

## **ABSTRACT**

ELLIOTT, STANLEY. An Examination of Factors Associated with the Retention and Recruitment of African American Male Faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina. (Under the direction of Dr. Paul Bitting and Dr. Robert Serow).

In light of escalating enrollments of African American students on college campuses and continuing calls to increase the numbers of African American male faculty, a considerable amount of research has been conducted over the years to explore the relative status of African American male faculty (Bennett, 2001). It was difficult to find a college or university in the United States that was not seeking new and innovative methods of recruiting and retaining minority faculty. As higher education experiences a transformation in the demographics of its student body, institutions are finding it increasingly important to enhance their abilities to retain minority educators. These educators bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the classroom and laboratory.

Ira Swartz, the provost of Temple University stated, "I think it encourages students to see faculty who have similar backgrounds and cultural beliefs, and these faculty members can serve as role models for these students" (Gater, 2005). Nonetheless, there is a growing amount of skepticism about the success of diversity initiatives, especially as they relate to African American male faculty. Although subsequent decades have seen increased representation of African American males among the general faculty pool, as well as among those employed in white institutions, the pool of African American male faculty has shown signs of stagnation and decline (Bennett, 2001). This presents us with a question of the causes for this decline.

This study examines African American male faculty and the contributing factors for their retention at Historically Black Colleges in North Carolina. As such, its larger purpose

is to call attention to mechanisms by which institutions of higher education can increase the number of African American males going into faculty positions.

The focal point of this study was a series of interviews with four African American male faculty members who are employed at Historically Black Colleges within North Carolina. The result of those interviews suggest that while the participants have a somewhat positive attitude regarding their current employer, factors external to those institutions have been highly influential in shaping their careers.

For example, three of the participants alluded to mentoring as a factor that has helped them to navigate academia, thereby indicating the importance of an academic pipeline that should begin at the elementary school level to expose African American boys to colleges. The interviews also revealed that there is a need for senior faculty to engage junior faculty as soon as they enter the faculty ranks. This type of mentoring would encourage participation in academic committees and sometimes facilitate a smoother transition from Graduate school to the faculty ranks.

During the interviews some participants believed it was easier to retain the African American male faculty than recruit new faculty. With increased retention of faculty, this makes success in recruitment easier. It should be noted that a university program that focuses on retaining African American male faculty should subsequently have more success in attracting additional African American faculty.

In this study, perceptions are that the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCU's in North Carolina is essential to the education of all students at HBCUs. The intent of this study was to investigate the factors that contributed to the

recruitment and retention of African America male faculty at HBCU's , contribute to the investigative literature and foster additional research.

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An Examination of Factors Associated with the Retention and Recruitment of  
African American Male Faculty at Historically Black Colleges and  
Universities in North Carolina

by  
Stanley J. Elliott

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## DEDICATION

### Mother to Son

Well, son, I'll tell you:

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

It's had tacks in it,

And splinters,

And boards torn up,

And places with no carpet on the floor—

Bare.

But all the time

I've been a-climbin' on,

And reachin' landin's,

And turnin' corners,

And sometimes goin' in the dark

Where there ain't been no light.

So, boy, don't you turn back.

Don't you set down on the steps.

'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.

Don't you fall now—

For I've still goin', honey,

I've still climbin',

And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

~Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes' poem represents much of why I am dedicating this study to my grandparents (Pete, Press, Bell and Sonny Boy). My grandparents did not have the opportunity to finish high school, attend college, obtain a masters or PhD. However, their hard work paid off several generations after they are gone. I am the direct beneficiary of their unselfish giving. My parents (James and Glorious) sacrificed opportunities and luxuries so they could expose their only son to a world beyond rural northeastern North Carolina. Mom and Dad, thank you for giving me a better life; a life that I can pass on to my only son (Sterling).

Sterling, you have so much promise and potential. You are only 8 now but your wisdom consistently surpasses your age. I only pray that I can give you not only luxuries and opportunities, but also the integrity, work ethic, and love for Christ that was passed on to me through generations.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Stanley Elliott is a native of Edenton, North Carolina. He has a B.S. Degree from Elizabeth City State University, Masters from North Carolina Central and is pursuing a PhD in Educational Research and Policy Analysis from North Carolina State University. He has been employed in various administrative positions in higher education. He is also CEO and founder of The Educational Global Group (The EGG), an educational consulting company that also helps underserved populations get into and pay for college. He is a member of 100 Black Men, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., and numerous community and national organizations. In his spare time, he coaches little league football, baseball and hockey.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Purpose of The Study.....	5
Statement of The Problem .....	5
Research Questions.....	8
Implications and Significance of The Study.....	8
Limitations of the Study.....	9
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	12
Historical Background .....	12
The Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890.....	15
Post-Secondary Desegregation .....	16
Landmark Supreme Court Decisions in Education.....	18
Executive Order 11246 .....	20
African American Male Faculty in the Academic Marketplace from a Historical Perspective .....	21
Under-representation in the Higher Education .....	22
The Relationship: HBCUs and African American Male Faculty .....	26
Factors Influencing Professional Preparation .....	28
Mentoring.....	29
Social Adjustment.....	36
Faculty Socialization.....	39

Institutional Barriers and Remedies .....	41
Summary .....	44
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	45
Introduction and Study Purpose.....	45
Research Question and Design .....	47
Rational for Selection of the Research Design/Interview Method .....	47
Selection of Study Setting.....	49
Sample Eligibility Criteria .....	50
Data Collection .....	50
Data Analysis .....	51
Profiles of Study Participants.....	53
Dr. Matthew .....	53
Dr. Mark.....	53
Dr. Luke .....	53
Dr. John.....	54
Trustworthiness and Rigor.....	54
Summary .....	55
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS .....	56
Introduction.....	56
Interview Questions .....	58
Dr. Matthew .....	60
Dr. Mark.....	64

Dr. Luke .....	68
Dr. John.....	72
Cross Case Analyses-Retained Faculty .....	75
Mentoring.....	76
Institutional and Departmental Support .....	78
Individual commitment instilled by undergraduate institution.....	79
Family and Social Support.....	80
Summary.....	81
 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND	
CONCLUSIONS.....	83
Discussion.....	83
The Recruitment and Retention Nexus .....	87
The HBCU Context.....	90
Implications and Recommendations for Further Research.....	92
Theoretical Recommendations.....	93
Pragmatic Recommendations.....	93
Additional Recommendations.....	94
Conclusion .....	95
REFERENCES .....	97

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Process of Data Collection.....	53
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## **CHAPTER 1:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The eminent philosopher John Dewey (1916) wrote that only in education do individuals get the opportunity to escape from their limited social environment and come into contact with a broader environment, enabling them to surpass their restricted class boundaries. In the demographics of higher education, the opportunities for African American males have not been proportionate to their representation within the general population. Furthermore, when we take a closer look at what African American male faculty in particular are saying about their existence in the academy, we wonder if Dewey would have changed his mind about these early assumptions.

While African American males still lag in many positive categories in education, both at the student and faculty levels, they tend to be overrepresented in others, including special education programs, suspension/expulsion, and dropout rates. Jones and Jackson (2004) have shown racial and gender disparities with educating African American males. Studies have uncovered “tremendous racial disparities in levels of educational performance, educational attainment, college enrollment and college graduation rates between racial groups” (Jones & Jackson, 2003, p. 87). Such studies have become very well-known among researchers and policy makers.

The first Ph.D. awarded to an African American male was earned only a little over 100 years ago, and it was followed by a century of protest and challenge in order for African Americans to gain admission to programs that prepared academic scholars. In 2007, there were 13,317 terminal degrees (Ph.D.s and Ed.D.s) awarded to men in the United States; only

618 of those degrees were awarded to African American men, representing only 4.6% of the total awarded. This percentage of African American men receiving Ph.D.s has remained relatively stagnant over the last few years. In 2008, 1,484 (still 4.6% of the total doctoral degrees) African American men received doctoral degrees (US Department of Education, 2009). Additional research revealed that only 13.5% of African American males in full-time faculty positions are employed in research universities versus 24.1% of White males; also, 45% of full-time African American male higher education faculty have doctoral degrees versus 60.8% of white male faculty (U.S. Department of Education, Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2009). These percentages suggest that African American men in higher education seem to be powerfully impacted by the complex array of historical, cultural, and social developments that have molded the American academy. For example, studies indicate the absence of African American men at the undergraduate level (Gibbs, 1988; Morgan, 1996; Wilson, 2000), which decreases the numbers of African American males going to graduate and professional schools.

African Americans constitute 58% of the faculty at historically Black colleges and universities and 4% of the faculty at all other higher education institutions in the United States (Hubbard, 2006). This number is more alarming when viewed in the context of the low level of Ph.D. attainment among this ethnic group. Retention of this faculty group has also been an issue. Trower and Chait (2002) found that Black faculty were more likely than white faculty to leave their institution within a seven year period. Despite this attrition, the hiring rate of Black faculty has been minimal at best. A study of institutions in the Irvine

Foundation project in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* found African Americans constituted only 4.8% of the new hires between 2000-2004 (Smith & Moreno, 2006).

African American males have not had the same rates of faculty success as other ethnic groups. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2005) notes that among African American students, African American males face more obstacles than African American women entering college; even when enrolled, they have a long history of earning fewer degrees at all levels than African American women. One must associate academic successes at the undergraduate and graduate level with increasing the numbers into the faculty ranks. If African American male faculty numbers are to increase, the numbers of African American males going to graduate and professional schools also must increase. Against this background, attention should be given to the role that the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) play in the education of African American males.

The literature has consistently found African American male faculty to be more satisfied at historically Black colleges and universities than at predominantly white institutions despite findings suggesting those employed at the latter tend to have lower teaching loads, higher pay, and higher publication rates ( McNeal, 2003, Berrian, 2006). This finding naturally leads to questions about the experiences of this faculty group at these institutions. Research of African Americans male faculty at predominantly white institutions has noted frustrations with tenure, teaching experiences, and the work environment.

HBCUs have long been the catalyst of change for African Americans in higher education. However, African American male faculty numbers at HBCUs have continued to diminish over the years (U.S. Department of Education, Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2009).

Although many HBCUs were founded as liberal arts colleges, some became industrial training schools under the model of “Negro education” espoused by Booker T. Washington (Cross, 2002, p. 38). In the post-World War II era, however, HBCUs returned to their original mission of providing African Americans with a tertiary education similar to that provided at PWIs, including the liberal arts, physical sciences, and professional programs such as law and medicine.

My experience at HBCUs provides the assumption that HBCU faculty typically pride themselves on being student-focused, and that the institutions themselves tend to center their missions primarily on teaching. Today, a significant percentage of HBCUs provide post-graduate degrees, and their faculty boast a substantially greater proportion of terminal degrees. However, with the decrease of African American male faculty members among all higher education institutions, the consequence of this change remains to be determined.

A national study on the impact of race on graduate degree aspirations showed that factors like interactions with teachers, full-time enrollment, financial obligations, and campus racial make-up can have a positive or negative impact on the graduate school aspirations of African American males (Pascarella, Wolniak, Pierson, & Terenzini, 2004). The study also reveals that some of the factors for African American male attrition at the doctoral level from faculty, staff, and students are the lack of financial resources; lack of quality faculty mentoring/advising; lack of intellectual ability to do graduate level work; lack of motivation; and lack of necessary physical and emotional stamina to deal with the environment and requirements of doctoral study.

Retaining and recruiting African American male faculty still remains an issue of focus and concern at many colleges and universities. While researchers have investigated the institutional climate, mentorship practices, and social capital as well as these factors' relationship with fostering a supportive campus environment for African American male faculty, few studies have used the counseling literature to discuss coping strategies that African American male faculty can use to enhance their experiences and increase their success, thus increasing retention rates. This study will focus specifically on the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCUs.

### **Purpose of The Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to identify factors associated with the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in North Carolina. In so doing, I hope to provide insight that leads to policy changes that will ultimately improve stability throughout the faculty ranks at HBCUs.

### **Statement of The Problem**

In 2009, the African American male faculty total population was 39,720 out of more than 1.4 million professionals, which is approximately 2.7% of the total population of faculty (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Most of the African American male faculty are heavily concentrated in the southeastern region of the United States. In 2009, 63.3% of all African American male faculty worked in colleges and universities located in the southeast. The reason for this disproportionate distribution is that the vast majority of African American professors are

employed at HBCUs, which are concentrated in the southern states.(U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

In comparison to PWIs with larger endowments and budgets, HBCUs typically are given the mission of providing education for under-prepared students while having significantly fewer resources. The lack of both fiscal and physical resources is a significant factor in retaining and recruiting faculty. The faculty at HBCUs are typically paid less when compared to faculty at PWIs (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

African American male faculty are deterred from applying to teach at HBCUs not only because of the salary, but also because of relatively few research opportunities, heavy teaching loads, and stressful political climates.

In order for all institutions to improve retention of African American male faculty, they must examine the complexity of job satisfaction as it relates to this group must be examined. Much of the literature has focused on sources of dissatisfaction for African American male faculty. However, it is important for discussions pertaining to possible reasons these faculty members may leave an institution be coupled with discussions of why they may stay. Discovering sources of dissatisfaction alone do not provide insight into the factors that may lead to African American male faculty feeling motivated, or for more experience faculty, a renewed sense of excitement.

For African American males to enter the faculty ranks, they must obtain advanced and terminal degrees. Studies over the past 20 years have documented the cumulative effects of specific variables upon persistence of minority students at the master's level. While these studies covered a broad spectrum, they tended not to assess the outcome of these variables

upon the persistence of African American male scholars at the doctoral level. At the same time, institutional efforts to reduce the attrition rate of African American male scholars at the graduate level have not produced desired outcomes. Considering budgetary constraints faced by many institutions, it is important that resources are spent in a way that will have significant and lasting results.

A significant determinant for African American male faculty underrepresentation may lie in the actual institution. From the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) survey, Turner and Myers (2000) discovered that although close to 80% of the institutions rate the retention of minority faculty as a high or very high priority, "only 5 percent report that their institutions have special offices designated for minority faculty professional development" (p. 122). Only a few institutions within the MHEC states have professional development programs directed at minority faculty recruitment and/or retention. Turner and Myers (2000) suggest that financial constraints or the absence of an institutional designee (those assigned to handle faculty recruitment and retention) is the most contributory for the lack of targeted programs.

The literature on African American male faculty surrounding retention and representation is scarce. However, the narrative of African American male faculty regarding their capacity to survive in the academy continues to grow. Sorted themes from qualitative data describe experiences of African American male faculty members, particularly those subjected to marginalization at their respective campuses. Broadly, the literature cited described how African American males and other minority faculty feel unwelcomed and unappreciated in their everyday social and professional interactions.

## **Research Questions**

The overarching questions that guide this study are:

1. What factors do participants associate with their own recruitment and retention at an HBCU?
2. Do the participants perceive their HBCUs as being supportive in both their teaching and research efforts as well as offering an environment of collegiality?

