving levels from African American alumni. Overall, further research into African American alumni philanthropic giving will expose the flaws that exist in the relationship between Predominately white Institutions and their African American alumni. In addition, it will provide greater insight for higher education administrators in need of establishing, maintaining, and/or improving associations with African American alumni of their college or university.

Theoretical Framework

As a basis for researching African American alumni philanthropic giving at Predominately white Institutions, this research study engaged Homans' Social Exchange Theory (SET), and Bell's Interest Convergence for direction and guidance. Each theory was explored as a means to advise the analysis of the research data.

Interest Convergence

Bell's (1979) initial scholarship on interest convergence examined and explained race relations from the perspective of legal scholarship. Interest convergence declares that social justice for people of color will only occur at times when the interests, viewpoints, and experiences of both whites and persons of color converge (Bell, 1979; Delgado, 2002). Interest convergence is often cited and associated with Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a foundational tenet in research associated with education and diversity (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Critical Race Theory converged with education through the works of Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate (1995) and since its inception, educational scholars and researchers have utilized

CRT to examine and further discussions on the methods in which race influences results in education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Fasching-Varner, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Interest convergence occurs in situations in which the interests of people of color wholly overlap with the interests of whites (Bell, 1995). While this overlap of interests is mutually beneficial for all parties involved, it is limited to only those aspects that advance the prosperity of white individuals and this can subside as the alignment of those interests deviate and misalign. Bell's (1992) theory of interest convergence developed through a thorough analysis of the plight of civil rights in the United States. The theory of interest convergence was further reinforced by the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* landmark court case of 1954, which provided support to the belief that the progress for people of color will only exist when the interests of whites are aligned and converge (Bell, 1979, 1992). Racial equality exists only as a derivative of white interests being paramount to the overall progress. Essentially, whites remain as the prevailing group for which all other persons of color must adapt their interests and beliefs to become adopted into consideration. When the interests of people of color do not align with that of whites, interest convergence will cease to exist and the potential for racial equality for specific pursuits will fail (Bell, 1992, 1995; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Interest convergence recognizes that racism innately promotes the interests of whites both financially and politically (Bell, 1995) and it further contends that there exist no motivations among this population to eliminate racism within society (Bell, 1995).

In relation to African American alumni philanthropy and higher education, interest convergence is only achieved when the interests and goals of the alumni align with the endeavors, goals, and campaigns of the college or university. For African Americans there is a vested interest in uplifting communities of color as a means of pursuing racial equality.

Moreover, for African American alumni, this interest is tied to increasing the number of African Americans in colleges and universities. The interests converge when higher education institutions commit to increasing diversity (African American students) between student and faculty populations and seeking the financial assistance of alumni to do so. African American alumni feel compelled to contribute as they recognize the alignment of their interests with the interests of the institution regarding the increase of overall diversity at the college or university. Bell (1995) posited that interest convergence only takes place when whites recognize the benefit of aligning their interests with non-dominant groups, or in this case, African Americans and the white administration pursue the alignment with the hopes of furthering the financial prosperity and ranking of the higher education institution. Financial support towards the increase in diversity programs, services, and faculties from African American alumni helps to relieve mounting pressure from stakeholders; it eases the financial burden of attracting and retaining these diverse individuals, and it fulfills a quasi-campaign to promote institutional diversity.

Social Exchange

Homans (1958) introduced Social Exchange Theory (SET) in his work *Social Behavior as Exchange*. In his theory, Homans proposed that social behavior is a direct result of a process of exchange. The purpose of the exchange between parties was the result of benefit maximization and costs minimization regardless of the benefit's physical or immaterial state (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). According to Homans' theory, upon engaging the option of a social exchange people weigh the conceivable benefits and the risks associated with establishing the social association (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). In the process of determining the benefits and plausibility of the exchange, individuals will make assessments and when it is determined that the risks

overshadow the rewards, the social exchange will be abandoned because of impending detriment (Cook et al., 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). The association of costs in SET focuses on perceived undesirable consequences like the loss of money, time, and resources in an attempt to fulfill a social exchange (Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958). Benefits are acknowledged as things one receives out of a social exchange such as power, influence, respect, or material goods (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). SET suggests that individuals calculate and analyze the benefits while subtracting the costs as a means of determining the value of a social exchange (Cook et al., 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). Positive and negative relationships have varying effects on the decision to maintain or dissolve social exchanges. Negative exchanges exist when the benefits of the exchange dwarf the costs, whereas positive exchanges occur when the costs overshadow the benefits (Cook et al., 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958).

According to Blau (1964), every individual takes calculated risks daily in engaging in social exchanges to maximize their benefit. He suggested that social exchanges take place not only in economics but in common everyday occurrences like friendships, relationships, and in networking. For African American alumni of PWIs, social exchanges exist in the relationships and interactions they support with their alma maters. These alumni provide philanthropic support in the form of money, time, and resources with the hopes of receiving greater influence, consideration, and respect as a reward/outcome (Homans, 1958). Social exchanges bring greater gratification when individuals received reasonable unbiased returns on their input, and for African American alumni, the desirable outcome may be greater leverage with the administration, increased commitment towards the interests of alumni of color, or the power to influence, to name a few. For social exchanges to successfully manifest, the existence of a

connection with an individual or entity, trust, and flexibility must be present (Homans, 1958; Stafford, 2008).

Social exchange theory in African American alumni giving can be used to analyze and explain the codependent relationship that is established between alumni and their alma mater (Kelly, 2002; Lasher & Cook, 1996). As a converse to interest convergence, it is the African American alumni who hold the power and they donate when their interests and needs become aligned with their alma maters (Lasher & Cook, 1996). Centered in the social exchange theory, there are two levels of donor incentive to give to one's alma mater (Kelly, 2002). First, increasing the positive outflow of support to their alma mater motivates donors. For African American alumni of PWIs, this translates into the continued support and uplifting of African American students attending the college or university (Kelly, 2002). The second incentive focuses on the receipt of some "private good" in return (p. 46). African American alumni may receive influential access to upper level administrators or other individualized private good (Kelly, 2002).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the review of relevant literature concerning African American alumni philanthropic giving, I explored a cross section of thematic areas that encompass alumni giving in higher education and the history of African Americans in higher education, campus climates, and environments for African American students attending Predominately white Institutions (PWIs). To achieve a greater understanding of African American alumni and the relationship these alumni have with PWIs, I focused on the African American student experience through a Critical Race Theoretical lens, with particular attention to the Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF) experienced by African American students and also associated with African American faculty at PWIs. This chapter focuses on existing knowledge of African American alumni of PWIs and how the history of African Americans in higher education, in addition to their experiences while attending PWIs, has considerable influence on the relationship between PWIs and African American alumni. Furthermore, the chapter explores how this relationship translates into African American alumni giving to their predominately white alma maters.

The current literature on African American philanthropic giving focuses on community organizing and religious giving based on affiliation and does little to explore higher education philanthropy as it pertains to giving to Predominately white institutions. Research on the topic of African American philanthropy concentrates on the donation of time and money to churches or community based organizations that work to uplift the African American race but does little to provide any examination on African American perceptions and attitudes toward giving to PWIs. Several theories posit that African Americans give at a higher rate than their white peers but the research does not conclude on where, why, or how these decisions to give are made (Chaffin,

2003; Davis, 2003). There is a lack of research that provides increased and improved understanding as to why African Americans do or do not give to PWIs and a determination as to what are the driving forces behind the decision of giving. The review of literature served to expose the existing trends, ideas, and research on African American alumni relationships with PWIs, higher education, and education in general, while looking deeper into the experiences that shape and mold perceptions and realities of the college and university experience for African American students attending PWIs. Because there is little literature or research on African American alumni giving at PWIs so, and to gain a better understanding of African American alumni giving as a whole, literature focusing on African American alumni giving at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) was utilized to aide in closing the gaps that exist in the literature on African American alumni giving. Much of the existing literature focuses on the financial solvency of private HBCUs and how alumni of these institutions are often called to provide a rescue effort during struggling financial times (Cohen, 2006). This literature highlights the philanthropic efforts of such organizations as the United Negro College Fund, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and 100 Black Men of America, and also highlights pioneers in African American philanthropy such as Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, and Freeda Johnson.

The literature review served to create a web of understanding on the topic of African American alumni and through a thorough review of its content, conclusions, and shortcomings; a focused plan can be developed to fill in those gaps. Through the development of a plan to address the shortcomings, newer strategies based on existing and newly created scholarly work can be implemented to establish, enhance, and nurture the relationship between African American alumni and PWIs and will prove mutually beneficial for all parties.

Interest Convergence in Theoretical Literature

The most profound study of interest convergence was Bell's (1979) study and analysis of the landmark court case of *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas*. As a legal scholar, Bell determined that people of color would only receive social and societal justice when it is in the interest of whites, causing an interest convergence and subsequent beneficial experience for both whites and individuals of color. In the case of *Brown v. the Board of Education*, the process of desegregation of schools was in the interests of African Americans because it was seen as an "leveling of the scales" towards much deserved and desired equality, though for whites the decision came about from mounting global/international pressure (Bell, 1979).

Castagno and Lee (2007) utilized the theory of interest convergence to examine the use of racially/ethnically offensive mascots at higher education institutions. The continued use of mascots that represent native populations was condemned by the groups of people these mascots portrayed and though countless attempts were made to condemn this action, it was not until the interests of white administrators at these universities were piqued and aligned with those natives that movement condemning the practice was adopted (Bell, 1979; Castagno & Lee, 2007; Fasching-Varner, Clark, & Brimhall-Vargas, 2012). The interests aligned for the native group because they provided an attempt at a policy condemning the depiction of their population as mascots and established a process for the mascot removal, and for the white administrators it showcased sensitivity to diverse populations and a firm attempt at promoting political correctness and an appreciation for diversity (Castagno & Lee, 2007). Unfortunately, the alignment of interests was short-lived and the policy towards the removal of the mascot was abandoned. Similarly, at other higher education institutions there is an ongoing alignment

between native groups and higher education institutions at which beneficial dividends for both groups have come to fruition. The PWI and its administration maintain the use of this group's name, likeness, and parts of their land in exchange for merchandising royalties, scholarships, and access and recognition at official university sponsored events (Keen, 2013; Saunders, 2005). In a larger political move, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) announced that as of February 1, 2005, they condemned the use of ethnically and racially sensitive likenesses and representations as insensitive and obscene (Saunders, 2005). This larger move towards interest convergence showcased the general promotion of political correctness and racial sensitivity that was called on by native groups in the United States.

Social Exchange in Theoretical Literature

In the context of the relationship between African American alumni and Predominately white Institutions, defining and characterizing the connection is often a difficult task that varies from institution to institution. The process of relationship management was presented in several research studies, which contend that for social exchange to successfully take place there must be an established relationship present those trends towards a more positive engagement (Merkel, 2010). Seltzer (1999) and Dougall (2005) developed a general understanding that in relationships that ultimately yield a social exchange, there are specific characteristics that must be present for success: the relationships are dynamic, there are shared perceptions and values for all involved entities, measurable, and they involve a two-way flow of resources. In his study of alumni relationship management in higher education, Merkel (2010) determined that in discussing and researching the relationship between alumni and their alma mater, it is ideal that the study be grounded in a social exchange theoretical frame, as this is essential in the prosperity of alumni/institution relationships. For alumni and colleges or universities, both parties engage a

reciprocal relationship with the expectation of a two-way exchange of resources (Hung, 2007). For alumni, these philanthropic contributions lead to a mutually beneficial relationship in which both parties are satisfied with the resources offered in the exchange (Hung, 2007; Merkel, 2010). In studying African American alumni of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Drezner (2010) adversely rebuffed the notion that the relationship is simply satisfied with the simple exchange of resources. He contended that as relationships progress and evolve the expectations follow suit and what was once a desired benefit becomes expected and new aspirations manifest leading to new challenges and stressors in the relationship. These new stressors and aspirations have the potential to lead to the dissolution of the relationship if expectations (new and old) are not met or neglected overall (Drezner, 2010; Hung, 2007). Additionally, social exchange theory dictates that the expectations maintained by all parties engaging in a social exchange are of great significance but the misidentification or the inequity of expectations will lead to stressors and potential dissolution (Broom et al., 2000; Ledingham, 2006; Wallace, 2012). The relationship between African American alumni and alma mater is one of interdependence where both parties depend on a set of expectations to foster the exchange of resources and royalties to the other (Cook & Lasher, 1996; Drezner, 2009; Kelly, 2002). Drezner (2009) pointed out that the most important foundational pillar of the social exchange theory is the alignment of interests from both the African American alumni and their historically white alma mater. Moreover, there are intrinsic and extrinsic influences for creating, developing, and manifesting the relationship among those individuals (Drezner, 2009). The motivations are not set and can change based on the misalignment and realignment from both African American alumni and the administration of their predominately white alma maters.

The History of African Americans in American Education

The United States Higher Education system has been shaped by periods of challenges and progress throughout history. For African Americans, education has been a valuable tool in the fight for equality and freedom from tyranny (Duster, 2009; Gold, 2005). The abolishment of slavery by way of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation opened a new door to education for African Americans that was once thought nonexistent (Watkins, 2001). Education for African Americans started by way of a grassroots campaign by Northern abolitionists to educate the newly freed African American slaves (Anderson, 1988; Watkins, 2001). Whites in the South were reluctant to educate African Americans due to the fear of becoming overtaken by newly educated African Americans (Anderson & Moss, 1999). Anderson (1988) stated that the education of African Americans was of their own volition and with moderate help from Northern abolitionists it became a reality. Before freedom was falsely delivered to those African American slaves and a win catalogued on the political plane of America, the learning that existed for these people came through narrative and communal teachings (Anderson & Moss, 1999). Learning to read, write, and teach was acquired away from the destructive eyes of overseers and slave masters and relegated to the shadows of the night (Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). By emancipation, it was estimated that ten percent of Southern African Americans possessed some degree of literacy (Duster, 2009). This method of learning and teaching was not uncommon for slaves but recognized as tradition brought from the shores and villages of Africa (Duster, 2009). These traditions remained engrained in these peoples though they were stripped of their names, cultures, and kin (Duster, 2009; Woodson, 2011). Though bound in chains and consigned to treatment as livestock, slaves saw education as a tool for liberation and a priority for every subjugated generation that followed (Anderson, 1988). Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852) captured

this feeling perfectly in her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* when she wrote, “They rushed not to the grog-shop but to the schoolroom-they cried for the spelling-book as bread, and pleaded for teachers as a necessity of life” (Anderson, 1988, p. 196).

The history of higher education in America began with the founding of Harvard University in 1636 (Thelin, 2011). By 1775, there were nine chartered institutions of higher education in the country, all of which were religiously affiliated institutions (Thelin, 2011). In 1779, Thomas Jefferson introduced a bill that would change the focus of higher education from religion to science and the exploration of new knowledge (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997; Conant, 1962). Jefferson saw value in life outside of the libraries and instituted a lecture method of instruction in addition to a system of general education and electives (Jefferson & Johnston, 1903). Shortly after Jefferson pitched his new ideas on college and university curricula, John Chavis became the first African American student (on record) to attend an American college (Conant, 1962; Thelin, 2011; Williams, 2005).

The fight to pursue higher education for African Americans began long before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and in 1823, Alexander Twilight became the first African American person to receive a bachelor's degree in the United States of America (Slater, 1994). As the plight of former slaves' thirst for education continued to become a public fight in the streets of the North, Cheyney University in Pennsylvania was established for free African Americans in 1837 (Watkins, 2001; Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). In response to the founding of Cheyney University, the message quickly rippled throughout the North and down to the South that African Americans were given an opportunity at an equal standing when it came to education (Anderson, 1988; Woodson, 2011). In 1862, Senator Justin Morrill introduced the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, which was signed into law by President Lincoln (Lee, 1963). Referred to as The Morrill

Act, it appropriated government land to create colleges and universities that would incite a spirit of entrepreneurship, research, and discovery throughout the country (Lee, 1963; Redd, 1998). The Act created several higher education institutions but few permitted African Americans to attend or apply. Alcorn State University in Mississippi was the only university created from the Morrill Act specifically to educate African Americans (Brown & Davis, 2001). As a result of a refusal by many of the original Morrill Act schools to permit African Americans to enroll and as a political move on the part of the government, a second act, the Morrill Act of 1890, was introduced and focused on the creation of higher education institutions in response to the notion of 'separate but equal' facilities, though the promise of land was exchanged for funding for many of the institutions (Brown & Davis, 2001; Redd, 1998). Though hesitant, Southern states accepted and acknowledged the building of institutions for African Americans since it provided the much-desired separation and prohibited the intermingling of African Americans and Whites (Duster, 2009). Schools such as the Tuskegee Institute were created with the purpose of keeping unwanted African Americans away from white educational institutions (Redd, 1998; Thomas, 1981).

Prior to the Morrill Act of 1890, much of higher education for African Americans was established and spearheaded by organizations such as the American Missionary Association (AMA) and the Freedmen's Bureau (Anderson & Moss, 1999; Watkins, 2001). The AMA was a Protestant originated group of abolitionists who sought the dissolution of slavery, promotion of equality for all peoples regardless of race, and finally to educate former slaves (Anderson & Moss, 1999). Many of the individuals associated with the Northern abolitionists were white Christian women who felt the call from the church to aid the African Americans in the South (Duster, 2009, Watkins, 2001). The AMA became a larger advocate for the education of African

Americans than that of the Freedmen's Bureau. The Freedmen's Bureau was an agency established by the federal government during the period of Reconstruction meant to serve as an intermediary and mediator between former slave owners and slaves (Du Bois, 1996). Many African Americans believed that the agents of the Freedmen's Bureau were nothing more than individuals attempting to prevent an uprising of African Americans (Williams, 2005). This agency's purpose was to quell any uprising between the races and project an image of care and concern for African Americans after the Civil War, though much of the work completed focused on provided advocacy and welfare for former slaves at the dismay of several U.S. presidents (Du Bois, 1996; Woodson, 2011). The bureau was met with much contention from former slaves because of their association with a government who would allow their human and civil rights to be stripped from them for so long (Anderson, 1988; Du Bois, 1996). The AMA and the Freedmen's Bureau worked in conjunction during and after the Civil War to establish schools throughout the country for free and escaped slaves (Du Bois, 1996). Though the Freedmen's Bureau was disbanded soon after the war, the AMA continued to promote the fundamental rights of African Americans while also continuing to establish additional higher education institutions (Richardson, 2009). Unbeknownst to them, the apprehension African Americans initially expressed would foreshadow the underhanded agreements such as the Tilden-Hayes compromise (De Boer, 1973; Richardson, 2009). Often referred to as "the Great Betrayal", the Tilden-Hayes agreement was an undocumented deal that affected the 1876 presidential election in addition to intensely racial governments in the southern states of Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida (Duster, 2009; Morris, 2004). The deal removed federal troops from these states and returned much power to confederate era governmental leadership but ultimately it arrested the attempted progress of the Reconstruction period (Morris, 2004). The parents of many African American

children preferred to send their children to schools created and operated by African Americans and far from the control of white schools (Anderson, 1988). African American parents believed that if white schools and teachers could capture the mind of their newly liberated children, they could once again enslave them and control their rights to freedom of thought and expression (Watkins, 2001; Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). African Americans expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the Northern abolitionists and their promotion and provision of education, but they still resisted under a perceived threat that they would lose their new found freedom and independence and once again become reliant on others (Anderson, 1988, p. 12). There were many instances in which propaganda was fabricated that claimed that African Americans were unintelligent and incapable of individual thought (Anderson, 1988, Williams, 2005). Stanford researcher Terman (1916) posited that African American children were vastly more inferior than their white peers in a study conducted on the measurement of intelligence. Studies of this nature and the propaganda that followed continued to haunt African Americans seeking equal education through primary, secondary, and into post-secondary schooling (Holland, 2006). Whites in the South believed that educating African Americans would demean white hegemony and promote an oppressive attitude towards whites (Woodson, 2011). Though, northern philanthropists promoted a genuine desire aid in Reconstruction, the reformation of the South, and establish and increase the economic power of African Americans in the South (Anderson & Moss, 1999). In *The Education of Blacks in the South*, Anderson (1988) pointed out that education was sold under different guises based on the race and location of African Americans and whites. African American education was billed to whites as a means of promoting guided education that would maintain a hierarchy of white control and power, while providing a sense of accomplishment to African Americans that would lead to a feeling of contentment (Anderson, 1988; Anderson &

Moss, 1999). It was promoted to African Americans as a way of escaping dependence and achieving equality.

