Career paths, barriers, and professional experiences: a comparison study of African American community college presidents and white community college presidents

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CAREER PATHS, BARRIERS, AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES: A COMPARISON
STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESIDENTS AND WHITE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

By

Cedric Andreas Bradley

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Community College Leadership
in the Department of Leadership and Foundations

Mississippi State, Mississippi

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CAREER PATHS, BARRIERS, AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES: A COMPARISON

STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PRESIDENTS AND WHITE COMMUNITY

COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

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The community college is one of the most diverse institutions of higher learning in regards to the make-up of its student population. However, with such a large representation of diversity within its student population, the community college has not been as successful in diversifying the community college presidency.

The purpose of this research study was to examine the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to examine potential recruitment strategies to recruit minority administrators. A total of 176 African American and White community college presidents were surveyed, and 105 \((N = 105)\) surveys were used for the study. Fifty-five surveys were from White/Caucasian community college presidents and fifty surveys were from Black/African American community college presidents.

A self-developed survey \((Presidents' Survey)\) was used to collect the data. Chi-Square, Analysis of Variance, frequencies, and percentages were used for data analysis. Results of the study indicate that African American and White community college presidents differ significantly in terms of marital status, graduation from a historically Black college or university \((HBCU)\),
make-up of student body at their institutions, location of their institutions, and in attendance of leadership development workshops.

Results of the statistical analysis are presented in narrative and table form to answer the five research questions. The study concludes with a summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Key words: African American, community college, president, minority, administrator
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my four biggest supporters: my mother, Pearlene Bradley, who showed me the value of an education; my wife, Angela, for her love, support, and encouragement throughout all of my educational endeavors; and finally, to my two sons, Caleb and Sean. I began this journey before either of you was born. I finished it because you both were here.
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I would like to thank all of the community college presidents across the nation who responded to the survey. Without your cooperation, this project could not have been completed.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

As America moves further along into the 21st century, ethnic diversity continues to occur in many top level positions in many different organizations. From head coaching jobs, to politics, and even religious organizations, ethnic diversity is seen in more places than it has ever been seen before. Ethnic diversity has never been more important than in the realm of the president within the community college and in the role the community college plays in serving so many minority groups.

Winston (2001) noted that there is a distinct relationship between diversity and organizational success. This relationship has proven to be a positive relationship with organizations that promote diversity. Organizations that are the most diverse have been identified as the organizations that are the most successful overall. These organizations have high minority employment at all levels, engage with other minority-owned companies, and endorse businesses that go to minority-owned investment banks. Furthermore, Winston commented that the changes in the demographics of the United States will continue to support the need for diversity in organizations.

Community colleges have not fostered diversity in their administrative personnel as they have within their student enrollment. According to Vaughan (1996), community colleges are enrolling more than half of all minorities attending colleges and universities; however, the number of minorities who serve as presidents or other upper-level or mid-level administrators is drastically low. A report presented by the American Council on Education (2005) found that
minority enrollment had increased by 52% from 1991 to 2001 in colleges and universities; however, minority college and university presidencies only increased 1.9% from 1994 to 2004. More specifically, community colleges had a representation of over 82% for White community college presidents, but only 6.5% for Black community college presidents (Pluviose, 2006). Community colleges must begin to develop various strategies to ensure that the administration within the community college is as diverse as the student population that the community college serves (Bowen & Muller, 1996).

Vaughan (2004) stated that minorities are filling leadership positions in community colleges at a very stagnant rate. Vaughan also revealed that in 1996, 86% of community-college presidents nationwide were White, and by 2001, this number had only dropped to 85%. June (2007) noted that there has not been much change in the physical description of community college presidents. The typical community college president has consistently been described as a married, White man with a doctoral degree. As a result of this consistent description of the college president, future community college presidents will be very similar to this.

The factors that shaped past and current community college presidents may shape future community college presidents to such a degree that these future community college presidents will be practically identical to those past and current community college presidents. One of these factors is the traditional pipeline that most community college presidents come through (Vaughan, 2004). The most common pipeline for future community college presidents is through the academic pipeline. However, minority faculty members are just as underrepresented as minority administrators. Vaughan noted that only 9% of full-time community college faculty members were minorities in 1987, and by 1990, only 10% of the full-time community college faculty members were minorities. Vaughan also stated that since the traditional pipeline of community college presidents is the academic pipeline, community college boards will have to
begin to recruit presidents from areas other than academic areas, if they are to reverse the underrepresentation of minorities. Another factor includes the current community college presidents. According to Vaughan, current community college presidents must begin to sponsor, mentor, and recruit potential minority candidates for the presidency. Finally, a major factor that must be adjusted is the make-up of the governing board. Vaughan states that 86% of community college governing boards are White and only 8.1% are African American. The governing boards that select future community college presidents will be selected by governing boards that are similar in make-up to the governing boards that selected the past and current community college presidents (Vaughan, 1998).

Women have begun to make strides in obtaining the position of senior administrators within higher education institutions (McKenney & Cejda, 2000). Unfortunately, only a small percentage of these women come from minority groups. June (2008) noted that a study by the American Council on Education revealed that 45% of senior administrators were women, but only 16% of those senior administrators were members of a minority group. When it comes to obtaining the position of presidency within the community college, minorities have been represented less than women (Piland & Giles, 1998).

In particular, African American and other minority trustees must begin to emphasize the importance of hiring minority candidates to other board members (Vaughan, 1996). Many potential minority presidential candidates are intimidated by White board members and choose not to apply for presidential job openings. Achieving diversity within a community college has to be the goal of the board of trustees and needs to be viewed as a core value of the community college (“What can be done,” 2007). Cortada (1996) contended that trustees should show a particular sense of where they stand on diversity issues. One way that trustees could show this stance is by creating a climate that is conducive to diversity. These trustees must work to assure
that the presidency position is as appealing to minority candidates as it is to White candidates. Trustees must be sensitive to issues in the academic environment that create stress and perceived risks for minorities. One example of this would be if a minority is the president of a community college where the majority of the faculty, staff, students, and community were White, then the board of trustees for that community college can help pave the way for that president into business, social, and other political groups that would usually not open their doors so freely to a minority (Vaughan, 2004). Furthermore, community college presidents should address the issue of diversity with the trustees of their institutions in an educational manner, rather than a political or social manner. Vaughan stated that White board members must be aware of this issue and work with their institution’s president to help recruit minorities for upper-level and mid-level administrative positions. Therefore, these minority administrators will be in a direct path to the presidency.

Minorities must begin to enter into entry-level administrative positions with the hope of advancing into mid-level and upper-level administrative positions. Cortada (1996) stated that entry-level administrative positions could be used by minorities to test their interests and abilities in administrative positions. Vaughan (1996) noted that presidents can begin to mentor young minority candidates with expert knowledge concerning the presidency. Finally, minorities must realize that an earned doctorate degree is one of the major deciding factors in becoming a community college president. Presidents of community colleges must also begin to encourage minority faculty and staff to pursue professional development opportunities, including obtaining a doctorate degree (Vaughan, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

Community colleges are enrolling more than half of all the undergraduate students within the United States, and of these students, there is a large percentage of minority students
(Bumphus & Roueche, 2007). Pluviose (2006) stated that there will be an increase in minority students in several states within the next few years, and many community college presidents are concerned about how to meet the needs of these students. One of the main issues that need to be addressed is the lack of minority administrators that will help to serve these students. Waiwaiole and Noonan-Terry (2008) noted that 47% of all the nation’s undergraduate students are minority students enrolled in community colleges. However, 86% of the current community college presidents are White and approximately 14% are minorities (“Iowa colleges,” 2008). It is imperative that community colleges continue to address the issue of lack of minorities in community college administration. Harvey (1991) acknowledged that personnel within the community college can provide knowledge, guidance, inspiration, and influence students beyond the bounds of their studies. Goral (2007) noted that “diversity enhances the educational experience for students of all persuasions, while reflecting back, for a lack of a better term, the real world” (p. 10). If a student is able to connect with people different from himself/herself, his/her imagination will be stimulated and he/she will learn to see the world through a range of eyes. Also, diversity fosters a greater spirit of community on campuses (Bollinger, 2007). Community college students should not only see other students who are similar and dissimilar to them, but community college students need to see faculty members and administrators who are similar and dissimilar to them. These faculty members and administrators can help to serve as role models, mentors, and advisers (Laden, 2004).

**Research Questions**

The following research questions were used to guide the current study.

1. Are there significant differences in the demographics of current African American community college presidents and the demographics of current White community college presidents?
2. Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and the career paths of current White community college presidents?

3. Are there significant differences in the professional experiences of current African American community college presidents and the professional experiences of current White community college presidents?

4. What are the barriers that current African American community college presidents feel they encountered on their paths to the presidency and the barriers that current White community college presidents feel they encountered on their paths to the presidency?

5. What are the recruitment strategies that current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents feel will be the most successful in recruiting minority administrators?

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to examine successful strategies for recruiting minority administrators. This study may suggest new strategies to aid in the crisis of community colleges achieving administrative diversity. Also, the strategies defined within this study may also aid in the recruitment of minorities in not only administrative positions within community colleges, but in faculty and staff positions as well. Finally, this study may inform minorities who desire to move into the presidency and other administrative roles within community colleges of certain factors that may enable them to acquire those positions.
Theoretical Framework of the Study

Kerlinger (1979) defined a theory as “a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining natural phenomena” (p. 64). Brand (2005) stated that one of the main issues of conducting any type of study is to ensure that the concepts involved within the study fit into a larger theoretical framework. Brand also noted that when concepts within a study fit into a larger theoretical framework, this allows the study to be more socially realistic. The theoretical framework for this study consists of three categories: 1) human resource theory, 2) network exchange theory, 3) labor market theory. Human resource theory refers to the recruitment process of organizations (Sims, 2002). Human resource theory is important in examining the hiring and recruitment of individuals in organizations. Network exchange theory refers to the relationship between social status and benefits gained from one’s social status (Thye, Willer, & Markovsky, 2006). Network exchange theory is important in understanding the relationship between statuses, power, and how these two interact to offer or not offer individuals rewards. Labor market theory refers to the ability as well as the boundaries of an individual to relocate to other geographical locations or to other positions within the company for career advancement (Twombly, 2005). Labor market theory is important in understanding how an individual moves up the career ladder.

