ANTI-AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LEGISLATION IN CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITIES: WHITENING THE IVORY TOWERS

By

Nicole Kontak

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As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Nicole Kontak, titled Anti-Affirmative Action Legislation in California Universities: Whitening the Ivory Towers and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

________________________________________  Date: December 17, 2014
Rose Ylimaki, Ph.D.

________________________________________  Date: December 17, 2014
Jeffrey Bennett, Ph.D.

________________________________________  Date: December 17, 2014
Gary Rhoades, Ph.D.

________________________________________  Date: December 17, 2014
Keith Humphrey, Ph.D.

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate’s submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

________________________________________  Date: December 17, 2014
Dissertation Chair: Rose Ylimaki, Ph.D.
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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SIGNED: Nicole Kontak
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ABSTRACT

This multi case study examined how leaders of color narrated their experiences regarding access to leadership positions at two universities in California before and after Proposition 209 (California’s anti-affirmative action legislation) was enacted in 1996. The research focused on addressing a gap in the literature with regards to professionals of color and the barriers they may have faced in the hiring process in an era of anti-affirmative action legislation. Semi-structured interviews of eighteen Student Affairs leaders of color (with job descriptions no lower than assistant director) were conducted. In addition, critical discourse analysis as outlined by Fairclough (1995) was used to analyze affirmative action plans from both institutions before and after Proposition 209. Cultural capital and critical race theory were the theoretical frameworks used to analyze the participant narratives and the discourse within the affirmative action plans. Findings included: qualifications being more important than cultural forms of knowledge, more diversity among director level positions, the hiring process being described as complex and lengthy, the importance of professional mentors, and leaders of color needing to assimilate to valued norms representative of the status quo to be successful in the hiring process as well as in their professional work environments. Recommendations for further research as well as recommendations for leadership development for professionals of color in higher education institutions is discussed.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Scholars have debated affirmative action legislation in the educational arena since it was first established in 1961 (Ibarra, 2001). As Ibarra (2001) noted, “proponents view affirmative action as leveling the playing field. Opponents see it as bureaucratized inequality” (p. 3). Some view affirmative action as a means of ensuring equity among people of color and the status quo, others view the legislation as an unfair advantage to people of color. Some even view affirmative action as reverse racism (Tierney, 1997). From a critical race perspective, affirmative action policies are a way to counter oppressive structures that have been in place since before the legislation was enacted (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Specifically, affirmative action legislation came about because college campuses were overwhelmingly White and male and the intent was to change the status quo (Tierney, 1997). Presently, universities have changed the racial rhetoric of affirmative action policies and have adopted discourse on the need to ‘diversify’ their campuses (Berrey, 2011). The concept of ‘diversity’ has become part of the race-neutral discourse and has decontextualized the inequities based on race that exist in universities (Moore & Bell, 2011). Instead, universities use ‘diversity’ to emphasize a need for more globalized campuses leading to students that are more marketable around the world (Berrey, 2011). The shift in higher education policy discourse is common at universities that have implemented anti-affirmative action legislation (Berrey, 2011).

Affirmative action is slowly disappearing at universities across the country. Anti-affirmative action legislation has passed in California (1996), Washington (1998), Florida (1999), Michigan (2006), Nebraska (2008), and Arizona (2010), and Oklahoma (2012). The

---

1 Ward Connerly, founder and Chairman of the American Civil Rights Institute (ACRI), has led the attack on affirmative action since 1995. Connerly and ACRI introduce ballot initiatives that
litigious debates, inconsistencies in practice among universities, the discrepancies in discourse, and the divide among members of the state and federal courts will continue to make affirmative action a target (Harris, 2009; Kaufmann, 2007; Schmidt, 2007; Tierney, 1997). In higher education, Proposition 209 was the beginning of a national conversation about affirmative action and the accessibility of universities for individuals of color (Pusser, 2004). Since California has been at the forefront of the anti-affirmative action debate as well as the first state where anti-affirmative action legislation was passed, I will focus on California universities for my research.

As affirmative action continues to be challenged in California and other state universities, the likelihood that diverse leaders will be hired for administrative positions is put at risk. Leaders of color that seek upper administrative positions in higher education institutions lack the privileged forms of cultural capital that are valued in colleges and universities (Bourdieu, 1977). In an era of anti-affirmative action legislation, the career mobility of leaders of color is compromised because they differ from the White, male, affluent, middle aged demographic of most university leaders (Cohen & March, 1974; Ferrari, 1971). The presence of affirmative action is important because it ensures that universities will attain a culture of diversity (Evans & Chun, 2007). Although recent anti-affirmative action legislation has become a challenge for institutions committed to having a racially diverse staff, many university leaders are committed to racially diversifying their campuses and their leadership positions.

In the wake of anti-affirmative action legislation (such as Proposition 209 in California), many universities are now grappling with how to create a culture of diversity without violating state policies. Much of the literature on affirmative action (e.g. Aguirre, 2000; Brown &

amend state constitutions in an effort to eliminate affirmative action (Larson & Menendian, 2008). Though Connerly’s initiatives have failed in some states (such as Colorado), his successes have raised concerns as to the future of affirmative action in universities.
Hirschman, 2006; Chang, 2006; Contreras, 2005; Cortes, 2010; Dickson, 2004; Robinson, 2003) focuses on student diversity. However, it is also important to examine how affirmative action affects the hiring of leaders of color at universities (Chang, 2006). This is particularly important since literature reveals racism and inequities embedded in hiring processes at higher education institutions (Bridges, 1996; De la Luz Reyes & Halcón, 1988; Jackson, 2006; McHargh, 2010; Sagaria, 2002; Seawood, 2005; WoodBrooks, 1991). In this proposal, I argue that research must examine how racially neutral policies and practices shape the lived experiences of current and aspiring higher education leaders, particularly leaders of color. I focused on California because it was the first state to eliminate affirmative action (Proposition 209 in 1996) and I am better able to understand the impact of the legislation over time.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this multi case study is to examine how leaders of color narrate their experiences regarding access to leadership positions at two universities in California before and after the anti-affirmative action legislation (Proposition 209) was implemented. Leaders of color include African Americans, American Indians, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Chicano/Latinos as outlined in the affirmative action plans at University 1 (U1) and University 2 (U2). Leaders are defined as individuals having Student Affairs and Student Services (non-academic) job titles not lower than assistant director. Anti-affirmative action legislation likely puts leaders of color at a disadvantage in the hiring process as they access upper administrative positions in higher education institutions. My research is an attempt to address a gap in the literature pertaining to leaders of color and the barriers they may have faced due to their ethnic identities in the hiring process in an era of anti-affirmative action legislation.
Definitions

**Affirmative action.** In this study, affirmative action refers to policies that take into consideration factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation to benefit underrepresented populations in employment, education, and business that have suffered historical discrimination (Tierney, 1997).

**Anti-affirmative action legislation.** In this study, anti-affirmative action includes state or university policies and legislation that has eliminated affirmative action.

**Proposition 209.** Also known as the California Civil Rights Initiative. Prop 209 was approved 1996 and amended the state constitution in California to prohibit state government institutions from considering race, sex, or ethnicity in public employment, public contracting, or public education.

**Professionals of color.** In this study, professionals of color will include individuals who are African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Chicano/Latino.

**Cultural capital.** This study utilized the explanation offered by Bourdieu (1977, 1986), who used cultural capital to understand how the reproduction of inequality occurred in educational institutions. In educational research, cultural capital is defined as knowledge, skills, dispositions, and cultural background of individuals that is valued by society (Bourdieu, 1977).

**Whiteness.** In this study, the term Whiteness is an ideology that has historically been established as ideal and superior (McLaren, 1998). White customs and practice are embedded in American society created by White people, for White people and can be seen in policy and university practice (Gillborn, 2005; Gusa, 2010).

**Critical race theory (CRT).** In this study, the definition of CRT was derived from Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and includes three propositions to explain social inequities: that race
continues to determine inequities in the United States, the idea that American society is based on property rights, and that ideas about race and property rights can be used as an analytic tool to understand social inequality.

**Interest convergence.** This study utilized the definition put forth by Bell (1980) who explained that the interests for people of color in achieving racial equality will only be accommodated when it converges with the interests of Whites.

**Community cultural wealth.** Yosso (2005) used critical race theory to critique Bourdieu’s (1977, 1986) theory of cultural capital and introduced the concept of community cultural wealth suggesting that people of color have forms of knowledge that are important and unacknowledged by the status quo.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Much of the research on affirmative action in higher education has focused on students (Aguirre, 2000; Brown & Hirschman, 2006; Cortes, 2010; Contreras, 2005; Dickson, 2004); however, it is also important to examine how affirmative action affects university employees. As Chang (2006) has noted, “it is not enough to simply bring together a diverse group of students. Diverse college campuses provide unique challenges and opportunities that must be considered if the learning opportunities they present are to be maximized” (p. 11). Increasing the number of leaders of color at higher education institutions is instrumental to increasing the institutions’ ability to serve diverse student populations (Franklyn, 2005). However, the elimination of affirmative action is a barrier for leaders of color as they attempt to access leadership positions at higher education institutions. Although there is an abundant amount of literature pertaining to leadership styles that leaders can utilize in their positions after they have already been hired (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006; Ayers, 2009; Kezar, 2007, Kezar, 2008; Kezar & Eckel, 2008), there is less literature about the leadership hiring process. Specifically, much of the research on administrative selection does not focus on issues of race, candidates’ experience and candidates’ perspectives about the hiring process (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; McHargh, 2010; Sagaria, 2002; WoodBrooks, 1991).

This chapter is organized into five main sections. First, I reviewed literature on court cases regarding universities and affirmative action legislation to show how affirmative action in universities has changed over time. Next, I examined literature on anti-affirmative action policy and access to higher education institutions for students of color. Literature on access to universities for students of color is important because leaders of color faced similar barriers as they navigated universities as students themselves and these experiences shaped their future
perspectives on access and equity. Then, I outlined literature related to access to leadership positions for individuals of color. Examining access is particularly important due to recent legislation that has repealed affirmative action policy in some states (such as California, Texas, Florida, Michigan and Washington). Finally, I included literature on the influence of affirmative action policy with regards to citizens and universities.

**Legal Court Cases**

There have been a number of affirmative action court cases with regards to college admissions. Although these court cases involved admissions processes for students, they were the gateway to arguments regarding affirmative action in higher education institutions and are important to the context of statewide anti-affirmative action legislation. The court cases also show the progression of race neutral policy over time. In addition, these cases also framed the political and racial environment that leaders of color found themselves in as students and later professionals.