## **Implications and Significance of the Study**

This study will contribute to the research examining recruitment and retention policies at colleges and universities. I hope to also contribute to the development of those policies, specifically focusing on how African American male faculty may successfully be recruited and retained at colleges and universities in the United States. Research efforts will concentrate on a small segment of institutions, namely HBCUs, and on the experiences and perceptions of several individuals who have been successfully recruited and retained as faculty members of these institutions. For the purpose of this study, I define *retained* as remaining at the current institution of employment for at least 5 years and not currently seeking other employment. While not necessarily representative of the broader population of African American male faculty, the findings of this research may contribute insights into policies and practices that would prove beneficial to other institutions.

A second potential contribution of this study is that it may shed light on achievement of job satisfaction and quality job performance within the population in question. Research indicates that African American male faculty members are more likely to spend time engaging in teaching and service activities than in research, and that this allocation of time

usually results in diminished amounts of publication and scholarship (Scott, 1981). Limited research evidence exists that estimates the effects of job satisfaction on research productivity for African American male faculty. Some research has described the dismal educational conditions for African American males (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder, 2003), coupled with federal legislation targeted at improving these conditions (Trio Programs); however, the evidence of results have been slow be revealed in practice.

This study is also significant in that it will add to studies that have shown the negative and often bleak chances for African American men to continue to be successful in higher education. Specifically, “African American males have even been described as an endangered species and the success of African American males in the academy is viewed as something of an anomaly” (Wilson, 2000, p. 176). In addition, studies of African Americans in higher education such as those by Roach (2001) continue to demonstrate the widening gap of degree completion of African American males compared to African American females. Providing research that places successes of African American males under a microscope will offer colleges and universities strategies to meet the challenges facing a diverse campus society. Moreover, the blueprint of success can be developed for other college-bound African American males who want to teach at a university. The utilization of this blueprint will not only provide success on college campuses, but may subsequently enable these men to be successful in their families, communities, employment, and society.

### **Limitations of the Study**

A limitation for this study is the limited participation of faculty from HBCUs. Factors that limit participation from faculty are faculty class loads and restrictions by

leadership that disallows faculty to participate in interviews. When I interviewed faculty, they were typically concerned about time constraints. I tried to reassure the study participants that the time constraints would be minimal.

The study was done with participation from African American male faculty from a small number of HBCUs, all located in North Carolina. These findings are, therefore, not representative of the African American male faculty at other types of institutions or in other states. Additionally, there was a limited amount of current literature related to the study. Much of the literature may appear to be outdated; however, it was necessary to include this literature in the study to build a foundation for additional research. Current literature is used to highlight current processes and recent developments used to increase retention and recruitment of African American male faculty at HBCUs. The study relies primarily on interview data and on a small amount of supporting documentation.

Qualitative research has limitations. The researcher is the primary data collection instrument, and thus subject to unique sensitivities in data collection and reporting (Merriam, 2009). The researcher alone must make decisions about depth of detail to provide for each case and cross-case analyses (Stake, 2005). For these reasons, it is very important that the researcher be aware of biases and subjectivities (Merriam, 2009).

There are also case study limitations of generalizability. This study focused on a small number of individuals who met very specific criteria: an African –American male faculty member, who has been employed at his current HBCU within North Carolina for at least 4 years. The study was also limited to faculty members willing to participate thus limiting purposeful examination of variables, such as tenure, that may impact African

American male faculty job satisfaction.

The interviewees' comfort level with the researcher may have served as a limitation. As noted by Schram (2006), over-identification with the researcher could cause participants to "act or respond in ways they think the researcher wants them to act or respond."

Due to the nature of qualitative studies, generalizability to the entire population of African American faculty at historically Black colleges and universities and predominantly white institutions was limited. There were also a limited number of documents that could be collected; the documents collected were vitas, faculty activity reports, publications, and course loads.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Chapter 2 offers a review of the literature pertaining to the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty members at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. It opens with a brief overview of the history of African American education in the United States, particularly with regard to higher education. Despite the increasing accessibility of higher education to African Americans during the past half-century, African American males continue to be severely under-represented within the faculty ranks. A partial exception to this pattern can be found in many of the nation's surviving 103 HBCUs. At these institutions, African American males have had a much larger presence than elsewhere, although even at the HBCUs, the case can be made that their numbers are lower than might be expected.

From an overview of history, the focus shifts to those factors that prior research identified as being instrumental in recruiting and retaining African American faculty, especially males. As will be noted, few of these studies have focused on HBCUs. Hence, the proposed research seeks to break new ground by extending the existing knowledge to a category of institution that continues to play an important part within American higher education.

### **Historical Background**

Recent data indicate that African American males are significantly underrepresented in most roles within American higher education, including those of undergraduate student, graduate student, and faculty, and that this pattern is especially evident among males

(Marable, 2007). In order to address the specific issue of this proposal, namely the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCUs, it will first be necessary to consider the broader historical context in which the current situation has developed. The history of African American education has been the subject of a substantial and diverse literature; the central point of agreement is that the forced nature of most African immigration to the United States is a historically unique circumstance that sets African Americans apart from other ethnic groups (Shabazz, 2004). To be sure, the historical literature has fully acknowledged that education in the United States has been subject to a complex array of barriers, including those based on socio-economic status, national origin or ethnicity, gender, religion, and geographic region.

To some extent, therefore, it can be argued that each of these other variables has paralleled, or perhaps even influenced, the education provided to African Americans. In order to maintain a reasonable focus on the topic at hand, it will be necessary to concentrate on the major trends and developments in African American history, beginning with the realities of slavery.

Data that encompasses the Antebellum Period reported that four million black slaves lived in the United States and the majority (92%) resided in the South. Although some free blacks attended school, strict laws and social customs during this period prohibited slaves from being formally educated (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). As early as 1783, free blacks were taking a leading role in initiating what were designated as African organizations, which were established to safeguard their right to worship, educate their children, and advance blacks in

society. These organizations were instrumental to the advancement of education for a small number of blacks during that time.

The rise of abolitionism and the victories of the Union forces in the Civil War inspired new efforts to provide some measure of formal education, including post-secondary education, to newly liberated black Americans. A key development was the passage by Congress of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. For present purposes, the significance of these laws was two-fold. First, by providing funding for public land-grant colleges and universities, the laws greatly expanded both the demand for and the supply of higher education throughout the United States. Secondly, the Morrill Act of 1890 was adopted at a time that southern states were reversing post-Civil War reforms. These reforms that instituted severe restrictions on African American rights gave rise to the institutions that would prove to be the most effective vehicles of post-secondary educational opportunity for Americans of color throughout most of the twentieth century, namely, the HBCUs (Harper, 2006).

Researchers of African American male higher education history must acknowledge the broad variations of African American men's collegiate and educational experiences and the wide differences in university relationships in America and abroad. It is imperative that contemporary educators know, claim and employ the long impressive history of formally educated African American males (Alexander, 2008).

Given the legacy of racial segregation, it is astonishing to perceive the presence of African American male faculty in many college classrooms. For leaders in higher education, this feat symbolizes progress toward a heterogenic academic culture, namely within

predominantly white institutions (PWIs). While we celebrate progress toward cultural diversity, the notion of retaining African American male faculty members in higher education remains a challenge. Retention rates for African American male faculty members of the academy were dismal compared to their white peers (Turner & Myers, 2000). This challenge forces scholars to reexamine issues of retention and representation for minority faculty in the arena of higher education.

Most higher education institutions' activities toward retaining and recruiting African American male faculty members remain stagnant, thus neglecting to meet the perceived needs of African American (and other minority) male representation in higher education. In respect to timely environmental factors, it is probable that the effects of the economy may influence the provision of critical resources for retention, further limiting sustainment of African American faculty. Nonetheless, we can assume that efforts toward collective advocacy and persistence from minority faculty members and administrators will promote, at the very least, above average representation of African American males in higher education.

### **The Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890**

Passed by a Congress dominated by northern Republicans, the first Morrill Act offered each state that would accept the terms of either land or land scrip in an amount equal to 30,000 acres for each member of Congress from that state. The unused land would be sold, with proceeds going toward endowments for the college. In contrast to the traditional collegiate emphasis on the classics and the liberal arts, the Morrill Act emphasized applied science and mechanical instruction and made higher education accessible to millions of people (McNergney&McNergney, 2004).

Almost thirty years after Morrill I, the Morrill Act of 1890, Morrill II, was passed. With a substantially narrower focus than the first act, it gave financial support to the already existing land-grant colleges and prohibited the payment of funds to states for colleges that made racial distinctions between students for admission purposes. This prohibition of racial discrimination was subject to provisions only if the funds received were equitably divided between the newly former HBCUs and established PWIs. The state legislature or officiating board would decide how funds would be managed; however, the state legislatures did very little to make the allocation of funds equitable.

Nevertheless, the “sidebar” of the law was that in order to receive federal funds, states with segregated higher education systems would need to establish land-grant institutions for blacks. Seventeen land grant HBCUs were established as a result of the 1890 act, and they still exist today (Jackson & Nunn, 2003). Within nine years of Morrill II, all southern states, along with Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia, had established dual systems of higher education.

### **Post-Secondary Desegregation**

By 1900, all southern states had legally segregated schools, and the majority of northern schools maintained a segregated policy built into school practice and local mores, continuing a system of institutionalized racism in education. Although the first black student had graduated from Bowdoin College in 1826, it took more than sixty years, until 1890, to graduate more than thirty African Americans from white colleges or universities (Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996).

Browning and Williams (1978) reported that missionaries had conflicting educational goals for African Americans. One sect instituted goals that lead to religion, equality, and a liberal arts education, while another sect instituted goals that provided religion and an industrial education, thus the emergence of a system of education exclusively for African Americans. “The black college has the same general mission as a white college, but additionally, the black college has a special and unique purpose” (p. 108). A contribution distinguishing the black college from its European American counterpart is service to uplift its people globally. The black college mission has a primary commitment to nurture and serve its students, the community, and humanity (Kannerstein, 1978).

Contrary to popular opinion, efforts to desegregate education in America did not begin with the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* litigation or at the primary and secondary levels of public education. In fact, post-secondary education, including graduate and professional schooling, served as the pioneering ground for a focused strategy against desegregation initiated by the NAACP legal defense fund (Patterson, 2001). In southern public higher education institutions, the long road to desegregation began in 1933 with *Hocutt v. Wilson* (North Carolina, 1933). Ultimately, this case hinged on the issue of entrance qualification. Hocutt was unable to verify his credentials because for fear of repercussions, he was afraid to attend a Black undergraduate institution. Nonetheless, Hocutt brought attention to the grave inequalities in graduate and professional programs. This would eventually be a critical inroad to challenging desegregation (Jones, 2000).

## Landmark Supreme Court Decisions in Education

Historically, African American male scholars had not fully participated in mainstream institutions of higher education. During the years prior to the United States Supreme Court decision of 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education*, educational policies favoring separation assured "there were few if any racial minorities on the faculties of predominantly white colleges and universities" (Turner & Myers, 2000, p. 61). Racism, de facto Jim Crow laws, and massive resistance to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision all frame a narrative for African American males' quest for education. The decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson 1896*, which gave the stamp of approval to the doctrine of "separate but equal," was dismantled under the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Two years later in *Hawkins v. Board of Control*, the U.S. Supreme Court applied the principal of equal access to higher education, thus expanding educational opportunities for African Americans (Williams, 2005).

Other cases continued to bring the issue of equal access to the Supreme Court such as in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*. This decision ruled unconstitutional the admission process of the Medical School at the University of California at Davis, which set aside 16 of the 100 seats for non-white students. The "diversity in the classroom" justification for considering race as "one" of the factors in admissions policies was different from the original purpose stated by UC Davis Medical School, whose special admissions program under review was designed to ensure admissions of traditionally discriminated-against minorities. UC Davis Medical School originally developed the program to (1) reduce the historic deficit of traditionally disfavored minorities in medical schools and the medical profession, (2) counter the effects of societal discrimination, (3) increase the number of

physicians who will practice in communities currently underserved, and (4) obtain the educational benefits that flow from an ethnically diverse student body (Williams, 2005). The case concluded that while the school had a compelling interest in a diverse student body and therefore could consider race as a "plus" factor in its admissions program, it could not *ex ante* set aside seats specifically for a certain race, resulting in the automatic exclusion of others based only on race (Williams, 2005).

Creating equal opportunity in higher education has been and remains a slow and uneven process. There is continued resistance for equal opportunity for higher education, as evidenced by the 2003 case involving the *University of Michigan, Grutter v. Bollinger*, in which a deeply divided Supreme Court recognized that educational institutions have a compelling interest in a diverse student body. In *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the affirmative action admissions policy of the University of Michigan Law School. The Court ruled that the University of Michigan Law School had a compelling interest in promoting class diversity. The court held that a race-conscious admissions process that may favor "underrepresented minority groups," but that also took into account many other factors evaluated on an individual basis for every applicant, did not amount to a quota system that would have been unconstitutional under *Regents of the Univ. of California v. Bakke* (Williams, 2005). In contrast to the *Grutter v. Bollinger* ruling, *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) was a U.S. Supreme Court Case regarding the University of Michigan undergraduate affirmative action admissions policy. In a 6–3 decision announced on June 23, 2003, the Court ruled the University's point system's "predetermined point allocations" that awarded 20

points to underrepresented minorities "ensures that the diversity contributions of applicants cannot be individually assessed" and was therefore unconstitutional(Williams, 2005).

Although the numbers remained low, the years following World War I marked a small increase of African American faculty appointments at PWIs while segregation forced African American faculty members to remain mostly employed by HBCUs. Despite gains in access to higher education, colleges' and universities' enrollment of African American males remain disproportionately low (Williams, 2005).

### **Executive Order 11246**

On September 24, 1965, Lyndon B. Johnson issued Executive Order 11246, which ordered all government contractors to hire employees based on the practices of affirmative action, seeking to ensure termination of occupational segregation by race, as mandated by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Executive Order 11246 required federal contractors, including universities, to ensure that all employment applicants be treated without regard for their race, creed, color or national origin (Etheridge, 1997).

According to Etheridge (1997), it was not until Labor Department orders were issued in 1970 and 1971—Order Number 4 and Revised Order No. 4—that there was real impact on higher education. In 1973, the American Association of University Professors endorsed an action in faculty hiring and charged the professorate with promoting diversity to remedy past discrimination. There was considerable resistance by major research universities in complying with this directive. For example, in 1975 faculty members from the University of California system testified before the president of the United States and Commission on Civil Rights. These faculty members argued against the implementation of affirmative action in

higher education, because they saw it as giving minorities an unfair advantage in the hiring process (Wey, 1980).

### **African American Faculty in the Academic Marketplace from a Historical Perspective**

The next section tightens the focus of this inquiry by examining the emergence of the marketplace for African American faculty. The origins of this can be traced to the post-Civil War era when missionaries and beneficent northerners provided preparatory education to previously legally nonexistent subjects (Anderson, 1976; Woodson, 1968). Missionaries had a threefold educational approach: social, economic and religious (Browning & Williams, 1978).

Prominent among the first generation of college-educated African Americans were teachers, preachers, and business owners. Occasionally, an African American male attended a PWI. Matriculation at those institutions was typically not recorded in that system's records (Jackson, 1986). Circa 1870, the first professor, Charles L. Reason, who was educated in the prestigious European American higher education system, a Harvard graduate (Wallenfeldt, 1983), entered the exclusive and rare African American academic marketplace.