The prosperity of higher education for the United States came to a halt as the country plunged into World War I and many Americans responded to the call to fight for freedom and democracy (Thelin, 2011). The war recruitment left universities with a lack of enrollment in addition to the valuable education dollars the students provided (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). After World War I, many colleges and universities struggled to maintain financial solvency and went defunct as these institutions struggled to keep their doors open because the target population for instruction and enrollment was occupied by a war that would wound more than the soldiers fighting (Thelin, 2011; Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The war ended and as soldiers returned home, a drastic reformation and rejuvenation happened at higher education institutions. Funding for higher education grew along with access, as there were more options for African Americans to achieve an advanced degree throughout much of the South (Wilson, 1996). Because of the collaboration between Ralph Waldo Emerson and Charles Elliot, former president of Harvard, and their push to elevate the status and prestige of higher education, universities became a more valuable proving ground in the recruitment and selection of employees for many fields (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997; Wilson, 1996). Between 1920 and 1930, the enrollment numbers at many universities doubled and the number of degrees awarded nearly tripled (Westmeyer, 1985). Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) of this time also saw an increase in their enrollment and their prosperity (Roebuck et al., 1993). Many of these institutions were supported through philanthropic giving by such individuals as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller (Watkins, 2001). These wealthy benefactors saw the need to provide an equality of funding and opportunities to this underfunded but flourishing institutions

(Peeps, 1981). Unfortunately, the education provided to African American students was limited to blue collar fields and schools were limited as to what they could teach (Anderson, 1988). Many African American schools were developed with the mission of maintaining a capitalistic system of order within American society while also maintaining control over African American education and advancement (Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). Amid the success of these institutions and the students enrolled came a crushing blow with the Great Depression and World War II. These events substantially drained HBCUs of finances and a bolstered student population (Roebuck et al., 1993). Previous funding sources swiftly withdrew their support of these institutions, causing African American students who struggled to pay no choice but to withdraw from school to join the war effort or simply return to an agricultural lifestyle established by their families post Civil War (Leman, 2011). This period in the history of African Americans in higher education began a more treacherous road for the education of African Americans in the United States- one filled with setbacks and successes.

In the mid 20th Century African Americans were given access to the rights of education but still there existed a separation of African Americans and Whites and a lack of equity (Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). The legality of the doctrine of “state supported segregation” was established in the court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. The courts ruled that separate facilities were permissible though they had to be equal, however this was rarely the case when it came to the substandard facilities that African Americans were required to utilize (Anderson, 1988). The *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling was challenged in the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. At that point in history, there were approximately 50,000 African American students enrolled in higher education institutions (Humphries, 1995). Prior to the Supreme Court ruling it was lawful for states to establish separate school systems based solely on race. This

reverberated from primary schools upward to colleges and universities, as African Americans were not welcome in many of the Predominately white Institutions (PWIs) (Spring, 1994). In response to the explosion of schools created to educate African Americans, Southern Whites limited or cut off access to resources such as funding, supplies, and books (Duster, 2009; Watkins, 2001). In an effort to quell the incensed white Southerners who opposed African American education, Booker T. Washington set forth on a public effort to promote African American education that focused on menial labor and agricultural trades (Duster, 2009). Washington strategically made these statements to comfort whites who feared that they would soon lose their economic and political hold over a newly educated African American populace (Gardner, 1975). The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) played a vital role in pursuing the landmark judgment that would work to correct the injustice previously established (Holland, 2006). Desegregation was the outcome of the case and established “separate but equal” as well as the outcome that states would be required to equally fund HBCUs just as they would PWIs (Guinier, 2004). Though the ruling came as a result of a decision by the Supreme Court of the United States it did little to enact immediate change as states, schools, and universities protested the ruling and forbade desegregation (Holland, 2006). As a result of the slow and at times nonexistent acceptance of the Supreme Court ruling, civil rights activists continued to protest, demonstrate, and demand change from the country’s leaders (Guinier, 2004; Willie, Garibaldi, & Reed, 1991). In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act, which provided greater control and enforcement of law to the federal government (Orfield, 1969). For African American students, it provided open access to institutions of higher education regardless of their race (Orfield, 1969; Wilson, 1996). Following the Civil Rights Act, the federal government created and signed into law the Higher Education

Act of 1965. The act focused on providing increased funding for higher education institutions to assist in their efforts to seek compliance to the Civil Rights Act (Keppel, 1987).

The Civil Rights Act did not have an immediate and profound affect on higher education in the United States, though the number of African Americans enrolled in the American higher education system swelled to 200,000 with approximately 90% attending HBCUs throughout the country (Humphries, 1995). By 1970, African American enrollment once again more than doubled to nearly 470,000 students in both HBCUs and PWIs and there began a fundamental shift in enrollment as there were more African Americans attending PWIs than HBCUs (Humphries, 1995). Although the numbers of African Americans were growing at PWIs, many institutions were reluctant to accept and embrace integration and civil rights. Knowingly, some of today's top universities did not admit African Americans until students erupted in strikes and protests. Rice University did not graduate their first African American student until 1970 while institutions like Emory, Vanderbilt, and Duke University resisted integration until 1967 (Slater, 1994). Duke University was one institution rooted in resistance to African American edification and recognition (Slater, 1994). Architect Julian Abele, an educated French African American man, designed the trademark architecture that is the Duke University's Chapel and much of the west campus. Abele was denied credit or viewing rights of the finished work until decades after its completion (Slater, 1994). In the decades that followed the post Civil Rights campaigns, access and enrollment into higher education institutions has continued to increase for African Americans (Philips, 2002) but while the numbers enrolled rise to historical heights, the rates of graduation do not follow suit (Feagin & Sikes, 1995). To explore the reason for these low rates of graduation and retention the literature must explore the experiences of African American students while attending Predominately white Institutions. Through this examination of the

literature, the information presented develops a clearer picture of the factors that influence the relationship between African American alumni and their historically white alma maters.

Being African American at Predominately white Institutions

According to the *Journal of African Americans in Higher Education*, there are approximately 4.6 million African Americans in the United States who hold a four-year college degree or higher, and African Americans who attend PWIs account for roughly 88% of those enrolled in higher education institutions (Chavous, 2002). The first higher education institution in America was established in 1636 on the campus of Harvard University (Slater, 1994). During that time, African Americans were accepted as nothing more than property and thought too inferior to engage in academic, let alone logical thought (Anderson, 1988; Holland, 2006). It took nearly 200 years for this notion of thinking to falter and for the first African American enroll at Dartmouth College in 1828 (Slater, 1994). As a means for creating a more racially inclusive educational environment, affirmative action was introduced to the United States as an Executive Order (10925) signed by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 (Fleming, 1978). Affirmative Action is defined as a strategy in which special provisions are made in the areas of employment, admissions, and recruitment of individuals from disadvantaged populations (Fleming, 1978). In higher education, affirmative action has been an unstable subject yielding several court cases that challenged its legality and relevance. In the Supreme Court case of *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the plaintiff asserted that the University of Michigan's Law School denied her admission on the basis of race and sex despite her high GPA and LSAT scores (Grutter, 2003). The Supreme Court upheld the admissions policy and acknowledged that an admissions policy that takes race into consideration does favor unrepresented populations and is necessary to provide equal access and equal rights to those included in the clause (Hicklin, 2007). While

affirmative action was created as a means for promoting diversity and equal access, many universities have been accused of misusing the policy to maintain a system of quotas and basing admissions decisions on said quotas (Hicklin, 2007). The history of African Americans in higher education is filled with battles to seek equality and access (Redd, 1998). Although affirmative action is often disputed in admissions policies and debated in courts, it is necessary to provide an inclusive educational environment that does not limit or prevent any population of representatives from accessing their rights and privileges to employment, admission, or education (O'Neil, 1971). O'Neil (1971) stated:

“The importance of the issue derives from the fact that the admissions policies of an education institution largely determine its mission and character – more than its structure or governance, the personality of its president, or even the interests and talents of its faculty. The student body is, after all, the primary constituency – not only the largest in size, but also the one for which the institution primarily exists. Thus when it appears that the admissions policies of the great majority of American colleges and universities have serve, however unintentionally, to deny essential opportunities to a substantial segment of the citizenry, those policies must be critically reexamined” (p. 699).

Unfortunately, the battles have been fought continuously and even today, the war toward equity still rages on in the classrooms, quads, and in the academic environment of higher education. African American students remain on the losing end as their experiences are marred with issues of RBF, oppression, ‘othering’, and a continued existence in a society that views them not as an equal but as a burden (Harper, 2009; Smith, 2010).

African American students attending PWIs are faced with challenges from the moment they acknowledge their acceptance of admission and their intent of enrollment. These challenges coalesce into a reality that reaffirms their place in the racial hierarchy of higher education and society. Reality tells African American students that no matter how educated they become, how prestigious the institution they attend, and no matter the wealth they may accumulate, they are

still African Americans on the losing side of an ongoing racial battle (Feagin & Sikes, 1995). When African American students make the initial decision to attend a PWI they face the potential for ridicule from peers, family, and friends (Thomas, 1981). The ridicule is represented as the individual choosing to attend a PWI over that of an HBCU and they are condemned as being bourgeois and on some extremes self-loathing of their race (Smith, Yosso, & Solorzano, 2006). Upon setting foot on the campus of PWIs, African Americans are commonly stereotyped and considered to be attending the university for their athletic ability (or lack thereof) and not their merit (Sedlacek, 1999). African American students face with micro aggressions, subtle bouts against an individual based on their race or ethnicity, and micro assaults, focused discrimination associated with micro aggression that can be verbal or psychological in action (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). The path toward graduation for these students is one filled with challenges and barriers. In 2012, African Americans graduated colleges and universities with a four-year degree at a rate of 42% in comparison to whites who graduated at a rate of 62% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). This large and ever widening gap in the success of African American students is in response to barriers that this population faces, many of which are exacerbated when attending PWIs (Feagin & Sikes, 1995). The barriers and challenges consist of struggles associated with the living/learning environment of the institution, institutionalized racism/discrimination on campus, and a lack of support from administrators/faculty/staff of color (Chavous, 2002; Sedlacek, 1999).

The diversity of higher education institutions can have a profound effect on student learning, engagement, and success (Elwood, 2000). Intellectual communities are a melting pot of diversity as it relates to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, and socio economic status (Hurtado et. al., 1999). The diversity that exists on the faculty of many institutions is a

key-recruiting tool that many African American students seek out when making decisions to attend a university (Sedlacek, 1999). The interaction that exists between African American faculty and African American students is an important relationship that is supportive and foundational for the success of African American students (Philips, 2002). The institutionally racist environment that African American faculty are subjected to has the possibility of affecting the satisfaction, success, and institutional perception of African American students (Smith, 2010). In 2010, faculty of color only occupied 18% of faculty positions at all degree-granting institutions (Ponjuan, 2011). Of this number, African American faculty represented 5% of all full-time faculties in higher education (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2010). As the number of diverse populations entering higher education increases, the need for equally diverse faculty grows in tandem (Lynch, 2013). For many colleges and universities, diversity amongst faculty, staff, and students are constant goals and maintain a permanent stake in their mission, vision, and values but the goal of retaining and recruiting African American faculty continues to be a losing battle. The war for faculty diversity has been a pyrrhic victory with the increase of diverse faculties over time but at the physical and psychological expense of these faculties (Stevenson, 2013). Because of Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF), African American faculties succumb to the high stress, low support demands of academia and institutional racism permeating throughout the collegiate environment (Smith et al., 2006; Stevenson, 2013). African American faculties are met with the expectation that they must 'perform' and impress instead of simply focusing on their academic pursuits (Lynch, 2013). The pressure to please administrators, students, and peers has African American faculties feeling as they must focus on dandyism and in response, they lose sight of their academic pursuits that led them into teaching (Smith et al., 2006).

The Racial Battle Fatigue experienced by African American faculties within an intensely racialized higher education environment can directly affect African American students enrolled at the university (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2012). Additionally, some faculty face hostile or challenging work environments, which causes added stress and RBF (Ponjuan, 2011). The challenging environment that exists on college campuses has the potential to cause some African American faculty to question their professional fit within the academic field and the professoriate (Stevenson, 2013). It may be difficult for African American faculties to reach their full potential if the environment is not conducive to supporting their skills and talents (Bowman & Deal, 2008). African American students at PWIs establish strong mentor/mentee relationships with African American faculty and at times, these relationships become personal and familial in nature (Stevenson, 2013). The personal feelings and experiences developed while working in these racialized environments construct a perception about the institution that is often shared with African American students who then feel associated companion stress (Stevenson, 2013). Across college and university campuses throughout the United States, African American faculty experience isolation, excessive work, race, gender, and language biases and these micro aggressions add to the Racial Battle Fatigue they experience (Stevenson, 2012). African Americans might slowly or suddenly distance themselves from stressful conflicts and deny or avoid recalling the impact of such experiences (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007). The institutionalized racism African Americans experience is engrained in the administration, the alumni, and is indoctrinated into the students, who are taught that for the world to operate effectively, the roles of individuals had to be established and controlled by a handful of white good ol' boys (Harper, 2009; Solorzano et al., 2000). To be accepted by the dominant white culture, African Americans must adapt to the surroundings and cultural norms instilled in the

institutionally racialized culture of campuses, adopt a lifestyle and understanding of their place in the hierarchy of the racial climate, and finally they are forced to integrate into established norms and construct of PWIs (Bourne, 2001; Smith, 2010) or risk continued anxiety, stress, and isolation (Thomas, 1981).

The literature suggests that stress-related diseases result from the fact that African Americans maintain an activated psychological and physiological response system in order to cope with racial micro aggressions (Smith et al., 2007). For African American students to subvert this dominate racialized paradigm they must be aware of the barriers, hurdles, and ceilings that exist during their collegiate campaigns and they must prepare by developing support mechanisms that will carry them to success (Harper, 2009; Thomas, 1981). Furthermore, for African American faculties and students to combat RBF there must be an acknowledgement of its existence, an expectation of the micro aggressions and micro assaults that may manifest, and a creation of support mechanisms to combat the negativity that exists (Smith et al., 2006). This greater attention to increasing diversity has profound affects on the success of the mission of the university and on the students who become truly engaged citizens (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen 1999). Having a diverse faculty is not only important for the students but it is also important to the faculty. For higher education institutions, it is essential that a faculty be as diverse as the population of staff, students, parents, and families it serves (Hurtado et al., 1999).

At Predominately white Institutions (PWIs) racism subsists as a set of administrative and cultural practices, attitudes, and ideas that deny African American students the rights and privileges awarded to whites (Smith, 2010). This atmosphere of racial intolerance and a lack of acceptance are exacerbated for African American students because of the influence and attitudes of leadership from individuals who promote a culture of institutionalized racism (Harper, 2009;

Spears, 1978). Racial lines are demarcated socially constructed categories created to show superiority or dominance of white culture over others (Solorzano et al., 2000). Administrators and peers who promote a culture fixated on keeping African American students in ‘their place’ often relegate African American students to subservient actualities unfitting of equal treatment (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011). Smith (2010) proposed that African American misandry/misogyny, or the hatred or ingrained prejudice against men/women, occurs to justify and reproduce the subordination and domination of African Americans. African American misandric environments, in which subjugated relationships proliferate, aid in the chance of African Americans experiencing micro aggressions and racial battle fatigue (Smith, 2010). The campuses of PWIs are often a testament of white power and African American oppression easily recognized in the employment makeup throughout the university (Spears, 1978). There is a lack of diversity in upper-level administration with African Americans serving in blue-collar and support roles in universities (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2010). The role/race makeup of employment places emphasis on the belittlement of African Americans and their ability to contribute to the success of the university from a position at the top rather than the bottom (Spears, 1978; Thomas, 1981). This attitude also affected the student population as African Americans are commonly regarded for their athletic potential while being criticized as being lackluster academics that elected for less challenging majors and programs (Bourne, 2001; Davis, 1994). The institutionalized racism that existed on campus infected several aspects of campus life including housing. For decades, African American students were dispatched to live in housing environments often shunned and branded as the ‘ghetto’ by whites (Spears, 1978). These racialized campus environments were reported as unsupportive, alienating, stressful, disengaged, and demeaning for African American students (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007).

Throughout many higher education institutions, administration considered an extension of the university alumni association and gathering of the ‘good ol’ boys club’ (Bourne, 2001).

The racial micro aggressions African American students encountered were not isolated to receipt from whites (Smith, 2010). African American students who do not associate or conform to the ideal African American cultural identity at PWIs may have experiences of alienation by members of the African American community (Bourne, 2001; Harper 2009). African American students are at times labeled as an ‘Uncle Tom’ and a sellout; peers may chastise them for not being “African American enough” (Smith et al., 2012). For some African American students, friendships deteriorate as they become isolated within a racial battlefield with fellow African American students who feel unsupported, oppressed, and demeaned on one side and the dominant acts of white administrators and peers on the other (Sedlacek, 1999). The micro aggressions experienced by African American students are symptoms of the institutionalized racism that exists on Predominately white campuses (Smith et al., 2007; Spears, 1978). Institutionalized racism has become interwoven into the everyday operation of institutions (Bourne, 2001). Smith (2010) wrote that African Americans are treated universally as proprietors of ghetto specific knowledge and behaviors regardless of their backgrounds or status. Unlike typical occupational stress, Racial Battle Fatigue is a natural response to living, working, and learning under dreary conditions of heightened stress, especially when facing potential perils because of tough, violent conditions or the perception that one’s life, personal dignity, or character is being threatened (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007).

Isolated racialized micro aggressions may seem harmless, but the cumulative burden of a lifetime of micro aggressions can theoretically contribute to diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence (Smith et al., 2007). The institutionalized racism was present in common activities associated with tradition and the namesake of the University.

African American Alumni Philanthropic Giving

The exploration and study of African American alumni giving to their Predominately white alma maters is an area of scarcity and inefficiency in research. Literature presented on the history, habits, and trends in African American alumni donations has primarily focused on the African American alumni who attended HBCUs. In addition to this focus on African American alumni of HBCUs, the current research explores the financial solvency of HBCUs and how an insufficiency of alumni donations affects the opportunities the institution has for growth and a positive financial future (Cohen, 2006). Philanthropic giving of African Americans is not limited to donations to higher education institutions, but has a much richer history rooted in spirituality, uplifting of the African American race, and community activism (Chaffin, 2003; Duran, 2001; Francis, 2003).