The use of race as a factor in higher education admissions began with the 1978 Supreme Court decision University of California Board of Regents v. Bakke (1978). Though the Supreme Court ruled that race could be considered in admissions processes in higher education institutions, it could be only one of many factors for consideration of a student (Koretz, Russell, Shin, Horn, & Shasby, 2002; Moses & Yun, 2009). Hopwood v. Texas (1996) was the next important case concerning admissions in higher education. The plaintiff, Cheryl Hopwood, held that she was discriminated against by the University of Texas Law School admissions system. The Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit ruled against including race as admission criteria (which affected Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi). However, they also ruled that race could be used in admissions only when higher education institutions intended to rectify past institutional
discrimination (Moses & Yun, 2009). One year after the Hopwood decision race neutral policy was also implemented with regards to financial aid, recruitment, and scholarships under the authority of the then Texas Attorney General Dan Morales (Moses & Yun, 2009). The Smith v. University of Washington (2000) case was a victory for affirmative action legislation when the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the university’s Law School admission practices were constitutional (Koretz et. al., 2002; Moses & Yun, 2009). Another important affirmative action case was the Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University of Georgia (2001). The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of three White women that sued the University of Georgia over their admission point system that awarded more points to applicant student of color (Moses & Yun, 2009). After the Johnson case, the United States Supreme Court heard two cases regarding affirmative action pertaining to the University of Michigan: Gratz v. Bollinger (2003) and Grutter v. Bollinger (2003). The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that while diversity was important in higher education institutions, the University of Michigan should not engage in any type of admission system that involved quotas or point systems that give more points to minority applicants (Moses & Yun, 2009).

In the thirty four years since Bakke in 1978 the court cases regarding affirmative action, legislation in higher education institutions show a progression towards race neutral policy in admissions practices. Due to increased legislative pressure aimed at the destructuralization of affirmative action policy over time, professionals of color have faced an increasingly racial climate as they transitioned from being students to entering the workforce. The lived experiences of higher education leaders of color reflect the racialized context which they have had to navigate to reach upper level administrative positions.
Anti-Affirmative Action and Admissions

In this section, I examined literature that described the impact of anti-affirmative action legislation on enrollments of students of color in higher education institutions. This literature is important in contextualizing the lived experiences of professionals of color as college students, and later administrators. Race-neutral policies have shaped the way professionals of color view and define their careers in higher education.

The passage of the California anti-affirmative action law (Proposition 209) had a dramatic effect on higher education institutions in the state. Aguirre (2000) explained that after Proposition 209 there was a decrease in the numbers of minority students applying for admission in California. Similarly, Santos, Cabrera and Fosnacht (2010) conducted a quantitative study using UC admissions data available from the University of California Office of the President and the California Postsecondary Education system for 1995 (pre-209), 1998 (two years after 209), and 2002 (six years after 209). The researchers found that the elimination of affirmative action legislation was associated with a decrease in the application rate of underrepresented student to the UC system (Santos, Cabrera & Fosnacht, 2010). Although the decrease was most significant at UC institutions in 1998, the trend only slightly improved in 2002. The researchers also explained that the slight increase of minority applicants in 2002 (compared to 1998) may have been due to a comprehensive review process of admissions and targeted outreach, but these strategies were not sufficient substitutes for race-conscious admission policies (Santos, Cabrera & Fosnacht, 2010). In 2002, despite a decline in the number of minority applicants to UC institutions, the University of California Regents stated a commitment to enroll students that “demonstrate high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and encompass the broad diversity of background characteristic of California” (Santos, Cabrera & Fosnacht, 2010).
Amidst anti-affirmative action legislation, admissions goals for UC institutions cannot be fully committed to increasing the number of minority students in their institutions. In addition, minority student will continue to face barriers access UC institutions.

In 2003, during the time Nina Robinson was President of Student Academic Services for the University of California (UC), she wrote a descriptive report on undergraduate access to the University of California after the elimination of affirmative action in California (1995 through 2002). Robinson (2003) described how students of color remained a substantially smaller proportion of the admitted and enrolled student body at most UC campuses than they were prior to the elimination of affirmative action. Although Robinson (2003) outlined ways that the University of California (UC) attempted to increase minority enrollment after the legislation, including expanding opportunities for community college transfer students and implementing a comprehensive review admission policy, these strategies were not specifically targeted at minority students. In addition the strategies were implemented without considering the lived experiences of minority students. Instead, the initiatives were created under the assumption that minority students would be included. However, the UC institutions have become more difficult to access for minority students. Rendon, Novack and Dowell (2005) analyzed race-neutral admission models at California State University-Long Beach (CSULB) after Proposition 209 that were intended to increase diversity. CSULB focused their admission model on geographic location, academic index, and transfer students. Though CSULB attempted to increase the number of minorities admitted to the university, the model failed because it assumed minorities were in a particular geographic location, that they were academically prepared in their K-12 education, and that they transfer from two year institutions. Contreras (2005) conducted a study at three universities in California: UC Riverside, UC Davis, and UC Los Angeles. The purpose
of his study was to examine how the elimination of anti-affirmative action policy (Proposition 209) affected access for minority students seeking admission to the UC institutions. He performed a regression analysis on admission data from 1994-1999 and interviewed university officials from each of the three campuses. Contreras (2005) found that admission criterion after Proposition 209 became increasingly more competitive with a focus on student merit. The increased competition in the admission process negatively affected access for minority students seeking admission. Although Contreras’ (2005) study suggests that there are barriers in the admission process for minority students, there is a lack of contextualized understanding from students with regards to how anti-affirmative action policy affected access.

Research on admissions data has also indicated a decline in the number of minority applicants to universities post anti-affirmative action legislation in Washington as well as Texas (Brown & Hirschman, 2006; Dickson, 2004). Further, Cortes (2010) conducted a study that analyzed quantitative data from the Texas Higher Education Opportunity Project that included admissions data from nine Texas higher education institutions. The purpose of her study was to analyze the graduation and retention rates of freshman and six year graduation rates of minority students. Cortes (2010) found that the elimination of racial preference in college admissions in Texas did not help non-minorities as much as it harmed the retention and graduation rates of minority students. The elimination of anti-affirmative action legislation may be more of an obstacle for minorities seeking employment at institutions of higher education, rather than a way to ensure equality for non-minorities.

Admission, graduation, and retention rates for minority students have suffered in states that have implemented anti-affirmative action legislation (Aguirre, 2000; Brown & Hirschman, 2006; Contreras, 2005; Cortes, 2010; Dickson, 2004; Santos, Cabrera & Fosnacht, 2010).
Across the country, the impacts of anti-affirmative action policies have influenced institutional practices as well as admission rates. Blume and Long (2014) researched the nationwide influence of statewide bans on affirmative action. The researchers analyzed high school students’ application trajectories from the U.S. Department of Education in 1992 and 2004 in states that had affirmative action bans. Blume and Long (2014) found a decline in college and university admission rates for minorities in states that had affirmative action bans. They also found that states that had affirmative action legislation intact saw a boost in minority applicants (19 points in 1992, and 18 points in 2004). In addition, the researchers found that college bound minorities had different opportunities depending on whether neighboring states banned affirmative action. In other words, minority students were at a disadvantage if they were interested in attending a selective institution and the closest one was in a neighboring state that implemented anti-affirmative action legislation. This finding shows the adverse impact for minority applicants regionally, and the likelihood of institutions being less diverse in time. This finding also suggests that professionals of color will have similar problems accessing leadership positions regionally.

As students, many professionals of color navigated higher education systems that had limited opportunities for admission based on race. These experiences have undoubtedly influenced professionals of color regarding access to leadership positions as professionals and have heightened their awareness to inequities that exist in universities. Ferrari (1971) conducted a study on American college presidents and found that most presidents were full time instructors or administrators at only two other institutions (or less) aside from the one of which they became president. In other words, the tendency of presidents was to remain at the institutions at which they worked for long periods of time. Further, Cohen and March (1974) outlined a six step promotion process for college presidents that began with entering college as students, the
transition to professor, department chair, dean, provost, and then president. College presidents become socialized to particular institutionalized norms and values because of the considerable amount of time they spent at working at their institutions. Ferrari’s (1971) as well as Cohen and March’s (1974) findings suggest that leaders of color are familiar with the racialized context of the institution and have to learn how to navigate oppressive structures, policies, and processes.

Access to Leadership

The small amount of literature on hiring minorities at higher education institutions reveals racism and inequities embedded in the hiring process. WoodBrooks (1991) examined how African American women described themselves as they applied for positions at a predominantly white institution. African American female participants were selected as part of a larger study of the recruitment and selection process of senior administrators. She conducted semi-structured interviews of six African American women candidates, five who were involved in senior administrative job searches. Candidates described their experiences with job interviews as well as shared written correspondence related to the recruitment and selection process (such as interview schedules, letters written to candidates from the hiring committees, and information packets). Her qualitative study concluded that the women felt the environment was not welcoming to them and that they were racially discriminated against during the interview process (WoodBrooks, 1991). Specifically, the participants in her study indicated that the interview process was “political, inhospitable, less than honest, and uncomfortable” (WoodBrooks, 1991, p. 203). Further, WoodBrooks (1991) found that the participants she interviewed had to balance and gauge their level of assertiveness in the workplace so that they would not be stereotyped due to their race. The participants in her study also explained their concern with the assumptions that hiring committees made about how they would “fit” into the organization, such as having
invested time in minority specific community concerns (research or service focused on minorities was devalued) (WoodBrooks, 1991). Participants also discussed how they felt there was a “hidden job description” (WoodBrooks, 1991, p. 214) where they were expected to attend to situations concerning minorities for the entire campus. Finally, participants described the important role that mentors had in their lives not only for professional advice, support, and encouragement, but to help them navigate the political terrain of their positions in higher education (WoodBrooks, 1991). Although the study conducted by WoodBrooks (1991) was important in shedding light upon the inequities that exist in the hiring process, her study only provided a snapshot of one particular application process related to African American female participants. WoodBrooks (1991) also conducted her study from a postmodernist paradigm suggesting that the experiences of her participants were a human construct not necessarily stemming from inequitable policy or discourse.

De la Luz Reyes and Halcón (1988) conducted an ethnographic study that included their own as well as their colleagues’ experiences of racism in the higher education institutions where they worked. Specifically, they described the experiences of Chicano applicants to leadership positions. De la Luz Reyes and Halcón (1988) outlined characteristics of racism during the hiring process that included: typecasting (stereotyping), hiring one minority per department, devaluing the research of minorities, and decisions made favoring White applicants based on miniscule differences between White and Chicano applicants such as mannerisms. Applicants of color tend to stay in lower level positions because of the obstacles they face in the hiring process for administrative positions. De la Luz Reyes and Halcón (1988) provided descriptive accounts of racism in the hiring process; however, they did not outline a formal methodology for their study. In addition, although they alluded to discriminatory processes and practices, they did not
contextualize their study with specific inequitable policies and discourse prevalent in their universities. Ramos (2008) conducted an ethnographic and narrative qualitative study using a grounded theory approach that focused on the effects that helped or hindered the career trajectories of Latina university presidents. She conducted semi-structured interviews on a total of sixteen Latina top level administrators (provosts, vice presidents, deans); three of the participants were presidents. Ramos (2008) found that discrimination related to deficit ways of thinking about Latina applicants, as well as recruitment of individuals that more closely represent the status quo were prevalent.