In 1890, Black college graduation rates were evenly balanced between the northern and southern states. Only two decades later, a significant demographic shift had taken place. The time had ended when the north was the paramount region for Black educational opportunity; this was the age of southern institutional growth. Following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld racial segregation under the rubric of "separate but equal," Jim Crow segregation decreased attendance at formally racially mixed institutions such as Berea College. Berea, founded in 1855 as a college for "Black and White

together,” succumbed in 1904 to the Day Law, which prohibited integrated schooling in the state of Kentucky (Nelson, 2004).

The greatest demand for African American academic professional services came mainly from institutions located in the southern states. Although largely invisible to the general public (Astin 1977; Willie, 1987), predominantly black institutions, including land grant colleges and universities, training institutions, and private colleges (usually church affiliated), all employed African American graduates of similar institutions as well as those who had matriculated at white institutions. According to Proctor (1976), most of these HBCUs specialized in producing classically trained educators and clergy members (the traditional clientele of future “teachers and preachers”). An exception to this model arose from two vocationally-oriented schools, Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute, both which came to be closely associated with Booker T. Washington’s earliest debate with W.E.B. Dubois over the purpose of black education in America.

### **Under-representation in Higher Education**

Although many studies have assessed the implications of having African American male professors, few have actually documented those men’s experiences. Additionally, researchers have conducted analyses concerning retention, recruitment and institutional environments in higher education (Tinto, 1994).

In 2005 only 16,270 or 2.6% of 631,596 full-time faculty members (all ranks included) in the U.S. were African American males (*The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac Issue*, August 26, 2005). Included in this total for African American males were faculty members identified as instructors, lecturers, and other. When considering only those

faculty members at the rank positions of assistant, associate, and full professor, the total number of African American males employed as full-time faculty was 11,566, less than two percent of the total number of faculty in the U. S. According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2007), African Americans currently comprise approximately 13% of the U.S. population, with African American males comprising one-half of that total. As such, it is clear that when compared to the general U. S. population, African American males continue to be underrepresented in academia. The underrepresentation of this particular subgroup of the professoriate is even more interesting when taken into account the majority of African American male faculty are employed at HBCUs.

Institutional data from the University of Memphis illustrate a similar trend of African American underrepresentation. During the 2005 fall semester, 8.1% of full-time faculty members were African Americans, while 80.3% were white (The University of Memphis, Office of Institutional Research). With some care in the interpretation, one can presume that the university data is indicative of the national trend of African American male faculty underrepresentation. To sum up the data, Perna (2002) cited that African American male faculty underrepresentation is pervasive, exacerbated by the fact that the "retention in higher education continues to be lower for African Americans than Whites" (p. 652).

Past literature has suggested that recruiting and retaining African American male faculty has been difficult to accomplish for several reasons: (1) the small numbers of African American males in the "pipeline" (Darden & Jacobs, 1998); (2) the long history of inequitable hiring and promotion practices at institutions of higher education (Alali&

Calhoun, 1990); and (3) lack of success (e.g., attainment of tenure) of African American male faculty due to inadequate research productivity (Scott, 1981).

In 2006, black men with graduate degrees still earned 70% of the income of their white counterparts with the same degrees (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). While possibly discouraging to black men, this speaks to a race wage disparity that is premised on more than just the academic qualification, and does not discredit the evidence that “education is still and important indicator for future social success or failure” (Hefner, 2004, p. 136).

African American male faculty were severely underrepresented at all academic ranks compared to their colleagues. Specifically, in 2007 there were 13,317 total terminal degrees awarded to men (includes doctorates earned by persons with unknown citizenship status and unknown race/ethnicity) of those total doctorates 618 were African American men. This number has remained relatively stagnant or decreased over the last two decades (Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2007).

Undergraduate institutions along with graduate programs are sometimes an unfamiliar place for African American males. Often, being an African American male in higher education, as well as in the larger society, means navigating an environment full of possibility, while at the same time having to manage an internal fear of failure (Fletcher, 2006).

The doctorate is often a prerequisite for upper tier employment with the academy (Solorzano, 1995); doctoral degree attainment for non-majority scholars must become the central focal point of institutional policy. Additionally, even the slightest improvement in equitable distribution of compensation amid the nation’s citizenry should be good news for

everyone. An increase in the number of African American male doctorate degree holders will translate into incalculable benefits not only for African Americans, but also for the educational community and the nation as a whole. It is, however, clear that the inability of higher education institutions to achieve a critical mass of black men has a tremendous impact on students' cultural identity, perceptions of the cultural climate, and their level of social and academic integration into the campus community (Cuyjet, 2006).

During the period of desegregation, HBCUs employed "upwards of ninety-six% of African American faculty" (Smith, 1992). Although not a major focal point herein, this data can be associated with the structuring of professional classes in African American communities. Allen and Jewell (2002) point out that African Americans "were trained almost exclusively in HBCUs in the era prior to the 1954 Brown ruling" (p. 246). These institutions produced highly educated and skilled professionals, including those future African American scholars of the academy. Smith (1992) noted that there had been a gradual shift of African American faculty employed by HBCUs since 1966. Regardless of this trend, African American scholars are still likely to teach in HBCUs (Smith, 1992). Nonetheless, HBCUs have created opportunities for African American faculty and students alike. They have symbolized the African American quest for education and scholarship (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

In their review of faculty representation in HBCUs, Johnson and Harvey (2002) cited that 58% of full-time African American faculty are concentrated at HBCUs. This regressive pattern (since the period of desegregation) appears to be indicative of increased opportunities for African Americans and other minorities in mainstream institutions of higher education.

Legislative activities and mass efforts by professional organizations have paved the way for diversity in higher education. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 11246 ushered in the growth of minority faculty members into predominantly white institutions of higher education. This order ensured "the termination of occupational segregation by race mandated by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" (Turner & Myers, 2000, p. 17). In 1973, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) pushed for affirmative action in faculty hiring. This organization "charged the professoriate with promoting diversity to remedy past discrimination" (p. 17).

### **The Relationship: HBCUs and the African American Male Faculty**

The first black colleges (Cheyney, Lincoln, and Wilberforce Universities) were established in the North during the antebellum period, years before slavery was abolished and the Civil War began. These institutions were established in response to resistance and widespread discrimination on the part of northern whites to African Americans securing advanced and basic learning experiences (Franklin & Moss, 1994).

There is relatively little research documenting the differences in experiences of students at HBCUs and PWIs. Overall findings indicate that there are both academic and social benefits for black students, and black men in particular, who attend HBCUs (Pascarella&Terenzini, 2005). For example, a comprehensive review of research from 2001 showed that students at HBCUs gained slightly more in the areas of overall personal development, persistence, and degree attainment than their black peers at PWIs (Cuyjet, 2006).

Early on, leaders of black colleges became determined to provide their students with the kind of comprehensive higher education they needed to return to their communities as effective scientists, teachers, and leaders and to help “uplift the race.” By 1865, there were only twenty-eight known African Americans who had received BAs from PWIs. However, by 1900 after the establishment of HBCUs, these institutions had produced more than 2,000 college graduates while the number of African Americans graduating from PWIs steadily decreased (Bowles & DeCosta, 1971).

Although HBCUs are relatively small institutions, have few resources, and serve a high number of disadvantaged students, they have continued to produce educated and productive members of society. While HBCUs are often thought to be similar, they are quite different in their academic quality, financial health, physical facilities, student body attributes, and faculty strength. However, HBCUs, unlike other institutions, are united around their central mission of meeting the educational and developmental needs of African American students. By the early 1990’s, they had educated almost 40% of America’s black college graduates. In addition, 80% of black federal judges, 85% of all black doctors, 75% of all black army officers, 75% of all PhDs, 50% of black engineers, and 46% of all black professional received their undergraduate education at HBCUs (Mixon, 1995). It was precisely this record of success and the inability of PWIs to achieve similar results that suggest that some insights might be gained by an examination of HBCUs, particularly their organizational structures, instructional styles, and operational approaches.

These institutions were, more often than not, able to understand the unique cultural aspects of black males and respond in kind. In the same vein, students at Howard University

reported a sense of ease and relief at being able to blend in at an HBCU. Not standing out based on race allowed them to be themselves and stand out in ways that they felt were more meaningful to them as individuals (Willie, 2003). Several general characteristics can be seen as being common to the modus operandi of HBCUs: (1) a set of interwoven circumstances on HBCU campuses that causes them to be much more successful in graduating African American students than are PWIs; (2) the nature of the relationship between the students and the faculty on HBCU campuses that typically differs from the relationship on PWIs; and (3) the atmosphere of the HBCU campus, which seems to give the students a greater sense of confidence and builds higher self-esteem (Allen, 1987).

It is clear that HBCUs have disproportionately contributed to the education and preparation of African American male faculty. As these men continue with graduate education, most of them disproportionately have attended PWIs at some point in their matriculation because there are very few HBCUs with doctoral programs or even graduate schools as compared to PWIs. Currently, only 19 of the approximately 103 HBCUs offer Ph.D.s or Ed.D.s, with Howard University offering 26 programs and Florida A&M offering 11. Nonetheless, if HBCUs began to offer more terminal degrees and carried students from the bachelor's degree to the Ph.D. or Ed.D., the number of African American Males earning these degrees may increase (Seifert, 2006).

### **Factors Influencing Professional Preparation**

Given the evidence that the underrepresentation of African American males within the ranks of higher education faculty is related to the question of degree completion and professional preparation, the remainder of this chapter will examine the factors that previous

research has found to be especially significant in this regard. To a considerable extent, such literature is relevant to the circumstances of African American males also applies to the professional preparation of aspiring academics overall. Thus, the key issues to be examined include mentoring, social adjustment, faculty socialization and institutional barriers and remedies.

### **Mentoring**

A prevailing theme throughout the literature is that mentoring is an indispensable component of the doctoral experience and necessary for survival in higher education (Connelly & Olson, 1995). Willie (1987) argues that mentors may be especially influential in advancing the careers of African American males in higher education, who sometimes find themselves outside the informal networks of the department. A sense of isolation is among the most commonly reported problems in the literature. Although merit and autonomy are touted as institutional values in the academy, a major contributor to success is the professorate is association with senior colleagues. Without such affiliation, African American male faculty are isolated and struggle through the socialization process alone (Turner & Myers, 2000).

Mentoring is a program and philosophy to enhance student success in an excellent component of a supportive campus environment. In his Urban Leadership Institute report *“Man up: Recruiting and Retaining African American Male Mentors,”* Miller (2007) describe five distinct types of mentoring programs: (1) traditional on-on-one, (2) school-based, (3) career-based, (4) group mentoring, and (5) Internet mentoring.

Traditional on-on-one programs link individual mentors with individual mentees and require a significant amount of time spent together as mentor and mentee. However, these programs incorporate a significant amount of time and commitment. School-based programs take place during school hours and are designed to improve academic and behavioral performance of the mentee. Most of these programs are conducted in a group setting. Group mentoring involves one mentor working with a group of mentees. Miller (2007) indicates that many programs across the country are turning toward this type of mentoring because of the lack of African American volunteers. Internet mentoring involves the building of relationships between mentor and mentee primarily through email and other forms of Internet communication. This is a growing style of mentoring. This section will give an overview of mentoring in general, but will focus on higher education mentoring.

A review of the selected literature revealed that "mentoring" was an overarching theme for increasing representation. Mentoring is defined as "a process in which one person, usually of superior rank, achievement, and prestige, guides the development of or sponsors another person, who is seen as the protégé" (National Educational Association, 1993, cited in Turner & Myers, 2000, p. 150). Mentoring is a specific strategy for "retaining faculty of color at predominantly white colleges and universities" (Stanley, 2006, p. 14). As a supplement to other retention activities, the implementation of informal or formal mentoring is likely to increase African American representation in higher education. For African American male faculty, having a mentor can result in "a significantly higher level of career development than those without mentors in terms of improved teaching and research performance" (Stanley et al., 2003; Tillman, 2001, as cited in Stanley, 2006, p. 16).

With these demanding and multiple requirements of mentoring, one can understand why mentors are in short supply. Yet their presence is essential in helping African American males through the academy. When the distinguished black historian John Hope Franklin doubted whether he would go to Harvard for graduate study because his family's finances had been decimated by the Depression, his mentor Professor T.S. Currier of Fisk University insisted that money would not keep Franklin from going to Harvard. Unable to find sufficient funding from any source, Currier, who incidentally was white, went to the bank and borrowed enough money to pay for Franklin's first year at Harvard (Willie, 1986).

Beyond such a selfless sacrifice like illustrated above, mentors sometimes provide a link of trust between individual and institutions for African American students (Willie, 1987). This may involve an intercessory function—insisting that rules, regulations and procedures are applied fairly and that full participation of protégés in institutional systems is not impeded in any way (Willie, 1987).

Kuh (2005) offered a set of criteria that contain essential elements that can assist a mentoring program in addressing the persistence and retention of African American students, especially African American males. This model also enhances the mentoring relationships between students, faculty, staff and administrators who provide academic, social and personal support. Kuh's framework of favorable conditions for a supportive mentoring program included: (1) an institutional emphasis on providing students the support they need for academics and social success; (2) positive working and social relationships among different groups; (3) help for students in coping with their non-academic responsibilities;

and (4) high quality student relationships with other students faculty and institution's administrative personnel.

Primarily, there are two types of mentoring used in post-secondary education: Formal mentoring is “managed and sanctioned by the organization” (Russell & Adams, 1997, p. 4). With formal mentoring, senior faculty and junior faculty are purposely paired and participate in activities/programs that are designed and offered by a third party (the institution or department) (Tillman, 2001). Formal mentoring most often focuses on short-term career achievement. A significant concern with formal mentoring programs is that they usually are not well-developed nor widely utilized (Lucas & Murry, 2002). Advocates of formal mentoring contend that informal mentoring occurs infrequently and those faculty members, women and faculty of color, who are most likely to benefit from a formal mentoring program fail to benefit from informal mentoring programs (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001).

Informal mentoring occurs without “external involvement from the organization” (Russell & Adams, 1997, p. 4) resulting in it not being managed, structured, or formally recognized by the organization. It typically occurs over an extended period of time as the mentor and protégé learn to trust and become familiar with one another (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001). Established based on mutual interests or developmental needs, informal mentoring relationships usually focus on long-term career goals – e.g., achieving tenure and promotion. Faculty-to-faculty mentoring is typically informal and is usually self-selecting, voluntary, and mutually agreed upon (Tillman, 2001).

Application of mentoring proves to be an effective tool in providing the support necessary to overcome the barriers that prevent many African American men from

successfully completing undergraduate and graduate studies. Mentoring is vital in contributing to the survival and empowerment of African American men, and it also enhances their ability to make plausible gains in higher education. Current literature asserts, and effective programs testify, that if African American men are to be successful in their pursuit of advanced degrees, positive and creative intervention methods may be helpful. Mentoring in higher education continues to assist African American men in developing and becoming role models for others.

The North Carolina Community College system recognizes the power of mentoring and has established a funded state-wide initiative for mentoring African American and other minority males attending community colleges. Program participants attend retreats, participate in community services activism, participate in personal growth workshops, and spend quality time with faculty members. Since the program's initiation, the colleges have experienced success retaining African Americans and other minorities at rates that exceed the rate of minority students who did not participate in the mentoring initiative (Hickman & White, 2007).

