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## ACCESS TO FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF FACULTY OF COLOR IN RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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ACCESS TO FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:  
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF FACULTY OF  
COLOR IN RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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A Dissertation  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education  
in  
Educational Leadership

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by  
Eduardo Vásquez  
December 2021

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Approved by:

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Dr Edna Martinez, Committee Member

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## ABSTRACT

The mission of community colleges is to create affordable pathways for students to enter into the workforce or transfer into 4-year universities (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Kisker et al., 2016). However, community colleges have not been successful in efforts to assist Students of Color in completing an associate degree or transferring (Shapiro et al., 2017). Therefore, efforts have been made to increase the number Faculty of Color in community colleges as they are influential in student success (Rodriguez, 2015) but Faculty of Color experience systematic oppression in higher education (Pittman, 2010). Faculty of Color in rural community colleges experience discrimination but do not want to share their concerns in fear of retribution in the conservative environment (Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018).

This study explored the experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges as they transitioned from adjunct roles into tenure track or tenured positions. An interpretivist phenomenological study using semi structured interviews was conducted on ten participants across three rural California Community Colleges.

The findings from this study show that the participants had negative experiences in obtaining full-time employment in rural community colleges. However, they were able to obtain more experience and education during their pursuit of a tenured position. In addition, the participants saw themselves as

agents of change in creating a more positive experience for the Students of Color.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all the Faculty of Color who overcome the challenges of discrimination, support the Students of Color, and inspire the next generation of leaders.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem Statement

Many studies have shown that community college faculty can positively impact the probability of success for Students of Color in terms of retention, degree completion, and transfer, by providing them mentorship, cultural competency through a diverse curriculum, and showing a genuine interest in the student's lives (Coll, & Zalaquett, 2007; Tovar, 2015; Ullman, 2009; Walker et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). This positive impact is related to the mission of community colleges which are open access institutions that provide higher education to all segments of society (Heelen & Mellow, 2017), and have become the primary entryway into higher education for Students of Color (Dowd, 2003). While there have been significant increases in the number of Students of Color entering the community college (Cardenas et al., 2020), the amount of Faculty of Color has not increased (Fuji, 2010; Gilmore, 2019), most notably in the number of full-time tenure track positions compared to the adjunct positions for Faculty of Color (Ott & Dippold, 2018).

In 2017, 44% of the community college student body in general was white, followed by 26% Latinx, 13% African American, and 6% Asian American (Monarrez & Washington, 2020). However, the demographics also show the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color at the community colleges. Espinosa et

al, (2019) found that in 2016, there were over 122,000 full-time faculty at public community colleges. In terms of demographics, the breakdown showed the overwhelming amount of white faculty compared to the Faculty of Color. The percentage of the full-time faculty positions at community colleges were 76.8% white, 6.7% Latinx, 7.4% African American, and 9% other racial groups. Furthermore 40.01% were tenured, 14.9% were on a tenure track, and 45% were adjunct faculty (Espinosa, 2019). Similar numbers were found in the demographics of adjuncts at community colleges with white faculty at 70%, Latinx at 5.3%, African American at 8.5%, and other racial groups were less than 1% (Espinosa, 2019). Bias in hiring, no affirmative action oversight, and white faculty unconsciously hiring within their own peer groups and networks are some of the reasons for the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color (Espinosa, 2019).

Much has been written about the benefits that the Faculty of Color bring to higher education, such as creating a sense of belonging to the Students of Color by being mentors, providing representation of the backgrounds that these students come from, and creating diverse curriculum (Han & Onchwari, 2018; Ndemanu, 2017; Pluviose, 2006). Administrators also support the intentionality of hiring a more diverse faculty to promote equity (Rodriguez, 2015) but there has also been resistance from white faculty members that find diversity efforts as a deterrent for them to become employed in higher education (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004). In community colleges, there are few Faculty of Color (Espinosa et al., (2019) compared to the white faculty and when they are employed, they are



found in part-time, adjunct roles and not full-time, tenured roles (Finkelstein et al., 2016). In order to increase the representation of tenured Faculty of Color, community colleges should first look at their current adjunct faculty pools in which exist a large amount of faculty color (Ott & Dippold, 2018).

Because rural community colleges often provide one of the only entryways of access to higher education for Students of Color (Hillman & Weichman, 2016), it is important to understand the experiences of Faculty of Color who work in these institutions and provide a sense of belonging for these students (Eddy et al., 2019; Gillet-Karam, 1995; Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018). The experience of Faculty of Color in urban community colleges have been examined extensively (Chang, 2005; Hagedorn et al., 2007; Lara, 2019; Wood & Newman, 2015); however, there has not been a lot written about the experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges. Faculty of Color at rural community colleges face unique challenges that are less likely found in urban settings such as, a closed-minded, conservative environment in both the K-12 and higher education that promote discrimination and isolation (Han, 2014; Kambutu et al. 2009; Kohli, 2009 Wolfe & Strange, 2003). Furthermore, faculty members need to be able to “fit” in the rural community colleges (Cejda, 2010; Eddy, 2007). This has allowed the predominantly white rural communities to be generally divided and opposed to diversity and People of Color (Han 2015; Han et al. 2015). For these reasons, the lived experiences and stories of Faculty of Color in the rural community colleges are the focus of this qualitative study.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to capture the stories and lived experiences of tenured Faculty of Color who held an adjunct position at one point in their careers and transitioned into tenured positions in rural community colleges. There is a need to uplift the voices of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges to create a more inclusive and diverse environment for Students of Color (Eddy et al., 2019; Gillet-Karam, 1995; Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018). Their experiences and stories can lead to a positive change for a more representative faculty body compared to the student body and provide a voice for other Faculty of Color that may feel isolated and discriminated against (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Levin et al., 2014; Ndemanu, 2017). This study will fill the gap in current educational leadership literature by focusing on the stories and lived experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges. It also used critical race theory (CRT) in education as a framework on how systemic racism occurs from the initial advertising of a full-time position to the interview process for Faculty of Color in rural community colleges.

## Research Questions

The research questions guiding this qualitative phenomenological study are grounded in CRT. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the professional experiences of adjunct Faculty of Color in rural community college?
2. What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when

attempting to move into a tenure-track position at a small, rural community college?

3. What strategies and resources do Faculty of Color apply to make the successful transition from an adjunct role to tenured one in a rural community college?

4. What contributions did participants make to the rural setting as Faculty of Color?

### Significance of the Study

This phenomenological study aims to contribute to the research on Faculty of Color and how they have moved from adjunct faculty positions to tenured faculty positions. Although there have been many studies conducted in urban community colleges about the experiences of Faculty of Color (Chang, 2005; Hagedorn et al., 2007; Lara, 2019; Wood & Newman, 2015), few studies have been conducted on Faculty of Color in rural community colleges (Eddy et al., 2019; Gillet-Karam, 1995; Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018). By giving Faculty of Color a platform for their voices to be heard, the study can benefit the academic and professional success of many Faculty of Color in community colleges. Leaving out their voices is unjust and harmful to the Students of Color pursuing careers in community colleges.

## Theoretical Underpinnings

This study was established using CRT as a research design to explore the experiences of Faculty of Color. CRT has been used to challenge the themes of colorblindness and the overlooked contributions of Faculty of Color in higher education (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015) and more recent studies have used CRT to also explore the basic root of marginalization that Faculty of Color experience during their recruitment and retention (Lara, 2019; White-Lewis, 2019). Moreover, a tenet of CRT allows the legitimizing of knowledge of People of Color and allows them to be experts in their experiences on how they are marginalized (White-Lewis, 2019). In the next section, I write about the assumptions of this study.

## Assumptions

For the purpose of this study, there exists many assumptions. Based on the literature review, there is a need for more Faculty of Color in higher education to be representative of the student body. Based on this information, Faculty of Color would be beneficial to assist Students of Color in closing the equity gap by providing them mentorship, role models, and an inclusive curriculum in which they will be represented.

It is assumed that those who participated in the phenomenological study provided a truthful and precise description of their experiences both personally and professionally. Furthermore, it is understood that the information gathered in

this phenomenological study will accurately represent the participants' experience.

### Delimitations

I have limited my analysis to the community college and am not examining 4-year colleges or universities. I also limited my review to study Faculty of Color and am not examining administrators or classified staff of color. The study focused on faculty in rural community colleges and the experiences, practices, and policies of the Faculty of Color may be different than larger, urban community colleges. Lastly, this study is limited to rural community colleges in California and the experience of Faculty of Color at rural community colleges in California may be different in other parts of the United States.

### Definitions of Key Terms

The terminology for this qualitative phenomenological study is important in understanding the findings and finding and perspectives of Faculty of Color through their voices. The definitions are:

*Adjunct faculty:* are defined in California community college as a person who is employed as an instructional or counseling faculty on a part-time, semester-to semester basis.

*Barriers:* refer to the obstacles Faculty of Color face in obtaining a tenured faculty position in a community college.

*Diversity*: is the inclusion of people from different backgrounds in regard to race, socio-economic background, gender, sex, and other characteristics (Levin et al., 2018). Eagan (2007) stated that the overall picture of community college faculty does not reflect an image of diversity.

*Faculty of Color*: is defined as a faculty member who identifies themselves as African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latinx, or American Indian.

*“Fit”*: is defined as the importance for faculty members to be able to reflect the college and community in rural community colleges (Cejada, 2010). It was identified as being a more important consideration for a faculty position in rural community colleges in comparison to urban community college (Twombly, 2005).

*Racism*: refers to the justification of racial inequalities that are reproduced in institutions that may formally state they value diversity but continue to isolate and discriminate against other racial groups (Fenelon, 2003). Racism creates environments in which Faculty of Color will not feel comfortable working in community colleges.

*Rural community colleges*: are community colleges that are located in an area that have a total population that is less than 500,000 people (Carnegie Classification, 2010).

*Tenured faculty*: “Tenured” faculty means a member of the bargaining unit who is employed on a regular basis in accordance with Education Code Sections 87608(c), 87608.5(c), or 87609(a).

## Summary

Faculty of Color are underrepresented and face a great number of challenges in working in rural community colleges. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the personal and professional lives of Faculty of Color as they transitioned from an adjunct position to a tenured one. Their personal and professional lives were examined to understand how they overcame barriers to be working in community colleges. This study examined their role models, mentors, and support network to see how they play a role in supporting their professional journeys. It also examined the barriers and discrimination they experienced in attaining a faculty position to gain insight for other Faculty of Color in similar positions.

Stories shared in this study will provide insight to leaders in community colleges on how to cultivate and promote the talents of Faculty of Color. Moreover, new strategies on how to attract, retain, and advance can be cultivated for the next group of Faculty of Color. This qualitative phenomenological study will also have the potential to be a guide for other faculty members seeking to advance in their faculty roles.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

Bemiller, (2019) stated that, “The community college system is a 20th century invention, and a rather distinct branch of higher education in the United States” (p.12). It was conceptualized as a vehicle to create access to higher education for students who did not have the financial or educational means by providing them curriculum that leads to transferring to a four-year college or preparation for the workforce (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Kisker et al., 2016). This chapter will focus on the experiences of Faculty of Color in the community college system. Many authors have written about the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color in urban community colleges (Chang, 2005; Hagedorn et al., 2007; Lara, 2019; Wood & Newman, 2015); however, little literature exists to see the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges.

The literature review is divided into seven sections. The review begins with the brief historical context of the origins of the systems of higher education in the United States, with an emphasis on the community college. As the demographics community college students shift, the second section explores the experiences of students of color in the community colleges system. The specific roles and responsibilities of community college faculty are discussed in the third section. The fourth section looks at the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color



by examining the demographics and composition of community college faculty. The experiences of Faculty of Color are explored in the fifth section. The sixth section provides information regarding the recruitment of Faculty of Color. The review ends with a summary of the theoretical framework that was used as a guide for the study. The literature review ends with a summary of the crucial points in this section.

### Higher Education in the United States

Broadly speaking, there are three types of institutions of higher education in the United States: research universities, comprehensive universities, and community colleges (Longanecker, 2008). Research universities are perceived as the most prestigious and are the most challenging to get accepted into due to their strict admissions standards (Marginson, 2018), which further marginalize historically underrepresented students (O'Meara, 2007). Research universities offer a wide range of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. However, the primary goal of the research university is the production and dissemination of new knowledge (Baker et al., 2017).

Comprehensive universities, also referred to as regional universities or master's colleges or universities (Baker et al., 2017), were formed out of colleges that only offered teacher training programs (Douglass, 2007). They offer a number of bachelor's degrees and a small number of master's degree programs (Dunham, 1969). In terms of faculty, "faculty are called on to increasingly perform

a variety of tasks, many of which are contradictory in nature (e.g, publish more yet be available to students at all times)” (Baker et al., 2017, p. 56-57).

Meanwhile, community colleges are open-access institutions and accept every student who applies (Boland et al., 2018). The open access mission has extended educational opportunities to historically underrepresented students (Boyd et al., 2012). As such, they are commonly referred to as the “people’s college”, democracy’s college" and "opportunity college” (Cohen et al., 2014, p. 4). Community colleges offer certificates and associate degrees for students who want to transfer to four-year colleges and universities or enter the workforce (Cohen et al., 2014). In addition, an increasing number of community colleges are offering their own baccalaureate degrees in a variety of applied fields (Martinez, 2019). Although community colleges and their faculty are often ignored in the literature (Gonzales & Ayers, 2018; Townsend & Twombly, 2007; Twombly & Townsend, 2008), community colleges play an instrumental role in advancing educational equity in the U.S. (Doran, 2020). I elaborate on the various community college missions below.

### The Missions of the Community College

The origins, purposes, missions, and impacts of the community college have been debated for decades (Ayers, 2005, 2009, 2015). Some maintain that community colleges were developed for the need of the workforce to have better trained individuals and to provide a pathway for students that could not afford to enter the university right after high school (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Kisker et al.,

2016); however, others may believe that community colleges were established for elite colleges to secure their selective admissions criteria and to track lower-income students into occupational fields (Dougherty, 2001). The mission of the community college includes many functions such as, providing a two-year education to attain associate degrees and certificates that can lead into transferring into a four-year university or entering the workforce, continuing education, remedial education, and community service (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Cohen et al., 2014; Dougherty & Townsend, 2006). Community colleges have made efforts to improve their transfer programs and have built several occupation programs, such as nursing, computer operations, and auto repair (Osterman & Weaver, 2016; Stevens et al., 2019).

Community colleges are distinct from the research universities and comprehensive universities due to the community college's open admission policy. As a result, community college students are more heavily working class, minority, female, and older than are four-year college students (Boland et al., 2018; Herrera, Gloria & Castellanos, 2018; Wood & Newman, 2015). Students from all backgrounds attend the community college, therefore, increasing the equality of education opportunity is at their center (Hagedorn et al., 2007; Zarate & Burciaga, 2010).

As time has passed, the operations of community colleges have grown to also include various programs such as: adult education; community education; dual enrollment programs for high school students; baccalaureate programs;

honors programs; noncredit education and contract training; English as a Second Language programs; summer programs for children, and so forth. (Cohen et al., 2014; Dougherty & Townsend, 2006). All of these functions that community colleges provide have been a topic of great debate, especially the baccalaureate program because people may see it as mission creep (Longanecker, 2008; Martinez, 2020).

The missions of the community colleges serve as a guide to the understanding of the needs of the people that the community colleges serve (Ayers, 2017). It is important for community colleges to examine the ever-changing demographics of the students that they serve as this brings on new changes and challenge to the needs of the student population (Levin et al., 2018). The following section examines the shift in demographics in the United States in terms of ethnic and racial diversity of the community college students as well as the equity gap and experiences that students of color face in higher education.

### Community College Students

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Fast Fact 2020, there are about 11.8 million community college students in the United States. The demographics of students who are enrolled for credit include: 26% Latinx, 13% African American, 45% white, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, 4% 2 or more Races, 4% Other/Unknown, and 2% Nonresident Alien. Sixty-four percent of the students are part-time students, while 36% are

full-time students. In terms of gender, 57% are women and 43% are men. Other significant demographics include 27% first generation college students, 15% single parents, 9% are non-U.S. citizens, 5% Veterans, 20% students with disabilities, and 8% students with prior bachelor's degree. Although community colleges have expanded access to higher education for students of color, community college students of color face various challenges once enrolled (Boland et al., 2018; Herrera et al., 2018; Wood & Newman, 2015).

#### Degree Attainment Among Community College Students of Color

The historical oppression that Students of Color have faced has created equity gaps in semester-to-semester retention and degree attainment from colleges and universities (Greene, Marti, & McCleeny, 2008; Tovar, 2015). Community college faculty and administrators have made efforts to increase student success for Students of Color, but their efforts have concluded with mixed results (Boland et al., 2018; Contreras & Contreras, 2015). Shapiro et al., (2017) found that colleges are not successfully graduating African American, Latinx, and Pacific Islander students at the rate of their white and East Asian counter parts. The data for completion rates at a two-year public institution found that 45% of white and 43.8% of Asian students completed while only 33% of Latinx and 25.8% of African American students. Furthermore, only 38% of African Americans and 45.8% of Latinx students graduate at a complete a degree or certificate within 6 years at any type of college or university compared to 63.2% of Asian and 62% of white students.

As evidenced by these data, Latinx student representation in higher education is lacking, and many of these students leave higher education, including community colleges, without receiving an associate's degree (Tovar, 2015). Community colleges are not doing enough to enroll Latinx students or creating meaningful support for them to succeed academically (Goff-Crews, 2014; Gillian-Daniel & Kraemer, 2015; Jordt et al., 2017; Sommet et al., 2015). This goes against the mission of community colleges of being open access institutions and places for academic advancement for the community (Abelman, & Dalessandro, 2008).

Zerquera and Gross (2017) examined how the proportion of Faculty of Color affected the baccalaureate degree completion of students of color in a university. They found that there was a positive correlation between having a larger portion of Faculty of Color and degree attainment amongst all students. Furthermore, the effect was greatest with students that were Latinx (Zerquera & Gross, 2017). Additional studies have shown that there is an achievement gap in degree completion and retention of students of color at California community colleges and other institutions of higher education (Sommet et al., 2015; Gillian-Daniel, & Kraemer, 2015; Jordt et al., 2017; Tibbetts, Priniski et al., 2018). Compared to the white student body, colleges and universities are not successfully at graduating and supporting minoritized students (Atherton, 2014; Sommet et al., 2015; Gillian-Daniel, & Kraemer, 2015; Jordt, et al., 2017; Tibbetts et al., 2018). The research has shown that the lack of success can be attributed

to the lack of representation among the faculty, academic preparedness, or unfamiliarity with the institutions of higher education. Students of color may feel more supported by faculty that is representative of them and their experiences.

Instead of holding institutions of higher education accountable, the so-called achievement gap has been attributed to lack of student preparation (Gillian-Daniel & Kraemer, 2015; Jordt, et al., 2017). Faculty may blame the high schools for not adequately preparing students but do not look at the institution itself and the unintentional barriers they may create through “hidden codes” (White & Ali-Khan, 2013, p. 27) of academia, such as note-taking, test-taking, and essay writing, which are grounded in whiteness (Oikonomidou, 2018). Community colleges must examine their practices and create a more equitable environment to help students of color achieve success in their college journey (Ching, Felix, Fernandez Castro & Trinidad, 2018; Contreras & Contreras, 2015).

The disparities in educational attainment must be brought forward to see in what ways colleges and universities can better serve and support African American, Latinx students, and Pacific Islander students (Cohen et al., 2014; Gillian-Daniel & Kraemer, 2015; Jordt et al., 2017; Sommet et al., 2015; Tibbetts et al., 2018). In the following subsections I discuss some of the barriers experienced by community college Students of Color including: (a) academic under preparedness, (b) limited student services, (c) detrimental stereotypes, (d) not represented in the curriculum, (e) imposter phenomenon, and (f) limited mentors.

## Educational Inequalities in the K-12 System & Academic Under Preparedness

Students of Color may feel as if they do not belong in higher education because their high schools did not prepare them adequately and failed them (Oikonomidou, 2018; West & Maffini, 2019; White, J. & Ali-Khan, 2013). For example, while African American students may attend high schools that promote a college attending culture, those high schools are often underfunded and have a lack of resources to help students succeed academically (Greene et al., 2008). The effects of being underfunded are that teacher positions are being cut, after-school programs are narrowed, and textbook purchases put on hold (Blanchett et al., 2005; Dunn & Derthick, 2012; Giroux, 2016). Moreover, many students of color may be the first in their family to finish high school let alone be the first to attend college (Santiago, 2011).

One way to improve the educational inequities that students of color face is through student engagement (Ingram & Coaxum, 2018; Quaye et al., 2015). A study examined the differences of students of color participation in student engagement and the outcomes. 3,143 students were administered survey from five Florida community colleges and the researchers found that there was a "...possibility that African American students are working harder to persist and achieve educational goals than their peers, who generally are less academically "at-risk" and who face fewer institutional barriers, can reach with less effort and engagement" (Greene et al., 2008, pg. 529). This effort and drive must be nurtured and supported to help even more African American students persist in



higher education. This may help balance the inequities that are consistently showing related to the academic achievement of African Americans compared to white students (Lundberg, 2012; Roksa et al., 2017).