The act of philanthropy can be defined as providing tangible or intangible support that positively affects an individual or provides support for a cause for common good (Pierce, 2008). The history of African American philanthropy has its foundations rooted firmly in a tradition of uplifting the race and the community from which one originates (Carter & Marx, 2008). Major influences on the habits and patterns of African American philanthropy are family and the traditions established and passed down through each generation on giving (Drezner, 2009). The history of African American philanthropy in the United States began during the period of forced slavery. African Americans were restricted from gathering and organizing activities that were

not permitted by the slave master with the exception of religious activities that were often led by slave masters (Chaffin, 2003). During the time of slavery, many African American families were forced apart by the hands of slavers as a method of exerting power and dominance over slaves (Chaffin, 2003). Families living on the same plantation were not permitted to communicate or interact but this restriction was lifted during church services (Chaffin, 2003). Church and other religious activities became an opportunity for families to interact and also became synonymous with family (Duran, 2001; Francis, 2003). Church was a time of fellowship and congregating to share the joys of life and building a greater community that was strong enough to withstand the psychological and physical lash of the slavers (Francis, 2003). Chaffin (2003) also pointed out that religion, although presented through the domineering eyes of the slave master, was an opportunity to escape the oppression of slavery and provided hope for freedom through the biblical verses. Through the abolishment of slavery, the church and all that it brought to African American families amidst the tyranny of slavery became a beacon for family, togetherness, and the uplifting of African Americans (Drezner, 2009; Francis, 2003). Many African American churches were built by the communities they served and as a response to these grassroots campaigns, churches served as a force for community engagement, uplift, and support (Francis, 2003). The African American church progressed as a collective hub for African Americans to worship in addition to an outlet for social, political, civic and philanthropic action within the community (Chaffin, 2003). Throughout the struggles of African Americans after Reconstruction and into the Civil Rights era of the mid 20th century, churches became a protective sphere away from the persecution, oppression, and condemnation happening outside (Pierce, 2008; Francis, 2003).

To continue to strengthen the church and expand the reach it had on positively affecting the community and advocating for its parishioners, church members would frequently give as a way to keep supporting the mission of the institution (Francis, 2003).

Pastor Nathaniel Edmond of the Second Baptist Church in Elgin, Illinois, explained, "Giving to the church is a first natural step. For people of color, the first thing we actually owned was our church. We knew there was a need to sustain it" (Chaffin, 2003, p. 4). Philanthropy was promoted by the church as a means for doing the work of God and the duty of being human (Ball, 1999). African Americans gave to the church in a number of ways. The first and foremost way of giving back to the church was through tithing, or financial support for the church, but those African Americans unable to give money gave time in support of the church (Durán, 2001). The time given translated into work conducted within the church maintaining and improving the facilities, community service, and through the ushering of 'lost' souls into the congregation of the church (Gasman, 2001). The African American church served as a common bond to the African American community and an ever-present resource toward the uplifting of African American peoples despite the actions taking place to destroy African American communities (Chaffin, 2003). The notion of racial uplift continued to be a driving force in African Americans' purpose for contributing to churches and community based organizations (many of which were offshoots of the church) throughout the 20th century and into the beginning of the 21st century (Pierce, 2008).

As the 20th century neared its end, African Americans welcomed the 21st century with a flourishing growth in African American wealth attainment and prosperity (Davis, 2003). Income growth has occurred for African Americans since the 1960s, though whites continue to earn more (Desilver, 2013).

Although, 50% of the ten highest earners in the United States are African American, whites occupy the majority of the top 400 richest Americans (Oliver & Shapiro, 1997). Taylor (2014) stated,

The net worth of just 400 billionaires, a group that could fit into a high school gym, is on par with the collective wealth of our more than 14 million African American households. Both groups possess some \$2 trillion, about 3 percent of our national net worth of \$77 trillion (p. 2).

The rise in African American prosperity is marred with racial inequality in terms of pay, benefits, and opportunities for advancement (Desilver, 2013). Since 1963, the ratio of African American-to-white unemployment has remained steady at nearly 2:1 and the wealth gap between the two races has grown far wider (Plumer, 2013). Oliver and Shapiro (1997) attributed much of the economic inequality that African Americans have faced with factors involving the racialization of politics and the systematic prevention of the ability to accumulate wealth by restrictive ownership of wealth generators such as land, home ownership, and businesses. From the decree of emancipation African Americans were provided with an unfair disadvantage in the journey towards prosperity and freedom from politically (Lemann, 2011) and socially racist politicians and supporters, but this did little to deter African Americans from supporting the philanthropic efforts needed to equalize the playing field in America (Drezner, 2009).

Data and information on African American wealth produces a dreary picture of the financial state of African Americans in America but it does little to highlight that, despite poor financial gains and an ever widening gap in wealth accumulation, African Americans are some of the biggest contributors to philanthropic causes (Anft & Lipman, 2003). Anft and Lipman (2003) discovered that African Americans donate 25% more of their discretionary income to philanthropic causes than whites. In the United States, ninety percent of every dollar given by

African Americans is for the purpose of community relief, addressing an issue, or uplifting the race (Davis, 2003). African Americans are modest donors and traditionally do not publicize or promote their charitable efforts (Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005).

Summary

The African American alumni of Predominantly white Institutions in the United States have a history tainted by oppression, persecution, and subjugation (Duster, 2009). From emancipation through Reconstruction, civil rights, and into the current era, the fight for equality, justice, and acceptance still has a tremendous effect on the success of African Americans (Bourne, 2001). Though often disenfranchised and presented with several barriers to success in the economic, political, and social context of the United States, African Americans lead the altruistic fight in philanthropic endeavors (Durán, 2001). African American philanthropy in higher education and in the community extends beyond the simple act of writing a check and focuses on time, talent, and treasure. From early in the tradition of giving back, African Americans were taught on plantations that when money was not an option, one's talent and hard work would suffice and assist in doing greater things (Carter & Marx, 2008; Chaffin, 2003). There was much appreciation for the diverse skillsets many slaves possessed especially during the period of reconstruction. The time that African Americans give toward philanthropy represents the opportunity provided to help out the community and causes that support and promotes the uplifting of African Americans (Carter & Marx, 2008). Time, talent, and treasure offered by African Americans as a means to help support a common good represented treasure.

This manifested itself as African Americans giving crops, earnings, and other resources during Reconstruction and evolved into tithes at church and donations to local and national organizations that uplift African Americans such as the United Negro College Fund (Gasman, 2001).

Education has always been an ivory tower for African Americans, as it was seen as the key to success, prosperity, and freedom (Williams, 2005; Woodson, 2011). African Americans championed the fight toward social justice and equal education and though tremendous strides were made, waves of oppression continued to rock the boat, keeping African American students afloat in the treacherous seas of instruction (Drezner, 2009). Today, African Americans continue to push for equal treatment in education and the efforts extend upward towards higher education where African Americans attending PWIs are continuously subjected to institutionalized racism and racial micro aggression, assaults, and dominance (Feagin & Sikes, 1995; Smith et al., 2006). African Americans attending PWIs often develop RBF that affects their ability to function and, at times, to develop lasting relationships with administrators of these PWIs (Smith et al., 2012). These feelings and experiences are also shared and felt by the African American faculty employed at these institutions and affects alumni giving by African Americans to their predominately white alma maters (Elwood, 2000). The experiences undertaken during African American alumni's undergraduate careers can influence the relationships established and eventually the role African American alumni play for the university (Harper, 2009; Smith et al., 2011). There is much need for scholarly submissions on African American alumni relationships with PWIs, African American alumni giving to PWIs, and African American alumni's post-graduation perceptions of their predominately white alma maters and how this further affects donation rates and amounts. More research dedicated toward closing these gaps would establish

an understanding of the state of the relationship between PWIs and African American alumni, and could further assist with developing and promoting a campus environment that is equally beneficial for African American students, faculty, and staff throughout the university.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research in higher education has been a driving force for initiating change and providing the evidence needed to influence methods of thought and understanding. Educational research is useful for administrators, teachers, and students in the exploration of specific topic areas that exist within gaps of understood knowledge (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). As educational researchers in higher education search for new and improved understandings of existing populations, programs, and services, they develop and establish grounded theories to support their findings and provide a framework upon which future research can be founded (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Throughout the history of higher education in the United States, there have been events that have affected generations of students and these events have had tremendous influences on policy and the understanding of how specific situations and occurrences transpire (Thelin, 2011). Explanatory research is the vehicle for observing significant events and describing them in detail to paint a picture that attempts to be representative of the entire event from several perspectives while using multiple descriptors (Bygrave, 1989).

Qualitative Research

Creswell (2014) defined qualitative research methods as the process for understanding phenomenology in human social experiences. Qualitative research examines more of the 'why', not so much of the 'how' of its subject area through the dissection of data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Researchers focusing on qualitative inquiry take considerable lengths to provide an in depth analysis on the study population (Newman, 1998). Examination of language, perceptions, and experiences are the foci of qualitative research methods including meeting transcripts, narratives, notes, input structures, photographs and features (Griffin, 2004). This

method of exploration does not place much emphasis on numerical data and focuses more on narrative and personal experience of the research subject(s) to draw larger conclusions of the population from which samples are drawn (Berg & Lune, 2012; Griffin, 2004). Qualitative research employs several approaches toward inquiry with each focusing on clarifying narratives, backgrounds, and improving the comprehension of the story being told by the study subjects (Griffin, 2004; Flick, 2009). This research method differs from quantitative in that it places considerable emphasis on the significance of conducting study observations in the natural environment of the subjects (Flick, 2009; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). Conducting the research on a subject in its natural environment allows for a more natural interaction between language (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990; Merriam, 1998) that can add a new layer of comprehension to the research study and it can also expose new phenomena (Flick et al., 2007). Qualitative research exposes phenomena that occur during the data collection phase and after the information has been analyzed, and these phenomena uncover new areas of research not previously recognized or understood. It explores variation, relationships, individual and group experiences, and it is used to better understand group norms (Denzin, 2009). Qualitative inquiry promotes flexibility and variability, as the questions presented to subjects have to be flexible to capture a myriad of potential answers while still being able to capture needed data (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012) and participants have great control over the flow and direction of questions asked (Berg & Lune, 2012). Qualitative research allows greater flexibility than quantitative methods because of the spontaneity provided and its ability to adapt and evolve as phenomena are discovered (Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004), especially through questions answered and the interaction between the researcher and participant (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Qualitative research explores and exposes phenomena within the narratives and environmental interactions of research subjects (Atieno, 2009). Similar to quantitative inquiry, researchers utilizing qualitative inquiry focus on experience and the process of data collection (Bryman, 2006; Griffin, 2004) with less emphasis placed on the outcome because of the benefit of first-hand observations of research subjects' interactions in their natural environment (Flick, 2009). There are advantages to utilizing qualitative research methods rather than quantitative inquiry. First, qualitative inquiry provides an open opportunity in its questioning format that allows participants to expand beyond simple dichotomous responses and provokes elaboration and reflection (Berg & Lune, 2012; Flick et al., 2007). Additionally, these answers are less fixed and contain culturally significant and expressive responses that are also less predictable or anticipated (Joy, 2007; Kura, 2012). Finally, they are capable of expressing new phenomena (Denzin, 2009). The open-ended question format allows for the researcher to evoke elaboration from the answers by asking 'why' and 'how' (Flick et al., 2007). Research through qualitative inquiry is classified as field based and allows for a richer observation for the researcher (Creswell, 2014). Participants in qualitative studies are immersed in a recognized environment that contains interactions that provoke memorable encounters, experiences, thought processes, and actions (Maxim, 1999), and researchers benefit from observing subtle distinctions, manners, and emotions that would not be captured in a structured laboratory setting (Anderson, 2010). The natural setting provides greater depth of information and observations that are not capable of being observed in a lab setting (Reaves, 1992). Qualitative inquiry also provides greater flexibility than quantitative in that researchers can pivot and adjust their research framework at any time if their observations (Merriam, 1998), and expose new and interesting phenomena on a different tangent of questioning (Berg & Lune, 2012). Moreover, conducting qualitative inquiry

through field observations is relatively inexpensive because there is no need for expensive and time consuming preparation of survey instruments or laboratory settings (Bryman, 2006); it does not require multiple researchers working on the study to capture and analyze data (Bernard, 2013). The ideal strength in considering qualitative research involves its ability to expose newly discovered phenomena and interactions within the research area of study and the exploration provides new avenues for future research (Anderson, 2010; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012).

Qualitative research methods have a wealth of strengths and benefits when utilized for inquiry and research, but they equally present limitations that weaken the flexibility or usefulness of the methodology. Data captured in quantitative studies is easily analyzed using computer based statistical analysis (Bryman, 2006); these programs isolate trends and patterns, however qualitative data is incapable of such analysis and therefore identifying trends is time consuming and subject to error if multiple individuals are conducting the analysis without properly established parameters (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the process of identifying trends within the data can be time consuming and involves behavioral coding, which encompasses assigning numerical identifiers to specific behaviors and, ultimately, converting qualitative data into quantitative data for statistical analysis (Thomas, 2003; Taylor, 2005). Some researchers consider a lack of statistical power as a drawback and think that it weakens conclusions made utilizing qualitative methods, as there are no clear trends and supportive figures (Mertens, 1998). To properly code behavior, researchers must be trained to analyze and assign individual markers to the data. Unlike quantitative studies that are easily processed through computerized programming, there is a lack of automation for qualitative inquiry, which requires more time and manpower (Taylor & Trujillo, 2000). Furthermore, in response to the need of generous amounts of time and manpower, many qualitative research projects are limited to only introducing a small

number of participants to the study (Newman, 1998) because of the dedication needed to capture and analyze the associative data (Anderson, 2010). The presence of researchers can also have an adverse affect on study participants and the data collected, based on the comfort of the participants with the demographics of the researcher and, additionally, the demeanor of the researcher when collecting data or making observations (Bernard, 2013; Flick et al, 2007; Griffin, 2004).

Research Design

Qualitative inquiry extends beyond numerical assignments and statistical analysis and captures the narrative of the research subjects while exposing experiences that lead to distinct and innovative conclusions, as well as new research avenues (Reaves, 1992). Undertaking a case study research approach provides an opportunity to capture the individual perspective and acuity of a shared experience (Ponty & Landes, 2012). By utilizing a phenomenological qualitative approach to conduct research on how African American alumni of PWIs talk about philanthropic giving, the researcher explored participant narratives to expose commonalities and explain unique and shared experiences. Participants in the research study were selected based on meeting the following research criteria:

1. Black (African American) female and/or male alumni of a Predominately white Institution located within the United States of America;
2. Achieved alumni status from accredited predominately white institution;
3. Graduated from the institution.

The conclusions drawn from the data analysis were applied to enhance a greater understanding of the how African American alumni talk about philanthropic giving to their predominately white alma maters.

Utilizing a cross-case analysis was the ideal case study research method for conducting a study of African American alumni of PWIs because it focused heavily on the narrative and experiences of the African American alumni participants as they underwent the common shared experience of attending PWIs. Also, capturing data from these alumni in the form of the narratives allowed for the researcher to conduct a thorough analysis of the subjects' shared experiences and to expose occurrences that identified trends within the shared experiences and perceptions of these individuals. Through in-depth interviews with research participants, the researcher collected data from which conclusions were drawn and which shed light on understanding the research question. A use of discourse analysis, analysis beyond simple words, behaviors, and systems of thought (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000), aided the researcher in examining the participants' narratives and identifying common experiences. Because it was necessary for the researcher to incorporate both environmental and historical contexts while conducting the research study, discourse analysis proved to be an ideal lens through which to examine the research study (Fairclough, 1992, 2013).

Case Study Methodology

In educational research, the case study methodology is an approach to research which pursues an in depth study and analysis of a specific situation or event (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Yin, 2014). The study was conducted on Acme State University and A&M College, the flagship institution for the state of Acme.

The rationale behind case studies is that all cases start in the same manner and the accounts of participants are taken and analyzed to explore deeply into the outcomes of the case (Hartley, 2004; Remenyi, Money, Price, & Bannister, 2002). Case study research is especially beneficial at improving and increasing researcher comprehension of a particular event (or series

of events) through exploration of the conditions for which the event took place and the relationships that existed during the event (Gerring, 2007; Patton & Appelbaum, 2003). Case study research is a beneficial approach in educational research when a complete, in depth investigation of a situation or event is required (Yin, 1981,2014). Yin (2014) defined case study research as an experiential analysis that examines an existing occurrence within its real-life context and environment. Unlike traditional quantitative methodologies, case study research focuses on distinct events that contain an abundance of variables and a lack easily measured by data points (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1993). For qualitative researchers, quantitative data analysis has been known to conceal much of the robust data on the area being studied (Stake, 1995). In collecting data for case study analysis, the researcher relies heavily on multiple sources to capture a clear representation of the particular event (Stake, 1991).

In *Applications of Case Study Research*, Yin (1993) identified three intentional types of case study research methodologies: explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Exploratory research seeks to discover new phenomena that cover new topic areas or new angles for which to analyze existing research from a differing theoretical perspective or simply a new method of measuring an outcome/response (Yin, 1993, 2014). Descriptive research endeavors to explore and explain while postulating superfluous information about a topic (Yin, 1993, 2014). This type of research works to explore unknown areas of inquiry to produce a known understanding for which new research can build (Stake, 1995). Explanatory research delves into the nature of specific relationships and how and why they exist (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1993, 2014). In addition to the three types of research Yin (1993) proposed, Stake (1995) developed three additional types of research within a case study methodological approach. These additional types included: Intrinsic, in which the investigator has a particular investment in the case being studied;

Instrumental, in which the use of the case is intended to expose more data that is not outright obvious to the researcher; Collective, in which multiple cases are studied to expose greater detail (Stake, 1995). Each of these types of case study research can be utilized in either single-case or multiple case functions (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1993,2014). According to Yin (2014), six potential avenues exist for achieving substantiation for case studies: archives, interviews, direct observation, documents, participant observations, and tangible artifacts (p. 83-96). Yin (2014) supported his belief with evidence and stated that the research will ultimately benefit when: there are multiple sources of evidence to support research conclusions; there is a database created to maintain case study information; and the chain of evidence is maintained (p. 97).

The researcher utilized a cross-case analysis grounded in case study methodology to explore the giving process of African American alumni of Predominately white Institutions while seeking answers to the research question, “How do African American alumni of PWIs talk about the experience of philanthropic giving?” A case study methodology offers a rich and in-depth exploration of information by recognizing the multitude of variables that may exist to identify the complexities that emulsify to produce a specific situation (Yin, 1981). The versatility of case study as a method allows the researcher to gather information regarding the case from several different and distinct avenues (Gerring, 2007). Because situations and circumstances vary based on college or university type, size, location, and mission, the researcher acknowledges that a case study method is often criticized as lacking representation of a greater population or setting, which limits the possibility of making greater generalizations. In defense of this criticism, the researcher contends that the purpose of case study research is to focus on a particular case in much detail and furthermore to take what was learned from that individual case to develop theories of understanding (Gerring, 2007; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1981, 2014).