Limitations

The findings of the study were influenced by the following limitations:

First, this study was limited by the willingness of the respondents to respond truthfully to the surveys. The researcher had no way of determining if the person who completed the survey was indeed the president of that community college and not someone assigned by the president to complete the survey.
A second limitation was that this study was limited to community college presidents in community colleges that are members of the American Association of Community Colleges; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the nation since presidents from community colleges that are not members of the American Association of Community Colleges were not surveyed.

**Operational Definitions**

*African-American* is defined as a person who identifies himself/herself as “a Black American of African ancestry” (American Heritage College Dictionary, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the terms Black or African American.

*Barrier* is defined as a boundary or limit or something that separates or holds apart (American Heritage College Dictionary, 2002). The researcher further defined a barrier as an obstacle or difficulty an individual has encountered that has limited his/her career advancement.

*Career Path* is defined as the jobs, positions, and experiences an individual has taken to get to his/her current position (Leatherwood, 2007).

*Community college* is defined as a publicly supported, regionally accredited institution of higher education that offers the Associates degree as its highest degree (Vaughan, 2000).

*Diversity* is defined as the differences among people (Weisman, 1997).

*Educational background* is the formal education a person receives throughout his/her career (Leatherwood, 2007). The researcher further defined educational background as the degrees, certificates, diplomas that an individual has received throughout his/her educational career.

*Historically Black College or University (HBCU)* is defined as “an institution of higher learning, whose principal mission is to educate African Americans. [These institutions] have evolved since their beginning in 1837 when their primary responsibility was to educate freed
slaves to read and write. At the dawn of the 21st century, along with graduate and post-graduate
degrees, Historically Black colleges and Universities offer African American students a place to
earn a sense of identity, heritage and community (www.pbs.org). For the purpose of this study,
the researcher used the term Historically Black College or University or HBCU.

Minority is defined as “part of a population differing from others in some characteristics,
often subjected to differential treatment, and can also be defined as any one of the following
racial ethnic groups: African American, American Indian, Asian American, Mexican American,
Puerto Rican American, or other (Shufelt, 2002). For the purpose of this study, minority referred
to racial/ethnic group.

President is defined as a person who has the duties and responsibilities of a CEO and has
assumed the role of CEO for an institution (Schmitz, 2008).

Professional experience is defined as the work experience obtained through someone’s
career (Leatherwood, 2007). The researcher further defined professional experience as
experiences that have contributed to the career development of individuals.

White is defined as a person “[who belongs] to a racial group of European origin and who
has white skin (American Heritage College Dictionary, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the
researcher used the terms White or Caucasian.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will present a review of related literature to this study. The review of related literature includes (a) review of the theoretical framework for the study, (b) the American community college, (c) career paths to the community college presidency, (d) community college administrators, (e) community college students, (f) diversity on the community college campus, (g) recruitment strategies of minority administrators, and (h) barriers and discrimination factors of minority administrators.

Theoretical Framework

Human Resource Theory

McGregor (1960) noted that “one of the major tasks of management is [organizing] human effort in the service of the economic objectives of the enterprise” (p. 3). In order to organize this human effort, an organization has to successfully recruit individuals. Recruiting is a key component of the human resource theory. Recruiting is a major issue for an organization if it is to be successful. Drucker (1992) noted that organizations compete for qualified and knowledgeable people. If an organization were successful, the management was able to attract these types of people into the organization (McGregor, 1960). Bolman and Deal (2003) noted that the framework of the human resource theory is built on four core assumptions:
1. Organizations serve human needs. Humans do not serve organizational needs.

2. People need organizations, and organizations need people. The organizations will desire to get ideas, energy, and talent from humans while humans will need organizations for careers and the benefits that come along with those careers.

3. When there is not a good connection between organizations and the individuals within the organizations, the organization, the individual, or both the organization and the individuals are going to suffer.

4. A good connection between the organization and the individual will benefit both.

Sims (2002) viewed the recruitment process as one of the major responsibilities of the human resource management function. Before the individual can be hired to help ensure the organization’s success, the organization must locate, or recruit, the desired individual. Sims defined recruitment as “the process by which organizations discover, develop, seek, and attract individuals to fill actual or anticipated job vacancies” (p. 107). Sims noted that the recruiting process involves several factors that happen internally within the organization. These factors include the organizational reputation, the attractiveness of the job, the cost of recruiting, the recruiting goals, and the recruitment philosophy. There are also external factors that affect the recruitment efforts of the organization. These factors include labor market conditions, labor unions, economic trends, and government influences.

Sims noted that there are different sources and methods that an organization may use for recruitment purposes. The two main methods that organizations use for recruitment purposes are recruiting internally and externally. Internal recruiting involves looking inside the organization for existing employees who may be promoted to higher-level positions. External recruiting involves looking outside the organization for potential employees.
Both internal and external recruitment methods have their advantages and disadvantages (Sims, 2002). Sims stated that internal recruiting has the following advantages: 1) the organization should have a good idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the employee, 2) many employees will be motivated to move up within the organization, 3) the employees who are promoted have an existing knowledge of the organization, including the organization’s climate, culture, and policies. Sims also noted that internal recruiting has the following disadvantages: 1) internal fighting can happen between employees who desire to be promoted, 2) when an individual is promoted, this will leave another vacancy. According to Sims, external recruiting has the following advantages: 1) the pool of talent is much larger, 2) helps meet affirmative action goals, 3) helps cope with the demand of rapid growth without overusing inexperienced personnel. External recruiting has the following disadvantages: 1) attracting, contacting, and evaluating potential employees is more difficult, 2) employees may need a longer adjustment or orientation period, 3) may result in motivational problems within the organizations for employees who feel that they have been denied opportunities.

Sims (2002) listed several methods for internal recruiting and external recruiting. The methods for internal recruiting include job posting, supervisory recommendations, employee referrals, and promotions and transfers. The methods for external recruiting include advertisements, employment agencies, external referrals, campus recruiting, and internet recruiting.

Sims (2002) noted that many organizations must have affirmative action plans to help recruit minorities. Some of the strategies these organizations may use to recruit minorities are using minority-oriented publications, recruiting at colleges with large numbers of minority students, participating in job fairs sponsored by certain racial/ethnic organizations, establishing a
minority internship program, and using current minority employees to recruit others of similar backgrounds.

**Network Exchange Theory**

Network exchange theory was developed to predict negotiated distribution of resources in a class of networks consisting of interrelated individuals (Markovsky, Willer, & Patton, 1988). Thye, Willer, and Markovsky (2006) broke network exchange theory down into separate categories: status characteristics theory and network exchange theory. In both categories, there is a connection between social status and the allocation of societal benefits.

Status characteristics theory is a term used to understand the importance of influence and prestige in organizations. When an individual possesses a certain characteristic and this characteristic leads to worth or self-esteem, then this individual has status value (Thye, Willer, & Markovsky, 2006). Within this theory, there are two types of status characteristics: diffuse status characteristic and specific status characteristic. Diffuse status characteristic is a characteristic such as gender, and this will only exist in certain situations. For example, if males are more highly valued than females, or males are expected to be more competent in specific tasks, or males are expected to be more capable at multi-tasking, then diffuse status characteristic will exist. Specific status characteristic will exist if one group is more highly valued than another group or if one group is expected to be more competent in a specific task. Finally, Thye, Willer, and Markovsky stated that specific status characteristic does not take into account multi-tasking preferences.

Network exchange theory is a term used to examine and predict the results of power use in networks of self-interested exchange actors (Willer, Troyer, & Lovaglia, 2005). In network exchange theory, power has a direct impact in organizations. When power has influence, it can
be broken down into two different types of power: strong-power networks and weak-power networks. Willer, Troyer, and Lovaglia noted that in networks that have strong-power networks, individuals that are in low-power positions will compete against each other for the opportunity to exchange with the individuals in the high-power positions. In a high-power network, the high-power individual will eventually gain all resources. In a weak-power network, a high-power position will not be able to use power without incurring costs. According to Willer, Troyer, and Lovaglia, the differences in power in weak-power networks will stabilize so that a high-power position will gain only moderately more advances than a low-power position. Kezar (2008) noted that most underrepresented groups will not have the power base to make changes within organizations. These underrepresented groups do not have the ability to create coalitions, alliances, or informal-influence processes. Consequently, the interests of the underrepresented group are not represented, and the members of the underrepresented will not gain the valuable resources needed to be successful. The most successful networks will be heterogeneous networks. These networks will be diverse in terms of mentors and role models. These networks will have a variety of position and location, and finally, these networks will be demographically mixed by age, race, gender, and culture (Evans & Chun, 2007).

**Labor Market Theory**

Recent research has shown that community colleges are defined in many aspects by labor markets. Twombly (2005) commented that most of the human resource aspect of a community college is defined by a labor market. This includes the recruiting, the hiring, and even the departure. This labor market also defines how and where positions are filled, and it defines what kinds of people will fill the positions and at what price.
Kalachek (1973) explained many different functions of the labor market in his book entitled *Labor Markets and Unemployment*. Kalachek explained that there are three major labor stocks: 1) employment, 2) unemployment, and 3) job vacancies. A series of inflows and outflows continually feed and relieve these stocks. When individuals decide to relocate to another job, most individuals do so in the belief that they will make more money in their new location.

Allen and Cejda (2007) discussed that the community college is an occupational internal labor market. Occupational internal labor markets help to describe careers that exist among similar firms. Allen and Cejda noted that since organizational boundaries are established based on the interdependence of organizations, community colleges fit into this realm. Community colleges are interdependent with many different organizations such as hospitals and other businesses within the communities they serve. Also, Allen and Cejda discussed that organizational boundaries can be influenced by broader structures. Community colleges that belong to state or multi-campus districts are structurally bound.

Geographic boundaries also create occupational internal labor markets. Clark, Twombly, and Moore (1990) conclude that a majority of individuals move from one institution to another in the same state. Also, many top level administrators who did not move to another institution within the same state, moved to another institution within the same region.