Jackson (2006) used quantitative data from the 1993 and 1999 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty to examine the trends of African American males in leadership positions at colleges and universities. Using trend analysis to analyze the data, Jackson (2006) found that White males held the majority of leadership positions as well as positions that involved policy development and implementation. Further, Jackson (2006) found that people of color tended to hold lower level positions in contrast to Whites. His study indicates the prevalence of the status quo in administrative positions and the subjugation of professionals of color at higher education institutions. Although this study was important in showing the inequities with regards to hiring trends, it did not include narrative data from participants outlining specific discriminatory practices in the hiring process. Narrative data from participants would shed light on the inequities that applicants of color face in the hiring process and could be used to inform practice and bring an end to the inequities that exist in the hiring process.

Sagaria (2002) conducted a qualitative study of search processes at predominantly White institutions to examine possible inequities in job searches with regards to including minorities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on a total of thirty two Black and White participants
involved in thirteen position searches. Eleven of the participants were on search committees, fifteen were candidates who were successful, and five were candidate unsuccessful at obtaining a particular position. Sagaria (2002) found that the members of the search committees had biased opinions about the minority applicants and tended to hire individuals that maintained the status quo. In other words, the search committees preferred the White applicants that exhibited familiar skills, dress and mannerisms.

McHugh (2010) utilized a narrative case study methodology that examined the hiring process of Black and White leaders in a predominantly white institution. McHargh (2010) concluded that all of the White applicants that were interviewed had inside knowledge about the positions they applied for and benefitted more from this knowledge than the Black applicants. In addition, more Whites had access to critical information about the positions as well as had more social connections that helped them obtain the positions. Blacks also saw their race as having an adverse effect on their upward mobility. Interestingly, almost all of the upper level Black administrators that were interviewed held leadership positions that related to diversity on campus (McHargh, 2010). The fact that most of the minorities that were interviewed held leadership positions in diversity related departments suggests that inequality exists for minorities with regards to the leadership positions they can attain. When minorities are hired, they are expected to address racial and ethnic problems associated with the institution (Seawood, 2005). Hiring minorities for diversity positions solely to deal with racial and ethnic issues on campus makes their experiences on campus limited as well as make them less valued and respected by other administrators (Bridges, 1996). Although the study conducted by McHargh (2010) was important to shed light on inequities that exist for African Americans, it did not include any other minority races. In addition, the study was conducted at only one school in a southern state.
Bell and Nkomo (2003) conducted an eight year survey of the career experiences and trajectories of 825 black and white female managers in the corporate sector. The researchers discussed a glass ceiling for professionals of color, or the fact that professionals of color did not achieve the high executive ranks due to their race. Bell and Nkomo (2003) identified three barriers that professionals of color experience in the workplace: subtle racism, prejudice, and harassment (racialized comments or jokes), managing duality and bicultural stress (intolerance or respect for cultural behavioral styles or dress), and tokenism and presumed incompetence (hiring a particular number of professionals of color for federal mandate or to give the impression of diversity instead of hiring due to skills or experience). In addition, the researchers also found a lack of mentorship, unfair promotion and evaluation processes, and segregation into particular low level job categories in the workplace (Bell & Nkomo, 2003). Arguments exist against the existence of a glass ceiling exclaiming that professionals of color tend to focus on family instead of their careers and are too lazy or are unwilling to do what it takes to get to the top (Cutler & Jackson, 2002). However, these racial stereotypes and workplace barriers have marginalized professionals of color and their advancement to upper leadership positions. Although the study focused on women in the business sector, the study was important in unveiling inequities for professionals of color advancing to leadership positions.

The ethnic representation of senior leaders at higher education institutions is not encouraging. On the Pathway to the Presidency, a study of leaders that held positions that often lead to the presidency from 149 four-year higher education institutions, revealed no significant changes in the racial and ethnic representation of leaders between 2008 and 2013 (Kim & Cook, 2013). Specifically, only 14% of all senior administrators at responding four year colleges and universities were people of color (Kim & Cook, 2013). This percentage was only a slight
increase from 8% in 1986 and 14% in 2006 (King & Gomez, 2008). In addition, when minority student serving institutions were excluded, only 9% of colleges or universities were led by an ethnic or minority president as of 2013 (Kim & Cook, 2013). Interestingly, these data also revealed that among four year institutions, 89% of chief diversity officers were people of color as of 2013. The study showed only a 6% increase in senior administrators of color from 1986 to 2013, as well as the propensity for leaders of color to take on ethnically based leadership roles within their institutions. Professionals of color are underutilized at all ranks, from presidential to faculty positions, and thus, the pipeline cannot be all to blame for the underrepresentation of leaders of color. The findings also suggested that professionals in non-academic leadership positions (such as chief diversity officers and chief student affairs officers) should be developed to take on presidential roles to increase diversity in the highest leadership levels.

It is important for leaders of color to take on leadership positions to challenge the historically rooted racial barriers professionals of color have faced in accessing leadership positions at colleges and universities. Owen (2009) reviewed literature regarding the desirability and effectiveness of appointing upper class Whites as diversity leaders in predominantly White institutions. Owen (2009) found that White leaders were effective as advocates for individuals of color when they understood themselves as having advantages individuals of color do not. However, Owen (2009) stressed the importance of hiring leaders of color to challenge the reproduction of systemic structures that benefit White males who are privileged identities in academia. If leaders at higher education institutions represent the status quo, then they will likely continue to make policies that interest other individuals in the status quo. Owen (2009) has argued that the tendencies of White male leaders are to maintain the vision and interests of an institution that benefits Whites. Ladson-Billings (1998) suggested that even leaders who do not
purposefully subjugate people of color do so because racism is embedded in society as normative and even natural. Whether intentionally or unintentionally created, there needs to be an end to the reproduction of oppressive systems in higher education institutions. Though Owen (2009) raised important issues pertaining to power and privilege, he did not introduce any of his own research to support his claims. White male leaders will continue to be hired and reproduce inequitable policies and practices if oppressive hiring structures aimed at excluding leaders of color from upper level administrative positions are not challenged.

College presidents with privileged identities and backgrounds that represent the status quo are more likely to be hired to presidential positions (Cohen & March, 1974). Cohen and March (1974) quantitatively (using surveys) analyzed the trajectories, decisions, organization, and leadership of American college presidents. Relying not only on their own research, but on four previous studies of college presidents (Bowman, 1965; Demerit, Stephens, & Taylor, 1967; Ferrari, 1970; Ingraham, 1968), the researchers found that administrators with particular valued backgrounds had a better chance of moving closer to the presidency. Specifically, presidents who represented White notions of academics, hiring, promotion, tenure, and admissions were chosen to become college presidents and reproduce these systemic ideologies. Bowman (1965) identified seven complex qualifications that presidential search committees found most important in a presidential candidate: academic prestige, administrative style, personality, special local requirements, a good wife, religion, and political affiliation. The seven qualifications outlined by Bowman (1965) were all deeply rooted in White customs and practice. Although the above research provided information about the careers of American college presidents, the data was obtained through surveys and did not provide detailed information about the backgrounds and experiences of the participants (Bowman, 1965; Demerit, Stephens, & Taylor, 1967; Ferrari,
1970; Ingraham, 1968). In particular, data regarding the race of American college presidents was not available (Cohen & March, 1974). There has been qualitative research conducted regarding the characteristics of African American Student Affairs leaders who successfully obtained leadership positions in higher education institutions (Hammonds, 2012; Seawood, 2005; Sobers, 2014; Stokes, 2011). The researchers outlined the importance of having a doctoral degree, general skill sets (these included visionary, communication, supervisory, advocacy for multicultural students and colleagues, political, budget, strategic planning, and organizational behavior skills), influential mentors, and membership in professional organizations. Without the necessary credential, skills, and assets, leaders of color are even more unlikely to achieve leadership positions in addition to the discrimination they already face due to their race and ethnicity (Hammonds, 2012; Seawood, 2005; Sobers, 2014; Stokes, 2011). Due to the varied and numerous obstacles that leaders of color face, it seems dismal for professionals of color to access leadership positions.

In sum, the literature I reviewed suggested that discriminatory practices exist in the hiring process for professionals of color accessing leadership positions (De la Luz Reyes & Halcón, 1988; Sagaria, 2002; WoodBrooks, 1991). Not only was there a tendency for professionals of color to be hired for lower level positions (Jackson, 2006), but professions of color who were hired for leadership positions tended to be hired for positions associated with diversity on campus (Bridges, 1996; McHargh, 2010; Seawood, 2005). Unfortunately, anti-affirmative action legislation has posed an obstacle for professionals of color accessing leadership positions at universities. Although the reproduction of White privilege is evident in hiring practices in higher education institutions (Owen, 2009), it is also prevalent in policy. The discourse in anti-affirmative action policy excludes individuals based on their race and paves the way for
discriminatory practices in universities (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004; Iverson, 2007; Tolbert & Grummet, 2003). Professionals of color must live with the repercussions of anti-affirmative action policy as students in the admission process, as professionals applying for administrative positions, and even as leaders conflicted with policy that has marginalized their own lives.

Policy

Professionals of color have had to navigate a very racially charged political environment as they attempt to access leadership positions in universities (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; Samaria, 2002). As anti-affirmative action legislation is implemented in more states across the country, racism can be identified in state as well as university policy (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004; Iverson, 2007; Tolbert & Grummel, 2003). Institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) can provide an explanation for the trend of colleges and universities adopting anti-affirmative action policy. According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), organizations become more alike as a way of maintaining relevance as well as norms and practices. With regards to universities and anti-affirmative action policies, it can be argued that more institutions will adopt anti-affirmative action legislation in an effort to maintain legitimacy and to be responsive to the changing political climate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). From a critical perspective, Apple (2004) explained how schools control what constitutes legitimate knowledge. He drew on Gramsci (1971) when he discussed the concept of hegemony, or a societal collective consciousness of valued norms (a reflection of social classes with power). Because hegemony is so ingrained in what society thinks and values, it is a level of unconsciousness that is difficult to recognize, much less resist (Apple, 2004). With regards to leadership, Fairclough (1995) explained that those with the power and privilege to influence policy operate under the hegemonic ideology that reflects White dominance. The discourse found in policy reflects a particular discursive field, or
intersection of particular ideologies, social meanings, and power struggles (Fairclough, 1992). Thus, various groups in society align themselves to particular White dominant ideologies found in discourse. Leaders who create policies and practices related to the dominant White hegemony protect and reproduce White privilege (Gus, 2010). In higher education institutions, hegemony is highly imbedded in the discourse of policies and practices that subjugate minorities. Hegemony explains how organizations are situated in a stratified society where the most powerful social class dictates legitimate structures, processes, and knowledge (Gus, 2010). If the dominant hegemony is not questioned, then it remains as an ingrained part of society that is difficult to recognize and remains unquestioned. The hegemonic influence to protect White privilege can also be seen in society as Whites vote against affirmative action policy.