The increasing attention placed on student retention and completion has led to various efforts to promote student success. Some of the different ways to colleges are trying to alleviate the equity gap with higher education for Students of Color and first-generation college students, include programs like AVID, TRiO, GEAR Up and Upward Bound (Venezia & Jaeger, 2013). These programs promote a college going environment for disadvantaged youth and their families at their elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools (Gullatt & Jan, 2003). Summer bridge programs have also been established to help students prepare for the transition from high school to community college by meeting instructors and peers (Thayer, 2000). These programs also provide students with English and Math support as well as informing them of what resources, such as tutoring labs, Food Pantries, and Extended Opportunities & Services (EOPS), are available. All of these services and resources have shown to positively affect the student's success at the community college (Atherton, 2014), especially given their advising/counseling components. At the same time, these efforts are small scale and limited to certain students (Acevedo-Gil & Zerquera, 2016).

Larger scale efforts to address concerns regarding academic preparation include remedial education reforms such as AB 705. With the passage of AB705 and the Student-Centered Funding Formula, the California Community College

Chancellor's Office is putting even more pressure on community colleges to increase the success rates of all students (Johnson et al., 2019). Community Colleges must allow students to self-place into college level English or math with the proper supports through AB705 and the Student-Centered Funding Formula has changed the funding formula from the number of students attending each college to the number of students receiving associate degrees. It is up to the faculty to create the proper supports with a positive mindset to help students of color become successful and attain associates degrees (Engle & Tinto, 2008; Herron Noureddine et al., 2015; Han & Onchwari, 2018; Lane & Bernard, 2003).

#### Limited Student Services

Generally, student services at the community college are organized into the following areas: enrollment management, learning support, student support, and cocurricular services (Hirt & Frank, 2013). Although community colleges have implemented an array of student support services and their importance has been established, these services are limited and to some degree siloed (Cohen et al., 2014). Stronger partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs are needed (Chang, 2005).

For example, Tovar (2015) found that Latinx students will benefit from a rigorous academic program with counseling interventions. Challenging students academically and having proper support may lead to more degree completion among Latinx students. Another study also found that the following practices: "...maintaining transparency with students, holding students to the highest

standard, being open and sharing data, and building strong relationships with students...” had the most impact of students of color (Goff-Crews, 2014, p. 7). By holding Students of Color to the highest standard will also increase the success rates of this student population (Ready et al., 2002). Well-trained tutorial services must be implemented in assisting Latinx students with their classes. It is important that the faculty believes in the student's success so they can help prepare the students with proper support for success in their classes (Jordt, et al., 2017; Sommet et al., 2015).

Research has also been conducted about the amount of interaction with faculty and staff inside and outside the classroom by students of color (Chang, 2009; Jackson et al., 2013; Stebleton & Aleixo, 2015; Wirt & Jaeger, 2014; Wood & Ireland, 2014; Wood & Newman, 2015; Zell, 2010). Chang (2005) stressed the importance of building the connections with the faculty and student services for the student's success academically and their own personal growth. Chang (2005) gathered data from the Transfer and Retention or Urban Community College Students (TRUCCS) to design a survey to explore factors promoting the retention and perseverance of urban community college students. The researcher surveyed 5000 students in the Los Angeles Community College District and found a low-level amount of interaction with the faculty and staff from Latinx, Asian American, and Pacific Islander students.

When Latinx students feel that their experiences matter inside and outside the classroom, they may also perform better academically and complete

programs (Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Garcia et al., 2019; Torres & Solberg, 2001). Researchers have stated that counseling faculty and academic advisors who have cultural competency and show interest in students' lives will also make a positive impact on the student's ability to succeed (Coll, & Zalaquett, 2007; Tovar, 2015; Ullman, 2009; Walker et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). Students of color enjoy sharing their experiences because it gives their experiences validity. Bringing in a student's experiences can have a wide range of applications to build cultural competency for faculty and they can gain better insight on the struggles that students of color have experienced (Merida, & Brown, 2016; Smith, Wessel, & Polacek, 2017).

Historically, students from these ethnic groups were never targeted to receive services from counseling, the library, or instructors outside the classroom and did not make a connection with them (Chang, 2009; Jackson et al., 2013; Stebleton & Aleixo, 2015; Wirt & Jaeger, 2014; Wood & Ireland, 2014; Wood & Newman, 2015; Zell, 2010). Furthermore, student services offices are often staffed by English-only speaking counseling faculty that were not trained in cultural diversity. Latinx, Asian American, and Pacific Islander students would look to their own communities for help. The study found that if there was a positive and less critical perception of student services by Students of Color, more Students of Color may be willing to utilize these services (Chang, 2005).

## Detrimental Stereotypes

Students of color often face negative stereotypes either unconsciously or consciously in higher education from their instructors (Urdan & Bruchmann, 2018). This can lead to them feeling that they are not intellectual enough to be in college and they may also try not to identify with their cultural or ethnic group to avoid the stereotype (Armenta, 2010). Additionally, the fear of stereotype threat can be constant and negatively impact students of color academic performance (Steele, 1997).

A phenomenological study was conducted on the experiences of Native Americans, Latinx, and African American students. Zanolini, (2010), interviewed 21 students of color about their experiences attending a predominantly white institution. Zanolini, (2010) found that students of color often felt that they were being stereotyped by white faculty and these faculty members were unaware of their cultural experiences because they may have been the first person of color that these faculty members had met. They also spoke about having to behave in certain manner to avoid causing discomfort to the white faculty and the listening to the denial of the existence of racism and other issues regarding diversity. Students of color may often experience being stereotyped or generalized.

The lack with familiarity of the culture of higher education, which is grounded in white ways of knowing and doing, has a negative effect on students of color because they may not feel well prepared for the academic demands of higher education and do not have many faculty members who they feel

comfortable asking for help (White, J. & Ali-Khan, 2013). These students may benefit from having a faculty that is more representative of them and can collaborate to share similar experiences. Students of color may be open to sharing their feelings of being stereotyped with the Faculty of Color through dialogue (Zell, 2010).

Ruelas et al., (1998) administered a study to understand the impact of participant ethnicity and counselor model of helping on Mexican American participants' ratings of the counseling faculty credibility. The researchers recruited 109 Mexican American community college student participants and the students were given questionnaires based on demographic data, and an Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA-II). Afterwards, they were given a vignette based on helping model that was portrayed and asked to evaluate the performance of the using a Counselor Effectiveness Rating Scale (CERS). The researchers found that counseling faculty members who have an understanding of the student's ethnic backgrounds will elicit more trust in the counselor and student relationship. Additionally, the study showed the importance of not perpetuating stereotypes of Latinx students because that may break trust between the counselor and the students.

By having a deeper cultural connection with students of color, white faculty members, such as counselors and instructors, may better understand the challenges that students of color face and dispel stereotypes (Ruelas et al., 1998; Zell, 2010). A study by Wood & Newman (2015) investigated where

students perceptions of racial and gender stereotypes had an effect on engagement with faculty. Data was collected from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM) and a total of 340 urban Black men participated. Data analysis was conducted, and the researchers found that Black male students are more engaged when faculty members communicate that they can be successful in college. They also found that students who were less engaged with the faculty were more negatively affected by the perceptions of stereotypes. The researchers recommended that, “Faculty must be engaged through professional development workshops and new faculty orientations on the impact of their behaviors and classroom pedagogy” (p.1074).

### Model Minority Myth

Asian American and Pacific Islanders are groups of students that have generally been thought of not experiencing an equity gap in higher education due to the Model Minority Myth (Gupta et al., 2011). The Model Minority Myth is a generalization that Asian students do well academically, particularly in math and do not need the academic support that other minority groups do (Kiang et al., 2016); however, Asian American students whose families come from South East Asian and are refugees typically do not have the same access to resources as East Asians (Koo et al., 2012; Zhou & Bankston, 2020). Hmong, Samoans, and Laotian students have also not been given adequate academic or social support as white students and they often perform poorly academically in school (Bui, 2018; Takei et al., 2013; Tsutsumoto, 1998). More types of support and

professional development need to be established for faculty and staff to assist students of these populations (Mossakowski & Zhang, 2014; Wang et al., 2018).

### Not Represented in the Curriculum

In the midst of the current political climate, there has been an uptick in racial incidents at various universities across the country. According to Ndemanu (2017), these incidents are targeted to strike fear into the minds of minoritized students from attending universities on the basis of race and religion (Ndemanu, 2017). This situation has caused a great number of students to make demands for change regarding the current culture of higher education. One of the key demands was for the hiring of more Faculty of Color due to their knowledge of the experiences and culture of students of color (Hurtado, 2001). Data was collected from survey responses that were administered to 16,000 faculty members and 4,250 students. Hurtado (2001) found that the gender and ethnicity of the instructor had an impact on the student's experience in terms of teaching styles and course content. African American faculty were found to use more racial/ethnic curriculum than the Asian American faculty and African American, Latinx, Native American faculty assigned more have required readings on racial/ethnic issues in some or most of their courses. Students also reported by having faculty members that were from a different racial group, they learned to grow more tolerant of people with different beliefs and cultures.

By having more Faculty of Color, students felt that their experiences would be validated, and the universities would expand from their Eurocentric



perspective to a more global perspective. Ndemanu (2017) conducted a study through document analysis from 73 colleges and universities to examine the demands of the African American student population that were protesting intolerance, bigotry and oppression. The themes that were found in the study were that the students wanted an increase in the diversity of the faculty and staff, more diverse curium that includes social justice, and campus-wide cultural sensitivity training for all faculty.

Furthermore, Ndemanu (2017) found that, “An increase in minority faculty and staff would mean that there are higher chances of having minority representation in departmental, college, and university committees where numerous policy decisions are being made that affect faculty hiring, tenure promotion, and curriculum on the one hand, and student recruitment and retention on the other hand” (p. 244). Change can only happen when the structure of the hiring committee members become diverse to meet the challenges that Faculty of Color have to gain employment in higher education (Applebaum, 2019; Kawa et al., 2019; Sensoy & Diangelo, 2017).

### Imposter Syndrome

Many of students of color experience imposter syndrome, which is a feeling that individuals are misrepresenting themselves or their talent in colleges or universities (Cokley et al., 2013). If they reach out for help, they may feel that their inadequacies may be exposed and would feel shame (Wei et al., 2020). To avoid being exposed, students of color may not ask or answer questions and

may not confide to the faculty member of their needs (Cokley et al., 2017). They may also feel that they are misrepresenting themselves and the neighborhoods that they grew up in if they acculturate to the college's lexicon (White & Ali-Khan, 2013). In addition, students of color may feel stress because they feel that the identity of the neighborhoods, they grew up in is clashing with their identity in higher education (West & Maffini, 2019).

### Lack of Mentors

Students of color are an increasing population in higher education but lack mentors because there are few faculty members of color in colleges and universities. This may cause these students to feel as if they do not belong in this sector of education and they will drop out or never attend (Greene, 2008; Goff-Crews, 2014; Lundberg, 2012; Rodriguez, 2015; Tovar, 2015; White & Ali-Khan, 2013).

The researchers Han and Onchwari (2018) described a mentoring program for faculty and staff of color, including Native Americans, that employed a culturally responsive mentoring framework. The program was designed to foster a partnership and collaboration across the whole campus to support and assist faculty and staff of color in navigating the university system. The researchers described how the participants grew a fourth component to the program: to be mentors for the students of color. The participants knew the value of being mentors for students of color to assist with retention and a feeling of belonging across the campus.

Hagedorn et al., (2007) completed a study to examine how the increased Latinx student population at an urban community college effected their overall academic success and the relationship between the Latinx faculty and the Latinx academic success. Data was collected through the Transfer and Retention of Urban Community College Students (TRUCCS) project where 5011 students in nine college within the Los Angeles Community College District were surveyed. The study was limited to students who identified as Latinx. A quantitative study was conducted through data analysis to examine calculate grades, level or remediation, and success rations. The researchers found, "...that the presence of Latinx faculty on campus may increase the availability of role models for students and foster a sense of belonging and social integration among students" (p. 89). When students see faculty, who look like them or come from the communities that they grew up in they feel more comfortable with the instruction and be more successful. Feelings of belonging will also help people from marginalized groups be more open to the idea of seeking help when needed and envisioning themselves becoming successful students.

#### Students of Color at Rural Community Colleges

Many of community college students of color obstacles to attend college not only due academic challenges but as well as non-academic challenges, such as: food insecurities, transportation, homelessness and lack of childcare (Au & Hyatt, 2017; Gupton et al., 2018). Attending a community college comes at a financial and health cost for many students. Programs like financial aid and

federal work study are not adequate to support these students (Goldrick-Rab, 2018; Henry, 2017). Recommendations have been made for community colleges to partner with social service agencies and awareness through educating the college community about basic needs insecurity and how it affects students (Goldrick-Rab, 2018; Stebleton et al., 2020).

Some of the challenges discuss above are exacerbated in rural contexts (Waters-Bailey et al., 2019). Students of Color at rural community colleges have different experiences than those at urban community colleges. Whereas Students of Color make up a large percentage of the student population in urban community colleges, they only make up a small percentage compared to the white student population in small, rural community colleges (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007). Being a small percentage of the student body may cause students to feel even more invisible and not receive the resources needed to allow them to become successful (Woldoff et al., 2011; Han & Leonard, 2016). The low numbers of students of color cause them to feel isolated and endure racism in the higher education system (Han, 2014).

The distance from a 4-year college or university greatly affects the chances of students of color or working families is a barrier for transferring (Ovink & Kalogrides 2015). In particular, Latinx students in rural communities may desire to attend a community college but the long commute creates obstacles for their longing to live close and support their families (Desmond & López Turley, 2009; Sabogal et al., 1987). Furthermore, Latinx, African American, and Native

American students are more likely to stay closer to home because of family obligations, ties to the community, or factors related to work while enrolled in school (Hurtado et al., 1997; McDonough et al., 1997; Pérez & McDonough 2008).

A study by Freeman (2017) explored the reasons that Latinx students attend community college students in rural areas even though they are academically qualified to apply to a 4-year university. The sample study consisted of 18-first-generation students whole enrolled full-time or part time, 10 faculty members, and five support service officers. Data was collected through focus groups. The researcher found that Latinx students found comfort in smaller classes, most of students were working to support their family, and that familismo elevated the family's needs before their own. Furthermore, students expressed ease staying closer to their home versus going off and living in another city.

Means et al., (2016) conducted a student looking at the aspirations, resources, choices, and barriers for rural, African American high school students. The researchers conducted a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews with 26 students. When the data was analyzed, three themes were identified: tensions of staying or going, pushed or encouraged without a roadmap, and financial aid and economic barriers for higher education. Most of the students in this study expressed that they wanted to go to the community college so that they can stay closer to their families.

By having a deep understanding of the experiences that students of color face in community colleges, the next section will examine the roles, responsibilities, and reliance of community college faculty. This becomes an important topic because as Deil-Amen (2011) stressed that community college students attain beneficial knowledge and skills that lead to success by their interactions and relationships with faculty members, counselors, and advisors. This is extremely important for students of color because they are less likely to gain that knowledge and skills from home and will more likely drop out (Deil-Amen, 2011; Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014).

#### The Roles and Responsibilities of Community College Faculty

Faculty members in higher education have many diverse roles from teaching courses, developing curriculum, advising students, and participating in committee assignments (Fugate & Amey, 2000; Gonzales & Terosky, 2016). Faculty members in community colleges in California community colleges are also tasked with participating in initiatives such as Guided Pathways, creating academic supports per AB705 as well as gathering evidence of assessment of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Programs Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for accreditation visits (Budge, 2017; Cejda, & Murray, 2010; Eddy, 2010). They are often asked to teach more students than they feel they can teach effectively, and this causes feelings of bitterness towards administration to who they feel are only looking at the students as a source of revenue (Gonzales & Terosky, 2016). Even with all the roles and responsibilities they must conduct,

faculty members have been found to be critical institutional agents of change for the transfer success of students of color (Dowd, Pak, & Bensimon, 2013).

### The Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty in Rural Community Colleges

Faculty at rural community colleges view the teaching of their courses to be their most important responsibility; however, they are aware of the equity issues that students in rural community colleges face. Due to the distance far distance that many students must commute to take classes at rural community colleges, most of the courses are taught online or students try to cram their workload for only two days a week. Finnegan (2019) found that faculty members at rural colleges are aware of the equity issues regarding the lack of transportation and technology and work with the college to promote access. Other equity issues that faculty in rural colleges must be a part of are role models, educational and career advisors, economic developers, childcare providers, medical providers, and food, housing and financial insecurities (Finnegan, 2019).

### The Reliance of Adjunct Faculty in Community Colleges

Adjunct faculty take up a great percentage of the teaching assignments in community college and are a critical part to meet enrollment demands in an era of ever tightening budgets (Charlier & Williams, 2011). This trend is especially profound in the community college environment where an estimated 70% of all faculty members were employed on a part-time basis in 2007 (Jolley et al., 2014). With the growing number of students at the community college,

researchers have found that the demand could not be met without the contribution of adjunct faculty members (Gonzales & Ayers, 2018; Pons et al., 2017; Xu, 2018).

Adjunct faculty, however, are adjunct faculty are not being supported by the community colleges. Kezar and Maxey (2014) have stated that adjunct faculty are paid less than the full-time faculty and do not have access to resources that would benefit students. A study entitled, "Promoting Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Faculty: What Higher Education Unions Can Do" (2010) also found that 73% of all adjunct positions were held by Faculty of Color and they had less job security and meaningful academic freedom. Adjunct faculty are tasked with promoting student success in community colleges that are made up primarily of first-generation and students of color but are not being supported by the institution in terms of resources and benefits (Kezar & Maxey, 2014).

#### The Reliance of Adjunct Faculty in the Rural Community Colleges

Rural community colleges perceive that there is a high overall unmet need for adjunct faculty members, especially in the areas of arts and humanities, social sciences, mathematics, business, and computer technologies (Charlier & Williams, 2011). The challenges to finding faculty at rural community colleges are that full-time faculty often take overload assignments, fewer individuals hold advanced degrees since it may be the only institution of higher educational in the region, and that institutional "fit" is particularly important in these regions (Murray, 2007). Also, rural community colleges have limited access to business and other



institutions of higher education which limits the amount of people in their pools (Katsinas, 1996). These factors may result in full-time faculty taking up a greater amount of the workload and less of a need for adjunct faculty (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007; Eddy, 2007; Murray & Cunningham, 2004).

The understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and reliance of community college faculty leads into the next section of community college faculty demographics. As stated earlier, it is important for community colleges to examine the ever-changing demographics of the students (Levin et al., 2018), it is equally important to examine the ethnic and racial demographics of community college faculty as well as their experiences. One reason can be found in Umbach's (2006) study that found that Faculty of Color interact more with Students of Color than the white faculty and bring a diverse set of pedagogical practices and techniques that lead to effective educational practices.

### Community College Faculty Demographics

A survey given to 251 American Association for Community Colleges leaders named "Community Colleges Today: The Presidents Speak" found that the most pressing issues their colleges faced was the rapidly growing diverse student bodies and the lack of Faculty of Color in their institutions (Pluiose, 2006). The survey found that the college leaders only felt "somewhat prepared" for the changing shifts in demographics and expressed a need from faculty with backgrounds from Mexico, Central America, and South America so that students could have mentors who understood their cultures. The leaders also mentioned

the need for African American and Asian American/Pacific Islanders for the same reasons. In the 13 years that the survey was administered, little has been done however to address the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color in community colleges (Castañeda, Zambrana, Marsh, Vega, Becerra, & Pérez, 2015; Denson, Szelényi, & Bresonis, 2018; Forray, & Goodnight, 2014; Hughes, Horner, & Ortiz, 2012; Johnson, Boss, Mwangi, & Garcia, 2018; Tran, 2014; Turner, Wood, & Stevenson, 2008).

Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2016) draws attention to the lack of Faculty of Color nationwide of community colleges. The data shows that 76.8% of faculty are white, 0.8% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 4.2% are Asian, 7.4% are African American, 6.7% are Latinx, 0.2% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 0.9% of the faculty are more than one race. These numbers show a contrast to the data from the U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2014) which reports that the national student body which is made up of 5% Asian, 14% African American, 22% Latinx, 49% white, and 10% of students of two or more race.

#### Faculty in California Community Colleges

In a report entitled, *Left Out: How Exclusion in California's colleges and universities hurts our values, our students, and our economy*, Bustillos & Siqueiros (2018) identified that the faculty body in the University of California, California State University, and the California Community colleges are not

reflective of the student body. The study showed that 70% of faculty are white, 7% of the faculty are Latinx, 3% are African American, and 16% are Asian American in the University of California system. At the California State University system, 62% are white, 10% are Latinx, 4% are African American, and 18% are Asian American. Meanwhile, the California Community colleges, which is the largest higher educational system in the United States (Pham, Greaney, & Abel, 2020), is made up of 61% white, 15% Latinx, 10% Asian and 6% African American (Bustillos & Siqueiros, 2018).

In comparison, Bustillos & Siqueiros (2018) also identified the student populations at these three systems of higher education. The University of California's student racial breakdown is: 39% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 26% white, 26% Latinx, 4% African American, and 5% unknown. California State University student racial breakdown showed: 43% Latinx, 25% white, 18% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 5% African American, and 9% unknown. Lastly, the California Community Colleges student population was made up of 44% Latinx, 27% white, and 14% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 6% African Americans, and 9% unknown.

When comparing the tenured Latinx California community college faculty to the Latinx student population, the tenured faculty make up 15% to the student population at 44% which makes a difference 29%. The number of Latinx non-tenured faculty came up to 13% so the difference is even greater at 31%. The number of African American faculty members did not show large numbers of

underrepresentation compared to the African American student body but the data shows that there is a low percentage of African Americans in all three groups at only 6% for the tenured faculty and student population, and 5% non-tenured faculty (Bustillos & Siqueiros, 2018).

