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CAREER PERSPECTIVES: AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESIDENTS' LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH
GROW-YOUR-OWN (GYO) LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

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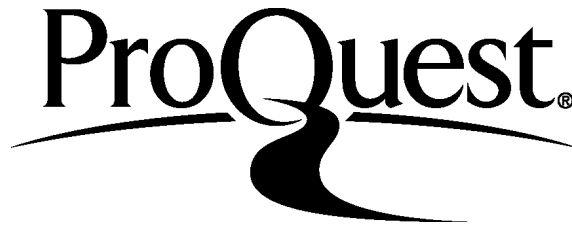
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ABSTRACT

Community colleges throughout the United States are facing an impending leadership gap and a critical shortage of experienced administrators. This is primarily due to the imminent retirement of college presidents, senior administrators, and faculty within the next 10 years (Shultz, 2001; Tekle, 2012; Vaughn, 2001). As community colleges nationwide face the impending leadership gap, research suggests that these retirements could possibly have a disproportionate impact on the number of African American presidents and CEOs (Boggs, 2003).

Findings of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) 2013 report suggest that Grow-Your-Own (GYO) leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy to address the shortage of pipeline candidates for future leadership positions. While a robust body of literature describes the need for GYO leadership programs (Benard, 2012; Focht, 2010; Jeandron, 2006; Scott & Sanders-McBryde, 2012), few studies have comprehensively examined how African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO leadership program describe (a) their career advancement, (b) the aspects of a GYO program which contributed most to their career success, (c) the impact of GYO program participation had on their

leadership practices, and (d) the leadership competencies presidents and CEOs feel were most crucial to their career success.

The purpose of this exploratory descriptive study was to identify why and how African American presidents were successful and what aspects of a GYO program contributed most to their career success.

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This is dedicated to my father, the late Cornelius Elijah Robinson,
and to my mother Dorothy Robinson, both of whom instilled in me a sense of
personal gratitude for the sacrifices that others have made
so that I may enjoy the benefits of higher education.
I honor their legacy of honesty, fairness, and integrity in their life's journeys.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Community colleges throughout the nation are facing a leadership gap and a critical shortage of competent administrators. This is primarily due to the impending retirement of college presidents, senior administrators, and faculty within the next ten years (Shultz, 2001; Tekle, 2012; Vaughn, 2001). According to a study by Vaughn (2001), 24% of current community college presidents plan to retire within 1-3 years; another 32% plan to retire within 4-6 years; and 28% plan to retire within the next 7-10 years. In addition, according to Weisman and Vaughn (2006), “84 percent of college presidents indicated they planned to retire within the next 10 years, which represented an increase from the 79 percent in 2001 and the 68 percent in 1996 who planned to retire within the same time period” (p. 6).

There are several issues that have combined to create a leadership gap between the number of anticipated future openings for college presidents and the leadership pipeline of experienced and qualified candidates available to fill these anticipated openings. First, college presidents are retiring at a higher rate than the anticipated backfill rate, and the pipeline of positions which traditionally lead to a college presidency (for example, vice presidents of instruction, vice presidents of student services, deans, and other similar pipeline positions) are also being affected by higher than normal retirement rates (Vaughn, 2001).

Added to this will be normal turnover such as voluntary and involuntary resignations, deaths and other forms of attrition.

This anticipated high turnover within the ranks of senior leadership combined with higher turnover within the traditional pipelines, has created a crisis and a possible void in the succession of leaders within community colleges nationwide (Shults, 2001). A report by the California Community College League found that “the annual turnover rate for California community college chief executive officers (CEOs) for the years 1984-85 through 1990-91 was 13 percent; for those same years, the national community college CEO turnover rate was 12 percent” (Mize, 1998, p. 1). In addition, the pool of potential applicants for CEO positions being hired possessing the requisite skills to “‘hit the ground leading’ is shrinking, with many first-time college presidents not having had professional development in the critical areas of college budgeting, academic management or institutional fundraising” (American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), 2013, p. 3).

In addition, research has postulated additional concerns with regard to the underrepresentation of minorities within the leadership pipeline. “Although there appears to have been a slight increase in the percentage of African-American community college presidents over the past decade, they are still underrepresented in the presidential population” (Phelps, Tabor, & Smith, 1996, p. 20). According to a 2007 report by the American Council on Education, the numbers of women and minorities in presidential positions at colleges and universities have not increased since 1998. Moreover, these groups are

underrepresented as presidents relative to their numbers as senior administrators (King & Gomez, 2008). Individuals in the leadership pipeline must have access to appropriate professional development opportunities such as leadership, budget management, fundraising, board of trustee and community relations, in order to gain these skills and traits needed for effective leaders (AACC 2005).

A study by Phelps et al. (1996) suggested that 5% (61) of the approximately 1,220 presidents of community colleges are African-American. Thirty-one percent (19) of African-American community college presidents are women. There is a critical need to increase the number of African-American, Latino, and other minority college administrators within the pipeline who possess the requisite skills necessary to lead within a multifaceted community college environment (Phelps et al., 1996). Overall, the impending retirements of baby-boom generation administrators and faculty is of major concern to current leaders; however, it also presents future opportunities to respond to the unfulfilled promise of achieving racial, ethnic and gender diversity among college and university leaders (Renick, 2008).

Community colleges are now faced with the challenge of identifying leadership talent within their own institutions and of considering how leadership development is to be addressed. This leadership gap can be addressed through a variety of strategies and programs, including the institutional Grow Your Own (GYO) leadership development programs, The American Association of Community Colleges Affiliated Councils programs, college and university based

leadership development programs, as well as formal mentoring and internship programs. The key is to sustain current leaders and to develop new and emerging leaders with the requisite leadership skills needed to be successful in the future (AACC, 2013).

In 2013, the AACC released its second edition of the report on “Competencies for Community College Leaders.” This report is fundamental to higher education leaders as it identifies the crucial management skills and competencies, which are necessary for both current as well as future leaders. These AACC competencies are also extremely important when used as a measure or benchmark for vetting job candidates, thus ensuring that job pools possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for open presidential positions. The “Competencies for Community College Leaders” report has also served as the foundation for the development of curriculum for college Grow Your Own and community college leadership doctoral programs (AACC, 2013). The findings of the AACC 2013 report suggest that GYO leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy to address the shortage of pipeline candidates for future leadership positions. Whether a development program is a GYO or academic in nature, it must be realistic about its expectations, and it must have measurable outcomes. AACC recommends institutions develop the following criteria for GYO leadership development programs:

- Leadership programs must be valued by the organization providing the training.

- The curriculum must include opportunities for the application of key concepts and principles of learning.
- The program components must have clear outcomes and measurable results as related to mastery of core competencies.
- Programs must contain team-building components as well as networking opportunities for cohorts.
- Programs must continue to be refined over time (AACC, 2013, p. 5).

Many programs developed by individual colleges are customized to address their specific needs, their community expectations, and the challenges of their college environments. Institutional leadership development programs must be flexible and agile enough to respond to the changing organizational, political, and human resources needs in higher education. They must also give individuals opportunities to participate in real-world scenarios that new leaders will likely face in the future. According to Vaughn (2001),

Community college presidents must play an important role in identifying, cultivating, mentoring, sponsoring and teaching future presidents.

Presidents decide who moves into the important pathways to the presidency, sponsor future presidents, and otherwise virtually control the supply of future presidents. (p. 5)

Another important aspect of leadership development programs is the component of mentorship. An AACC 2001 online survey asked CEOs to identify the professional development activities that were most influential in their attaining

their positions. According to research by Weisman and Vaughn (2001), approximately 14% of community college presidents identified themselves as members of an ethnic or racial minority in 2001. “Initiatives to provide minority community college professionals with opportunities for professional development and formal mentoring experiences may be key to achieving a more diverse applicant pool” (p. 15). The Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) Mentor Program was developed in 1988 to provide a formal means of providing a pipeline of emerging leaders into the community college system, particularly ethnic minorities and women identified as interested and ready for leadership responsibilities in California community colleges. The ACCCA Mentor Program has been identified as a viable strategy to address the growing leadership gap among community college presidents and administrators.

Problem Statement

Community colleges across the nation are facing an impending leadership crisis. College presidents, senior administrators, and faculty are retiring in record numbers. According to a 2001 E-mail survey conducted by the AACC, “13 percent of presidents believe that half of their highest-ranking administrators, whose average age is more than 50, will retire within five years” (Evelyn, 2001, p. 6). This trend is expected to continue over the next ten years as more baby boomers retire (Campbell, Syed, & Morris, 2010; Shults, 2001; Tekle, 2012; Vaughn, 2001). In addition, the pipeline of emerging leaders will be similarly affected, with higher than normal rates of retirement projected over the next 10 years (Shultz, 2001).

The findings of the most recent AACC (2013) report suggest that GYO leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy to address the shortage of pipeline candidates for leadership positions. The report indicates that existing community college GYO programs, university doctorate programs, and AACC type leadership academies will not adequately meet the needs for future community college leadership. Although there is a plethora of evidence on the need for GYO leadership programs (Jeandron, 2006; McNair, Duree, & Ebberts, 2011; Rowan, 2012), limited research exists pertaining to what aspects of GYO leadership programs contribute most to the career success of program participants.

Further evidence suggests that some GYO leadership programs have higher success rates for African American graduates who have subsequently achieved a college presidency ("Presidents' Round Table Directories of African American CEOs," 2014). However, additional qualitative research is needed on this unique population of presidents that describes the narratives of their journey to their current position. This study will seek to identify why and how African American presidents are successful and what aspects of a GYO program contributed most to their career success.

In response to the pending crisis, AACC provided a second edition report, "Competencies for Emerging Community College Leaders", that presented recalibrated competencies. These competencies include the following:

- organizational strategy
- institutional finance

- research, fundraising, and resource management
- communication skills
- collaboration
- community advocacy (AACC, 2013).

Each of these competencies progress along a continuum from a fundamental skills level to a mid-level proficient skills level, to a senior experienced skills level. The competencies at the fundamental skills level are basic competencies that are required of new leaders. As the competencies move along the continuum, they evolve and deepen to reflect the competencies expected when leaders become more senior level administrators or new CEOs. The competencies evolve further as new CEOs become more seasoned in their careers (AACC, 2013). The AACC competencies for community college leaders were developed to help prepare new and emerging leaders for future anticipated vacancies created as current presidents and senior administrators retire. In addition, the competencies help to identify the essential skills needed for successful leadership of a community college.

This study will inform trustees, administrative policy makers, and professional development facilitators who have an interest in developing their own GYO programs by providing information on the essential elements or components of a GYO program that impact career success. This study will inform community college leadership of the diversity and equity practices of utilizing GYO leadership programs as a means of identifying, preparing, and

increasing the number of African American, Latino, and other minorities into the leadership pipeline for a college presidency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory descriptive study was to describe African American community college presidents' perceptions of the impact of their experiences in a GYO leadership program on their career success. As community colleges nationwide face a forthcoming leadership gap due to the impending retirements of current college presidents, research suggests that these retirements could possibly have a disproportionate impact on the numbers of African American, Hispanic, and other minority presidents (Boggs, 2003). According to research by Jeandron (2006), 50% of survey respondents, which included community college administrators and GYO leadership program facilitators, indicated that they deliberately put forth efforts to include a diverse representation of individuals in their programs in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, age, years of employment and current positions at the college.

This exploratory descriptive study employed individual interviews to better understand African Americans presidents' perceptions of the impact of their experiences in a GYO leadership program on their career success, as a result of their experiences in a GYO leadership program. While a robust body of literature describes the need for GYO leadership programs (Benard, 2012; Focht, 2010; Jeandron, 2006; Scott & Sanders-McBryde, 2012), few studies have comprehensively examined how African American college presidents who have participated in a GYO leadership program describe (a) their career advancement,

(b) the aspects of a GYO program which contributed most to their career success, (c) the impact of GYO program participation had on their leadership practices, and (d) what leadership competencies presidents and CEOs feel were most crucial to their career success. In addition to the AACC recalibrated competencies for emerging community college leaders, this study will build on the AACC recalibrated competencies by informing leadership of additional leadership competencies that are essential for the success of current African American presidents and will help to ensure that the pipeline of emerging underrepresented African American, Hispanic, and other minorities are prepared for the future challenges of community college leadership. In Chapter Two, the literature on GYO leadership programs using AACC competencies is discussed in further detail.

Research Questions

The research questions that framed this study were designed to determine how African American community college presidents describe their career success as impacted by their participation in a GYO leadership program. Leadership training programs present considerable benefits including accessibility, flexibility, effectiveness, direct application in the context of the college, and the opportunity to solve real college issues through training offered by the program (Reille & Kezar, 2010). The perceptions of the presidents are important since these individuals are knowledgeable and experienced in leadership competencies such as organizational strategic planning, financial planning, communication skills, collaboration, and community college advocacy.

These basic fundamental competencies are essential to the success of a chief executive officer (CEO) in today's community college. However, there may be additional competencies that are necessary to be successful as an African American CEO. The following research questions were posed:

1. What aspects of the GYO leadership program contributed most to African American presidents and CEOs' career success?
2. How do African American presidents and CEOs respond to the revised AACC leadership competencies and leadership practices?
3. What leadership competencies do African American presidents and CEOs feel were most crucial to their career success?

Significance of the Study

As a resource for community college leadership to reference when implementing GYO leadership programs, this research will make a significant contribution to educational leadership. The research can also be of benefit to community colleges who wish to use GYO programs to identify, attract, and retain underrepresented groups such as African-Americans, Latinos, and other minority groups within their respective institutions. This study can serve as a resource to trustees, chancellors, presidents, provosts, and professional development facilitators in the following areas: (a) developing and revising performance standards for managers and administrators, (b) developing and modifying GYO program curriculum and content, (c) informing policy development, and (d) better understanding how college presidents attribute their career success toward their experiences in a GYO leadership development

program. This study will also determine how participants define leadership, within the context of the 2013 AACC leadership competency report based upon knowledge, skills, and abilities for future leaders.

Scope of the Study

Creswell (2009) stated that the scope of a research project provides the boundaries and the justification for the boundaries that are created for the study by the researcher. The scope of this qualitative exploratory descriptive study involved the lived experiences of a purposeful sampling of African American community college presidents and chancellors who were serving during the 2014-2015 academic year. The purpose of this study was to explore African American community college presidents' perceptions of the impact that a GYO leadership program had on their personal career development, career growth, and career success.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions are suppositions that were made as a condition of this study and will not be tested or researched as a part of this study. The assumptions do not represent any particular order of importance and are itemized for clarity.

- The college presidents will provide honest and truthful responses to interview questions.
- The college presidents actually engaged in and participated in a GYO leadership program.

- GYO leadership programs can improve diversity, although people of color and other minorities are still underrepresented within the higher ranks of education leadership
- GYO leadership programs can be effective in providing emerging leaders with the necessary skills, talents and leadership competencies for to be successful.
- African American community college presidents are not substantially different from any other non-African American college president with regard to their educational backgrounds, job qualifications, and experiences.

Study Limitations

The results of the study were limited to a small sample size of African American community college presidents and chancellors to provide a snapshot of those currently serving during the 2014-2015 academic year. Because of the qualitative nature of this study, the results cannot be generalized to the experiences of other college presidents or generalized to other GYO leadership programs.

Study Delimitations

Individuals not serving in a community college presidential position such as vice-presidents, deans, directors or other administrators were not included in this study. Community college presidents referred to in this study are limited to public, two-year, not for profit institutions located in the United States.

Definition of Terms

Andragogy. Andragogy is a teaching methodology used for adult learners. It is often interpreted as a process of engaging adult learners within the learning environment. Viewed within the context of learning orientation, adult learners see education as a process of developing increased competence in order to achieve their full potential in life. They want to be able to apply the knowledge, skills and abilities they gain today to the immediate future (Knowles, 1980).

Collaboration. Collaboration is the development and maintenance of responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships. Collaboration nurtures diversity, promotes student success, and sustains the community college mission (American Association of Community Colleges, 2013).

Effective Communication. Effective communication within the context of competencies for community college leaders is the use of clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the organization, as well as the surrounding community. Effective communication also promotes and sustains the community college mission, the success of all

students, and ensures the safety and security of the college community (American Association of Community Colleges, 2013).