Analyses of White voter support for California’s Proposition 209 that eliminated affirmative action in the state revealed racist motives. Tolbert and Grummel (2003) analyzed census data for Proposition 209 in 1996 and found that the White vote supporting the proposition tended to be higher among Whites who lived in areas with higher populations of people of color. As neighborhoods became more racially diverse, Whites were threatened by the ethnic change and felt more compelled to defend the White status quo (Tolbert & Grummel, 2003). However, Alvarez and Bedolla (2004) analyzed exit poll data on Proposition 209 and critiqued the work of Tolbert and Grummel (2003) and explained that the racial context needed to be emphasized. Alvarez and Bedolla (2004) found that the anti-affirmative action campaign, rhetoric, and political supporters were effective in racially dividing the electorate. Further, racially divisive anti-affirmative action campaign materials and discourse may only confuse some voters since they may be the only materials they receive.
Although affirmative action is a debated social issue, many citizens are not well informed when making political decisions that influence the fate of affirmative action and ultimately hiring and work experiences in universities. Saenz and Moses (2010) conducted a qualitative content analysis study (a combination of document analysis and philosophical inquiry) that focused on print news media coverage of the Michigan Civil Right Initiative (Proposal 2), or the anti-affirmative action legislation that was passed in Michigan in 2006. Their purpose was to determine what type of information on affirmative action and the initiative was made available to the public in the interest of making voters well informed. Saenz and Moses (2010) qualitatively coded 332 articles into three categories: descriptive (type), interpretive (topic or theme), and evaluative (whether they were researched based and explained affirmative action). Saenz and Moses (2010) and found that voters were ill informed when they voted to eliminate affirmative action in Michigan. Further, voters did not have enough information (such as a historical context of affirmative action or why affirmative action was created) to have any sort of meaningful deliberation about the issue. Similarly, voters in California were ill informed when they voted for Proposition 209 (the anti-affirmative action legislation that was passed in California in 1997).

According to Jones (1998) many voters thought that they were voting to protect civil rights instead of eliminating it when they approved Proposition 209 that was named the California Civil Rights Initiative. The discourse associated with the proposition’s title misled voters and likely caused many to vote for a proposition they might not have otherwise approved. Anti-affirmative action initiatives may be passed easily in states across the country due to the lack of information for voters to make informed decisions. The support from citizens to eliminate affirmative action has also led to exclusionary college and university policy for minorities.
Research suggests that the discourse in university policies at some institutions indicate a lack of commitment to campus diversity as well as a deficit way of thinking about minorities. Iverson (2008) conducted a study that analyzed problems and solutions represented in 21 diversity action plans at 20 land grant institutions in the United States. She used a method of policy discourse analysis (which focuses on written documents) and conducted a line by line analysis utilizing inductive and deductive coding strategies to identify problems and solutions related to diversity in the diversity action plans. Iverson’s (2008) findings suggested that the discourse related to capital and market-driven endeavors are more important than advocating for change related to equity within the institution. Although Iverson (2008) primarily focused on inequities among students, it was clear from her research that generating revenue and maintaining prestige were most important among the diversity action plans she analyzed instead of increasing the number of hires of individuals of color. Further, Iverson (2007) found that people of color were typically described in the diversity action plans as deficient. The diversity action plans were void of specific actions to address problems of discrimination, but rather outlined support services for minority students to cope with their “deficits” (Iverson, 2007, p. 596). With regards to hiring professionals of color at universities, Iverson’s findings suggest that higher education institutions view professionals of color as not qualified to take on leadership roles. This deficit way of thinking and exclusionary discourse further subjugates professionals of color and prevents them from advancing professionally.

Summary of Literature

As court battles to end affirmative action succeed in some states, anti-affirmative action initiatives can be expected to appear in other states as well. Even if state-wide initiatives to end affirmative action fail, institutions of higher education that establish and legitimize race-neutral
policies across the country will influence other institutions to adopt similar practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The implementation of anti-affirmative action in states across the country is an alarming reality that professionals of color face as they attempt to access top administrative positions in universities. Anti-affirmative action policy is not simply legislation; it is a concrete reality that individuals of color perceive to have an effect on their personal, academic and professional lives as well as their institutional setting (Moore & Bell, 2011). The discourse found in affirmative action policy has excluded professionals of color from higher education institutions both as former students and later administrators. Research indicates that enrollment, retention, and graduation rates for students of color declined as a result of anti-affirmative action legislation (e.g. Aguirre, 2000; Brown & Hirschman, 2006; Contreras, 2005; Cortes, 2010; Dickson, 2004; Robinson, 2003). This research suggests that many professionals of color faced obstacles as students seeking admission to universities in states that have eliminated affirmative action. This is particularly true in California, where anti-affirmative action policy has been in place since 1996. The barriers that professionals of color have faced have influenced their career experiences and the way they view their institutions.

Literature also indicates that leaders of color face barriers in the hiring process as they try to obtain leadership positions in universities (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; McHugh, 2010; Ramos, 2008; Samaria, 2002; WoodBrooks, 1991). However, much of the literature does not contextualize these discriminatory experiences with specific power and privilege discourses found in policy. This is particularly important since racism is embedded in state and university policy (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004; Iverson, 2007; Tolbert & Grummel, 2003). Cultural capital and critical race theory are the theoretical frameworks I utilized to understand privilege and power. Cultural capital is a relevant theory in explaining how leaders of color are at a disadvantage
because their cultural capital is not considered legitimate, meaningful, or important for leadership positions at higher education institutions. In addition, Bourdieu (1977) explains the presence of a valued discourse that is institutionalized in policy at higher education institutions. Because Bourdieu (1977) focused on inequities due to social class rather than race, I used critical race theory as described by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) to focus my study on issues related to race and the inequities that professionals of color face in accessing leadership positions. A focus on race is important for my study because the discourse that is viewed as significant is based upon the status quo to protect the rights and privileges of Whites (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

**Theoretical Framework**

Cultural capital and critical race theory (CRT) are used to frame my research. The importance of cultural capital is integral to succeeding in a society that rewards individuals from privileged backgrounds. Cultural capital also suggests that professionals of color are excluded from leadership positions based on their culturally learned practices. Critical race theory provides a framework to analyze inequitable policy and hiring practices based on race. CRT challenges the White dominant ideologies that are valued in policy and in the hiring process at higher education institutions.

**Cultural Capital**

Bourdieu (1986) used cultural capital to understand how the reproduction of inequality occurred in educational institutions. In educational research, cultural capital is defined as knowledge, skills, dispositions, and cultural background of individuals that is valued by society (Bourdieu, 1977). In other words, they are favorable traits or “high status cultural signals” (Lamont & Lareau, 1988, p. 153) that individuals have which are seen as worthwhile in a
university setting. Individuals of color in leadership positions must establish themselves in a system that favors high social class traits. From a cultural capital perspective, individuals must learn the dominant norms (such as language, vocabulary, dress, mannerisms, and behaviors) in order to be successful professionally. These dominant norms that are learned contribute to one’s habitus. The habitus is the internalization of relationships and expectations that are formed over time based on the social context (Bourdieu, 1977). Individuals use their habitus (that is influenced both by their own cultural capital as well as dominant societal norms) to navigate the hiring process. However, assimilating to these dominant norms will not make individuals of color accepted members of the dominant group because of their race. Instead, it only slightly improves their chances of being successful professionally.

According to Bourdieu (1986), there are three forms of cultural capital: the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state. The embodied state is part of the individual’s mind and body and it is inherited by socialization through time (usually by the family). In the objectified state, cultural capital is cultural goods such as art, books, dictionaries, or machines. In the institutionalized state, cultural capital is possessed by an individual and institutionally recognized as valuable such as an academic credential. For the purposes of this proposal, I will focus on the embodied form of cultural capital since it deals with culturally learned norms that individuals negotiate in society. For example, Professionals of color must adopt particular mannerisms and gestures reminiscent of the status quo to fit in and access leadership positions in universities. Bourdieu (1977) also cited yet another form of capital, linguistic capital. For the purposes of this study I did not distinguish between linguistic capital and cultural capital since cultural capital is a part of the embodied state (Bourdieu, 1977).
Bourdieu (1977) has stated that educational institutions perpetuate inequalities by rewarding the language (embodied capital) that is recognized as valuable. The discourse (such as diversity action plans) that universities publish and make available to the public focuses on language that is valued by society. Linguistic capital is imbedded into policy documents at higher education institutions as a means of excluding minority populations. Though many policies do not clearly state that they are exclusionary with regard to hiring practices, particular discourse is used to veil obvious inequities such as the exclusion or subjugation of racial groups.

Cultural capital is a relevant theory to explain how professionals of color are excluded from leadership positions in universities. According to Lamont and Lareau (1998), cultural capital is not only seen as the idea that the skills and knowledge of the dominant class are valued, but it is a way of excluding certain people based on class attributes. Cultural capital focuses on the White, male dominant norms and knowledge that is valued by society and points to subordination by dominant structures and individuals. Due to the exclusion that minorities face as they seek leadership positions in higher education institutions, they have to rely on other forms of capital such as social capital, or benefits that come from social exchanges, (Coleman, 1988) to try and obtain employment in leadership positions.

Cultural capital does not explain the particular forms of knowledge professionals of color possess. Similarly, cultural capital does not address the importance of these forms of knowledge that professionals could bring to leadership positions in universities. These forms of knowledge are particularly important in universities with high populations of diverse students. Due to these factors, I used critical race theory to shed light upon the importance of the forms of knowledge of diverse professionals. However, before I explain critical race theory and how the theory focuses on racism in society, it is important to understand the privilege that is associated with being
White in society. Whiteness is a form of cultural capital in American society because of the historical social, political, and governmental structures that were established by Whites, to protect Whites.

**Whiteness**

To understand White privilege, it is important to define what being White means in society. Peter McLaren (1998) explained that White customs and practice are embedded in American society created by White people, for White people. Whiteness is an ideology that has historically been established as ideal and superior. Whites never have to question inequities that exist based on race and do not have to navigate themselves in a racially biased society as people of color do daily. White ideology can also be seen in government and policy, as White politicians rally for legislation that continues to privilege Whites. Policies that continue to privilege Whites are institutionalized and legitimized as part of university practice.