For this research study, the researcher conducted approximately six to ten interviews with participants who met the requirements for research participants. Many researchers argue that because of a small sample size, there is a lack of validity in the data (Finlay, 2009). The researcher was confident in selecting his approach based on the content of the research question. The researcher was intentional in allowing the participants to narrate holistic representations of their experiences, and thus gained greater insight into the participants' mindset of the experiences that shaped their answers to the researcher's questions. The research method also proved ideal for the participants, as case study research is an effective method at exposing the perceptions of events and experiences of individuals based on their personal perspectives (Marton, 1986; Moustakas, 1994). A case study research approach can produce robust data on the physical, psychological, and emotional response one feels when engaging in profound experiences (Finlay, 2009; Marton, 1986). Through the first-person accounts of the research study, the researcher gained an understanding of how these African American alumni of PWIs talk about philanthropic giving to their alma maters.

Sampling

The major researchers in case study research contend that the methodology is not one of sampling research (Tellis, 1995). However, an intentional selection of cases is required to maximize data and observations taken from the cases. The researcher utilized a purposive sampling method for the research study. A purposive sampling method simply utilizes a subset of an entire population of individuals to represent the larger group (Family Health International, 2010). Subjects within the research study were intentionally chosen based on meeting the criteria outlined in the participant selection section. In addition to purposive sampling, the researcher also included a provision for sampling for semi-structured interviews. Sampling for

semi-structured interviews focuses on the intentionality of selecting study participants who meet certain criteria outlined by the researcher for the purpose of choosing only individuals who can provide useable data (Coyne, 1997). Individuals chosen as members of the selected sample group met specifically identified criteria to capture data about their experiences, perceptions, and opinions toward African American alumni giving to PWIs. The participants/cases were drawn from the membership of the African American Alumni Association of Acme State University.

Data Collection

The researcher acquired ten individual oral testimonies with voluntary participants representing an even gender mix of male and female participants. Each of the individual interviews focused on a one-on-one narrative regarding the interview questions developed from the research question. In case study research, oral testimony is seen as providing a voice for often marginalized groups (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1993, 2014) and is ideal for research with this population of individuals. The researcher instituted a directed style of interviewing with guided questions (Appendix D), but afforded the opportunity for appropriate and related tangents in explanation or follow-up questioning, as it was needed. A small number of questions were reworded and asked multiple times as a method of testing consistency of answers from the case study participants. The researcher employed the use of a handheld audio voice recorder, the voice-to-text function on a Macintosh laptop computer, and typewritten notes to fully capture all information shared during the interviews.

Participant Selection

The participants for the research study were intentionally selected based on meeting the criteria outlined by the researcher's data collection needs. Demographic data including race, undergraduate degree and granting year, gender, education level, degree status, and current

donation levels were captured while conducting participant selection. Participants met the following criteria:

1. Black (African American) alumni of Predominately white Institution located within the United States of American;
 - a. Participants will be male and female with the goal of capturing a 50/50 representative sample in the individual interviews.
2. Alumni status must be from accredited predominately white institution;
3. Must have graduated from institution.

Study participants were composed of both African American male and African American female alumni of PWIs. Additionally, the researcher intentionally attempted to secure a stratified sample of alumni from various graduation years. Prior to the individual interviews, the researcher required all willing study participants to complete consent and disclosure form and a demographic and historical information form.

African American Alumni Participant Demographics

The ten participants who volunteered for the research study were all alumni of a large research-one public university located in the Southern United States. Brief demographic sketches of each participant are provided in this section to familiarize the reader with the participants and to frame their narratives for the research study. The following are introductory paragraphs for each participant in the research study; names have been changed as a means of protecting the identity of the participants.

Robert

Robert was a 31-year-old African American native of the region surrounding the University, and a former University scholarship football player. Robert graduated from the University in 2005 with a degree in history and soon after became a history teacher in a local high school. Robert remained philanthropically actively involved by means of volunteering at alumni events, helping to recruit potential students (athletes and non-athletes), and supporting the University but had not provided any monetary donations to the University.

Paul

Paul, a 36-year-old African American male, native to the city where the University was located, graduated in 2002 with a degree in General Studies. Upon graduation, Paul became a licensed stockbroker living in a major metropolitan area, but at the time of this research study he was an educator working with post-secondary students. Annually, Paul donated more than \$1000 to the University but also donated his time recruiting potential students, volunteering at alumni events, and speaking at engagements in support of the University. Paul stated that he and his wife were alumni of the University and were willing to give whenever the University called to solicit monetary donations.

Julian

Julian, a 47-year-old African American male, was native to a state adjoining that of the study University. He graduated in 1989 with a degree in French Literature and Language and began work in the secondary education after graduating the University. Julian did not actively participate in philanthropic giving of time, talent, or treasure to the University, though he remained actively involved in alumni organizations based in social media and online communities.

Chad

Chad, a 35-year-old African American male, was a 2002 graduate with a degree in English and was a native to the region surrounding the University. After graduating, he accepted a position at the University and served as a consultant for the University Library and Information department. A strong advocate for the University athletics program, Chad actively participated in alumni philanthropy through volunteering of his time and he annually gave approximately \$500 to the University.

Andrew

Andrew was a 33-year-old African American male and a 2004 graduate with a bachelors degree in English. After graduation Andrew assumed several professional positions including grant writing, song performance, and song writing. Andrew was a native of a major metropolitan area in the region surrounding the University. Annually, Andrew donated approximately \$600 to the University in the form of target program and service donations.

Jen

Jen was a 32-year-old African American female graduate with a bachelors degree in Secondary Education. She was a native of a major metropolitan area in the same region as the University. After graduating in 2005, Jen accepted a position to teach high school in her hometown. While Jen remained active in social media and only alumni communities, she was not actively involved with alumni philanthropy and chose not to give to the University.

Jake

Jake was a 28-year-old African American male and a 2008 graduate with a bachelors degree in Psychology. Jake returned to the University and earned his doctoral degree. Jake was a native of a major metropolitan area adjacent to the University region.

Jake was a professional working for the federal government. On an annual basis, Jake gave approximately \$1000 to the University in addition to time recruiting and mentoring students and potential students.

Aaron

Aaron was a 29-year-old African American male and 2009 graduate with a bachelors degree in General Studies. Aaron was a native of the large metropolitan area in which his alma mater was location. After graduating he assumed a position in private sector technology services. Annually, Aaron donated approximately \$200 to the University. Additionally, Aaron was actively involved in mentoring undergraduate students, volunteering for alumni events, and assisting in the recruitment of potential students.

Quinn

Quinn was a 38-year-old African American female and a 1994 graduate of the University. She received her bachelors degree in General Studies and after graduation worked as a consultant. Quinn was a native of a major metropolitan area in an adjoining state and attended the University as a legacy from her mother. She was not actively involved with the University and had not contributed anything to the University in terms of time, talent, or treasure. She felt her support of the University ended with her interest in the football program.

Tracey

Tracey, a 37-year-old African American female, graduated in 1995. She majored in Kinesiology before transferring to the University's affiliated medical school per the path of her program. After graduating Tracey became a licensed physical therapist and moved back to her hometown, a major metropolitan city.

Tracey participated in giving back to her alma mater financially though she expressed that she would prefer to be more active in mentoring and recruiting minority students for the institution if time allowed.

Table 1. African American Alumni Participant Demographics

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u> <u>Year</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Annual</u> <u>Giving</u>
Aaron	2009	29	Male	General Studies	Tech. Support	\$200
Andrew	2004	33	Male	English	Grant Writer	\$600
Chad	2002	35	Male	English	Librarian	\$500
Jake	2008	28	Male	Psychology	Researcher	\$1000
Jen	2005	32	Female	Education	Educator	\$0
Julian	1989	47	Male	French Literature	Educator	\$0
Robert	2005	31	Male	History	Student	\$0
Paul	2002	36	Male	General Studies	Stock Broker	\$1000
Tracey	1995	37	Female	Kinesiology	Therapist	\$500
Quinn	1994	38	Female	General Studies	Consultant	\$0

Research Setting

The research study was a large research-one public university located in the southern United States. This university is the largest public university in the state and is considered its flagship university. The student population is approximately 30,000 students with nearly 11% identifying as Black or African American. While developing participant recruitment strategies, the researcher attempted to partner with the University alumni association to create a mutually beneficial data sharing relationship, but was denied after several official and unofficial inquiries. Additionally, the researcher attempted to make contact with the African American Alumni Association of the University, which was considered a subgroup of the larger University alumni association. Several inquiries to the organization leadership and several individual members of the group were unanswered, thus yielding no conversations or insight into the organizational makeup of the group.

To recruit participants the researcher solicited African American alumni through the use of social media; more specifically, the researcher contacted several participants representing a range of undergraduate majors and graduation dates spanning nearly three decades through the discovery of an unofficial alumni online community on the social media site Facebook. Many participants expressed excitement to participate as they thought the larger alumni association had marginalized their voices and often ignored or cast them aside.

African American Alumni Philanthropy: A Qualitative Research Study

Higher education in the United States is in the midst of a financial crisis that has claimed the operation and institutional memory of several colleges and universities throughout the country (Lyken-Segosebe & Shepherd, 2013). Both state and federal government funding agencies are effectively reducing their investment in the American higher education system

substantially and forcing these institutions to find new ways to make up for the loss (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013). Once prized university endowments are shrinking and the financial ratings of many institutions have affected more than the bottom line of their financial ledgers (Hovey, 1999). In an effort to ease the financial burden, many higher education institutions have begun to sacrifice academic programs, forgo quality enhancement programs (QEPs) for students and faculty, and raise tuition for students as the only viable option to avoid dissolution (Zusman, 2005). To compensate for a reduction of state and federal funding, a limit on tuition increase, and a lack of spending control, colleges and universities are relying more heavily on the philanthropy of their alumni to shoulder the mounting burden of continuing to provide a standard of operation that is reflective of the mission, vision, and values of the institution (Harrison, Mitchell, & Peterson, 1995). For many Predominately white Institutions (PWIs), alumni donations are a key source of funding that provide endowed professorships, scholarships, grants, and essential operating dollars for dozens of programs and services (Kameen, 2006; Harrison et al., 1995). The relationship between alumni and these PWIs is a bond solidified with mutual benefit (Kameen, 2006) and one in which both parts take pride. However, this bond is not inclusive of all alumni and, moreover, African American alumni are often underutilized and not accepted as viable sources for the valuable philanthropic dollars that they could provide to these institutions (Gaier, 2005). There is a lack of literature and research to support conclusions on the nature and frequency of philanthropic giving by African American alumni to PWIs. Furthermore, there is a gap in understanding how the relationship between African American alumni and their predominately white alma maters affects African American alumni donations and involvement with the college or university post graduation.

With colleges and universities throughout the United States struggling to cover the expenses associated with growth, innovation, and operation (Hovey, 1999; McDonald, 2014), many of these institutions are petitioning alumni to answer the call to give toward the success and continued operation of their predominately white alma maters (Harrison et al., 1995). Unfortunately, many of these institutions overlook and undervalue African American alumni as a substantial force of giving towards the success of the institution. African American alumni are not as valued as their white peers at PWIs and often are not considered a reputable source for donations by university development professionals and administrators (Gasman, 2002). African American alumni serve as mentors, unofficial college recruiters, public relations associates, and a host of other unofficial roles for PWIs, and the continued disregard of their status as a reputable and beneficial group by colleges and universities will have a potentially disastrous affect on these higher education environments (Gasman & Bowman, 2013).

As the drive to improve alumni relationships to benefit the development needs of colleges and universities continues to rise, PWIs need to explore their unstable relationship with African American alumni as a means for increasing giving dollars and improving often tattered relations. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between PWIs and their African American alumni and use this newfound information to increase and improve an understanding of the relationship (or lack thereof) to further explore means and methods of increasing African American alumni participation and philanthropic giving. An intentional focus was to identify rudiments within the PWI/African American alumni relationship that have considerably influenced alumni perceptions and realities of giving to their predominately white alma maters. The research study was guided by the research question, “How do African American alumni of PWI talk about the experience of philanthropic giving?”

The interview questions that guided the research study were:

- How do you think your own experiences as a student affected or shaped the ways you decide to give to the University?
- How have your perceptions regarding the institution changed since becoming an alumnus of the institution?
- Talk to me about when you decided to give back to the institution.
- How was your decision on giving back to the university shaped?

Practical Concerns

In conducting this research study, the researcher acknowledged the possibility of practical challenges that could complicate the collection or analysis of research. These problems could have associated the researcher or the participants in the study and could have had disastrous effects on the entire study. One potential problem would have been the researcher's inability to acquire a diverse sample of participants based on gender, degree, and age. This difficulty would have affected the possibility of a representative sample of African American alumni to attest to their experiences at various time periods throughout the operation of the university.

Additionally, the expense and logistics of traveling to collect data from individuals in different locations would have been a challenge to the researcher, as this would have been expensive and presented coordination and scheduling problems. The researcher acknowledges that problems arose and concerns were presented in the conduction of the research, but flexibility was a strength in successfully collecting and analyzing data associated with the study.

Data Collection

Upon soliciting participants for the research study, the researcher attempted to utilize the University alumni association as a resource for targeted participant selection. Unfortunately, the alumni association of the University denied all requests for access to alumni contact information; no official reason for the request for information from the alumni association was provided to the researcher, though several queries were submitted. The researcher then focused on soliciting participants through a word of mouth approach. The researcher collected data from ten participants in an individual interview format for each individual. Lamber and Loiselle (2008) contended that individual interviews for data collection reveal a richer and more personal account of events and experiences. Two individuals were interviewed in-person in a location that was considered neutral and comfortable for the participants, while the other eight were interviewed in one-on-one phone conversations. Each interview was recorded on two digital recording devices for clarity and assurance purposes and each recording was transcribed in detail. Scheduling conflicts associated with the personal and professional lives of the participants impacted the data collection period, which lasted approximately three weeks.

Data Analysis

Data collection and the process of data analysis are important processes that require constant and simultaneous analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Merrian, 1998). In qualitative inquiry, analyzing data requires the constant need to classify identifiable phenomena within the narrative provided by the research participants as well as providing constant validation of the questions being answered by participants (Merrian, 1998; Thomas, 2003). The element of analysis is an acute element in case study research. Tellis (1995) contended that case studies are selective and should focus on a minimum of issues that are essential to understanding the event

being researched. Case studies have multiple perspectives and subsequently, multiple analyses for those perspectives (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991; Tellis, 1995). The multi-perspectival analysis must take into account the passive and active voices of the actors, formal/informal groups, and the subtle and not-so-subtle interactions among them (Feagin et al. , 1991; Tellis, 1995). Case studies give a voice and attention to those without voice or power and avoid conducting research reporting from a place of oppressive elitism (Feagin et al., 1991). Snow and Anderson (1993) contended that case study is a triangulated research strategy meaning the researcher uses multiple data points to establish and verify meaning.

The researcher utilized the approaches to qualitative data analysis of Hazzan and Nutov (2014), and analyzed the individual interview transcripts for each of the study participants for relevant phrases and words that were assigned intentional codes and categorized for further analysis. Based on the work of Marshall and Rossman (2006), analyzing qualitative data is a process that involves six phases: (i) organizing the data; (ii) creating categories; (iii) coding the data; (iv) testing preliminary understandings; (v) searching for alternative explanations; and (vi) generating the report. The researcher implemented the phases outlined by Marshall and Rossman (2006) during the data analysis process.

Organizing the Data

For the initial step of analyzing the data, the researcher read through the interview transcript documents multiple times as a method of gaining familiarity with the data (Baralt, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Gaining awareness and familiarity with the data is an essential step in the sense-making process that is data analysis (Baralt, 2011). Key (1997) contended that qualitative records consist of descriptive data, which is intended to depict the events of an event under study.

Creating Categories

Utilizing a lens based in discourse analysis, data was examined to determine patterns in the participants' narratives. A use of discourse analysis, analysis beyond simple words, behaviors, and systems of thought (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000), was beneficial to the researcher in examining the participants' narratives and identifying commonalities in their experiences. The process of creating categories is to present a description of common phenomena within and between groups of study participants (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The researcher also incorporated both environmental and historical contexts while conducting the research study (Fairclough, 1992, 2013). The researcher's identification of prominent themes, shared experiences, and repetitious words and phrases were essential in developing a greater understanding of the research area (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The researcher categorized the data into five thematic areas: (1) Undergraduate experience; (2) Institutional perceptions as alumni; (3) Alumni philanthropy towards the institution; (4) Alumni engagement; (5) Institutional choice. The thematic areas were considered "analyst-constructed typologies" as analyst-constructed typologies are crafted by the researcher and substantiated through the data (Patton, 2015; Bradley, 1993). Though the researcher crafted themes through a discourse analysis, they were not the sole means for conducting the data analysis and limiting further exploration.

Coding

Hartley (2004) asserted data analysis and collection are inherently developed together in an iterative process. The process of analyzing data consists of probing, classifying, arranging, and testing to address the presuppositions of a study (Yin, 2003). In essence, data analysis is no more than a search for patterns in the data for which one has access (Hartley, 2004; Yin, 2003). Once a pattern has been identified, Yin (2003) and Neuman (1997) contended that it should

interpreted in terms of a social theory or the environment for which it occurred and the researcher then transitions from point of describing the event to interpreting the underlying meaning. "The ultimate goal of the case study is to uncover patterns, determine meanings, construct conclusions and build theory" (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003, p. 67). For the purpose of this research study, the researcher developed a catalog of interview questions that were utilized through individual interviews (Kim et al., 1999). The participant interview response data was then transcribed by the researcher and analyzed to identify thematic areas for further research and exploration. Following the information transcription, the researcher isolated research appropriate statements associated with the research question and conducted a sense making study of said statements from each of the individual interviews. The researcher then coded the statements based on thematic areas and grouped each theme based on the phenomena identified. The information and conclusions drawn from the analysis were validated, based on a comparison of conclusions to the actual experiences of the study participants.

Coding the Data

The third phase in analyzing the data involved intentionally sorting and classifying the data through the use of categorizing based on common thematic areas (Berg, Lune, & Lune, 2004). The coding process in data analysis essentially reduces data, assists with understanding and recognizing phenomena that exists, develops a construct, and further helps to develop theories related to the data (Berg et al, 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In reducing data, the research set forth to maintain the integrity of the data without losing or compromising the meaning (Berg et al., 2004; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). Individual interviews provide a rich collection of material from participants and during the data coding process the researcher analyzed the data to better recognize phenomena that were present in the data (Elo & Kyngäs,

2008). In developing categorical constructs, researchers must further analyze the captured data to develop categories and themes that are shared amongst participants (Berg et al., 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In the process of coding participant data the individual participant interviews were transcribed and that data then coded independently. Each coded interview transcript was then compared to the other transcripts to examine for commonalities among the various themes. At this point the researcher assigned a specific coding scheme to match with the intentional categories selected, and meticulously examined each document to assign specific codes to passages, phrases, and words that met the conditions of being accepted into the categories. The researcher utilized a system of colored highlighters to assign individual codes to the transcript passages. The researcher did not code in exclusive terms and instead allowed for the creation of sub-categories to further analyze the data. Additionally, the researcher allowed for the same passage, phrase, or word to exist within multiple categories where applicable.