Within internal labor markets, there are three structural features: 1) employees begin in entry ports or lower-level positions, 2) job ladders or career lines are developed to help minimize the costs of training employees, 3) movement up the job ladder is associated with gaining new knowledge or skill (Cejda, McKenney, & Burley, 2001). One of the basic assumptions of the internal labor market theory is that these sequences to move up the career line become institutionalized. Cejda, McKenney, and Burley stated that the positions become testing points,
whereas the organization can evaluate the individual to determine whether he is capable to continue his path up the career line.

**The American Community College**

The community college is known as the gateway to educational and career opportunities at an affordable price (Vaughan, 2000). It has been successful in many aspects because it has combined practices of the public high school, the private junior college, and the four-year college and university (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). According to Vaughan, the GI Bill, the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and business and industry’s demand for trained workers are a few of the influences that have helped the community college to grow, expand, and be successful. Vaughan also noted that there are approximately 1,100 community colleges nationwide, and each of these community colleges continues to follow Thomas Jefferson’s philosophy that education should be both practical as well as liberal and serve both public goods and individual needs.

The community college history began early in the twentieth century. Some of the influences that contributed to the founding of the community college include workers needing to operate the nation’s expanding industries, the period of adolescence was lengthened, and newer technologies demanded more skilled workers (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).

In 1901, Joliet Junior College was founded by William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago. Joliet Junior College was an extension of Joliet High School. The college’s enrollment grew at a very rapid rate (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). According to Cohen and Brawer, by 1915, the college’s enrollment had grown to such a great extent that it was given the addition of a junior college wing. Joliet Junior College has continued to exist today, making it the oldest existing public two-year college in the nation (Vaughan, 2000). Cohen and Brawer also noted that the term junior college has been applied to two-year colleges since their beginnings to the 1940s.
Community colleges have been known for their open-door policies, but community colleges did not begin to practice open-door policies until the 1960s when they began to see rapid enrollment growth. Vaughan (2000) noted three distinct events that sparked enrollment growth in community colleges during the 1960s. First, baby boomers began to reach college age during the 1960s. Vaughan also stated that with the help of the GI Bill, the parents of these baby boomers were also able to attend college. Second, the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the push for women’s rights helped to eliminate many barriers that blocked higher education access to disadvantaged groups (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). Cohen and Brawer noted that an increase in financial aid for higher education opened many doors for community college students.

The mission of community colleges differs greatly among each institution, but the overall mission of the community college is improving its community. Vaughan (2000) gives five commitments that shape most community colleges: 1) open-access admissions; 2) comprehensive educational program; 3) serving the community; 4) teaching and learning; 5) fostering lifelong learning. Each community college differs in the way it carries out its mission. Some community colleges may focus on technical programs in achieving their missions while others may focus on university transfer programs to achieve their missions.

**Career Paths to the Community College Presidency**

In 2007, a survey was taken from community college presidents across the nation, and the results of that survey revealed that 84% of current community college presidents planned to retire within the next ten years (Drake, 2008). With such a large number of retirements impending, it is imperative for potential community college presidents to understand and know the most common career paths to the community college presidency (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007).
According to Weisman and Vaughan (2007), the most consistent path traveled to the position of presidency is through the academic pipeline. Weisman and Vaughan noted that 55% of community college presidents were in academic positions prior to assuming their first presidency, compared to 8% who were in student services prior to assuming their first presidency and 6% who were in business services prior to assuming their first presidency. Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) conducted a study of community college presidents in which 37% of community college presidents had held the title of provost as their immediate past positions. Within this same study, other immediate past positions of the community college presidents surveyed indicated the positions of president at another community college, senior academic or instructional officer, senior student affairs officer, vice president for institutional planning and advancement, dean position, and director of continuing education. Amey and VanDerLinden stated that a small percentage of community college presidents surveyed emerged to the position by a promotion from the faculty ranks.

Most community college presidents obtained a doctorate degree as their highest degree. Weisman and Vaughan (2007) reported that 76% of community college presidents had a doctorate degree as their highest degree in 1984. By 2006, almost 90% of community college presidents had a doctorate degree as their highest degree. Most community college presidents have never obtained an associate’s degree although that is the highest degree at most of these presidents’ institutions. Weisman and Vaughan revealed that in 2006, 18% of community college presidents held an associate’s degree while 40% had attended a community college but never obtained an associate’s degree.

A large percentage of current community college presidents were promoted from within their current institution (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Weisman and Vaughan noted that in 2006, 35% of community college presidents were internal candidates when they received their current
presidency. Nevertheless, a large percentage of current community college presidents was hired with the help of a search firm. Weisman and Vaughan also revealed that many community college presidents were interviewed for an average of three presidential vacancies before being hired as a president.

**Community College Administrators**

Community college presidents are expected to begin retiring in vast numbers within the next several years. Boggs (2003) stated that a recent survey compiled by the American Association of Community Colleges revealed that 45% of college presidents planned to retire by 2007 while 79% plan to retire by 2012. Between 2006 and 2009, 24% of community college presidents planned to retire (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). With such a large number of retiring presidents, many upper-level administrators would move into these presidential positions; however, these upper-level administrators are on the verge of retirement as well. According to Boggs, the average age of community college presidents is 56 years, and the average age of upper-level administrators is 54 years. Boggs states that with this huge crisis facing the leadership of community colleges, opportunities have never been better for minorities to fill the leadership vacancies left by retiring administrators.

California, which has one of the nation’s largest community-college systems, has experienced the crisis of retirements in community college leadership first hand (Ashburn, 2007). In 2007, twenty-two of California’s 109 community colleges were looking for a college president. Ashburn also noted that in 2007, twenty-eight of the community colleges began the academic year with a new president. California boasts one of the nation’s largest percentages of minority populations. Minority candidates must begin to be included in these presidential searches.
Women have begun to make great strides in assuming leadership positions within community colleges. Between 1986 and 1998, presidencies held by women in community colleges rose from 7.9% to 22.4% (Lively, 2000). By 2002, the percentage of female community college presidents had risen 27% (Townsend, 2006). Women have begun to see more administrative opportunities available to them because of the attention that was drawn to the subject during the 1980s (Opp & Gosetti, 2002). June (2008) notes that women make up 38% of chief academic officers, but only 10% of those women were African-American or from another minority group.

Minorities of different ethnic groups continue to be underrepresented in administrative roles within the community college field (Lum, 2005). Lum revealed that Asian Americans continue to be one of the most underrepresented minority ethnic groups in the field of higher education leadership. Asian Americans have long been viewed as good managers, but they have not been traditionally viewed as leaders. Lum further stated that Asian American students have been plentiful on the West Coast, but the number of Asian American leaders has not represented the student population.

African American community college leaders have also been underrepresented in leadership roles within the community colleges. Phelps and Taber (1997) revealed that 5% of 1,220 community college presidents were African American. Some community college experts revealed that in order to condense this large gap of underrepresentation of African American leaders, community colleges will have to begin expanding opportunities for them (June, 2007).

Chenoweth (1998) suggested that African American community college presidents are underrepresented because many boards of trustees fear that the community will not accept an African American or minority president. Also, trustees are dominantly Caucasian male, just as most community college presidents are dominantly Caucasian male. According to Vaughan and
Weisman (1997), 86.6% of trustees classified themselves as Caucasians. African Americans made up 7.9%, Hispanics made up 2.3%, and 1.1% classified themselves as Asian American.

Some experts argued that one reason minorities have not achieved administrative positions within community colleges is because minorities have not been exposed to the programs that lead into these positions (Evelyn, 1998). Although there have been numerous leadership programs and efforts from several national organizations, minority representation is still underrepresented in community college leadership. Boggs (2003) stated that there was a 78% decline in the number of advanced degrees in the area of community college leadership from 1982-1987. However, there are several community college leadership programs offered at various institutions to continue to prepare individuals for administrative roles within the community college. Three of these leadership programs include the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas (http://edadmin.edb.utexas.edu/cclp); the Higher Education Administration Program at North Carolina State University (http://ced.ncsu.edu/ahe/degree_programs/hea_edd.php); and the Community College Leadership Program at Mississippi State University (http://www.leadershipandfoundations.msstate.edu/programs/#ccl). The goal of these programs is to prepare students to lead and to inspire those around them. These programs also specialize in building minority candidates for leadership roles within community colleges (Manzo, 1996).

Developing graduate programs is one way to help aspiring community college leaders.

There are many factors related to being an outstanding community college president. McFarlin (1999) listed nine factors that exist in relationship to being an outstanding community college president: 1) completion of a terminal degree; 2) study of higher education and community college leadership; 3) scholarly publishing and presentations; 4) preparation as an agent of change; 5) status as a community college insider; 6) following nontraditional paths to the
presidency; 7) participating as a protégé in a mentor-protégé relationship; 8) using peer networks; 9) knowledge of contemporary technology.

Vinier (2006) stated that some community colleges have begun to look elsewhere for potential leaders to lead their institutions. Campuses have begun to recruit candidates from businesses, the military, and other non-community college backgrounds. Since most upper-level administrators are nearing retirement age, it is imperative that community colleges begin to look elsewhere to fill positions.

**Community College Students**

Minority student enrollment is continuing to increase within community colleges throughout the United States. For the majority of these minority groups, community colleges will continue to be the choice of where they begin their higher education pursuits (Laden, 2004). Minority student enrollment at two year colleges rose from 16% to 18% between 1987 and 1997. Each region of the United States has seen an increase in minority student enrollment in community colleges. The New England region witnessed a 36.9% increase, the Mid-Atlantic region witnessed a 7% increase, the Southwest witnessed a 21% increase, and the Southern United States witnessed an astonishing 48% increase (Wright, 1997). Pope (2002) noted that the U.S. Census Bureau reported in 1999 that 42.3% of African Americans in higher education were in the community college system.

The Los Angeles Community College District has one of the largest community college districts in the world. Minority ethnic groups are clearly a majority within this community college district. In 2003, approximately 81% of students enrolled within the district were non-White students (Hagedorn, 2004). This large percentage of minority student enrollment is becoming relevant throughout the United States because of the number of minorities in general is
increasing. Minorities are beginning to outnumber or set to outnumber Whites in several states. Minorities currently outnumber Whites in California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Texas, and they are set to outnumber Whites in Arizona, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, and New York (Pluviose, 2006).