Grow Your Own Programs (GYO). A GYO leadership program is a program that is institution based and focuses on succession planning and leadership development. A GYO is offered by a college, district, region, consortium, or state to current college or district employees as a method of preparing them for future leadership positions. Other sources of professional development include programs offered by AACC affiliated organizations, and higher education conferences. GYO programs are designed to identify and develop future college leaders from the existing pipeline of emerging leaders within the ranks of mid-level administrators, faculty, and classified staff.

Leadership Pipeline. The leadership pipeline is a pool of employees who have expressed an interest in career development opportunities and who are interested in participating in professional leadership development programs and experiences. Professional development experiences include classroom workshops, real-world work simulations, experiential learning, special assignments and projects, mentorship relationships, and serving in interim assignments to gain leadership experience.

Organizational Strategy. Organizational strategy within the context of competencies for community college leaders is the effective promotion of student success, which strategically improves the quality of the institution and sustains the community college mission based on knowledge of the organization, its

environment, and future trends (American Association of Community Colleges, 2013).

Pedagogy. Pedagogy is a term derived from the Greek words *paid* (meaning “child”) and *agogus* (meaning “leading”). Thus the term pedagogy refers to the art and science of teaching children. Viewed within the context of learning orientation, it is a process whereby the child learner acquires subject matter content, most of which they understand will be useful at some later point in life (Knowles, 1980).

Organization of the Dissertation

In this chapter, I provided a context for the impending shortage of community college leadership because of forthcoming retirements of college presidents, senior administrators, and faculty members. This anticipated high turnover within the ranks of senior leadership combined with the higher anticipated turnover within the traditional pipelines has created a crisis and a possible void in the succession of leadership within the community college system. This study describes African American community college presidents' perceptions of the value of their experiences in GYO leadership development programs juxtaposed within the context to today's institutional and organizational leadership challenges. In this chapter, I also presented the significance of the study and introduced the theoretical foundations on which the study was based. The chapter provided the studies assumptions and limitations as well as the definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 presents a critical review of the literature pertaining to the research questions. Chapter 3 contains the research design

including data collection and analysis methods. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings and recommendations for policy, practice, and further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Community colleges throughout the United States are facing an impending leadership gap and a critical shortage of experienced administrators. This is primarily due to the imminent retirements of college presidents, senior administrators, and faculty within the next 10 years (Shultz, 2001; Tekle, 2012; Vaughn, 2001). According to a report by the Compensation and Benefits Group of The Community College Trustees (Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), 2013), 75% of survey respondents indicated they plan to retire within the next ten years. Furthermore, an additional 15% of the respondents indicated they plan to retire in the next 11-15 years (AACC, 2013, p. 3). There are several issues that have combined to create the leadership gap between the number of anticipated future openings for college administrators and the pipeline of experienced and qualified candidates available to fill these openings. These issues include (a) normal turnover rates such as voluntary and involuntary resignations, (b) deaths, and (c) other forms of attrition, including promotions, transfers, and extended leaves of absence. This anticipated high turnover within the ranks of senior administrators, combined with higher than normal turnover within the traditional pipelines of qualified emerging leaders to fill these positions, has exacerbated the problem. A report by the ACCC (2013) stated:

The pool of potential job applicants for the position of Chief Executive Office (CEO) possessing the requisite skills to hit-the-ground running is shrinking, with many first time presidents not having had the professional development in the critical areas of college budgeting, academic management or institutional fund raising. (p. 3)

Professional development opportunities for preparing future leaders is very important for faculty leaders and middle managers who have an interest in community college leadership. Shults (2001) posited that:

new community college presidents feel unprepared to deal with key aspects of their jobs, including fundraising, financial management and working effectively with governance groups. To address the gap effectively, community colleges must identify new leaders and give them the opportunity to acquire and practice the skills they need to lead in the 21st century. (p. 3)

Colleges that provide appropriate training and development through workshops, seminars, and work-related projects may effectively address critical knowledge areas of leadership competency. Important skills identified by AACCC for future leaders include having the ability to bring various constituent groups together in the shared governance process, the ability to use and understand emerging technologies, as well as the ability to build coalitions (AACCC, 2005). In addition, there is a critical need to increase the number of African American, Hispanic, and other underrepresented groups within the leadership pipeline who possess the requisite skills necessary to lead within a multifaceted community

college environment (Vaughan, 2004). In a survey by the AACC (2006), 545 out of 1,186 community college presidents responded that they were White (88%). The race and ethnicity of remaining presidents were African American (6%), Hispanic or Latino (4%), Asian American or Pacific Islander (1%), and less than 1% for American Indian or Alaska Native (Weisman & Vaughan, 2006). These findings are similar to research conducted approximately 10 years prior by Phelps et al. (1996), which suggested that 5% (61) of the approximately 1,220 presidents of community colleges were African American. Of this group 31% (19) of African American community college presidents were women.

The AACC and ACCT in a joint statement on leadership and diversity stated their commitment toward diversity in leadership:

Most of the women and minority higher education presidents are found in the ranks of American Community Colleges. However, progress has been slow in identifying and employing presidents who are representative of the student bodies and the communities served by the colleges (Vaughn, 2004). Presidents and trustees should mirror the populations on our campuses and be committed to the participation and success of all groups. (AACC/ACCT, 2008)

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory descriptive study was to explore the relationship between GYO leadership programs and the career advancement of African American community college presidents who have participated in these programs. A substantial body of research exists on the effectiveness of GYO leadership programs, toward preparing future leaders.

Findings of a 2013 AACC report suggested that GYO leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy for addressing the impending shortage of qualified candidates within the pipeline of emerging leaders, as well as for increasing the representation of African American, Hispanic, and other underrepresented groups.

While a robust body of literature describes the need for GYO leadership programs (Benard, 2012; Focht, 2010; Jeandron, 2006; Scott & Sanders-McBryde, 2012), few studies have comprehensively examined how GYO leadership programs have contributed to African American college presidents' career success; how those programs helped to shape their perception of leadership competencies as compared to the AACC (2013) competencies for effective leaders; or what contributions gained through participating in a GYO leadership program enabled their individual success as African Americans.

Theoretical Foundation

This study is based on the theoretical foundations of andragogy, which is a concept first introduced by Malcolm Knowles in 1968. Andragogy, also referred to as adult learning theory, focuses on the adult learner. This Western-based theory describes andragogy as “the art and science of helping adults learn,” and was differentiated from the concept of pedagogy, which is the art and sciences of helping children learn (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). Knowles's theory is based on the following assumptions: (a) concept of the learner—adults have a deep psychological need to be self-directing and to know why they are learning what they are learning; (b) role of the learner's experience—adults possess a growing

capacity and wealth of experience and knowledge as they grow and develop, which enriches the proficiency of the learning environment for themselves, as well as for others; (c) readiness to learn—adults become ready to learn something new in order to cope with a real life problem or task and need tools and procedures to discover their “needs to know”; and (d) orientation to learning—adult learners see education as a process of developing increased competence in order to achieve their full life potential. Adults typically want to be able to apply whatever knowledge and skills they learn today toward living more effectively tomorrow. Adults are performance-centered in their orientation as to the desired outcomes and purpose of their learning experience (Knowles, 1980).

There are, however, a number of criticisms of andragogy learning theory. According to Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007), andragogy assumes that education is value-neutral and apolitical. Second, andragogy assumes adult learners all look and learn the same, which is a universal form of a Eurocentric middle-class perspective of the individual learner. Third, other ways or methods of how adults learn are totally ignored, resulting in the silencing of other voices. Fourth, andragogy does not take into account structural systems of White privilege and oppression based upon race, gender and class, which influence learning and does not consider how culture impacts a person’s personal development and ways of learning. Andragogy however, still remains the best-known model of adult learning today, and the implications for practice that Knowles draws for each of the assumptions are considered to be good instructional practice for all ages, particularly adults. Thus, “we see Andragogy

as an enduring model for understanding certain aspects of adult learning” (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 92).

Adult learning theory focuses on the adult learner and the need to be self-directed, goal focused, and apply real-world perspectives to the learning process. The GYO model of leadership development focuses on the adult learner and should give participants opportunities to participate in real-world scenarios or work projects that community college leaders face (AACC, 2013). These work-based scenarios may include simulations involving budgeting, audit functions and activities, student success interventions, or academic management activities. These work-based experiences enrich not only the proficiency of the learning environment but also the work environment for both themselves and for others (Knowles, 1980).

Review of the Scholarly Empirical Literature

The framework for this study is grounded in five broad areas, which I have used to organize the literature. The first of these is leadership core competencies, which inform current leadership practices. The second is pathways to the presidency (career success), which addresses historical and relevant career progressions for emerging leaders. The third area is leadership and diversity and the importance of evidencing diversity and inclusion within all GYO leadership programs. The fourth area is key modules or components of a GYO leadership program, such as succession planning, mentoring, and work-based scenarios. Finally, the fifth area are issues facing future leaders and the ways in which leadership practice in the future may be shaped or influenced to

meet the growing demands for new leaders, leadership challenges, and leadership opportunities of the future.

Leadership Core Competencies

The research addressing core competencies necessary for today's community college leaders is quite extensive and is relevant to this study. In response to reports of imminent retirements and anticipated vacancies in community college leadership, the AACC produced a 2005 report entitled, "Competencies for Community College Leaders." This report serves as a framework for community college leadership. The framework is important for use by institutions and current leaders as they monitor their personal development. It also provides guidelines for curriculum development with leadership development programs and informs human resources departments of the requisite competencies, experience, skills, and abilities necessary to become successful as a leader in community colleges. Based on survey data distributed to 125 community college leaders from across the country, the AACC (2005) report identified competencies for community college leaders that were approved by the AACC Board of Directors. These competencies were collectively structured into six major categories with sub-categorized attitudes, behaviors and values adjoined to each competency. The categories are: (a) organizational strategy, (b) resource management, (c) communication, (d) collaboration, (e) community college advocacy, and (6) professionalism. Examples of sub-categories of organizational strategy include the ability to strategically improve the quality of the institution, promote student success, sustain the college mission, and align

the organization to address future trends and demands. Sub-categories of resource management include the ability to equitably and ethically sustain people, processes, and information, as well as to employ organizational, time management, planning and delegation skills. Sub-categories of communication include the effective use of clear speaking, listening, writing, projecting confidence, and responding responsibly and tactfully. Sub-categories of collaboration include the development and maintenance of responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships. Sub-categories for community college advocacy include possessing an understanding, commitment, and advocacy for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college. Finally, examples of sub-categories for professionalism include the setting of high standards for self and others, continuous improvement of self and environment, institutional accountability, and the demonstration of transformational leadership through authenticity, creativity and vision. This framework was designed to be a living document, which progresses and evolves in order to meet the growing and ever-changing needs of community colleges.

Research conducted by Hassen, Dellow, and Jackson (2010) explored the degree of agreement between college presidents and board chairs regarding the importance of the AACC competencies. The authors wanted to “determine what leadership experiences current community college presidents identified as significant in the development of their leadership competencies” (Hassen et al., 2010, p. 182). A descriptive non-experimental survey research design was used to address this study’s objectives, as related to leadership competencies for

community college leaders. Survey responses from both community college presidents and trustees validated the importance of the six AACC competencies for successful community college leadership. Additional competency sub-categories often cited by presidents and trustees include institutional acumen, strength to sustain against political pressures, effective communication with sponsors and respect for all levels of employees (Hassen et al., 2010, p. 185). Additionally, their findings revealed that on-the-job training assignments provided the most effective leadership development. Activities such as progressive job assignments, networking with colleagues, and on-the-job training activities were reported as more effective than training seminars and workshops. The authors concluded that the AACC competency model could be used as a template for developing screening, interviewing, and selection procedures for job applicants and candidates for future community college leadership.

Some studies have examined trends of course content for professional development in leadership and have identified important curricula. The six competencies identified by the AACC have been integrated into curriculums of GYO leadership programs as a strategy to help prepare faculty and staff for future leadership programs (Jeandron, 2006). Hull and Keim (2007) reported that GYO programs include classes, workshops, and seminars on team building and collaboration, institutional mission and purpose, budgeting processes, institutional funding, culture and values, and emerging college issues. Other activities in GYO programs have included job shadowing, internships, mentoring,

sabbaticals, release time, tuition reimbursement, and succession planning (Hull & Keim, 2007; Scott & Tolar, 2009; Watts & Hammons, 2002)

AACC's New Framework for Leadership Competencies

In 2013, the AACC created the 21st Century Implementation Team, with the charge of recalibrating the 2005 leadership competencies and of making recommendations for a new framework for leadership based on the following conclusions:

- Successful leaders move institutions to move and improve student success.
- Dramatic steps are needed and a greater sense of urgency and alignment is required if student success needs are to be realized.
- Leadership expectations today are very different than in the past because accountability must shift to student success.
- Leadership preparation must be deliberate with the right mix of competency, risk taking and change management.

In this section of the review of the literature, I will further distinguish the new 2013 AACC competencies and framework from the 2005 AACC competencies that were previously developed. The AACC affirmed the recalibrated leadership competencies as an evolving progression of skills ranging from basic competencies for emerging leaders, intermediate competencies for new CEOs with less than three years in their position, and advanced competencies for CEOs with three or more years in their position (AACC, 2013). These refined community college core competencies for leaders include

(a) organizational strategy; (b) institutional finance, research, fundraising, and resource management; (3) communication; (4) collaboration; (5) and community college advocacy.

AACC (2013) defined effective leadership in organizational strategy competency as “promoting the success of all students, strategically improving the quality of the institution, sustaining the college mission based on knowledge of the organization, its environment and future trends” (p. 6). As emerging leaders progress along the leadership continuum they develop an understanding of the mission, vision and goals of community colleges and of student success strategies. They must understand the importance of providing exemplary service and process improvement, and demonstrate an understanding of employee responsibilities. Emerging leaders and new CEOs with three or less years of experience must embrace college values, have a strong sense of self, place moral values and ethics above charisma, embrace change management, build stronger board relations, and have a higher awareness of institutional strengths and weaknesses. CEOs who have been in their positions for three or more years, must demonstrate their organizational strategy competence through sustaining the development of personal transformational leadership skills, ensuring an organizational focus on student success, show courage under political pressures, create an environment that promotes access, inclusion, equity and strong board relations.

AACC (2013) also recalibrated its definition of leadership. It defined effective leadership in institutional finance, research, fundraising, and resource

management competencies as the “ability to equitably and ethically sustain people, processes, and information as well as physical and financial assets to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the community college” (p. 8). Emerging leaders progress by developing a basic understanding of budgets, establishing institutional fundraising goals, data interpretation toward improving student success, time management and planning, and organizational protocols pertaining to conflict management and resolution. CEOs with less than three years of experience use information and data to inform their budget decisions, serve as the institution’s chief fundraiser, design strategies as a check and balance for cautionary budget directions, become effective at team building, and evolve a deeper understanding of organizational protocols. For CEO’s with more than three years in their position, competence is evidenced by possessing an in-depth knowledge of finances, alternative approaches to fundraising, understanding key components of fundraising, demonstrating accountability in reporting, showing effective resource management, employing time management for planning, establishing and delegating team expectations, and managing conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long term viability of the organization.

AACC (2013) defined effective leadership in the category of communication as “the ability to use clear listening, speaking and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community; promote the success of all students; ensure the safety and security of students and the surrounding college community; and sustain the community college mission” (p. 9). Emerging leaders are articulate, possess strong

presentation skills, respect chain of command for communications, particularly in emergency or crisis management situations, and are familiar with what it means to be globally competent from a cultural and ethnic perspective.

CEOs with less than three years of experience meet the communications competencies of emerging leaders and evolve toward having a deeper understanding of systems of communications for trustee members, employees, and the community at large. They must be knowledgeable in determining which speech is appropriate for different audiences and in creating environments where employees feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions. Furthermore, they must understand global competences and strive to provide students with opportunities for exposure to different cultures and points of view.

Experienced CEOs with more than three years of experience in their positions communicate and convey ideas and information succinctly, frequently, and inclusively. They understand differences in communication styles between print media versus on-camera, have a communications chain-of-command to address emergencies, facilitate an environment of shared problem solving, build and leverage internal and external networks, and understand people, cultures, and complex relationships of social, political, and economic global issues (AACC, 2013).