As outlined by Gusa (2010) White institutional presence is the institutionalized fusion of White worldview, White supremacy, and White privilege, and the manifestation of WIP can be categorized into four intricately linked attributes: White ascendancy, monoculturalism, White blindness, and White estrangement. White ascendancy is characterized by Whites having a historical position of power and advantage in society that is maintained by reproducing dominant White ideologies. White victimization is the idea that Whites feel threatened by people of color obtaining more rights and privilege in society, therein taking privileges away from Whites. Monoculturalism is the belief that White culture is the norm and that every culture should conform. White blindness is the failure to understand how White norms and policy are constructed to be exclusionary and prejudiced. White estrangement is the segregation of Whites from people of color. White estrangement can be seen in policies such as anti-affirmative action
legislation. Universities can segregate Whites from minorities since they are not required to hire people of color. White institutional presence is an example of how the reproduction of inequalities occurs in universities as White ideology and practice is not confronted.

It is important to analyze and deconstruct White institutional privilege in an attempt to be more equitable to people of color. Gillborn (2005) suggested that although policy does not explicitly state that people of color are to be disadvantaged by particular legislation, White dominance is inherent in the political structure of society. The pattern of White privilege is something that is maintained to protect the advantages that exist for Whites. Anti-affirmative action legislation in higher education institutions is an example of White institutional privilege (Gillborn, 2005) in that it emphasizes White power and privilege. Race-neutral policies are a way of protecting White privilege while simultaneously misrepresenting policies as equal for all. Instead, these anti-affirmative action policies only recognize the cultural capital of Whites as significant and legitimate. Critical race theory further sheds light on the dominant White ideology by focusing on racial inequities in society and emphasizing the idea that Whiteness is a valuable asset in society.

**Critical Race Theory**

Critical race theory emerged (CRT) as a response to civil rights legislation that marginalized people of color. Matsuda (1991) asserted that scholars of color were creating a philosophy or theory of law that shed light upon racism imbedded within the legal system with the intent of eradicating oppression towards people of color. Though CRT was born from critical theory in relation to the legal realm, it quickly appeared in other disciplines such as ethnic studies, women’s studies, sociology, and history (Yosso, 2005). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995)
introduced critical race theory in the field of education and it has been utilized and expanded by education scholars ever since.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explained three propositions as the foundation of critical race theory to explain social inequities. The first proposition suggests that race continues to be an attribute that determines inequity in the United States (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Race is the focus of critical race theory in contrast to the dominant culture (White European Americans) with the intent of showing racial inequities that exist in society. Due to the fact that White European American culture is embedded in society as the norm, CRT is used to expose the ingrained inequities that exist (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

The second proposition outlined by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) was the idea that American society is based on property rights. Though the concept of property can be linked to cultural capital goods in the objectified state (books, dictionaries, paintings that are valued by society), race can also be viewed as a valuable good in U.S. society. Whites do not have to face the inequities and barriers that people of color do because of their race (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Although a person of color can almost expect discrimination of some sort in society, Whites are exempt from these challenges. Harris (1993) further explained the notion of Whiteness as property with regard to affirmative action. Harris (1993) stated that the protected of White norms and privilege is protected and reproduced in court decisions through the persistence of Whiteness as a valued social identity which can be identified by the court rulings in favor of Whites against affirmative action policy.

The third proposition centered on the argument that “the intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequality” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 48). Through issues of racial inequities and
privileges related to Whiteness, social and institutional inequalities can be examined. Using critical race theory as an analytical tool, one could conclude that since White women have benefitted most from civil rights legislation and contribute wages to their White families, then civil rights legislation was enacted under the guise of racial equity (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Bell (1980) further elaborated on Ladson-Billings’ (1998) point with interest convergence theory. Bell (1980) explained that legislation that benefits people of color is only enacted when it simultaneously is in the best interest of Whites. Morfin, Perez, Parker, Marvin and Arrona (2006) also used the interest convergence theory to critique Supreme Court decisions arguing for the allowance of anti-affirmative action policies. States that enact anti-affirmative action legislation (such as California) are able to circumvent federal court decisions aimed at increasing diversity (Morfin et. al., 2006). Instead, institutions in these states can take a racially neutral stance and outwardly commit to increasing diversity, without being accountable for proving it is actually occurring. Bell’s (1980) interest convergence theory is similar to Gusa’s (2010) idea of White institutional presence in American society. For universities and employment practices, CRT suggests that hiring policies implemented at higher education institutions benefit White populations more than professionals of color. Furthermore, as Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) assert, hiring leaders from the status quo does not tarnish the status of higher education institutions and hiring people of color elicits scrutiny from the dominant White majority.

Yosso (2005) used critical race theory to critique Bourdieu’s (1977, 1986) theory of cultural capital and suggested that people of color have cultural competencies instead of cultural deficiencies (though these competencies are not recognized by the status quo). Thus, Yosso (2005) introduced the concept of community cultural wealth that included the idea that people of color have forms of knowledge that are important and unacknowledged. The six forms of
knowledge were: aspirational (resiliency and determination based on historical oppression), navigational (the ability to maneuver through deficit thinking institutions), social (support through peer and community relationships), linguistic (multiple language and communication skills), familial (knowledge based on family and extended family ties), and resistant capital (opposition to subordination). In the context of hiring practices at higher education institutions, professionals of color have forms of knowledge that are valuable to leadership positions. These forms of knowledge are important and beneficial skills that leaders of color can bring to leadership positions at universities. For example, some professionals of color can use their multi-linguistic skills, their understandings of family commitments, or their insight about first generation college students to advocate and help students in universities. Further, the forms of knowledge that Yosso (2005) outlined were developed for people of color to navigate institutions designed to be exclusionary. Social networking, communication skills, as well as resiliency and determination are all important skills for individuals of color to traverse higher education institutions (Yosso, 2005). The idea that professionals of color are beneficial to leadership positions at higher education institutions is important to challenge the policies and practices designed to keep them out of upper administrative positions.

Critical race theory can be used to explain how professionals of color navigate their way through an institutional system that values the dominant White male ideologies. As Parker (1998) stated, “critical race theory documents minority exclusion and the ways some have had to compromise their race to survive at predominantly white colleges and universities” (p. 49). Many professionals of color lack the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986), or White privileged identities that are prevalent in leadership positions at higher education institutions. Professionals of color must assimilate to the valued norms and customs of the status quo if they want to secure
leadership positions at colleges and universities (Bourdieu, 1986). The adoption of White forms of cultural capital suggests that professionals of color have had to sacrifice their racial identities in order to advance professionally in higher education institutions. CRT is useful for analyzing the diversity of leaders at educational institutions because it explains the challenges that professionals of color have faced with regards to hiring and promotion into top leadership roles at universities.

**Summary**

Professionals of color bring different forms of knowledge to their positions that are beneficial to administrative positions such as advocacy, resiliency, and determination (Yosso, 2005). Hiring leaders of color to serve in leadership positions at colleges and universities is important to end the historical reproduction that has served to protect White privilege (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This is especially important as anti-affirmative action policy is enacted at more universities across the United States making it more difficult for professionals of color to access leadership positions. Critical race theory has been used to analyze anti-affirmative action legislation with the finding that White power and privilege have historically been protected by Whites to benefit other whites (Harris, 1993; Morfin et. al., 2006). However, analyses have not been conducted in a university setting specifically concentrating on hiring leaders of color to upper administrative positions. Further, analyses have not been conducted on leaders of color in higher education institutions to understand racial barriers in the hiring process.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

Multi-Case Study with Critical Discourse Analysis

I used a combination of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992) and a multi case study approach (Stake, 1995) to analyze the career experiences and trajectories of professionals of color as they access leadership positions in higher education institutions. By analyzing the narratives of leaders of color concerning their career trajectories, the findings will inform hiring committees and emphasize the importance of diversity in the highest leadership positions at universities, even in the face of anti-affirmative action legislation. Case studies are detailed investigations of individuals, groups, and even institutions (Cresswell, 1998). In addition, case studies concentrate on experiential knowledge of the case and attention paid to the social, political, and societal influences (Stake, 1995). Multi case studies provide in depth accounts of one or more individuals bounded by time and environmental influences (Stake, 1995). Merriam (2009) has stated that qualitative case studies are in-depth, holistic descriptions of a social unit where the researcher handles multiple data sources to provide strong evidence to support a particular phenomenon. My multi case study focuses on leaders of color at two California universities and their experiences with accessing leadership positions before and after anti-affirmative action legislation was implemented in California. My study is a multi-case study because I focused on individuals representative of two institutions. Further, case studies are identified as bound because they provide a detailed account of specific cases in their natural environment and do not represent all cases (Stake, 1995). A multi case study methodology is appropriate for this study because I gathered contextualized understandings of leaders of color who serve in two universities with anti-affirmative action policies. I combined a critical discourse analysis of affirmative action plans as well as a case study methodology to
contextualize the influence that policy discourse has had on leaders of color and the hiring process.

This study focused on the following research questions:

1. To what extent (if any) has the discourse in California university affirmative action plans affected hiring practices for leaders of color?

2. To what extent (if any) do leaders of color narrate their personal experiences regarding access to leadership positions at universities in California before and after Proposition 209?

**Purposive Sampling**

Purposive sampling allows a researcher to select individuals who can and are willing to provide information about a topic based on knowledge or experience (McGraw Hill, 2006). I had to strategically select California institutions and participants to answer my research questions. I focused on two California universities because California was the first state to implement state wide anti-affirmative action policy (Proposition 209) in 1996 and this time frame allowed me to analyze changes over a period of time. I selected University One (U1) and University Two (U2) due to the diversity of their student bodies (this is particularly true for U1). As of fall 2013 U1 had 18,621 undergraduate students and 2,676 graduate students enrolled at the institution. In 2013, 35.4% of the undergraduate population was Asian or Pacific Islander, 32.1% was Hispanic, 17% White, 6.3% African American, and 0.5% American Indian. The university prides itself on being widely recognized as one of the most diverse research universities in the nation. As of fall 2013 U2 had 15,695 undergraduate students and 1,508 graduate students enrolled at the institution. As of fall 2013, the undergraduate population consisted of 3.7% African American, 1.1% American Indian, 25.2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 29.5% Chicano or Hispanic,
and 36.8% European American. As of fall 2013 the institution boasted a 55% rate of freshman students (entering as freshmen) that graduate in four years, and an 89% rate of first year students that return as sophomores.

The participants for my multi case study were leaders of color who represented the following races outlined in the affirmative action plans at U1 and U2: African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Chicano/Latino. I interviewed 18 total participants, 9 each from U1 and U2. The leaders that I focused on included the following Student Affairs and Student Services administrative positions: provost level (provost, vice provost, associate vice provost, or assistant vice provost), dean level (dean, associate dean, or assistant dean), and director level (director, associate director, or assistant director) (Table 1).