Bumphus and Roueche (2007) stated that community colleges are enrolling more than half of the nation’s undergraduate students. For a vast majority of these undergraduate students, community colleges are the entry point for their higher education experiences. As more and more high school students begin to graduate, community colleges are going to be seeing a growth in student enrollment, particularly minority student enrollment. Banerji (2004) stated that by the year of 2014, minority student enrollments will increase by 43% in eleven different states and in the District of Columbia.

Diversity on the Community College Campus

The student body at community colleges throughout the United States continues to become more and more diverse. Seeing administrators of similar backgrounds is important and has many benefits for community college students. Jackson and Phelps (2004) listed three important benefits that come from a diverse community college. First, students, faculty, and staff are exposed to structural diversity. Structural diversity opens doors for new ideas of teaching and learning. Second, students, faculty, and staff are exposed to informal interactional diversity, which usually occurs in student organizations and other social activities. Finally, students, faculty, and staff are exposed to classroom diversity in which they not only teach and learn about diverse people, but they are exposed to this type of diversity each day at the community college.

Page (2003) advocated that higher education institutions must have a vision for the make-up of the student body, faculty, and administration. He stated that as colleges continue to
examine the moral and organizational characteristics of their mission statements, they will have to examine the make-up of the student body, faculty, and administration. Page gave five key features that the leadership team of diverse community will exhibit. First, there will be an understanding of other cultures and a high value placed on diversity in leadership positions. Second, there will be an understanding to basic values that pass through the organization. Third, there will be a creation of trust, and all cultures within the organization will be represented and respected. Fourth, there will be strategies to recruit ethnic minorities within the organization. Fifth, there will be a willingness for the leader to be accountable for the success or failure of promoting diversity within the organization.

Mulder (1991) noted that community colleges must begin to attract new minorities to leadership positions to help recruit and retain minority students who are already faced with a number of issues. A major barrier to minority student recruitment is the student’s perception of the institution he/she attends. Konrad and Pfeffer (1991) noted that minority students seem to benefit from academic environments in which minority authority figures are present. The presence of at least one minority in not only leadership positions, but also on a college’s board of trustees, is essential to successful minority student recruitment. Minority administrators that serve in mentor programs offer the opportunity for minority students to come in contact with role models (Mulder, 1991).

Successful minority presidents can produce not only confidence in the institution they serve, but also a sense of educational excellence (Cortada, 1996). Cortada also noted that these minority presidents can also serve as a spokesperson for accepted, basic values. Minority presidents will also provide connections among Latino, African American, Caribbean, and Asian populations.
Community colleges are known to serve the community in which they reside, and these communities can be very diverse. Therefore, meeting the needs of these diverse communities is important. Community colleges must be multicultural in all of their representations (Burstein, 1997). Maricopa Community College District in Arizona has a student population that is 40% minority. Officials at Maricopa believed that minority enrollment will continue to grow (Evelyn, 2001). Evelyn further noted that Maricopa officials have begun to recruit potential employees at institutions that serve large numbers of minority students.

The president of the community college plays an important role in advancing a diversity agenda. Presidents are able to relate a diversity agenda in strategic planning, presidents can create board support in having a diverse campus, and presidents can establish committees within the college to help tackle the diversity issue (Kezar, 2008). As community college presidents begin to retire, they may find themselves in a position to be an advocate for diversity on their college campuses. These retiring presidents are able to work with their boards and mentor potential presidential candidates in such a way that the community college becomes an equitable workplace (Drake, 2008).

Kezar (2008) listed several goals that a diversity initiative must have. First, the organization must have a clear understanding of diversity. Second, organizations must infuse attention to differences in race, gender, and sexual orientations. Finally, organizations must create greater equity in the experience of individuals from diverse backgrounds. According to Kezar, a diversity initiative can arise from several different ways. A diversity initiative can emerge from the top down, where the president or CEO of the organization plans the initiative; also, a diversity initiative can emerge from the bottom up, where faculty or staff plans the initiative.
Recruitment Strategies for Minority Administrators

Land (2003) stated that the pool of qualified leaders for the community college has declined in recent years. Land also noted that inadequate leadership preparation, job requirements, and other demands have caused this pool of qualified leaders to shrink. According to Land, community colleges are also expected to see large numbers of their administrators retiring in the next few years. Without an adequate number of qualified individuals to assume these administrative vacancies, these community colleges will be in a crisis to find qualified individuals from elsewhere (Land, 2003).

With the pending mass number of retirements of community college administrators within the next few years and the underrepresentation of minorities in administrative roles, community colleges should encourage minorities to acquire the needed qualifications to fill these vacancies (Land, 2003). Community colleges should begin to develop specific strategies that will guide minorities into these leadership roles.

Muller (1996) stated that urban community colleges play a vital role in recruiting minority administrators. More minority students are found in urban community colleges than in community colleges elsewhere, and these minority students will play a vital role in selecting minority administrators. Muller also noted that community colleges within urban communities will usually display an abundance of minority administrators despite the underrepresentation of minority administrators in other parts of the nation. There has to be a coordinated effort between parties of the community college to recruit, retain, and development minority administrators.

In order to continue to recruit minority administrators to help create a diverse community college campus, the effort to create this diversity must be an ongoing process (Phelps & Taber, 1996). Community colleges must have plans, programs, and/or goals that will help create a campus that is ethnically diverse. These plans should involve strategies that will result in
Barriers and Discrimination Factors of Minority Administrators

Perez (1990) stated that although a number of advances have been made in the search and selection process, there is still a number of systemic factors and prejudices that hinder institutions from recruiting and appointing candidates of various backgrounds. One factor is that majority males still constitute the largest number of individuals considered for and appointed to upper-level administrative positions. Perez also noted that many search committees do not view candidates’ degrees on an equal scale. For example, a candidate who holds a doctorate degree in higher education administration will be held to a higher standard than a candidate who received a doctorate in a humanities or social science field.

Evelyn (1998) noted that minority administrators, as well as minority faculty, still encounter many barriers and discrimination factors as they move up the realm in higher education. One major barrier for minorities in achieving top level administrator positions is the board of trustees for the college. Most boards are dominated by White males, and most of these White males have never considered hiring a minority president. Evelyn stated that although boards are beginning to diversify, and some boards are seeking diversity when hiring a president, many board members do not see the terms of minority and quality as interconnected. Pluviose (2006) stated that many times when boards bring a minority president in to lead the institution, it is simply to promote diversity. Therefore, in some cases, this presidential appointment will be a brief tenure.
A report published by the Association for the Study of Higher Education noted several organizational barriers that serve as barriers to promoting a diverse campus. The report included references to the hiring process that serve as barriers (Evans & Chun, 2007). Colleges and universities have historically excluded minorities from faculty and staff ranks. Promotion and advancement also serve as barriers because minorities have received promotions at a much slower rate than non-minorities. Many people consider promotion for minority individuals as ambiguous and inequitably administered. Many people also consider lack of support from the organization as a barrier. When an individual receives little support or praise for his work, it may cause him to be ineffective in his position. Failure to empower and include in decision-making ideas is also a barrier. Many minorities who achieved a high-ranking position may lack the authority associated with making key decisions. Other barriers include differing expectations, stereotyping and organizational fit, and lack of mentoring and access to formal and informal networks (Evans & Chun, 2007).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study provided a comparison of the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to examine successful strategies for recruiting minority administrators.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the current study.

1. Are there significant differences in the demographics of current African American community college presidents and the demographics of current White community college presidents?

2. Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and the career paths of current White community college presidents?

3. Are there significant differences in the professional experiences of current African American community college presidents and the professional experiences of current White community college presidents?

4. What are the barriers that current African American community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency and the barriers that
current White community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency?

5. What are the recruitment strategies that current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents feel will be the most successful in recruiting minority administrators?

**Survey Research**

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) suggested that the main purpose of survey research is to describe the characteristics of a population. When doing survey research, researchers want to find out how members of a population distribute themselves on one or more variables. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, there are three distinct characteristics that surveys usually possess. First, surveys collect information from people in order to describe some aspects or characteristics. Second, information is usually collected through asking questions, and the answers to these questions constitute the data for the study. Third, information is collected from a sample rather than from every member of the population. For the current study, all characteristics for survey research were met.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) noted that choosing the mode of data collection is a very important step in conducting survey research. In this study, the use of mail surveys was the method used for the primary method of data collection. The mail survey contained a questionnaire that was sent to each individual in the population sample with a request that it be completed and then returned by a given date. The choice to use mail surveys for the present study was made for several reasons. First, mail surveys can be accomplished by the researcher alone. A second reason that the researcher chose to use mail surveys was that mail surveys permit the respondents to take sufficient time to give thoughtful answers to the questions asked.
Mail surveys also present negative challenges for the researcher. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), mail surveys offer less opportunity to encourage cooperation of the respondents or to provide assistance. As a result of the researcher not being present when the respondents are answering the surveys, mail surveys have a tendency to produce low response rates.

**Internal Validity**

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) presented three major threats to internal validity in survey research. Those four threats include mortality, location, and instrument decay. Mortality threats usually arise in longitudinal studies. In this study, mortality would mean presidents leaving a community college for various reasons (retirement, relocation, termination). In order to address the threat of mortality, it is imperative that the researcher collect data within a one month time frame to reduce the threats of mortality. Location is another threat to internal validity. In this study, location could be a major threat to internal validity since the respondents are most likely to complete the surveys at their community college. A third threat to internal validity is instrument decay. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, instrument decay can occur if the respondents get too tired or if they feel rushed. This threat was minimal because the respondents were given a two week’s time frame to complete and return the survey. Also, the survey was estimated to only take five-ten minutes to complete.

**External Validity**

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) defined external validity as the degree to which a study’s findings can be generalized to a larger population. Population generalizability refers to the extent to which a sample represents the population of interest. For this study, African American
community college presidents and White community college presidents were the population of interest.

Establishing Validity

Gay and Airasian (2003) noted that construct validity is the most important form of validity. Construct validity ensures that the research instrument is measuring what it is that it is supposed to be measuring. There are several ways that a researcher can establish construct validity. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) noted that in order for a researcher to satisfy proof of construct validity, the researcher will have to collect a variety of different types of evidence that will allow them to make necessary conclusions. One type of evidence that a researcher could collect that shows construct validity is the opinion of independent judges that have knowledge of the field being studied. In order to establish construct validity of this instrument, the researcher used scholars in the field of community college administration to judge whether the items contained on the survey instrument actually addressed the researcher’s research questions. The panel of experts gave their opinions about the items on the survey. The panel was asked to give comments and suggestions regarding the clarity of the items on the testing instrument, the amount of time that it took to answer the items on the testing instrument, and any other suggestions regarding additional items to be included or items to be excluded to make the testing instrument more valid. The panel of experts determined that the survey was valid for the study.