Although the data found that there were nearly identical percentages of Asian American/Pacific Islander tenured and non-tenured faculty compared to the student population, the data did not disaggregate between Asian American/Pacific Islander populations. By disaggregating the data, are likely find some more inequities between Asian American Populations and South East Asian/Pacific Islander populations (Lee, 2019).

These data sets show a lot of inequities that exist in the California higher education system. The low numbers of African American faculty as well as students show a need to do more outreach for this community. African American students and faculty members may feel that they are outsiders in higher education. The statistics in this study also show a greater need of Latinx faculty in the California Community Colleges to match the Latinx students (Hatch et al., 2016).

### The Experiences of Faculty of Color

Faculty of color experience different forms of oppression and discrimination during their times working in higher education which affects their chances of being employed or staying employed as a faculty member. They may experience one or all of these modes of discrimination from: Systematic

Oppression (Martinez & Welton, 2017; Pittman, 2010), Feelings of Isolation (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Levin et al., 2014), and Imposter Syndrome (Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014; Hutchins, et al., 2018).

### Systematic Oppression

Similar to Students of Color, Faculty of Color have experienced and continue to experience systematic oppression. It can be defined by the system of obstacles and the individual acts that maintain the privilege and authority of the dominate group (Pittman, 2010). Colleges and universities have systematically created forms of racism and oppression to not allow Faculty of Color to gain entry (Martinez & Welton, 2017). Examples of the systematic oppression include: subtle discrimination and microaggressions (Eagan & Garvey, 2015); cultural taxation, tokenism, and erasure (Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014); challenges to expertise and scholarly competence (Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011); bias in recruitment, promotion, and tenure (Gasman et al., 2015); and gendered, racialized, and ableist systems of merit (Griffin et al., 2013). These systems of oppression have caused a great deal of stress to the experiences of the Faculty of Color (Pérez, & Carney, 2018).

### Feelings of Isolation

Faculty of Color also experience feelings of isolation, which can be defined as feeling that you are working in an environment that you are unfamiliar from you, (Levin et al., 2014), navigating an environment that does not value of the team approach (Salinas et al., 2020), or “excluded from the informal and

social aspects of their departments or institutions” (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002, p.387).

After data was collected thru interviews form 36 part-time and full-time faculty to investigate the faculty’s educational preparation, professional background, prior community college experience, and level of satisfaction as a community college faculty member, Levin et al. (2014) found that when Faculty of Color bring up issues and concerns, they often get dismissed or told they misunderstood the situation or are being oversensitive. The researchers concluded that faculty are told that the community colleges want to embrace diversity, but Faculty of Color feel that they are isolated. They may feel that they are undervalued because their talent and experience is not being recognized. These practices work against the measures of building a more diverse faculty and cause Faculty of Color to depart from academia all together (Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014).

Faculty of Color in community colleges may also experience differences between their world view and the institutional world view, and this may be hindering efforts to increase Faculty of Color in higher education (Levin et al., 2014). Researchers have found that Faculty of Color construct their own identity and possess a different understanding of their institutional life than their white colleagues and create separate identities (Levin, et al., 2014). Faculty of color work in an environment different that may feel foreign to them and they are forced adopt norms and practices of higher education culture that may feel

uninviting to them. This may also cause Faculty of Color to suppress their social and cultural identities in fear that these identities may jeopardize their jobs (Ahluwalia et al., 2019; Fenelon, 2003).

Turner et al., (2008) conducted a study to examine how 20 years of research on the low representation of Faculty of Color can help practitioners attract and sustain a more diverse faculty in higher education. The researchers synthesized 252 publications on Faculty of Color and found that, “A more diverse environment has the potential to alleviate isolation for People of Color on campus. As colleges and universities become diverse, it will also be important for students, staff, faculty, and administrators to be provided with training on the issues faced by Faculty of Color” (Turner et al., 2008, p. 151). Professional development will help faculty members understand the importance of diversity and it can also tell a narrative from the Faculty of Color’s prospective.

In another study, Pérez & Carney (2018) examined the experiences of counseling Faculty of Color in predominately white institutions. The researchers conducted a phenomenological study by interviewing 6 participants who were tenure track counselors at a Predominantly white institution. The researchers found that the participants experienced subtle discrimination and aggressions when students ignored their position as a faculty member. The participants also expressed isolation when they would advocate for the few Students of Color. The experiences of marginalization could lead to feelings seclusion and consideration of departure (Kelly & McCann, 2014).

Mentoring programs have been instituted in some universities that provide support for Faculty of Color (Diggs et al., 2009; Han & Onchwari, 2018). These programs help Faculty of Color feel like they belong in the college by honoring their contributions to the colleges and universities. These efforts can decrease the feelings of isolation and can make the educational systems' practices less ambiguous. These programs can also offer a safe space for Faculty of Color to feel that they can express their opinions without being judged or reprimanded (Zambrana et al., 2017).

### Imposter Syndrome

Faculty of Color also face Imposter syndrome when they feel that their contributions are not adequate enough to be considered a faculty member at institutions of higher education (Dancy & Brown, 2011). Impostor syndrome can be defined as the internal experience of intellectual deceit and the inability to internalize professional success despite objective indicators noting otherwise (Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014; Hutchins et al., 2018). Most Faculty of Color internalize their feelings of discomfort and will either exit the system or be seen as if they are insubordinate in front of the dominant group (Levin et al., 2014). Zambrana, et al., 2015, conducted a qualitative study through semi-structured interviews of 58 Faculty of Color. The researchers stated that the Faculty of Color participants felt that they were perceived as, "Affirmative Action hires" by their white counterparts and were not hired based on their professional merit. Furthermore, when white faculty members begin to manifest



their negative feelings into actions, it may turn into implicit or explicit forms of discrimination and racism. They may lose out on opportunities to collaborate or share their own ideas to help the profession grow (Martinez & Welton, 2017).

The researchers Dancy and Jean-Marie (2014) conducted a study to examine the ways that Faculty of Color internalize racialized oppression and how it affects their success. The researchers synthesized the scholarship on Faculty of Color experiences with racial discrimination, bias, and serotyping.

Furthermore, they examined the relationship with impostor syndrome and internalized racism as a theoretical framework. The researchers found that Faculty of Color still face challenges creating a scholarly identity in particular in predominately white institutions. Faculty of color than internalize their feels of inequities by absorbing discriminatory practices and the feelings of being an impostor become reproduced with in interactions between faculty and students.

Imposter syndrome can cause a great deal of stress and when Faculty of Color face imposter syndrome and they may feel that their contributions are not worthy or that their voices should not be heard. The researcher Peguero (2018) wrote a reflection essay about his experience being as a Latinx Associate professor. In his essay, he wrote about his feelings of doubt and how a child of immigrants can be a professor in an university. He had experienced imposter syndrome when he felt that he was not “good enough” and he was the first Latinx faculty in his department. It is important that if any Faculty of Color is having feelings of imposter syndrome, they should look for mentors that help support

you and help them understand that they have earned their position at the college or university because of their talents and contributions to the field (Peguero, 2018).

### Experiences of Rural Community College Faculty

Faculty members at rural colleges also experience feeling that the students they are teaching in rural areas are underprepared for the college level coursework at the community college (Murray & Cunningham, 2004). This may be due to the culture of the rural environment because the people in the community may not see the value of a college education compared to entering the workforce at an early age (Miller, & Tuttle, 2006). People who live in these rural communities may need their children to help the household by providing financial assistance or childcare. By asking their children to go to college would be a big sacrifice for them. It would be up to the college to provide adequate resources, such as financial aid and tutoring, to help assist students in these positions to finish a college education.

One of the biggest challenges rural community colleges have to face is that most community college faculty never intended to become faculty members in community colleges. (Cejda, 2010; Murray & Cunningham, 2004). These faculty members may have felt challenges securing employment elsewhere or do not feel comfortable working with students from varying types of backgrounds; however, there are community college faculty that enjoy the challenges of working with students at varying levels (Eddy, 2007). Murray and Cunningham

(2004) also found that female faculty members expressed more interest in the student's personal growth and male faculty members expressed job with student's accomplishments, such as transferring or getting into a career. It is important for community college administrators to provide faculty members professional development and opportunity for growth (Eddy, 2007). This can lead to better prepared faculty members to better strategize new ways to assist students in their educational development.

By understanding the experiences and the need to increase the faculty of college, the next section will examine: the recruitment of Faculty of Color (O'Brien et al., 2015; Rodriguez, 2015), efforts and challenges to increase the amount of Faculty of Color (Binning & Unzueta, 2013; Plaut et al., 2011; Vidal-Ortiz, 2018). Furthermore, the challenges to attract and retain Faculty of Color at rural community colleges (Ceja, 2010; Eddy, 2007; Isaac & Boyer, 2007; Wolfe & Strange, 2003) will be explored.

### Recruitment of Faculty of Color in the Community College

Increased access and equity are two primary reasons that are driving the need for a more diverse community college faculty. As Rodriguez (2015) indicated, "Our institutions have to be intentional about whom we seek to bring into our academic community and be clear about the profile characteristics of the instructors and administrators we are looking for that would serve the institution well today and in the future. If we are committed to equity, it is necessary that we seek diversity among our faculty" (p. 22).

Much has been written about the need for a more diverse faculty but the reasons why there has not been much of a growth in the amount of Faculty of Color has not been explored entirely. According to Bilimoria and Buch (2010), “While a number of complex factors across the entire academic pipeline play significant roles in [the lack of Faculty of Color], important contributing causes of the underrepresentation of women and minorities on the STEM faculty are how recruitment is conducted and how hiring decisions are made” (p. 27). The recruitment process of faculty members needs to be examined to eliminate inequities against women and People of Color (O'Brien et al., 2015).

The traditional way of attracting candidates for applying for faculty positions, such as job postings in limited locations, must be reevaluated to see if women and underrepresented minority groups are missing out from even having the opportunity of being interviewed for a faculty position (Bilimoria & Buch, 2010). Along with the structure, the types of questions asked during the interview, professional development for the hiring committee, and how the candidates reflect the mission and vision of the college must all be explored (Green & Ciez-Volz; 2010; Rodriguez, 2015). When we gain a better understanding of the hiring process, equity can be better reached for recruitment and hiring of faculty (Oldfield, 2007).

There have been other creative ways to attract and recruit Faculty of Color. Stern (1999) explored efforts in attracting more Latinx faculty in a research university. A research university in New York was using a mentoring program to

help underrepresented groups gain access to teaching an area that they may not have met the minimum qualification. The participants did not have a degree of the exact subject but had met equivalency through the other degree they had and teaching experiences. Joint assignments also were happening at this college where people who had degree in multiple subjects, such as political Science and biology, had teaching assignments for both (Stern, 1999). Efforts like this bring fresh perspectives into fields that often lack diversity. It also allows people who have multiple degrees bring in their knowledge base to many different sectors of the college and increases intercommunication dialogue across academic disciplines (Lester et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2008; Sprouse et al., 2008).

Another approach to faculty diversification would be through active recruitment and training (Bilimoria & Buch, 2010; Jeffcoat & Piland, 2012). Colleges and universities must actively engage in the recruit process by continually searching for potential candidates and providing them with adequate training once they are hired for the position. Programs that are developed to increase the applicant pool for faculty positions and provide onboarding can help increase the lack of diversity in community colleges. Most Faculty of Color are first generation college students, and the additional training will help them gain insight and network with mentors to become better candidates for faculty positions (Peguero, 2018). Afterwards, they in turn, can be role models for underrepresented groups.

## Efforts to Increase the Number of Faculty of Color

The three California systems of public higher education all have elected leadership positions that direct mandates from the state and federal government through shared governance to the faculty, classified, and administration. They include Academic Senates to represent the faculty, Office of the Presidents to represent the administration, and Classified Senates to represent the classified staff. These elected bodies must communicate with one another to ensure that the laws that are being enacted are equitable and impartial for everyone working at the colleges and universities.

In the Community colleges, the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges mission statement charges itself with fostering effective participation by community college faculty in all statewide and local academic and professional matters; develops, promotes, and acts upon policies responding to statewide concerns; and serves as the official voice of the faculty of California Community Colleges in academic and professional matters. The Academic Senate of California Community Colleges has also taken a position on the endorsement of diverse hiring committees. In the Spring of 2009, The ASCC has resolved to,

Endorse the idea that hiring committees at local colleges should be diverse in terms of race, ethnicity or cultural heritage, age, gender, sexual orientation or identity, and disability when possible and without establishing quotas or compromising the professional expertise of the committee; encourage local senates to pursue the development of college

policies and processes for the formation of diverse hiring committees that include consultation with local senates.

In this resolution, the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges endorsed the creation of more diverse hiring committees at the local community colleges to be more inclusive of diverse people backgrounds. This resolution has shown to their constituents that it is important to carry out a more concentrated effort to increase diversity efforts not in terms of quotas but the talent that they can bring.

Vidal-Ortiz (2018) reported that faculty representatives from the California State Universities have been looking for grants to increase the diversity among the faculty. The University of California Office website of the President shows how a number of programs, initiatives, and committees have been developed to increase the number of historically underrepresented people for employment in the University of California. These efforts are being driven by the idea that faculty members of color have historically been withdrawn from teaching in the public universities of California (Schnabl et al., 2012).

The concentrated efforts of California Community Colleges, University of California, and California State University are examples that have shown that institutions of higher education understand that there is a need for a more diverse faculty to meet the changing demographics of the student population. If they do not change to accommodate these demographic changes, then they may be potentially alienating large groups of students. This would be a disservice to our

society and would limit the progress of all our citizens (Heaggans, 2018; Ndemanu, 2017).

### Barriers to Increase the Faculty of Color in California

The efforts to increase the number of Faculty of Color in California have not always been welcomed. There has been a proposition passed that halted the use of affirmative action in state hiring (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004) as well as white faculty members feeling that they feel that they are being put at a disadvantage for faculty positions (Binning & Unzueta, 2013; Plaut et al., 2011). The researcher, Fujimoto (2012) had found that by avoiding efforts to diversify the faculty, the white faculty members are only reproducing the inequalities and discriminatory actions that occur towards Faculty of Color during the recruitment and hiring process.

In the article *Proposition 209 Has Crippled Black Faculty Hiring at the University of California* (2008) the author stated that proposition 209 was passed in California and it banned the use of affirmative action in state hiring and negatively impacted diversity efforts that were happening in hiring education. The amount of people who voted for this proposition were found to live in areas that have a predominately white community (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004). This proposition hindered the diversity efforts that were taking place in California and showed that people in the white communities wanted to sustain their dominance in educational systems. Many white voters felt that affirmative action initiatives



threatened their ability to become employed in the future (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004).

Many faculty members at community colleges may fear that diversity efforts are putting them at a disadvantage in terms of employment. They may feel that they will be overlooked for positions and are going to be replaced only due to someone from a different ethnicity. These fears may be unfounded because diversity efforts are working to increase the number of diverse faculty members and not on attack on white faculty members (Binning & Unzueta, 2013; Plaut et al., 2011). Efforts to increase the Faculty of Color is about bringing in new ideas and perspectives to be more representative of the demographic changes that are happening with the student body today.

These critics may also believe that diversity efforts are another form of affirmative action in which people are not being hired because of the talent but only to meet a diversity quota, but there has been a study to disprove this belief. Fujimoto (2012) conducted a case study using document analysis from affirmative action reports, search and screening procedures developed at the campus level, state certification guidelines, human resources and conducted interviews with individuals involved in the specific searches. The researcher found that systematic racism occurs in the hiring process to adhere to a homogenous, white value-based system of inequality and hinders diversity efforts to increase the Faculty of Color. Without recognizing the history of the past hiring

practice of the higher education institutions, we will never make a difference in alleviating these negative past practices.

### Attracting and Retaining Faculty in Rural Community Colleges

Many rural community colleges face challenges when trying to attract and hire candidates for faculty positions (Ceja, 2010; Eddy, 2007; Isaac & Boyer, 2007; Wolfe & Strange, 2003). Rural areas often have high levels of illiteracy, low levels of educational attainment, high unemployment, and extreme poverty (Murray, 2007). Other challenges that rural community colleges face is a lack of resources to pay high salaries and not enough entertainment and restaurants for potential faculty members to enjoy in the community (Cejda, 2010). In addition to lack of entertainment and culture, faculty members at rural community colleges must take on additional duties which they might not have been prepared to take on (Glover, Simpson, & Waller, 2008). In order to better recruit faculty candidates, it is important for the rural community college to define the demographics of the students the potential faculty members will teach as well as be explicit in their roles, such as: teaching multiple subjects and creating curriculum for their courses and programs (Leist, 2007; Murray & Cunningham, 2004; Twombly, 2005). This would better help attract faculty members that are interested in growing their skill sets and enjoy the challenge of teaching students with varying levels of education.

Turnover is one of the biggest challenges to rural community college. Burnett (2004) found that faculty members at rural community college often leave

to earn doctorates degrees and work at larger community colleges. Many faculty members may be the only one in their department and are burdened to develop all of the curriculum for their major. Lastly, the Murray (2007) states the location can become a challenge because for dual earner families, there may not many opportunities for the spouse, and faculty members of color especially can feel isolated in remote areas.

Potential faculty members in rural community colleges must be aware of the amount of involvement they must partake in. Faculty members in rural colleges are limited in their college and sometimes in their departments, therefore, they not only in charge of teaching courses but also writing curriculum, teaching in more than one subjects, and working in tutorial areas (Ceja, 2010; Eddy, 2007; Isaac & Boyer, 2007; Wolfe & Strange, 2003). Faculty members at rural colleges experience burnout and disappointment with all of these addition responsibilities as well as uneasiness with the expectations teach courses outside of their expertise. It may be helpful for some of the faculty members to attend conferences and network with other colleagues to help support them in this role.

For administrators at rural community colleges, being “a good fit” for the community college is one of the more important factors for hiring faculty members (Ceja, 2010; Eddy, 2007). They believe that the credentials they hold are important but if the faculty members are not able to work in a rural community college setting, they will not work well with college or the students they are going

to teach. Miller and Tuttle (2006) found that a community college is a place where students question their beliefs and behaviors and do not accept solely the community's way of thinking. Rural community colleges are important agents of change for the community they serve by providing them access to a higher quality of life and prepares them for the workforce (Miller, & Tuttle, 2006). Furthermore, Wolfe and Strange (2003) conducted a study that found that female faculty members experienced more sexism since rural colleges tend to be more conservative and traditional. If administrators are looking at hiring faculty members that are what they seem as a good "fit" for the college, they may be doing the college a disservice by not allowing new and progressive ideas to enter into the institution (Cejda, 2010; Eddy, 2007).

The faculty hiring process at community colleges have not been fully studied (Twombly, 2005). When recruiting for positions, community colleges recruit internally, regionally, and statewide. The hiring committee may hire people who are local to the area and may not have the experience that other candidates may have. Other times, faculty members may not be the best candidate because they have a limited number of choices available. This practice does not help the college, however, due to the candidate being hired not having a genuine interest in teaching. It is important for community colleges to change the way they select candidates who they see as good "fit" for the rural colleges but should look for candidates that can bring change and improvement to the lives of the students (Cejda, 2010).

While it can be a challenge to attract faculty members to rural community colleges due to the location and lack of resources, there are a number of faculty members that do enjoy working at these colleges. The reasons could be that they would have shorter commutes, enjoy the rural lifestyle, and enjoying teaching students from different backgrounds (Murray & Cunningham, 2004). It is important for community colleges to be explicit in the responsibilities for faculty members and the student demographics in job advertisements to attract the best possible candidates.

The next and final section of the literature review will be exploring the theoretical framework that was used in the study. The literature review has explored the lack of faculty in community colleges (Bilimoria & Buch, 2010; O'Brien et al., 2015; Pluviose, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016) and the lack of student success that students of color are achieving. Critical Race theory was the theoretical framework that will allow for the examination of the oppressive social structure community colleges have created to deny access to Faculty of Color in their institutions (Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018; Lara, 2019; Sleeter, 2017).

### Theoretical Framework: Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory is framework that "...draws from and extends a broad literature base in law, sociology, history, ethnic studies, and women's studies," and, "...emerged from criticisms of the critical legal studies (CLS) movement. Critical legal scholars questioned the role of the traditional legal system in

legitimizing oppressive social structure” (Yosso et al., 2004, p. 2). It has been shown to be a proven theoretical framework to examine the oppression, racism, and discrimination that Faculty of Color face in institutions of higher education (Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018; Lara, 2019; Sleeter, 2017). The following sections will discuss the history of Critical Race Theory and how Critical Race theory explores inequity gaps for the hiring of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges.

### History of Critical Race Theory

During the 1960s and 1970s, the civil rights movement was happening to address the racial discrimination that People of Color were experiencing from the white majority (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Parker, 2015). From these movements, Yosso et al., (2004) explained that Critical Race theory emerged from criticisms of the critical legal studies movement. Critical legal scholars were questioning the role of the traditional legal system in legitimizing oppressive social structures towards People of Color (Han & Leonard, 2016). The critical legal studies movement wanted to make changes in the legal system but neglected the of use race or racism as an agent for oppression, especially towards African Americans (Brown & Jackson, 2013). In the 1980s, conservative Supreme Court justices and Supreme Court rulings began to restrict and eliminate prior legislation that allowed for race conscious hiring practices and higher education’s affirmative action’s admissions plans (Brown & Jackson, 2013). Thus, Critical Race theory separated itself from the critical legal studies

movement because of the changing perspectives of social inequalities. Critical race theory was evolving to address the discrimination that People of Color were facing due to racism while also addressing social inequalities that from society (Tate, 2016).