AACC (2013) defined effective leadership in the category of collaboration as “developing and maintaining responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships which nurture diversity, promote the success of all students, and sustains the community college mission” (p. 10).

Emerging leaders are understanding of the fact that there are no lone rangers, in that all employees must collaborate to meet the goals of the institution. They know key stakeholders that advocate for the institution and the roles that they play within the community. New CEOs with less than three years of experience in their positions must develop a culture of collaboration on the institution's campus, as well as establish and build upon relationships with key internal and external stakeholders within the community. They also maintain effective relationships with peers and colleagues not only during times of crisis but also in times of celebration. Experienced CEOs with more than three years of experience in their jobs evidence competence of collaboration by effectively breaking down institutional silos and mitigating internal politics within the institution. They also build and leverage internal and external partnerships toward the advancement of the institution's mission, vision, and values.

AACC (2013) defined effective leadership in community college advocacy as understanding, committing to, and advocating for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college on the local, state, and national level (p. 11). Emerging leaders recognize multiple government programs at both state and federal levels that contribute to the funding of the college. They also recognize the interplay between public perception and policymaking, which can impact college operations. New CEOs with less than three years of experience in their positions must meet competencies of emerging leaders. In addition they must understand the role that multiple government programs play in the operation of their college. They also understand their role in crafting advocacy positions,

which align the public's interests with college operations. Community college advocacy for experienced CEOs with more than three years of experience heavily engage in shaping multiple government programs that best meet the college goals and objectives. They also engage with public outlets in a proactive manner to effectively advocate for the college's operations.

Research has proven that leadership skills evolve (AACC, 2006; Boggs, 1989; Hassen et al., 2010). AACC's new model of competencies for community college leadership focuses more on what leaders need to know based upon their level of knowledge and experience within the organization. To place these recalibrated leadership competencies in the proper context, it is important to recognize that many of the initially identified leadership competencies such as organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism that AACC established in 2005 are still essential and required. "The work of effective institutional change requires a strengthened infrastructure of support, including strategically focused professional development programs, technologies for learning and using data to inform a student success agenda" (AACC/ACCT, 2012, p. 19).

The AACC has promoted the notion that longevity of the CEO was one of the major factors contributing to transformation within an institution. Trustees must ensure that new college presidents have the appropriate time, training, and resources to carry out the necessary institutional reforms that will lead to student success. "In addition, a new president needs a rapid indoctrination to the

financial and budgetary processes of the college and state systems” (Wallin, 2002, p. 35). Furthermore,

The community college president’s life is fast paced, hectic, and involves constant interaction with people. They verbalize a need to get away and believe that constantly interacting with others is draining and sometimes inhibits their creativity. Finding time to self-reflect is a major challenge. (Stoeckel & Davies, 2007, p. 899)

One of my research questions explored gaining an understanding of what components of a GYO leadership program had the most influence on African American college presidents’ career success. My research will enlighten educational leadership on how presidents balance their self-perceptions with the competing priorities of constant interaction with others and the challenges of finding time for self-reflection.

AACC Competencies and GYO Leadership Programs

One of my research questions addresses the topic of how leaders respond to the revised AACC (2013) competencies for community college leaders. This question is derived from the perspective of AACC leadership competencies and practices for effective leadership and organizational strategies, resource management, communications, collaboration, and community college advocacy. McNair (2010) asked California community college leaders to identify which of the six AACC core competencies were essential for effective leadership and to determine “which, if any, of these skills could be acquired through doctoral studies that lead to the Ed.D.” (p. 201). Overall, respondents agreed that the six

core competencies were essential for effective leadership and described the way leaders best developed these competencies. Respondents were asked how they believe community college administrators can best acquire and develop each core competency. Participants in the study “overwhelmingly indicated leadership competencies are acquired and developed through on-the-job training, mentoring, and professional development activities” (McNair, 2010, p. 211). The findings of this study also support the AACC core competencies as a framework for identifying essential skills for community college leaders.

There is a need for organizations to be deliberate in their preparation of emerging and present leaders, particularly in the areas of risk taking, organizational transformation, and change management. Over time, the AACC competencies for community college leaders should serve as the foundation for GYO leadership programs and for community college leadership doctorate programs. However, the changing demands of our educational environment have made it necessary to review GYO leadership programs within the framework of the kinds of experiences they can provide participants so that the programs include curriculum and activities that are well-defined and provide practical, real-world experiences. GYO programs must also be flexible and responsive to both internal and external environments in order to meet the future leadership needs of community colleges in the 21st century.

GYO Leadership Programs

The AACC recommends that institutions develop and support GYO programs for emerging leaders in order to ensure that the leadership pipeline is

adequately supplied with individuals possessing the requisite skills to fill leadership job openings in the future. These programs must have the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing educational environment and provide participants with real-world type scenarios of situations that emerging leaders will face. This can be accomplished through the use of case studies, projects, assignments, and the like. “It is also important that AACC-affiliated councils and other national organizations include a special component on the ‘21st-Century Commission Report and Implementation’” (AACC, 2013, p. 3). The 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges is comprised of local, national and international educational leaders. The commission’s main charge is to safeguard the fundamental mission of the community college to provide high quality education to millions of diverse and underserved student populations. The commission is also charged with addressing future educational issues related to global competitiveness, community college student success and completion rates, equity of access, and institutional performance, effectiveness and efficiency in preparing students to be globally competitive job markets. A special component on the 21st Century Commission Report is important because future leadership must be equipped with the knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively address student success and completion. “This will require a clear and steady commitment to professional development across the institution focused on student success and completion” (AACC, 2012).

A GYO program can be defined as “a leadership development program offered by a college or district to some of its employees as a way of preparing

them for leadership within their institution” (Reille & Kezar, 2010. p. 60).

Developing a GYO program is considered to be a good strategy for identifying internal talent and preparing succession for future organizational leaders among the college’s current faculty, staff, and middle managers. According to research conducted by Reille and Kezar (2010), in-house leadership training programs provide considerable benefits, including accessibility, flexibility, effectiveness, direct application within the context of the college, and the opportunity to solve real college issues through the training offered by the in-house program.

In addition, the one major element that most readily distinguishes GYO programs from other leadership programs is the ability to customize the curriculum content and design to best fit the organizational culture, as well as the needs of the individual. Accordingly, most colleges emphasize current issues such as leading through change, bonds and construction, or college values. Programs have different levels of staffing and funding due to the availability and unavailability of resources. (Reilli & Kezaer, 2010, p. 74)

Another important factor to consider with GYO leadership programs is the development of an effective and succinct leadership succession plan.

Succession planning generally involves three major stages: (a) understanding the organization’s long-term goals and objectives, (b) identifying the workforce development needs of the organization, and (c) determining workforce trends and predictions in direct relation to the type of institution (Luna, 2010, p. 980).

Although the concepts of succession planning, individual career pathways, team

learning, talent pools, mentoring, and cross-training have long been practiced in the private or business sector, the literature suggests that singling out individuals to be groomed for future leadership positions has not been readily accepted or embraced within higher education. This may be attributed to the fact that state and federal EEO laws, as well as collective bargaining agreements, and board policies, which are more restrictive than inclusive by purpose, heavily regulate public sector environments.

Finally, AACC presents several very important recommendations for all GYO leadership programs. First, the program must be valued by both the institution and by employees contemplating participating in it. Second, the curriculum must be interactive and provide opportunities for participants to practice newly acquired skills. Third, program modules must have clear outcomes and measurable results related to the leadership core competencies. Fourth, GYO programs must contain team-building components and networking opportunities for the cohort. Fifth, the program must be continually improved and refined over time (AACC, 2013). AACC further recommends addressing the leadership gap through a variety of strategies such as AACC affiliated councils and university doctoral programs, state system programs, residential institutes, coaching, mentoring, and approaches that blend online and classroom experiences.

A first step toward developing a GYO program is to secure the support and endorsement of the president or board of trustee members. This level of support is crucial, as the president and board of trustee members play a vital role

in endorsing the program, organizing, funding, selecting participants and facilitating sessions. GYO program buy-in and active participation by the college president has been key to the program's success (Jeandron, 2006). The second step in the GYO leadership program development process is choosing a home base for the program. The college president usually selects the home base. There are various approaches to consider in selecting a home base, including housing the program in the office of the president, in the human resources department, among different divisions using a team approach, or within a training or organizational development division of the institution. A location within the office of the president will immediately give the program credibility and provide the vitality to get it off the ground and running. The advantage of housing the program within human resources includes allowing for collaboration with all other divisions of the institution including academic affairs, student services, and support services in the planning of the GYO leadership program. Some organizations have chosen to assign coordination of leadership development programs to other non-traditional offices such as admissions and records, the vice president of administration, or the chancellor's executive office.

GYO leadership programs may vary in terms of length, hours, and duration. "Most community college GYO programs range from twenty to sixty hours. Participants may participate in the program during three to fourteen sessions over a one to nine month period. The average leadership development program holds sessions five hours per day, one day per month, for eight months" (Jeandron, 2006, p. 13). The application process for GYO programs varies from

institution to institution. Some colleges require a formal application, resume, letters of recommendation, or the signing of a commitment letter to attend and to participate in all sessions. The paperwork is then reviewed by a screening committee who make recommendations to the program director, vice-president, or college president for final selection of participants into the program. Some programs have no formal process for participant selection other than the college president having the primary responsibility for selecting participants from eligible and interested employees. Research indicates a majority of GYO programs base their curriculum on specific leadership competencies that may be grouped under the six competencies identified in AACC's (2005) "Competencies for Community College Leaders" report (AACC, 2005; Jeandron, 2006). AACC (2013) recommended:

Today's GYO programs have an outward-looking curriculum, so that emerging leaders are exposed to trends and issues that are not only internal to their own colleges, but also from colleges in other localities. It is also extremely important that all leadership programs offered by AACC-affiliated councils and other national organizations include a special module on the "21st-Century Commission Report and Implementation. (p. 3).

These programs must also have flexibility and the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing college environment and provide participants with experiential learning opportunities, with exposure to budgeting, academic management, and leadership development. Scott and Sanders-McBryde (2012) presented the

following recommendations and implications with regard to GYO leadership programs: (a) Identify the organization's vision and strategy for institutional improvement, and design the GYO program standards and criteria to surpass the status-quo to a level of significant impact on the organization; (b) the GYO program must be seen as value-added in which participants will commit their time and energies to maximize benefit to the college and to future leaders; and (c) the GYO program should produce at least two tangible products or outcomes including a formal presentation to a diverse group of individuals, and the program should prepare documentation with quantitative and qualitative content for internal use and possible external publication for peer review (Scott & Sanders-McBryde, 2012).

Amy and VanDerLinden (2005) conducted a national survey of community college leaders. Their survey instrument consisted of 34 open-ended response, closed-ended response, and Likert-scale questions. "A stratified random sample of 1,700 community college administrators across 14 position codes was drawn from the AACC data bank, providing representation by geographic, urban and rural locations. The data collection efforts yielded a 54% response rate" (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002, p. 2). Most of the surveyed administrators reported they participated in the professional development activities provided by their institutions. For example, 90% indicated they participated in staff development programs on their college campuses. Administrators also reported having opportunities to participate in external leadership development programs or conferences at the state, regional, or national level.

Pathways to the Presidency

Two of my research questions address the topics of leadership competencies and career success. This study investigates African American community college presidents who have participated in a GYO leadership program and the impact the program has had on their leadership practices. The study also seeks to determine what aspects of the GYO program they feel attributed most to their career success. In this section, I address the historical and relevant career pathways and progressions for community college leaders. Understanding community college leadership career advancement and leadership career success from an historical and practical perspective will better establish a foundation for research on the attributes and perceptions of individuals who have participated in a GYO leadership program.

The most common pipeline to the community college presidency continues to be through the academic ranks from department chair, to dean, to vice-president, to president. A finding of the AACC (2005) report indicates that the most traditional trajectory to the presidency is through the academic or instructional side of the institution. Most survey respondents in the AACC (2005) study held immediate past positions in what would be considered the traditional senior leadership path: provost at 37%, president at another community college at 25%, senior academic affairs or senior instruction officer at 15%. Three percent held the position of dean or director of continuing education, and another 12% held other non-traditional positions such as senior student affairs officer or vice president for institutional planning and advancement (Amey &

VanDerLinden, 2002). As their careers progressed, most survey respondents spent an average of five years in each position on their path to the presidency. This appears to support the findings of previous studies on instructional side progression to the presidency. Research has indicated that African Americans are less likely to experience career progression through the traditional academic progression toward a college presidency (Phelps et al., 1996). A study by Twombly (1987), examined the relationship between types of entry position and the number of years taken to achieve the presidency. The study found that community college presidents are likely to have begun their careers in either administrative or faculty positions. "Those who began in administrative positions appear to have an advantage in taking them fewer years to obtain a presidency" (Twombly, 1987, p. 20). These findings appear to be consistent with the findings of Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) where the most likely previous positions of community college presidents were the provost, followed by president of another community college, and senior academic affairs or instruction officer. According to Boggs (1988), approximately 26% of community college CEOs served as dean prior to becoming president, 24% were vice-president and 16% transferred from another college at which they were presidents.

Research shows that university-based leadership programs are not meeting the needs of faculty members who could serve as future leaders as well they serve administrators. These programs are built on structures and features such as cohorts, structured curricular, course accessibility, research support, adult learning strategies, external program reviews, and on-going program

assessment (AACC, 2006; Friedel, 2010). Strathe and Wislon (2006) have stated the following:

It is imperative for institutions to identify faculty members who can be highly successful administrators, and to nurture and develop them through professional development or GYO leadership programs, and to recognize the contributions they bring to the faculty when they leave the academic ranks. (p. 9)

Academic Preparation

The traditional pathway of educational preparation for the community college presidency includes completion of a terminal degree and completion of a doctorate program. Research indicates that 41% of educational administrators hold a master's degree, 18% hold an Ed.D, and 19% possess a Ph.D. (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002). Of those who possess an Ed.D or Ph.D., the most popular fields of study were higher education administration and educational leadership and other education related fields such as educational policy studies, curriculum and instruction, vocational or occupational education, and student personnel or counseling (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002). Five percent of the approximately 1,220 community college presidents in that study were African American, and of this group 76% held a doctorate degree. Academic preparation, completion of a terminal degree, studies of higher education and community college leadership were ranked among the top five factors that might contribute to recognition as an outstanding leader (Duree, 2007).

Leadership and Diversity

Community colleges have historically provided the greatest access to higher education for women and minorities; however, these institutions have not successfully promoted women and minorities into positions of leadership. Research indicates that 80.7% of college presidents are Caucasian, 8.2% Black/African American, 5.8% Hispanic/Latino, 2.2% Native American, and 1.9% Asian/Pacific Islander (Duree, 2007). African Americans and Hispanics within the presidential ranks do not proportionally reflect the current demographics of the community college student body. Students of color represent approximately 40% of student populations nationwide and even more in some geographic locations such as California, Arizona, and Nevada where the Hispanic/Latino student populations are even higher. Increasing the number of minority leaders may be one way to ensure that institutions are not creating barriers that discourage the advancement of underrepresented populations into leadership positions (Duree, 2007). According to an AACC (2005) survey of college GYO leadership program facilitators, approximately 50% of survey respondents indicated that they purposefully put forth efforts to include as diverse representation of individuals as possible in their programs with regard to gender, ethnicity, race, age, years of employment, and time within current position at the college.

Diversifying the pipeline of potential leaders by recruiting more underrepresented groups such as African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Asian/Pacific Islanders would help community colleges to become more diverse

in all areas of college leadership. College leadership should be sensitive to and aware of the institutional barriers minorities face such as White privilege, oppression, lack of job opportunities, limited mentoring opportunities, restricted exposure to challenging assignments, and training and development activities.