An exploratory research study conducted by Holland (1993) identified five types of relationships African American male doctoral scholars had with their major advisors: (1) formal academic advisement; (2) academic guidance; (3) quasi-apprenticeship; (4) academic mentoring; and (5) career mentoring (p. 6). In formal academic advisement, little engagement transpires between advisee and major professor. The scope of this type of advisement is limited to basic and routine academic advisement that is essential to the student's negotiating the doctoral program, but which entails relatively little contact and is

non-developmental in nature. The focus tends to be on the transmission of information: specific departmental policies and procedures, typical sequencings of courses in the program, transfer credit information, grade point requirements, and fundamental dissertation requirements (p.8). The limited contact relationship may be categorically summarized as aloof and impersonal. Students have limited opportunities to establish a meaningful relationship with their major advisor and the contact is often limited to procedural issues.

In this type of informal academic advisement (non-developmental) the structure of the relationship inhibits establishment of social rapport with the major advisor. As stated by Holland (1993), “The advisor is not involved in nurturing or grooming the doctoral student” (p. 9). Campus organizations and advisors must reach out to African American males, who may be unlikely to seek out opportunities for involvement on their own (Kimbrough & Harper, 2006).

In the second type of advisement, academic guidance, the relationship between the advisee and the major professor is traditional. Here, the major advisor not only provides the student with academic advisement but also shows the student he or she is genuinely interested in the student (Holland, 1993). The structure is flexible and less formal; the student’s views are given serious consideration and the advisor meets frequently with the student as the need arises. Holland (1993) identified advisors who showed these types of qualities as “supportive” advisors. Additionally, supportive advisors attempt to build a professional relationship with the advisee both inside and outside the school setting. Such advisors show that they are sensitive to the reality of a minority scholar at a PWI, which ultimately means the minority may not have the usual support groups. Advisors who are

supportive recognize the importance of building collaborative relationships with scholars that create positive educational environments. Collaboration serves a twofold purpose: it establishes the student within the educational setting and it socializes the student into the department (Anderson, 1996). Anderson stated “the level of participation by the graduate student in collaboration with efforts within a department can be thought of as a measure of the interconnectedness of the departments’ research agendas and projects” (p. 306).

The third type of advisement is the quasi-apprenticeship relationship (Holland, 1993). Quasi-apprenticeship relationships provide the doctoral student with an opportunity to engage in “educational research opportunities that are not available to all doctoral students” (Holland, 1993, p. 12). Additionally, this relationship allows the major advisor to give the student basic academic advice, professional guidance, and political advice that will help the student to be successful in his or her academic career (Holland, 1993).

Academic mentoring and career mentoring, the fourth and fifth advisement types, are relationships that provide the doctoral student with a broader range of opportunities to work in a collaborative milieu designed to enhance the quality of the relationship between the advisor and the student (Holland, 1993). Of the five mentor relationships with African American male doctoral students, quasi-apprenticeship, academic mentoring and career mentoring were the most important to the doctoral student (Holland, 1993).

Adams (1993) articulated the mentor’s function as crucial to the success of the African American doctoral student. The mentor should also take the mentee’s culture and learning style into account when planning educational programs to ensure the material is as accessible as possible (Watkins, 2005). Adams further suggested the following as ways the

mentor engages in various roles: (1) a source of information regarding departmental programs, politics, protocol, policies and procedures, etc.; (2) an advisor who guides the protégé through the intricacies of program planning, course selection, preparing to take and pass milestone examinations, identifying and selecting a research area, writing and presenting the dissertation; (3) an advocate for the protégé as progress is made toward completion of the doctorate; (4) a confidante and friend who lend support to bolster the protégé's self-confidence by modeling good scholarship/research practices; (5) a sounding board who gives constructive and critical review of protégé's work free of judgmental bias; (6) a door opener to run interference for the protégé in gaining access to the departmental resources, space, equipment, information; and (7) sponsor and promoter of the protégé into the profession (p. 14).

In summary, a review of the literature suggests that mentoring of scholars, specifically African American males, is indispensable to recruiting and retaining African American male professors. However, while literature concludes that outcomes of mentoring are positive, there is little corroborating evidence to support that the same holds true for African American males at the doctoral level. Because of this, it is imperative that baseline data be gathered to support the outcomes of mentoring African American male scholars at the doctoral level, which is typically the prerequisite for entrance into the academy.

### **Social Adjustment**

Socialization is characterized as an ongoing process of educating a person to the ways, customs, values, and norms of a group so that they may engage as meaningful

participants in that group or society (Kozier&Erb, 1988). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) state:

It is clear that many of the most important effects of college occur through students' interpersonal experiences with faculty members and other students. It is equally clear that the academic, social, and psychological worlds inhabited by most nonwhite students on PWI campuses are substantially different in almost every respect from those of their white peers.

Austin (2002) and Clark and Corcoran (1986) also describe the socialization experience as a two-way or bidirectional process. From the perspective of the organization, socialization is the means by which new members of the organization “learn the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs and the interpersonal and other skills that facilitate role performance and further group goals” (Clark & Corcoran, p. 22). From an individual's perspective, socialization is learning to participate in the social life of the organization. How the socialization process is defined is important, if senior faculty and departmental administrators view it as bidirectional they will gain a better understanding of the unique and varied socialization experiences of African American male faculty and other faculty of color. If academia truly values and appreciates diversity in its faculty ranks, then new faculty should have the opportunity to influence their respective departments just as they are influenced by the department (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993).

Herndon and Hirt (2004) found that family plays an important role in African American male social adjustment and motivations. In addition to immediate relatives, family in this instance encompasses extended relatives. With respect to institutional type, Freeman

and Thomas (2004) found that ties to HBCUs, whether through a family member, friend, or teacher, made black students more likely to consider an HBCU, irrespective of the type of high school, which will contribute to increased social adjustment. Socialization of African American scholars serves as an important function in scholars' adjustment, persistence, and decision to graduate. The quality of faculty's engagement with African American scholars serves an even more crucial function in their overall decision to persist. Adams (1993) suggested the faculty can empower scholars to become successful by using the following strategies: (1) move early to integrate underrepresented graduate students into the department and assist them to build a sense of belonging, (2) appoint departmental ambassadors from among current graduate students, (3) conduct department orientation sessions for all new graduate students, (4) implement written guidelines for departmental staff functions regarding acclimation of new graduate students, (5) encourage and reward advising and nurturing of minority and women students, (6) treat all students as legitimate members of the graduate school community by respecting and nurturing their academic and scholarly attributes and potential, and (g6 facilitate collaboration building with other graduate students (p. 12).

While numerous studies identified correlates of persistence at the undergraduate and graduate level, to date few have identified correlates specific to the persistence of African American males scholars at the doctoral level. As a result of the findings of the review of literature, it is apparent that studies need to be conducted concerning persistence of African American male scholars at the doctoral level, which is the direct pipeline to the professorate.

## **Faculty Socialization**

Tierney and Rhoads' faculty socialization model (1993) views the process as bidirectional. Institutions and academic departments socialize faculty members, influencing their values, beliefs, attitudes and norms, while at the same time faculty members help shape the culture of institutions, academic departments, and fields of study. Tierney and Bensimon (1996) further describe the socialization process as a rite of passage that begins with entry into the profession and ends with tenure or termination. These preceding authors also point out entities external to the institution or academic field, like research groups and national or regional professional associations, which impact the socialization process.

According to Tierney and Rhoads (1993), faculty socialization occurs through the interaction of national, professional, disciplinary, institutional, and individual norms and values. However, as new and diverse faculty enter the academy, such traditional rituals have to be adapted to meet the new context. Johnson and Harvey (2002) produced research literature on black faculty socialization at various institutions including HBCUs that shows it is virtually nonexistent. The authors explain that the faculty socialization process at HBCUs is structurally different and generally more positive for black faculty, who report more feelings of loneliness, intellectual isolation, lack of collegial support, heavy teaching loads, stress, and severe time constraints at PWIs (Johnson & Harvey, 2002). Moreover, the favorable socialization experiences at HBCUs greatly impact the promotion and tenure process as well as increase the likelihood of black faculty staying at the institution.

Faculty socialization involves two stages (anticipatory and organizational) and six dimensions (Johnson, 2004; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1994). The

dimensions involved in Tierney and Rhoads (1993) faculty socialization model include: 1) collective vs. individual, 2) formal vs. informal, 3) sequential vs. random 4) fixed vs. variable, 5) serial vs. disjunctive, and 6) investiture vs. divestiture. These points of emphasis help provide a more practical framework for investigating educational structures as well as impacted individuals. The authors further point out that anticipatory faculty socialization begins in graduate school where students begin to take on norms of the profession, and continues into the organizational socialization stage as students assume roles as faculty.

Collective socialization is socialization that occurs in group settings like classrooms or laboratories, while individual socialization involves isolated exposure, for example, meetings with a faculty advisor. Formal socialization is built into the organizational structure with coursework, research/teacher assistantships, and departmental expectations. Informal socialization is less structured and can occur through various avenues like presentations, workshops, and study groups, mentoring, or just conversing with faculty or other students.

Random vs. sequential and fixed vs. variable socialization refer to the institutions' structural clarity in sharing of its culture. Academic departments and fields may have clear sequential socialization requirements along with fixed timeframes and deadlines, or they may have random/variable guidelines, requirements and structures (i.e. interdisciplinary fields). Tierney and Rhoads (1993) explain that serial socialization involves planned training of new faculty by grouping them with senior faculty in an apprenticeship. This relationship helps the departmental norms and values to be shared and maintained as new faculty enter the field. Disjunctive socialization is what would occur in the absence of such faculty role models. In this case, departments have to utilize various tactics to ensure their beliefs and

expectations are communicated. The last dimension of Tierney and Rhoads' (1994) model is investiture vs. divestiture socialization. Investiture concerns the affirmation and welcoming of new faculty members experiences, characteristics, norms and goals. In contrast, divestiture involves the transforming new faculty members' values and individual characteristics that may be contrary to the department's "ethos" (Tierney & Rhoads, 1994, p. 29). In graduate education, students' prior educational experiences along with their accompanying values and norms are always a concern for departments as they make their investiture or divestiture decisions/plans, which help lead to a discussion of graduate student socialization theories.

### **Institutional Barriers and Remedies**

Yoshinaga (2006) reviewed institutional barriers to recruiting and retaining African Americans and other minorities. She pointed out that there was an increase in anti-affirmative action initiatives, stating that they are designed to prohibit "the use of race/ethnicity in admissions, retention and scholarship programs, and in any program at institutions of higher education" (p. 345). She noted that in hiring, faculty appointments of minorities are for the sole purpose of improving diversity within specific departments, and without the much needed guidance and support of senior faculty. African American faculty members are at greater risk for retention problems. According to Yoshinaga (2006), the rigidity of the tenure and promotion process force African Americans to leave tenure track positions due to family demands. Given the 50/50 ratio of hiring by gender at the assistant professor rank, "the increase at the tenured ranks of associate professor is much slower to change and shows even slower increases than hoped for when gender diversity is considered" (p. 353). Yoshinaga

(2006) noted that "faculty of color are often hired as a sole expert in their area of study, an area that the institution or unit members do not emphasize and perhaps, even worse, do not value" (p. 355). She pointed out that mentoring is lacking in specific academic units, suggesting that faculty of color solicit mentorship from scholars at other institutions. Most likely, these scholars would be available to cultivate professional development and assist faculty of color avoid clashes within their respective departments.

To examine some of the policies and practices that have been developed to address the issues around African American males' educational achievement in higher education, I begin with a quote from Altbach, Lomotey, and Kyle (1999): "Academic institutions are caught in a contradictory situation of having made a commitment to serve all students and to provide special assistance to students from underrepresented groups while having neither the fiscal nor political support to implement workable programs." Examples of institutional policies and practices that have contributed positively and negatively to the recruitment and retention of African American male students include affirmative action, outreach programs, multi-culturally focused majors/curriculum, and other mentoring /advising initiatives. A relatively new recruitment and retention initiative is the work of student-run organizations and programs to support the persistence and achievement of underrepresented minority populations. Studies have explored the impact of multicultural and student-initiated projects in changing the culture and structure of institutions (Braxton, 2000).

Affirmative action policies and practices are probably the most recognized and controversial initiatives. Affirmative action initiatives were designed and implemented by federal or state legislation to help eliminate past and present discrimination and

discriminatory practices based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Fleming, Gill, & Swinton, 1978). Currently race can be considered in efforts to promote diversity, but cannot be the sole deciding factor.

Positively, affirmative action programs help open the doors to higher education for many African American males as seen by the large growth in HBCU college attendance and graduation in the 1970's and 1980's (Bowen & Bok, 1998). Undergraduate education is the first step for an African American male in achieving a graduate or terminal degree, which is still a prerequisite into the academy. Bowen and Bok also note affirmative action initiatives helped increase the size of the African American middle class and helped them gain access to institutions and professions that previously were virtually unattainable.

Negatively, it has been argued that affirmative action programs place a stigma on beneficiaries and opens opportunities for unqualified recipients, ultimately leading to increased dropouts and failures (Jackson, 2007). The study by Bowen and Bok (1998) refutes these negative arguments. Their findings reveal that at more selective colleges and universities, students of color are as likely as white students to persist and graduate. Moreover, research demonstrates that other conditions like isolation and lack of helpful relations are more attributable to higher minority dropout rates and lower self-esteem than being admitted through affirmative action programs (Orfield & Miller, 1998).

Additional statistics reflect the negative impact of the removal of affirmative action initiatives. Following the removal of affirmative action programs in California and Texas, the nine campuses of the University of California and the fifteen campuses of the University of Texas showed steep drops in applications and admissions of underrepresented minorities.

For example, the University of California at Berkeley Law School enrolled only one African American student, while the law school at the University of Texas at Austin enrolled none in the entering classes following the removal of affirmative action programs (Karabel, 1999).

African American males earn roughly one-third of the bachelor's degrees awarded to all African Americans (Snyder & Hoffman, 2008). Similar statistics exist at the graduate and professional levels of higher education. These statistics are quite troubling and may lead to an even more diminished role of African American males in business, politics, professional settings, and society. African American males must matriculate to and persist at higher education institutions, taking advantage of all the available resources and opportunities in order to truly change their status/position in academia, research, and society.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher explored literature pertaining to recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at four-year colleges and universities. Because relatively few studies have focused directly on this topic, the review of literature evaluated closely-related material that could assist with building a foundation for this study. The review of literature focused on the overview of Africans Americans and education, African American men in higher education, and various theories associated with the topic. Moreover, the literature review supported the research questions, which sought to understand non-cognitive variables and the assessment and measurement of these variables.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction and Study Purpose**

This chapter provides an overview of the study's purpose, research questions and design, rationale for the selection of the research design, selection of study setting, sample eligibility criteria, data analysis and collection, profiles of study participants, and trustworthiness and rigor. The purpose of this study is to explore the self-reported experiences of African American male faculty at HBCUs in North Carolina and the factors associated with their recruitment and retention.