Originally, Critical race theory only focused on Black and white American matters and often ignored other marginalized groups (Williams, 1991). The experiences of other marginalized groups were not being explored. Women and other marginalized groups started expressing their feelings of oppression in broader terms than the Black and white opposition (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Yosso et al., 2004). For example, LatCrit grew out of the need of the Latinx community to address issues that were ignored by critical race theorists such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001).

Critical race theory then responded began to explore the shared experiences of other marginalized groups. Critical race theory began to address the experiences of people from the lens of gender, race, ethnicity, language fluency and immigration status (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Yosso et al., 2004). This helped Critical race theory to grow into a more inclusive frame to promote social change for oppressed groups. Therefore, different Critical Race Theory grew to include viewpoints from feminists (FemCrit), Latinx (LatCrit), Asians (AsianCrit), and Native Americans (TribalCrit) (Annamma et al., 2016; Iftikar &

Museus, 2019; Martinez-Cola, 2020; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Yosso et al., 2004).

Finally, the basic Critical race theory model consists of five tenets focusing on: (a) the centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination, (b) the challenge to dominant ideology, (c) the commitment to social justice, (d) the centrality of experiential knowledge, and (e) the transdisciplinary perspective (Solorzano, 1998; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015). These five elements were used when critical race theory is discussed in relation to the recruitment and retention of Faculty of Color in the rural community colleges.

#### Critical Race Theory in Higher Education

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) were one the first researchers to use Critical Race Theory into education and challenge racial inequalities in the K-12 context. The researchers argued that racism plays a role in the education of Students of Color and is often not addressed. They found that African American students achieve success outside of the school context due to the institutional and structural racism white people create to protect their advantages. The researchers also found that even though desegregation existed, schools used tactics such as offering free camping and ski trips to entice white students who had access to expensive camping and ski equipment. Latinx and African American students, on the other hand, were served poorly by the school system. Schools that African American and Latinx students faced a high expulsion and



suspension rate and a low academic achievement rate. The researchers argued against the injustice that Students of Color faced and made aware the need to listen to the voices of People of Color. “Thus, without authentic voices of People of Color (as teachers, parents, administrators, students, and community members) it is doubtful that we can say or know anything useful about education in their communities (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 58)

Institutions of higher education have not been fully explored through a Critical Race theory framework as K-12 schools (Patton, 2016). Patton et al., (2014) argue that researchers would rather avoid the issues of racism and white supremacy in Higher Education than directly address it. However, research has been done in examining the experiences of African American college students, such as stereotype threat, through the Critical Race Theory lens (McGee & Martin, 2011). Also, the researchers Jayakumar et al., (2016) explored the experiences of a hostile work environment, lack of support, and feelings of isolation that the Faculty of Color face through a Critical Race theory lens.

The continued oppression and discrimination that Faculty and Students of Color face are a result the illogical belief of colorblindness and equal process (Parker, 2015). Patton (2016) and Bonilla-Silva (2017) also argued that Faculty of Color in face racial oppression in regard to student access, faculty, curriculum, and the diversity of the institution while the white led institutions of higher education wants to a promote a narrative of neutral spaces free of race and racialized perspectives.

## Critical Race Theory in the Recruitment and Retention of Faculty of Color

In the last decade, Critical Race theory has been used to challenge the themes of colorblindness and the overlooked contributions of Faculty of Color in higher education (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015) but Critical Race Theory has not been used often used to explore the fundamental root of marginalization that Faculty of Color experience during their recruitment and retention (Lara, 2019; White-Lewis, 2019). By using a Critical Race Theory Framework and a qualitative methodology, those fundamental roots can be explored.

Here I contrast the five central tenets of Critical Race Theory, as identified by Solórzano (1998) and Pérez Huber and Solorzano (2015) with how they relate to the recruitment and retention of Faculty of Color:

1. Centralizing race, racism, and multiple forms of intersecting oppressions experienced by People of Color: Critical Race theory beings with "...acknowledging that race and racism are rampant in American society" (Han & Leonard, 2016, p. 115). In the recruitment process, racist practices occur to limit the opportunities of Faculty of Color as Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) argued, "...that through a range of discursive moves, hiring committees protect rather than unsettle Whiteness" (p. 558). Furthermore, they state that, "These moves include the so-called objective scrutiny of applicant CVs, the discourse of "fit," the token committee member, the additive nature of diversity related interview questions, and the acceptability of candidate ignorance on issues of race/gender" (p.

559). Fujii (2014) stated, “CRT allows for the investigation of how societal norms influence educational processes and practices to support the status quo and serve the needs and will of the majority” (p. 910).

2. Challenging dominant ideologies that justify the subordinate positions of People of Color created by structural oppression: “Critical Race postsecondary scholars have also set out to expose how the prevalence of Whiteness and White supremacy, frequently in the guise of colorblindness, covertly and overtly shapes the culture of higher education” (Ledesm & Calderón, 2015, p. 214). Lara (2019) has argued government directives, such as affirmative action, should be reviewed through a CRT lens to repair the adverse impact it has on the People of Color and its definition of race should be changed to be viewed as an asset in the employment process.

3. The commitment to social justice: Critical Race Theorists work to “direct the formal curriculum toward goals of social justice and the hidden curriculum toward Freirean goals of critical consciousness” (Yosso, 2002, p. 98). Critical Race Theorists argue that the dominant curriculum oppresses People of Color and, by having a more representative Faculty of Color, the curriculum could be changed to address social justice and the hidden curriculum.

4. Legitimizing the experiential knowledge of People of Color, thus supporting counter stories aimed at uncovering master narratives that

dominant groups use to justify the racial subjugation of others: This tenet allows CRT scholars for "...positioning participants exposed to a system as experts in their own experiences with said system - both perspectives are necessary to reveal the finer mechanics of how candidates and/or Faculty of Color are marginalized" (White-Lewis, 2019, p. 60). Many times, Faculty of Color who serve on hiring committees often make up a small percentage of the committee. Lara (2018) states that Critical Race theory gives us the opportunity to examine the lived experiences of Faculty of Color in a process that is bound by rules, guidelines and confidentiality.

5. The transdisciplinary perspective: Yosso (2002) states that Critical Race Theorists "...utilize interdisciplinary methods of historical and contemporary analysis to articulate the linkages between educational and societal inequality" (p. 98). Many white faculty members tend to promote others when they can also promote white interests (Bell, 1980). Critical Race theory allows to see how white faculty members have historically benefited from programs that were supposed to benefit Faculty of Color.

All five of these tenets allow for Critical Race Theory to be applied to Higher Education. In this dissertation, I used Critical Race theory as an analytical framework to study how race and racism impact the recruitment and retention of the Faculty of Color and preserve the dominant status quo in rural community colleges.

## Summary

California community college students have some of the most diverse student bodies in the world. Many of students can be the first in the families to go to college, be veterans, have disabilities, or be from a number of different ethnic backgrounds or countries. These students also come from various levels of socio-economic status. Many members of the faculty body, however, do not share the same backgrounds of the students. By having an understanding of the student body demographic breakdown and how well they are succeeding academically, there has been more effort exerted by administrators and faculty to recruit faculty that are representative of the student body they serve.

“The alignment of diversity efforts at both levels of the organization is critical for progress to take place. In addition, the literature suggests that increasing the campus presence of Students and Faculty of Color may lead to a synergy that supports the retention and development of both groups as well as attracting others” (Turner et al., 2008, p.150-151). Community college faculty and administrators have recognized that there is a gap not only faculty representation of the student body but also degree attainment for Students of Color. More concentrated efforts have been made to alleviate these gaps by recognizing the need to hire more Faculty of Color and providing more professional development on the understanding of how culture effects a student’s success; however, more must be done to retain diverse faculty and community colleges will benefit from their education, ideas, and experience.

By showing an interest in a student's cultural background, faculty can make a positive difference in a student of color's success of degree attainment, and an improved GPA (Ruelas et al., 1998; Tovar 2015). Students of Color may also increase the use of student services that will assist them in reaching their goals (Chang, 2005). Ultimately, equity gaps will only be lessened if the institutional barriers created by community colleges will be brought down for Students of Color and community college processes will be demystified for Faculty of Color (Levin et al., 2014; White & Ali-Khan, 2013). When this occurs, community colleges become more progressive in assisting students of color and recruiting more Faculty of Color.

Having a deeper understanding for the need for a more Faculty of Color has led to my research questions:

1. What are the professional experiences of adjunct Faculty of Color in rural community colleges?
2. What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when attempting to move into a tenure-track position at rural community colleges?
3. What strategies and resources do Faculty of Color apply to successfully transition from an adjunct role to a tenured position in a rural community college?
4. What contributions did participants make to the rural setting as Faculty of Color?

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I provide a comprehensive explanation of the research design and methodology. The chapter examines the following areas: (a) the purpose of the study; (b) research design; (c) research setting; (d) research sample; (e) research data; (f) data collection; (g) data analysis; (h) validity and trustworthiness; (i) and positionality of the researcher. This chapter closes with a summary.

#### Purpose of this Study

The mission of community college includes providing access to higher education through affordable 2-year programs for students to be able to enter the workforce or transfer into a university (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Kisker et al., 2016). While the mission of the community college has increased access to higher education for Students of Color (Boyd et al., 2012), it has not facilitated the transfer process for them at the same rate as their white counterparts (Greene et al., 2008; Tovar, 2015). Studies found that some of the reasons for the completion gaps for Students of Color are the lack of role models that reflect the communities they came from, the lack representation in the curriculum, experiences of stereotyping and discrimination, and experiences of imposter

syndrome (Cokley et al., 2013; Greene, 2008; Goff-Crews, 2014; Insoon & Onchwari, 2018; Ndemanu, 2017).

The completion gaps for Students of Color bring attention to another persistent issue: the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color in the community college system (Pluiose, 2006). It has been found that Faculty of Color bring their personal experiences and create a sense of comfort for Students of Color which increase their success rates (Insoon & Onchwari, 2018). However, Faculty of Color experience discrimination when applying for positions at the community colleges and they also experience a lack of collegiality and role models to assist them in the process (Peguero, 2018). Most Faculty of Color are normally employed at the community colleges in the role as a part-time adjunct (Finkelstein, Conley, & Schuster, 2016).

In rural community colleges, the lack of Faculty of Color is especially important because it is difficult to attract and retain faculty due to a lack of resources (Cejda, 2010; Murray & Cunningham, 2004). However, a key issue is that hiring committee members and administrators value “fit” more than diversity (Cejda, 2010; Eddy, 2007). While there have been studies researching the lack of Faculty of Color at large, urban colleges (Chang, 2005; Hagedorn et al., 2007; Lara, 2018; Wood & Newman, 2015), there research focused on small, rural community colleges is scarce (Ceja, 2010; Eddy, 2007; Isaac & Boyer, 2007; Wolfe & Strange, 2003).



The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of Faculty of Color as they transitioned from part-time, adjunct roles, into full-time, tenured positions in small, rural community colleges. Critical Race Theory was used as a lens to examine the experiences of Faculty of Color. The subsequent research questions guided the study:

1. What are the professional experiences of adjunct Faculty of Color in rural community colleges?
2. What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when attempting to move into a tenure-track position at rural community colleges?
3. What strategies and resources do Faculty of Color apply to successfully transition from an adjunct role to a tenured position in a rural community college?
4. What contributions did participants make to their rural community college sites as Faculty of Color?

### Research Design

A qualitative research study design was used because it provides insights and understanding to people's experiences as well as an understanding of the barriers they have faced (Denny & Weckesser, 2019). According to Patton (2002), qualitative methods, "can contribute to useful evaluation, practical problem solving, real world decision making, action research, policy analysis..." as well as, helping to "answer concrete questions, support development, and

improve programs” (p. 145). Qualitative researchers attempt to understand or interpret the phenomenon through the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The collection of data takes in consideration the people and the settings that are being studied and concludes with a report that includes, “...the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or call for change” (Creswell, 2013, p.145).

In this case, the qualitative research method was used to study community college Faculty of Color at rural community colleges. I focused on researching the experiences of Faculty of Color at rural community colleges who have made the successful transition from an adjunct position into a tenured position. While much has been written about the absence of Faculty of Color in higher education (Charlier & Williams, 2011; Kezar & Maxey, 2014), the continued lack of representation of Faculty of Color in small, rural community colleges is still a pressing issue (Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018). Therefore, I used this approach because it allowed me to understand that each participant is an individual and I respected their perspective when I collected data to examine for themes and patterns (Creswell, 2013).

I employed a qualitative research design, as I sought to understand the lived experiences of my participants by means of using rich data. I utilized my professional and personal experiences of 15 years in higher education to build relationships with other Faculty of Color, which has allowed me the opportunity to

understand the behaviors, mindsets, and decision-making process about their aspirations for full-time employment. I used my experience of working with and being a part of a diverse community in terms of race and ethnicity to build rapport and trust with my participants. This allowed the participants to have an open and honest conversation.

### Research Methodology

For this study, I used a phenomenological research design. Creswell and Poth (2018) described phenomenology as research examining the common meaning for several individuals of a concept or a phenomenon. This approach allowed me to explore the shared experiences of tenured or tenure-track Faculty of Color in rural community colleges and identify the barriers they face in small rural community colleges (Patton, 2002). With phenomenology, the researcher collects the data from the participants, "who have experienced the phenomenon and develops a description of the essence of the experiences for all individuals" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75)."

I utilized an interpretive phenomenological research approach over descriptive phenomenological research approach as the interpretive phenomenological research approach allows researchers to enter the study by making inferences of the data to discuss meaning, cognition, affect, and action with an awareness of the social and cultural ground against where the data was generated (Reid et al., 2005). Descriptive phenomenological research values objectivity and finds it essential for the researcher to shed any prior experience of

the subject (Lopez & Willis, 2004). On the contrary, interpretive phenomenological research allows the expert knowledge on the part of the researcher to guide the inquiry and make the inquiry meaningful undertakings (Lopez & Willis, 2004). In fact, Heidegger (1962) stressed that it is impossible to clear the mind of the background knowledge of understandings that has led the researcher to consider a topic worthy of research in the first place (Koch, 1995). Data collection for this study came from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon through in-depth interviews.

The phenomenological research design was applicable to this study as it allowed me to explore, "how human being make sense of experience and transfer experience into consciousness, both individually and as a shared meaning (Patton, 2002, p. 104). The five tenets of CRT: (1) the Centrality and Intersectionality of Race and Racism; (2) the Challenge Dominant ideology; (3) The Commitment to Social Justice; (4) the Centrality of Experiential Knowledge; and (5) The Interdisciplinary Perspective (Solorzano, 1997) can all be explored through an interpretative phenomenological research design as it provides a platform to explore a phenomenon through a CRT lens (Patton, 2002).

### Research Setting

The setting for this study was the rural colleges in the California Community College system. A rural community college is located in areas that have a total population that is less than 500,000 people (Carnegie Classification, 2010). The faculty demographics at these rural colleges show a large number of

Faculty of Color in adjunct roles compared to tenured roles. They may also be the only form of higher education in their respected communities and serve as important agents of change by providing access to a higher quality of life and preparing them to enter into the workforce (Miller & Tuttle, 2006). Little is known about the barriers that adjunct Faculty of Color face in rural community colleges to move into tenured positions; therefore, rural community colleges in California was deliberately selected to speak with the faculty members who have moved into these roles.

### Research Sample

The participants of my study were Faculty of Color in both tenured and tenure-track positions in rural community colleges throughout California. The number of people who participate in the study was limited to the amount of new information gathered from the interviews and if redundancy occurs (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Purposeful sampling was used when selecting participants. According to Patton (2002), it is important to not overgeneralize from purposeful samples and, at the same time, we should be maximizing the advantages of in-depth, purposeful sampling.

### Participant Selection and Recruitment

In order to recruit participants, criterion and snowball sampling were used in this study (Patton, 2002). Criterion sampling allows researchers to better understand situations that are likely to be information rich because they may reveal major institutional weakness that can be points of opportunity for

improvement (Patton, 2002) Moreover, criterion sampling can be used to identify situations, such as ongoing workplace discrimination, from in-depth follow-up of standardized questions. The following criteria were used for the selection of participants:

1. Identification as a Person of Color
2. A tenure-track/tenured faculty member who previously held an adjunct position
3. Employed at a rural community college

In rural areas, white individuals make up the educator workforce in higher education and People of Color often endure racism and isolation (Han, 2018). Faculty of Color are employed throughout community college in California but mainly found in urban areas. Because this group may be hidden or difficult to reach, the snowballing sampling was implemented as a way to recruit candidates. The snowball aspect of sampling relies on participants to identify other colleagues in their profession to participate in the study (Creswell & Proth, 2018). This sampling technique allowed participants to suggest Faculty of Color who they felt meet the criteria.

For the purpose of this study, I assured the participants that I would use pseudonyms to protect their identity, so I would ask the participants to choose a pseudonym they feel most comfortable with. All names, including college sites, in this study were also pseudonyms. I hoped to find that all the participants were

identified by a range of racial/ethnic backgrounds from their ethnicity to their employment status, and the subject taught or area they work in.

### Data Collection

Once I was able to acquire IRB approval, I recruited participants via social media sites and emails were sent to potential candidates who responded to the social media posts. The emails contained a self-introduction, the purpose of my study, and a request to participate in the study. I posted the flyer onto my Facebook and LinkedIn accounts to recruit participants in my study. The emails went out to participants who work in rural community colleges and contained a self-introduction, the purpose of my study, and a request to participate in the study.

I hoped to contact 20 potential participants. By contacting a large amount of people, I was able to recruit 10 people for my study. I was very flexible with my schedule. Community college faculty are mainly working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, using ConferZoom allowed for greater participation because we did not need to meet in person. Otherwise, the distances between myself and other rural areas would come at a cost financially and time wise.

Hour long, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. I conducted semi-structured interviews with both tenure-track and tenured Faculty of Color. By conducting semi-structured interviews, I had a prepared set of questions to ask my participants but also had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions based on the participants' answers when I felt it was necessary

(Hardon et al., 2004, Rubin & Rubin, 2005, Polit & Beck 2010). I used ConferZoom to record the sessions and maintained a journal to annotate field notes. The time of the interview was scheduled at the participants convenience. A follow-up interview may have been requested, if needed.

The data collected from the interviews was secured on my California State University, San Bernardino's licensed Google Drive. All electronically stored data including recorded interviews, will be deleted from the Google drive three years after the project has ended. All interview transcriptions and field notes were also stored in the same place. I have reflected on each interview by transcribing the recording and taking additional notes.

### Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), "Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis; the reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally presenting the data in figures, tables, or a discussion" (p. 183). It is important, "to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002, p. 433)." I analyzed the data after transcribing the interviews. The methods were used to seek for themes to that explain the barriers adjunct Faculty of Color face when they are seeking full-time positions in rural community colleges.

I kept a journal in order to maintain accuracy as well as listening to the recording with the participants. I coded interviews manually for common themes



that aligned with the experiences of Faculty of Color and the barriers they faced in securing tenured positions. The qualitative software, QDA Miner Lite and NVivo, were also used to aid with the organization of the coding of data. I used the transcripts from the interviews to further identify different themes that were relevant to my literature review and research questions.

Emotion coding was used as it is, “appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies, but particularly for those that explore intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions, especially in matters of social relationships, reasoning, decision-making, judgement, and risk taking (Saldaña, 2016, p.125).” I used this coding method to seek out moments where participants felt “sad,” “discouraged,” “angry,” “frustrated,” and “happy” to help me understand the participants' experiences as they transitioned from an adjunct position to a tenured position. Moreover, versus coding was also used as it, “is the application of codes to qualitative data that reflect a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview (Saldaña, 2016, p.131). I used versus coding to understand the conflict that participants had between adjuncts and tenured faculty; white faculty members and Faculty of Color; and Faculty of Color and rural community colleges. Versus coding also helped me also understand the barriers that the participants faced to get to the tenure-track position.

I used critical race theory as a framework, as it is “particularly suitable for such inquiries as identity development; psychological, social, and cultural

meanings and values; critical/feminist studies; and documentation of the life course (Saldaña, 2016, p.155).” Lived experiences should not only be analyzed for the single participant’s story but also the context (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). I also used CRT in education as my framework because it provides a model to challenge the discrimination and inequalities found in higher education (Jayakumar et al., 20016; McGee & Martin, 2011; Patton et al., 2014). CRT acknowledges that race and racism are rampant in American society (Han & Leonard, 2016). It challenges the dominant ideology that justify structural oppression that exists in higher education (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015.) Moreover, CRT informed my research questions and the interview questions, which gave the participants the opportunity to share their experiences of being marginalized in higher education (Lara, 2019; White-Lewis, 2019).

Throughout the interviews, the participants shared their experiences and spoke about how their influence was limited because of the discriminatory practices of the institutions. One participant spoke about the fear he felt when he wanted to do more to advocate for AB 540 students due to the rural community having negative feelings towards undocumented students. He wanted to avoid drawing attention to this work and it was only until the Black Lives Matter movement happened that he felt empowered to advocate for these students.