These barriers may be demonstrated in the actions or value systems of board members, community leaders and job selection committee members. There may also be barriers in the minds and value systems of African American community college administrators and others who would consider a presidential role were it perceived as more attainable. (Phelps et al., 1996, p. 21)

As community colleges plan for the future, it is essential that they develop strategies in order to attract diverse groups of talented minorities into the leadership pipeline, including utilizing GYO leadership programs. They must look for ways to prepare educators to work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues and learners from diverse backgrounds (Green, 2008; Townsend, 2009). A 2009 study by the American Council on Education (ACE) found that women and minorities are underrepresented among chief academic officers, and those in the position of chief academic officer are not interested in pursuing a college presidency. The report further concluded that in order to better prepare women and minorities for the presidency, there needs to be more encouragement to complete doctorate programs in an academic discipline as well as increased access to the traditional leadership pipeline careers such as

department chair, dean, and provost (Berliner, Lorden, Palm, Smyer, & Yakoboski, 2009; Bornstein, 2010).

Succession Planning

GYO leadership development programs can play a crucial role in preparing emerging leaders and equipping the pipeline with women and individuals from diverse experiences, backgrounds and cultures. Research by Conger and Fulmer (2003) on the factors that contribute to leaders' success or failure found that companies or organizations that combine the approaches of succession planning with leadership development create a long-term process for managing their talent roster across the organization. This is accomplished by having a focus on leadership development, identifying essential positions for the future, ensuring that the succession planning system is highly transparent, measuring individual progress regularly, and keeping the process as flexible as possible.

Mentoring

There is a growing recognition of the importance of the effect and impact of mentoring on an individual's career advancement. As community colleges have grown both in size and complexity, the awareness of a mentor's importance has grown accordingly among inexperienced community college faculty and administrators who aspire to positions of leadership (Valeau & Boggs, 2004). Mentoring plays a key role in preparing individuals for leadership positions. Fifty-seven percent of respondents to a 2001 AACC survey indicated that a mentor was either valuable or very valuable in helping them obtain their current

presidency. An even higher percentage (62%) indicated that a mentor was either valuable or very valuable in preparing them for everyday challenges and tasks of the presidency (Schultz, 2001). According to Vaughn (2001), once a president selects someone to mentor, that leader should work with the individual until that person satisfactorily completes the program of studies or training designed to groom future leaders. Mentoring is a time-consuming activity, which consists of frequent meetings, conversations, and activities that enhance networking and leadership skills and abilities. For mentoring to be effective, mentors and mentees have to make the time to communicate regularly and work closely together. Although researchers seem to agree that mentoring is very important, very few GYO programs actually incorporate mentoring into the curriculum because of the perceived difficulty in coordinating its activities (Conger & Fulmer, 2003; Piland & Wolf, 2003). A major study by Reilli and Kezar (2010) of 15 existing GYO programs mirrored the best practices for program components that are found in the literature except for mentoring, job shadowing, and team projects. The majority of programs studied included an orientation on the first day, presentations and panels, readings, case studies, and discussions. All formal programs included assessment tools to improve participant's self-awareness and to create individualized professional development plans that were based on the participant's skills, interests, and career goals.

It was important for participants to feel that their time and energies were well spent with someone who needs their expertise and has true potential for leadership. For these reasons, administrators were more likely to

choose a protégé through a GYO program, than to commit to helping someone that they did not know. (Reilli & Kezaer, 2010, p. 70)

Chapter Summary and Future Trends

Community colleges throughout the nation are facing a potential leadership gap and a critical shortage of competent administrators within the next ten years. This is due to impending retirements of college presidents, other senior administrators, and faculty members (Boggs, 2003; Shults, 2001). One of the greatest challenges facing community colleges in the new millennium is filling the leadership pipeline with individuals who possess the necessary skills and traits to be successful and are committed to upholding the community college core mission and values (Duree, 2007). The pending retirements of faculty and leadership of the nation's community colleges can be seen as both a challenge as well as an opportunity. It is an opportunity for emerging leaders to bring in new ideas, new directions, and energy into the community colleges (Boggs, 2003). College presidents and trustees have shown strong support for using the validated AACC competencies as a template for hiring future community college leaders, identifying candidates for succession planning, and designing and improving GYO leadership programs (Hassen et al., 2010; Hornsby, Morrow-Jones, & Ballam, 2012; Plinske, 2008).

While a robust body of literature exists describing the need for GYO leadership programs, there is limited research that comprehensively examines how African American college presidents' experience participating in a GYO leadership program and how the program has helped to shape their perceptions

of leadership practices and impacted their career success. In addition, there are gaps in the literature that addresses African American college president's definition of leadership competency within the context of the recalibrated AACCC leadership skills, which were reported in 2013. These recalibrated competencies have been identified as competencies that are required of all emerging leaders in order to implement radical change in restructuring community colleges and to meet the demands of the future.

This exploratory descriptive study explored the relationship between GYO leadership programs and the career advancement of African American community college presidents who have participated in these programs. This qualitative research approach employed personal interviews and observations in order to gain a better understanding of how presidents value their GYO programs experience and the impact these programs had in shaping their leadership practices, career development, and perspectives of leadership competencies and career success.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Community colleges nationwide are facing an impending crisis because of a gap in the supply of experienced and qualified leaders. The need particularly affects the level of college president. This is primarily due to the impending retirements of college presidents, other senior administrators, and faculty in the near future (AACC, 2013; Shults, 2001; Tekle, 2012). There are an increasing number of baby-boomer generation senior administrators who are approaching the end of their academic careers. These boomers are retiring at a higher rate than the anticipated back-fill rate. Similarly, those individuals who are normally within the leadership pipeline, which would traditionally fill academic leadership positions, are also anticipated to retire with higher than normal rates within the next five years (Boggs, 1998; Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Shults, 2001). Therefore, these future retirements present strong evidence of the impending crisis within the leadership pipeline for higher education and for community colleges in particular.

While significant future opportunities will exist for minority leadership in community colleges, the current percentage of community college presidents does not accurately reflect the racial and ethnic make-up of the student body demographics on most community college campuses (Perrakis, Campbell, & Antonaros, 2009). Those who apply for presidencies and rise through the

administrative ranks tend to be white and male (Vaughn, 2001). Attention needs to be paid toward balancing the racial and ethnic progression within community college administration. Several studies have shown that one of the most effective methods for addressing the anticipated leadership gap, and for preparing future leaders, is through the utilization of GYO Leadership programs (AACC, 2013; Boggs, 2003; Shults, 2001).

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this explorative descriptive study was to understand African American community college presidents' perceptions of their career success, as a result of their experiences in a GYO leadership program. This study described college presidents' perceptions of "self" as it pertains to their experiences in a GYO leadership program, and how this experience has helped to shape their definition of leadership. An expected outcome of this study was to develop comparisons of presidents' perspectives on leadership competencies and skills as presented by the 2013 AACC research report on "recalibrated" leadership competencies.

The research questions that drove this qualitative study were as follows:

1. What aspects of the GYO leadership program contributed most to African American community college presidents and chancellors' career success?
2. How do African American community college presidents and CEOs' respond to the 2013 revised American Association of Community

Colleges (AACC) leadership competencies and leadership practices?

3. What leadership competencies do African American presidents and CEOs feel were most crucial to their career success?

In Chapter 3, I first present the methodology for this study including a discussion of its philosophical foundations. Next, I provide a description of the research design within the selected methodological approach that was used in this study. Following the research design, I detail the specific research methods used in this study. This description includes (a) information about the setting, sample, data collection, including instrumentation and procedure, and (b) data analysis including trustworthiness and the role of the researcher. I conclude with a chapter summary.

Research Methodology

Qualitative research serves as a means to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The research process involves developing open-ended questions, establishing procedures, inductively analyzing data based upon general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009). The major characteristics of this research method include exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon. Qualitative research has the following characteristics:

- Researchers strive to understand the meaning individuals have constructed about their world and their lived experiences (Merriam, 2002).
- Research data is collected in the field or site where the participants experience the issue or the problem to be studied. The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2002). This means the researcher collects the data themselves through examination of documents, observing behaviors or interviewing participants. “The researchers are the ones who actually gather the information. They do not tend to use or rely on interview protocols or instruments developed by other researchers” (Creswell, 2009, p. 175).
- Research is conducted by gathering multiple forms of data such as interviews, observations, and documents, and focus groups rather than on a single data source. The data or information is then reviewed and organized into categories or themes based upon all data sources.
- Qualitative research involves a holistic approach, which involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally outlining the emerging central phenomenon. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).
- Finally, “the product of a qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive. Words and pictures rather than numbers are used to convey what

the researcher has learned about the phenomenon” (Merriam, 2002, p. 5).

The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the researcher generating meaning from the data collected from participants (Creswell, 2009).

Social Constructivist Philosophical Foundation

The philosophical foundations for my research methodology are based on a constructivist worldview. “A constructivist paradigm or worldview assumes that an individual seeks to understand the world in which they live in through the lens of their past experiences, their attitudes, their beliefs, social perspectives, and personal values” (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). My goal as researcher was to rely as much as possible on the research participants’ views of their experiences participating in a GYO leadership program. A constructivist framework makes knowledge claims from multiple meanings of individual experiences and from social or historical constructs with the intent of developing a theory or pattern (Creswell, 2009). The research questions were broad and open-ended to allow the participants to construct meaning of the situation and to share their views. The intent was to derive meaning from participants’ views and perspectives on a problem or situation.

Finally, the social constructivist paradigm is based upon the following assumptions:

- People construct meaning as they engage with the world they are interpreting.

- Individuals engage with their world in order to make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives.
- The basic generation of meaning is inductive, and always rises within a social context out of interactive with other individuals within their environment. “Thus, the researcher generates understanding and meaning from the data collected in the field.” (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 8). Therefore, the researcher seeks to understand the context or setting of the participants, and interprets findings through the lens of their own experiences and background.

Study Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this qualitative research method are as follows:

- Qualitative research allows the researcher to expand their understanding through nonverbal, as well as verbal communications. The information can be processed immediately and provides the researcher the ability to clarify and summarize materials, check with participants for accuracy and correct interpretation, as well as explore unusual and unanticipated results. (Merriam, 2002)
- The qualitative approach provides the opportunity to conduct cross-case comparisons and is useful in describing complex phenomena.
- The qualitative approach provides a deeper understanding and description of personal experiences of phenomena, and it takes into account the personal viewpoints and perspectives of participants.

- Finally, a qualitative approach is especially responsive to local college situations, conditions and participants perspectives.

Weaknesses of the qualitative approach are that the information produced may not be generalized to larger populations. In addition, the information may not be generalized to individuals within other geographic locations or settings. Finally, qualitative research generally takes “more time to collect and analyze the data when compared to quantitative or mixed-methods research” (Creswell, 2012, p. 19).

I believe a qualitative research approach is best suited for this type of research because the study used an inductive research approach and was purposeful in its exploration of African American community college presidents’ perspectives in their participation in a GYO leadership program. “Qualitative methods can be used both to discover what is happening and then to verify what has been discovered” (Patton, 1980, p. 47). Another justification for using a qualitative research approach is that it allows the researcher to learn about the views of individuals in order to generate theories based upon participant perspectives. Qualitative research methodology is best suited for addressing this type of research problem in which you do not know all of the variables and need to explore” (Creswell, 2009, p. 16).

The perspectives and voices of African American community college presidents are important because these individuals are knowledgeable and experienced in employing leadership competencies such as organizational strategic planning, financial planning, communicating internally and externally

with constituent groups, and collaborating with other outside institutions in order to accomplish the goals, mission, and vision of the college or institution. “When participants provide their understandings, they speak from meanings shaped by their social interaction with others and from their own personal histories”

(Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 40). It is the participants’ experience in a GYO leadership program that served as a construct on how this experience had helped to shape their future leadership practices. The desired outcome of this qualitative study was ultimately to provide a robust perspective from African American participants whose voices and perceptions are often missing on the various components of GYO leadership programs.

Research Design

In this section, I describe the specific research methods that were utilized in this qualitative explorative study. Qualitative research may take on a variety of designs or strategies to include basic exploratory qualitative studies, phenomenology, grounded theory, case studies, ethnographic, narrative analysis, and critical qualitative research (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Merriam, 2002). This study used an exploratory descriptive design. The tradition of qualitative methods involves the active involvement of the researcher. This differs quite significantly from that of a quantitative researcher, who engages a classical, experimental scientific approach of collecting numeric data, pre-set interview protocols, trend analysis, and related quantitative methods (Patton, 1980).

Research Methods

In this section, I will describe the specific research methods that I applied to the exploratory descriptive design used in this study. Specifically, I discuss the setting, sample, data collection, data analysis, and the steps taken to ensure trustworthiness.

Setting

The setting for this research study was the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, held October 12-17, 2014 at the Marriott Hotel, City Centre, Oakland, California. The Presidents' Round Table (PRT), an affiliate of the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA) sponsored the institute. The NCBAA is an affiliate council of the AACC and is designed:

to prepare senior-level executives for positions as community college presidents, chancellors and chief executive officers. The Institute has graduated the highest number of African Americans who have gone on to CEO positions over any other leadership institute in the United States.

(Presidents' Round Table Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, 2013, p.1)

The Lakin Institute provided both formal and informal experiential learning opportunities in the areas of employment preparation, accreditation, strategic planning, budget and financial planning, diversity and equity, board of trustees relations, human resources, media and community relations, and other areas pertinent to community college leadership. Candidates selected to participate in the institute were nominated by their chief executive officer and serve in the

position of college president or were positioned to assume the role of CEO or equivalent as their next position at the time of the study.

This particular program was selected as a research setting because of its abundant representation of African American college presidents and CEOs of education institutions from across the United States. The Lakin Institute has a reputation for being an established and effective GYO leadership program for African American community college leaders for more than 15 years ("The Thomas Lakin Institute Fact Sheet," 2013). In addition, participants of the Lakin Institute come from a variety of demographic backgrounds including age, gender, socioeconomic, geographic area, single-campus and multi-college campuses from across the United States.

Sample

I used purposeful sampling to select interviewees from participants attending the Lakin Institute who had participated in a GYO leadership program. "Purposeful sampling is used as a strategy when one wants to learn something and come to understand something about certain select cases without needing to generalize to all such cases" (Patton, 1980, p. 100). Homogeneous sampling was undertaken to ensure that the pool of participants included African American college presidents with a range of seniority in their positions from emerging leaders with less than three years of experience, to new CEO's with at least three years of experience, to seasoned CEO's who had been in their positions for three or more years. This range of experience levels within the ranks of CEOs helped

to inform this study on how their perceptions of leadership success progressed along a leadership continuum.

Homogeneous sampling was also utilized to select college presidents and CEOs who had participated in GYO leadership programs through AACC affiliated councils, university and local colleges, state and regional programs, and residential institutes. “In homogeneous sampling the researcher purposefully samples individuals or sites based on membership in a subgroup that has defining characteristics” (Creswell, 2012, p. 208). The one-on-one interviews were conducted with African American college presidents and CEOs at the Marriott Hotel, Centre City, Oakland, California.

I conducted a review of the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership documents in advance of the site visit. These documents included, but were not limited to, program guides and catalogues, website postings, records of past Lakin program participants from 2009 to 2014, documents of the history of The President’s Round Table, and the President’s Round Table membership directories from the years 2009 through 2013.

The 2013 Presidents’ Round Table membership directory was obtained from a Lakin Institute Program Director in order to identify currently sitting African American college presidents’ and CEOs. Potential research participants at the Institute were cross-referenced with the Presidents’ Round Table, *Directories of African American CEOs and Leaders between the years of 2009-2013*, to identify those individuals currently serving as a community college president or chief executive officer. Approximately 96 individuals were listed in the President’s

Round Table Membership Directory (2013a) by name, title, affiliated institution, and other related background information. Therefore, I invited sitting college presidents' and chief executive officers' to participate in this study.

Invitations were sent to PRT members inviting them to participate in the research study including information about the research and its potential importance to community college GYO leadership program (see Appendix A). No incentives other than confidential contributions to the research were offered for participation in the research. Telephone calls were made to members of the Presidents' Round Table that consisted of a brief introduction and explanation of how I gained access to the participant's name, and a brief explanation of the research project. The purpose of the initial telephone contact was: (a) to inform potential participants of the background nature of the study; (b) to determine whether potential participants would be interested in participating; and (c) to lay the ground work for the mutual respect necessary for the interview process. Another purpose for the telephone contact was to assess the appropriateness of a participant for the study (Seidman, 2013). The number of study participants was 12 individuals who participated in one-on-one interviews, and 8 individuals who participated in a focus group interaction, which ensured both the breadth and depth of the data collection. Participants completed a consent form prior to the beginning of the one-on-one interview meeting (see Appendix B). Finally, interview appointment confirmation letters were sent to research participants confirming the date and time of their scheduled interview appointment (see Appendix C).