Table 1

**U1 and U2 Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Position level*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deb</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eve</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fay</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabe</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
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<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>Director</td>
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<td>Quinn</td>
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<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Position level includes all assistant, associate, and vice positions.
I used pseudonyms as well as position levels instead of their actual position title to protect the identities of my participants, as affirmative action is a highly controversial topic. Only 2 of the 18 total participants that I interviewed at U1 and U2 were hired at any California higher education institution before Proposition 209 was enacted in 1996. For the multi-case study phase, I used a purposive sampling strategy. I utilized purposive sampling because I deliberately sampled participants because of their relationship or knowledge towards my research topic (McGraw Hill, 2006).

Data Sources and Collection

Multi-case study semi-structured interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews to elicit counter narratives that focused on career barriers and/or trajectories in the context of anti-affirmative action legislation. An effective method used to analyze the role of race and racism in people of color is the counter-narrative. Counter narratives act to deconstruct the dominant ideology and challenge the dominant White and often predominantly male culture that is held to be normative and authoritative (Stanley, 2007). This research method was appropriate for this study because using a counter-narrative allowed me to examine minorities’ perceptions towards access to leadership positions in universities before and after Proposition 209, which eliminated affirmative action in California. I elicited counter narratives by allowing my participants to tell their story or monologue (Denzin, 2003) with regards to the inequities professionals of color faced as they attempted to secure top leadership positions in universities. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) note that studies situated in CRT must utilize counter narratives, the voices of those traditionally marginalized by society (such as people of color), to fully reveal the scope of societal inequities. Using cultural capital as a lens to analyze the counter narratives of leaders of
color shed light on the forms of capital that are not valued or recognized as important for leadership positions in higher education institutions (Bourdieu, 1977).

The data for this research comes from the semi-structured interviews I conducted in spring 2014. I conducted interviews at U1 in April 2014 and at U2 in March 2014. I contacted professionals of color via e-mail and asked for their participation in this study (see Appendix B). All participants were given a description of my study and provided written consent to be interviewed (see Appendix C). I used the institutional websites at U1 and U2 to interview potential candidates based on their names and pictures online. I had difficulty identifying professionals of color at U2 and was only able to secure nine participants, two of which were actually faculty who had directed student services programs on campus. I had an easier time identifying participants at U1, as there were more professionals of color that I could identify. Interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and all participants agreed to be audio-recorded. All participants were asked the same 13 questions (with sub-questions for a total of 33) that were designed to uncover possible racial discrimination in the hiring process, the participants’ narrative about administrative diversity on campus, family background, career aspirations, and professional identity (see Appendix A). I utilized a technique referred to as interviewing by comment (Snow, Zurcher, & Sjoberg, 1982). Interviewing by comment is a supplementary data gathering technique where an interviewer makes statements as opposed to asking direct questions for the purposes of eliciting information from participants. Snow, Zucher and Sjoberg (1982) outlined eight types of comments that can be used during the interview process: puzzlement, humor, replay, descriptive, outrageous, altercasting, motivational, and evaluative. This technique is particularly effective when interview questions are perceived to be stigmatizing or embarrassing. In addition, comments are not as likely to frame answers as
questions (Snow, Zurcher, & Sjoberg, 1982). Interviewing by comment also allows the interviewer to gather information about the hidden side of social organizations by probing the participant to divulge information separately from a scripted set of questions.

I conducted the interviews in locations chosen by the participants. All of the interviews at U1 were conducted in person on the university campus and all except for one were conducted in the offices of the participants. At U2, all of the interviews were conducted in person except for one over the telephone. Two of the interviews were conducted at off campus locations, and one participant indicated it was because she did not feel comfortable being interviewed in her office about my research topic. The interviews at both institutions lasted between one and two hours. In addition, I also reviewed curriculum vitas or resumes. My review of the curriculum vitas or resumes supported the information given by the participants during the interview process.

**Affirmative action texts.** I collected two affirmative action plans each from U1 and U2. Related to the U1 affirmative action plans, one was the update to the October 31, 1995 plan that was distributed on March 31, 1996. This update was made immediately after Proposition 209 was enacted in California. The other affirmative action plan I analyzed from U1 was the 2010-2011 staff affirmative action plan effective March 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011. I had to request the U1 plans from the Director for Affirmative Action since they were not available online.

The U2 affirmative action plans I analyzed were the update to the 1993-1994 plan which summarized the progress for the year ending October 31, 1992 and presented the campus action plans for the 1993-1994 academic year. This affirmative action plan was created before Proposition 209 went into effect. The other plan was the affirmative action plan for career staff effective June 1, 2010 through May 31, 2011. The current affirmative action plan was available
for download from their university website, but I had to purchase the 1993-1994 plan through the institution’s archival system.

Although I had originally wanted to compare affirmative action plans from more California universities before and after Proposition 209, this will not be possible. Interestingly, I found that many UC institutions destroy their archival affirmative action plans and only keep the recent year and prior year plans on file. In fact, U1 and U2 were the only California universities I found that had archival affirmative action plans.

It is important to analyze universities’ affirmative action plans because they are the institutional documents that describe campus diversity initiatives (Iverson, 2008). Analyzing affirmative action plans will give me an understanding of what strategies (if any) the institutions used to increase minority leaders on campus before and after the anti-affirmative action legislation was implemented.

**Diversity statement.** I analyzed the University of California Diversity Statement that was adopted by the Academic Senate on May 10, 2006 and endorsed by the President of the University of California on June 30, 2006. This statement was the most recent (and only) document I could locate. The statement served to define diversity in the University of California (UC) system as well as outline the UC system’s commitment to diversity. Diversity was referred to as “the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and more.” The document also called for diversity among students and employees, as a mission of the UC System, representative of the state of California. As was evident in the Affirmative Action plans, the Diversity Statement, while seemingly inclusive, welcoming, and committed to
increasing diversity within the UC system, focused on individuals with particular high qualifications (similar to the Affirmative Action plans that I analyzed). The document discussed providing access, recruitment, retention, and advancement of ‘talented’ and ‘qualified’ students, staff, and faculty, without defining the terms. Further, the document indicated that “The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups.” The term ‘perceive’ was significant because individuals’ perception of a phenomenon occurring, does not mean that it is actually a realization. In other words, injustices could still occur and be veiled or even concealed.

**Principles of Community (POC).**

_U1._ I downloaded the POC document from the diversity website. The document was not dated, nor was there an explanation of who created the document and for what purpose. Upon examination of the properties of the document, it was created on July 25, 2006. However, this indicated when the file was created, not necessarily when the policy was created. Respect (mutual respect, respect for differences and respect for all people) was a theme that resonated throughout the document. The word ‘respect’ was used with a connotation of tolerance, or the permittance of different cultures without outwardly being judgmental. However, the term respect can have differentiated cultural meanings. For example, in some cultures, respect must be earned (sometimes over time). Individual ‘rights’ are also included in the document pertaining to individuals being entitled to interacting on campus without being intimidated or persecuted. These notions are deeply rooted in ethics and morals which also can also differ culturally. Although the document indicated that the campus should be a welcoming environment, it did not suggest that individuals explore or learn about different cultures. The document also indicated
that individuals should “work together to make the campus community a place where reason and mutual respect prevail” though it did not suggest activities or ways this could be accomplished. The term ‘diversity’ was only used once related to U1 taking “pride in the diversity of the campus.” The term ‘diversity’ was not defined in the document; however, the University of California system has documented their definition of diversity (as I previously indicated). Also included was a call for individuals to work together towards ‘reason’ and ‘civil discourse’ on campus. The term equity was used with regards to equitable treatment.

   **U2.** I was able to download the POC from the “About” section directly off of the main page of the institution’s website. The document was not only imbedded on the website, but a colorful and aesthetic document was available for download. The document explained that the POC statement was developed by the Campus Welfare Committee, the campus, and was endorsed by the Provost’s Advisory Council and Chancellor in 2001. It is not completely clear whether or not the document has been updated, but the downloadable document included a quote by the Chancellor that was dated July, 2011. The POC was categorized into the following principles: diverse, open, purposeful, caring, just, disciplined, and celebrative. As with the U1 POC, the U2 POC also utilized the term respect throughout the document including mutual respect. The term diversity was used a total of three times, twice referring to the campus community. The U2 POC also stated that the campus celebrated the heritage of the community. This suggested more of a campus acceptance to different cultures rather than simple tolerance. However, the document stated that the institution was “committed to due process, respect for individual dignity and equitable access to resources, recognition, and rewards.” In the dictionary, the term ‘dignity’ refers to a caste system of high honor, rank, position and class. The word inherently implies social stratification in society even though the document indicates the
promotion of an atmosphere of fairness. In contrast to U1, the term equity was used in regards to equitable access to resources, recognition, and rewards.

**Institutional websites.** I reviewed Human Resources and Diversity websites for U1 and U2 so that I could determine what resources were available to hiring committees as well as potential employees of color. I selected websites that were similar between the two institutions so I could compare the information. I reviewed a total of four websites (two per institution) that included information on recruitment and selection and diversity recruitment. I also reviewed four Diversity websites related to hiring (two per institution), that included information on diversity and inclusion programs as well as their stated “best practices” for recruiting a diverse applicant pool. I did not cite these websites or include them in my references to preserve the anonymity of the institutions.

**Human resources websites.** U1 had extensive recruitment and selection information for hiring committees presented in a step by step format (one through eight). The steps began with identifying the vacancy all the way through a detailed explanation of actions to be taken with regards to finalizing the offer letter to the candidate. Step three described the development of a recruitment plan. One of the sub steps was to consider placement goals (as noted in the more current affirmative action plan for U1). Although the placement goals included veterans and individuals with disabilities, it was suggested that employers could contact the Office of Affirmative Action for placement goals. In addition, employers were encouraged to contact diversity agencies to recruit potential underrepresented groups. In step four that outlined instructions on selecting a search committee, Affirmative Action and Diversity training is required for each search committee member. In step six, the review of applicants and developing a short list, employers are reminded to review the pool for diversity in light of placement goals.
since the list must be approved by the Faculty and Staff Affirmative Action Office. The diversity
recruitment information for U1 included the appropriate training webinar and tutorial
information that was required for hiring committee members as well as diversity advertising
resources where hiring committees could post their job vacancies.

The recruitment information on U2’s human resources website did not nearly include as
much extensive information as that found on U1’s website. The information on recruitment was
simply a summary of the institution’s policy. Forms, resources, and information were linked at
the bottom of the page without suggestions or instructions for utilization. Information about
hiring potential employees was given in a ‘frequently asked questions’ format. U2 included a fair
hiring guide with topics such as recruitment plans, committees’ roles, interviews, and reference
checks. However, diversity goals or initiatives were not discussed considerably (if at all).