Population

The population used for this study included 964 presidents that preside over community colleges listed in the 2008 American Association of Community Colleges directory. The 2008
American Association of Community Colleges directory listed all of the community colleges that were a member of its organization for year of 2008.

**Sample**

The sample for this study was 176 community college presidents. The researcher was able to identify 88 African American community college presidents by accessing the Presidents’ Roundtable Directory (http://www.ccc.edu/roundtable/MembershipResources.asp). The Presidents’ Roundtable is an organization that connects African American community college presidents and campus leaders. After identifying the 88 African American community college presidents to be used for the sample, the researcher conducted a random sample of the remaining 876 community college presidents to get a sample of 88 additional community college presidents. The total number of community college presidents that were sent surveys was 176 presidents.

**Instrumentation**

A written questionnaire (*Presidents’ Survey*) was the primary method of data collection. This instrument was formed based on the extensive reading of existing literature and research questions. This instrument consisted of 26 checklist and rating scale items, divided into 5 different sections. Section I of the instrument consisted of demographic items. Section II of the instrument consisted of career paths items. Section III of the instrument consisted of professional experiences items. Section IV of the instrument consisted of barriers items. Section V of the instrument consisted of recruitment strategies items.
Reliability

Gay and Airasian (2003) stated that “reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring” (p. 141). The researcher performed a Cronbach’s alpha reliability test on his testing instrument by having a panel of 12 participants to complete the questionnaire. Since the researcher’s testing instrument was divided into five sections, he performed the Cronbach’s alpha reliability test on each section. Results of the Cronbach’s alpha reliability test indicated the testing instrument had adequate internal consistency. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability test yielded the following coefficients: demographics, $r = .79$; career paths, $r = .82$; professional experiences, $r = .84$; barriers, $r = .69$; recruitment strategies, $r = .78$.

Procedures

Once written permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Mississippi State University to conduct the study was granted, a packet of information was mailed to the community college presidents. In order to obtain the informed consent of the subjects, the researcher sent a package that contained the following: a letter explaining the purpose of this study, a request for them to participate in the study, a description of the confidentiality of the study, the identity of the researcher, a statement of appreciation, a request for a timely concern, a promise of the results once the study was completed, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to return the surveys. The researcher asked the respondents to return surveys within two weeks of receiving them. A second mail out was sent after the initial due date. This mail out was once again sent to all 176 community college presidents reminding them to fill out the initial survey if they had not already done so. The researcher sent the second mail out to all 176 community college presidents participating in the study because the return envelopes did not have the presidents’ names on them; therefore, the researcher did not know which presidents had filled out
the survey and which presidents had not. Each respondent had access to a self-addressed stamped envelope that was found in the survey package.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected from the returned surveys that were sent to the researcher from the respondents participating in the survey. The responses from the participants were analyzed using various descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive data such as frequency distributions and minimum and maximum scores were used for this study. Chi-Square Analysis was used to examine differences in respondents’ responses. Analysis of Variance was used to compare differences of means between the respondents’ current ages and to compare differences of means between the ages in which the respondents’ obtained their first presidency. The level of significance was set at .05. For research question one, Chi-Square Analysis was used to examine differences in the responses to the demographic questions (questionnaire items 1-12). An Analysis of Variance was used to examine questionnaire item 2. For research question two, Chi-Square Analysis was used to examine differences in the responses to the career paths questions (questionnaire items 13-20). An Analysis of Variance was used to examine questionnaire item 15. For research question three, Chi-Square Analysis was used to examine differences in the responses to the professional experiences questions (questionnaire items 21-24). For research question four, frequencies and percentages were used to determine the barriers the respondents had encountered (questionnaire item 25). For research question five, frequencies and percentages were used to determine the recruitment strategies that would be successful in recruiting minority administrators (questionnaire item 26).
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to examine successful strategies for recruiting minority administrators. The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief background of the study, describe the population surveyed, and present the results of the statistical analysis used to answer the five research questions.

Population Surveyed

The population surveyed for this study was 176 community college presidents. The researcher identified 88 African American community college presidents by accessing the Presidents’ Roundtable Directory. The Presidents’ Roundtable is an organization that connects African American community college presidents and campus leaders. After identifying the 88 African American community college presidents to be used for the sample, the researcher conducted a random sample of 88 additional community college presidents. The total number of community college presidents surveyed was 176 presidents.
Response Rate

Survey questionnaires were mailed to 176 community college presidents. Two surveys were returned blank, with the respondents indicating that they did not wish to participate in the study. One survey was returned with insufficient data for analysis. One survey was returned with the recipient indicating that a search is currently being conducted for a new president at the institution. Three surveys were returned with the respondents indicating that their race was neither White/Caucasian nor Black/African American. A total of 112 surveys were returned, with 105 of those surveys used for the current study. The response rate was 63%.

Figure 1 presents an overview of the ethnic groups of the respondents ($N = 105$) who responded to the survey.

![Pie chart showing percentages of racial/ethnic groups](chart.png)

Figure 1

Percentages for Racial Ethnic Group

In Figure 1, 52% of survey respondents were White/Caucasian. Figure 1 also shows that 48% of survey respondents were Black/African American.
Research Question One

Table 1 presents an overview of the frequencies and percentages for responses to the demographic items on the survey (Questionnaire items 1-12). In addition to frequencies and percentages, the researcher also performed Chi-Square Analysis and Analysis of Variance tests for the responses.

Table 1
Frequencies and Percentages for Responses to Demographic Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 55</td>
<td>n = 50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>$\chi^2 = 1.913$</td>
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<td>31 (62.0)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>19 (38.0)</td>
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<td>Degree</td>
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<td>$\chi^2 = 3.525$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 (3.6)</td>
<td>2 (4.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Field of Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\chi^2 = 6.069$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>2 (3.6)</td>
<td>3 (6.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCLP</td>
<td>7 (12.7)</td>
<td>11 (22.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>29 (52.7)</td>
<td>27 (54.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>4 (7.3)</td>
<td>1 (2.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>1 (1.8)</td>
<td>2 (4.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc Sciences</td>
<td>3 (5.5)</td>
<td>3 (6.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9 (16.4)</td>
<td>3 (6.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 presents the data used to analyze the first research question: Are there significant differences in the demographics of current African American community college presidents and the demographics of current White community college presidents? Table 1 presents data in the form of frequencies, percentages, Chi-Square, and Analysis of Variance results. With an alpha level of .05, the Chi-Square Analysis was used to find the following demographic data to be significant: marital status (p = .022), graduate from an HBCU (p = .000), make-up of student body (p = .001), Rural (p = .000), Urban (p = 5.370), Suburban (p = .080).
body \((p = .001)\), and location of institution \((p = .000)\). Results of the statistical analysis for the category of marital status indicated a significant difference, \(\chi^2(3, N = 102) = 9.609, p = .022\).

Ninety-four percent of White/Caucasian community college presidents were married as compared to 73% of Black/African American community college presidents. More Black/African American community college presidents (10.4%) tended to be single as compared to single White/Caucasian community college presidents (3.7%). Two respondents did not respond to the marital item because they indicated that they have a partner. Graduating from an HBCU was also found to be significant, \(\chi^2(1, N = 105) = 28.875, p = .000\). No White/Caucasian community college presidents attended an HBCU. This was expected since White/Caucasians usually do not attend an HBCU. Make-up of the student body was also found to be significant, \(\chi^2(2, N = 102) = 13.833, p = .001\). The largest percentage (58.5%) of White/Caucasian community college presidents described the make-up of the student body at their institution as predominantly non-minority. The largest percentage (36.7%) of Black/African American community college presidents described the make-up of the student body at their institution as predominantly minority. Finally, there was a significant difference, \(\chi^2(2, N = 105) = 21.719, p = .000\), in location of the institution. Most (72.7%) White/Caucasian community college presidents described the location of their institutions as rural while most (60.0%) of Black/African American community college presidents described the location of their institutions as urban. Results of the Chi-Square Analysis found no significant differences in the following categories: gender, highest degree earned, major field of study, attending a community or junior college, and graduating from a community or junior college.

Analysis of Variance was used to determine whether there were significant differences in current age and in years worked on the community college level. The results indicated that there was not a significant difference \((F(1, 100) = 3.099, p = .081)\) found for the category of current
age. However, there was a significant difference ($F(1, 102) = 5.370, p = .022$) found for the category of years worked on the community college level. White/Caucasian community college presidents had worked for a mean of 27.93 years, with a minimum of one year and a maximum of 44 years. Black/African American community college presidents had worked for a mean of 23.82 years, with a minimum of two years and a maximum of 40 years.

**Research Question Two**

Figure 2 is a visual representation of how many years Black/African American community college president respondents and White/Caucasian community college presidents had held their current positions.

![Years Held Current Position](image)

**Figure 2**

Percentages for Years Held Current Position

Figure 2 presents an overview of the percentages for the years the respondents had held their current positions. As shown in Figure 2, a large percentage (42%) of Black/African
American community college presidents had only been in their current positions for 1-3 years. The largest percentage (30.9%) of White/Caucasian community college presidents had been in their current positions for 10 or more years. The smallest percentage for both White/Caucasian community college presidents (14.5%) and Black/African American community college presidents (16.0%) had held their current position for 7-9 years.

Table 2 presents the frequencies, percentages, and results of the Chi-Square Analysis performed on current positions and previous job titles (Questionnaire items 13, 14, and 16). The level of significance was set at .05. These questionnaire items were used for respondents to indicate how many years they had held their current positions, how they achieved their current positions, and what were their previous job titles.
Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages for Current Positions and Previous Job Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Path Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian $n = 55$</th>
<th>Black/African American $n = 50$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years Held</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>$\chi^2=3.993, .262$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achieve Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$\chi^2=.016, .992$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Previous job title</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$\chi^2=15.303, .054$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAO</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic affairs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External affairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student affairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Business</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents the results of questionnaire items 13, 14, and 16 on the survey questionnaire. The responses to these items were used to answer the second research question: Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents? Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(3, N=105) = 3.993, p = .262$) indicated that there was not a significant difference in the years that White/Caucasian community college presidents and Black/African community college presidents had held their current positions. There was not a significant difference, $\chi^2(2, $
in the way the respondents achieved their current position. For both
groups of respondents, the largest percentage of respondents indicated that they had achieved
their current positions through the application process. The smallest percentage of respondents
for both groups indicated that they had achieved their positions through other processes. Some of
these respondents indicated that they had been recruited from another college.