Another participant spoke about how she felt welcomed at first by the white faculty members but when she wanted to share new ideas about the program and curriculum to be more exclusive and supportive towards Students of

Color, they quickly reacted negatively to her ideas and got to the point where they would not meet or share any previous curriculum with her. The participant felt that the rural community college created an impression of wanting to be more inclusive of a diverse faculty, but she was not allowed to create meaningful change to the institution.

These two participants felt that the white faculty members in the rural community college used their influence to intimidate the participants, reproduce discriminatory practices towards People of Color, and impede any positive change to the rural community colleges. By using a Critical Race theory lens, I was able to draw themes from tenets of CRT such as: the centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination, the challenge to dominant ideology, and the transdisciplinary perspective (Solorzano, 1998; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015).

#### Trustworthiness

My participants must know that I aimed to protect their anonymity in my study. I used pseudonyms to disguise their identity, so they would not feel fear of any repercussions of participating in the study. They had the opportunity to look over their interview transcript if they were so inclined, by member-checking. I also asked them for their feedback to make sure that their story is being told correctly. If they felt that something was not as described, I did my best to make the changes necessary so that they felt comfortable in my study. However, none of

the participants asked for any changes. I kept contact with them after the study was completed to assure that they felt comfortable with the study and the results.

I was also very clear about my research biases and subjectivity. It is important to see myself in the study and how my own experiences affected it. My own subjectivity and biases could drive my research, but I made sure that it did not overcome it. They were important to recognize, and I made them clear to the readers. This is important because we are human, so we may be influenced by our experiences.

I also asked my peers, dissertation chair, and committee members to review my work so that I can get an opinion about the work. These groups of people are experts in the field, and they can make sure that my work is accurate and fair for everyone involved. They gave me feedback that I must implement in my study.

Trustworthiness is one of the most important elements of the study because you are asking people to be honest and open in your study. If you do not do your best in providing a safe environment for your participants, you are doing them and your study a disservice. The study has the most detailed and accurate description of the findings for your participants and your study. This will let the participants know that their time and experience was important for the study.

## Positionality of the Researcher

In the Doctoral program at Cal State San Bernardino, I learned about both qualitative and quantitative research designs and its effect on the people we are studying and ourselves. We must look at how the study effects those who we are examining and make sure that we are honoring them, their cultures, and the communities where they come from. As researchers, we must also look at how our positions affect the work we are planning to complete and how it will help disenfranchised groups. Therefore, reflecting on my individual positionality was important to this research process.

### Self

My cultural heritage is unique because I am a child of two close but different cultures. My mother's family immigrated into the United States from Costa Rica during the mid-1970s and I am unsure of my father, but I can guess he immigrated around the same time from Argentina. They met when they were both working in a furniture store named, "Aztec Furniture," on Mt. Vernon in downtown San Bernardino. My father had previously been married and he convinced my mother to marry him, and both my sister and I were born from that marriage. He was also an abusive person and would hit my mother, so my mother left him and took all of us to live with her parents.

I grew up in a single parent household and did not learn English until I started watching, "Sesame Street" on Public Access Television. My grandparents only spoke Spanish and we were not allowed to go outside the home because it

was not safe. We all lived in Muscoy, which is an unincorporated part of San Bernardino, and there was often trouble by the white neighbors that did not like us living there. We would have rocks thrown at our windows from time to time and we would have to call the police.

I learned a great deal about my Costa Rican culture growing up. From the national hero, Juan Santa Maria, to the stories of my grandfather who struggled to support his brothers and mother, but he was the son of one of the most powerful people in the country. He instilled in me the power of education and would say, "I worked hard so you don't have to." He was a carpenter and with the financial support that he could give his brothers, they became lawyers and engineers.

When high school was ending, I remember hearing a lot of stories of my friends going to a four-year university. I knew that I was smart, but I did not push myself enough to look for scholarships or other opportunities. Like many other Students of Color, I did not feel that my experiences inside and outside the classroom mattered (Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Garcia et al., 2019; Torres & Solberg, 2001). I also knew that my mother would not be able to pay for a four-year university and, since I was unsure of what I wanted to study and I did not want to spend a lot of money, I decided to enroll into San Bernardino Valley College as I knew that the community college would bring me access into higher education.

I was very happy with my experiences at San Bernardino Valley College because I had the chance to meet some of my best role models, Mr. Gomez, Ms. Brown, and Professor Duarte. Mr. Gomez was my history professor and I learned so much about Native American history that I was never taught before. I always remember his passion for teaching. Ms. Brown was African American and my first Sociology teacher. She was the one who inspired me to study Sociology for my major. Professor Duarte was my Spanish teacher from Mexico. Taking three of his Spanish courses made me feel more competent in my Spanish language ability and was the only place my Costa Rican heritage was reflected in the literature. By being exposed for the first time to Faculty of Color, I finally felt that I had a place in education and was reflected in the curriculum. My grades shot up and I am forever grateful for the positive trajectory these three faculty members of color had on my life.

Since I was a first-generation college student, I had to do everything by myself. From the admissions process to applying to financial aid. It was not easy to convince my mother that I need to give a copy of her taxes to the financial aid office. I often visited the counseling office and had a chance to meet with a counselor that I enjoyed speaking to, but I did have a bad experience with another one who was trying to convince me that I would not be able to transfer to UCR. One of the biggest regrets that I had was that I was never told to apply to the EOPS program and did not visit the transfer office. I feel that I missed out transferring to a university like UCSB and only chose UCR because it was the

closet UC to me. I was never encouraged to look out past the Inland Empire for college. I felt that I could never consider leaving to be an option as I was worried about money and my academic abilities compared to other students in more prestigious universities as well as having no one to connect to if I even tried. Most Students of Color like myself are never targeted or miss out on applying for services that would provide resources, such as book vouchers, meal vouchers, transportation cards, counseling, and transfer services, (Chang, 2009; Jackson et al., 2013; Stebleton & Aleixo, 2015; Wirt & Jaeger, 2014; Wood & Ireland, 2014; Wood & Newman, 2015; Zell, 2010) as they are often smaller in scale and limited to a certain number of students (Acevedo-Gil & Zerquera, 2016).

Fast forward to 10 years ago, I finished my position teaching English as a Second language in South Korea and returned to the California in order to become a counselor at a community college. As I reflected in my past, I remembered that my experiences as a community college student were the most life changing for me, and I was the most vulnerable with little knowledge of the future. I felt that I could help students with similar backgrounds as me to get the best possible experiences they can at the community college. I went then and started applying to many jobs, unfortunately, the year was 2011 and all the community colleges were having hiring freezes. I felt that I did not have a chance and started working as an ESL teacher at the University of La Verne's English Language Institute. The salary was very low, and the job was very stressful, but I was happy to have a job.



I started driving 120 miles to San Diego because I was part of an internship program at the San Diego Community College District and San Diego State. It was difficult to drive there but it was the only experience I had working within the community college system. Fortunately for me, I did not have to do that sacrifice that long and I gained employment as an adjunct Counselor for an Upward Bound program. In this program, I worked hard meeting with low-income youths from various Latino/a, Asian, and African American background to help them gain access into the college system. I was driving all over the Coachella Valley, Cathedral City, Palm Springs, and Indio to meet with them at their high schools and help guide them. Many of the students were grateful for the help that I was able to give them, and I still keep tabs on them today.

During this time, I started to realize that I was not gaining any real experience working with the community college students. I would attend board meetings and do my best to learn about the chancellor's office initiatives but when I attend faculty committee meetings, I felt that I was not welcomed. I would hear comments like, "What's Eduardo doing here?," "He doesn't need to be here," and, "He should only be focused on Upward Bound." It bothered me because I felt like I did not belong there, and my contributions were not being appreciated. These experiences are not exclusive to me but also other Faculty of Color who experience isolation, marginalization, and imposter syndrome (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Hutchins, 2018).

After a few years, my director left and started a new job, and we were stuck without a director. I had to take on the initiative to start writing the reports for the program since the director position was vacant. I was not receiving the director's salary or recognition for my work for which the Vice President of Student Services did. I was able to transfer to another TRiO program and I also got another adjunct job in Northern California.

I ended up traveling by plane weekly from Palm Desert, CA, to Oakland, CA, only spending about \$100-\$200 for the plane tickets. The reason that I made this sacrifice was that I knew when I told people that I worked in that community college in Northern California, which had a reputation of being one of the most successful transfer community colleges to the UC system, they would take notice of me. My experiences in Northern California were the best experience that I could ask for. I was constantly busy meeting international students and general students. I had built great relationships with my coworkers and learned so much. Unfortunately, when they interviewed me for a full-time position, I was not chosen. I was very disappointed and felt that my experience, background, and sacrifice was still not valued enough to attain a full-time, tenured position. I almost quit trying to work in the community college system and felt like it would be impossible for me to get a full-time, tenured position.

After this defeat, I went ahead and applied to a full-time position in a small, rural community college. I drove out there from San Bernardino and was surprised to see small, rural community college compared to the other massive

community colleges that I have interviewed at before. I was happy to see only 3 people in the interview panel compared to my previous experiences with 10 people and gave the best interview that I could. The Vice-President of Student Services took a shine to me, and I was given a second interview with the president of the community college and I received the position. I was ecstatic for obtaining a full-time, tenured-track position but a little sad that the location is remote and far from my friends and family.

As a full-time instructor and Faculty of Color, I have felt my experience very different than my white colleagues. I was the first Spanish speaking counselor at the college. I have also attended every diversity professional development and often have been asked to speak about diversity. I have also taken on leadership roles such as the curriculum committee chair and the Counseling representative for our local Academic Senate. I constantly work to help students only to see other faculty members not do the same. Sometimes, when I am attending meetings with other faculty members and administration, I raise awareness of an issue I feel that is important only to get dismissed. This is one of the reasons that I am working on my doctorate degree. I feel that when you have a doctorate degree, more people seem to listen to your concerns.

#### Self in Relation to Others

In my study, I want to examine the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color compared to the student body. I feel that Faculty of Color have even less opportunities to gain full-time employment at small, rural community colleges. I

would like to interview participants of their experiences trying to gain full-time employment at the community colleges.

The cultural and ethnic heritage of my participants came from African American, South East Asian, and Latino/a participants. These are the groups that I want to work with, and I felt that it would not be that difficult to find applicants from these backgrounds to self-disclose their ethnic background. I do not also feel that it was a challenge finding them in adjunct roles as the research has shown that Faculty of Color are normally employed in that position (Finkelstein et al., 2016).

From the literature review that I have conducted, I have read a great deal about the increasing amount of work that adjunct Faculty of Color have to do, how much they have to prove their position to their white colleagues, and how much they are undervalued and ignored at the community college (Leist, 2007; Murray & Cunningham, 2004; Twombly, 2005). I am not African American or South East Asian, but I have read about their experiences and must be open to hear about the experiences of my participants. This goes as well as the Latino participants. While I do identify with being Latino, my experience of being a light skinned, mixed Central and South American is very different than people who have more indigenous features.

I have also grown up in a single parent household and some of my participants may have as well. While I still had to work since high school, I had

the support of my family. Some of the participants may have had to take a different route possibly through the military to achieve their academic goals.

I was sure to treat every participant as an individual to tell their story and not try to control the narrative. My experience may have been different than my participants and I must respect that. As much of the readings have taught us, we must look at honoring the stories of the participants and not try to put our own spin on it. They had my trust that I would not make changes and I would give them copies of my dissertation if they ask for it.

### From Self to System

In my study I examine how race and class effect the chances of being hired and retained at a small rural community college. From my literature review, I have read a great deal of the experiences of Faculty of Color from their challenges of being isolated and undervalued to suffering from imposter syndrome. Faculty of Color often have more obligations and less support from their colleagues or mentors (Diggs Garrison-Wade et al., 2009; Han & Onchwari, 2018; Kelly & McCann, 2014; Pérez & Carney, 2018).

Small, rural community colleges also have a separate number of issues that larger, urban colleges. There are many challenges to attract faculty in general to work in rural locations and it has been shown that administrators are not looking at hiring people based on qualifications but to see if they are a good “fit” for the community (Cejda, 2010; Eddy, 2007). This may prove challenging for a Faculty of Color to gain entry into the system when the faculty and

administration in the college does not reflect them or the communities they came from (Peguero, 2018; Wolfe & Strange, 2003).

The challenges that I have found that affect Faculty of Color being hired and retained come from historical racism, feelings of isolation, imposter syndrome, and lack of mentors (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014; Martinez & Welton, 2017; Pittman, 2010). In my literature review, I have also written about the hidden curriculum and community colleges are often prone to nepotism and it may be a challenge for people that may not have relations or friends to work in the system (White & Ali-Khan, 2013).

In this dissertation, I wrote a great deal about myself and my experience working as both an adjunct faculty and a full-time faculty. I have also written about my personal story of my culture and where I have come from. Examining who I am as a person helps me relate to the people I want to study. I want to be sure to respect and honor the stories of those who I hope to interview. They may have had similar experiences as I but some of them were quite different and I must be open to listening to all of it.

### Summary

According to Creswell and Poth (2018) "The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (p.75)." The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences of Faculty of Color as

they transitioned from adjunct roles into tenured roles in rural community colleges. As a researcher, I hoped to gain insight into the lived experiences of these faculty members as they aspire or achieved a tenured position. Their narratives developed a storyline on how their experience and professional lives have influenced them on this trajectory in their own words. How the support structures, such as family members, mentors, and role models was explored to see how they contributed to the success of the Faculty of Color. Epiphanies, turning points, and the lived experiences of these Faculty of Color was explored within a personal, social, and historical context (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

This chapter presented the conceptual framework of the study, the qualitative research design, and methodology. The phenomenological study was guided Critical Race Theory framework (Pérez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Solórzano, 1998), which guided the research questions and semi-structured interview questions, to capture the lived experiences of Faculty of Color at rural community colleges. The interpretivist phenomenological allowed me to explore the shared experiences of my participants and enter the research to identify the essence of the phenomenon (Reid et al., 2005; Smith et al. 2009).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of the study. The purpose of this analysis was to examine the experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges as they moved from an adjunct role into a tenured position using critical race theory (CRT) in education (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). To recollect, the research questions that guided my study were: 1) What are the professional experiences of adjunct Faculty of Color in rural community colleges?; 2) What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when attempting to move into a tenure-track position at rural community colleges?; 3) What strategies and resources do Faculty of Color apply to make the successful transition from an adjunct role to tenured one in a rural community college?; and What contributions did participants make to the rural setting as Faculty of Color? Data was collected to construct themes, and the findings were organized according to those themes. By using interpretive phenomenology, I examined these interconnected themes from the viewpoint of the participants and derived meanings from their narratives with a reflective process of interpretation (Reid et al., 2005; Smith et al. 2009). The three interconnected themes I found were: a) Experiences, b.) Barriers, and c.) Strategies.



## Participant Demographics

The following section provides a brief demographic and narrative background of each participant. The participants real name was replaced with a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Jessica has been a math instructor for many years in the same rural community college that she had attended as a student. Her parents immigrated from Mexico, and she is a first-generation college student. She felt that instructors that she had as a student provided her with the support that she needed to be a successful student. She cares deeply about the rural community that she grew up in and wants to help create more opportunities for students in the area. She did not have much experience working outside any other community college, however, she gained valuable work experience participating in summer camps outside the state. She worked for 10 years as an adjunct before becoming a tenured faculty member.

Eric is a counselor and is a first-generation college student, who came from a working-class family. His mother is white and his father was from the Philippines. He grew up in a single-family household and had to work while she attended community college. He transferred to a private, for-profit university and felt that he accumulated too many units at the community college because he did not make the time to meet with a counselor. He started working as a social worker and had to refer students to the rural community college. He liked the area and applied to work at a rural community college without having much of an

idea of the responsibilities of a counseling faculty member. After many years working as an adjunct, he learned the roles and responsibilities of a counseling faculty member and has a strong passion to work with students from non-traditional backgrounds like himself. He had only recently been offered a tenure-track position.

Jamie is an athletic instructor who grew up in an urban area. Her father was from Guatemala and her mother was from El Salvador and she is a first-generation college student. She did not originally envision herself working in a rural community college but after working many years an adjunct in urban community colleges, she felt that she was never given a chance there, so she accepted an offer in a rural community college. She had never saw herself as a faculty member, but her mother's and coach's encouragement helped guide her to get to this point. She holds a doctorate and is passionate of teaching Students of Color, especially Central American ones as she feels that there is not enough attention brought to the issues that they face. She has only been a tenure-track instructor for 2 years.

Gary is a business instructor who grew up in an all-Black neighborhood and high school. His mother was a homemaker, his father was a steel worker, and he is a first-generation college student. He attended a Historically Black University and joined the Airforce afterwards. He was stationed in a rural area, and after finishing his service, he started working as a K-12 teacher in the area. He felt passionate to serve students but found it challenging working with both

the parents and students. He found employment in a rural community college and enjoys the more intimate setting. He states that African American students gravitate towards him, and he wants to help empower them, but he is not their friend. He had worked as an adjunct for 3 years before being offered a tenure track position.

Katelyn is a math Instructor and grew up in an urban city. Her parents immigrated from Mexico and her mother was a homemaker and her father was a mechanic. She was a first-generation college student and attended a community college before transferring to a university. Her initial goal was to be a high school teacher but, after a year of working as one, decided to be a community college instructor. She wanted to help students who struggle with school and may not be as prepared to attend a university like herself. She initially was not looking for employment in rural area but had to make a sacrifice to gain the experience she wanted. Her transition in a tenure-track role did not take long after working only a few years as an adjunct.

Patricia is a math instructor who is from the Philippines. She went to the university there and her parents did not go to college, so she was a first-generation college student. She immigrated to the US through a program that placed Filipino people in teaching areas in remote areas. She worked in the high school and enjoyed it but wanted to work in the community college. She likes the intimate, rural environment and was able to finish her doctorates while

working as an adjunct. She worked for about 8 years as an adjunct before being offered a tenured position.

Rachel is a counselor that grew up in an urban environment. Her mother worked as a secretary for the city and had an associate degree. Her father was laborer who immigrated from Mexico. She did not attend a community college and went straight to a university after high school. After receiving her bachelor's degree, she knew that wanted to go into advising so she entered in a master's program for Counseling and did a few internships in the local community colleges. She struggled finding opportunities in urban community colleges and was offered a part-time position that eventually turned into a full-time one in a rural community college. She was not seeking employment in a rural setting and credits her ability to speak Spanish as the reason she was offered a position. She works with ESL and undocumented students. She had worked almost 3 years as an adjunct before being offered a tenured position.

Alma is a nursing instructor and grew up in a rural environment. She was adopted and identifies as Latinx. She was working as an LVN before working in a rural community college and credits her brother-in-law for encouraging her to apply. She is proud that she was able to overcome any adversity of being an adoptee and works to help her students be successful. Alma did not have to work very long as an adjunct before accepting a tenured position.

Luke is a counselor who grew up in an urban environment. He and his immigrated from Mexico and he attend a community college before transferring

to a university. His father was a mechanic, and his mother was a homemaker, and they were encouraging him to get a college education. They all moved to a rural area for his father's job and Luke was commuting to work not realizing there was a community college in the area. He worked very hard but was never able to get a tenure track position in that community college but was able to obtain a position in one that's further. Luke is passionate about working with ESL and undocumented students. Luke worked as an adjunct for almost 15 years before being offered a tenured position.

Nadia is a math instructor who immigrated from Guatemala when she was in high school. While she struggled with speaking English, she knew that she could teach math. She lived and worked in an urban environment but quickly learned that she did not have the amount of experience that other people had when applying for tenure track positions. She was advised that she should apply in rural areas and found work. She is happy for the opportunity and enjoys working with international and undocumented students. Nadia worked for only a few years as an adjunct before being offered a tenured position.

A total of 10 Faculty of Color participated in this research study. Out of those 10, five participants identified as Mexican or Mexican American, one was Guatemalan, one was Filipino, one was mixed Salvadorian and Guatemalan, one was mixed white and Filipino, and one was African American. Almost all of the participants attended a community college, except for three. The participants'

education ranged from an associate degree to a doctorate and all, but one, was the first in their family to receive a college education.

As for the type of degree attained, four of the participants received master’s degrees in Mathematics, three of the participants received master’s degrees in Counseling, one participant received a degree in Kinesiology, one participant received a master’s degree in business, and one participant received associate degree in Nursing. Nine of the participants faculty position required a master’s degree to meet the minimum qualifications but for the LVN faculty position, only an associate’s degree and six years of experience was required (CCCO, 2020).

Table 1. Participants Name; Gender; Ethnicity; Major.

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Department
1. Jessica	Female	Mexican	Mathematics
2. Eric	Male	White/Filipino	Counseling
3. Jamie	Female	Guatemalan/Salvadorian	Athletics
4. Gary	Male	African American	Business
5. Katelyn	Female	Mexican American	Mathematics
6. Patricia	Female	Filipino	Mathematics
7. Rachel	Female	Mexican American	Counseling
8. Alma	Female	Mexican American	Nursing (LVN)
9. Luke	Male	Mexican American	Counseling
10. Nadia	Female	Guatemalan	Mathematics

Research Question #1: What are the professional experiences of adjunct Faculty of Color in rural community colleges?