Testing Preliminary Understandings

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), to test the value and usefulness of the data, the researcher must directly assess the data for satisfying a retort to the research questions presented. The researcher acknowledged that there were several factors that have the possibility of influencing the data analysis process including: interests, biases, background, and philosophical paradigm (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Bradley, 1993). As the researcher underwent the process of coding the data, there were instances when the researcher applied the data to the associated research question to test whether or not the data was satisfying the initial inquiry. After successfully testing at randomly selected intervals, the researcher determined the practicality of the data and continued with the full analysis.

Study Findings

After a thorough analysis of the data collected from research participants, the researcher scrutinized the data relative to the research questions of the study. The researcher categorized the data into five thematic areas: (1) Undergraduate experience; (2) Institutional perceptions as alumni; (3) Alumni philanthropy towards the institution; (4) Alumni engagement; (5) Institutional choice.

The participants were given the option of selecting a pseudonym for use in the research for confidentiality purposes. The researcher encouraged the selection of an alias as it would grant the participants more comfort in freely sharing their narratives and the ability to be more open in answering the questions.

Subjectivity

In higher education, alumni involvement in the development process has becoming increasingly integral to the continued operation of many colleges and universities in the United States. The relationship between alumni and higher education institutions is one that influences and builds upon an association of reciprocity. Alumni who actively participate in the giving process receive authoritative influence in exchange for their dollars while universities receive philanthropic donations of time, talent, and treasure. Universities recognize alumni as valued members of the institutional community but, all too often, African American alumni do not receive recognition or association as philanthropic contributors to the overall benefit and progress of higher education institutions. Alumni relations' offices often characterize African American alumni as non-committed and uncharacteristic of traditional alumni philanthropists, however African Americans are an unused resource for university development expansion. Research regarding the reciprocal relationship between colleges/universities and African

American alumni has been limited to exploring this dynamic from the perspective of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). There is a lack of literature exploring the relationship between African American alumni and PWIs and how this relationship influences or affects African American alumni philanthropic giving.

As an alumnus of a public Predominately white Institution, I experienced first-hand the ‘othering’ by white administrators that many African American students and alumni experienced on these campuses. African American students feel undervalued and disregarded because their involvement in the financial philanthropic endeavors of the university did not match the financial generosity of their white counterparts. As an administrator at a higher education institution, I observed first-hand the ‘othering’ to which African American students were subjected when attempting to enact change, seek equality, and pursue equity; furthermore, I experienced the backlash first-hand when I faced racial injustices and witnessed their disregarding by white administrators. African American alumni of PWIs do not have influence and engagement in the day-to-day operations and vision for Predominately white institutions, nor do they have an open channel to the administration of these institutions as a result of their status as ‘lackluster’ philanthropists. If allowed to perpetuate, the already marginalized African American alumni populations of white institutions will continue to express sentiments of distrust and feelings of apprehension with their Predominately white alma maters, and this will further infect the experiences of current African American students enrolled at the institutions, furthering this unnecessary cycle. African American alumni serve as mentors, unofficial college recruiters, public relations associates, and a host of other unofficial roles for PWIs and the continued disregard of their status as a reputable and beneficial group by colleges and universities will have a potentially disastrous affect on these higher education environments. As a researcher, an

African American alumnus of a PWI, and higher education professional, I recognize that this study and its findings have the potential to bring about informed change in the relationship between African American alumni and their predominately white alma maters. Addressing this issue exposes larger implications for improving the experiences of both African American undergraduates and African American alumni attending PWIs. I intend for this research study to explore African American alumni perceptions of their predominately white alma maters and ultimately, the experiences of African American undergraduate students and how their experiences may have an affect on their perceptions relative to giving to their alma maters.

Qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were the two foremost methods utilized for conducting academic research. Qualitative research focuses on observations conducted in natural settings, captured narratives, and individual interpretations, unlike quantitative research, which places considerable emphasis on numbers, experimentation, and is derived from traditional scientific research (Miller, 2000; Taylor & Trujillo, 2000). In qualitative inquiry information is non-numerical data and quantitative inquiry scrutinizes data focused on numbers and numerical variables (Creswell, 2014). Within academic research, qualitative and quantitative methodologies encompass the collection of varied data as a means to increase and improve the understanding of the world we live in and the individuals we interact with on a daily basis (Denzin, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2000).

CHAPTER 4: INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

The State of Acme vs. Higher Education

After World War II the United States experienced an exponential growth in the American higher education system (Trow, 2007). The American public research based institution was heralded as a model in higher education and was and is still duplicated around the world (Cohen, 1998). Since the start of the 21st century recession and between the 2008 and 2014 fiscal years, higher education funding in the United States decreased 96% for all states with the exceptions of Alaska and North Dakota (Crisp, 2014; Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2010). According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Figure 2), Acme saw a decrease in funding per higher education student of over \$5,000 or 43.2% (Mitchell, Palacios, & Leachman, 2014). While several other states propose moderate increases to per pupil funding in higher education, eight states including Acme continue to decrease their investment in higher education funding though the economic climate for the country as a whole is steadily improving since the most recent recession (Mitchell et al., 2014). The lack of investment in higher education by state governments places an unnatural burden on the higher education institution to bridge the financial gap between budget cuts and operational expenditures, all while still operating at the same degree of excellence and without compromising the quality and availability of instruction.

As states pull out of funding higher education, the federal government has attempted to close some of the financial gaps that exist for students pursuing higher education by increasing aid and the overall federal investment (Hovey, 1999; Zusman, 2005). One such effort was the increase in the federal Pell Grant award from \$5,550 to \$5,975 for fiscal years 2013 through 2017 (The White House, 2009). As mentioned by the President and Chancellor of Acme State University, however, a 7.5% increase in Pell Grant funding amounts to very little when higher

education institutions are raising the cost of tuition upwards of 20-40% to deal with the cuts coming from state governments (President/Chancellor F. King Alexander, personal communication, February 5, 2015).

Table 2. Changes in State Appropriations

Changes in State Appropriations per Student and Tuition, 2008-14											
Percent Change in State Educational Appropriations per Full-time Equivalent Enrollment			Dollar Change in State Educational Appropriations per Full-time Equivalent Enrollment			Percent Change in Sticker Price Tuition and Fees			Dollar Change in Sticker Price Tuition and Fees		
Rank	State	% Change SEA/FTE	Rank	State	\$ Change SEA/FTE	Rank	State	% Change Tuition	Rank	State	\$ Change Tuition
1	Arizona	-48.3%	1	Louisiana	(\$5,004)	1	Arizona	80.6%	1	Arizona	\$4,493
2	Louisiana	-43.2%	2	Hawaii	(\$4,648)	2	Florida	66.5%	2	Washington	\$4,085
3	South Carolina	-41.6%	3	New Mexico	(\$4,588)	3	Georgia	66.5%	3	New Hampshire	\$3,768
4	Oregon	-37.9%	4	Alabama	(\$4,413)	4	California	62.4%	4	California	\$3,474
5	Alabama	-37.5%	5	Idaho	(\$3,857)	5	Hawaii	61.4%	5	Hawaii	\$3,460
6	Idaho	-36.8%	6	South Carolina	(\$3,761)	6	Washington	60.7%	6	Alabama	\$3,250
7	New Hampshire	-36.6%	7	Massachusetts	(\$3,704)	7	Alabama	55.2%	7	Georgia	\$3,125
8	Massachusetts	-36.3%	8	Nevada	(\$3,430)	8	Louisiana	52.1%	8	Colorado	\$2,989
9	New Mexico	-34.2%	9	Connecticut	(\$3,293)	9	Colorado	48.9%	9	Rhode Island	\$2,808
10	Nevada	-31.2%	10	Arizona	(\$3,082)	10	Nevada	44.0%	10	Florida	\$2,531
11	Pennsylvania	-30.7%	11	North Carolina	(\$2,999)	11	North Carolina	34.6%	11	Virginia	\$2,491
12	Florida	-29.7%	12	Florida	(\$2,745)	12	Rhode Island	34.6%	12	Delaware	\$2,487
13	Michigan	-28.2%	13	Georgia	(\$2,656)	13	New Hampshire	34.6%	13	Illinois	\$2,326
14	Washington	-27.8%	14	Kentucky	(\$2,649)	14	Tennessee	33.3%	14	Louisiana	\$2,242
15	Colorado	-27.6%	15	Mississippi	(\$2,524)	15	Virginia	31.6%	15	Vermont	\$2,176
16	Missouri	-27.4%	16	Washington	(\$2,498)	16	Utah	29.5%	16	Michigan	\$2,050
17	Hawaii	-26.5%	17	Oregon	(\$2,386)	17	Oregon	28.8%	17	Tennessee	\$2,008
18	Kentucky	-25.4%	18	Tennessee	(\$2,310)	18	South Dakota	28.5%	18	Nevada	\$1,951
19	Utah	-25.2%	19	New Jersey	(\$2,263)	19	Idaho	28.5%	19	Massachusetts	\$1,930
20	Mississippi	-25.2%	20	Utah	(\$2,230)	20	Delaware	28.4%	20	Oregon	\$1,924
21	North Carolina	-24.9%	21	Pennsylvania	(\$2,206)	21	West Virginia	26.3%	21	Pennsylvania	\$1,799
22	Georgia	-24.8%	22	Minnesota	(\$2,160)	22	New Mexico	25.4%	22	South Carolina	\$1,732
23	Virginia	-24.6%	23	Arkansas	(\$2,073)	23	Kentucky	23.2%	23	South Dakota	\$1,713
24	Minnesota	-24.1%	24	Iowa	(\$2,031)	24	Illinois	22.7%	24	Minnesota	\$1,706
25	Iowa	-23.8%	25	Oklahoma	(\$2,005)	25	Mississippi	22.7%	25	Connecticut	\$1,695
26	New Jersey	-23.5%	26	Texas	(\$1,996)	26	Massachusetts	21.8%	26	North Carolina	\$1,675
27	Rhode Island	-23.1%	27	Delaware	(\$1,923)	27	Michigan	21.5%	27	Kentucky	\$1,636
28	Kansas	-22.8%	28	Missouri	(\$1,914)	28	New York	21.3%	28	Wisconsin	\$1,530
29	Arkansas	-22.5%	29	West Virginia	(\$1,859)	29	Wisconsin	21.2%	29	New Jersey	\$1,508
30	Texas	-22.5%	30	Virginia	(\$1,852)	30	Connecticut	19.9%	30	Idaho	\$1,401
31	Delaware	-22.3%	31	Kansas	(\$1,663)	31	Kansas	19.7%	31	Utah	\$1,345
32	Wisconsin	-22.0%	32	New Hampshire	(\$1,659)	32	Minnesota	19.5%	32	West Virginia	\$1,300
33	Connecticut	-21.8%	33	Rhode Island	(\$1,649)	33	Vermont	18.5%	33	Texas	\$1,274
34	Tennessee	-21.8%	34	Michigan	(\$1,631)	34	South Carolina	18.4%	34	Kansas	\$1,272
35	Ohio	-21.7%	35	Ohio	(\$1,481)	35	Alaska	18.4%	35	New York	\$1,215
36	West Virginia	-21.6%	36	Colorado	(\$1,407)	36	Texas	17.6%	36	New Mexico	\$1,214
37	Oklahoma	-21.3%	37	Wisconsin	(\$1,401)	37	Oklahoma	17.3%	37	Mississippi	\$1,213
38	South Dakota	-18.4%	38	South Dakota	(\$1,388)	38	Nebraska	16.6%	38	Indiana	\$1,191
39	California	-15.8%	39	California	(\$1,373)	39	Pennsylvania	16.4%	39	Maine	\$1,150
40	Vermont	-13.9%	40	New York	(\$1,154)	40	Indiana	15.4%	40	Nebraska	\$1,044
41	Illinois	-13.5%	41	Maine	(\$1,136)	41	Arkansas	15.0%	41	Oklahoma	\$973
42	Maine	-13.3%	42	Nebraska	(\$1,099)	42	Maine	14.0%	42	Arkansas	\$947
43	Maryland	-12.0%	43	Maryland	(\$1,015)	43	New Jersey	13.5%	43	Alaska	\$913
44	Nebraska	-11.2%	44	Illinois	(\$851)	44	Iowa	12.2%	44	Iowa	\$854
45	New York	-11.1%	45	Vermont	(\$717)	45	North Dakota	11.4%	45	North Dakota	\$744
46	Indiana	-7.3%	46	Indiana	(\$547)	46	Wyoming	10.3%	46	Wyoming	\$410
47	Montana	-6.8%	47	Montana	(\$422)	47	Missouri	5.2%	47	Missouri	\$401
48	Wyoming	-0.7%	48	Wyoming	(\$93)	48	Montana	4.3%	48	Ohio	\$398
49	Alaska	3.5%	49	Alaska	\$636	49	Ohio	4.2%	49	Maryland	\$256
50	North Dakota	38.6%	50	North Dakota	\$3,150	50	Maryland	3.1%	50	Montana	\$253

Sources: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, SHEF 2013; Illinois State University, Grapevine FY 2014; College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2013.
Notes: All figures are adjusted for inflation and represent constant 2013 dollars. Illinois funding data is provided by the Fiscal Policy Center at Voices for Illinois Children. Because enrollment data is only available through the 2013 school year, enrollment for the 2013-14 school year is estimated using data from past years.

Note. Changes in State Appropriations per Student and Tuition, FY08-14. Reprinted from “State Higher Education Finance,” by State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2014, Copyright 2014 by State Higher Education Executive Officers. Reprinted with permission.

In the state of Acme, the current fiscal hardships felt by higher education institutions continues to cycle vicious cuts in funding. After years of deep cuts of state funding and support for Acme’s higher education institutions, several institutions were forced into making tough decisions that have had lasting detrimental effects on the institutional diversity of degree programs and academic avenues upon which the universities were built. A projected \$1.6 billion dollar budget shortfall looms as the governor of the state scrambles to find a solution to the impending crippling of the state’s higher education system (O’Donoghue, 2015). In a bold move to cushion the historic higher education cuts, the governor proposed several controversial alternatives to limit the budget reductions, many of which are not favored by his constituents, business owners, and taxpayers.

Tuition/Fee Autonomy

Fee autonomy for Acme higher education institutions would effectively relinquish oversight of the myriad of fees assessed to students by universities and colleges. On average, higher education institutions charge fees for building use, technology, student activities, academics, athletics, infrastructure, and ambiguous fees like “excellence fees”. With no oversight on student fees, colleges and universities can institute new fees with minimal approval and increase existing fees charged to students to make up reductions in funding elsewhere (O’Donoghue, 2015; Sullivan, 2009). In a move to drum up more financial resources and further close the funding gap, the governor has proposed a new higher education fee titled, State Adjustment for Valuable Education (SAVE) (O’Donoghue, 2015). This SAVE fee amounts to

\$2,000 per student and would do little to close the gap instituted by the budget cuts, though the governor has stated that some would receive a tax credit for the fee if they pass the threshold for a tax liability (O'Donoghue, 2015).

Viewed as passing more control of higher education operations and finance to universities, the provision of fee autonomy can potentially price out many students who simply would be unable to afford the adjusted fees plus tuition, room, board, and books. For African American students undergraduates from lower socio-economic homes, the mounting costs associated with higher education become a major deterrent and obstacle towards successfully entering and completing a bachelor's degree.

University Privatization

The recession of 2007 forced the publicly supported colleges and universities of Acme to undergo strict financial reduction procedures to make up for the fiscal demands of the government. Yet, years after the recession and months into a progressive economic growth in private and public sector jobs and a slight increase in per pupil funding for many states, the Acme state legislature continues to lead the nation in cuts to higher education funding (Mitchell et al., 2014). With budget cuts pending the official vote by the Acme State Congress, politicians, higher education professionals, and civilians proposed radical channels for dealing with the dire \$581 million dollar budget cut to higher education funding. The more off-the-wall of the proposals involves the privatization of several of the states public colleges and universities. Presented by several members of the state's Board of Regents, the proposed privatization of a select number of higher education institutions in the state would shed hundreds of millions of dollars from the higher education line item in the state's fiscal budget. The idea was proposed by a member of the Acme Board of Regents, who queried if in exchange for the physical structures

and land, various universities within the state would relinquish their public charters and any right to state support ultimately relegating each of the institutions to a private university (Crisp, 2015). In an interview provided to *The Advocate* reporter Crisp (2015), Board of Regents member Bill Fenstermaker stated, “I would think we ought to look at this at least. I know this is radical and it changes maybe some of the model, but it also could free up a lot of money for the other institutions” (p. 3).

While the thought of allowing a flagship institution to transition into a private university may seem radical and off-the-wall, it is not the first time in recent years that the idea has been presented and considered for colleges and universities in the United States. In 2009 when the financial crisis continued to loom over much of the country, Michigan, which many analysts considered to be one of the hardest hit states, proposed severing ties with the state’s flagship institution, the University of Michigan, in a move to shed approximately \$327 million dollars from the cash-strapped state’s fiscal budget (Sullivan, 2009). Political leaders in the state heralded the proposal as a sure-fire method of shoring up millions in the budget while cutting their higher education investment, though the process for removing the institution as a publicly funded university required a constitutional amendment, a unanimous decision by the University’s Board of Regents, and legislative approval (Sullivan, 2009). Many higher education institutions outside of Michigan and Acme have blurred the lines between existing as a public institution and privatization. For instance, the University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, University of Virginia, and the University of Wisconsin operate in a gray area in which they are public institutions but receive a large amount of their funding from private or out-of-state students (Priest, 2006). In 2004, the state of Virginia reduced its funding for its flagship institution, the University of Virginia, to 8% of the institution’s total operating budget (Leslie & Berdahl, 2008).

To avoid the potential for greater budget shortfalls on both the institutions within the state and the state legislature, the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act (RHEFAO) of 2005 was passed and implemented as a cost-saving initiative (Breneman & Kneedler, 2006; Leslie & Berdahl, 2008). The passing of the act permitted Virginia's public colleges and universities moderate autonomy from state regulation and control as it pertained to the financial operation of the institutions (Leslie & Berdahl, 2008).

As Acme and its flagship institution continue to avoid financial disaster, the proposed privatization becomes an more real possibility as generous philanthropists respond to the call for supporting the institution that has built a respectable following with petroleum, mineral, and other natural resource industrialists from around the world. The 78% cut in higher education funding for the state will force Acme State University specifically to take drastic measures to secure funding for the multitude of programs and services offered to stakeholders throughout the university constituency, including a potential restructuring and reemergence as a leading private university. The desperate need to improve the financial solvency of the University is no longer and has never been an issue of the state government or the Board of Regents. It is an issue and the responsibility of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The University must take the initiative to work with African American alumni to heal the gaping wounds left by the vicious budget cuts.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Introduction

As higher education funding from states and the federal government continues to decline amid a shift of higher education advocacy and governance from governments to the private sector (Hovey, 1999), colleges and universities are at the brink of collapse under the immense pressure to do more with less. As a result of financial mismanagement, the recession, and/or a lack of funding, colleges and universities are in dire need of securing additional revenue through philanthropic giving from the untapped resource that is their African American alumni. Though often tumultuous, the relationship between Predominately white colleges and universities and their African American alumni is essential and important to the success of higher education institutions in the United States. There is a lack of research and understanding regarding this relationship and the reciprocal nature both the institution and the African American alumni strive to achieve. There is a growing need for research and literature that provides substantiated information on how to develop, maintain, and improve the missing connection. This study was conducted to examine the relationship between public Predominately white institutions in the United States of America and their African American alumni and develop an understanding of this relationship (or lack thereof) to further explore African American alumni philanthropic giving to their white alma maters. A significant point of research was to isolate elements within the PWI/African American alumni relationship that influence or detract from the philanthropic activities desired from white colleges and universities. Those elements occur over a period beginning with initial enrollment at the PWI and extend beyond graduation into alumni status, a person who has attended or graduated from a school, college, or university (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

African American Alumni Philanthropy

What Is Philanthropy?