The last results from the Chi-Square Analysis presented in Table 2 indicate that there was
not a significant difference, \( \chi^2(8, N=105) = 15.303, p = .054 \), in the previous job titles between the
two groups of respondents. The largest percentage (43.6%) of White/Caucasian community
college presidents indicated that their previous job title was Chief Academic Officer or Provost.
The largest percentage (28.0%) of Black/African American community college presidents
indicated that their previous job title was President/CEO/Chancellor. The top three previous
positions for White/Caucasian community college presidents were Chief Academic Officer or
Provost (43.6%), President/CEO/Chancellor (20%), and Other Senior Executive in Academic
Affairs (10.9%). The top three previous positions for Black/African American community
college presidents were President/CEO/Chancellor (28%), Chief Academic Officer or Provost
(26%), and Other Senior Executive in Student Affairs (24%).

The mean age for White/Caucasian community college presidents at the first presidency
(item 15) was 48.52 (SD = 7.435) years while the mean age for Black/African American
community college presidents at their first presidency was 48.46 (SD = 6.267) years. The
youngest age that White/Caucasian community college presidents indicated for their age when
they accepted their first presidency was 26 while the oldest age that White/Caucasian community
college presidents indicated was 64. The youngest age that Black/African community college
presidents indicated for their age when they accepted their first presidency was 34 while the
oldest age that Black/African American community college presidents indicated was 61. The
results of the Analysis of Variance indicated that there was not a significant difference ($F(1, 100) = .002, p = .965$) in the ages of the respondents for when they accepted their first presidency.

Table 3
Mean Age at First Presidency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian $n = 55$</th>
<th>Black/African American $n = 50$</th>
<th>$F = .002$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age at first presidency</td>
<td>$M = 48.52, SD = 7.435$</td>
<td>$M = 48.46, SD = 6.267$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents the frequencies and percentages of the type of experience the respondents held before their first community college presidency appointment (Questionnaire item 17). The largest percentage of respondents from both groups had held the title of community college instructor before their first community college administrative appointment. Respondents were asked to check all experience held before their first presidency.
Table 4
Frequencies and Percentages for Type of Experience Held

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college instructor</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University professor</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University administrator</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 teacher</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 administrator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military/Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Professional</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the White/Caucasian respondents, 57.4% of respondents indicated that they had held the title of community college instructor. Within the Black/African American respondents, 48% of respondents indicated that they had held the title of community college instructor. The smallest percentage of both groups indicated that they were in the military or government sector before their first community college administrative appointment. Over 7% of White/Caucasian respondents had been employed in the military or government sector while 8% of Black/African American respondents had been employed in the military or government sector.

Table 5 presents the results of questionnaire items 18 and 19 from the survey questionnaire. These questionnaire items were used for respondents to indicate if they had to relocate to obtain their current positions and to indicate how important location was to them when they accepted their positions. The responses to these items were used to answer the second
research question: Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents? A Chi-Square Analysis was used to determine if significant differences exist between the responses of the two groups. The level of significance was set at .05.

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages for Relocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Path Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 = .537$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How far</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-200 miles</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-400 miles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-700 miles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>701 or more miles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No relocation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 = 5.584$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No importance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 = .501$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large percentage of White/Caucasian community college presidents (78.2%) and a large percentage of Black/African American community college presidents (72.0%) had to relocate to obtain their current presidencies. Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(1, N=105) = .537, p = .464$) indicated that there was not a significant difference between the responses for questionnaire item 18 (relocation to obtain current position).
Black/African American community college presidents who had to relocate to obtain their current presidency had to travel farther more often than their White/Caucasian community college presidents counterparts. Approximately 26% of Black/African community college presidents had to travel 701 or more miles to obtain their current presidency while only 14.5% of White/Caucasian community college presidents had to travel 701 or more miles to obtain their current presidencies. Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(4, N=105) = 5.584, p = 2.32$) indicated there was not a significant difference in the number of miles White/Caucasian community college president respondents and Black/African American community college president respondents had to travel to obtain their current job.

Figure 3 presents a visual representation of the miles traveled to obtain the presidency for both groups. The largest percentage of White/Caucasian community college president respondents had to travel 0-200 miles to obtain their current position. The largest percentage of Black/African American community college presidents had to travel 701 or more miles to obtain their current positions.
Figure 3 indicated that over 21% of White/Caucasian community college president respondents did not have to relocate to obtain their current positions. Figure 3 also indicated that 28% of Black/African American community college president respondents did not have to relocate to obtain their current positions. The smallest percentage of White/Caucasian community college president respondents had to travel 401-700 miles to obtain their current positions. The smallest percentage of Black/African American community college president respondents had to travel 401-700 miles to obtain their current positions.

Respondents were asked to list the items that contributed the most to their career advancement. In Table 6, respondents listed the top three factors that have contributed to their career advancement as prior administrative experience, leadership abilities, and educational accomplishments (Item 20).
Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages for Factors Contributed to Career Advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors contributed to career advancement</th>
<th>1st choice</th>
<th>2nd choice</th>
<th>3rd choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior administrative experience</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational accomplishments</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication record</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American mentor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-African American mentor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership abilities</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to take risks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance of search firms</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 shows a visual representation of the top three factors that have contributed to the respondents’ career advancement. Respondents listed assistance of search firms, publication record, and networking as the factors that had contributed the least to their career advancement.
Figure 4 was used to show a visual representation of the top three factors that had contributed to White/Caucasian community college president respondents and Black/African American community college president respondents. Prior administrative experience was the factor that contributed the most to both White/Caucasian community college president respondents and Black/African American community college president respondents. Leadership abilities and education accomplishments were the final two factors that contributed the most to White/Caucasian community college president respondents’ and Black/African American community college president respondents’ career paths.
Research Question Three

Table 7 presents the data for the professional experiences (Questionnaire items 21, 22, 23, and 24) of the respondents. The results from these items were used to answer the third research question: Are there significant differences in the professional experiences of current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents. A Chi-Square Analysis was used to determine if significant differences existed between the respondents’ responses.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages for Professional Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Experience Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of Professional Organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Publication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Agent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05.

Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(1, N=105) = 7.312, p = .007$) indicated that there was a significant difference between respondents in attending advanced leadership development
workshops. Over 81% of White/Caucasian community college presidents had attended advanced leadership development workshops while over 98% of Black/African American community college presidents had attended advanced leadership development workshops. Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(1, N=105) = 2.696, p = .101$) indicated that there was not a significant difference between respondents in being a member of any professional organization. Over 78% of White/Caucasian community college presidents indicated that they were a member of a professional organization while 90% of Black/African American community college presidents indicated that they were a member of a professional organization.

In the rating of the respondents personal research and publication agenda, results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(2, N=105) = 1.522, p = .467$) indicated that there was not a significant difference in the responses. A high percentage of both groups indicated that they would rate their personal research and publication agenda below average. Over 49% of White/Caucasian community college presidents indicated that they would rate their personal research and publication agenda below average while 40% of Black/African American community college presidents would rate their personal research and publication agenda below average.

Results of the Chi-Square Analysis ($\chi^2(1, N=105) = .253, p = .615$) indicated that there was not a significant difference between the respondents for perceiving themselves as a change agent. Over 96% of White/Caucasian community college presidents perceived themselves as a change agent and 98% of Black/African American community college presidents viewed themselves as change agents.

**Research Question Four**

Table 8 presents the frequencies and percentages of the barriers that the respondents felt they had encountered on their paths to the presidency (Questionnaire item 25). The largest percentage of respondents reported that college politics had served as a barrier to the presidency.
Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages for Barriers Encountered to the Presidency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers Variable</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial discrimination</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender discrimination</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of personal support</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College politics</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest degree earned</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of administrative experience</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of board support</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The college or university attended</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over 70% of White/Caucasian respondents felt that college politics was a barrier to the presidency while 82.2% of Black/African American respondents felt that college politics had served as a barrier to the presidency. When viewing the barrier variable of racial discrimination, Black/African American respondents (71.1%) had perceived it to be a barrier at a much greater percentage than White/Caucasian respondents (19.5%). The college or university attended was least likely to serve as a barrier. Over 12% of White/Caucasian respondents indicated the college or university they attended had served as a barrier while 0% of Black/African American indicated the college or university they attended had served as a barrier.
Research Question Five

Table 9 lists the frequencies and percentages for the recruitment strategies that the respondents perceived would be the most successful in recruiting minority administrators (Questionnaire item 26). Respondents were asked to rank the strategies from 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest choice and 5 being the last choice.

Table 9

Frequencies and Percentages for Strategies Used to Recruit Minority Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment Strategies</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; choice</td>
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<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertise in media outlets w/large minority audiences</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Include members from diverse backgrounds on search committees</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minorities serve on board of trustees</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<td>22.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet with minority business representatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet with minority church representatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertise at HBCUs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Request the assistance of search firms</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Recruitment Strategies</td>
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<td>Request the assistance of search firms</td>
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Respondents listed “include members from diverse racial/cultural backgrounds on search committees,” “advertise in media outlets with large minority audiences,” “request the assistance of professional employment contractors for assistance in locating minority candidates,” and “advertise at historically Black campuses or schools with large African American populations as their top five choices.” Respondents were also allowed to choose a category of “other.” Some of the responses for other included “tap network of current minority administrators,” “meet with minority community representatives,” “personally recruit rising minority administrators,”
“network minorities,” “treat minorities right,” “pay competitively,” “develop a welcoming campus/community,” “leadership development programs that create pipelines and networks,” “ensure minority candidates obtain the degrees and administrative experience necessary to make them competitive candidates,” “network with other administrators of color,” “go to American Association of Community Colleges executive leadership training,” and “attend the Lakin Institute.”
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary, conclusions, and recommendations based on the results of the study. The purpose of the study and a description of the procedures used in collecting the data are presented in the summary. The conclusions answer the research questions based on the results of the study. Recommendations for further research are also given.