To answer the questions posed in this study, qualitative research methods were utilized. Over the past 20 years, qualitative methodology has been recognized as being capable of “giving voice” to the individuals who are often silenced in the research literature (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Qualitative research methods promote the gathering of rich data that examines individual lived experiences, in contrast to quantitative methods, which emphasize numerical outcomes. Qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena; its various genres are naturalistic and interpretive, and they draw on multiple methods of inquiry (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Qualitative methodology attempts to expose the world of the research participant by the use of thick, rich descriptions. The strength of qualitative research is that the data collected is complex, interactive, and takes into account perspectives over a span of time (Rapp, 2005). The strength of qualitative research is its capacity to look at the particular in depth. Simply stated, qualitative research is a clear approach which allows the researcher to focus on the details of the lived, everyday

experiences of regular people. The research methodology is the implementation of the stated purpose, which answers the research question. Qualitative research provided the researcher an opportunity to explore experiences of African American male faculty at HBCUs in North Carolina. The ability to draw upon the participants' experiences helped me as a researcher to connect and develop themes surrounding the research question.

The inductive process is vital to this methodology. It provides the researcher the capacity to observe and explore patterns and themes as they emerge. Because this type of investigation is probing, quantitative research would not fully provide the data needed to formulate theories and themes relevant to how the context of certain events, understandings and actions are perceived by the participants. Quantitative research is guided by the hypotheses. Conversely, qualitative research seeks to allow the theories, themes and or assumptions to emerge from the data (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

During the research process, I used a set of semi-structured interview questions, thus allowing the participant to expand on the answers and even add examples and stories for more description. In addition to the interview questions, this narrative research design gathered personal information and events that were used to obtain emerging themes. In narrative design, the researcher asks participants to tell their stories. The researcher then analyzes the shared story in an attempt to understand and re-construct the experiences through the stories the participants told. Narrative methodology does not simply take data or answers to questions and turn them into a story. This methodology seeks to deconstruct text and language, re-story the data, and present the analysis in the findings. Narrative research is an appropriate approach to utilize for this study because its aim is to give voice to the study

participants, to capture the lives of a small number of individuals (Creswell, 2007). The design is fluid, which allows for changes as the research moves forward. Narrative research is hearing and conveying the lived and told stories of individuals which give accounts of a series of events (Creswell, 2007, p. 54).

### **Research Questions and Design**

As discussed in Chapter 1, the research questions in this study are:

1. What factors do the participants view as reasons associated with their recruitment and retention at their institutions that employ them?
2. Do the participants perceive their HBCUs as being supportive in their teaching and research efforts and does each institution offer an environment of collegiality?

This study employs semi-structured interviews to obtain the data needed. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) outlined four characteristics in which semi-structured interviews were utilized. They are: 1) to collect detailed factual information that describes the existing phenomena; 2) to identify problems or justify current conditions and practices; 3) to make comparisons and evaluations; and 4) to determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and benefit from their experiences in making future plans and decisions.

### **Rationale for the Selection of the Research Design/Interview Method**

The purpose of this study is to advance understanding and further contribute to the limited research on this topic. Open-ended semi-structured interviews were conducted. To obtain robust and meaningful information based on participants' perceptions, the interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis within the relevant field setting (on the campuses

where the participants are employed). In qualitative research, interviews often have less structure and are more open-ended (Merriam, 2009). This is in keeping with the qualitative tradition, in which researchers attempt to understand the distinct ways people assign meaning to experience. In a semi-structured interview, a researcher seeks specific information from all participants and uses a list of questions to guide the interview, though perhaps in no particular order (Merriam, 2009).

Purposive sampling was used to identify cases for inclusion in the study. Merriam (2009) notes that “a typical [i.e. purposive] sample would be one that is selected because it reflects the average person, situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 78). A variety of purposive sampling, the snowball sampling method, was used to identify additional potential cases. In the snowball sampling method, the researcher asks participants to recommend others who match the profile description (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009). The snowball sampling method is typically used in qualitative research and is often used when the number of possible initial participants is limited (Merriam, 2009).

Borg and Gall (2006) noted that the interview as a research method is unique in that it involves the collection of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals; this direct interaction is the source of one of the main advantages of the interview as a research technique. The interview situation usually permits much greater depth than do other methods of collecting research data, thereby allowing the interviewer to obtain information that the subject would probably not reveal under any other circumstances. The flexibility, adaptability, and human interaction are unique strengths of the interview process which allows subjectivity on the part of the interviewer to emerge (Borg & Gall, 2006).

The study participant's interviews ranged from 70 minutes to 126 minutes. The interviews were timed to ensure the researcher was cognizant of the participant's time. One participant wanted to expand beyond the allotted time and I granted him the time to explain his answer.

### **Selection of Study Setting**

This study was conducted at four HBCUs in North Carolina. Three of the institutions are private, church-affiliated HBCUs and the fourth is a state supported HBCU. The selection of these four institutions were dictated by the sample and recruitment procedures followed, and in particular by the availability of participants. North Carolina has eleven HBCUs, second only to Alabama, which has fourteen. North Carolina has five public HBCUs and 6 private-church affiliated HBCUs. It should be noted that two of the eleven HBCU's in North Carolina were not used as a selection pool for candidates for this study. Barber-Scotia College in Concord, North Carolina, is not accredited by SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, is not considered a traditional HBCU in this study, because they do not admit males. Therefore, for this study, there were nine institutions that were possible selection sites for study participants: Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Livingstone College, Johnson C. Smith University, Shaw University, Saint Augustine's University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina A&T State University, and Winston Salem State University. Of the nine institutions, I interviewed one person from four of the HBCUs in North Carolina.

The rationale for interviewing four persons is that narrative research can be used to pilot a study and to gather information that will help to design the most appropriate objective research tools; it can be used to gain a greater depth into a small sample within the larger context of a population that has been surveyed with objective measures; or it can be used as the sole evaluation of a real-life problem (Greene, 2007).

### **Sample Eligibility Criteria**

Individuals in this study had to have met the following criteria. First, all participants had to be African American males born within the United States. Second, all participants had to be full-time faculty members with teaching responsibilities at HBCUs in North Carolina.

### **Data Collection**

According to Gay and Airasian (2003), “A research study usually produces a mass of raw data, such as the responses of participants during the interviews. Collected data must be accurately coded and systematically organized to facilitate data analysis” (p. 410). The intent of this study is to gather and analyze data to determine the experiences of African American male faculty at HBCU’s in North Carolina and to extract the factors for their retention and recruitment.

The study employed purposive means of constructing its sampling. I contacted several African American male faculty at HBCUs in North Carolina via email and asked for their participation in the study. I had several contacts after being employed at three of the institutions and graduating from an additional two of the HBCUs in North Carolina. Through snowball sampling, a list of ten African American male faculty was developed. The four

participants were selected by their availability, location, and willingness to participate in the study. The participants have come from various disciplines, which included Chemistry, Religion, History, and Education. All four participants who agreed have doctoral degrees.

After the interviews, all recorded data collected from semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed. The researcher conducted open coding along with a line-by-line analysis. The researcher also reexamined the themes and made comparisons to determine similarities and differences in each transcript following open coding. Finally, selective coding was conducted in order to have concepts grouped into a smaller set of categories based on obvious similarities. The interrelationship of categories and sub-categories were merged to form a more precise and detailed interpretation of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to accomplish the stated purpose of this study, I chose narrative research design, which is the gathering of a personal reflection of events. In narrative design, the researcher asks people to tell their stories. The researcher then analyzes the shared story and seeks to understand and re-present the experiences through the stories the individuals tell. Narrative methodology does not simply take data and turn it into a story. This methodology seeks to deconstruct text and language, re-story the data, and present the analysis in the findings. Narrative research is an appropriate approach to utilize for this study because its aim is to give voice to the study participants, to capture the lives of a small number of individuals (Creswell, 2007).

The uniqueness of the narrative approach is that it enables the researcher to learn what cannot be learned from other forms of inquiry and is more about the search than the

answer (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). The design is fluid, which allows for changes as the research moves forward. Narrative research is the lived and told stories of individuals which give an account of a series of events (Creswell, 2007, p. 54). Although narrative research is loosely structured, and the researcher is afforded some latitude, the purpose of narrative analysis is to re-construct the participants' stories and experiences by analyzing the themes, which can be thought of as concepts or patterns that are revealed through the coding of the new data.

Transcribing took place during several listening sessions of each interview. The audio taped interview was transferred into my computer, so I would have a back-up copy. Field notes, which were taken at the end of each interview, were coded and categorized separately. As more audio taped interviews were conducted, data was categorized into themes that emerged. Additionally, once all of the interviews were conducted and categorized in the computer, further coding took place through the process of creating edited rough draft sequences that were associated with each research question.

I subsequently analyzed documents (vitas, faculty activity reports, instructor observations/evaluations, publications, and course loads) in order to provide greater depth and context in retelling the experiences of the participants. The triangulation of data allowed for the analysis of a chronology of unfolding events, turning points, and epiphanies (Connelly & Clandinin, 2005).

**Table 1. Process of Data Collection**

<b>Processes</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>
Data collection.	Take notes, read and reflect on data.
Interview 4 participants and use semi-structured interviews.	Read transcriptions, reflect on themes emerging.
Transcribe data.	Read and reflect on document data. Denote themes.
Select themes to present as data.	Interpret and analyze data. Construct text.

### **Profiles of the Study Participants**

This section provides a profile overview of the four study participants. All participants were assigned pseudonyms by the researcher to protect their anonymity; these fictitious names will be utilized throughout the following chapters.

#### **Dr. Matthew.**

He is a native of North Carolina. He is a 61-year-old male who has a bachelor's degree from and HBCU and master's and PhD degree from a PWI in North Carolina. He is currently an associate professor of Education/ Department Chair at a private HBCU in North Carolina. He has been employed at his current institution for 15 years, and this is his third HBCU experience.

#### **Dr. Mark.**

He is a native of Texas. He is a 41-year-old male who has a bachelor's degree from a PWI in North Carolina in chemistry, and a master's degree and PhD in chemistry from a PWI in Texas. At the time of the interview, he had been employed at his institution for 7 years as an associate professor of chemistry. His current institution is a private HBCU in North Carolina.

**Dr. Luke.**

He is a native of New York State. He is a 42-year-old male who has a bachelor's, master's, and PhD from a private PWI in the Northeast. He is employed as an associate professor of religion. He has been employed for four years at his current institution, which is a private religiously affiliated HBCU. This is his first HBCU experience.

**Dr. John.**

He is a native of Charlotte, North Carolina. He is a 43-year-old male who has bachelor's and master's degrees from a public HBCU in North Carolina, and a PhD from a public PWI in North Carolina. He is currently a tenured professor of history at a public HBCU in North Carolina. He has been there for ten years.

**Trustworthiness and Rigor**

To increase trustworthiness and rigor, a panel of African American male professors was used to evaluate the appropriateness and quality of the interview questions. The panel consisted of three African American male faculty. I also used pseudonyms for these persons. Dr. Frank, Dr. Phil, and Dr. Cecil. Dr. Frank received his doctorate from Harvard University and is the Department Chair for the Division of Business at an HBCU. Dr. Phil received his doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is employed with a local Educational Research firm as Chief Research/Statistician. Dr. Cecil received his doctorate from Howard University and is employed as Department Chair at an HBCU. They reviewed the questions for clarity, conciseness, content validity, style, and format. Questions the team entertained during the instrument critique were

1. Do the interview questions address the purpose of the study?

2. Is the wording of the questions appropriate?
3. How would the panel respond to the questions?

The panel believed that the questions were appropriate and thought that if the study participants were open and candid about their lived experiences, the study would yield some interesting results. Each panel member wanted me to give them a copy of my results after the study was completed.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 presented the type of research conducted in this study. The areas covered were the study purpose, research questions and design, rationale for the selection of the research design, selection of study setting, sample eligibility criteria, data analysis and collection, profiles of study participants, and trustworthiness and rigor. I will present the analyzed data from the interview transcripts throughout Chapter 4. Chapter 4 will create a contextual picture of past experiences of the participants. To ensure that the interpretations are accurate, in some cases the researcher conducted a follow-up interview with participants. These follow-up interviews were done via Skype. When I transcribed the interviews, I wanted to ensure that the participants did not have any additional information to add. All participants were satisfied with their interviews and didn't have any additional information.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the analyses of data obtained from semi-structured interviews with the participants. Only the data relevant to the preliminary theoretical categories identified in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 and possible emerging theoretical categories are described in this chapter. It introduces the four cases in this research study. All participants have been assigned a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. The cases are presented and analyzed individually. After each section, a cross-case analysis is provided that discusses emergent themes revolving around the interviews.

In the initial stages of the research, theoretical categories were identified using the literature as a guide. The formulation of categories was identified by using the most frequently mentioned variables in the literature which contributed most to the retention of African American male faculty. The results of each interview were examined to assess data conformity to previously identified preliminary theoretical categories included in the literature. As the analysis of the interviews continued, emerging concepts and properties of each theoretical category relative to each preceding interview were identified. This process continued until data saturation occurred.

I initially met with the four participants in at their places of employment and explained the study. I also gave each participant a copy of the IRB consent form. Each participant read, signed, and agreed to the interview.

During the interviews, participants were given the opportunity to expand on their answers to the questions. The semi-structured interviews allowed the participants' voices to be heard. I used the interviews to gain information that I could not directly observe. All participants added narratives to further explain their answers to the questions. These questions provided a framework within which participants shaped their accounts of their lived experiences. The cordial relationships I enjoyed with the participants made my task an easy one. The maintenance of cordial relationships between researcher and participants is recommended by Czarniawska (2004) when he defines narrative interviews as “an observation of an interaction between two people” (p. 49).

During the interviews, each participant was asked a series of pre-selected questions. These pre-selected questions established the context within which I could proceed with the narrative interviews. The actual statements the participants made including their observations and responses, provided the context of their lived experiences. All participants received the same set of questions. All questions were of a probing nature and were asked in the same sequence.

A set of basic rules was observed during the interviews. I avoided long explanations of the study and was careful not to deviate from its main purpose. I did not allow telephone or other interruptions that could sidetrack the participants. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, as this eliminated the risk that others could influence the answers provided. I kept the interview questions simple and did not offer interpretations on the meaning of the questions. The structure of the sessions minimized the chances of giving any hint to the participants of any of my preconceived ideas and thus reduced the risk of bias.

Participants allowed me to use a tape recorder during the interviews. I was thus able to refer back to the data at a later stage of the process. While conducting the study, I observed how participants established a link between what happened to them in the past and their current employment. As the analysis of the interviews continued, emerging concepts were identified. This process continued until the data saturation occurred.

### **Interview Questions**

The following are the set of questions asked to all four participants.

1. How long have you been at your current institution?
2. At what other institutions have you been employed?
3. Is recruitment and retention of African-American male faculty important to you?  
If so, Why?
4. Did you have academic mentors during your undergraduate experience? If so explain.
5. Have you ever in a past teaching position or current position experienced any racial and ethnic bias in the academic workplace, lack of institutional support, or devaluation of you personally? If so explain.
6. What issues should be given the most attention in addressing the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCU's? (Race/ethnic/gender bias in the work place, lack of institutional support, legal challenges, individual devaluation, lack of mentoring opportunities, isolation, lack of support from supervisors, low research opportunities, support programs not systematic, or low pay) . Please expand on any additional concerns not mentioned.