*Diversity websites related to hiring.* U1 had a diversity education inclusion program in
addition to the mandatory Affirmative Action training for employers. The program was five
months long and dedicated to staff and administrative issues related to diversity. U1 also had
information on communicating across cultures for staff and administrators that encouraged
individuals to be aware of cultural nuances in the workplace to create a welcoming environment
for all employees. An important difference between U1 and U2 is that U1 had an Affirmative
Action Office (this was in addition to their Diversity Office). Similar to the step by step hiring
and recruitment information, U1 also had a five step best practices website specifically for
recruiting a diverse staff. The five steps were shortened versions of information that was located
on the Human Resources website for recruitment and selection.

U2 had a diversity and inclusion certificate program that was designed to promote
diversity across campus. The program was designed as a professional development opportunity
for employees and included eight courses. U2’s Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion also had a website that outlined best practices in staff recruiting. The best practices information was imbedded in a training program that was required for hiring managers and search committee chairs only and had to be renewed every three years. The training was 90-120 minutes and could be completed online. In addition to general recruitment and selection topics, the website explained that the training covered bias theory, the benefits of a diverse workforce, equal opportunity employment, and affirmative action.

**Pilot Study: Semi-structured interviews to elicit counter narratives**

I conducted a small pilot study to conduct an analysis of affirmative action plans and to test my interview protocol. I interviewed three leaders of color at a four year university in Arizona. The state of Arizona voted to eliminate affirmative action in 2010 with the passing of Proposition 107. I interviewed a Hispanic male who was a dean level administrator for his college, a Hispanic male who was director level for a multicultural affairs office in his college, and a Hispanic female who was director level for a faculty diversity program.

All of the participants in my pilot study had been hired more than five years before our interview and were promoted within their college to the leadership positions they currently held. Two of the participants mentioned luck with regards to their initial hire within the college and their promotions, although they both acknowledged their hard work and dedication as contributing factors to their promotions. Two of the participants also discussed being competitors stemming from their families pushing them to be competitive and successful. Though neither of the males felt as though they were discriminated against in the hiring process, the female participant indicated she had sensed discrimination in a job that she was not hired for based on her gender. Though they did not indicate that they were ever discriminated against in the hiring
process based on race, they all strongly believed that it would have been different if affirmative action would not have been present at the time they were hired. In addition, two of the participants that were interviewed were leaders in diversity related positions and felt as though their race contributed positively to them having these positions. As a result of the findings of my pilot study, I decided to modify my interview protocol to include a question about family as well as a question about what participants perceive their strengths and weaknesses are to leadership positions.

Critical Discourse and Thematic Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a way of explaining social and political action (Fairclough, 1992). CDA can be used to understand how powerful groups control public discourse and subjugate less powerful groups (Van Dijk, 2001). Critical discourse also focuses on the ways in which language acts as a tool to suppress certain populations and produce power for others. Critical discourse analysis will allow me to analyze the affirmative action plans and expose ways in which “language as racism and the experience of racism are linked to political decisions and legal rulings” (Parker, 1998, p. 45). This research method is appropriate for my study because critical discourse analysis will allow me to examine the reproduction of inequalities based on race embedded in the affirmative action plans from a critical race theory perspective.

I utilized a three tiered critical discourse analysis framework outlined by Fairclough (1992) to analyze the affirmative action plans, diversity statements, websites, and interviews. Fairclough’s (1992) framework includes: the analysis of the text (which includes vocabulary, grammar and semantics), the analysis of the interpretation of the text (representative of socially acceptable rules and social identities), and the socio-historical and societal context of the text.
(economic, political, and cultural contexts). Fairclough’s (1992) approach allowed me to analyze the affirmative action plans in many different ways and I analyzed the patterns, sequencing, and even layout of the text while I simultaneously interpreted the meaning from the discourse in the text.

I conducted a line by line analysis of the affirmative action plans paying particular attention to the discourse that excluded minorities from obtaining leadership positions. I focused on the following key words: title/occupation, credentials, fairness, access, power, oppression, discrimination, marginalization, minority, equity, policy, diversity, disparities, policy, capitalism, and qualifications. These key words later become codes and emerged into broader themes of underutilization, goals, data and cultural capital versus qualifications. I took note of patterns in vocabulary and phrases. In addition, I paid careful attention to the graphs and charts in the plans and compared data from the four plans. The analysis of the affirmative action plans were used to inform the interview process by providing context to the counter narratives given by the participants (Stake, 1995).

The interviews were initially coded using thematic analysis and then coded using critical discourse analysis. Thematic analysis is a process used for encoding qualitative information (Boyatzis, 1998). As outline by Boyatzis (1998), there are four stages when utilizing thematic analysis: sensing themes (recognizing the codeable moment), reliability (coding consistently), developing codes (critically thinking about the information), and interpreting the codes and themes in the context of theory. I coded the interview transcriptions using many of the key words that were used in the critical discourse analysis. These codes turned into themes that I used to present my findings. Theory also informed my data analysis, but I remained open to new meanings and understandings that emerged from participants.
Weis and Fine (2004) describe three analytic moves in their theory of methodology when studying ethnic groups: First, the narratives of participants must be contextualized with regards to the social, economic, and historical structures that have influenced their experiences. I used Proposition 209 to contextualize my study. Next, identities such as race, class and gender have social, economic and political implications. Since my participants were professionals of color, I focused on issues related to race. Finally, interviewing individuals whose ideas may stand in opposition to dominant ideologies are important sources of information. These “outliers” provided counter narratives that were not attributed to hegemonic influence and they shed light on societal inequities.

Validity and Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, validity is important in establishing the authenticity of the data and occurs when the researcher checks for accuracy of the findings (Cresswell, 2009). I addressed the issue of validity or trustworthiness by utilizing triangulation (or crystallization), or the process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I used triangulation/crystallization in my study because I incorporated multiple data sources in my study (critical discourse analysis of affirmative action plans, qualitative interviews supplemented by a review of resumes or curriculum vitas, institutional diversity statements, and Human Resources and Diversity websites) (Cresswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Using triangulation was important for the process of providing thick descriptions (Cresswell, 2009), or detailed findings and multiple participant perspectives for the case studies I analyzed.
Positionality

I am half Hispanic and the first in my family to graduate college in the United States. I have worked in higher education institutions for over ten years in a variety of administrative positions. I worked for two years in the community college sector and over eight years in a research/doctoral granting university. I work and have served on a number of hiring committees in a state that recently eliminated affirmative action. I have seen injustice that occurs with regards to professionals of color accessing leadership positions. As an administrator of color who has a White appearance reminiscent of the status quo, I realize that I have not faced as many barriers professionally with regards to hiring. In addition, my White Mother raised me and I was brought up with the language, traditions, gestures, and values representative of the status quo. Further, I noticed that when I changed my last name (which was previously Hispanic) after I was married and used my Husband’s German last name, I was treated differently. When I had my Hispanic last name, the reaction to other professionals in my field was interesting. White professionals were doubtful of my heritage based on my appearance and would ask me to talk more about my background and how I had a Hispanic last name. This was always interesting to me since often the conversation did not warrant such a personal discussion. In contrast, once Hispanic professionals realized I was Hispanic, they seemed to want to establish more of a rapport. Very early I noticed that I had to negotiate myself on campus in such a way that I benefitted from the context. I presented myself differently in my interactions with White professionals and professionals of color.

Due to my experience with racial bias in the hiring process, I have focused on cultural capital and issues of race and social justice in many of the papers I have written. Analyzing the backgrounds of individuals and determining the influence of participants’ backgrounds on their
lives and careers has always fascinated me. I am an aspiring leader of color and contemplate the possibility of particular racial barriers as I attempt to access leadership positions. However, I acknowledge that I may not have to traverse obstacles in my own career trajectory due to my White appearance. My interest in racial inequities that exist in the hiring process led me to focus my research on professionals of color and their career trajectories.

I did not tell my participants at either institution that I was half Hispanic during the interview process. I told one participant after the interview process was over and she was surprised to learn of my background. I had considered telling participants about my heritage before the interview process because I thought it would build trust with my participants. However, I decided not to tell participants before the interview process because I felt it might have led some participants to not explain their stories as much because they may have been under the impression I had a better understanding of their struggles. Most of my participants did not realize I was also an administrator. I did not hide this piece of my identity since I emailed participants with my professional signature at the bottom. However, I think that for many participants, I was viewed as more non-threatening because of them perceiving me as a student (perhaps even full time) instead of a colleague (or even competitor for administrative positions). Although I identified with the participants in my study and their frustrations related to accessing leadership positions, I was able to remain reflexive in an effort to help other professionals of color interested in being leaders in higher education institutions.

Pilot study findings of interviews indicated that participants felt lucky to have been hired and promoted in their positions. Further, they felt lucky even though they felt that they had worked hard and were dedicated and motivated individuals. In addition, participants stated that they were competitive and that they had to vie for positions within their institution. Participants
seemed as though they had to prove their worth and fight for positions since they were professions of color. Participants also described their ethnic background related to how they became a professional and what made them successful. Due to this finding, I changed my interview questions to include more questions that inquired about participants’ families and backgrounds and how they impacted or influenced their professional lives. Although almost all of the participants that were interviewed (except for the female) did not state any blatant discrimination in the hiring process, they all acknowledged the influence of affirmative action as a contributor to them being hired. Since affirmative action was identified as a positive influence from the interviews, I decided to analyze the discourse in affirmative action plans. In addition, I decided to review more literature on the influence of affirmative action policy discourse. I analyzed affirmative action plans from U1 and U2 implemented before and after the anti-affirmative action legislation was enacted in California. I examined discriminatory discourse found in the plans. I also compared the similarities and differences between the plans. The findings are presented in four themes: underutilization, goals, data, and cultural capital versus qualifications.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this multi case study was to examine how leaders of color employed in Student Affairs and Student Services (non-academic) positions narrated their experiences regarding access to leadership positions at two universities in California before and after the anti-affirmative action legislation (Proposition 209) was implemented. The findings shed light on the barriers the participants (leaders of color) faced in the hiring process in an era of anti-affirmative action legislation. In addition, the findings also illuminated the obstacles participants faced (due to the influence of anti-affirmative action policy) as they negotiated their cultural identities in their work environments at their institutions. Specifically, the findings addressed two research questions:

1. To what extent (if any) has the discourse in California university affirmative action plans affected hiring practices for leaders of color?

2. To what extent (if any) do leaders of color narrate their personal experiences regarding access to leadership positions at universities in California before and after Proposition 209?