### The Adjunct Life

In this study, the participants disclosed their experiences becoming adjuncts in rural community colleges. The participants experienced excitement for the opportunity to be working in a community college as an adjunct, but they quickly became disheartened with the lack of benefits they had compared to their tenured counterparts. Additionally, the participants perceived themselves as being undervalued and having a lack of security as adjuncts. Although they hoped to bring more value to the college, the participants also perceived to be generally isolated from the rural community college and tenured, full-time faculty as they were not invited to attend to committee meetings or have voting rights. Nevertheless, the participants demonstrated a great deal of fortitude with the lack of opportunities they had and the isolation they had felt. All of these struggles allowed them to be more dedicated to the Students of Color and to learn to advocate for students. The following sections will discuss how Faculty of Color felt as secondary faculty compared to the full-time faculty, felt unwanted, and were undervalued in the rural community college.

The second tenet of CRT challenges dominant ideologies that justify the subordinate positions of People of Color created by structural oppression: In the following sections, the participants speak about their experiences as adjunct

faculty members and that they were made to feel inferior to the white tenured faculty members to the point that they were expendable. Many of the participants did not find a support system from their colleagues or their institutions due to them being an adjunct Faculty of Color.

### The Lack of Status and Tension with Full-Time Faculty

The participants all shared similar experiences of division between the full-time, tenured faculty members and themselves. The participants felt that there was a hierarchy and there were certain rights and privileges that full-time, tenured faculty had but were not granted to them. In the first example below, Jessica explained about the discouragement about not having a dedicated office to work with students:

“So, when I got that part time job, I was happy. I didn't know any better in some ways, right? But looking back, for example, I remember when I started [LMC], we didn't have office hours right and I was a teacher who always had seven, eight students, so I had to like engineer something out of a public area. And that's when I started seeing a few things. Like wow, you know, I'm part-time and I have all the students and I've seen full-time instructors who have zero students, and they have their comfy offices and things like that, right?”

The experience of having a lack of status also showed up in other areas, such as adjunct faculty learning that they had to be careful of how they approached full-



time faculty members. One of the participants, Eric, spoke about an experience he had when was advocating for a student. Eric said:

“I definitely had an encounter with one of the full-time faculty members, which now, I get along with really well, but it was pretty scary because I was trying to, you know, do my job and being advocate for a student but I also stepped on toes, and I learned that it cannot do that.”

Another example of the lack of status came from the selection of courses that adjuncts could choose to teach. Full-time faculty members often have the first choice in what classes they want to teach, and therefore, adjuncts are limited in their options.

One participant, Jamie, shared that she had to come to campus at all hours of the day to teach the courses. However, full-time instructors did not want to adjust their schedules to do the same. She explained:

“I got the leftovers and I mean the leftovers. ‘Are you available to teach this fitness course because the other full-time professors don't want to do it?’ But they have a bunch of people that want to come to that course and you're like, ‘Yeah sure’ and then ‘Oh, by the way we have another opening at 11 o'clock at night.’”

For Jaime, she described her experience as problematic because she wanted to get experience as an instructor but was dismayed since she was assigned courses and not given options. She was also limited in the number of units she was being offered so she had to take multiple adjunct positions at other colleges

to make ends meet. For Eric and Jessica, they both did not like the idea that the full-timers had more influence than they did but they learned to accept it.

### Feeling Unwanted

Some of the participants in this study felt a sense of isolation when they were adjuncts in the rural community college. Two of the Faculty of Color spoke about trying to connect with white faculty members but were either ignored or disregarded. For example, Gary described his experience trying to connect with the other faculty members:

“When I asked them or talked to them, they answered me, but they weren't like welcoming and loving. No one said, ‘Let me take you under (my) wing’ I'm not saying there was nobody that way but there were few people that way, I guess.”

Gary described how he did not find the support he needed when he was an adjunct and was just met in a cold manner. Another participant, Katelyn, also mentioned that she felt ignored by her fellow faculty members during department meetings in the following example:

“I was the only Faculty of Color that I remember but the majority were white faculty. So, it felt I didn't belong at the at the college because I was new, young, and I didn't look the same as other faculty...And also, since I was an adjunct, I felt that some faculty didn't really value my point of views, my thoughts, my ideas, or things I did in the classroom. So,

because I was an adjunct, and they saw me as a young Faculty of Color that doesn't know what she's doing and in reality.”

As a young woman of color, Katelyn's experiences exemplified marginalizing practices at the intersection of racism and sexism. She attempted to belong to the faculty but was not welcomed. Although Gary and Katelyn felt that they were being ignored and isolated, they still continued to work on establishing relationships with their faculty colleagues and became supportive of the newer faculty members after them.

Other participants wanted to be more involved with the college through committee work but were met with resistance. Jamie explained that she was not allowed to participate in committees as an adjunct. Jaime stated, “At Riley Community College, oddly enough, I tried to join committees, but because I was adjunct, they didn't allow adjuncts on the committees.” Jessica further explained the importance of being involved when she discussed the importance of being involved in committee work and shared governess. She explained:

“As a part time teacher, you don't have a voice, you don't have a vote. I mean people will hear you, and you can maybe influence people, but you can't vote. You can propose things, right? Like maybe you can say some provide an idea, and then a part of a full-time faculty can bring that idea up into a committee or something. But if you really want to make some changes, you have to be essentially a full-time teacher.”

By not having the ability to participate in committee work or having a vote on the way the college should be making change, both Jessica and Jaime knew that their input would not be invited, and they could not make the positive changes they wanted for the institution itself.

### Under Valued

Almost all the participants spoke about wanting to bring more value to the college to be secure in their positions. Many of the participants spoke about feeling insecure in their adjunct roles and would take on additional projects to be sure that the deans kept them in mind. Gary explained the insecurity he felt as an adjunct, "As a part timer, you're almost kind of like, 'We'll have you, but if we don't need you, we don't have to keep you.'" Gary continued speaking about having to take on additional duties or being "voluntold" for projects and not being compensated for the work. Katelyn described one of the reasons in want to transition into a tenure-track role to bring value to the college. Katlyn explained:

"Because I did notice that part-time faculty are valued less compared to full-time faculty. So, I wanted to be valued more within an institution. I wanted to make more changes in school, positive changes. And be involved with more the department and things like that so what that's why I also want to become a full-time instructor."

Katelyn described that she did not only want to be a tenured faculty member for the benefits but because she wanted to become more valued in the institutions.

Another participant, Rachel, explained that her experience as an adjunct was not

valued and she questioned if it would be more valued if she was white. Rachel explained:

“I felt like I wasn't valued a lot, you know, because of some experiences that I had. Because again, I was literally the minority, you know. So, there was times where I felt that I didn't belong, you know, or I was made to feel that way sometimes. And I think to because, at the time, I was younger and I just I wonder if they respected me or they saw me with respect, but I always thought, ‘If I was white, I wonder if they see me more you know with better eyes, with more fondness.’”

By being the only Faculty of Color, Rachel felt that she was not only undervalued but also marginalized. Her experience led her to question that if she were white would they have been more accepting of her.

All the participants were first generation, Students of Color and did not have a familiarity about how community colleges operated. Therefore, they often took on more work than their white counterparts with the aim to add more value to the colleges while they were adjuncts. Nevertheless, as adjuncts they felt undervalued, isolated, and less regarded than their white counterparts.

Research Question #2 What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when attempting to move into a tenure-track position at rural community colleges?

The participants spoke in detail about the barriers they faced. At first, they seemed reluctant but after some reflection, they realized that they were treated

unfairly by white faculty. They spoke about the hiring process being manipulated to keep Faculty of Color out by skewing the point system in order to only have white candidates advance into final interviews, not having enough representation of People of Color in interview committees, and disqualifying candidates based on the applicant's name and college that they attended.

The first tenet of CRT centralizes race, racism, and multiple forms of intersecting oppressions experienced by People of Color. In the faculty recruitment process, racist practices occur to limit the opportunities of Faculty of Color as Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) found that "...through a range of discursive moves, hiring committees protect rather than unsettle Whiteness" (p. 558). In the following sections below, the participants speak about People of Color being screened out of tenured faculty positions by way of manipulating the point system, not having a diverse interview committee, or adding additional requirements to faculty positions that many Faculty of Color do not meet.

### A Broken System

Before even becoming tenure or tenure-track faculty members, the participants in the study often spoke about the hiring process feeling like a manipulation to keep Faculty of Color out of tenure-track positions. The participants shared that they felt that some of the ways that the system can be manipulated was through the use of a scoring system, not having a diverse hiring committee, and not advancing candidates with ethnic sounding names or degrees from less prestigious universities. The following sections will detail the

participants experiences with the barriers they faced with the scoring system, lack of a diverse hiring committee, name bias, and university biases that all impedes Faculty of Color's opportunity into moving into a tenure-track position from an adjunct one in rural community colleges.

### Scoring System

A few of the participants explained that white faculty members could manipulate the scoring system in order not to advance Faculty of Color for an interview. Katelyn spoke in detail about the committee members scoring a Person of Color high, but the white faculty member scored the Person of Color with low scores to purposely skew the results. Katelyn explained:

“The data could get skewed and that’s actually one of my experiences. In one of the hiring committees we had, one strong member of the hiring committee had a strong belief to hire one compared to the eight of them. So, she gave like zero points to all the candidates, and she gave like all the points to one candidate. So, our data was skewed... And then, so they mentioned we need diverse faculty, right? But I feel the people within the hiring committee were not really interested in having diversity. So, they had white faculty that wanted to hire white faculty.”

Katelyn felt that the white faculty member purposely skewed the data to not advance the candidate of color. Furthermore, the college itself puts out a message of wanting a more diverse faculty body but the hiring committee were white faculty members who did not want to advance that cause.

Eric had a similar experience in which he was told by a fellow faculty member that she purposefully scored him low because she felt that he did not have enough years of experience working as an adjunct. Eric explained:

“She asked me how to run the programs every day and I had to do a lot of things for her, but it was silly for me to want that position. She purposely scored my application as a one because she knew that I didn't have enough time as adjunct. She had to have so much time as an adjunct and that it wasn't fair for me to apply. So that was her putting me in my place.”

Eric explained that he helped his colleague complete a lot of tasks because she struggled with technology. When he interviewed for the full-time position, however, she retaliated against him and purposefully scored him low because she had to work more years as an adjunct than he had. She felt that it was unfair and let him know that she scored him low. From a CRT lens, Faculty of Color must work harder to prove their worth in the spirit of “fairness” and “equality from white faculty.” The concept of meritocracy that promotes “fairness” and “equality” is problematic because it fails to recognize the inequities and discriminatory practices that exist which allows white faculty members to privilege from knowledge, perspectives, and ways of being (Viesca et al., 2014).”

#### Lack of a Diverse Hiring Committee

One of the participants, Gary, shared that he had not been involved in many hiring committees. He had been working at the rural community college for many years and was one of only three African Americans working there. He



seemed puzzled by the idea that he has not been asked to participate more.

Gary stated:

“I honestly feel like I should be on more hiring committees. Yes, I think I should be. You know being that there's only three people that are black. I think that, and I'm sure they probably have other people who are, but maybe I don't fall into the category of what they're looking for so that's why they don't choose me to be on hiring committees. But I know there are people of all different kinds of things that are on hiring committees for management and different other things so I'm not quite sure why I haven't been I've only been on one, and this is my fifth going into my sixth year. So, that's kind of funny to me. Odd.”

Gary started to question why he was not on many hiring committees. At first, he started to think that it did not have anything to do with race and more about qualifications. But when he started questioning it, he started to conclude that it was a strange situation especially because there were few African American faculty members who work at his institution. The rural community college has failed to allow Gary to participate in hiring committees and bring his perspective from being one of the few African American faculty members. Moreover, from a CRT lens, the institution has allowed Faculty of Color to be marginalized from being in positions to create positive change and continued to reproduce discriminatory practices.

## Name Bias

Jamie spoke about name bias and that it could stop People of Color from advancing in the hiring committee because white faculty members were not interested in faculty diversification. Jamie said in the research she had seen, people with white sounding names have more opportunity to advance through the hiring process rather than an ethnic sounding name. Jaime explained:

“If I actually want to go a step further remove the names from the resumes. That's interesting. Let's remove the names from the resumes because there's research that shows that depending if your name sounds more white, you have a better opportunity of getting hired so if we just remove the names and actually the addresses because then people can determine from where the people are living. What kind of you know the situation that they're in. We would have more equity and hiring people.”

Jamie felt that to have more equity and faculty diversification, we should not only remove the names but also addresses from the applicants resumes because people would know the demographics of the candidates based upon the area that they lived in. If they were living in an area with a large diverse population, then there could be racialized biases against that candidate. From a CRT lens, we can see that, “white people, their attributes and behavior automatically become the standard for comparison (Cotton et al., 2014)” When Faculty of Color does not have a white sounding name or lives in an diverse community, they become screened out as potential candidates for faculty positions.

### Degree Reputation

A few of the participants explained that barriers existed with the minimum qualifications for faculty positions. The participants felt that their degrees were not valued due to the institutions that degrees came from. Some participants felt other faculty members had even more advanced degrees, which resulted in the feeling that they held more authority. Finally, another participant spoke about the increasing recommended preparation was a barrier for Faculty of Color. Eric explained that because his degrees came from for-profit colleges, he was overlooked for full-time positions. Eric stated:

“I had to go to different kinds of schools, like private schools. So, there was one time during my interview where I was questioned about it. It wasn't in the interview itself, but it was kind of talk, and you hear a lot of talk. And it was like, ‘Oh, this counselor actually went to maybe UC Merced or CSU Stanislaus, or, you know or Berkeley?’ I went to an online university.”

Eric felt that because he went to an online, for-profit university, he was not considered for full-time faculty positions such as a person who went to public university. He made the argument that he could relate to students more because many of the community college students that he served did not have the access or resources to attend classes in-person in a public university. Another participant, Alma, shared that when teaching Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) courses she only needed to have an associate degree and a number of years’

experience in the field to be a faculty member in that subject. Even though she met those requirements, she felt that other faculty members looked down on her.

Alma explained:

“The only thing that I felt I was lacking due to the fact that I did not have the college credentials that everybody else had around me. I didn't even have a bachelor's degree. I'm just now finishing, and as soon as I got on staff there, I started taking classes that I needed left to transfer.”

Alma described her experience as a bit of a challenge because even though she had an adjunct position and later a tenure-track position, she still needed to take classes in the community college from her peers in order to transfer and get her bachelor's degree. She described her experience as humbling and a little self-conscious about it.

Similarly, Jamie explained that recommended preparation and years of experience needed for faculty positions were a form of institutionalized racism to keep People of Color out of those positions. Jamie explained:

“And I just kept working hard and realized it wasn't enough working hard. It wasn't enough. I was always blinded by the idea that it was racism or like built-in racism in the system but after I went to get my doctorates, I realized that's exactly what it was. It's a system that set up to keep us out of it. That's the reason they put the masters as a minimum requirement.”

Jamie explained the struggles that she had to obtain experience as an adjunct to be considered for a faculty position but that was not enough, she had to obtain a

Doctorates degree to be competitive in the market. She described that increasing number of requirements for a faculty position was institutional racism because People of Color were receiving more bachelor's degrees, the white faculty needed to add more hurdles for faculty of Color to be considered for a faculty position. From a CRT perspective, Students of Color attended schools in a K-12 system that is underfunded and do not have the opportunities that their white counterparts do (Greene et al., 2008). Thus, Students of Color are limited in attending a four-year university and completing post graduate work afterwards. By creating these educational inequities, Faculty of Color do not have the same opportunities to build upon the standards of merit that the white faculty members continue to assign to faculty positions in rural community colleges.

#### The Competitive Job Market

The competitive job market was one of the most common themes amongst all of the participants when they discussed the lack of opportunities they had in transitioning into a tenure-track role due to name bias, lack of prestige from the university they attended, or lack of experience they had. Finding a faculty position in any community college became a challenge and most participants were not considering being a faculty member at a rural community college. Almost all the participants had to relocate to work in a rural community college. The participants spent a lot of time preparing for tenure track positions and building up networks of support.

Many of the participants spoke about how they had to wait several years to have the opportunity to apply for a tenure-track position. Other applicants moved far from their hometowns into rural areas because they knew that they would have more opportunity for a tenure-track position in a rural college rather than an urban one. The participants also spoke about how often they applied for positions and did not even hear back from the human resources office. Many of the applicants took that time to enhance their experience and education but still felt that, even by doing so, institutional racism is still prevalent and will impede the opportunities that Faculty of Color have in order to move into full-time, tenured positions.

#### The Culture Shock of Full-time Work

After obtaining, the tenure-track position, a majority participants in this study explained that they were not prepared to take on the additional duties of curriculum development, committee assignments, and other projects. As adjuncts, the participants primary duty was to teach courses or counsel students. Most of them were not involved in committee work as they were not reimbursed for their time. Once they had the opportunity to enter into full-time work, many of them felt unprepared for what they were expected to do.

#### Curriculum Development

As a full-time faculty member, one of their assignments was to create courses, modify courses to meet state standards, and choose appropriate textbooks. Many of the participants were not given the opportunity to contribute

to curriculum development as adjuncts and when they found themselves with this work, they felt lost. Rachel explained that she was in charge of a lot of the curriculum development and did not receive support from the other full-time faculty members. Rachel noted:

“So, I had a lot more responsibilities that I didn't get support with. And I felt like, ‘Oh my God. I just have to do this stuff.’ And since I was not tenured, I was in a tenure-track position, I felt I had more... I have to do more stuff and actually I didn't get support from other faculty. I didn't expect it. I thought tenure track is working more full-time and you have your just to teach more classes but, in reality, it was more work. I did a lot of curriculum work, a lot of SLO (Student Learning Outcomes) mapping, you know creating SLOs or courses.”

Rachel went on to say that once one of the other full-time faculty members had retired and another Faculty of Color was hired, she was able to get more support with curriculum development.

### Committee Work

Being a part of committee can be especially challenging for adjunct faculty since many colleges do not pay adjunct for committee assignments and adjunct faculty may also need that time to work at other colleges. Jaime earlier explained that adjuncts were not allowed to participate in committees at the college site where she was an adjunct. Therefore, the experience of being part of a

committee was foreign to many of the Faculty of Color. Eric explained that he often felt lost in his committee assignment. He stated:

“I had to pick up the committee work, and I felt a little bit lost for sure because I didn't you know when you started a new committee and you're kind of new, you're not really sure what's happening in this committee. What is our goal? There's a lot of like etiquette and things like that. It's just like these standards that you're kind of hitting without really saying this is our job, you know? So that was a little bit rough because I was new.”

Eric felt that he was unsure of his role in committee as well as the purpose of the committee. He also spoke about not being prepared for the parliamentary nature of committee work in the community colleges.

Eric went on to say that he felt guilty for not being able to assist students due to his obligatory committee work. Eric explained:

“It was a hard transition because I love meeting with students and seeing as many as I can, because before our lobby was in the welcome center and you have all these students sitting in this room and they're just staring at you through the glass and it's like you just want to like get through them. So, to know that you have to shut your door and say you're going to this meeting that you're not really sure what's going to happen. It's like I want to get them. So that was that was a hard transition. Being able to just have to shut my door and not service to students.”



As a counseling faculty member, Eric felt that he wanted to serve the students who were in the waiting room but instead had to close his office door to attend a committee meeting.

Many of the participants seemed unhappy with the committee work because they were under the impression that they would have more time counseling students or teaching class and not spending a greater amount of time attending committee meetings. By separating the Faculty of Color from their teaching and counseling responsibilities, barriers are created by decreasing the amount of time that Students of Color have access to them. The only way to increase access to the Students of Color would be by providing more overtime to the Faculty of Color.

#### Other Duties as Assigned

The participants in the study spoke also about their participation in other projects as assigned. Some of them felt that their participation was a benefit to the community while others felt overwhelmed with these responsibilities. Alma spoke about her involvement and how she saw it as an overall picture on how the rural community college functioned. Alma explained:

“The tenure track was more projects, more committees, more or that. So, I'm just like, ‘Oh, whoa!’ That's just that's when I learned that counseling wasn't just counseling, you know? That's where politics came into play. And because now you're more vested in this. You're no longer a girlfriend, you're part of the family. So, you're going to see all the family dynamics

and you're going to see all the problems and the challenges and you're part of that and you're trying to solve that. So that was the hard part because my goal was just to counsel students get them from point A to point B. Now, it's like I have to do like committees, might have to do this, and solve problems and issues, and do this project, and do SLOs. So, it just became definitely a lot more work.”

Like Eric before, Alma felt guilty that she was not able to only meet with students but had to be involved with projects and committee work. She also learned that she was more vested and therefore more responsible to help the college function in a better manner.

Luke had worked many years as an adjunct and felt overwhelmed by the amount of projects he had to do. He explained:  
“Okay, just because I had never gone through that transition before and doing all these things that they expected from a counselor can be overwhelming. I was like, ‘Oh, I have to be able to do all of that by the end of this year.’ So that that can be overwhelming.” The amount of work and lack of training the adjunct Faculty of Color had before transitioning into a tenured faculty position took a toll on many of the participants. They did not have support from their (tenured) white colleagues, and the system is not set up to help Faculty of Color succeed.  
Research Question #3: What strategies do Faculty of Color apply to successfully transition from an adjunct role to a tenured position in a rural community college?

As almost all of the participants in the study were first generation college students, many of them lacked the experience and knowledge that their tenured, white faculty members had. The participants had to put in more work in terms of professional and educational experience. A few of them even took the time to complete their doctorates degrees as well as gain as much unique experiences that they could. They also built up a strong network base to help support and guide them through the process. Some of them felt extremely discouraged by the lack of opportunities that they had and almost stopped their job search.