In developing a greater understanding for African American alumni philanthropy, one must first understand what philanthropy means to this population. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines philanthropy as “the practice of giving money and time to help make life better for other people.” For African American alumni of PWI’s this fits with commonly associated practices of giving back to community organizations and churches for the purpose of uplifting and engaging the community. However, the concept of philanthropy for this population seems farfetched and, in a sense, a glorification of duties and responsibilities that are expected or customary. Though the theory of social exchange dictates that there is a mutual exchange towards maximum benefit for all parties involved (Homans, 1958), African Americans historically have given back not for their own benefit but for the benefit of others (Ardalan, 2013; Carson, 1993; Cohen, 2006; Davis, 2003). Though the idea of giving money to institutions, organizations, and churches is commonly recognized with giving back, African American alumni feel that the act of giving their time to help benefit an organization is not necessarily representative of philanthropy. The concept of philanthropy for recognition and commendation is, for some, an unbelievable idea or concept that fosters false humility and furthermore refutes Drezner’s (2009) idea in which he contended that in African American alumni giving, a social exchange is at the foundation of the motivation to give. In her presentation during the CASE online series, Gasman (2009) posited that African Americans identify their philanthropic endeavors as a response to opportunities for racial uplift, religious influence, peer/family influence, visible results, and their lack of comfort with established and organized philanthropy. “Philanthropy means to me to give, time or

resources that represent or align with a cause I am passionate about (Julian, personal communication, February 16, 2015). “Philanthropy, or “giving back” as it is commonly referred to, exists within and beyond the boundaries of community.

Philanthropy means giving back to me to others in need. I support - My local church because of my religious convictions. - Youth sports teams because I believe in the power of sports to build character. -NPR because they are one of the few actual news sources left in America -Wikipedia, the last bastion of free information (Quinn, personal communication, February 3, 2015).

Philanthropy is necessary to the stability and proliferation to certain institutions, especially in regards African American culture (De Boer, 1973; Drezner, 2008).

Ideal Methods to African American Fundraising

There are ideal methods for attracting and incorporating African American alumni into the giving process. For African Americans, philanthropy must be associated and tied to the greater process of racial uplift (Drezner, 2008, 2009; Gaier, 2005; Gasman, 2009). Uplifting the African American race is an essential and natural mission as it dates back to times of slavery and still continues on today as African Americans are fighting for civil rights and equality (Carson, 1993; Gasman, 2009; Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005). In his 1903 book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, W. E. B. Du Bois posed the questions, “How does it feel to be a problem?” The process for engaging African American alumni in the fundraising process involves a social exchange and an interest convergence between the alumni and the alma mater. In this relationship, African American alumni provide funding and support to the white alma mater and its endeavors with the hopes of receiving a favorable policy decision and strategic response to increase students/faculty/staff of color on campus, and to also improve programs and services that work

to support and uplift African American students (Drezner, 2008; Emerson, 1976; Gasman, 2009; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). To capitalize on the opportunity of receiving additional funds from these African American alumni, the alma mater must align its interests with that of the alumni. The interests of the university may align with those of the African American alumni but ultimately, they will still be in the best interests to maximize university benefit (Bell, 1979, 2004; Delgado, 2002).

Where Do African American Alumni Fit With Philanthropy?

The decision of being a monetary philanthropist for the University was met with mixed emotions from those who participated in the research study; there was a shared belief from all participants in the role African American alumni should play in giving back to the University. Several African American alumni recognized that interest convergence appeared to be the only way they could work with the University to bring about beneficial change for other African American students. Among African American alumni it is generally understood that they should support those programs and services that helped them to acclimate, achieve, and graduate their alma maters (Drezner, 2009; Durán, 2001; Fairfax, 1995; Gasman, 2009). Supporting these programs helps to continue a cycle of continuous participation and sustenance of other African Americans in higher education (Feagin & Sikes, 1995; Lasher & Cook, 1996). A socially constructed theory of exchange for which the support from African American alumni translated into a more engaging and beneficial environment for future students was understood (Emerson, 1976; Nash & Curti, 1965; Pierce, 2008; Scott, 2009). Among participants this was pressed even more when coupled with supporting future students who originated from their neighborhoods, schools, and those who looked like them. One participant stated,

Well, number one, I mentioned the summer scholars program so I definitely want to help out that program as much as I can because it definitely helped contribute to my success, you know, being able to go around, you know, the summer going into my freshman year, starting off like that fall semester that's a 4.0, starting off Acme State University with knowing people, knowing the campus, knowing the resources, like it gave me a leg up, like completely going into my freshman year, going to that fall semester (Jake, personal communication, February 4, 2015).

Participants commented on specific programs and services that supported their earning an undergraduate college diploma. More specifically, these participants commonly referenced programs that were centered on the support and success of African American students attending the University. From the theoretical lens of interest convergence, PWIs find it in their interest to provide support to African American students as they represent an influential demographic of students and their support of recruiting, enrolling, and retaining these students align with the interests of African Americans who place considerable value on education (Bell, 1979; Gasman, 2009; Spears, 2008). Additionally, the alumni participants who mentioned an intentional decision not to give money to their alma mater were petitioned by the researcher to provide examples of changes at the University about which they were passionate and which they would like to see as a means to invoke a spirit of financial philanthropy. Julian stated,

Specifically, I would truly support programming that supports minority students in their journeys and their activities that they need to be successful at a Predominately white institution. It's hard being African American at a white institution and existing programs are underfunded and I don't see any of my friend's alumni dollars going to those programs but the school can build more on to the football field (Personal communication, February 16, 2015).

To correct this misunderstanding and for the reader's knowledge, the financial structures of most large public universities and associated athletics operate independently of each other. Moreover, money is not allocated to athletic facilities or personnel from the university administration but may be donated from athletics to the overarching university for unspecified use. Regardless, this

misunderstanding was common among several participants, as they believed that money they provided to the University was reallocated to athletic programs and services. Paul mentioned,

Hypothetically speaking, let's say if I did have the money to give, I think Acme State University's current financial status and its current issues will be very mobile with money, will give me a lot of pulls about giving to, you know, to the college. I'd be worried about where the money is going to go (Personal communication, February 2, 2015).

The notion of unrestricted funds and alumni giving with the intention of helping to support a program or service that equally benefits other African American undergraduates, and that money subsequently going to a well-funded or unassociated program, is a real threat to African American alumni philanthropy. Paul stressed, "I don't want the money going to some general fund and it gets funneled into... something else and I do know which way the wind blows here and I notice some programs get heavier concern than others (Personal communication, February 2, 2015)."

The participants on average gave \$500 annually to the University but also gave countless hours of service to the university. While many colleges and universities do not recognize the often-difficult process of recording service to the university as a philanthropic endeavor, African American alumni contend that while money is sometimes difficult to produce, time is an even more valuable resource that they utilize to pay dividends to the University. One participant stated,

Someone who may not have the money may have the biggest heart and may be the most dedicated to the prosperity of Acme State University but then... they might not be able to contribute like monetarily so they dedicate their time and I feel like I'm really contributing to something that's bigger than just me (Chad, personal communication, February 3, 2015).

The study alumni gave an average of five to seven hours per week either promoting, volunteering at events associated with, or mentoring/guiding potential students to their alma mater. This act

of giving back is based in a social exchange of time from alumni in exchange for minor amounts of influence and consideration (Cook et al, 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Drezner, 2009). In many college and university development offices the act of volunteering or dedicating time to the university is not quantified into the regular capital campaigns or philanthropic donation totals, and furthermore it is undervalued and underappreciated when compared to monetary donations. Similar to other college and university development offices, this relationship is acknowledged as a social exchange that works to build a beneficial relationship with African American alumni. “It's just important to me to be a part of the legacy whether it's a small part or major and whether it's financially or with time” (Jen, personal communication, February 3, 2015). For many of the African American alumni, the legacy that exists is not one that is rife with financial prosperity towards the University but is full of memories of actively involved alumni who gave their time to mentor, lead, guide, and assist in the cultivating of a supportive and engaging community for students of color attending the University.

I teach high school. I steer kids towards Acme State University all the time. I wear my sweatshirts and tee shirts to school and, you know, we have college days on Friday and, you know, everybody and everybody knows I went to Acme State University and I talk very proudly about my experiences there (Julian, personal communication, February 2, 2015).

The recruitment of students to any university starts well before the first campus visit. The pride and joy potential students have for potential college and university choices are in many ways affected by those influential stakeholders they encounter during their life. For example, a high school student who encounters an influential teacher who holds his/her alma mater in high regard and constantly promotes its stellar offerings can influence and excite potential students before they set foot on campus. Those African American alumni who champion the efforts of their alma maters with little to no regard for compensation, recognition, or acknowledgement do

so as a means of giving back to their alma maters. For these individuals time is as valuable as money and the pride they have for their alma maters rivals that of the most generous financial donors.

African American Alumni Associations

African American alumni involvement varies based on the age and location of the alumni. Though the University recognized one major African American alumni association as a subgroup of the greater alumni association, the members of that group represent individuals who graduated 30+ years ago. Many of these individuals who were actively involved with the official alumni association were members of the first classes years after the University was forced to integrate by court order. This initial integration took place in 1953 when the first African American student, Alexander Pierre Tureaud, Jr., enrolled for one semester before being forcefully removed by state legislators and public officials (Lewis, 2011). The integration of African Americans into the University was a decision based off the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* and many scholars argue that the decision is highly representative of the interest convergence of African American and societal pressure towards the University. Ultimately, the University aligned their interests and goals for integration with the African American community and opened admission to a select group of African American students, much to the dismay of prominent white alumni. Additionally, in 2001, a group of African American alumni thought there was greater need for an alumni association for African Americans that was not tied to the overarching umbrella of the University Foundation and they formed an online community of alumni (Earl, personal communication, March 5, 2015). This organization became known as the “Soul Tigers” and represented a community unified by their love for the University, their propensity for promotion the prosperity of the institution through philanthropy, and their race.

An African American organization comprised of alumni, this group believes that such close ties to the larger alumni foundation yield no benefit and potentially stifle some alumni participation. The Soul Tigers are organized through a shared governance structure. Any and all members have an equal voice in the direction of that organization. Additionally, each member is responsible for seeing to fruition personal ideas and aspirations for the prosperity of African American undergraduates.

Through interviews with various members of the Soul Tigers and the Official African American Alumni Association, it was understood that the two groups co-exist and the membership was not mutually exclusive but inclusive, as there was much overlap in the general mission of bringing together African American alumni to commune, network, and assist in the success of future members of both groups. There was some tension among members of the groups; strong emotions of betrayal were verbalized regarding perceived apathy and abandonment.

I think campus experiences and alumni events influence giving. My campus experiences were great, but the alumni association wasn't completely welcoming. They just sent envelopes asking for money. I will take part in unofficial alumni events with groups of friends sharing the same alma mater, but those don't involve giving time or money directly to the university (James, personal communication, February 28, 2015).

More specifically, members of the unofficial alumni group Soul Tigers feel that the official African American alumni organization is nothing more than an affirmative action piece that affords the University the opportunity to remark on their ability to recruit and retain active African American students into alumni status. Thus the University aligns with the theory of interest convergence. African American alumni petitioned the University for greater recognition and acknowledgement of their efforts as a specific group outside of the general alumni association. The alignment of interests yielded the African American alumni association, which

became recognized as an endeavor of the University to increase the involvement and engagement of diverse alumni. Several outspoken members of the Soul Tigers likened the organization to a group of “house niggas” who step and fetch at the request or demand of the University and its constituents and, furthermore, these individuals do not work toward the prosperity of the African American population but for that of the greater University, which ultimately further marginalizes African American students.

Underpinnings Influencing African American Alumni Philanthropy

Undergraduate Experience

The undergraduate experiences of many African American alumni became the defining factors that influenced their involvement levels with the University both financially in terms of physical service (Benton, 2001; Chavous, 2002; Gaier, 2005; Kameen, 2006). For many African American alumni of Predominately white Institutions the decision to attend a college or university is the first experience they will have being away from home and on their own for an extended period of time (Chavous, 2002; Feagin, 1996). Many of the participants in the research study contended that it was their “first time” being away from home. Naturally, there is fear associated with being in a new environment that is uncomfortable, unnatural, and unsupportive (Benton, 2001; Chavous, 2002; Gasman, 2001). With African American alumni, there are several positive and negative instances that resonate with their undergraduate and post graduate experiences and they have profound affects on the perception of their alma maters (Drezner, 2009; Gasman, 2001, 2008), and furthermore, it influences their decisions to actively engage the college or university as alumni (Gasman, 2002; Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005).

Past experiences with the institution and department, feeling of inclusion, involvement and meaningful experiences, post-graduate support, career/job attainment timeline, post-graduation income, institutions' current initiatives including recruitment, student and faculty demographics, post-graduation contact frequency, presence of a mentoring relationship. (Julian, personal communication, February 24, 2015)

The undergraduate experiences for the research participants was filled with political advocacy, incidents of racial profiling, community gathering, and grassroots organizing for the betterment of the treatment of those identified as minorities on campus. For several participants, becoming actively involved in historically Black Greek letter organizations had a deeply positive impact on their undergraduate experiences (Astin, 1982; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Henry, 2012; Thomas, 1981).

I joked around for three years during undergrad and every year I thought about leaving... (Aaron, personal communication, February 5, 2015)

Aaron's feelings of loneliness represented a common emotion and struggle that African American undergraduates attending PWIs experience. The feeling of loneliness for African American undergraduates attending PWIs is a common experience when planted in an unfamiliar environment with individuals who are not in support of your presence on campus (Cross, Strauss, & Fhagen-Smith, 1999; Love, 1993). Similarly, all other participants spoke candidly about their feelings of isolation and at times desolation upon their first months on campus (Feagin, 1996; Feagin & Sikes, 1995). Representing a small and often marginalized population on the campuses of PWIs, these students are alone in their classrooms, dormitories, and are often forced to assimilate to the dominant white culture before experiencing greater acceptance (Anglin & Wade, 2007; Feagin, 1996; Feagin & Sikes, 1995). For African American undergraduates, the process of achieving a sense of belonging while attending a PWI is long, difficult, and not guaranteed. According to Sedlacek (1999), African American undergraduates struggle to

recognize themselves as being a part of the school and they find it even more difficult to identify themselves as integral members of the University community. Identifying and finding comfort and support with a college or university is more integral to the success of African American students (Astin, 1982; Harper et al., 2009). For Aaron, it took associating with likeminded individuals to foster his identification with his alma mater and it was only then that he shed a cloak of loneliness and experienced success.

It wasn't until I joined my frat that I got serious about school and being involved. After joining I felt more connected to campus and to resources. I guess I had to live up to the expectation of being a member of that frat so I pushed myself to do and be better (Aaron, personal communication, February 5, 2015).

Aaron's involvement in a historically Black fraternity, though situated on the campus of a PWI, aided in his transition from a lonely, embattled student to a successful college graduate. Aaron noted in his interview that he achieved more success because of the way he was pushed to learn the true test of a man; the words of the poem *Invictus* by William Ernest Henley motivated him to push forward through the times of desolation as the only person of color in his classes. Henry (2012) acknowledged that as a result of joining a Black Greek Letter Organization (BGLO), individuals realize positive outcomes from their active participation including leadership development, networking, community service, accountability, and brotherhood/sisterhood. Active involvement in BGLOs for participants like Aaron, Quinn, Robert, and Julian yielded a desire to remain engaged with their alma mater as alumni and the findings indicated that these individuals donated more often to the University campaign, were actively involved as members of the larger alumni association, and also held leadership positions in the larger alumni organization or associated subgroups. African American alumni who were involved in BGLOs as undergraduates have a greater connection to their alma mater if it was the institution of their

initiation (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Henry, 2012). African American undergraduates who have a greater connection to their alma maters are more likely to become alumni who give back money, time, and other resources to the institution as a means of continuing the prosperity of the institution and supporting programs and services they believe are beneficial (Carson, 1993; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Monks, 2003).

Programs and Services

African American alumni who are actively involved in student organizations also remained engaged and donated more time and resources to promoting the university prosperity (Cohen, 2006; Daniel, 2013; Drezner, 2008). For several of the study participants, the experience of being involved in summer bridge programs for minorities was a catalyst that jumpstarted their involvement and continued that motivation into alumni.

It's a summer program for primarily African American students to acclimate them to the campus life, give them a chance to earn summer credits and to get a jump on the, you know, the whole college experience so that was really cool because I was around people who looked like me, talked like me, acted like me in an environment of higher learning where we were able to influence each other (Chad, personal communication, February 3, 2015).

For African Americans, navigating the campus culture of PWIs is a new and challenging landscape. Several individuals experience identity crises as their racial identity was tested and they became embattled. Cross (1995) suggested that there are four stages to African American identity development: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion, and internalization. Growing up in the Southeastern United States, Jake viewed the world under the auspices that white is right and Black represents the wrong (Cross, 1995; Cross, Strauss, & Fhagen-Smith, 1999). This represents the pre-encounter stage in which African Americans view the world as opposite of Black and whites as all knowing and all guiding. For Quinn, the encounter phase considerably

shifted her understanding of the campus and the surrounding culture. Quinn experienced blatant acts of racism from which she realized that no matter how progressive the campus of her PWI seemed, she was still looked down upon because of the color of her skin.

Several participants entered into the immersion stage although there were generational gaps. The desire and need to associate with peers of color and the dedication to avoid the pressure of forced assimilation led Jake, Aaron, Chad, Julian, Quinn, and Tracey to join BGLOs and the Black Student Union on campus. This need to surround oneself with promotions of Black life and culture characterizes the immersion stage (Cross, 1995; Cross et al., 1999). The final stage of African American identity development is internalization. Cross (1995) detailed this stage as the individual who remains in support and admiration of their “Blackness” while still exploring and establishing relationships with whites who are respectful of the student’s own racial identity and existence.

Programs and services offered at the university are able to aid in the process of acclimation while supporting an environment that is culturally and socially responsive to the needs of the minority community. For participants, these programs included: African American student organizations, offices handling multicultural affairs, programs organized by minority student groups, and services that allowed for minority students to engage with each other outside of academic settings.

That was really a time for me when I got to kind of start to develop myself as a leader and I was involved in many organizations on campus and served as leader in a few (Robert, personal communication, February 2, 2015).

These organizations and the participants’ active involvement as undergraduates reflected in their feelings of connectedness to the greater University community (Drezner, 2009). Through data captured by the researcher, participants who developed a greater connection to the University as

undergraduates through active and engaged participation in campus clubs and organizations became more involved as alumni and tended to be greater philanthropic donors to their own college or university (Drezner, 2009; Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

The encouraging findings of a positive undergraduate experience translates into a more intentional involvement as an alumnus (Cohen, 2006; Daniel, 2013; Gaier, 2005), but as positive experiences yield positive outcomes, negative instances have the potential to permanently scar and damage the relationship between African American alumni and their Predominately white alma maters.