Data Collection and Management

The data collection phase for this study took place at The Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. The data collection activities included both one-on-one interviews and a focus group interaction. According to Creswell (2009), “the qualitative researcher will collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue of problem under study” (p. 175). This is done through various methods of data gathering such as interviews, observation and documents.

This study included a combination of qualitative strategies. These strategies included interviews, focus group, content analysis, and a questionnaire to analyze participants based upon criteria such as job classification, gender, educational degree, years of employment within the position of college president or chief executive officer, and total years in educational leadership. One-on-one interviews are usually associated with qualitative studies and involve a data collection process where the researcher asks questions to and records the responses of one participant at a time (Creswell, 2012). This type of data collection method is ideal for interviewing participants who are expressive, articulate, and who are comfortable sharing their thoughts, perceptions and ideas.

Focus groups have the advantage of enabling the researcher to gain a variety of perspectives from participants within a relatively short period of time. According to Creswell (2012), “a focus group interview is the process of collecting data through interviews with a group of participants, typically four to six

individuals” (Creswell, 2012, p. 218). However, one possible limitation of the focus group interview is the possibility of a few participants dominating the feedback session. The challenge for the researcher is to ensure that there is equity of feedback among all focus group participants.

The first step in data analysis is to conduct a preliminary exploratory analysis of the data (Creswell, 2012). Interview and observational notes are explored to obtain a general sense of the data. The content analysis phase of this study included organizing the data into files, source tables, and charts. Interviews were then transcribed by converting audio tape recordings into text data. Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis computer program was utilized to store, organize, and assign labels or codes to the data. According to Creswell (2012), “the object of the coding process is to make sense of the data text, divide it into segments, label the segments with codes, examine the codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapse these codes into broader themes” (p. 243).

Instrumentation. This research was conducted by gathering data from multiple sources such as one-on-one interviews, directories, and GYO leadership program documentation such as curriculum, forms, projects, and focus group feedback. The data were reviewed and organized into categories or themes based upon all data sources.

Participants in this study were asked to participate in either a one-on-one interview or a focus group interaction based upon their lived experiences as African American community college presidents. The semistructured interview questionnaire (see Appendix D) was used to guide the one-on-one interviews

and provided demographic information, allowing the researcher to identify common characteristics of the participants. The focus group participants completed a consent form prior to the beginning of the focus group interaction meeting (see Appendix E). Focus group confirmation letters were sent to research participants confirming the date and time of the scheduled focus group interaction meeting (see Appendix F). The focus group protocol (see Appendix G) was used to guide the focus group interaction.

Data collection procedures. The data collection phase of this study occurred between the months of August 2014 and October 2014. The documents consisted of responses to the survey, transcripts of face-to-face interviews, and transcripts of the focus group. Using different data sources, I triangulated the results by corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection. This ensured greater accuracy, and data reliability, because the study relied upon multiple sources of information, individuals and processes (Creswell, 2012).

Interviews. Merriam (2002) postulated, “the interview is the primary method of data collection wherein one attempts to uncover the essence, the invariant structure, and the meaning of an experience” (p. 93). The purpose of interviews is to allow the researcher to better understand the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2013). In this study, the central purpose of the interviews was to engage in dialogue with participants in order to elicit their perceptions of themselves and their experiences in a GYO leadership program. This explorative descriptive study

used a semi-structured interview approach that utilized open-ended questions.

These questions included the following: What led you to seek a college presidency or CEO position?

1. Have you ever participated in a GYO leadership program? If so, please describe your experience.
2. What aspects of the GYO program do you feel attributed most to your career success?
3. What impact did participating in a GYO leadership program have in shaping your leadership practices?
4. How do you define leadership? How has your participation in a GYO leadership program helped to define your perception of leadership?
5. What do you consider to be key leadership competencies for emerging leaders? Why?
6. What specific barriers did you encounter in your accession to the college presidency (personal, or institutional)?
7. What personal attributes do you feel contributed most to your career success?
8. What effect, if any, has networking had on your career success?
9. As you reflect on your career, what if anything would you do differently and why

The interview protocol was tested with a sample group of peers, in order to clarify wording, and to reduce interviewer bias. Twelve (12) one-on-one interviews

were conducted that lasted approximately 60 minutes each (see Table 1). The one-on-one interviews were each audio recorded for accuracy and recall of the interview discussion and the dialogue.

Table 1

Personal Interviews

Name	Title	Years in Position	Years in Educational Leadership	Education	College Location (U.S. Region)
Helen Greer	Chancellor	10	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Bill Evans	President	3	20+	D.D.S.	Northeastern
Edward Veer	Chancellor	3	15	Ed.D.	Southern
Frank Smith	Superintendent/ President	3	18	Ed.D.	Western
Gayle Moss	Chancellor	3	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Sue Perkins	President	5	20+	Ed.D.	Southwestern
Lynn Green	Chancellor	5	18	Ed.D.	Western
Sarah Franklin	Chancellor	5	18	J.D.	Eastern
Ella Jones	President	3	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Walter Owens	President	5	13	Ph.D.	Southern
Anna Graham	President	10	20+	Ed.D.	Northeastern
Ann Thomas	President	10	20+	Ph.D.	Southwestern

Note. One-on-one interviews were conducted with college presidents and CEOs with positional experience of at least three years in their positions. Names are pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the participants and integrity of the research process.

Focus group. Utilizing a focus group can be advantageous when the time frame for collecting data is limited. The focus group also has the advantage of offering the ability to collect shared understanding from the group on a particular phenomenon as well as obtaining the views and opinions of specific individuals. “The focus group also offers the opportunity to elicit several

viewpoints of shared understanding, as well as individual perspectives” (Creswell, 2012, p. 218).

A focus group interaction was conducted on October 17, 2014 during the 2014 Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. The focus group meeting included 8 participants and lasted for 90 minutes. Participants were homogeneously sampled from a listing provided by a Lakin Program Director to include African American college presidents and CEOs with positional experience ranging between three to 20 or more years. The objective of the focus group meeting was to elicit participants’ perceptions of the necessary leadership competencies for future leaders as compared with the re-calibrated leadership competencies delineated in the 2013 AACC report on the competencies for community college leaders. The focus group meeting was audio recorded in order to obtain an accurate record of the discussion and the dialogue. Participants completed a consent form prior to the beginning of the focus group meeting (see Appendix D). Participants were initially informed as to the nature of the study, the length of the focus group meeting, how the results would be used, and the availability of the summary data once the research is completed. Finally, a confirmation letter was sent to participants confirming the date and time of their scheduled interview appointment (see Appendix E). Table 2 provides demographic information about the participants who participated in the focus group.

Table 2

Focus Group Participants

Name	Title	Years in Position	Years in Educational Leadership	Education	College Location (U.S. Region)
Ann Thomas	President	7-10	20+	Ph.D.	Southwest
Charles Melon	Chancellor	4-6	15	Ed.D.	Western
David Ellis	Chancellor	7-10	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Helon Kirton	President	4-6	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Marshal Kirton	President	4-6	20+	Ph.D.	Western
Percy Moore	Chancellor	-10	20+	Ed.D.	Western
Regina Shaw	President	4-6	20+	Ed.D.	Western
Rose Simpson	President	4-6	18	Ed.D.	Southern

Note. Focus Group consisted of African American college presidents and chancellors with a minimum of five (5) years experience in a CEO position. All names are pseudonyms for privacy purposes

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The process of data analysis may take the shape of several different components. “The process of data analysis involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting the analysis, obtaining a deeper understanding of the data, representing the data and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2009, p. 183). The methodology of this research involved transcribing interviews, reading, organizing, and preparing transcribed interviews, typing field notes, and sorting and arranging the data into different categories. After the data was prepared for analysis, I attempted to derive a general sense or meaning from the described lived experiences of the participants as it pertains to the investigated experiences of this study. I engaged a process to analyze and code the data using the Dedoose qualitative analysis software program to aide in

the extraction of pertinent information. This research study also used methods and procedures of Creswell (2012). The specific steps recommended by Creswell (2012) are (a) organizing the data, transcribing the interviews, and typing field notes, (b) conducting a preliminary analysis of the data in order to gain a general sense of the meaning or meanings of statements, (c) coding the data relevant to the experience and the perceptions of participants, and (d) Interpreting the findings. Research is built upon patterns, categories and themes from the bottom up. This inductive process illustrates working back and forth between themes and the database until a comprehensive set of emerging trends is established.

Procedures to ensure trustworthiness. To ensure trustworthiness of the findings several colleagues were providing with an opportunity to read interview transcripts, review selected excerpts, assess coding of themes, and check initial analysis.

Steps were taken to obtain permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), to protect the privacy rights of the participants. Documentation such as the approval letter from the IRB as well as other documentation was made available to all participants in the study based upon request. In addition, caution at all times was exercised in order to protect the individual identities of the research participants and their respective educational institutions, by assigning pseudonyms or by withholding descriptors which would lead to the identification of participants, their worksites or institutions.

Role of the researcher. I am directly connected to the Presidents' Round Table through serving as a national board member of the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA). This board relationship afforded me access to and support from the Presidents' Round Table and past participants of the Lakin Institute for research purposes. Prior to the interviews, I explored my personal experiences in order to become aware of any prejudices, viewpoints, and assumptions. "These prejudices and assumptions [were] then bracketed, or set aside, so as not to unjustifiably influence the interview process" (Merriam, 2002, p. 94).

I have more than 20 years of human resources administrative experience in both the public and private sectors, with 15 years being in higher education. Areas of expertise include staff and professional development, staff diversity and equity program management, recruitment and staffing, labor relations, and community relations. I am also a board member of the NCBAA and a former graduate of the NCBAA Leadership Institute, which is a co-sponsored program of the President's Round Table's Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. Because of my prolonged interaction with the college presidents and CEOs, I acknowledged that there is a strong possibility that I may have adopted some of the beliefs or even become an advocate for the ideas of the participants.

Chapter Summary

This study used an exploratory descriptive approach to explore the career perspectives of African American community college presidents who have participated in a GYO leadership program. This exploration focused on their

perceptions of their experiences in a GYO leadership program within the context of today's institutional and organizational challenges for college presidents. This study described college presidents' perceptions of self as it pertains to their experiences in a GYO leadership program and how this experience has helped to shape their definition of leadership. Conducting this research involved developing open-ended questions, establishing procedures, inductively analyzing data based upon general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009). Purposeful sampling was used to select participants in this study from African American college presidents and CEOs attending in the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. Participants also had previously participated in a GYO leadership program. Homogeneous sampling was undertaken to ensure that the pool of participants included African American college presidents with a range of seniority in their positions from emerging leaders with 1-3 years of experience, to new CEO's with 4-6 years of experience, to seasoned CEO's who have been in their positions for 20 or more years.

Chapter 4 will present the results from research gathered from one-on-one and focus group interviews

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study explored the relationship between GYO leadership programs and the career advancement of African American presidents and CEOs who participated in these programs. This study also explored the impact of a GYO leadership program on African American presidents and CEOs personal career development, success, leadership practices, and what they perceived as crucial leadership competencies for current and emerging leaders. The research methodology used to address questions in this study was qualitative, and an exploratory descriptive design was applied. This strategy of research inquiry identifies the essence of human experiences relating to a central phenomenon as described by participants (Creswell, 2009). This strategy of inquiry best fit this study because it provides a greater and deeper understanding of the lived experiences of African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO leadership program. Data gathering, analysis, and interpretation were accomplished through qualitative research methods and procedures (Creswell, 2012). The data collection activities included both one-on-one interviews, focus group interactions, transcribing interviews, reading, organizing and preparing transcribed interviews, and sorting and arranging data into different categories. I analyzed and coded the data using Dedoose qualitative analysis software to aide in the extraction of pertinent information.

This chapter describes the participants and presents the research questions that formed the foundation for this study, the significant findings from the study, unanticipated results, and a summary of the findings.

Participants

The participants in this study were 13 African American college presidents and 6 African American chancellors who attended The Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership and served as either program presenters or facilitators during the week of October 12-17, 2014 in San Francisco, California. Of the 19 participants, 12 were female and 8 were male. This Institute is designed to prepare senior-level executives for positions as community college presidents, chancellors, and chief executive officers. This particular program was selected as a research setting because of its abundant representation of African American college presidents and CEOs, and its accessibility to African American community college presidents from various educational institutions across the United States. The data collection activities included one-on-one interviews with 12 African American college presidents with three to more than 20 years of experience in their positions. The data collection activities also included a focus group interaction with eight African American community college presidents and chancellors, with a minimum of five years to more than 20 years of experience in their position as a college president or chancellor.

Research Questions and Findings

The following research questions formed the foundation to determine how African American community college presidents and CEOs describe their career success post-participation in a GYO leadership program.

1. What aspects of the GYO leadership program contributed most to African American community college presidents and chancellors' career success?
2. How do African American community college presidents and chancellors respond to the 2013 revised American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) leadership competencies and leadership practices?
3. What leadership competencies did African American community college presidents and chancellors feel were most crucial to their career success?

Four themes emerged from the research. These themes were as follows: (a) job and career preparation strategies and techniques, (b) networking with colleagues and peers, (c) mentoring, and (d) relationship building.

Findings for the First Research Question

The first research question asked what aspects of the GYO leadership program contributed most to African American community college presidents and CEOs career success. The findings from the first research question identified three emerging themes: (a) job and career preparation skills, (b) financial and budgetary acumen, and (c) networking and mentor relationships.

Job and career preparation skills. The research revealed that job and career preparation aspects of a GYO program had a crucial impact on the career success of college presidents and CEOs. Job preparation components and activities of GYO programs can include preparing letters of application, simulated job interview and feedback sessions, resume preparation, and role-playing scenarios. All 12 one-on-one interview participants and the 8 focus group participants agreed that the job preparation and career development component of GYO programs were extremely important to their career success. Topics within this section included job search techniques, developing letters of application, resume writing, mock interviews with feedback, and appropriate appearance and dress. The participants reported that professional search consultants on occasion worked with GYO participants to provide them with insight into how they work with job candidates and boards of trustees, and provided information about the inner workings of the recruitment, interviewing, and job placement processes. One college president of an East Coast based community college reported that consultants often informed participants on how candidates are screened, what to expect in a job interview, and how to craft an effective resume and cover letter. According to this president:

Because what people are looking for is a leader, and how you're going to lead really needs to shine through in that interview process. So that program contributed a lot to my current success. (S. Franklin, interview participant, October 14, 2014)

Participants felt that it was career preparation experiences provided in GYO programs that better prepared them for an opportunity for a promotion when the occasion materialized. Several participants found the career preparation component to be extremely valuable because it offered them an opportunity to prepare letters of application, resumes, and to engage in one-on-one mock interviews. Many also participated in different scenarios based upon real-life problems and practices that college president's experience.

I think the readiness for presidency, knowing when you're ready, and having the repeated participation in letters of application, interviewing skills, and going through mock interviews helps to prepare you for the initial phase of the written application. If you get past the written, then you have a face-to-face interview. How you get through the face-to-face, what you need to do, how you communicate, and knowing the appropriate questions to ask—it was through those experiences, that better prepared me for what to do when I had that opportunity. (W. Bill Evans, interview participant, October 16, 2014)

The participants reported the experiences gained within the job and career preparation component gave them valuable insights into strategies, methods, and techniques for building and leveraging internal and external networks, which included leaders and colleagues who may have connections to career opportunities or knowledge of the inner workings of other institutions. Networks were considered extremely valuable assets that could be used as career opportunities become available.

Financial and budgetary acumen. The findings from the research suggested that college finance, budgeting, and fundraising activities were other components of a GYO program that contributed to the success of the participants. Specifically, participants mentioned the following topics as being important: understanding institutional budgets, budget monitoring, budget planning, institutional finance and sources of revenue, fundraising, and the role of college foundations. This knowledge was described as critical to the success of emerging leaders.