7. What other factors have contributed to your remaining at your current employer?
8. Do you plan on seeking other employment opportunities at another institution? If yes why? If no, why not?
9. What suggestions do you have to increase retention and recruitment of African-American male faculty at HBCU's?
10. Please add any additional comments that you may have that you would deem as important for this study.

The above questions were reviewed by a panel of African American male professors who evaluated the appropriateness and quality of the interview questions and they assessed for trustworthiness and rigor.

Each of the next four sections of this chapter will consist of the verbatim remarks of one of the four participants. These remarks have been edited so as to achieve a clear, coherent narrative flow. By providing for a presentation that is essentially free of textual and editorial interruptions, the intent is to allow the speaker's own voice to emerge strongly, which, as discussed in Chapter 3, is a hallmark of the narrative research design (Creswell, 2007) used in this study. And as was also noted previously, participants were encouraged to offer additional details about their lives and work, beyond those provided in direct response to the interview questions. Some of these focused on their early backgrounds and so provided a useful starting point for the presentation of each of the four cases. After each participant tells his own story, in his own words, the next step will be to extract the major findings. That precedes a fuller discussion and drawing of conclusions that will be presented in Chapter 5.

**Dr. Matthew**

“I’m the first person in my family to go to college. I’m the youngest of eight children and my parents raised us in Henderson, North Carolina. My mother cleaned houses and my dad was a sharecropper. We were very poor and my community was made up mostly of farmers and domestic workers. We did have persons in my community who were ministers and teachers. One of the ministers who happened to be the principal at my all black elementary school told my mom that I had a real understanding of the English language. He thought if I continued to do well, I could go to college. As time passed, I continued to do well in school and the principal mentored me all the way through high school.

After I graduated from high school, I attended a small HBCU and majored in education. During those years, I met others just like me and was mentored by several other African American professors. These men were all shining examples of what I thought it meant to be a professor at an HBCU. My undergraduate experience taught me about commitment to our colleges (HBCUs). These men helped me get through college with ease. Oh, believe me, they did not make it easy for me; they just showed me how to do it a better way. I would not have gone to graduate school if it had not been for my mentor. He taught at my small college and later on went to teach at a larger predominantly white university. He would call my mom and tell her that he had a spot for me at the larger university. My mentor would send graduate school applications to my house and then bug me to fill them out. I am so glad I filled them out and attended that larger institution.

While at the larger university, I got a master’s degree and PhD. During my matriculation in graduate school, my mentor’s health began to fail and he eventually died. I

always wanted to ask him questions about our profession and how I could help others the way he helped me.

At my current institution, I am a mentor to several African American students. I even informally mentor the few younger African American male faculty at my institution. What I see as the major hurdle for recruiting African American male faculty is the perception of college and education many African American males have; this starts in elementary school. I was mentored by African American males in elementary, middle, high school, and even college. Many African American males go through school and sometimes never see another African American male that can mentor them. If there aren't any men out there telling these young men what they can become then quite likely they don't see becoming a college faculty member as an option. This problem has to be addressed a lot earlier than college. I have to stay here to give back.

I mentor my great nephew and he is in 5th grade. He is the only African American male in his class and he has never had an African American male teacher. Early on, he was having real trouble academically and socially. He said he didn't understand the teacher and the teachers said they were having trouble understanding him. He was academically gifted prior to going to elementary school, then his academics severely dropped off. I started to mentor and work with him academically and now he is in the top 3 in his class. All it took was a little mentoring.

During my tenure as a faculty member, I have mentored and even assisted others in getting tenure, writing grants, and also publishing. I think I was asked to do this interview because I mentored you too. There are going to be a lot of opportunities you have to pay it

forward. What I mean by that is that my mentoring of you should be replicated with you mentoring others. I enjoy my current employer and I'm not looking. I'm way too old to go to another place and get used to the way they do things. I might have a few more good years left to teach and mentor others like you. After I leave here, I want to go back to Henderson and work the land my father left me. Farming and teaching has a lot in common, when you sow good seed, water, and keep the weeds out of the field, you will reap a good harvest. The same is true with teaching and mentoring. When you teach students and mentees in a good way you will see how they will grow and flourish. All I can hope for is that they do the same to someone else.

From my point of view, we as a nation must commit to reenergizing the teacher starting with the elementary and middle schools. This will help African American males to view teaching as a valuable option. Our males who go to college go into fields like engineering, law, and medicine. Not many of them want to go through the headache of a Ph.D. program and then doing a dissertation when the pay is quite a bit lower than those in law, medicine, and industry.

As an administrator and faculty member I have a unique vantage point. I can see why a number of our quality faculty leave. I have to balance that with my view from the chair of an administrator and acknowledge that our budgets continue to decrease while the work load increases. I try to put some informal programs in place to slow down the attrition of my African American male faculty. One of the informal things I do is I make sure I meet with them twice a semester to just talk about what the institution can do to make their academic experience better. Sometimes I can't help because it may be a financial issue or something

with more research funding, but most of the times I can help them with a reassigned classroom, decrease the number of students, pay for them to go to a conference, or giving them a room with a Smartboard. This only took a conversation and I think I have saved a number of faculty because they felt frustrated.

I also like to get the new African American faculty together for a casual dinner. This helps them to get to know one another and also helps to establish more relationships outside the walls of the institution. The guys form their own support groups after that. They find that they have similar research interest, similar backgrounds, same fraternities, and even same undergraduate experiences. I find that many of them may even publish together after they find out more about their colleagues. I try to build relationships, that doesn't cost anything.

I have met with our President on a few occasions to ask about forming a partnership with the larger institutions in the area to assist us in recruiting bright, young faculty. With a partnership comes benefits for both the larger institutions and our small HBCU. The larger institutions can boast about their students graduating from the doctoral programs and transitioning directly into a teaching position at a local institution. The larger institution can also be recognized for assisting a smaller institution in the area. Agencies who fund grants always like to see partnerships or collaborations between institutions. Our institution could benefit by having a faculty member who may be more likely to stay at our institution because he is already living in the area and familiar with his surroundings. His family and friends may still be in the area which would give him more of a reason to stay at our institution. We have North Carolina State University, The University of North Carolina and Duke University

all within a 30 minute drive of our institution. I think it would be a win/win for both institutions and the young faculty member.

If there could be some way we could assist our new African American male faculty with loan repayment, this would be a very attractive benefit. I am not sure how, Teach for America or the Peace Corps does it but they have loan forgiveness programs that assist students in college loan repayment. I have had a lot of my students go into the Peace Corps, specifically because of the loan repayment program. I can't imagine that a new faculty member wouldn't see this as an attractive benefit. Our institutions have to think outside the box to keep and attract new faculty. I look at my department and African American faculty are really underrepresented throughout my department and the institution. I only have a few more years left then I'm retiring. I want to make sure that there is someone here to take my place. I have enjoyed sharing a few of my ideas with you. I look forward to seeing what fruit you will produce.”

**Dr. Mark**

“You know I'm from Texas, and I originally came to North Carolina on a football scholarship. I am the oldest of two boys in my family. Both my mom and dad attended college. My mom was a teacher and my dad was a teacher and a coach. I'm a 41-year-old father of three wonderful children. I'm married to the love of my life who I met while in college. I have a bachelor's degree from a predominately white institution in North Carolina, where I majored in chemistry, and a master's degree and PhD in chemistry from a major university. I have been employed at this institution for seven years as an associate professor of chemistry. I am looking at positions at other institutions right now. I have stayed here

because I have young children and right now I don't have the time to publish like I would have to at a major university. I come here, teach my classes, do my office hours, and leave. I try to help students but I think because I'm in the sciences there only so much help I can give them. To master the sciences it takes a lot of work.

This is my first time teaching at an HBCU and I think it may be my last. For me to help my students stay current, I need better equipment, more resources, and more freedom to teach the way I want to teach. I really don't do the whole team or department thing, because I pretty much keep to myself. I haven't experienced much in terms of devaluation or racial biases at my job, but I have experienced a number of cliques that I personally do not think that a university is a place for this.

Time and time again I have asked for funding to support the department and to purchase more equipment. I don't think the decision makers here care a lot about research or advancing the department. I go out and look for partnerships at local community colleges and other institutions to bring in funding for my department. This gives students a different perspective when it comes to opportunities that are out there for them.

If the HBCU's are serious about retaining and recruiting African American males, then we need to be intentional about keeping the ones we have. It's easier to retain something that you already have. I have colleagues at other universities who think I'm crazy to stay here. I always tell them what I give up in salary and resources, I get back in time spent with my family and less responsibilities. Now that my kids are a little older I have started to look for other opportunities. I never had a mentor when I was in college. My

parents laid the law down and I followed the law to a T. I think more parents should be intentional about letting their kids know what the expectations are academically.

One way I believe we could retain and recruit more African American males is to give them incentives like more pay, paying off student loans, decreasing the teaching load and increasing the research funding. I know colleagues of mine who would go to an HBCU at the drop of a hat, if the college would pay back some of their student loans. You know I have an interest in seeing more minorities go into STEM areas. That's all the STEM programs are doing to get more minorities is to assist them financially. It's not rocket science. If you help a person financially, typically they will be committed.

When I attend the faculty meetings and they are talking about the shortages of faculty of color, especially how they can address it. I think sometimes, we are talking for the sake of talking and documenting it to say we discussed it. This should be a part of our strategic plan and operational goals each year. If we know that having African American males will help our campuses, this should be a priority, but typically it's an afterthought. There should be employment agencies and headhunters out there right now looking for those brothers who have terminal degrees and want to teach at an HBCU. There should be administrators out there at jobs fairs recruiting those talented individuals. What I typically see is a lot of lip service and no action.

I would love to have a real voice with the administrators. I am not sure if they understand the gravity of this issue with retaining and recruiting African American males. It's really more extensive than the college level faculty. If we can find a way to help with African American male student retention and graduation within our public schools then

ultimately we will be able to get them to an undergraduate institution and then hopefully to a graduate program. Our graduation and retention rates are awful at the high school level. It's almost a rate of 50% of our African American males don't graduate from high school. I think if we can get them to graduate, we might have a chance to get them into our HBCU's. Once they get to us then we have to have some really comprehensive remediation programs to help get them to the level where they can really compete academically. The young men I have seen have some real issues with academic writing. If we have programs in place to assist them with their writing and others there to help them make the transition from high school to college, I believe these young men will ultimately want to continue to graduate and professional school. We don't have a lot of programs like that at our institutions, that where we can partner with the local community college. They focus on remediation and writing assistance. You see I partner with them for my lab courses. They have better lab facilities, they also send me great science students who I have worked with in the lab. If our institution would again put these items into our strategic plan and not just put these types of partnerships into a strategic plan, but implement the plan, I think we could make a real impact on our African American male population and subsequently increase our numbers of African American males going into academia.

I have had a lot of my friends from graduate school go into the faculty ranks and leave within a year or two. Many of them leave because of better opportunities to continue their research. I could leave this institution and make considerable more at one Galaxosmithkline or one of the other companies in Research Triangle Park. Being a scientist, I want to research and find solutions to existing problems. Why haven't our

institutions done a better job of partnering with these agencies? North Carolina Central University has started with their Biotech program, but there should be more programs within our institutions that partner with those agencies. Those agencies bring the institution positive press, additional funding and also exposes our students to the world of the private corporate researcher. With the additional funding we would be able to attract and keep our existing African American male faculty. I do believe that my colleagues would have a better academic experience and ultimately an increase in job satisfaction that could lead to an increase in retention. We don't have to be as research intensive at North Carolina State University or Duke University but we do have to create an atmosphere where I students and faculty expect to not just do experiments in our labs on campus. We have to expose them to real world experiences which will help them to be better researchers and better students. I think I have talked so much about research opportunities, I didn't focus back on recruiting, but it is all tied together ultimately help our African American male faculty."

**Dr. Luke**

"Being from New York, I didn't know a lot about HBCU's when I was growing up. When I was in high school my history teach use to talk about going down south to go to college. He would talk about the fun he had in college and how him and his fraternity brothers would cut up. This was my first introduction to HBCU's. I chose another route because my parents didn't want me or trust me to go too far. My bachelor's, master's, and PhD are all from a private predominately white institution in Massachusetts. I came to the HBCU scene because my wife is from the south and she and her parents attended the HBCU where I am employed. My wife and I thought it would be a great opportunity to spend more

time together as a family, because the position wasn't demanding in terms of research and publications. I think because I am a Professor of Religion, I may be shielded by what some of my other colleagues might endure. I have been at my current institution for four years and I have not been looking for employment anywhere. Now don't get me wrong, because I haven't been looking does not mean that if an opportunity comes to me I will discuss it with my wife and pray about it. This is really my first HBCU experience and I have enjoyed it. I get lots of support from my dean and department chair. I am given the opportunity to learn and wear multiple hats. Many of my colleagues don't like doing extra assignments but I jump at the opportunity to learn and grow.

Let's get straight to it. To retain us at these HBCU's most people are looking for a better quality of life and with that comes more pay. Our HBCU's across the board pay less than other public majority institutions. I have never been a person to equate more money with job satisfaction. This comes from within. My students know every day I give 110% and every day I leave knowing I have helped someone. This is something you can't put a dollar value on. If I could somehow help some of my colleagues figure out what that it's not all about the money. That will come. When you do something you enjoy and you are making a difference, you are compensated other ways.

Yes, I think we should think about retention and recruitment of African American males a little more because we are truly a dying breed. There are a number of African American males in my department, but all of them are over 60 years old and I am only one in my 40's. These guys are retiring in a few years, how do we replace them or can we replace them?

Programs need to be started to connect HBCU academic careers to graduate schools and the HBCU's need to be able to compete with salary, housing, benefits, loan paybacks, and any other perks that could help a new African American PhD to decide he wants to work at an HBCU. When I got out of graduate school, I used my wife's and her parents' network to get this job. It wasn't about HBCU or a majority institution, it was about having a job in my field where I could provide for my family. It has worked for me.

If I were the President of this institution I would encourage a community partnership with the local high schools, whereby African American males who meet a certain criteria can be accepted and transition into our teacher education program. This is an introduction to teaching and once the students have graduated and are in the profession, we can also partner with local graduate schools, where these young men can transition into masters and doctoral programs. I think South Carolina has a program at the University of South Carolina named the Call Me Mister Program. This type of program would help the pipeline concern that so many institutions are discussing. We have to make sure our HBCUs are not just in the community but are a part of the community. I believe the emphasis is coming back to education and even teacher education. President Obama and the federal government are placing more emphasis on education and retaining quality teachers. I think we need to take a page from President Obama's book and replicate some of his programs and focus on African American males. We have an opportunity to make a difference in the classrooms. Our boys are looking for something positive to be a part of and our HBCUs need to step up to the plate and provide that avenue for them.

HBCUs have been there to help uplift the African American community and focusing on teacher education for African American males will increase our public school numbers and consequently increase our numbers at the college levels.