The purpose of the study was to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to examine successful strategies for recruiting minority administrators. The Presidents’ Survey was used to answer the five research questions used for the study. The survey consisted of five separate parts: 1) demographics, 2) career paths, 3) professional experiences, 4) barriers, and 5) recruitment strategies. The Presidents’ Survey was a self-developed instrument. The survey was developed based on extensive reading of existing literature of similar studies and research questions (Bridges, 2004; Leatherwood, 2007; May, 2005; Schmitz, 2008; Shufelt, 2002).

The Presidents’ Survey was sent to 176 community college presidents. The researcher surveyed 88 African American community college presidents who held the title of president as listed in 2009 Presidents’ Roundtable Directory. The researcher conducted a random sample to obtain 88 additional presidents to survey. Of the 176 surveys sent, the researcher received 112 surveys back. The response rate was 63%. Of the 112 surveys returned, 105 of those surveys were used for the current study. Answers to the following research questions were sought:
1. Are there significant differences in the demographics of current African American community college presidents and the demographics of current White community college presidents?

2. Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and the career paths of current White community college presidents?

3. Are there significant differences in the professional experiences of current African American community college presidents and the professional experiences of current White community college presidents?

4. What are the barriers that current African American community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency and the barriers that current White community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency?

5. What are the recruitment strategies that current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents feel will be the most successful in recruiting minority administrators?

A preliminary data analysis to check for reliability was used in the study. A panel of 12 participants was used. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test reliability of the testing instrument. Results of the Cronbach’s alpha test indicated internal consistency.

**Conclusions**

*Research Question One*

The findings for the first research question (Are there significant differences in the demographics of current African American community college presidents and current White
community college presidents?) indicated that significant differences \( (p < .05) \) existed between the respondents of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents in relation to marital status \( (p = .022) \), graduating from a Historically Black College or University \( (p = .000) \), make-up of student body \( (p = .001) \), and location of the institution \( (p = .001) \). In relation to marital status, White community college presidents tended to be married while more African American community college presidents tended to be single. No White community college president indicated that he/she had graduated from a Historically Black College or University while 58\% of African American community college presidents had graduated from a Historically Black College or University. Most White community college presidents indicated that they presided over a student body that was mostly non-minority students while more African American community college presidents indicated that they presided over a student body that was mostly minority students. White community college presidents tended to preside over community colleges that were in rural locations while African American community college presidents tended to preside over community colleges that were in urban locations. A doctorate degree is still considered a defining criterion in assuming the role of community college president (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Over 85\% of African American community college president and White community college president respondents indicated a doctorate degree as their highest degree. Most White community college presidents had an Ed. D. while more African American community college presidents had a Ph. D. Over half of the respondents of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents had majored in Education or Higher Education for their highest degree obtained. Over half of the respondents for both groups had attended a community college, but less than 30\% had graduated from a community college. The mean age of African American community college president respondents was found as 56.83 \( (SD = 7.769) \) years, and the mean age of White community
college president respondents is 59.24 (SD = 6.012) years. This is consistent with prior research of community college presidents. The average age of community college presidents is 56 years (Boggs, 2003). African American community college presidents had worked on the community college level for 23.82 (SD = 9.971) years and White community college presidents had worked on the community college level for 27.93 (SD = 8.103) years. The conclusions for research question one were significant differences exist between African American and White community college presidents in relation to marital status (p = .022), graduating from a Historically Black College or University (p = .000), make-up of student body (p = .001), and location of the institution (p = .001). Also, the conclusions for research question one indicated there were no significant differences between African American and White community college presidents in relation to “gender,” “highest degree earned,” “major field of study for highest degree earned,” “attendance of a community college,” or “graduation from a community college,” “age at first presidency,” and “years worked on the community college level.”

Research Question Two

The findings for the second research question (Are there significant differences in the career paths of current African American community college presidents and White community college presidents?) indicated that there were no significant differences in the career paths of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. Over 42% of African American community college respondents had held their current positions for 1 to 3 years. Approximately 78% or more of both respondent groups indicated that they had achieved their current positions through application. This is inconsistent with existing literature. In 2006, 35% of community college presidents were internal candidates when they received their current presidency (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Over 43% of White community college president
respondents and 26\% of African American community college president respondents had held the position of chief academic officer or provost as their previous job title. Existing literature stated that the immediate past position of community college presidents is chief academic officer or provost. Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) conducted a study of community college presidents in which 37\% of community college presidents had held the title of provost as their immediate past positions. Approximately 48\% of African American community college president respondents and over 57\% White community college president respondents had held the title of community college instructor. As found in previous literature, a large percentage of community college presidents come through the academic ranks. According to Weisman and Vaughan (2007), the most consistent path traveled to the position of presidency is through the academic pipeline. Over 70\% of both groups of respondents had to relocate to obtain their current positions, with over 50\% of both groups indicating that location was very important in their acceptance of their current positions. The top three factors respondents indicated to have contributed to their career advancement were prior administrative experience, leadership abilities, and educational accomplishments. The mean age for when African American community college president respondents accepted their first presidency was 48.46 (SD = 6.267), and the mean age for when White community college president respondents accepted their first presidency was 48.52 (SD = 7.435). The conclusions for research question two indicated there were no significant differences between African American and White community college presidents in relation to “years held current position of presidency,” “achieve current position of presidency,” “previous job title,” “relocation to obtain current position,” “miles traveled to obtain current position,” and “importance of location.” The conclusions for research question two also indicated that approximately 50\% of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents had held the title of community college instructor before their first presidency,
and the conclusions for research question two indicated the mean age for African American community college presidents and White community college presidents was 48 for their first presidency.

**Research Question Three**

Findings for the third research question (Are there significant differences in the professional experiences of current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents?) indicated significant differences in attending leadership development workshops ($p = .007$). Approximately 98% of African American community college president respondents had attended leadership development workshops as compared to 81% of White community college president respondents. Approximately 90% of African American community college respondents were members of an administration organization, and over 78% of White community college respondents were members of an administration organization. Most respondents from both groups indicated that their research and publication agenda were either average or below average. A small percentage (16%) of African American community college president respondents and a small percentage (9.1%) of White community college president respondents ranked their research and publication agenda above average. Over 96% of both groups indicated that they viewed themselves as change agents. The conclusions for research question three indicated African American community college presidents and White community college presidents differ significantly in relation to attending leadership workshops ($p = .007$). The conclusions for research question three indicated African American community college presidents and White community college presidents did not differ significantly in relation to “being a member of a professional organization,” “research and publication agenda,” and “viewing themselves as a change agent.”
Research Question Four

Findings for the fourth research question (What are the barriers that current African American community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency and the barriers that current White community college presidents feel they have encountered on their paths to the presidency?) indicated that college politics has served as the most encountered barrier for both respondents. Over 70% of African American community college respondents indicated racial discrimination as a barrier they encountered on their paths to the presidency. Gender discrimination was also a prevalent barrier for the respondents. Over 31% of African American community college respondents had encountered gender discrimination and over 29% of White community college respondents had encountered gender discrimination. The conclusions for research question four indicated African American community college presidents had experienced “college politics,” “racial discrimination,” and “gender discrimination” as barriers to their positions of presidency. The conclusions for research question four indicated White community college presidents had experienced “college politics,” “gender discrimination,” and “highest degree earned” as barriers to their positions of presidency.

Research Question Five

Findings for the fifth research question (What are the recruitment strategies that current African American community college presidents and current White community college presidents perceived will be the most successful in recruiting minority administrators?) indicate that African American community college presidents and White community college presidents perceived that the most successful way to recruit minority administrators is to include members from diverse backgrounds on search committees. African American and White community college presidents also perceived that other successful recruiting strategies include advertising in media outlets with
large minority audiences and requesting the assistance of professional employment contractors for assistance in locating minority candidates. Strategies that minority administrators perceived will be the least successful include meeting with minority church representatives and meeting with minority business representatives. The largest percentage of respondents listed “minorities serve on board of trustees” as their second choice. Vaughan and Weisman (1997) noted that one of the main issues in acquiring minority administrators is that trustees are dominantly Caucasian male, just as most community college presidents are dominantly Caucasian male. The conclusions for research question five indicated African American community college presidents and White community college presidents perceived “include members of diverse backgrounds on search committees,” “advertise in media outlets with large minority audiences,” and “request the assistance of search firms” as the best strategies to recruit minority administrators. The conclusions for research question five indicated African American community college presidents and White community college presidents perceived “meet with minority church representatives” and “meet with minority business representatives” as the least successful strategies to recruit minority administrators.

**Implications**

Diversifying the community college presidency and recruiting more minority administrators would help the community college to become more diverse in all areas, not just in the student body. Future community college presidents and administrators should be aware of the demographics, professional experiences, and barriers of current community college presidents and administrators. This study formed the following implications for future community college presidents and future community college administrators.
In order to become a community college president, a doctoral degree is consistently one of the main components in becoming a community college president, and results from this study indicated that the doctoral degree made up the largest percentage of the highest degree earned among community college presidents. Weisman and Vaughan (2007) noted that by 2006, almost 90% of community college presidents had a doctorate degree as their highest degree. Future potential community college presidents should obtain their doctoral degrees to increase their chances of obtaining a presidency position.

Potential community college presidents should be aware that prior administrative experience is a huge factor in obtaining the community college presidency position. Over 40% of the respondents listed prior administrative experience as their top factor for their career advancement.

Prospective community college presidents should gain experience in the academic areas of the community college. The typical community college president continues to come through the academic ranks. Weisman and Vaughan (2007) noted that 55% of community college presidents were in academic positions prior to assuming their first presidency, compared to 8% who were in student services prior to assuming their first presidency and 6% who were in business services prior to assuming their first presidency. This study is consistent with Weisman and Vaughan’s study. Approximately 48% of African American community college president respondents indicated that they had held the title of community college instructor. Over 55% of White community college president respondents indicated that they had held the title of community college instructor. Over 50% of White community college president respondents listed their immediate past position as an academic position. Approximately 35% of African American community college president respondents listed their immediate past position as an academic position. Future community college presidents and community college administrators
should understand that the findings for this study suggest that holding an academic position increases one’s chances of becoming a community college president or a community college administrator.