I think probably the one thing that contributed the most to my career success was understanding the importance of, and knowing budgets; knowing the finances; knowing how things work; knowing how to navigate your way through that process, and how to ask questions to get more information. To me that was a huge bulk of what we do on campus by understanding the budget, and keeping things straight. (L. Green, Interview participant, October 13, 2014)

Another important aspect of the budget and finance process as described by focus group participants was the process of the organizational audit and the importance of understanding internal and external audit processes. Focus group members reported one of the components of GYO programs that is missing is in the area of financial and operational audits. They postulate that the GYO curriculum needs to incorporate more on how to effectively interact with auditors, how to understand the role of auditors, and how to respond to their roles. Furthermore, this study suggests that there is a serious gap in addressing the

whole notion of community college finances and the structures of finances within GYO leadership programs.

You want to understand the institutional landscape regarding fundraising.

You also want to understand what shape the institution is in financially, because people will paint a glowing picture, and then you get there and pull back the cover and see that it's rotten underneath, and that's a real issue. So financials and budgets, I think, are very, very important. And how you budget is also very important. (S. Franklin, interview participant, October 14, 2014)

Participants believed that more emphasis should be placed not only on expenditures, revenue structures, revenue sourcing, and enrollment management, but also on the macro view of finances in higher education as a whole. As described by a chancellor of a multi-campus college district:

The whole notion of community college finances, not budgeting, but the whole structure of finance—there is a serious gap in our Grow Your Own programs. Not just how to expend money, revenue structures, revenue sourcing, and not just growing more students and charging more tuition, but the whole notion of finance in higher education is a gamble, and needs more emphasis in GYO programs. (D. Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Networking relationships. College presidents and CEOs also described networking as having a crucial impact on their career success. Some described networking as a very powerful and effective tool for meeting with, interacting with,

sharing information with colleagues and peers. Networking provided opportunities to learn about job opportunities, diverse educational environments, various leadership styles, and to gain information on approaches to common institutional problems or issues. The 12 one-on-one interview participants and 8 focus group participants concurred that networking and establishing mentor relationships were very important topics in a leadership development program. They expressed that networking and mentorship has had a significant impact on their career success. Networking was described as a very powerful tool that provided exposure to different people, different environments, and different leadership styles.

I wouldn't be where I am without networking. When I applied for both the presidency position and the chancellor position, I called on my mentors and I asked them, what about this? My mentor shared interview questions that he had accumulated over the years; questions that were asked of him when he went through and applied for presidency. That was a tremendous help. He also told me the pitfalls of colleges or institutions: you don't want to go there, don't apply there. Other colleagues in my network did the same thing. (G. Moss, interview participant, October 16, 2014)

The participants emphasized the effectiveness of networking in improving their ability to make important connections regarding job opportunities, job referrals, personal references, and peer dialogue. They also placed high value on the ability to engage and interact with peers and colleagues from across the United

States. Many attributed their personal career success to their networks. One participant from a community college in the Northeast reported:

In the Grow Your Own Programs you meet a cohort of professionals, and we do stay connected and share thoughts and ideas with each other, at least in the one or two years after you finish a program. As that number expands, the Grow Your Own Program offers you a rich group of persons that you can get to know and share as peer colleagues and persons with expertise that you may want to tap sometime in the future to ask questions or to get guidance. (W. Evans, interview participant, October 13, 2014)

An important phenomenon that emerged in the study was that several college presidents had created, and used their own “personal advisory boards” or “community advisory networks.” One participant from a community college located in the southern United States established what he considered a “microcosm of the larger society,” which was represented demographically along the lines of race, socio-economics, and ethnicity. He personally selected individuals from various groups (i.e., the Black community, Hispanic community, Asian community, LGBT community, as well as others from socio-economic and political backgrounds) to serve as his “community advisory network.” This president stated, “I need to be able to identify the folks that can help me learn that community, mainly so that I can gain a better perspective of that sub-group, within the context of the larger community, which our college serves” (E. Veer, Interview participant, October 14, 2014). Another participant from a community college located in the southern United States created what he described as a

“personal board.” He identified four or five individuals based upon their professional backgrounds to become a part of his personal board. These individuals met four to five times a year to discuss not only career or work related issues but also various aspects of their personal lives. His Personal Board would also serve as a means for discussing both personal and professional issues in a mutually safe, confidential, and trusting environment. This participant stated:

The reason that I think that's important is because when you're at the top, you don't really have folks you can talk to. So this “personal board” may be individuals in the business profession, or legal profession, or the education profession that I can connect with and basically build that relationship which will allow me to improve to be a better husband, a better father, better leader, and person. So networking is critical. (W. Owens, interview participant, October 13, 2014)

Furthermore, another president of a community college located in the southern United States, described what she called her “own committee,” which is comprised of several trusted colleagues who provide her with the opportunity to seek their advice and opinion. Particularly when faced with a crisis or difficult leadership situation, she relies upon her “own committee” for advice and feedback prior to making an executive decision or taking action. (S. Perkins, interview participant, October 16, 2014)

Mentoring relationships. College presidents and CEOs described a mentor as a valued and trusted colleague and advisor who provides career guidance, career exposure, career path advice, and serves as a strong role

model. Mentoring relationships could be established through a formal mentorship program or informally. The majority of the participants in the interview process provided feedback from their personal perspective while the focus group participants provided feedback from an organizational or institutional perspective. This occurred particularly in regards to their lived experiences in a GYO leadership program and the effects that the mentoring component had on their career success.

Someone saw a potential in me and encouraged me to consider an executive leadership position, and they helped guide me through a variety of leadership programs, provided me with expanded abilities to engage in projects and presentations, to build skills, and to increase my awareness, to share and get first-hand experience, and suggested paths for me to follow up until the actual appointment as president. So it was a mentor that saw my potential, provided guidance through leadership programs, and recommended that I seek out experiences in different positions at different colleges. (W. Evans, interview participant, October 13, 2014)

The role of a mentor was described as someone who helped guide emerging leaders through a variety of leadership programs. They provide expanded opportunities to engage in various work related projects and presentations, including skill building, and helped to provide suggested career pathways.

Focus group feedback revealed that mentors increased awareness and understanding of institutional prerogatives and how to engage the organization from a management perspective. Furthermore, mentors serve as a beacon for

political, professional, and instructional navigation. One college president from an East Coast college expressed:

Thomas Lakin Institute was a combination of three things. It gave me political navigation; it gave me the professional and instructional navigation, but it also had the cultural component that made it life changing for me. So the components of it that I used, that I believe most contributed to my success was, its mentoring component. (A. Graham, interview participant, October 16, 2014)

Of particular importance to African American college presidents and CEOs was the notion of having the ability to interact with, to share, and to dialogue with other African Americans in the system. One president from a community college located in the Northeastern United States described her mentor relationship as not only a teaching and mentoring relationship but also as one where senior African American leaders could also validate them during times of uncertainty. She stated, “Often, new African American presidents were unsure as to whether or not we were making the right administrative or personal decisions; or taking the appropriate administrative actions.” She indicated her mentors would encourage her and support her in the confidence that she had the ability to lead it her own way. She concluded, “So that’s why this particular leadership is so important” (A. Graham, Interview participant, October 16, 2014).

Focus group participants also gave similar importance to having African American leaders as their role models. They described access to African American CEOs as having access “to people who looked like me” as well as

being very successful, effective and impactful. They were able to connect to those individuals for advice and guidance as they navigated through different political, social, and organizational issues (C. Melon, D. Ellis, H. Kirton, P. Moore, M. Harris, R. Simpson, & A. Thomas, focus group participants, October 17, 2014).

Findings for the Second Research Question

The second research question asked how leaders respond to the revised AACC leadership competencies, and recommended leadership practices. Feedback from both the one-on-one interviews and the focus group interactions with community college presidents and CEOs validated the importance of the revised AACC 2013 competencies for community college leaders. These competencies include: (a) organizational strategy; (b) institutional finance (c) research, fundraising, and resource management; (d) communication; (e) collaboration; and (f) community college advocacy. However, the findings from this study suggest that some GYO programs do not place enough emphasis on competencies such as media relations, communications, and soft skills, as components of a GYO leadership program. The findings for the second research question revealed four emerging themes that revealed how African American presidents' respond to the 2013 revised AACC competencies for community college leaders and recommended leadership practices. These themes included (a) media relations, (b) political acumen, (c) soft skills, and (d) relationship building.

Media Relations. A focus group participant from a northern California community college described her experience in a weeklong communications program that provided training and guidance on how to engage the media in both print and television. The program was facilitated by professional journalist in the mass-media communications industry and emphasized the importance of communicating clearly, concisely, and effectively with the media. This president highly valued the experience, which included extensive exercises on conducting television interviews, feedback on video presentations, as well as advice on grooming and personal appearance. The participant reported the following media training experience:

They gave us specific feedback, and training, so that in the end we left there with the video of a successful media presentation and a successful interview on television. And I think that the Grow Your Own programs really could focus more on strengthening those communications competencies by having media relations incorporated in their programs.

(R. Shaw, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Political acumen. One focus group participant, a chancellor of a relatively large community college district, described political acumen as “having the ability to understand the various political nuances of an environment that allows you to advance a cause without having to be mostly political” (D. Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014). According to the participant, there are multiple governance structures in an organization, particularly at a community college. The participant reported that leaders must know how to engage those

governance structures without being basically political about that engagement. An interview participant and chancellor of a large multi-campus district stated that understanding the political dynamics of your community is vital and invaluable because the majority of your community will not look like you or have an African American perspective. Therefore, if a president does not understand the political ramifications of that, then it will be very difficult to successfully navigate particular political situations.

One participant from a central California community college district reported that one of the key leadership competencies for merging leaders is having political awareness, not just in understanding budgets, but possessing a political awareness and understanding of their educational community. “Emerging leaders need to know their communities, and not just the African American community, but the entire community in which they work” (L. Green, Interview participant, October 13, 2014).

Soft skills. There are assortments of soft skills that within the context of this study include sub-categories of the AACC leadership competencies of communication and collaboration. These soft skills include the ability to interact effectively with other people, to develop collaborative relationships, to work in teams, and to handle difficult, stressful or sensitive situations with tact and diplomacy. Focus group members’ emphasized those soft skills as extremely important for leadership success and indicated that they are often overlooked in GYO programs.

I'd say the thing that's probably overlooked the most in GYO programs is developing their soft skills. The thing that makes or breaks you and allows situations is not whether or not you know how to budget but can you interact with people? There are a whole series of soft skills that are crucial to success. And I rarely ever see those as part of a Grow Your Own program. (P. Moore, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Additional feedback considered the notion of the importance of soft skills in determining a CEO's success with philanthropic or fundraising efforts for their institution. For example, focus group participants describe the utilization of soft skills as crucial to a president's fundraising efforts and for successful connections with potential donors or supporters. "Soft skills are seen as necessary in the building confidence and trust, so that potential donors would be willing to entrust their support or funds to your institution. And development and fundraising is a specific competency that CEOs really need to have." (H. Kirton, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Relationship building. Relationship building was another sub-theme that emerged among African American presidents and CEOs as compared to those identified by the AACCC (2013) competencies for collaboration. Relationship building within the context of this study includes the described personal relationships and experiences of college presidents and CEOs and the importance of building mutually beneficial relationships with peers and colleagues. The participants saw relationships as being based upon mutual trust, personal integrity, shared core values, and mindsets of mutual respect.

Relationship building was also seen as closely related to networking.

Participants described both relationship building and networking as extremely important in their efforts to establish the trust and confidence to effectively connect with the people who seek their guidance. A focus group president concurred with the importance of relationship building: “I mean, at the end of the day it’s all about relationships. You’re in the community, and especially in the world we’re living in now, collaboration and partnerships with business and industry in terms of jobs and internships is very important” (R. Shaw, focus group participant, October 17, 2014).

Findings for the Third Research Question

The third research question asked what leadership competencies African American presidents felt were most crucial to their career success. The findings for the third research question resulted in the emergence of three themes that addressed issues that were most crucial to the career success of African American community college presidents and CEOs. These themes included: (a) personal attributes which presidents felt led to their success; (b) personal leadership styles, which characterize and exemplify leadership strategies that presidents felt were most crucial to their success; and (c) personal values, ethics, and beliefs.

Personal attributes. A prevalent competency that African American presidents attributed to their career success was their ability to communicate effectively and to engage in honest, open dialogue with their faculty, staff, managers, and key stakeholders in their communities. Participants perceived

that good oral and written communication skills and communication styles must frequently take into account the particular needs and perspectives of the diverse communities that they serve, specifically in regard to race, ethnicity, socio-economic, and political affiliations. One college president described the notion of having the competency to be like a chameleon: “And by that I mean, operating in your own culture as African Americans, but you have the main stream culture that you have to take into account and operate in, and sometimes African American leaders have a difficult time adjusting to the requirements of an environment that can often times be hostile (S. Franklin, interview participant, October 14, 2014). Several presidents responded that leaders should create an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, ideas or opinions without retribution and that leaders should exhibit behaviors that affirms their value and respect for the opinion of others. Furthermore, several presidents felt that people made stereotypical assumptions of them as leaders; therefore, they had to work twice as hard and show others that they can have faith in their decisions and trust their leadership. One president expounded on this idea: “When I first started this job I was the first person there and the last person to leave, intentionally. I wanted the folks at the institution to know that I’m one of the hardest working folks on campus” (W. Owens, interview participant, October 17, 2014).

Many presidents’ espoused that emerging leaders must have a comprehensive understanding of the community college as a whole, which included components such as budget and finance, human resources,

participatory governance, and the mission of their intuitions. However, these presidents also felt that emerging leaders must possess passion, persistence, focus, and deliberation in their efforts to become competent and successful leaders. One participant indicated, “communication skills, interpersonal communications, and the ability to articulate a cogent vision, to garner the support of individuals in order to carryout that vision; these are the competencies needed of emerging leaders.” (G. Moss, Interview participant, October 17, 2014)

Leadership vision and goals. A leader’s ability to provide a clear vision and direction that inspires and brings results was a critical leadership competency that emerged from the research. A leader’s vision brings people together and influences them in ways that motivated them to accomplish the goals that the leader sets out to accomplish. According to one college president, leadership is having the ability to execute shared goals. Several participants in the study postulated that a leader must first have a clear vision in order to be effective in goal setting. Participants’ revealed that leaders must receive support from key stakeholders on shared goals. Furthermore, participants felt that a leader’s effectiveness is determined by their ability to execute shared goals. One participant stated: “Implicit in the term leadership is the understanding that the leader has followers. In order to have followers, leaders must have buy-in, and in order to have buy-in people must see some benefit to the whole as an outcome of their buy in to the shared goal” (G. Moss, interview participant, October 17, 2014). Both focus group participants and one-on-one interview participants corroborated the importance of having a clear vision, purpose and mission, which

served and undergirded their leadership styles. One participant from a community college located in the Northeastern United States reported:

Leadership in simple terms is having the ability to provide a vision that inspires and yields results. And that takes multiple qualities to do. You have to have a vision, you know how to inspire, you know how to engage, you know how to guide to get the results, and that person feels confident to follow you. (W. Evans, Interview participant, October 13, 2014)

Personal values, beliefs, and ethics. Living one's personal values and beliefs was critically important to African American presidents and CEOs. Presidents expressed that they come from a rich heritage of great leaders and they were proud to represent and to be a part of that tradition of great leadership. Much of their belief and value system was grounded on principles such as Sankofa. Sankofa is an Akan courtly word of Ghana, West Africa, which means to return and retrieve (Temple, 2010), and is based on the principle that African Americans must go back and reclaim their past so that they can understand how and why they became who they are today.

One focus group participant from a southern California community college district emphasized the importance of "how we clarify our values, not only for ourselves but also for your intended audience. He further stated that values are extremely important, so that others know who you are: "Your truth should come through at all times, an authenticity about the individual which ought to be on full display" (D. Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014). Another focus group participant revealed the following:

Well, you know, the thing that I think is extremely important, especially when you get to the presidency, you have to know who you are, and what is your value system, and be clear about what you will and will not do. I think that's important. (A. Thomas, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Significant Findings

The most significant findings of this study revealed that networking, mentoring, and relationship building had a significant impact on the career success of African American presidents and CEOs. The research further suggests that this is particularly true for participants' lived experiences in a GYO leadership program. Several African American presidents suggested that one GYO leadership program in particular, the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, provided them with political, professional, and instructional navigation experiences that were undergirded by a cultural construct. Furthermore, participants in the program reported that it offered an extraordinary opportunity to meet, interact, and to network with senior-level African American community college presidents and CEOs from across the United States.