The fourth tenet of CRT is legitimatizing the experiential knowledge of People of Color to support counter stories aimed at uncovering master narratives that dominant groups use to justify the racial subjugation of others. The participants in this study understood the institutional barriers to keep them out and they worked hard on how to overcome them. They worked on gaining more experience, networked with other professionals, and built a tolerance to help them overcome the desperation of quitting. The following sections explain how the participants learned from their past experiences to overcome the barriers that impeded their success.

### Preparing for Opportunities

Many of the participants had to wait years for the opportunity to apply for a tenure-track position. The participants often spoke about waiting for a person to “retire out” so that a spot could be open, but at the same time, getting some

valuable work experience. Patricia explained that she waited for a position to open, and, at the same time, she completed her PhD. Patricia explained:

“As I have mentioned, I waited until someone retired from the faculty because I knew that there is a certain number of full-time faculty positions for math. And that's what I did I waited since 2013 until it opened in 2019... So, I basically waited out that long. Since I'm just waiting and not doing anything, might as well just finish my PhD.”

Patricia knew that she wanted to do more to separate herself from other potential candidates, therefore, she worked at the high school full-time and worked part-time at the college while completing her PhD. Jessica also spoke about how she worked hard on gaining some unique and diverse work experience that would separate herself from the other Math candidates that had a master's degree. She stated:

“So, I knew that thing doing things, like Upward Bound, working in New York in the summers teaching in a math camp. Doing the things that people might not think is math related or a waste of time because they didn't pay very well or whatever doing those extra things, I knew were super important.”

Jessica spoke in great lengths about how important it is for Adjuncts of Color not to only wait for a position to open and to have the minimum qualifications but also have a something unique that separates the applicant from other candidates. Other participants, such as Rachel and Luke, explained that preparing for tenure

track positions to open up and interviewing took an emotional toll on them.

Rachel recalled the amount of time she had to take out of her day and be away from her family to complete applications only to not hear back. Rachel stated:

“The amount of work that's involved to doing it and, you know. Some of them was a lot more than I was probably wanting to do depending on the presentation or the demand. I would say that demand of the application was there, but I know I knew that if it was something that I could do, even if it was obviously going to be a lot of work.”

Rachel knew what she was in for, but Luke struggled with it more. He worked for 13 years in many grant-based adjunct positions and was very disheartened speaking about never having an opportunity. Luke explained:

“So, I think it's super competitive um you know, obviously they're looking for something specific and, hopefully, in the interview say those key things and to maybe reconsider to go on second round, but you know, it was very frustrating for me and knowing that I was not getting the second call. I was getting the first call pretty much everywhere I applied. I got called for the first interview, but that was as far as I went with many of the community college jobs. That was really discouraging and disappointing. So, there was a time where I stopped.”

Luke felt that he could not go on applying for jobs because whenever he interviewed, he would get stumped on the questions when he was unfamiliar with the terminology. Some of the adjunct faculty members were not offered

professional development to learn about the constant changes in the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The terminology used within the community college system is often reserved for people already working within the system.

### Importance of a Network

All of the participants spoke in great deal about the network of individuals they built inside and outside the college. Many of the participants were the only Faculty of Color in their institutions and did not feel accepted by the white faculty members who made up a majority of the faculty body. In order to find support, they had to go outside their institutions and meet with faculty members in urban community colleges to grow their professional development. Gary spoke about how no one mentored him or supported him in the rural community college and had to go to conferences to connect with other faculty members. He stated, "Other than giving me the opportunity to interview, I didn't have any mentoring, not before, not during, and not after. Zero help." Rachel also stressed the importance of attending conferences and building a network. Rachel stated:

"Definitely network with multiple People of Color like yourself. Get their perspectives. The networking part is key and not just within the college that you're being an adjunct faculty at but try to get outside of the box. And, of course, try to attend the conferences. Get to know people outside of the community colleges that you're at because I would say that going into my part-time position, I knew no one. I knew not a soul."

Rachel went on to talk about how by attending conferences, she was able to learn best practices from people at other colleges as well as grow her knowledge in programs like Umoja, Puente, and learn also to work with Veteran students and Students with disabilities. Jessica spoke about how the network helped her find about jobs. Jessica stated:

“So, in grad school, a lot of my friends’ kind of were all over California. And so, one of my interviews was in Modesto. So, you know, and they had a friend who worked not in Modesto but one of the other campuses near Modesto. And so, she's the one that told me about it.”

By having a network of colleagues from graduate school, Jessica was able to learn about new opportunities all across the state. For Jamie and Nadia, the network around them both encouraged them to look outside urban areas and into rural areas to have an opportunity to work as a faculty member. Jamie said, “He told me, ‘Jamie, you're going to have to move East and build your reputation reputation out there in these schools that nobody knows about and then grow and move your way back west.’” Nadia had a similar experience with a mentor that advised her that she should not have her hopes up for employment in an urban college. Nadia stated,

“My mentor said, ‘We're not even going to look at your application. You know why? It's because you barley have one semester of experience. The people who come here and apply have PhDs, okay? So, to be honest, I

broke your heart, my friend, but you have to look for a job somewhere else.”

Nadia felt that his mentor’s brutal honesty helped him realize the challenges of working in an urban community college and decided that she would have more opportunities in rural community colleges. Luke also benefited from building a network of individuals and he explained that they assisted him in revising his resume which gave him even more opportunities. Luke stated:

“I did ask my two friends/mentors to go through my resume and help me out. And they did they both did it. It was like, ‘here's my feedback.’ And so, I took their feedback and revamped my resume. And after I did that, that's when I started getting called like almost every single college.”

By building a network, the participants explained that they had people that they could count on, that could support them, and guide them to the best possible outcome. Even though, they could not get them tenured faculty positions, they could create opportunities for them to have a chance.

Research Question #4: What contributions did participants make to the rural setting as Faculty of Color?

### The Rural Community College Experience

The participants spoke in detail about the differences of working as adjuncts in a rural community college in comparison to an urban community college and the equity gaps that exist for Students of Color in rural community



colleges compared to urban community colleges. The participants spoke about the lack of access to big industry, resources, and student engagement. The participants felt that the Students of Color did not have the opportunities or resources that other students did in urban institutions, and the Students of Color were unable to leave their rural communities.

The third tenet of critical race theory is the commitment to social justice in which critical race theorists work to “direct the formal curriculum toward goals of social justice and the hidden curriculum toward Freirean goals of critical consciousness” (Yosso, 2002, p. 98). In the following sections, the setting of rural community colleges is discussed as well as how Faculty of Color were able to make positive changes within the community. The participants understood the experiences of the Students of Color who came from the community since they shared the same backgrounds and understood the languages they spoke. They incorporated social justice programs, open educational resources (OER), and a diverse curriculum.

#### Lack of Access to Industry and Technology

Two of the participants Luke and Katelyn explained that rural community colleges did not offer access to Students of Color for opportunities to work in big industry or to the technology that urban areas have. By not having access to big industries, Students of Color will have less of a chance of earning a substantial wage in the future. Luke spoke about how there are not a lot of opportunities for employment in rural areas. Luke stated:

“And I don't see a lot of potential, at least not at this time. So, it's like, ‘Well what kind of job are you really getting?’ Probably the community college is the number one employer at this point in time. So, besides an academic job, where else do most people find jobs that are going to provide for them to buy a home, to be able to have a standard of living, that is above minimum wage, that are going to be able to afford to pay their homes or utilities, be able to maybe travel? I don't see that.”

Luke feels that the rural community college is the only place that Students of Color can work in to have a higher standard of living. Katelyn explained that Students of Color in rural community college and faculty members do not have access to good technology. By missing out on that access, it can be more difficult to engage students.

“Well, less resources, working on that rural community colleges, less resources compared other community colleges. So, there is less resources in the classroom, the technology is not there. Location. The locations are very remote, and the internet connections are not great.

Technology is not great for students and for myself, as a faculty. So that's a big change.”

By not having access to good technology and internet connections, Faculty of Color found teaching their classes more challenging. Also, Students of Color often dropped out of courses when they were solely offered online due to having a lack of access to resources to take online courses.

## Lack of Engagement

Luke and Jamie spoke about students and faculty members not being as engaged in rural community colleges as urban colleges. They found that the rural community college setting was not a place where people normally meet after classes. Luke spoke about the experience as being culture shock when he did not see anyone outside their offices or classrooms. Luke explained:

“It was a culture shock, I think to me, when I got the job and started working and still going up on my door and not seeing a single soul outside. It seemed like everyone stayed in their offices. Students are not out there. Rarely would I see a sprinkle of students. And not throughout the day. Say I went to the bathroom, or I went to the cafeteria, I would see them, but if it wasn't for the cafeteria, I will not see a student outside.”

Luke mentioned that many of the students were commuting to the college, so they wanted to go home. The only other times that Luke would see students was during some of the events. Jamie said, “It could be the middle of the day at 12 o'clock and there's 20 people on campus. That's pretty much it. It's not because it's rural. We don't have dorms and we're pretty isolated. It just takes away from the campus life and involvement.” Jaime made the argument that if the campus had dorms, more students would be involved in campus life. She also felt that students would benefit from having politicians come and talk to students but did not feel that it would happen in the rural community college.

## Agents of Change

The participants in the study used their experiences to help Students of Color become more successful. Both the financial cost of attending community colleges and the lack of representation of People of Color in the curriculum were addressed. Also, the participants were passionate about supporting dreamer students and bringing resources to Students of Color in remote areas.

### Adopting Opening OER Resources

Eric supported Students of Color by adopting OER (Open Educational Resources), which eliminated the cost of expensive textbooks. Eric explained, “Now, I'd say I did help assist like using our new book, the OER psychology book. I definitely think that helps support students.” The OER textbook book he is using is online, easily accessible, and free for students. This takes away the burden of costly textbooks for students and allows them to have access early to the textbook and not be behind when the bookstore does not have the textbook readily available.

### A More Representative Curriculum

The participants spoke about how it may be a challenge to incorporate a diverse curriculum in subjects such as Math since most of the mathematical concepts came from Europe. However, they were able to find new ways to incorporate the Students of Color's background within the subjects they teach. Jessica spoke about how she was able to include the students' diverse backgrounds during some of her math lessons. Jessica explained:

“Most, I would say the discoveries of mathematics are based on French, German, Russian and essentially European discoveries from the 1800S, 1700S, 1600s, right? So, in this STEM track, it's a little more difficult. However, in the liberal arts track, it lends itself to do a lot of that. So, I'll give you a good example. In our Liberal Arts Math class. It's one of the classes where I get to show a map of Mexico and Central America. I get to talk about the Mayan's number systems. I get to talk about the Babylonians. I get to show like different maps of the world, and they get to show them where things come from, right?”

Jessica went on to speak about how she was able to positively influence Students of Color to be interested in Math since they were unaware that their own cultures have developed a great deal of Mathematical concepts. Faculty of Color can feel overwhelmed by curriculum development, but it also creates opportunity for new ideas and change.

#### Supporting Dreamer Students

Faculty of Color may feel intimidated to support Dreamer students in rural areas. The participants spoke about how they did not want to draw attention to students who may feel threatened about losing their documentation status from the past political climate. Luke went on to speak about how he created an event to support dreamer students. At first, he spoke about how he did not want to draw much attention to the event since he was tenure-track and he works at a

rural college but after attending webinars about inequities in the system, he built up courage to promote his events. Luke explained:

“So, I think this year I kind of learned from my own experience and also attending some of the Black Lives Matter kind of topics. They've been saying you shouldn't be apologetic for believing in what you believe in. And I finally took that to heart for myself. Why was I like 'hush hush' about my dreamer students? That shouldn't happen anymore so like I'm going to have this event and if you want to be supportive, great. If you don't that's, okay, too. We all have our different belief systems and that's fine as long as it's not intrusive too.”

Originally, Luke was quite about his passion on assisting dreamer students because he was unsure if it was a good environment to bring up these topics in rural community colleges, but he spoke to the Dean, and she was supportive. She helped look run an event to bring attention to dreamer students in the rural community college. Now, Luke has been working with an advisor on holding more workshops and running a webpage to support dreamer students.

#### Bringing in Social Justice Programs to Satellite Campuses

The participants in this study knew about the issues that students had and also wanted to bring attention to how they were being treated as Faculty of Color. Two of them worked in remote satellites and saw even more inequities there. They were familiar with the backgrounds of the people there and wanted to promote a positive change. Eric brought to the attention of the lack of services he

saw in the satellite campus compared to the main campus and worked to bring those services to the satellite campus. Eric explained:

“Before I got there, we didn't have EOPS really going out there. My thought of the satellite campus before I was there was that they don't really want to transfer. They don't, you know? Everyone was on this local degree and transfer wasn't really a big deal for them. And when I got there, I realized that all they want to do is transfer... EOPS now comes once a week, a whole team. It'll be a counselor and a staff member, and they start on boarding students and things like that. So that's very helpful we have book pickups now and drop offs. So, we're getting a lot more services out there and that's just because we I went out there three years ago and realized like we need so much out here.”

Before Eric started working in the remote campus, the consensus was that students who were going to the satellite campus were not interested in transferring and they did not have services, such as EOPS, coming to service these students. Eric was strong and brought attention to the fact that these students were interested in transferring and was able to bring EOPS to the satellite campus.

Jessica also spoke about her experience working in a satellite campus and how she felt that it was because she is a Faculty of Color like the students in the satellite. Jessica explained:

“Yeah, so you know, I think. I almost I feel like as a Person of Color, sometimes we have to work twice as hard to let people know like well there might be things you might want to consider. There might be things that are being done not necessarily on purpose, but there might be things that are being done where you might want to reconsider. Things like sending all your Faculty of Color, math science, counseling, to your satellite campus, right? Like that doesn't look right. Like, ‘You're literally segregating us as we go right that's literally what's happening, right?’”

Jessica struggled with the fact that other Faculty of Color and she was being segregated from the main campus. She also struggled with the idea the highest Math courses being taught at the satellite campus was Pre-Calculus. She advocated for the Students of Color at the satellite campus and was able to teach the whole Calculus sequence. By seeing what students were not being provided in the satellite campuses, the participants were given the opportunity to advocate and be an agent of change.

### Summary

In this chapter, I shared findings related to each of the four research questions by sharing the experiences of participants who were Faculty of Color in rural community colleges. The first research question: “What are the personal and professional experiences of Faculty of Color in small, rural community college?”. For the Faculty of Color in this study, they described how they felt isolated, under-valued, and were unprepared for the amount of committee work



and projects that they undertook moving into a full-time position. Moreover, they described the lack of opportunities that they and Students of Color had in rural community colleges compared to urban community colleges.

Then, I went on to share the findings to answer the second research question: “What barriers, if any, do adjunct Faculty of Color encounter when attempting to move into a tenure-track position at a small, rural community college?” The findings indicated that the participants felt that the scoring system can be manipulated to stop Faculty of Color advancing to these positions. Furthermore, the more advanced recommended education for positions, name biases, degree prestige, and the amount of time needed to wait for a position to open up were all found to be barriers for Faculty of Color to move into a tenure-track position. The findings to the research question: “What strategies do Faculty of Color apply to make the successful transition from an adjunct role to tenured one in a rural community college?” indicated that Faculty of Color need to have a diverse work background, a solid network of support, an understanding of diverse communities, and opportunities to volunteer their services. The findings suggested that the more Faculty of Color could be involved in working in the rural community college or the more knowledge they could bring to the rural community college, the more they would be viewed as an asset and a more desirable candidate.

Lastly, I shared the findings to the research question: “What contributions did participants make to the rural setting as Faculty of Color?” revealed that there

is a lack of resources and engagement for the Students of Color in rural community colleges and Faculty of Color work hard to address the equity gaps that Students of Colors face. The participants worked on bring social justice programs to the Students of Color, incorporated a diverse curriculum, adopted Open Educational Resources, and supported dreamer students.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

The goal of this dissertation study was to understand the experiences of Faculty of Color as they transitioned from adjunct positions to tenured or tenure track positions in rural community colleges. By utilizing an interpretive phenomenological approach, I sought to derive meanings from the narratives of the participants with a reflective process of interpretation (Reid et al., 2005; Smith et al. 2009) that accounts for a critical race theory in education (Solorzano, 1998) lens. While more attention has been brought for the need of more Faculty of Color (Rodriguez, 2015), institutionalized discrimination and racism has only hindered efforts to increase the amount of Faculty of Color (Fujimoto, 2012). Moreover, the resistance to a more diverse educational environment can be exacerbated in rural areas (Han & Leonard, 2016; Han et al., 2018). This is a particular issue because California Community Colleges have one of the most diverse student bodies in the United States, but the amount of Faculty of Color is not reflective of the students in California Community Colleges (Bustillos & Siqueiros, 2018).

## Overview

The reasons for the underrepresentation of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges are wide-ranging and complex with a large number of Students of Color in California Community Colleges, it is vital that solutions are sought after. In Chapter 2, the literature review provided context on the historical roots of community colleges as well as the inequities that Students of Color face in the K-12 system. Some of these inequities were a lack of student services, detrimental stereotypes, impostor syndrome, and a lack of mentors. The literature review also examined roles and responsibilities of Faculty of Color in community colleges and how their experiences are reflective of the Students of Color. Faculty of Color also experience systematic oppression, feelings of isolation, and impostor syndrome. Therefore, it was crucial to listen to the voices of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges, to comprehend the challenges and look for solutions.

The research design and methodology of this dissertation was discussed in Chapter 3. An interpretative phenomenological approach was utilized in the qualitative study. There were 10 participants in this study who were all Faculty of Color that worked as Adjunct faculty and have moved into tenure track/tenured positions in rural community college. I used Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the theoretical framework for in this study to explore the participants responses to the research questions as it used to capture the authentic voices of People of Color within the educational setting (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and also providing a

framework that helps to understand the barriers Faculty of Color face of the illogical belief of color blindness and equal process as well as being overlooked for their contributions in higher education (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015; Parker, 2015).

In Chapter 4, the participants spoke about their experiences in rural community colleges. Most of them never intended to work in a rural community college and did not feel connected with the faculty of the college when they first started working there as adjuncts. Most of them had to seek out help outside the rural community college to get support. As adjuncts, the participants felt undervalued and that they could not or were not allowed to participate in committee work, which may have been one of the reasons that many of them felt overwhelmed when they had to participate in committee work once transitioning into full-time faculty members.

Moreover, the findings showed that Faculty of Color experience challenges moving forward into full-time positions due to discrimination regarding their names, the college, they attended, or their ethnicity. The participants felt that applications should not include these traits when they move forward to the interview committee. A few of the participants also spoke about white faculty members could purposefully score candidates low so that they would not advance to the second interview. Some of the participants also were surprised that they have not been asked to participate often in hiring committees compared to their white colleagues.

Lastly, the participants spoke about Faculty of Color having to wait a long time before having the opportunity to move into a full-time, tenured role. While waiting for the opportunity, adjunct Faculty of Color should look into advancing their education, seek out opportunities to strengthen their resume, and build a network of people. All of these strategies will help adjunct Faculty of Color to separate themselves from other candidates. Furthermore, they should also look for opportunities to help with projects or participate in outreach activities.

### Building Upon Previous Literature

Previous studies have been written about the feelings of marginalization and isolation of Faculty of Color (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014, 2018; Levin et al., 2014) and this study has addressed feelings of marginalization by the participants in forms of not being invited to committee meetings to not being supported by the full time faculty. Moreover, the participants in my study discussed their experiences of discriminatory practices from not being chosen on faculty hiring committees or skewed scoring systems. These practices have also been written about in study regarding discriminatory hiring practices (Espinosa, 2019). Lastly, participants in my study spoke about the importance of the mentors and how they helped reach their goals of becoming a tenured faculty member. The importance of mentors has been written about in other previous studies (Han & Onchwari, 2018; Ndemanu, 2017; Pluviose, 2006).

My study has added to the literature in how Faculty of Color are transformational agents to the rural community college. The participants in my study spoke about how they brought programs to the rural community college, such as DACA and ESL, that did not previously exist there. They also were able to better connect to the diverse community to bring programs, such as EOPS and advanced Calculus, to areas where many People of Color live and were not thought to benefit from. The participants were able to advocate for the community and bring in new opportunities.

#### Recommendations for Educational Leaders

The findings in the study revealed the importance of supporting Faculty of Color when they transition from adjunct faculty to tenure track or tenured faculty. Faculty members have many different roles and responsibilities from teaching courses, developing curriculum, advising students, and participating in committee assignments (Fugate & Amey, 2000; Gonzales & Terosky, 2016). Moreover, faculty members at rural colleges have to be even more involved with statewide initiatives while also being a driving force to bring equity and opportunities for students they serve in rural community colleges (Finnegan, 2019). The experiences of participants reflected the struggles they have faced in the rural community college. Therefore, four of the recommendations will be expanded upon from the results of this study.

The findings further revealed the importance of prioritizing the importance of developing bridges from adjunct positions to tenure track positions. As many of

the Faculty of Color are first generation college students themselves, they may feel lost in the rural community college. There needs to be additional trainings and access to mentors that will aid Faculty of Color in the transition of an adjunct position to a tenured one (Peguero, 2018). By not having additional training and support, Faculty of Color may become discouraged with the lack of security that adjunct positions have and return into corporate world (King et. al., 2018).

### Professional Development

Many of the participants felt unprepared for all the responsibilities they took on when they became full-time faculty. The participants spoke about the transition into full-time work as a culture shock because they only thought that they would be teaching more classes or counseling more students. As adjunct Faculty of Color, many of the participants were not involved with committee work, statewide initiatives, or projects so when they became tenured these duties and responsibilities became overwhelming for them.