Future community college presidents should be aware that relocation may be necessary to obtain a presidency position. Over 70% of the African American and White community college president respondents indicated that they had to relocate to obtain their current presidency. Future community college presidents should note that mobility is a critical component to help increase their chances of becoming a community college president.

Future community college presidents should be aware of the barriers in obtaining a presidency position. College politics continue to serve as one of the most prevalent barriers to obtaining the community college presidency. African American community college president respondents noted that racial discrimination was one of the most prevalent barriers for them in obtaining the community college presidency position. Future African American community college presidents should be particularly aware of racial discrimination since it has served as a barrier for a large percentage of current African American community college presidents. Future community college presidents should be aware that in addition to college politics and racial discrimination barriers, gender discrimination, lack of administrative experience, and highest degree earned are also barriers they may encounter on their paths to the presidency.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

An analysis of data for the present study, including the review of related literature has led to the recommendations for further research. These recommendations should be used to further advance the community college in diversifying all aspects of its institutions, including the presidency and other administrative positions.
1. The community college presidency consists of other ethnic groups, besides African American and White community college presidents. A comparison study of all minority community college presidents and White community college presidents should be conducted to determine if other minority community college presidents differ significantly from White community college presidents. Therefore, all minority candidates, and not just African American, will know what differences exist between them and White community college presidents.

2. A study of chief academic officers that examines the demographics of chief academic officers and chief student affairs officers should be conducted. The largest percentage of the president respondents listed these two positions as their previous past positions; therefore, a study should be conducted to determine if the administrators who hold these positions have the same demographics as current community college presidents.

3. Gender discrimination was a barrier frequently listed among the presidents. A qualitative study of female community college presidents should be conducted to assist other potential female community college presidents in surmounting gender discrimination.
REFERENCES


Vaughan, G. (1998). No new leaders. Community College Week, 11(2), 4-6


COVER LETTER

3009 55th Court
Meridian, MS 39305
(601) 484-3706

April 3, 2009

(In Inside Address)

Dear (Name of community college president):

I am a doctoral candidate at Mississippi State University. My dissertation is to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this research project is to examine potential recruitment strategies for minority administrators.

I request your participation in this research project. Your participation in this research project will help ensure that the results of this research represent the diversity of leaders who comprise the community college system. Approximately five to ten minutes of your time will be needed to complete the questionnaire.

All returns will be strictly confidential. All institutions and individuals will remain anonymous. If you would like to see a summary of the results once this research project is completed, you can contact me at cab112@mstate.edu.

Please complete and return the questionnaire by (date) in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 601-484-3706 or my advisor, Dr. James E. Davis, at 662-325-0944. For information on your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Director of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS 39762, at 662-325-3294.

Your participation in this research is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Cedric Bradley
Doctoral Candidate

MSU IRB
Approved: 4/3/09
Expires: 12/31/09
APPENDIX B

SECOND LETTER TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS
April 3, 2009

(Inside Address)

Dear (Name of community college president):

About two weeks ago I sent you a questionnaire concerning a research project to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African American community college presidents and White community college presidents.

Please take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to complete and return the questionnaire. Your response is essential to the success of this research effort. If you have already returned the requested information, please disregard this reminder.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Cedric Bradley
Doctoral Candidate
APPENDIX C
PRESIDENTS’ SURVEY
Part I: Demographics
Please circle the appropriate number or fill in the following information:

1. What is your racial ethnic group?
   - White/Caucasian
   - Black/African-American
   - Hispanic/Latino
   - Asian/Pacific Islanders
   - American Indian
   - Other

2. What is your current age? ______

3. What is your gender?
   - Male ______
   - Female ______

4. How many years have you worked on the community college level? ______ years

5. What is the highest degree that you have earned?
   - 1 Master’s
   - 2 Educational Specialist
   - 3 Ed. D.
   - 4 Ph. D.
   - 5 Other degree ______

6. What is your major field of study for highest degree earned?
   - Business
   - Community college leadership doctoral program
   - Education or Higher Education
   - Health Education
   - Humanities/Fine Arts
   - Law
   - Social sciences
   - Other (Specify)

7. What is your marital status?
   - Married
   - Divorce
   - Widowed
   - Single

8. Did you graduate from a Historically Black College or University during your educational career?
   - Yes _____
   - No _____

9. Did you attend a community or junior college during your educational career?
   - Yes _____
   - No _____

10. Did you graduate from a community or junior college during your educational career?
    - Yes _____
    - No _____

11. How would you best describe the make-up of the student body at your institution?
    - Predominantly minority students ______
    - Predominantly non-minority students ______
    - A balance between minority and non-minority students ______

12. How would you best describe the location of your institution?
    - Rural ______
    - Urban ______

Part II: Career Paths

13. How many years have you held your current position?
    - 1-3 _____ 4-6 _____ 7-9 _____ 10 or more _____

14. How did you achieve your current position?
    - Promotion _____
    - Application _____
    - Other _____

15. What was your age when you accepted your first presidency? ______

16. What was your previous job title?
    - President/CEO/Chancellor _____
    - Chief Academic Officer or Provost _____
    - Other senior executive in academic affairs _____
    - Senior executive in development or external affairs _____
    - Senior executive in student affairs _____
    - Senior executive in finance or administration _____
    - Faculty _____
    - Private Business _____
    - Local/state/federal government _____
    - Military Personnel _____
    - Other (Specify) ______

Turn Over
17. What type of experience did you have before your first administrative appointment? (Check all that apply)
- Community college instructor
- Four-year university professor
- Community college administrator
- Four-year university administrator
- K-12 teacher
- K-12 administrator
- Military/Government
- Business professional
- Other (specify) ____________________________
- Other (specify) ____________________________

18. Did you have to relocate to obtain your current job?
- Yes
- No
If yes, how far did you have to move?
- 0-200 miles
- 201-400 miles
- 401-700 miles
- 701 or more miles

19. How important was location in the acceptance of your current position?
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- No importance

20. Rank in order the top three factors that have contributed to your career advancement? (1=highest, 2=your second choice, 3=your last choice)
- Prior administrative experience
- Educational accomplishments
- Extensive publication record
- Influence of African-American mentor
- Influence of non-African mentor
- Leadership abilities
- Willingness to take risks
- Networking
- Assistance of search firms
- Other (specify) ____________________________

Part III: Professional Experiences
21. Have you ever attended any advance leadership development workshops?
- Yes
- No

22. Are you a member of any administration organization?
- Yes
- No

23. How you rate your personal research and publication agenda?
- Above average
- Average
- Below average

24. Do you view yourself as a change agent?
- Yes
- No

Part IV: Barriers
25. The following have been identified as barriers that presidents encounter in their paths to presidency. Please check all that you have encountered.
- Racial discrimination
- Gender discrimination
- Lack of personal support
- College politics
- Highest degree earned
- Lack of administrative experience
- Lack of board support
- The college or university you attended
- Other (specify) ____________________________
- Other (specify) ____________________________
- Other (specify) ____________________________

Part V: Recruitment strategies
26. The following strategies have been identified as strategies used to recruit minority administrators. Please rank the five strategies that you feel will be most successful in recruiting minority administrators. (1=highest, 2=second choice, 3=third choice, 4=fourth choice, 5=fifth choice)
- Advertise in media outlets with large minority audiences
- Include members from diverse racial/cultural backgrounds on search committees
- Minorities serve on board of trustees
- Meet with minority business representatives
- Meet with minority church representatives
- Advertise at historically Black campuses or schools with large African American populations
- Request the assistance of professional employment contractors for assistance in locating minority candidates
- Other
- Other

Thank You
APPENDIX D

LETTER TO PANEL OF EXPERTS
CEDRIC BRADLEY
3009 55TH Court
Meridian, MS 39305
601-484-3706

April 6, 2009

(In Inside Address)

Dear (member of panel of experts),

This letter is to request your evaluation of the enclosed questionnaire. This is part of a research survey that I will be using to collect data to compare the career paths, barriers, and professional experiences of African-American community college presidents and White community college presidents. A secondary purpose of this research survey is to examine potential recruitment strategies to obtain minority administrators within community colleges. I have selected you as a member of my panel of experts due to your extensive background in the community college, your knowledge of the roles of community college administrators, and your overall contributions to help promote and achieve administrative diversity within the community college.

This information will be used as both partial fulfillment of the requirements for my doctoral program at Mississippi State University and as a way to promote and encourage ethnic diversity within the administrative roles within the community college.

I would certainly appreciate your review and any input on this questionnaire. Please make any comments directly on the pages. A blank page is included for any longer comments.

Please use the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope to evaluate and return the enclosed questionnaire by Friday, April 17, 2009. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at (601) 484-3706. If you do not wish to evaluate the questionnaire, please disregard this request.

Sincerely,

Cedric Bradley
APPENDIX E

IRB APPROVAL LETTER
April 3, 2009

Cedric Bradley
3008 55th Court
Meridian, MS 39305

RE: IRB Study #09-042: Career Paths, Barriers, and Professional Experiences: A Comparison Analysis of African American Community College Presidents and White Community College Presidents

Dear Mr. Bradley:

The above referenced project was reviewed and approved via administrative review on 4/3/2009 in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). Continuing review is not necessary for this project. However, any modification to the project must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Any failure to adhere to the approved protocol could result in suspension or termination of your project. The IRB reserves the right, at anytime during the project period, to observe you and the additional researchers on this project.

Please note that the MSU IRB is in the process of seeking accreditation for our human subjects protection program. As a result of these efforts, you will likely notice many changes in the IRB’s policies and procedures in the coming months. These changes will be posted online at http://www.ors.msstate.edu/human/aahppp.php. The first of these changes is the implementation of an approval stamp for consent forms. The approval stamp will assist in ensuring the IRB approved version of the consent form is used in the actual conduct of research.

Please refer to your IRB number (#09-042) when contacting our office regarding this application.

Thank you for your cooperation and good luck to you in conducting this research project. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at cwilliams@research.msstate.edu or call 662-325-5220.

Sincerely,

[For use with electronic submissions]

Christine Williams
IRB Compliance Administrator

cc: Dr. James Ed Davis