In addition, participants indicated that programs such as the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership that have a mentoring component often played a key role in preparing them for a leadership position. Participants revealed that a mentor was not only influential in their decision to seek a college presidency, but a mentor was also extremely valuable in helping them manage the many challenges of a college presidency. Relationship building was another important

aspect of the leaders' success. Presidents reported that relationship building was closely tied to both mentoring and networking and that true networking and mentoring were not possible without mutually agreed upon relationship foundations such as honesty, integrity, trust, and respect.

The research further revealed that African American community college presidents and CEOs corroborated the findings of the AACC's 2013 report on the framework for leadership competencies such as: (a) organizational strategy; (b) institutional finance, research, fundraising, and resources management; (c) communications; (d) collaboration; and (e) community college advocacy. Furthermore, the research revealed presidents' placed just as much significance on the impact networking, mentoring, and relationship building had on their career trajectory.

Unanticipated Results

Findings from this study revealed several emerging themes that impacted the leadership effectiveness and the leadership practices of African American community college presidents and CEOs. The major themes reported by participants included: (a) That race still matters within institutions of higher education; (b) that cultural competency, from the construct of how African Americans are perceived, is crucial for leadership success; and (c) that both Institutional and personal barriers still exist for African American leadership.

Race Still Matters

Participants described shared challenges and issues that would typically be faced by college presidents or CEOs. These included career related

challenges, such as organizational fit, geographical preferences, personal values, vision, and leadership style. In addition, participants reported that it was oftentimes difficult to build a leadership team that fit their leadership styles, their vision, as well as the culture of the college or institution. However, in regard to race, participants reported several challenges that were faced, particularly by African American presidents and CEOs. One chancellor reported the notion that since he attended college during an historical time when affirmative action programs were plentiful, there was a mainstream perception that he must have gained access to the presidency through the affirmative action process, even though he successfully navigated the academic environment through the same pathways as any other student. He had to prove that his core processes were not “tainted,” and that his success had the same levels of academic acceptance as his peers. Several participants also indicated the sense that they still had to prove their competence every time they entered a professional setting. One participant revealed:

I recognize that whenever I enter the room, the whole race enters with me, and so I have a responsibility in terms of representation. And so, how do I use my life story and my sense of responsibility to represent the race, to navigate these predominantly white post-secondary education institutions in order to lead toward social justice? (G. Moss, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

The research findings suggested that being able to understand and recognize underlying racial dynamics was important to learning how to deal with racial

perceptions. Presidents reported that when situations are difficult, or when circumstances get tough, that they respond by acknowledging their fundamental beliefs, their leadership and educational philosophies, and reaffirmed their values, focused on their commitments.

What people need to understand about African Americans, is that the Black experience is not a monolithic kind of experience. We all experience things in a very different way. And while we're bound in ways that we have great commonalities' we're also very diverse and very different. (E. Jones, interview participant, October 15, 2014)

Cultural Competency

The research findings revealed shared experiences among the focus group participants and individual interviews that were built upon a construct of developing multi-cultural competencies. This notion required efforts on the part of African Americans to make non-Black people feel comfortable or to put an audience at ease with themselves as African Americans. Participants suggested that this is particularly necessary so that they can communicate across race perceptions in order to reduce threat barriers and put others at ease. Developing multicultural competencies helped so ensure that other individuals can hear and understand comprehend what is being said and not lose focus on the presenter. One focus group chancellor revealed:

I'm a particularly visible Black man. And when I walk into a room, I have that responsibility to put the audience that is not Black at ease. But the fact that I'm a Black man, no one else has that particular responsibility. I

have cultural competencies that make non-Black people comfortable. At one time I was told that because I'm a big Black man that people were afraid. So I had to reduce that threat barrier for people so they could hear what I have to say while they're looking at who it is that's saying it. (D.

Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Presidents further described cultural competency within the context of this study as having the necessary skills and understanding of how to put a larger audience of non-African Americans at ease. Presidents also described how important it is to understand the process of how to engage others in frank and honest one-on-one conversations in order to better understand their personal views on racial perceptions and gender stereotyping.

Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat can be defined as the fear of confirming a negative stereotype about one's ethnic group or individual behavior (Steel & Aronson, 1995). Where negative stereotypes of ethnic groups exist, members of these groups can fear being reduced to that stereotype (Steele, 1997). One college president reported her perception of stereotypical threats as social-psychological constructs that enter the room with you when you're an African American. She further described herself as a big Black woman and dark enough to be clearly identified as an African American. "It's an intimidation issue, which is based solely on racial perceptions. This stereotype threat is about the fear of validating the negative stereotype." (A. Kirton, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

There is significant research on the negative consequences of stereotype threat. Several focus group participants reported this intimidation dynamic often emerges as a perception by non-African Americans that in dealing with African Americans they will be dealing with an angry Black woman or an intimidating big Black male. Focus group participants further revealed that they were not willing to validate this negative stereotype during this experience and within this context. Participants viewed stereotypical perceptions as an imposition on their leadership that lacked justification and imposed a barrier on their communications with others (D. Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014). Researchers have described this response as “fending off the stereotype,” where individuals work vigorously to demonstrate that the negative stereotypes do not apply to them (Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather, & Roberson, 2011). Finally, one chancellor described his experience as one racial construct embedded within another racial construct: “I think another barrier which is part of my career path is that I have to figure out how to be Black enough for Black people and beige enough for White people” (D. Ellis, focus group participant, October 17, 2014).

Chapter Summary

The study found that networking, mentoring, and relationship building had the most meaningful impact on the career success of African American presidents’ and CEOs’. Networking provided opportunities to learn of job opportunities and diverse educational environments and to meet people with various leadership styles. Networking also provided opportunities to dialogue on common approaches to address various institutional problems and decisions.

Mentoring was viewed by participants as being mutually beneficial for both mentees and their mentors. Mentors were viewed as valued and trusted advisors who provide career guidance, career exposure, career path advice, and served as strong role models.

The research findings also revealed that job and career preparation aspects of a GYO program had a crucial impact on the career success of presidents and CEOs. It was through GYO career preparation experiences such as the development of resumes, letters of application, and experiencing mock interviews based upon different real-life scenarios that gave emerging leaders valuable insight into strategies, methods, and techniques for identifying and securing promotional opportunities. The research findings also suggest that another component of a GYO program that contributed to the success of college presidents and CEOs was the emphases on finance, budgeting, and fundraising. Specifics included understanding institutional budgets, planning functions, and having various approaches to address budget shortfalls. However, participants also revealed that there is a serious gap in GYO programs in addressing fiscal components such as internal audit functions, and the role of auditors, revenue sourcing, and the fiscal aspects of enrollment management processes.

Feedback from community college presidents and CEOs in both one-on-one interviews and focus group interactions corroborated the importance of the revised AACC (2013) competencies for community college leaders. Those competencies supported by this research included (a) organizational strategy (b) institutional finance (c) research, fundraising, and resources management

(d) communication (e) collaboration and (f) community college advocacy.

However, the study's results suggest that some GYO programs should place more emphasis on leadership competencies such as media relations, personal communications, and the effective use of interpersonal soft skills.

The research also revealed several leadership competencies that contributed to the career success of African American presidents and CEOs. These competencies included: (a) the ability to provide a clear vision and direction that inspires and brings results; (b) the ability to execute shared goals; and (c) the ability to sustain personal values, principles, and beliefs, even during times of turmoil. The interview and focus group findings suggested that emerging leaders must possess a passion for education, have persistence and focus, and be deliberate in their efforts to become competent and successful leaders in the future.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Community colleges throughout the nation are facing a leadership gap and a critical shortage of competent administrators. This is primarily due to the impending retirements of college presidents, other senior administrators, and faculty within the next ten years (Tekle, 2012; Shultz, 2001; Vaughn, 2001). This anticipated high turnover within the ranks of senior leadership combined with higher turnover within the traditional pipelines has created a crisis and a possible void in the succession of leaders within community colleges nationwide (Shults, 2001).

Findings of a 2013 report by the AACC suggested that GYO leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy to address the shortage of pipeline candidates for leadership positions. A GYO program can be defined within the context of this study as a leadership program that is institution based and that is focused on leadership development, succession planning, and mentoring. Existing community college GYO programs, university doctorate programs, and AACC type leadership academies will not adequately meet the needs for future community college leadership positions (AACC, 2013).

Furthermore, research has postulated concerns that African American, Hispanics, and other minorities have been underrepresented within the leadership pipeline: “Although there appears to have been a slight increase in

the percentage of African American community college presidents over the past decade, they are still underrepresented in the presidential population” (Phelps et al., 1996, p. 20). According to a 2007 report by the American Council on Education, the number of women and minorities in presidential positions at colleges and universities has not increased since 1998. Furthermore, these groups are underrepresented as presidents relative to their numbers as senior administrators (King & Gomez, 2008). There is a critical need to increase the number of African American, Latino, and other minority college administrators within the pipeline who possess the skills necessary to be a leader within a multifaceted community college environment (Phelps et al., 1996).

While there is robust research on the need for GYO leadership programs (Benard, 2012; Focht, 2010; Jeandron, 2006; Rowan, 2012), few studies have comprehensively examined how African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO leadership program describe their career advancement, the aspects of a GYO program that contributed most to their career success, and the impact GYO program participation had on their leadership practices and self-perceptions. Furthermore, research has not effectively addressed cultural differences and experiences of African American presidents and CEOs with regard to leadership skills and competencies (Seabrooks et al., 2012). Additional research is needed on the cultural differences and experiences of African American college presidents and CEOs juxtaposed with the revised 2013 AACC leadership competencies for community college leaders. Additional examination will provide more insight into what

competencies are most crucial to African American presidents' career advancement and career success.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this exploratory descriptive study was to describe African American college presidents and CEOs' perceptions of their experiences in a GYO leadership program within the context of today's institutional, cultural, and organizational challenges. This study further sought to understand the impact of participation in a GYO program on African American college presidents and CEOs' career advancement, personal career development, career growth, and career success.

The following research questions formed the foundation for this study:

1. What aspects of the GYO leadership program contributed most to African American community college presidents and chancellors' career success?
2. How do African American community college presidents and chancellors respond to the 2013 revised AACC leadership competencies and practices?
3. What leadership competencies do African American community college presidents and chancellors feel were most crucial to their career success?

Methodological Approach

This study employed an exploratory descriptive methodology that explored the relationship between GYO leadership programs and the career advancement

of African American community college presidents and CEOs. The major characteristics of this research method include exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of its central phenomenon. The research process used in this study involved developing open-ended questions, establishing procedures, inductively analyzing the data based upon general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009).

Theoretical Foundation

Malcolm Knowles's andragogy, also referred to as adult learning theory, and a social constructivist framework were used as the theoretical foundation and philosophical framework to guide this study. Adult learning theory focuses on the adult learner and the need to be self-directed and goal oriented. Knowles's theory is based upon the following assumptions: (a) that adult learners have a need to be self-directed and to know why they are learning what they are learning; (b) that adult learners possess a growing capacity and wealth of prior knowledge and experience; (c) adult learners' prior knowledge and experience enriches their growth and development; and (d) adults apply real-world perspectives to the learning process that not only enriches the proficiency of the learning environment but also the work environment for both the participant and others (Knowles, 1980).

The GYO model of leadership development focuses on the adult learner and should give participants opportunities to participate in real-world scenarios or work related projects that community college leaders face (AACC, 2013). A social constructivist paradigm or worldview assumes that "an individual seeks to

understand the world in which they live through the lens of their past experiences, their attitudes, beliefs, social perspectives, and personal values” (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). My goal as the researcher was to examine the impact of participation in GYO leadership programs on African American college presidents and CEOs’ career development, career growth, career success, and perceptions of self.

Summary of Findings

An analysis of the data collected in the research identified three themes that made the greatest contribution to the career success of African American community college presidents and CEOs. These themes included: (a) job and career preparation skills, (b) financial and budgetary acumen, and (c) networking and mentoring relationships.

Feedback from both one-on-one interviews and focus group interactions with African American college presidents and CEOs corroborated the importance of the revised AACC (2013) competencies for community college leaders. These competencies included (a) organizational strategy; (b) institutional finance; (c) research, fundraising, and resource management; (d) communication; (e) collaboration; and (f) community college advocacy. However, the findings suggested several additional competencies and identified cultural differences and experiences when compared to the revised 2013 AACC leadership competencies. The findings suggested 4 sub-themes to these competencies, which revealed how African American presidents and CEOs responded to the 2013 revised AACC competencies. These sub-themes included (a) media

relations—the importance of communicating clearly, concisely and effectively with various forms of print, electronic, and social media; (b) political acumen—the ability to understand political dynamics and to effectively navigate through difficult political situations; (c) soft skills—the ability to interact effectively with other individuals, to develop collaborative relationships, to work in teams, and to handle difficult situations with tact and diplomacy; and (d) relationship building—the ability to build mutually beneficial relationships with peers and colleagues that are based on trust, integrity, shared values, and mutual respect. A prevalent competency that African American presidents attributed to their career success was their ability to communicate and to interact effectively across various racial, ethnic, socio-economic, multicultural, and political boundaries with key stakeholders throughout their communities.

The most significant findings of this study revealed that networking, mentoring, and relationship building had an important impact on the career success of African American presidents and CEOs. This was particularly true when the GYO program included a mentoring component, which often played a key role in preparing them for a presidential position. As community colleges have grown both in size and complexity, the awareness of a mentor's importance has also grown accordingly among community college faculty, staff, and administrators who aspire to positions of leadership (Valeau & Boggs, 2004). Relationship building was another important aspect of the leaders' success. Presidents reported that relationship building was a key component of mentoring

and networking and would not be possible without mutually agreed upon relationship foundations, such as honesty, integrity, trust, and respect.

Presidents shared many challenges and issues that were stereotypically faced by African Americans in leadership. These included perceptions that they gained access to, or progressed along their career paths as a result of an affirmative action process, although participants reported that they had successfully navigated through their career paths without the privilege of affirmative action. Several participants reported the notion that as African Americans they had to continually prove their knowledge, skills and competencies, whenever they entered a professional setting. For example, some presidents shared that they were perceived as intimidating or threatening because of their dark skin hues, physical size, or physical stature. Participants reported that this intimidation dynamic often emerged because of perceptions by non-African Americans that they were dealing with an angry Black female or a big intimidating Black male. They described it as an intimidation issue that was based solely on racial perceptions. According to focus group participants, dealing with racial stereotyping requires a converse cultural competency on the part of African Americans in order to communicate across race perceptions, to reduce threat barriers, and to put individuals or an audience at ease so that their audience can focus on the message and not on the messenger. No one else has that particular responsibility (D. Ellis; A. Kirton, focus group participants, October 17, 2014).

Implications for Future Research

GYO leadership programs must have the ability, and flexibility to adapt to a rapidly changing educational environment. This includes incorporating real-world scenarios or experiences into GYO programs in order to give emerging leaders opportunities to face situations that educational leaders are likely to face at their institutions (AACC, 2013). Future research could include expanding the scope of institutional, regional, or statewide GYO programs that have incorporated real-world experiences into their curriculums to prepare participants for the future challenges of community college leadership. This research could serve as a resource to community college leadership to better understand key components of successful real-world experiences incorporated into GYO leadership development programs.

Previous research has identified additional concerns with regards to the underrepresentation of African Americans, Hispanics, and other minorities within the leadership pipeline (Phelps et al., 1996, p. 20). This study examined what leadership competencies African American community college presidents and CEO's felt were most crucial to their career success. The results of this study were, however, limited to a small sample of African American community college presidents and chancellors who served during the 2014-2015 academic year. Future research might include extending the research to a broader population of college presidents or include positions such as vice-presidents, deans, directors, or other administrators. Increasing the sample size could provide further valuable information that would inform leadership on how GYO leadership

programs impact career success, identify additional critical leadership competencies, and influence strategies on how to recruit, attract, and retain underrepresented minorities within the leadership pipeline.

Recommendations for Policy

The findings emphasize the importance of institutional policies and procedures that support GYO leadership programs. Therefore, recommendations for GYO programs consider both leaders and the policies they create and support. To this end the following recommendations are offered specifically for board of trustees and college administration.

Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees are responsible for the establishment of policies, broad performance expectations, as well as setting standards for the direction and values of their respective colleges or districts. These responsibilities include a commitment to equal employment opportunities and an appreciation for the diversity among the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and key stakeholders within the communities they serve. Selecting a chancellor or chief executive officer is one of the most important decisions a board will make. Several presidents in this study indicated that one of the most important factors in attracting a diverse pool of candidates is for the board to be known as fair and progressive and to provide a clear vision and respect diversity. The findings of this study further suggest that potential candidates will not apply for positions at colleges or institutions if they have a perception that the board has pre-identified an individual within their political queue for the position. Participants reported

that one of the institutional barriers African Americans and other minorities face is not having exposure to the same political structures, networks, or communities as their non-minority counterparts. Therefore, when making a final selection for a president or CEO, the perception of the participants is that boards frequently select individuals whom they deem to be the right fit. This is often perceived as code for the board having a level of comfort, familiarity, or similarity with the final candidate. Having a highly qualified, diverse administration is essential in creating innovative and effective educational institutions. Therefore, boards should affirm their support for equal employment opportunities by creating and supporting policies that help to attract and retain diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.

College Administration

A major commitment of community colleges is in fulfilling their mission of student access and student success (CCLC, 2012). Access is the notion of providing a quality education to everyone who can benefit. Student success refers to the commitment of colleges to provide the needed programs and services to ensure that students are able to achieve their educational goals (CCLC, 2012). A recent report (AACC, 2012) recommended that community colleges increase rates of students earning degrees, certificates, and so forth by 50% by the year 2020, while preserving access and quality and eradicating achievement gaps associated with income, race, ethnicity, and gender.

This study further suggests that all GYO programs include a module or component on the AACC (2013) report, “The 21st Century Commission Report

and Implementation.” Focus group participants reported concerns that there was a real disconnect between student access and student success. Historically, there are periods when academic and resource emphasis is placed on student access initiatives and other periods when emphasis is placed on student success initiatives. However, according to focus group members, these two mission objectives should be complimentary.

The convergence of these strategies has not been sufficiently addressed either within public policy or within GYO leadership programs. Public debate on when, and where that convergence should occur is not adequate. (P. Moore, focus group participant, October 17, 2014)

Therefore, due to the cyclical nature of public policy that drives the choice of emphasis, it is recommended that administration began a conversation around policies that issues that address the conflict between student access and success. Practical public policy will need to be created on how to converge student access and success strategies into actionable steps in an educational institution’s strategic plans.

Recommendations for Practice

Research indicates that a majority of GYO programs base their curriculum on specific leadership competencies recommended by the AACC’s 2005 report and the revised second edition, the AACC (2013), “Competencies for Community College Leaders” (Robinson, 2015). The findings of the AACC (2013) report suggest that GYO leadership programs have emerged as a valuable and effective strategy to address the shortage of pipeline candidates for future

leadership positions. Further evidence suggests that some GYO leadership programs have higher success rates for African American participants as participants have subsequently achieved a college presidency or CEO position ("Presidents' Round Table Directories of African American CEOs," 2014).

The first research question in this study examined the aspects of GYO leadership programs that contributed the most to African American community college presidents and CEOs' career success. This study comprehensively examined African American college presidents and CEOs' descriptions of the components of a GYO program that contributed most to their career success. The following are recommended components for future GYO leadership programs:

- Mentoring and networking components, which provide GYO participants with ongoing and structured exposure and career guidance by college presidents, CEOs, and other senior level administrators. Networking and mentoring increase awareness and understanding of institutional prerogatives and how to engage an organization from a management perspective. Furthermore, mentors serve as a beacon for political, professional, and instructional navigation.
- Real-world scenarios or project-based assignments components, which include sustainable and outcomes based activities, which are associated with case studies, problems, or situations that college presidents and educational leaders face in a multifaceted and

challenging educational environment. Program components must have clear goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes.

- Job and career preparation skills components, which include guidance in job searching techniques, interviewing techniques, mock interviews, letters of application, and resume writing. This study revealed that job and career preparation aspects of a GYO had a crucial impact on the career success of African American presidents and CEOs.
- Finance and budget components, which provide a thorough and comprehensive understanding of community college budgets and finance, financial structures, institutional fundraising, various strategies, and approaches to address shortfalls. Finance and budget components should also the audit processes and the role of auditors and their responsibilities and how to engage them.
- Communications and media relations components, with emphasis on communication within all forms of mass media including print, electronic, social, and televised media. These components may also include advice on grooming, personal appearance, and interviewing etiquette.
- Soft skills components, which include networking opportunities, human relations skills, collaboration, and case-study scenarios based upon team building and team problem solving exercises.

- Components on the “21st Century Commission Report and Implementation” (AACC, 2012), the report that highly recommended all leadership programs offered by AACC-affiliated councils and other national organizations include a module on the 21st Century Commission Report and Implementation because it is a response to President Obama’s education agenda.

Recommendations for Human Resources Practitioners

AACC’s (2013) revised model of competencies for community college leadership focuses on what emerging leaders need to know based on their positions within the organization. These competencies include (a) organizational strategy; (b) institutional finance, research, fundraising, and resource management; (c) communication; (d) collaboration; and (e) community college advocacy. These competencies can help guide human resources and organizational development practitioners with identification of critical job functions, as well as recruitment activities.

- Identification of essential job criteria for use as a guide recruitment and hiring, applicant minimum qualifications, management performance evaluations, as well as a tool to assure that job qualifications for each position are closely matched to the specific responsibilities of the position.
- GYO leadership programs can be used as a means to identify qualified minorities and other underrepresented groups within the leadership pipeline for future positions. This not only demonstrates

the institution's commitment toward diverse leadership, but it also expands the pool of diverse candidates thus increasing the potential for diversity in leadership opportunities. Diversifying the pipeline of potential leaders will help community colleges increase sensitivity of and awareness of institutional barriers that minorities face, such as white privilege, oppression, lack of job opportunities, limited mentoring opportunities, and restricted opportunities to challenging assignments and professional development opportunities.

Summary of Dissertation

This study explored the impact of a GYO leadership program on African American presidents and CEOs' personal career development, success, leadership practices and investigated what they perceived as crucial leadership competencies for current and emerging leaders. The research revealed three themes that contributed the most to the career success of African American community college presidents and CEOs. These themes included job and career preparation, financial and budgetary acumen, mentoring relationships, and networking.

The findings of this study also revealed that presidents and CEOs corroborated the importance of the recalibrated AACC (2013) competencies for community college leaders. These competencies include organizational strategy; institutional finance; research, fundraising, and resource management; communication; collaboration; and community college advocacy. Several

additional sub-competencies emerged from this research including media relations, political acumen, soft skills, and relationship building. Several competencies or themes emerged from this research not included in the AACC (2013) competencies. These competencies, which presidents and CEOs revealed as crucial to their career success, included personal attributes; personal leadership styles; and personal values, ethics, and beliefs.

This study revealed that for African American presidents and CEOs, race still matters within institutions of higher education. The ability to navigate, recognize, and understand the underlying racial dynamics of an institution and to possess the ability to deal with it is crucial to career success. These racial dynamics included a counter-type cultural competency developed to deal with perceptions of African Americans as stereotypical threats and to collaborate in overcoming institutional barriers.

The primary recommendations arising from this study were to encourage boards of trustees and administrations to continue to support equal employment opportunity by creating policies that support diversity at the executive level. It was recommended that policymakers continue the dialogue to reconcile the convergence of student access initiatives and student success initiatives reflected in their institutional strategic plans. Furthermore, this study recommended that future GYO leadership programs include components on mentoring, networking opportunities, real-world scenarios, finance, budget, auditing, media relations, job and career preparation, as well as soft skills and team building. Finally, this study may serve as a foundation for additional

research on the use of GYO leadership programs as a strategy to diversity
community college leadership.

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APPENDIX A

RESEARCH SOLICITATION EMAIL

My name is Kenneth Robinson, and I am a student at California State University, Fullerton, CA, working on a Doctor of Educational Leadership degree, under the direction of Dr. Ding-Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor.

I am conducting a research study, titled *Career Perspectives: African American Community College Presidents' Leadership Development through Grow-Your-Own Programs*. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Grow-Your-Own (GYO) leadership programs, and the career advancement of African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO program. This study will seek to understand the impact of participating in a GYO program on leadership's career development, career advancement, and leadership practices.

I would like to invite you to participate in a Focus Group meeting or a One-on-One interview as a part of my research study. Your participation will involve a 60-90 minute interview, which will be audio and/or video recorded for recall and accuracy purposes. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The significance of this study is that it will help to inform institutions of higher education on ways to identify, attract, and retain underrepresented African Americans within the leadership pipeline, for recruitment, retention, and professional development purposes.

I will be conducting interviews and focus group during the week of October 13-17, 2014, during the PRT/Thomas Lakin Institute in San Francisco, CA. I would appreciate the opportunity to schedule a mutually convenient day and time to meet with you. For questions, Kenneth Robinson can be contacted at (661) 487 7150 or agr8tguy@csu.fullerton.edu; and Dr. Ding-Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor, may be reached at dcurrie@fullerton.edu.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT

Dear [Recipients' name]:

My name is Kenneth Robinson, and I am a student at California State University, Fullerton, CA, working on a Doctor of Educational Leadership degree, under the direction of Dr. Ding-Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor.

I am conducting a research study, titled *Career Perspectives: African American Community College Presidents' Leadership Development through Grow-Your-Own Programs*. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Grow-Your-Own (GYO) leadership programs, and the career advancement of African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO program. This study will seek to understand the impact of participating in a GYO program on leadership's career development, career advancement, and leadership practices.

I would like to invite you to participate in a One-on-One interview as a part of my research study. Your participation will involve a 60-90 minute interview, which will be audio recorded for recall and accuracy purposes. During the interview, I will ask a series of questions pertaining to your experience in a GYO leadership program, and the impact the leadership program had on your career advancement and leadership practices as a result of that experience.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of this study may be published however, no names or identifying information will be included for publication, and the results will be reported in aggregate. In addition, all research records and materials will be kept confidential to the extent of the law; and will be secured on a password-protected computer or in a locked cabinet or file drawer. The significance of this study is that it will help to inform institutions of higher education on ways to identify, attract, and retain underrepresented African Americans within the leadership pipeline, for recruitment, retention, and professional development purposes. The researcher does not have a financial (or otherwise) conflict of interest relating to the results of this study.

For questions, Kenneth Robinson can be contacted at (661) 487-7150 or agr8tguy@csu.fullerton.edu; and Dr. Ding-Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor, may be reached at dcurrie@fullerton.edu.

I have carefully read and/or I have had the terms and conditions in this consent form and their significance explained to me. By signing below, I agree that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to participate in this project. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep.

Name of Participant (print) _____

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Signature of Investigator _____ Date _____

Your signature below indicates that you are giving permission to audio record your responses.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT CONFIRMATION LETTER

Dear [Recipients' name]:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study titled: *Career Perspectives: African American Community College Presidents' Leadership Development through Grow-Your-Own Programs*. This communication confirms our appointment for _____ (date), at _____(time); Board Conference Room IV, Atrium Level, Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport Hotel. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Grow Your Own (GYO) leadership programs, and the career advancement of African American college presidents and CEOs.

Your participation will involve a 60-90 minute interview, in which you will be asked a series of questions pertaining to your experiences in a GYO leadership program, and the impact the program had on your career advancement and leadership practices. The significance of this study will help to inform leadership in institutions of higher learning of the significant ways to identify, attract and retain African Americans within the leadership pipeline for professional development purposes.

I may be reached by phone: (661) 487-7150, or by email: agr8tguy@csu.fullerton.edu, should you have questions. Thank you again, and I am looking forward to an informative and productive interview session!

Sincerely,

Kenneth I. Robinson
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership Program
California State University, Fullerton

APPENDIX D

SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. Background Information

1. What is your current position?
2. How long have you been in your current position?
3. Name of current educational institution, and how long employed?
4. How long have you been employed within higher education in general?
5. What is your highest level of education?
6. What is your current salary?
7. What is your gender?
8. What is your race/ethnicity?
9. What is your marital status?
10. What city and state do you currently reside?

II. Career Perspectives

11. What led you to seek a college presidency or CEO position?
12. What specific barriers did you encounter in your accession to the college presidency (personal, or institutional)
13. What personal attributes do you feel contributed most to your career success?
14. What effect if any, has networking had on your career success?
15. As you reflect on your career, what if anything would you do differently and why?

III. The GYO Experience

16. Have you ever participated in a GYO leadership program? If so, please describe your experience.

17. What aspects of the GYO program do you feel attributed most to your career success?
18. What impact did participating in a GYO leadership program have in shaping your leadership practices?

IV. Leadership Competencies

19. How do you define leadership? How has your participation in a GYO leadership program helped to define your perception of leadership?
20. What do you consider to be key leadership competencies for emerging leaders and why?

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP INFORMED CONSENT

Dear [Recipients' name]:

My name is Kenneth Robinson, and I am a student at California State University, Fullerton, CA, working on a Doctor of Educational Leadership degree, under the direction of Dr. Ding Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor. I am conducting a research study, titled *Career Perspectives: African American Community College Presidents' Leadership Development through Grow-Your-Own Programs*. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Grow-Your-Own (GYO) leadership programs, and the career advancement of African American college presidents and CEOs who have participated in a GYO program. This study will seek to understand the impact of participating in a GYO program on leadership's career development, career advancement, and leadership practices.

I would like to invite you to participate in a focus group interaction as a part of my study. The focus group will take place during the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, to be held in Oakland, California between October 12-17, 2014. The focus group will consist of 4-6 participants, and will include presidents and CEOs with at least 5 or more years experience at the senior leadership level. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of this study may be published however, no names or identifying information will be included for publication, and the results will be reported in aggregate. In addition, all research records and materials will be kept confidential to the extent of the law, and will be secured on a password-protected computer or in a locked cabinet or file drawer. The significance of this study is that it will help to inform institutions of higher education on ways to identify, attract, and retain underrepresented African Americans within the leadership pipeline, for recruitment, retention, and professional development purposes. The researcher does not have a financial (or otherwise) conflict of interest relating to the results of this study. For questions, Kenneth Robinson can be contacted at (661) 487-7150 or agr8tguy@csu.fullerton.edu; and Dr. Ding-Jo Currie, Faculty Advisor, may be reached at dcurrie@fullerton.edu.

I have carefully read and/or I have had the terms and conditions in this consent form and their significance explained to me. By signing below, I agree that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to participate in this project. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep.

Name of Participant (print) _____

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Signature of Investigator _____ Date _____

Your signature below indicates that you are giving permission to audio/video record your responses.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP CONFIRMATION LETTER

Dear [Recipients' name]:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study titled: *Career Perspectives: African American Community College Presidents' Leadership Development through Grow-Your-Own Programs*. This communication confirms our appointment for the Focus Group Interaction meeting, Friday, October 17, 2014, (4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.), Board Room IV, Atrium Level, of the Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport Hotel. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Grow Your Own (GYO) leadership programs, and the career advancement of African American college presidents and CEOs.

Your participation in the Focus Group interaction will consist of college presidents' and CEOs' with 5 or more years' experience at the senior leadership level. The significance of this study will help to inform leadership in institutions of higher learning of the significant ways to identify, attract and retain African Americans within the leadership pipeline for professional development purposes. I may be reached by phone: (661) 487-7150, or by email: agr8tguy@csu.fullerton.edu, should you have questions.

Thank you again, and I am looking forward to an informative and productive session!

Sincerely,

Kenneth I. Robinson
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership Program
California State University, Fullerton

APPENDIX G
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Friday, October 17, 2014

Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership

1. What aspects of a Grow Your Own leadership program contributed most to your success?
2. When considering GYO leadership programs, what are some examples of “real-world” experiences, which leadership programs could incorporate into their curriculum; in order to prepare participants for the future challenges of community college leadership?
3. In the fall, 2013 AACC recalibrated their original *Competencies for Community College Leaders* in 2010. The AACC 2013 recalibrated leadership competencies have now added institutional finance, research, fundraising, and resource management. As an African American, what leadership competencies do you feel were most critical to your success?
4. What stereotype threats, barriers, risks, and challenges do you feel specifically impact the career success of African American college presidents and CEOs’ along their leadership journey?