The main issue that influences alumni giving is an alum's connectivity to their alma mater. If they feel connected or feel they have an opportunity to be connected, they will give back financially or otherwise. If they feel fragmented and isolated, it's not happening. People have to have a sense of value and respect in order to simply have the conversation, as well as being educated as to how to give (i.e. earmarking funds) in order for them to consider doing so. (Jen, personal communication, March 2, 2015)

For African American alumni of Predominately white institutions, the negative experiences and incidents that occurred on their college campuses engrain a lasting impression that affects their perception of the institution and their overall undergraduate experience (Feagin, 1996; Sedlacek, 1999). One participant stated, “There were a lot of negative connotations with coming to [alma mater] that turned out to be slightly true” (Andrew, personal communication, February 3, 2015). The history of institutional racism, violence, and inequity among racial groups creates a defensive disconnect that causes African American students to lose the feeling of connectedness to the institution (Cross et al., 1999; Sedlacek, 1999). For one participant, simply “fitting the profile” was more important to the University than due process or justice for all. “The run-ins with the police for negative reasons where, you know, simply walking down the street, I fit the profile” (Aaron, personal communication, February 3, 2015). African Americans in

Predominately white spaces face internal discourse whether they are going to be genuinely accepted or simply tolerated (Cross, 1995). They expel energy determining if the whites around them are being supportive in their actions or destructive, and they have to confront race based situations with the mindset that it could have a greater affect on their careers (Jackson, 2014; Smith et al., 2007).

One of the most negative things I can remember is when I was at [alma mater], I think they were just starting to build the center for African American and cultural studies building. And I just remember a lot of comments from white people, you know, that they didn't feel like it should be built. They felt like it was a waste of money and that Black students didn't deserve it if white students didn't have one (Quinn, personal communications, February 10, 2015).

The negative occurrence that African American alumni experience creates a vicious undertaking of Racial Battle Fatigue. RBF is attributed to the psychological attrition that persons of color experience from the constant battle of deflecting racialized insults, stereotypes, and discrimination (Jackson, 2014; Smith et al., 2012). These African American alumni who experienced bouts of RBF, associated with racialized micro aggressions and micro assaults, experienced a disconnect with the university (Bourne, 2001) and this trend continues on into alumni status. Eventually, this disconnect renders African American alumni of PWIs who feel that they are isolated in the greater university community; they feel a lack of support and engagement from administrators, and they feel out of place/unwelcomed, which limits and diminishes their desire to feed back into the system that alienated them to begin with (Bourne, 2001; Solorzano et al., 2000).

Progress Towards Diversity and Inclusion

As the African American undergraduate students earned their respective bachelors degrees and transitioned into alumni, their perceptions of the institution were influenced by their undergraduate experiences. Those perceptions often translated into their decision to remain actively involved and engaged alumni at varying levels. The perceptions, of course, followed and continued to have an interconnection between undergraduate experience and alumni involvement.

The negatives range from mainstream (Caucasian) student attitudes towards people of color. For some that have book-smarts, in regards to positive engagement with students who are different from them (ranging from ethnic status, socioeconomic status, and other measures), it ranges on the beyond ignorant. This includes some organizations doing social events that are derogatory to students to a general sense of not having a clue about people other than them. However, the more you talk with them, the more you realize they really do not have a clue as they've been conditioned not to, so there's more "reaching across the aisle" that you have to do. There are a number of positives: supportive faculty, student organizations, and a lot of good and decent people I am able to meet the more I got involved with on-campus programs. In making things better, I see more of it coming from students of color having to assimilate, yet some go too far and then are disconnected from their given ethnic group. It's about having a balance of being able to work with others yet maintain your identity, and that can be a challenge for students and alumni (Jen, personal communication, February 28, 2015).

In situations where this relationship and the perception that existed trended towards a negative experience and subsequent negative alumni perception, the relationship could be altered and corrected to a more positive state (Gasman & Bowman, 2013; Gasman & Sedgwick, 2005). If there are concerted and intentional efforts made towards the promotion of diversity, inclusion, and equity on the part of the institution, the college or university would show that it was serious about creating an atmosphere of acceptance and support towards African Americans. A concerted attempt to bring about positive institutional change shadows a sense of diversity and inclusion on college campuses (Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, Hurtado, & Allen, 1998).

I just didn't feel like [alma mater] did a lot for the minorities. I think they got a lot better after I left. You know, we have an African American cultural center now and the clubs and offices are doing more for African Americans and it makes me want to give to the offices that are doing things for us.... they didn't have like a lot of events and things going on when I was there or maybe I just didn't know about them (Tracey, personal communication, February 12, 2015).

African American alumni feel that a strong intentional effort to create a more supportive and engaging environment that is welcoming and encouraging to African American students shows determination to bridge an existing gap; they want to become a part of that legacy that “extends the olive branch” and works to better campus and the community for these students and that translates into financially supporting programs, services, and opportunities jointly with the university (Daniel, 2013; Kameen, 2006).

I was still around [alma mater],;it still gave me so much so definitely when I graduated from undergrad and then I continued on with my Masters degree, I felt like it was still giving me more ... it gave me so much more so I, you know, giving back wasn't a problem at all (Aaron, personal communication, February 3, 2015).

As colleges and universities abandon their efforts to create lasting relationships with populations of African American alumni deemed unwilling to give, they miss out on an opportunity to engage these alumni in building a more supportive and encouraging environment while also creating a financially beneficial relationship.

“All of my memories are attached to the campus and the university as a whole so I always like to see it do better and I like to do what I can to make it be better with whatever I can do (Chad, personal communication, February 3, 2015).”

There is a strong connection to the University when students are engaged and encouraged to involve themselves in the betterment of campus and their overall experience to the University.

An early investment on the part of the college or university to engage African American students in supportive services, clubs, organizations, and programs can instill a sense of university pride,

and has the potential to pay dividends as African American students transition to alumni status and continue to feel that sense of pride and responsibility for the prosperity of their alma mater.

Interest Convergence

For African American alumni of PWIs, the motivation to actively participate in the giving process of their alma maters is greatly influenced by the relationship that exists and the alignment of the interests of both parties (Drezner, 2009; Gasman, 2008). African American alumni of PWI's give to their alma maters because the spirit of philanthropy and giving is engrained within the culture and history of the people. Supporting their alma maters financially is rooted in the goal to encourage and sustain a diverse environment on campus and to uplift African American students who come from similar neighborhoods and communities as their own. These alumni support programs that provide assistance and backing to African American students including: multicultural affairs, Black student organizations, Black Greek Letter Organizations, and scholarships for African Americans. While the drive to support these programs and services exists, the presence and investment of these programs at PWIs may not take priority unless a concerted effort is present by the administration. For several PWIs the designation of resources and manpower to supporting programs and services for a small percentage of the population is not a worthwhile investment that will pay dividends. Bell (1995) contended that support of diverse programs and services will only manifest when it provides a direct benefit in the interest of whites. In higher education, diverse programs that African American alumni want to support are often shuttered or grossly underfunded because they do not align with the overall interest of the college or university and the interest of whites (Bell, 1979, 1995). For African American alumni to successfully support and see programs, services, and opportunities for others succeed, there has to be an overlap or convergence of interests with the

white administration of their white alma maters, and only when this happens will these programs succeed and those alumni will garner the ability to motivate change. When the alignments of these interests diverge and the University pulls support it often results in the dissolution and further destruction of the program and the community/population it supported (Bell, 1995; Harper et al., 2009). Alumni participants recognize that engrained racism at their predominately white alma maters begets interest convergence and overall, this promotes the financial and political agenda of the white administration (Bell, 1992, 1995). African American alumni of white institutions realize that to see the proliferation of programs and services that support students who look like them, they must discover the niche within the white administrators' agenda that promotes a dual benefit for all parties involved. For instance at Acme State University, the current strategic plan "Flagship 2020" has provisions that call for an increase in student and faculty diversity. Furthermore, the white administration has called on the leading African American alumni association of the University to help lead the charge in raising funds that would provide scholarships and endowed professorships for students and faculty of African descent. The promotion of the strategic agenda's provision on diversity aligns with the African American alumni's overall desire to increase diversity, thus providing an opportunity for interest convergence to manifest and propagate (Bell, 1995). The official African American alumni association that exists under the umbrella of the larger alumni association was an act of interest convergence as it came into existence when African American alumni wanted more influence and connections to Acme State University, and the administration wanted to appear more connected and engaged with their alumni of color. Through the acknowledgement of the African American alumni association, the white administration further compels its members to actively participate in the giving process and this benefits the fiscal bottom line for the university. Bell

(1995) posited that interest convergence only takes place when whites recognize the benefit of aligning their interests with non-dominant groups or, in this case, African Americans and the white administration pursue the alignment with the hopes of furthering the financial prosperity and ranking of the higher education institution. Financial support from African American alumni increases diversity programs, services, and faculties helps to relieve mounting pressure from stakeholders, eases the financial burden of attracting and retaining these diverse individuals, and fulfills a quasi-campaign to promote institutional diversity.

Social Exchange

The theory of social exchange in relation to African American alumni of PWIs focuses on the exchange of resources (e.g. money, time, or talent) towards the receipt of maximized benefit or outcome (Homans, 1958). Social exchange works towards minimizing the costs or risk associated with developing and maintaining certain intentional relationships (Homans, 1958; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). African American alumni enter into a social exchange with their predominately white alma mater because of the conceivable benefit and favorable minimization they hope to gain from the relationship (Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958). For these alumni social exchange is one of money and time provided to the University in exchange for the promotion of diverse values and the influence of decisions that relate to diversity initiatives. The most common risks associated with this social exchange are the risks of lost investments and the failed success of multicultural endeavors. The predominately white alma mater finds benefit in receiving financial support and promotional support from diverse individuals and associates their potential risks as being demonized for alienating and marginalizing the African American population.

Though mutually beneficial, both African American alumni and their alma mater continuously assess the relationship for value of the benefits received and level of risk and, when either party recognizes that the risk outweighs the benefit, the social exchange is abruptly re-negotiated or dissolved (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958).

Through a further analysis of the social exchange theory, the researcher determined that the white alma maters have maximum benefit in the social exchange with their African American alumni and have very minimal risks associated with the relationship. For example, in establishing a social exchange relationship with African American alumni, the college or university gains financial, moral, and community support for maintaining such a relationship. If the relationship falters, the institution loses all that it gained but in the minds of the administration, the loss of such a small contingent of the University alumni population does not translate into million dollar endowments or substantial financial gains. The social exchange theory is ideal when applied to situations of equity and equality among those engaging in the relationship but when the power dynamic is unbalanced, the more powerful entity will have the upper hand while the lesser powerful will associate minimal gain and the relationship as a whole as a benefit. The African American alumni see the benefit of having a relationship with their white alma mater because it provides them an opportunity for recognition and consideration when issues of diversity and multiculturalism arise. Beyond those minute benefits, this population gains access to administration and work to influence the decisions of the administration, but ultimately this comes at a price. The social exchange is grossly uneven because African American alumni must first provide substantial intrinsic and extrinsic benefit to the university before they are considered to be essential and effective, and when this relationship moves towards desolation the University will shutter the relationship.

Summary

While African American alumni may not financially bless the institution and provide an easily measureable impact on the bottom-line of the college or university's financial books, they deliver invaluable benefits in promoting, recruiting, and championing the efforts of the university they consider to be influential and impactful in their educational and personal journeys. The direct recruitment efforts of African American alumni may account for dramatic upticks in the diversity numbers for many undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff members.

However, there are a number of positives ranging from the faculty I have been able to work with, support from different entities (student and otherwise), along with being more involved on the alumni level in different affairs and decision-making entities. As I have shared with current students and even alumni, it is possible to have a like-dislike relationship with where you go. In general, it is positive as I am more in tune and aware of the resources available, but there's still work to do in order to make things better for all (Jake, personal communication, February 24, 2015).

Additionally, these alumni work to intentionally develop a narrative that may acknowledge the difficulties associated with being an undergraduate on the campus but ultimately highlight the benefits, advantages, and opportunities associated with their diligence and the successful completion of their programs of study. Every research participant interviewed highlighted times of frustration and desolation while attending the University, but continued their statements with an expression of pride and satisfaction for being a member of a national community of alumni of their alma mater. Homans (1958) acknowledged that social exchanges work to maximize benefit for all parties involved and interest convergence further dictates that interests must align for there to be progress; thus, when all interests and the expectations for a social exchange are misaligned or not present, the relationship further breaks down towards total dissolution (Bell, 1979, 2004; Drezner, 2009; Merkel, 2010; Wallace, 2012).

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In this final chapter, the researcher offers conclusions to the research study on the Philanthropic Giving of African American Alumni of Predominately white Institutions. Additionally, information focuses on how the research in this document informs both current and future practice as well as future research. In conducting data collection and analysis, the data exposed significant implications concerning the philanthropic habits of African American alumni of PWIs. All too often, African American alumni are seen as a lost cause when developing a plan for soliciting donations from college and university advancement offices, but why? Disengagement between the institution and the alumni results in the loss of philanthropic donations that are essential to the operation of colleges and universities. As the financial affluence of many PWIs is jeopardized, these colleges and universities are in dire need of securing additional revenue through philanthropic giving from the untapped resource that is their African American alumni.

Issues Affecting African American Alumni Philanthropy

For African Americans in the United States, a culture of community uplift and service has been a consistent characteristic and is common throughout the country. Several factors can affect the potential for African American alumni to give back to their Predominately white alma maters. In the process data collection, the researcher asked participants to provide examples of the things that impeded their ability or intention to give back to their white alma maters. A common theme among study participants was their current and projected future financial standings. Research has stated that African Americans on average give 18% more of their disposable income than whites (Zeinsmeister, 2013), however, they remain conscious of their

own financial status when the decision to give back to their alma mater is presented. As with donations received from alumni of any race, the current national and global financial status has a greater affect on African American philanthropic giving. On average, men and women of African American identification make less than white men and women (Antecol & Bedard, 2002) and therefore have less disposable income and less for philanthropic purposes. For many African American alumni, the ability to give back to the University primarily focused on their financial status at the time of solicitation.

In addition to the personal financial status of the African American alumni, an equally important influence was the progress and success of the athletic programs at the University. As one alumni stated, “As trivial as it might seems, Sports! Sports teams contribute to school pride” (Julian, personal communication, February 2, 2015). The success of the athletic program generally has led to an increase in alumni participation, philanthropic dollars, and an increase in undergraduate student enrollment (Tucker, 2004), which then led to the potential of more active alumni. African American alumni mentioned that the success of the large football, basketball, and baseball athletic programs generates more alumni pride, which in turn motivates those alumni to become increasingly more active with the University. As the success of the football program mounts, the amount of philanthropic donations received from alumni increases substantially (Baade & Sundberg, 1996; Tucker, 2004). For those participants who attended the University during the most recent national collegiate football championship win, there was more institutional pride, a greater sense of enjoyment for their time spent at the University, and lastly, there was a greater chance that those alumni were actively involved with the official alumni association and were active givers.

Improving/Increasing African American Alumni Participation

Improving African American alumni participation means increasing options for this population of stakeholders to actively engage with the University's methods and opportunities that mean something and instill a sense of pride. Participants in the research study contended that as African American alumni, their decision to be actively involved with the University began with how accepted and engaged they felt while undergraduates. This acceptance correlated with the reception of their status as underrepresented minority students, as well as acceptance in terms of the atmosphere prepared, presented, and promoted from their peers and administrators. The study participants felt that because they were not athletically inclined or provided some type of notoriety to the University, they were not valued or appreciated. African American alumni felt objectified as affirmative action cases and diversity pieces to be flaunted and displayed for accreditors, potential students, and benefactors. Colleges and universities must promote shared governance that welcomes the input of African American alumni and undergraduates as valued members working to build the prosperity of the University.

Communication and Solicitation

In soliciting philanthropic donations from African American alumni, colleges and universities first must develop communication strategies that engage the alumni in a conversation regarding their desire to influence the communities about which they care. Initially, alumni associations must maintain constant communication with alumni when they officially become alumni of their alma mater; for many schools that translates into at least two semesters of enrollment at the university. To engage African American alumni in conversations about their legacy and the building of a better college or university for populations about which they care, it is essential to first foster an interest in the idea of initiating an impact. Simply asking for money

for a general pool of donations that can fund programs of no interest yields apathy and disinterest, while focusing on issues about which African American alumni care is a more ideal method of gaining philanthropic champions for the efforts of capital projects that directly affect African American alumni and undergraduate populations. Moreover, a call center employee must understand what is important to the African American alumni in regards to the University. By developing an understanding of what matters to individual alumni, development staff can solicit targeted donations for programs or services that matter and speak specifically to the alumni's philanthropic interests.

Alumni Responsibility for Alma Mater Prosperity

African American alumni are active participants in promoting the prosperity of their colleges and universities, though not easily acknowledged because their efforts go unrecognized due to their lack of immediate financial return. These alumni play a key role in the recruitment and retention of minority students attending the university. Regardless of their undergraduate experience, these alumni take pride in promoting the mission, vision, and values of the institution while encouraging potential students to enroll. Though the payoff is not immediate, these students bring added tuition dollars to the institution and for many alumni who reside out of state; this is beneficial for the institution since out-of-state students pay the full cost of tuition and not the subsidized amount paid by in-state students.

We love [alma mater], man so we, no, we try to send every kid there we can. Like any kids, especially like kids of color. Any minority students that we teach or come in contact with and we know can get into [alma mater], I mean, we actively promote [alma mater], we actively try to get them enrolled at like the minority recruitment day and try to get them into summer scholars (Paul, personal communication, February 2, 2015).

In 2013, Higher Education consultant Levitz (2013) estimated that on average four-year public institutions spent \$457 per student in the recruitment process while four-year private institutions spent an average of \$2,543 recruiting. For a public institution suffering financial shortcomings, every tuition dollar coming into the college or university counts and the minimization of all expenditures is a primary goal. African American alumni are natural unofficial recruiters as they feel a sense of pride and accomplishment for succeeding, and they innately want to perpetuate a cycle of African American achievement, education, and success within their communities; the proud promotion of their alma mater comes naturally.

Interpretation of Findings

Current information contends that African American philanthropy focuses heavily on uplifting the community and church affiliation and does little to explore higher education philanthropy as it pertains to giving to PWIs. Research focusing on African American philanthropy converges on the donation of time, talent, and treasure to churches and community organizations that improve the status and conditions with which African Americans are faced daily, but does little to provide any examination on African American perceptions and attitudes toward giving to their white college and university alma maters. The current literature focuses on the financial creditworthiness of private Historically Black Colleges and Universities and how alumni of these institutions are often called upon to provide a rescue effort during struggling financial times (Cohen, 2006).