Therefore, there should be professional development offered to adjunct Faculty of Color and People of Color to learn about the roles and responsibilities of full-time employment. These programs can host workshops that demystify the community college system by exploring topics of curriculum, local policies, state policies, and federal policies. Furthermore, some of the participants spoke about being unfamiliar with the terminology of community college. Therefore, professional development programs can partner with the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) as well as the Academic Senate for



California Community Colleges (ASCCC) to provide webinars and trainings for Faculty of Color who are working in rural community colleges.

### Mentorship Programs

The findings also supported the need for mentors in community college. Many of the participants felt isolated and considered abandoning the idea of working in community colleges. Mentors have shown to have a positive impact for Faculty of Color not to feel isolated (Diggs et al., 2009; Han & Onchwari, 2018) or worried about being reprimanded for sharing their worries or concerns (Zambrana et al., 2017). Mentors can also help Faculty of Color grow professional by providing them culturally responsive feedback and spotlight their contributions. This would help to diffuse the impostor syndrome and build more confidence for Faculty of Color.

One of the participants, Luke, explained that he almost quit the community college system after he was never selected for a second interview after many years of trying. He explained that he wished that he had a mentor that would help guide him and tell him that his feelings are valid. Mentors could share their own experiences of struggling with securing full-time work and this would help to encourage Faculty of Color who feel alone and discouraged by the job search process.

### Revamping the Candidate Selection Process

The findings of my study revealed some of the inequities found in the hiring system. A few of the participants had spoken about their experiences

participating in hiring committees or their experiences afterwards. Rachel spoke about being on a hiring committee and the white faculty members purposely ranking Candidates of Color with zero scores so that they could not advance to the next round. Gary also explained that he was surprised that he was not asked to serve on a hiring committee because he was only one of three African American faculty members at his rural community college.

Rural community college human resource officers and administrators must strategize new ways on how to rank candidates to avoid intentionally sabotaging applicants through point-based ranking systems. Faculty of Color could be intentional eliminated by one member of the hiring committee if the committee is not large enough or they could also be eliminated if the hiring committee make up is not diverse. Furthermore, rural community colleges should do more to retrack names, addresses, and colleges from job applications as they have been found to cause implicit and unconscious towards People of Color and hinders them from moving forward during the selection process (Kang et al., 2016; Mulki & Stone-Sabil, 2021).

There should also be more attention to brought to the student demographics of the rural community colleges. As the demographics of the student body changes, the rural community college should be looking at candidates that understand the diverse backgrounds of the students and their needs. Faculty of Color bring a sense of belonging to Students of Color (Ruelas et al., 1998; Zell, 2010), create diverse curriculum (Ndemanu, 2017) and are

mentors for Students of Color (Han & Onchwari, 2018). If rural community colleges are committed to equity, they must be intentional in seeking out diversity among our faculty (Rodriguez, 2015).

### Next Steps for Educational Reform

Many themes for educational reform were discovered through the data analysis and by looking back the fifth tenet of Critical Race Theory, the transdisciplinary perspective, we can “utilize interdisciplinary methods of historical and contemporary analysis to articulate the linkages between educational and societal inequality” (Yosso, 2002, p. 98). This will help us understand how past practices discriminatory practices have affected Faculty of Color.

### Develop the Rural Community College

Administrators at the rural community colleges should do more to attract Faculty of Color. Almost all of the participants in the study did not intend to work in a rural community college, which aligns with the previous research of faculty in rural community college (Cejda, 2010; Murray & Cunningham, 2004). One of the participants, Gary, stated that rural community colleges have to be more creative to attract Faculty of Color instead of just focusing on money. Gary felt that while the money initially attracts potential candidates, it is not the driving force to retain them.

There should be also more work from administrators to bring back local graduates. Within the rural community colleges, there are many Students of

Color that leave the rural community to go off to a public four-year college and never return. Many times, institutions will look to hire faculty from outside of the community and, therefore, these faculty members may not understand the needs of the community or feel loyal to it (Rhoades et al., 2008). The researchers advocated that pathways should be created so that these individuals can return to the community as faculty and/or administrators (Rhoadese et al., 2008). People who grew up within the community understand the needs of the community and are loyal to it but they also bring in new ideas that may help develop the rural community.

Administrators at rural community colleges must advocate more for industry and technology at their colleges. The participants in the study often spoke about the lack of academic and employment opportunities that students had in rural community college. There is also a sense that students are not as engaged in rural community colleges and that may be a direct result of the lack of opportunities. Once students start to feel that they can benefit from a community college education, the college will grow and be more successful but if there are not enough opportunities after college, students will less likely see the importance of a college education.

Rural community colleges should do more to partner with four-year public universities to provide bachelor's degree completion programs for rural areas. Career Technically Education (CTE) administrators should do more to attract industry so that when students obtaining degrees or certificates in CTE

programs, they have jobs to apply for. These partnerships can grow further by providing education and training to the next group of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges.

### Disrupt the Current Hiring Practices

The participants in this study spoke about how point-based ranking systems can be used to stop Faculty of Color from advancing to faculty positions by white faculty members. New strategies must be created and implemented to stop this form of discrimination. Liera (2020) conducted research on how universities were not improving on creating a diverse faculty. The researcher stated that, "Faculty search committees should ask themselves, for example, how race, gender, and professional status bias their evaluation of racially minoritized candidates (Liera, 2020)." By having a deeper understanding of their past performance, community colleges can evaluate their current practices and culture that impede Faculty of Color to move into tenured positions. Faculty members must feel free to talk about race and how implicit bias happens.

Moreover, Liera (2020) suggested that, "leadership should train faculty search committee members to take active steps to create an equity-minded peer review system, including the appointment of people who are trained specifically to advocate for equity in the evaluation process (p. 36)." These individuals are responsible for minimizing the amount of biases in the faculty search process and assist in developing the equity-minded recruiting and hiring processes. These individuals can look at the materials that are used in the

search process to develop more equity-minded job announcements and scoring systems.

Community colleges have to move away from solely using a point-based scoring system to an equity-minded evaluation rubric in which candidates are able to visualize and understand through an equity lens the experiences of potential candidates. This rubric also helps faculty search committees evaluate the teaching and counseling experiences of potential candidates with Students of Color and how their practices can reproduce racial inequities (Liera & Ching, 2020).” An equity-minded rubric would help the hiring committee understand more deeply who the potential candidates are and how likely are they going to support a diverse student population.

By reviewing how the culture and practices of the rural community college, administrators and faculty members can disrupt these practices that are causing racial and discriminatory procedures against Faculty of Color. Recruitment efforts, job announcements and scoring systems must be evaluated by equity-minded advocates to adapt and change them to become more inclusive and less bias against Faculty of Color. By enacting these changes, rural community colleges can create a more diverse, representative faculty body that can support the Students of Color.

#### Recognize the Contributions of Faculty of Color

Faculty of Color often feel isolated, undervalued, and marginalized (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014,

2018; Levin et al., 2014). Many of the participants explained that they felt that there was a hierarchy between them and tenured faculty members in which they had to be careful with voicing their concerns or advocating for students in fear of retaliation. They were also not given the opportunity for their voices to be heard in collegewide decisions. One of the participants of this study felt discouraged when she was sent off to a satellite campus because she was the only Faculty of Color in her discipline and the satellite campus had many Students of Color. The participant let it be known to the administrators that they were being segregated based on their ethnicity, but no changes happened. The administrators did not see the importance also of offering advanced math courses in that remote area, but the participant was able to advocate for advanced math courses to be offered in that location.

As Settles et al. (2019) has found Faculty of Color experience tokenism, exclusion, and (in)visibility responses to tokenism and exclusion. Therefore, the participants in the study felt disengaged but also had to work harder to prove their worth. It would be important for rural institutions to start to recognize the experiences that Faculty of Color face and not only use them to represent diversity or appear committed to diversity efforts through tokenism (Settles, et al., 2019). Gary spoke about not wanting to be involved in diversity efforts as he was one of only three African Americans at the college. Institutions must make diversity efforts systemwide and not put Faculty of Color in uncomfortable situations in which they do not feel that their contributions will be honored.

## Recommendations for Future Research

### Follow Up Study

To continue the research, I would strongly suggest a follow up interview for Faculty of Color in rural community college. Throughout my study, some of the newer Faculty of Color stated that they felt more supported than Faculty of Color that started before them. These finding could illustrate how well rural community colleges are doing to create a more inclusive environment than the past. However, it could also reveal that newer Faculty of Color may start to understand the challenges that they are experience the further along they go in their career.

### Focus on Disciplines or Areas

Another recommendation is to further disaggregate the data by the subject or area taught. In the study, there were no Faculty of Color in the areas of English, History, Political Science, or Early Childhood Education. Future studies can examine of what causes Faculty of Color to choose their particular major compared to another and how can universities attract Faculty of Color to predominately white programs.

### Recruitment Efforts

The findings of this study highlighted the need for continued research on the ways that rural community colleges can attract Faculty of Color. It is important for the Human Resources in Rural Community College to conduct more targeted outreach for Faculty of Color by attending career fairs in public



universities or by joining organizations that work with large groups of People of Color. Many of the participants were unaware of the Rural Community Colleges before they started working there and there still needs to be a lot done to draw more attention for these opportunities.

### Roles of Administrators

The findings also brought attention to the role of administrators, such as deans, in the hiring process. Future studies could research the impact that deans bring to community colleges in terms of being more inclusive of a diverse environment in terms of the faculty body. Moreover, future studies can explore the experiences of Deans of Color that have transitioned from a Faculty of Color role into a position as a dean in the student services department.

### Limitations of Study

#### Research Setting

The study was only conducted in rural community colleges in California. Other states may have different demographics in rural community colleges in terms of Faculty of Color and Students of Color. Moreover, the study was limited to the experiences of Faculty of Color in public community colleges and did not examine the experiences of Faculty of Color in for-profit community college. The experiences of Faculty of Color at for-profit universities may be different.

#### Sample Size

The sample size was another limitation to my study. Creswell (2013) recommend recruiting participants until saturation was reached. However, due to

the current COVID-19 pandemic and the limited number of opportunities to recruit candidates, only 10 participants were selected to participate in the study. I sent out recruitment emails explaining that their participation was important to the study's goals. Had more opportunities to recruit candidates existed, additional participants from different areas and institutions would have been included.

### Time

The amount of time available to me has caused my study to be limited. For research to be even more meaningful, researchers must be able to dedicate a great deal of time to examine not only what is being said but also what is not being said (Tracy, 2010). Due to time constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic, I was only able to recruit candidates from three sites. A longitudinal study would have captured the experience of Faculty of Color across more rural community colleges (Kezar, 2014).

### Confidentiality

Another limitation of the study was the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Due to the sensitive nature of topic, potential participants may not be willing to participate being that there are only a limited number of them, and they may fear repercussions from their institutions by participating if their identities are exposed. Han (2018) explained that in rural areas, white citizens make a up the educator workforce in higher education and People of Color often endure racism and isolation. If not the fear of losing confidentiality, there have may been more Faculty of Color in rural community colleges willing to participate

in the study. I did, however, to my utmost ability to protect the identity of my participants, institutions, and any other indicators that may reveal their identities. Regardless of these limitations, rigorous data was collected to produce significant findings and themes (Tracy, 2010).

### Conclusion

This interpretivist phenomenological study signifies an opportunity to contribute to the literature in the field that prioritizes social justice and equity efforts. In conclusion, this dissertation is a demonstration of how rural community colleges will continue to be challenged to address the systematic inequities that exist for Faculty of Color in terms of advancing in their roles from adjuncts to tenure track or tenured positions. While there is some resistance to faculty diversification, Faculty of Color continue to be persistent in the goals of security and being agents of change for the rural community colleges. Rural community colleges need to do more to address the inequities in the hiring process and provide more professional development for the faculty body. By taking time to understand the barriers that Faculty of Color face and their positive impact to the Students of Color, we can do more to help support them and the Students of Color. Jessica summarized it best when she spoke about how a Faculty of Color inspired her to be a community college teacher, “And I think just seeing him and what the way he changed lives can inspire me to become a community college teacher.”

APPENDIX A  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Access to Opportunities: A phenomenological study of the experiences of  
Faculty of Color in Rural Community Colleges.

Interview Protocol

Interview description: Interviews will be semi-structured. The interview process will follow the subsequent protocol.

- Introduction
- Share purpose of study and provide informed consent form to interviewee.
- Provide interviewee with the opportunity to ask questions and express concerns.
- Upon completion of consent form begin recording and proceed with interview.

The following questions will guide the interview:

**Background**

- Tell me a little bit about yourself, like where did you grow up, what did your parents do for work, what college did you attend?
- How did you know you wanted to work as faculty in a community college?
  - How did you decide to become faculty in a rural community college, specifically?

**Experiences as Adjunct**

- What was the experience like be an adjunct Faculty of Color when you started working in a rural community college?

- How did you gain experience or connect with other faculty members as an adjunct?
- Did you feel that you “fit-in” with in with the campus culture? Explain
- Can you share some of your experiences working with Students of Color when you were part-time faculty?
- How did you decide you wanted to become a tenure-track faculty member as opposed to an adjunct?

### **Experience on Job Market**

- Can you tell me about the process that you experienced when applying to tenure-track positions?
- In your process to transition from part-time to tenure-track, did faculty colleagues become mentors or did you look outside the college for support?
- What aspects of the full-time faculty search process represented barriers to you?
- What resources were most beneficial during the tenure-track job search process?

### **Transition to Tenure-Track**

- How was the transition from adjunct to tenure-track faculty?
- How do you experience being a Faculty of Color at your institution?
  - How is working at a rural college different from other colleges?

- Can you tell me about your experience working alongside with your faculty colleagues when you entered the tenure-track position?
- Did your abilities to support Students of Color change when you entered the tenure-track? If so, how?
- Have you had the opportunity to introduce new diverse curriculum to the college?
- Have you been able to bring new ideas to your department or college?

### **Equity in Hiring Process**

- Could you tell me about how your department or college addresses equity and faculty diversification?
- Have you had the opportunity to serve on committee hiring new tenure-track faculty? If so, how was that experience for you?
  - What suggestions or strategies would you share with adjunct Faculty of Color wanting to move into a tenure-track role?
- If you could change anything about the tenure-track search process, what do you think should happen to facilitate hiring more Faculty of Color?
- Finally, do you have anything else that you want me to know about your experiences as you transitioned from part-time to tenure-track faculty?

The interview protocol was created by Eduardo Vásquez for the purposes of this study.

APPENDIX B  
MARKETING FLYER



**Access to opportunities:**

**A phenological study exploring the experiences of Faculty of Color in small, rural community colleges.**

Principal Investigator:

Eduardo Vásquez, Doctoral Candidate

The purpose of this research is to:

- Examine the experiences of Faculty of Color as they transitioned from part-time, adjunct roles, into full-time, tenured positions in small, rural community colleges.

To participate in this research, you must:

- Identify as a Person of Color
- Previously worked as a part-time, community college faculty member
- Be a current tenure-track or tenured community college faculty member
- Employed at a rural community college.

If you complete the interview, you will receive a \$20 gift card.

It will take about forty five to sixty minutes to complete the interview.

To find out more about this study, please contact:

Eduardo Vásquez,

442-235-1814

005086311@coyote.csusb.edu

This study has been approved  
by the CSUSB IRB FY2021-284

APPENDIX C  
EMAIL LETTER

## Recruitment Email

Dear Faculty Member \_\_\_\_\_: My name is Eduardo Vásquez, and I am an Educational Leadership doctoral candidate at California State University, San Bernardino, in the College of Education. I am conducting a research study entitled, *Access to opportunities: A Phenomenological Study of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges*. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study.

Attached, you will find a statement of Informed Consent, which details the parameters of your potential participation. Essentially, I am inviting you to participate in one interview, with the possibility of one follow-up interview.

Additionally, I have attached the proposed interview questions to inform you of the nature of the interview.

Please read the attached Informed Consent statement and let me know if you are willing to participate. If you agree to participate, I will schedule a day/time for your interview, at your convenience. Prior to the interview, I must receive a copy of the Informed Consent statement with your signature/date. On that form, you may also indicate if you will allow audio/video recording.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Vásquez

California State University, San Bernardino

Cell Phone: 442.235.1814

Email: 005086311@coyote.csusb.edu

This study has been approved by the CSUSB IRB FY2021-284

APPENDIX D  
IRB CONSENT FORM

## INFORMED CONSENT

### **Access to opportunities: A phenomenological study exploring the experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges.**

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate the experiences of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges. This study is being conducted by Eduardo Vásquez under the supervision of Dr. Nancy Acevedo-Gil, Associate Professor, College of Educational Studies, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

**PURPOSE:** Eduardo Vásquez, Doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at California State University, San Bernardino, invites you to participate in a research study. This research has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of California State University, San Bernardino and the purpose is to examine the experiences of Faculty of Color as they transitioned from part-time, adjunct roles, into full-time, tenured positions in small, rural community colleges. The researcher will examine the barriers that Faculty of Color have faced in that transition through a Critical Race Theory lens.

**DESCRIPTION:** I would like to ask you to participate in an interview via Zoom. With your permission, the interview will be recorded. The time and location of the interview is to be scheduled at your convenience, as well. A follow-up interview may be requested, if needed.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to be in this study, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You can freely withdraw from the study at any time.

**CONFIDENTIAL:** I will do everything possible to protect your confidentiality. Specifically, your real name will never be used in any dissemination of the work (e.g., articles or presentations). Pseudonyms will be used for the campus, college, colleagues, etc. All efforts will be used to protect your confidentiality. Your identity, your institution, and colleges will remain confidential. All data will be collected electronically, and stored on California State University, San Bernardino's licensed Google Drive. All electronically stored data including recorded interviews, will be deleted from the Google drive three years after the project has ended.

**DURATION:** The extent of your participation would include one virtual interview, and a demographic survey. The interview would last approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Following the interview, you could be contacted via email with follow-up or clarifying questions. Such an exchange would require no more than 10 minutes of your time. Following the interview, you will receive a transcript of the interview, along with a scanned PDF of the signed consent form. All participants will be granted the opportunity to review their transcript, confirm, and/or withdraw the transcript or portions of the transcript from the study.

**RISKS:** A foreseeable risk is that the act of reflecting upon sensitive topics and/or experiences, may cause a certain level of discomfort. In an effort to minimize the risk and level of discomfort, you may choose to stop sharing a particular story and/or the remainder of the interview.

**BENEFITS:** Society will benefit from this study more than the participants. The narratives shared by the participants will contribute to existing literature on the importance of a diverse faculty body in community colleges. Moreover, the research will also assist Students of Color who are interested in becoming a faculty member in a community college by exposing them to successful strategies in becoming a tenured faculty member at a community college. Participants will also receive a \$20 gift card to Amazon.com or Starbucks.

**AUDIO/VIDEO:** I understand that this research will be recorded via audio/video. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT:** If you should have any questions regarding this study, please contact Eduardo Vásquez at 005086311@coyote.csusb.edu or 442-235-1814. For answers to questions about the research and research subject rights, or in the event of a research related injury please contact, Dr. Acevedo-Gil, at nacevedo-gil@csusb.edu or 909-537-5623. You may also contact CSU San Bernardino's IRB compliance officer, Michael Gillespie, at 909-537-7588 or mgillesp@csusb.edu.

**RESULTS:** This study will be published as part Eduardo Vásquez' dissertation. Likewise, it may be disseminated through various outlets including conference presentations and publications. Findings will be published online through ScholarWorks, an online institutional repository for California State University, San Bernardino.

**CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:** I have read the above information and agree to participate in your study.

**SIGNATURE:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX E  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER





Eduardo Vasquez &lt;005086311@coyote.csusb.edu&gt;

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**IRB-FY2021-284 - Initial: IRB Admin./Exempt Review Determination Letter**

1 message

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**do-not-reply@cayuse.com** <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>  
To: NAcevedo-Gil@csusb.edu, vasqe325@coyote.csusb.edu

Fri, May 21, 2021 at 3:17 PM



May 19, 2021

**CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination  
Status: Determined Exempt  
IRB-FY2021-284Prof. Nancy Acevedo-Gil and Eduardo Vasquez  
COE - Doctoral Studies  
California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
[San Bernardino, California 92407](https://www.csusb.edu)

Dear Professor Nancy Acevedo-Gil and Eduardo Vasquez:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Access to opportunities: A Phenomenological study of Faculty of Color in rural community colleges." has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants. Important Note: This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit the Office of Academic Research website for more information at <https://www.csusb.edu/academic-research>.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

**Important Notice: For all in-person research following IRB approval all research activities must be approved through the Office of Academic Research by filling out the [Project Restart and Continuity Plan](#).**

- Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.
- Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.
- Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.
- Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2?ik=44a99b47bd&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1700408030897048964&simpl=msg-f%3A17004080308...> 1/2

5/23/2021

CoyoteMail Mail - IRB-FY2021-284 - Initial: IRB Admin./Exempt Review Determination Letter

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at [mgillesp@csusb.edu](mailto:mgillesp@csusb.edu). Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2021-284 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Nicole Dabbs*

Nicole Dabbs, Ph.D., IRB Chair  
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

ND/MG

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2?ik=44a99b47bd&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1700408030897048964&simpl=msg-f%3A17004080308...> 2/2

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