In my little bit of experience, I have seen that one of the greatest factors to increase jobs satisfaction is what I call work/life balance. I know we are discussing increasing the retention and recruitment of our African American male faculty but work/life balance is tied to job satisfaction which is tied to retention. When I talk about work/life balance, I think there needs to be programs at our institutions to assist our new faculty in balancing the rigors of the job with family. When I first started my position, I spent so much time trying to do a good job, I left a lot of things at home undone. My kids were missing daddy, my wife was missing her husband and I started to notice that I wasn't really a part of the family. My family would take trips without me, my daughters would have functions at school that I didn't attend because I was always working. My family wasn't happy and I wasn't happy. Our Human Resources department had a pamphlet about balancing work and home. I read it and called the organization. They started to send me information and I even joined an online academic support group that assisted new faculty with work/life balance. My home life and academic career began to have a balance. I know I went all around to get to my point, but my point is that institutions need to recognize that if our faculty are not happy employees outside of work this will affect their happiness at work. As a minister, employees come to me for spiritual assistance. I have visits from a number of our African American male faculty and they tell me about their struggles with work and home. I try to help them with what I have been given about work/life balance. This should be an initiative that is

established throughout the institution. If our African American male faculty and other faculty members know that the institutions care about their well-being as a person the faculty members will have more allegiance to the institution and not seek other employment.

I have started an initiative of my own to increase the numbers of African American male faculty at our institution. Since I'm in religion, I go to a lot of minister's conferences and I interact with a lot of African American males who have advanced degrees in religion and philosophy. These gentlemen are full-time ministers but many of them want to try the world of academia. I have successfully recruited approximately five part-time faculty from interacting with them at conferences. Of the five persons recruited three of them have been African American males and the other was a Caucasian female and a Native American male. Now this is how I try to increase my diversity within my department, while at the same time increasing the presence of African American male faculty. I you know that everything is about relationship building and the more relationships we build with our surrounding community, we can increase our numbers of quality African American male faculty."

**Dr. John**

"I'm from Charlotte, North Carolina. I've been here all my life. I attended college here and obtained my bachelors and master's degree from a public HBCU. I received a PhD from a public predominantly white institution in North Carolina. I'm currently a tenured professor of history at a public HBCU in North Carolina. I've been employed here for ten years. I can say I truly love my job. I went here as an undergrad and got my master's degree from here. Every day I see students that remind me of myself when I was an undergrad.

Your topic of retention and recruiting African American male faculty is one that has needed attention for a long time. We have known each other a long time and every time we see each other we talk about the lack of African American faculty at our schools. It's not that the men are not in the pipeline; we both know a lot of brothers who teach, but not at our HBCUs. Our HBCUs need to be more attractive to progressive young minds. This would make our institutions more attractive if we embrace change and innovation. We both have friends who have chosen to go to larger institutions. It's not always about the money. Many of our colleagues have gone to other institutions because they don't want to play a lot of the political games that HBCUs play. Now on the flipside, when they get to those larger institutions, they soon find out that they have to play a different political game. I have chosen to stay here and make a difference at my alma mater. I'm looking to move up to Chair, Dean, Vice President and maybe even one day President.

Yeah, I know our institutions have a lot of growing and changing to do, but I always believe that change has to start from within. I want to be a part of the solution and not the problem. That's why I stay here. We have great students and I know I can help them achieve their goals.

When I was a student here, I really didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I had an instructor who would talk to me and even take me to lunch from time to time. He helped me to get my focus and eventually to realize I wanted to teach. I not only wanted to teach but I wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. To answer your immediate question, I stay here because I make a difference in the lives of students. This is a feeling

that you can't pay for, this is something that most faculty may not realize until they have been in the business a while.

Yes, I have had times where I have felt devalued by some of the faculty and administration, but that's when I go right back to my previous point in that I am not here for the faculty, I am here for the students. I think one way to increase retention and recruitment of African American male faculty is to do exactly what you are doing now. We need more research on the topic. A lot of institutions know that this is a problem but there isn't funding out there to study the problem. I am hoping that you not only continue this to complete your dissertation but I hope you do more with it. We need more publications and articles out there addressing the issue. Then maybe someone will take a real look at this and see that it is a real concern that affects even our primary schools. I'm hoping we can collaborate on some publications and even present at a few conferences together. I have thought about this a long time but have never really made time for it. Since you are here today and we both have said we are committed to increasing our numbers, let's do it.

I try to participate in extracurricular activities with my African American male students. I am the advisor for our fraternity on campus, I co-advise an African American male athletic club and I also play on a few intramural teams on campus. All this is a lot of work and it helps to keep me in shape. I can remember as an undergraduate student here, one of my favorite professors would do all of those activities with the male students. He's one of the reasons why I continued through graduate school and came back to my alma mater to teach. I have built life-long relationships with my students and even when they graduate they call me for references or advice. I have also helped to guide a few to and through graduate

school. I can brag and say that I have helped two young men obtain a PhD and both of them are teaching at HBCU's. I am glad I had that impact on them. I don't think if I had not have guided them in that direction, they would not have obtained their PhD. I think they will do the same thing and mentor other young African American males, like I mentored them.

I try to get my African American male colleagues to join me in helping out on campus with various student organization or intramurals. I have asked some to attend games with the students. The students are able to see you as a real person outside of the classroom and not just as an authority figure in the classroom. This relationship building will help our African American males stay in school and ultimately graduate and possibly help them go to graduate school. This interaction with our students outside the classroom will help our African American male faculty to see the students from a different view. When students and faculty interact in clubs, intramurals and games, the faculty member gains what our students refer to as street credibility. With this street credibility the faculty member now has a greater influence on the student thus allowing the faculty member to guide the student to graduation and graduate school. The African American male faculty now has a vested interest in staying at the institution because he sees the power of his influence among the African American male population. This is not something that I haven't tried. I stay because I see my value with the students and my influence and I know I have helped many to graduate and go on to graduate school.”

### **Cross Case Analyses**

Cross-cases analysis is characterized by the researcher's use of comparisons and contrasts among individual cases or groups as a way of drawing out underlying themes

(Stake 2005). Although some studies select some cases explicitly for the purpose of fostering contracts or similarities, this was not a major consideration in this study, apart from the basic requirement that all participants be African American males currently employed as full-time faculty members at HBCU's I North Carolina. There is much dissimilarity in background and experience which as will be suggested in the next chapter, may be linked to participants responses. These differences include age (ranging from early forties to early sixties), discipline (sciences and humanities) experience with HBCU's (lifelong versus first-time), geographic origins (two native North Carolinians, a Texan, and a New Yorker), and administrative responsibilities (one is a department chair) among other.

Analysis of the interviews revealed a variety of factors that influenced why participants chose to remain at their current institution. All the participants chose to remain at their current institutions; however, one participant stated that he did anticipate looking for other faculty positions. The next sections will discuss similar and dissimilar themes that emerged from the interviews as compared to the literature in chapter 2.

### **Mentoring**

Participants described academic mentoring on the high school, undergraduate and graduate school levels as a reason why they remained at their current institution. Dr. Mark was the only participant who did not refer to having a mentor during his undergraduate or graduate school career. He stated, "I never had a mentor when I was in college. My parents laid the law down and I followed the law to a 'T.' I think more parents should be intentional about letting their kids know what the expectations are academically."

Dr. Matthew, Dr. Luke and Dr. John all referred to a mentor in high school, undergraduate or graduate school, or their current departments. They all wanted to mentor other students or faculty in an attempt to “pay it forward” or “give back.” This was an attempt to pass on the lessons of helping others that was given to them. Dr. Matthew even stated:

At my current institution, I am a mentor to several African-American students. I even informally mentor the few younger African-American male faculty at my institution. What I see as the major hurdle for recruiting African American male faculty is the perception of college and education many African-American males have, this starts in elementary school. I was mentored by African-American males in elementary, middle, high school, and even college. Many African-American males go through school and sometimes never see another African-American male that can mentor them. I have to stay here to give back.

In chapter 2, a review of the literature revealed that mentoring allows both the mentor and the mentee to flexibly experience the full range of both the internal college community and the external communities at-large. Mentoring is a program and philosophy to enhance student or faculty success in an excellent component of a supportive campus environment. In his Urban Leadership Institute report “*Man up: Recruiting and Retaining African American Male Mentors,*” Miller (2007) describe five distinct types of mentoring programs: (1) traditional on-on-one, (2) school-based, (3) career-based, (4) group mentoring, and (5) Internet mentoring.

Dr. Matthew, Dr. Luke and Dr. John describe their mentoring as one-on-one, school based, and career-based. All participants see themselves both as mentors and mentees and discuss this as a reason to remain at their current institution.

### **Institutional and Departmental Support**

Institutional support was a theme that emerged as a theme of why the participants remained or are currently looking for other employment. All of the participants did refer to institutional support in terms of financial and research support. Dr. Luke stated, “This is my first time teaching at an HBCU and I think it may be my last. For me to help my students stay current, I need better equipment, more resources, and more freedom to teach the way I want to teach.”

Dr. Luke stated, “This is really my first HBCU experience and I have enjoyed it. I get lots of support from my dean and department chair. I am given the opportunity to learn and wear multiple hats. Many of my colleagues don’t like doing extra assignments but I jump at the opportunity to learn and grow.”

In reviewing the literature, when referring to institutional and departmental support, much of the literature referred to financial support as it relates to student loan repayment for individual faculty. Dr. Luke stated:

One way I believe we could retain and recruit more African American males is to give them incentives like more pay, paying off student loans, decreasing the teaching load and increasing the research funding. I know colleagues of mine who would go to an HBCU at the drop of a hat, if the college would pay back some of their student loans. You know I have an interest in seeing more minorities go into STEM areas.

That's all the STEM programs are doing to get more minorities, is to assist them financially. It's not rocket science. If you help a person financially, typically they will be committed.

### **Individual commitment instilled by undergraduate institution**

Early on, leaders of black colleges became determined to provide their students with the kind of comprehensive higher education they needed to return to their communities as effective scientists, teachers, and leaders and to help "uplift the race"(Bowles &DeCosta, 1971).

Dr. Matthew and Dr. John each attended an HBCU as an undergraduate student. They both allude to the lessons learned at HBCU's as it relates to educating young African American students. Dr. Matthew stated:

After I graduated from high school, I attended a small HBCU and majored in education. During those years, I met others just like me and was mentored by several other African-American professors. These men were all shining examples of what I thought it meant to be a professor at an HBCU. These men helped me get through college with ease. Oh, believe me they did not make it easy for me; they just showed me how to do it a better way. I would not have gone to graduate school if it had not been for my mentor. My undergraduate experience taught me about commitment to our colleges [HBCUs].

Several general characteristics can be seen as being common to the modus operandi of HBCUs, such as (1) a set of interwoven circumstances on HBCU campuses that causes them to be much more successful in graduating African American students than are PWIs;

(2) the nature of the relationship between the students and the faculty on HBCU campuses that typically differs from the relationship on PWIs; and (3) the atmosphere of the HBCU campus, which seems to give the students a greater sense of confidence and commitment to their institutions which builds self-esteem (Allen, 1987).

Both Dr. Matthew and Dr. John referred to their undergraduate HBCUs as being “supportive.” Dr. Luke and Dr. Mark, who both attended PWIs did not allude to any significant event or references as it relates to how their undergraduate experience influenced their commitment to HBCUs or their students.

### **Family and Social Support**

Family and social support was another theme revealed during the interviews that retained the participants at their current HBCUs. It should be noted that all participants were married and had children, and they each referred to maintaining the concept of family. Some even thought their current position helped to facilitate maintaining the family structure.

Dr. Luke stated, “My wife and I thought it would be a great opportunity to spend more time together as a family, because the position wasn’t demanding in terms of research and publications.” Dr. Matthew’s, Dr. Mark’s and Dr. John’s commitment could be seen in their many pictures of the family vacations, children’s birthday parties and even a World’s Greatest Dad award on the wall.

The literature as it relates to retention and family support was not extensive; however, Thoits(1982) did state that life events are sensitive changes that require a rapid behavioral readjustment in a relatively short time and in some cases negatively impact faculty retention. In making adjustments to employment, some faculty relied on support

located either inside their respective institution, outside the institution or in most cases support from family and friends.

## **Summary**

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study, examining the experiences of African American male faculty at HBCUs in North Carolina. The investigator collected data from a subset of the population of African American faculty at Historically Black Colleges in North Carolina. From the interviews four distinct themes emerged as significant contributors to recruitment and retention: (1) Mentoring, (2) Institutional support both financially and research, (3) Individual commitment instilled by undergraduate institution (4) Family and social support.

Mentoring has been the prevalent theme throughout the research that has proven to be a factor that assists African American males with getting into the faculty ranks; once they achieve the rank of a faculty member, mentoring helps to keep them engaged. Dr. Mark revealed that there is a perceived lack of institutional commitment, both budgetary and in research experiences. In reference to individual commitment to the institution and student learning, one faculty member believed that the institutions also lacked commitment to develop the talent of the current faculty members, subsequently leading to decreased job satisfaction.

The examination of the participants' responses yielded additional insight. The first is a reference to one of the main findings in the literature about African American faculty that led to the creation of this current study. It is the notion that African American faculty at HBCU's are more satisfied than their counterparts at predominantly white institutions despite

having lower teaching loads, higher pay, and higher publications at the latter. While this study was not designed to gauge the job satisfaction of the faculty at their respective institutions, one finding from this study may shed further light on this issue.

This has to do with participants' statements of reasons for choosing their present institutions. Specifically, people are much more willing to endure certain factors of job dissatisfaction if the institution is their first choice or they have a specific reason for choosing it. As previously mentioned, the vast majority of the participants from both institutions expressed a strong desire to improve the lives of African American students and the African American community in general.

Traditionally, that has been the mission of historically Black colleges and universities therefore possibly validating their faculty members' sense of purpose for entering higher education. Future research studies should examine the impact of faculty choice upon job satisfaction to see if it is a significant factor. This and other points related to the unique circumstances of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities in shaping faculty recruitment and retention will be discussed in the following Chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **Discussion**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine factors associated with the retention and recruitment of African American male faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina. Additional purposes were: (1) to provide insight that leads to policy changes that will ultimately improve stability throughout the faculty ranks at HBCUs and (2) to inform stakeholders about the recruitment and retention processes with authentic African American male faculty information

To accomplish this purpose, the investigator identified persons to be interviewed who fit the criteria for the study. Open-ended questions were asked of the participants and they were urged to add additional information, thereby providing detailed background information for the researcher. The participants provided candid and authentic insider information. Triangulation of the interviews, vitas, and other background information provided a comprehensive view of the problem. The interviewer collected, examined, and where appropriate, coded responses from the interviews. Mixed results came from this study. Each interview contributed to the development of some previously identified emerging theoretical categories, failed to support others, and/or identified new emerging categories. The themes found in Chapter 2 of the study will be restated to reaffirm the themes revealed by the interviewees and will include a discussion of additional themes not previously revealed in Chapter 2 of the research.

The literature showed mentoring, social adjustment, faculty socialization and institutional financial and research support as emerging themes that contribute to the recruitment and retention of African-American male faculty. Another emerging theme was derived from the participant interviews. This theme was individual commitment instilled by the undergraduate institution.