Undergraduate Experience

The literature focused on the undergraduate experience of African American college students relies heavily on the details of racial mismatch and the historical implications as well as present issues that face African Americans attending PWIs. A historical perspective details the

vast period of racial inequity that is commonly rooted in the American education system today. Additionally, African Americans still are meant to feel inferior when compared to their white counterparts. Education and race scholars contend that African Americans in Predominately white spaces are faced with issues of racialized micro aggressions and micro assaults; many develop Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF) and a survival instinct that causes them to detract from environments of overwhelming white presence to avoid further attack. The research study found truth in that each participant mentioned incidents involving overt and covert racial attacks. For many, these attacks become so blatant and common that the only a life of reclusiveness affords them the ability and strength to push forward relegates. A “head down” mentality is adopted as a means of surviving the daily onslaught associated with RBF. The researcher asserted that African Americans were discriminated and embattled for their place at universities but as Smith (2010) stated, African Americans were wildly appreciated for the contribution to the knowledge community about “ghetto knowledge”, essentially turning the aspirations of pursuing higher learning into nothing more than a minstrel show. Moreover, for many African Americans who attended PWIs instead of HBCUs, there was an inordinate amount of chastising from their peers who attended HBCUs. They were considered “sellouts” and many mentioned instances of being ostracized from friend and support groups in their hometown for their higher education choices.

Furthermore, the literature presented detailing the understandings of African Americans attending PWIs, and their experience with the institutionally racist and discriminatory culture, aligns with the researcher’s findings. African Americans are a shrinking minority in higher education and as the numbers dwindle, the investment that higher education institutions make to promote a campus environment that is supportive and engaging will shrink also; the struggling culture of African Americans in colleges and universities will take a disastrous blow. The

literature contends that administrators and peers who promote a culture fixated on keeping African American students in ‘their place’ often relegate African American students to subservient actualities unfitting of equitable treatment (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011). Study participants spoke at great lengths about the feeling of subordination from the marginalizing efforts to demean them as affirmative action cases, standard diversity, and charity cases. As the value placed on African Americans at PWIs falls, they will become more susceptible to these administrators diminishing their value and place as stakeholders for their colleges and universities. Additionally, the research participants commonly acknowledged the institutionalized racism of the literature and the researcher found that the two converged in the theory that racism is engrained in all aspects of American culture and society, and the practice that promotes this theory in higher education based on the experiences of research participants.

African American Alumni Philanthropy and Engagement

A 2012 study from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation determined that African Americans give a proportionally larger amount of their income to charity than whites (Ardalan, 2013). Additionally, African Americans who do give back do not consider themselves to be philanthropists because they commonly associate philanthropy with images of rich white men or religious figures giving to the poor and underprivileged (Ardalan, 2013). Collective giving among African Americans dates back to the 18th century and along the course of history, the definition and perception of philanthropy shifted to belief that only wealthy whites could serve as philanthropists (Fairfax, 1995).

For African Americans, the act of philanthropy exists as a natural expectation engrained in all community members but also includes small gifts, providing money to churches, assisting with community uplift, and extends to providing large-scale donations to higher education institutions to promote the proliferation of educated and qualified African Americans in society (Ardalan, 2013; Fairfax, 1995).

Existing research details the philanthropic efforts of African Americans as being rooted in a legacy of racial uplift, spirituality, and social activism. African Americans participate in philanthropic endeavors because it is engrained into the culture and fabric of being African American in America. African Americans' philanthropy inception occurred during the period of forced servitude when African Americans were given nothing more than what they could grow and cultivate of their own hands. To support the health and wellness of the slave community, a tradition was born that focused on the success and life of the many with little focus on the individual. This tradition of supporting the community with many hands continued through the emancipation of slaves. Prosperous African Americans worked to feed, clothe, and support those newly freed slaves who were without homes and support. Eventually, these created communities were self sufficient and operated with a communal mindset. Those African Americans who were more fruitful in their harvesting and more successful in their businesses continued the tradition of helping those less fortunate individuals until they could continue the tradition of helping support and uplift other African Americans.

The researcher determined that the concept of community uplift and support is a supported and believed doctrine among African American college graduates today. The belief in a supportive community model of growth motivates African American alumni to remain actively engaged with their white alma maters as a means of furthering the proliferation of African

Americans in higher education. Furthermore, there is a desire to perpetuate the cycle of educated individuals who return to the communities (local, university, social) and assist with continuing to support other upcoming members of the race and to uplift and support the community. African American alumni remain actively involved in the University community to support those who look like them and come from similar communities. These alumni may not be serving the greater financial needs of the University, but they provide the invaluable service of mentorship, guidance, support, and role modeling that is lacking on the campus of many PWIs.

The religious nature of African Americans has had a profound effect on the nature of philanthropy within the race. During the times of slavery, church was considered an opportunity to interact and also became synonymous with family (Duran, 2001; Francis, 2003). Church was a time of fellowship that also afforded those who were enslaved an opportunity to support each other mentally/emotionally and to utilize faith to press on through the hard times (Francis, 2003). Chaffin (2003) stated that religion, though presented through the domineering eyes of the slave master, was an opportunity to escape the oppression of slavery and provided hope for freedom through the stories of the Bible. After the abolishment of slavery, the church became a inspiration for family, togetherness, and the uplifting of African Americans (Drezner, 2009; Francis, 2003). African American churches were built by the communities they served and served as a force for community activism (Francis, 2003). The African American church is a collective hub for African Americans to worship in addition to being an outlet for social, political, and civic engagement (Chaffin, 2003). Churches are a protective sphere void of much of the persecution, oppression, and condemnation in the exterior community (Pierce, 2008; Francis, 2003).

For African American alumni, the church was a key support system in motivating and promoting their collegiate aspirations and achievements. African Americans speak highly of the church as being a strong foundation and support system for their collegiate endeavors. African Americans who come from homes that are not college-educated struggle to navigate the application and transitional processes associated with being first-generation college students. For many, the church serves to fill this information and experiential void by connecting potential students to actively involved and proud African American alumni of these PWIs. Thus, the church is deeply rooted in the success of its community members who embark and succeed in higher education at PWIs and continue to support those who enter the cycle of African American support.

African Americans have been an oppressed, persecuted, and discriminated population. From their first introduction to the Americas, they have been enslaved and subjugated and though minor victories have been realized, the battle for equity rages on. African Americans are undervalued for their contributions to society, existence, and in higher education; they are underappreciated for the role they play as alumni in promoting the diversity, prosperity, and continued success of Predominately white colleges and universities. African Americans take pride in the success and promotion of their white alma maters. They are philanthropists of time, and talent, and on average donate more of their treasure than their white counterparts. Often overlooked and all too undervalued, African American alumni of PWIs contribute to the very lifeblood of educational knowledge, cultural diversity, and financial success of American colleges and universities. Unfortunately, the continued lack of recognition and acknowledgement of such contributions may lead to the demise of many white institutions and the ever-widening diversity gap in institutional enrollment.

Limitations of the Study

Wiersma (2000) contended that because qualitative research is situated and observed in a natural setting it is difficult to reproduce. For case study research, the researcher has the ability to affect the sensitivity and integrity of the study. As an African American alumnus of a Predominately white institution, the researcher acknowledged that the chance of bias may have existed based on personal experiences, although steps were taken to limit personal narrative in the data collection process. Additionally, an unethical researcher has the potential to manipulate the data analysis to guide the findings in a specific direction (Miller, Birch, Mauthner, & Jessop, 2012). The researcher elected to use only the record data, guided by questions intentionally chosen for their lack of directional bias. During the data analysis phase, the researcher believed it appropriate and necessary to include relevant passages verbatim with the only redactions being specific institutional names or likenesses. The researcher's sample size, however robust, was small relative to the 4.6 million African Americans who have earned a four-year college degree or higher (Chavous, 2002). The researcher contends that where surveys and questionnaires provide ample opportunity for a large data set, a set of robust, rich interviews provides a personal narrative that extends beyond surface level questions.

Flyvbjerg (2006) developed five misunderstandings about case-study research. It is commonly misunderstood that broad-spectrum knowledge is of greater importance than content specific information but in the qualitative study of individuals, context-specific knowledge is of greater value and data. For instance, there is much general knowledge of African Americans in higher education but very little is known, as referenced in the literature review, about the philanthropic habits of African Americans to PWIs. Also, there are researchers who believe that it is nearly impossible to make such broad generalizations from an individual case, thus implying

that single case studies do not expand the field of knowledge. In response, Flyvbjerg (2006) opposed the idea that generalization is the only substantial source for new data and realizations, and supported the notion that a single-case study and its findings are commonly underestimated for their impact and presentation. Following, it is assumed the only beneficial use for case-study research is producing hypotheses in the initial phase of research. Flyvbjerg (2006) argued that case-study research is beneficial in constructing and assessing hypotheses. Some researchers believe that case studies are nothing more than an attempt to confirm the researcher's prejudiced conceptions, and, truthfully, bias exists in all research. Finally, it is misunderstood that case studies cannot be formed into general propositions and models. Flyvbjerg (2006) acknowledged the difficulty in providing summaries of case studies but supported the belief that this was because of the properties of the study and not the actual methodology.

Implications for Practice

Diversity is a key component of the overall success for student life and higher education. When working with diverse groups, faculty, staff, and administrators must be supportive, accepting, and engaging. Underrepresented groups are more prevalent on college campuses and their individual contributions to the greater prosperity of the institution will have a lasting affect on the success of the institution. For development professionals seeking meaningful investment from African American alumni, development opportunities must fit the common philanthropic interest of this population. Engaging young alumni early and often and providing them with opportunities to offer input is helpful and breaks down barriers and prejudices that might materialize during their undergraduate career. Development staff members must realize that the philanthropic interests of one group do not translate or shift to the interests of all groups. This assumption is based on the faculty and staff believing that the student groups naturally assimilate

with one another. According to Quevedo-Garcia (1987), if one's culture is to assimilate with another that means that they would be "relinquishing one's cultural identity" that makes them unique (MacKinnon, 2004, p. 225). Assimilation means becoming more like the majority group. According to MacKinnon (2004), "African American students at these institutions do not just assimilate on their own and many of the students feel that they were physically in the institution but not part of the institution" (p. 225).

Additionally, it is essential to attract diverse professionals to promote an atmosphere conducive to learning, acceptance, and growth for students, faculty, and staff. In the unstable field of higher education, it is important that professionals as well as departments engage in providing inclusive programs and services that promote holistic development for African American students. This is especially beneficial because it promotes a sense of connectedness to the institution and potentially improves the overall experience and boosts institutional pride. Underrepresented groups are growing in higher education and the institution must attract and retain a diverse staff; the institution is responsible for fostering a positive environment that will enhance experiences and provide meaningful opportunities for staff and students alike. The research findings are beneficial for various higher education professionals as they attempt to create stronger relationships with African American undergraduates and alumni to yield maximum alumni involvement. Through an exploration of various roles in higher education and student affairs, the researcher has determined that the findings from the study have the potential to impact university staff development and student affairs professionals.

University Development Staff

The core function of university development staff members is to serve as fundraisers for the university. They network with alumni and other benefactors to share and promote the vision of the University and to entice individuals to join in making the vision a tangible reality. The research findings will benefit these professionals because African American alumni is a population of stakeholders that is widely neglected by these offices, but through research have been found to be profoundly generous philanthropists. The findings present the motivations for these alumni to give and what outcomes they desire when giving to a college or university. The researcher contends that the findings support the improvement of a plan by development officers that properly engages African American alumni in opportunities for philanthropy that align with their giving habits and preferences. Furthermore, the researcher believes that by working with other higher education and student affairs staff members, the development office has the potential to increase African American alumni participation substantially over a four-year period.

Student Affairs Professionals

Student affairs professionals develop students as global citizens capable of contributing and succeeding in the changing world. As a former student affairs professional, the researcher contends that the profession works diligently in developing students as young adults and in preparing them for life after the end of their undergraduate career. The findings in this study will be beneficial to these professionals because they highlight the undergraduate experiences of African American undergraduates and how influential these experiences are in developing a sense of connectedness to the University. Furthermore, the act of connecting to the University is beneficial as it produces graduates who are generally more successful and who network within their respective professional fields.

Implications for Research

The demise of the American system of higher education is not of imminent approach, though current trends in federal and state higher education spending result in a dissolution of colleges and universities, academic programs, and the growth of an educational marketplace that will be limited to those who are fortunate enough to pay. The financial shortcomings faced by Predominately white Institutions in the United States, in addition to the growth in institutional development ventures, has left many institutions burdened and struggling to find new populations of benefactors. The research that exists on African American philanthropy suggests that African Americans donate a substantially higher percentage of their disposable income than any other racial group (Drezner, 2008) yet, this research focuses primarily on African American philanthropy towards community based organizations and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The void in the research and literature for African American philanthropy exists when specifically examining African American alumni philanthropy to causes not directly associated with Predominately African American organizations, or causes such as the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), local African American churches, or African American advocacy groups. The literature does not examine African American philanthropy towards non-minority endeavors and definitely not African American philanthropy towards white institutions.

Conclusion

The research study was guided by the central question, “How do African American alumni of PWIs talk about the experience of philanthropic giving?” In conducting individual interviews and collecting data, the research participants mentioned various causes that promote or constrict African American alumni philanthropic giving to PWIs. Lacking existing resources that delved into the factors that influence alumni participation at PWIs, the researcher captured

the narratives of this population through the determination of indicators that influence African American alumni giving; further examination of those influential indicators developed a greater understanding. This research expands current knowledge of African American alumni giving, which is limited to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, to including that of four-year public institutions. Recognition of peripheral forces of race and education, power and administration, and history and education were researched and included in the analysis and collection of data. African American alumni of Predominately white Institutions have pride in their alma maters and seek to see their college or university prosper and progress through the best and worse times. These alumni often give countless hours of their personal time, large percentages of their disposable income, and they advocate for increased diversity and multiculturalism by serving as unofficial recruiters for their alma maters. The marginalization and relegation of this population of alumni is an all-too-common mistake by higher education professionals, and that in turn diminishes an opportunity for increased alumni participation and the addition of much needed revenue from alumni dollars. African American alumni of PWIs are an invaluable resource that colleges and universities under utilize, under appreciate, and under value. As the current financial crisis in higher education across the country deepens and provides a more tumultuous foundation upon which to work, the lost revenue and support of this population will be hard felt and deeply missed.

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APPENDIX A INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

TO: Melvin Jackson
Educational Leadership, Research, and Counseling

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: November 24, 2014

RE: IRB# E9103

TITLE: Philanthropic Giving of African American Alumni of Predominately White Institutions

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 11/22/2014

Approved X **Disapproved**

Approval Date: 11/22/2014 **Approval Expiration Date:** 11/21/2017

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2a,b

Signed Consent Waived?: No

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable)

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman 

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

Continuing approval is **CONDITIONAL** on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.

8. SPECIAL NOTE:

**All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>*

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Study Title: Philanthropic Giving Of African American Alumni Of Predominately white Institutions

Performance Site: Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

Investigators: The following investigators are available for questions about this study:
Melvin J. Jackson, Dr. Kenny Fasching-Varner
Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm Monday-Friday
(225) 200-5032 (225) 578-2918

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between Predominately white Institutions and their African American alumni and use the understanding of this relationship to further explore African American alumni philanthropic giving towards their alma maters.

Subject Inclusion: Individuals who identify as Black or African American and who have earned alumni status from a Louisiana State University and A&M College.

Number of subjects: 6-10

Study Procedures: The study will involve conducting individual interviews of a random sample of participants encompassing approximately one hour of open-ended questioning.

Benefits: Subjects will not be provided with compensation for participating in the study.

Risks: The only risk identified by the researcher involves the accidental release of information regarding participant demographics. Many efforts to maintain the security and participant confidentiality will be made. All files will be digitized and kept on a secure data storage device with three-bit encryption.

Right to Refuse: Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Privacy: Study findings may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless law requires disclosure.

Signatures:

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Dennis Landin, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb.

I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Subject Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FORM

Study: **Philanthropic Giving Of African American Alumni Of Predominately white Institutions**

Date _____

Time _____

Location _____

Interviewer _____

Interviewee _____

Participant Consent form signed? ____ (Y/N)

Interviewer Information: Provide information on who you are, what you are doing, what you hope to achieve, and some subtle background information. Also, be sure to read through the *Participant Consent form*.

Notes to interviewee: Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research and in helping to better understand philanthropic giving of African American alumni at LSU.

Confidentiality of responses is guaranteed

Approximate length of interview: 60 minutes, five major questions

Purpose of research: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between Predominately white Institutions and their African American alumni and use the understanding of this relationship to further explore African American alumni philanthropic giving towards their alma maters.

A. Interviewee Background Information

- i. What is your highest degree earned? _____
- ii. What year did you graduate from LSU? _____
- iii. What was your undergraduate major? _____

B. Participant Open-Ended Questions:

- i. Talk to me about the factors that made you decide to attend your college.
- ii. How do you think your own experiences as a student shaped the ways you decide to remain actively involved with the university?
- iii. How have your perceptions regarding the institution changed since becoming an alumnus of the institution?
 - a. How have your perceptions translated into your giving back to the university?
- iv. Talk to me about when you decided to give back to the institution?
 - a. How was your decision on giving back to the university shaped?
- v. What continues to shape your decision on giving back?

Response from Interviewee:

Reflection by Interviewer:

Closure:

- Thank you to interviewee
- Reassure confidentiality
- Ask permission to follow-up if clarification is needed _____

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PHILANTHROPIC GIVING OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ALUMNI OF PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

The research study individual interviews will be guided by the following research questions:

- I. Talk to me about the factors that made you decide to attend your college.
- II. How do you think your own experiences as a student shaped the ways you decide to remain actively involved with the university?
- III. How have your perceptions regarding the institution changed since becoming an alumnus of the institution?
 - a. How have your perceptions translated into your giving back to the university?
- IV. Talk to me about when you decided to give back to the institution?
 - a. How was your decision on giving back to the university shaped?
- V. What continues to shape your decision on giving back?

APPENDIX F

PERMISSION TO USE TABLE 1.

From: Gloria Auer GAuer@sheeo.org
Subject: [Website feedback] Figure Use
Date: March 5, 2015 at 4:51 PM
To: mjack71@tigers.lsu.edu
Cc: Hans Peter L'Orange hlorange@sheeo.org, Andy Carlson ACarlson@sheeo.org

GA

Dr. Jackson:

We are happy to grant you permission to use the table as you've described below—provided that proper attribution is given.

Thank you,
Gloria Auer

Gloria Auer
SHEEO – The Association of State Higher Education Executive Officers
3035 Center Green Dr Ste 100
Boulder CO 80301-2205
Direct line: (303) 541-1625
gauer@sheeo.org
www.sheeo.org

-----Original Message-----

From: Gloria Auer
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 3:41 PM
To: Gloria Auer
Subject: FW: [Website feedback] Figure Use

-----Original Message-----

From: administrator@sheeo.org [mailto:administrator@sheeo.org] On Behalf Of mjack71@tigers.lsu.edu
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 10:34 AM
To: General Mailboxes
Subject: [Website feedback] Figure Use

Melvin Jackson (mjack71@tigers.lsu.edu) sent a message using the contact form at <http://www.sheeo.org/contact>.

Hello,

I am a doctoral candidate studying higher education and I have come across a table your organization produced on "College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2013". I would like to ask permission to use this table in my dissertation research study while of course appropriately citing the source.

Thank you.

Melvin J. Jackson

Report as inappropriate:
http://www.sheeo.org/mollom/report/mollom_captcha/1503050e3aa62d44c2

VITA

Melvin Jonathan Jackson was born August 22, 1986 in Asheville, North Carolina. He received his Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management from Appalachian State University in 2008 and a Master of Arts in College Student Development also from Appalachian State University in 2010. He was awarded the Louisiana Board of Regents and designated a Southern Region Educational Board Doctoral Fellow in 2013 upon enrollment as a doctoral student at Louisiana State University.