A discussion of the results allows a summary profile to be drawn of the African American male faculty in this study. All persons interviewed were at least the rank of Assistant Professor and all had a PhD. They have all been employed for over four years. Their teaching disciplines were the following: (1) Chemistry, (2) Education, (3) Religion, and (4) History. From a review of their vitas, all have served on at least three institutional committees, which means they all have been engaged within their departments. When asked about their salaries, all of them say they know they are well below the average as compared to a predominately white institution, but equal to many of their colleagues at other HBCUs. No conclusions should be drawn from this without taking into account service time, rank, and type of institution.

Only one participant worked at other HBCUs; the other three participants did not have other HBCU teaching experience to compare to their present employer. Two of the respondents had their undergraduate experiences at an HBCU, and the other two had their undergraduate experience at a predominantly white institution. It should be noted that those participants who had attended an HBCU as undergraduate students discussed their commitment to the HBCUs and the African American community. They also alluded to a commitment to help students succeed over a commitment to increasing their salaries.

I reviewed their vitas and publications and noticed that all participants had published multiple articles and presented at conferences. One participant did state that he wanted to present more but that his institutional and departmental budget would not allow it. All participants did allude to more money needed to be allocated for scholarly research in their departments and for African American male faculty research. All of the participants taught a minimum of 9 credit hours. One participant taught an overload of 3 credit hours.

The personal views and experiences of the participants reflect a somewhat positive attitude regarding their current employer. One participant did, however, use the phrase, “I do my eight and hit the gate.” He used this when referring to what he referred to as “cliques” in his department. He was frustrated with the lack of funding for his department and research. Most of the participants were consistent in saying they wanted their students to excel and they as faculty would go above and beyond to see that they excelled.

Three of the participants alluded to mentoring as a factor that has helped them navigate academia. One even stated he went to an HBCU to teach because of his mentor. All talked about emphasis needing to be placed at the elementary school level to expose African American boys to colleges and the occupation of university professors. The interviews also revealed that there is a need for senior faculty to engage junior faculty as soon as they enter the faculty ranks. This type of mentoring would encourage participation in academic committees and sometimes facilitate a smoother transition from graduate school to the faculty ranks.

Only one of the participants stated he “would take another position if it came along.” The other three respondents were relatively satisfied with their current employment

status. Their vitas indicate that all of them had additional faculty and administrative responsibilities. The following were a list of additional responsibilities: advising, recruiting, faculty senate, SACS onsite/offsite teams, curriculum councils, and academic organizations.

During the interviews some participants stated that it was easier to retain the African American male faculty than to recruit new faculty. With increased retention of faculty, this makes success in recruitment easier. It should be noted that a university program that focuses on retaining African American male faculty should subsequently have more success in attracting additional African American faculty.

In this study, perceptions are that the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCUs in North Carolina is essential to the education of all students at HBCUs. The intent of this study was to investigate the factors that contributed to the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty at HBCUs from authentic participants, contribute to the investigative literature, and foster additional research from the findings.

My impression from the interviews is that three of the participants' experiences have been generally favorable. One participant out of the four interviewed did indicate he was not satisfied with his compensation and departmental budget. All participants expressed a great deal of personal commitment to student success and to the need to increase the numbers of African-American male faculty at our HBCUs. All of them did allude to some incidents that could have been discouraging as a faculty member but their sense of purpose at the institution along with coping skills have allowed them to be content in their place of employment.

## **The Recruitment-Retention Nexus**

As indicated in the previous section, participants draw a distinction between recruitment and retention, viewing the latter as a prerequisite to the former. In other words, they believed that having African American males already represented in large numbers in the faculty ranks makes it easier to recruit additional such individuals. A further dimension to the recruitment and retention question is the pipeline issue, a phrase used to identify barriers (and opportunities) to channels that might produce greater numbers of students and faculty of color (Stanley, 2006). The opportunity to work with African American male students was, as we have seen, an important incentive that led participants to their current employers. In these respects, the findings of the present study are broadly consistent with prior research evidence that all three factors—recruitment, retention, and the student pipeline that represents a potentially important source of future faculty—are closely interrelated, insofar as faculty of color are less likely to want to work in a place where they might have obstacles and isolation (Turner 2006), while students of color may not matriculate at a certain university that is seen as lacking minority representation (Leonard, Horvat, and Tiley-Tillman, 2002).

The nexus between diversity of the students and faculty has been recognized by universities and has given rise to a wide range of programs aimed at both populations but for present purposes, is particularly of interest in regard to efforts to diversify the pool of applicants for faculty positions.

Historically, American academics were primarily native-born Caucasian males, which in turn has created the current academic environment at most universities, especially in the arts and sciences (Schuster and Finkelstein, 2006). Historically, student populations at many

institutions were not diverse either. Pipeline problems, a common phrase used to identify barriers to channels that might produce greater numbers of minority faculty and students, bear on the lack of students of color on campus (Stanley, 2006). These problems ultimately evolve into a lack of faculty of color on campus (Stanley, 2006). Faculty of color are less likely to want to work in a place where they might face obstacles and isolation (Turner, 2006). This approach is cyclical, as students of color may not matriculate to a certain university due to a lack of minority representation. Leonard, Horvat, and Tiley-Tillman, (2002) suggest a nexus exists between diversity in student and faculty populations. In an effort to diversify the pool of applicants for faculty positions, universities have implemented several programs and taken active measures to attract the faculty members. These include grant writing and editorial assistance; funding for development, travel, and graduate assistants; and supportive family policies like longer maternity leave and other options that will advance progress toward tenure (Leonard, Horvat, and Tiley-Tillman, 2002). However, these initiatives require that administrators and frontline recruiting committees embrace them and take active measures to ensure they are being followed. In their review of failed minority recruitment and retention efforts, Turner and Myers (2000) identified one of the major causes attributed to the collapsed efforts as a lack of committed leadership from all levels. In addition to historical barriers, faculty of color encounter and must discredit myths surrounding their credibility and status as faculty. One huge impediment to progress centers on perceptions of competence. Yoshinaga (2006) notes that many existing faculty and administrators “express the attitude that faculty of color are not as qualified as white faculty”

(p. 349). Such a sentiment inhibits collegiality and creates a non-supportive environment. This in turn leads to faculty of color changing institutions or leaving the higher education profession altogether (Turner and Myers, 2000). Along with the issue of competence is the notion that some universities do not foster an environment conducive to embracing diverse cultures. Sadao (2003) discusses biculturalism: the idea that faculty of color, in particular, practice two different cultures—their community and family culture and a separate academic culture—in an attempt to fuse with traditional academe. Although academe is viewed as a liberal place where individuals are free to express their thoughts, those individuals are often from similar backgrounds or share similar experiences. Creating a multicultural climate entails broadening the expectations for what is seen as quality work, appropriate behavior, and effective working styles. “Developing a positive and supportive climate for all faculty, especially faculty of color, requires identifying those factors that support an individual’s desire to remain at an institution” (Yoshinaga, 2006, p. 349). Conduct that creates a welcoming environment includes establishing networking, mentoring, and professional development opportunities (Turner, 2006). Other essential factors are placing value during the tenure process on the additional service contributions often made by faculty of color and actively supporting research that might vary from the norm of traditional academic endeavors (Turner, 2006). Collectively, recruitment efforts, coupled with a sincere desire to embrace diversity and respect for faculty of color, will lead to better results. However, recruitment efforts alone are not sufficient to solve issues of disproportionately small numbers of minorities in academe. Although the diversification of the faculty population has increased

slightly, Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) note that the numbers may not translate into increased retention if appointments are not renewed or if they do not lead to promotion and tenure for faculty of color. In sum, it is important to monitor efforts in recruiting and retaining faculty of color.

Retention is a critical component to ensuring longevity in the profession. Once an African American male has joined an institution as a faculty member, another set of potential issues arises relating to retention. Issues important to retention are tenure, promotion, and academic satisfaction. Furthermore, “Retention is affected by a hostile climate, lack of students of color, lack of community, lack of mentorship for both scholarship and role models of success in the academy, and inequity in job description irrespective of what advocacy programs are established” (Yoshinaga, 2006, p. 351). Other impediments include marginalization of work, feelings of isolation, and the difficulties of balancing life in dual cultures. Support by colleagues and deans is also critical for successful retention. Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) identify respect as the nucleus of successful faculty work experience; adverse experiences in feeling respected may greatly harm retention efforts. Negative treatment of candidates and new faculty of color adds to potential barriers to successful future recruitment efforts.

### **The HBCU Context**

The preceding discussion indicated the conclusion within the existing research literature that the recruitment/retention nexus involves a range of issues touching upon individual identity, skilled leadership, and institutional resources and commitment, among

many factors. It will be noted that racial identity underlies much of the literature, especially as it suggests a duality and tension between faculty and students of color, on the one hand, and the rest of the institution on the other.

Such a duality is less relevant to the present study, given that its focus is on HBCU's. Therefore, the remainder of the discussion will examine the study's findings specifically within the context of HBCU's, which have existed for the primary purpose of serving communities of color. While the overall dynamics of recruitment and retention may involve some of the same issues, Chapters 1 and 2 have shown something of the unique history and mission of HBCU's.

There are two findings in which the HBCU context appears to have had a particularly strong role in shaping participants responses. The first of these has to do with mentoring. It is important to recall that for several participants, mentoring involved matters of both racial and gender identity. In describing his own undergraduate experience, Dr. Matthew said that, "I met others just like me and was mentored by several other African American Professors. These men were all shining examples of that I thought it meant to be a professor at an HBCU." Dr. Matthew then goes on to say that he mentors several African American students and "the few younger African American male faculty at my institution." In his view, mentoring of African American males is best accompanied by those who share those characteristics. Given this belief, it is ironic that the HBCU is no longer seen as the ideal setting for much mentoring due to the attrition of African American male faculty. As Dr. Luke says of African American male faculty, "we are a dying breed. There are a number of (us) in my department, but all are over 60 years old and I am the only one in my 40's"

The other major area in which HBCUs institutional type seem important is the degree of institutional support available to faculty. The initial point to be made here is that participants believe that institutional support is closely related to mentoring. Specifically, because HBCU's as a group are relatively under-resourced, they have difficulty in attracting and keeping prospective African American male faculty. Dr. Mark, for instance, cites his need for "better equipment (and) more resources" as a prime reason to seek employment elsewhere. In turn, the comparative absence of young African American male faculty members results in an insufficiency of potential role models and mentors for HBCU male students. Dr. Luke stated, "our boys are looking for something positive to be a part of and our HBCUs need to step up to the plate and provide that avenue for them." But beyond mentoring, the scarce resources that participants see as characteristic of HBCU's pose additional difficulties for African American male faculty in the form of critical choices regarding their own career patterns. This includes not only the relative emphasis that participants place on teaching versus research, in which teaching seems to be the default option in a resources-poor environment, but also the way in which some faculty allocate free time, with some individuals choosing to reduce professional effort as a response to what they regard as inadequate salaries. Dr. Mark says, "what I give up in salary and resources, I get back in time spent with my family and less responsibilities.

### **Implications and Recommendations for Further Research**

The researcher has discussed the literature and studies that promote the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty. It is apparent that additional studies need to be conducted concerning persistence of African American male scholars at the doctoral level,

which is the direct pipeline to the professorate. More research needs to highlight African American male faculty both at HBCUs and the PWIs. The following are both theoretical and pragmatic recommendations:

### **Theoretical recommendations**

The theoretical recommendations are as follows: (1) the continuation of this type of inquiry into the recruitment and retention of African American male faculty;(2) refinement of the questions and maybe even another instrument and sequential administration to ensure repetition of answers due to the length of the interviews; (3) inclusion of refined research questions and possible instruments as part of recommended African American professional teaching faculty recruitment programs and use in longitudinal studies to assess perceptual changes; (4)pursuit of further study to analyze academic implications for human resource development benefitting the recruitment and retention process for African American male faculty, and (5) expansion of additional studies to include PWIs and their recruitment and retention strategies for African American males.

### **Pragmatic recommendations**

The following are pragmatic themes identified in this study that could be implemented to assist with increasing the retention and recruitment of African American males: Commitment to the faculty from the institution and the nation, labor pool and academic preparation. As it relates to commitment, the following are recommendations: (1) recruitment and retention of African American male faculty with terminal degrees should become part of the national higher education agenda; (2) additional funding and incentives should be given to recruited faculty members, i.e. repayment of student loans or faculty

housing; (3) a national post-doctoral fellowship program for African American male faculty to develop leadership skills among the population; and (4) a national task force or commission should be developed to investigate the feasibility and development of a national consortium for African American male faculty.

### **Additional recommendations**

Future researchers should examine the differences between the job satisfaction factors of African American faculty that are tenured, those that are not tenured but on a tenure track, and those that are on a non-tenured track. This study was not designed to examine the impact of tenure though there were isolated findings that suggested tenure could affect how African American faculty view job satisfaction in reference to fulfillment, contentment, and dissatisfaction.

Secondly, a study is needed to test the assertion that job dissatisfaction factors should be separated into two different categories; those a faculty member is dissatisfied with but willing to endure, and those that would dissatisfy them to the point of leaving their institution. This finding could be beneficial in understanding African American male faculty retention.

Thirdly, a similar qualitative study should be conducted to compare the job satisfaction factors of Black and White faculty at predominantly white institutions to see if they differ. This finding could aid institutions in understanding the retention discrepancy between White and Black faculty at predominantly white institutions.

The fourth recommendation is for a study examining the reasons faculty choose to apply and/or accept positions at a particular institution and the impact this choice has on their

overall job satisfaction. For example, faculty who enter higher education due to their strong research background may not be satisfied at a service-oriented university. The findings of this study could impact how institutions write job descriptions and recruit incoming faculty. Finally, a quantitative study is needed to determine if the findings of this study can be generalized to African American faculty employed at other historically Black colleges and universities and predominantly white institutions.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented a summary and discussion of the study's findings and conclusion as well as the implications for action and recommendations for further research.

As an African American male, I was surprised with some of the findings of the study. As I interviewed the participants, I began to realize the impact that my research could possibly have and the contribution it could make to increase the numbers of African American males in HBCU faculty positions.

Throughout my tenure in academia, the majority of my experiences have been at HBCUs, initially as a student, then as a faculty and staff member, and now as an administrator. It has always been my passion to assist African American males with identifying resources that will open doors and increase their likelihood to be successful. This study has strengthened my knowledge about the recruitment and retention of African American faculty. More importantly, I hope this study will aid policy makers and university administrators with the creation of resources to assist not just African American male faculty—but all faculty.

African American males are equipped with the essential components to be successful;

however, supporting their success requires a collective effort. Departments interested in implementing efforts to increase recruitment, promotion, tenure, and mentoring opportunities should look for guidance to the best practices of institutions whose efforts have been effective. They should also be active participants truly committed to improving efforts to recruit, retain, and mentor African American male faculty. These efforts include incorporating policies and providing quantifiable measures to evaluate the implementation of such plans. Collective support from upper-level administrators and influential faculty will bolster the impact of faculty colleagues in adopting the initiatives implemented. Although efforts are in progress, there is a substantial amount of ground to cover.

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