Critical Discourse Analysis of Affirmative Action Plans

Underutilization

U1. In both of the affirmative action plans, the term ‘underutilization’ was used to indicate the deficit of minorities employed in particular job groups outlined by the plans. The U1 1995 plan was very clear as to what the term meant and offered a definition of the term. According to the U1 1995 plan, underutilization is “having fewer minorities in a particular job group than would reasonably be expected by their availability” (p. 20). The U1 2010 plan did not offer a definition of the term, though it was used frequently.
To determine underutilization in a particular job group, or, “jobs having similar content, wage rates, and opportunities” (U1, 1995, p. 17), the U1 1995 plan had three measurements that were used. The three tests included: the 80% test (if minorities in a job group were less than 80% based on their availability), the standard deviation test (if the percentage of minorities in a job group is more than two standard deviations below the percentage available), and the half person test (if the number of minorities in the job group is at least 0.5 person based on the expected number available). In the U1 2010 plan, the 80% test and the half person test remained intact, though the standard deviation test was not present.

In the U1 1995 plan, underutilization was also based on two percentage rates, the participation rate and the availability rate. The participation rate referred to the percent of people in a job group who belong to an affirmative action category. The availability rate was the percent of people assumed to be available for the job group who belong to an affirmative action category. These figures were based on survey data given to employees when they were hired at the university. These percentage rates were apparent in the U1 2010 plan as well, though the term ‘participation rate’ was changed to ‘incumbency rate’ making the term seem more formal and as though the employees were appointed.

It was easy to get confused with the percentage rates and terminology involved in determining underutilization. Overall, it was apparent that the U1 1995 plan defined and outlined measurements and terms better than the newer plan. The terms themselves were also characteristically decontextualized and this disguised the historical context with which affirmative action was intended.

U2. The 1993 and 2010 U2 plans that were analyzed also included the term “underutilization” to refer to “the composition of a job group that is less than would be
reasonably expected given estimates of availability” (U2, 1993, p. 2). Both the 1993 and 2010 defined job groups the same way as the U1 plans as clusters of jobs with similar skills, pay, and requirements. In addition, the U2 1993 plan also had a term called “adverse impact” which referred to personnel hiring, promotion, or reclassification rates of minorities that were less favorable than Whites. This was determined by the government to be when the rate for protected groups was less than 80% of the rate for the non-protected group. The plan explained that this would not necessarily indicate discrimination, but would signify “a problem in need of attention” (U2, 1993, p. 2). Though adverse impact was not found in the U2 2010 plan, U2 committed to addressing areas of concern in selection procedures. The U2 2010 plan stated that “studies were conducted to identify potential problem areas in each of its selection procedures (i.e., applicant flow hires, promotions, and terminations) and affirmative actions, as appropriate, will be taken to address and remedy any identified areas of concern” (p. 17). Though they did not explain any of the studies that were conducted, it was interesting to note that such attention was still being paid to these practices.

Underutilization was based on the availability rate in both the 1993 and 2010 U2 plans. The availability rate in these plans, unlike the U1 plans, was determined by U.S. Census data indicating the number of people in the recruiting area with the job skills necessary for particular job groups. In the U2 2010 plan, each job group had a rationale for local, state, or national area recruiting. The 2010 plan indicated that the higher the job group, the more responsibility and expertise, the larger the recruitment area. The rationale in the U2 2010 plan explained that national searches for these upper level positions were necessary to “yield a qualified and diverse candidate pool that includes minorities” (p. 9). This suggested that having a diverse applicant pool was still important to the institution, even after the implementation of Proposition 209.
Goals

U1. In both of the affirmative action plans goals were set to increase the number of minorities in job groups. However, in the U1 plans, goals were only set if underutilization was found in a job group. In other words, increasing diversity in a job group was not found to be a priority unless underutilization was found. The U1 1995 plan stated, “to correct deficiencies in the utilization of minority groups, goals must be established where underutilization is found to exist” (p. 57). The language ‘correct deficiencies’ indicated there was a problem needing to be rectified, this type of discourse was not found in the U1 2010 plan. The U1 2010 plan stated, “where underutilized areas in job groups are identified, goals are set to increase the representation of minorities in those areas” (p. 23). This statement suggests that a problem does not exist and there is no sense of urgency when minorities lack in numbers in a particular job area. Further, the U1 2010 plan stated that “goals are designed to be met only if hiring opportunities arise” (p. 23). It was clear that hiring minorities was not a high priority even if underutilization was found to be evident in a job group.

In both the U1 plans, the hiring goals are set as a percentage of hires, equal to the availability rate. In the U1 1995 affirmative action plan, there is a section for the evaluation of meeting the intended goals, though this section is absent from the U1 2010 plan. However, in the U1 1995 plan, though there is an evaluation methodology in place to see if goals were met, there is not consequence for not meeting these goals. In fact, in the U1 2010 plan, “goals serve as objectives reasonably attainable by means of applying every good faith effort to make all aspects of affirmative action work” (p. 23). In this statement, ‘reasonably attainable’ and ‘every good faith effort’ are ambiguous statements that hold no accountability. The plan listed goals, but with no accountability or penalty for meeting these goals, they are easy to disregard. In addition, the
U1 2010 plan also stated that the hiring goals “do not require an employer to hire a specified number of persons because such a requirement would constitute a quota, which is expressly forbidden” (p. 23). The discourse of “expressly forbidden” is an example of the exclusionary practices of hiring minorities for leadership positions.

**U2.** The U2 1993 plan appeared to be more committed to achieving placement goals based on availability than the U2 2010 plan. The U2 1993 plan directly stated, “Our long-term goal is to eliminate underutilization” (p. 13). Though the U2 1993 plan did not outline particular numerical placement goals, the overarching goal of eliminating underutilization suggested that U2 focused solely on underutilization percentages since they wanted to eliminate underutilization altogether (as opposed to eliminating it in small increments).

The U2 2010 plan established annual percentage goals in areas where underutilization was found in the availability area. The plan explained that the goals were to be met through recruiting and advertising to increase minority applicants, and action plans such as developing outreach strategies for minority applicants and investigating internal problems. The plan also stated that “good faith efforts” were going to be established to meet affirmative action goals. Upon reviewing the list of programs that were to be implemented, it was clear that the programs were broad and standard practices (such as attendance at job fairs) were laced with empty promises by discourse such as “good faith efforts” and “special efforts” to increase minority applicants. However, the U2 2010 plan described that in 2009 the institution hired two campus diversity officers to strengthen understanding about inclusion and diversity. Also in 2009 every dean on campus was required to assign someone to serve as the divisional diversity liaison for their unit to focus on diversity goals, efforts, and plans.
Data

**U1.** The affirmative action plans that were analyzed contained data regarding underutilization in certain job groups. The U1 1995 plan was very thorough in the analysis of their data. Not only did the U1 1995 plan have charts, but the plan also explained the charts in great detail. The U1 2010 plan only had charts what were left to the reader to decipher. I paid particular attention to the highest level of job groups since this research focused on leaders in universities. Minorities were considered to be Hispanics, Asians, Blacks, and American Indians in both plans. In the U1 1995 plan, minorities were underutilized as academic deans, academic associate deans, and academic coordinators. However, it should be noted that no minorities were employed as academic associate deans (out of eleven), academic administrators (out of four), and academic coordinators (out of six). Only two minorities were employed as academic directors (out of six), and one minority as an academic dean out of seven. In the U1 2010 plan, the job groups were different than the U1 1995 list and the plan did not specify the administrative positions in the job groups. However, in the three job groups labeled Executive, Administrative and Managerial, underutilization was found among minorities in the Technical Professionals job group. Underutilization was also found among Hispanics in the Administrative Professionals job group.

**U2.** The U2 1993 plan had detailed explanations of charts that showed underutilization related to job groups. As of October 31, 1992, the staff workforce at U2 was 23% ethnic minority and according to the U2 1993 plan had risen about 1% per year for eight years prior. The U2 1993 plan also stated that “the hiring process may be more favorable to minorities in some job groups than others” (p. 17). The highest level of job group in the U2 1993 plan was the Executive group that was 75% White. In the Management and Administrative Program (MAP)
Administrative group, there was 79% White and was underutilization by four minorities (1 Asian/Pacific Islander and 3 Chicano). The MAP Technical group was 83% White and had underutilization by three minority positions. The Administrative & Student Affairs, Exempt group was 72% White and they expected to find 2 more Native American staff, though underutilization was not found. In the Administrative, Non-exempt group, given availability, 2 more African American staff, 1 more Native American staff, and 3 more Chicano staff would be expected. In the Student Affairs, Non-exempt group, there was no underutilization. As was noted earlier, it appears that the large number of minority hires were in the Student Affairs, Non-exempt group (the lower grade Student Affairs positions). Total underutilization compared to availability (U.S. Census data) totaled 73 positions.

With regards to promotions in the U2 1993 plan, minorities were promoted “more often than would be expected” (p. 18), though there were fewer minorities than would be expected with regards to upward reclassification (promotions by federal guidelines to a different job group). Further, the U2 1993 plan indicated that “despite relatively high rates of hiring for members of ethnic minority groups, the overall percentage of minorities in Administrative and Professional Staff and Management and Administrative Program groups has decreased slightly” (p. 20). This suggests that while minorities were being hired, they were being hired for lower level positions. Adverse impact was also analyzed by job group in the U2 1993 plan and was found in the Administrative and Professional Staff group signifying personnel rates were adverse for minorities among the group.

Unlike the U2 1993 plan, the U2 2010 plan did not have a detailed explanation of the one underutilization chart that was displayed which was left to the reader to decipher. Though the particular job groups were described, the data showing underutilization in the groups were not
explained. The job groups in the U2 2010 plan differed slightly from the U2 1993 plan. The Senior Management group was the highest level and showed underutilization among Asian/Pacific Islanders 0% with availability of 7.5%, American Indians 0% with availability of .8%, and Latinos 0% with availability of 9.5%. The MSP Administrative group showed underutilization among Asian/Pacific Islanders 4.4% with availability of 6.8% and Latinos 6.3% with availability of 9.4%. The Administrative, Grades K-M group had underutilization among African Americans 1.8% with availability of 3.2% and Asian/Pacific Islanders 4.1% with availability of 6.5%. The Administrative, Grades H-J group had underutilization among Latinos 8.6% with availability of 9.2%. The Student Affairs, Grades K-M had no underutilization. The Student Affairs, Grades H-J had underutilization among American Indians 1.0% with availability of 2.1%. The biggest disparities were in the highest job group (Senior Management) that had no minorities employed from three out of the four recognized minority groups.

**Cultural Capital versus Qualifications**

U1. In the U1 1995 and U1 2010 affirmative action plans University of California, Riverside made it very clear that their hiring, promotion, termination, transfer procedures will be implemented equally without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran. Though the plans ensured that discrimination will not occur, they gave the idea that equal treatment is better than leveling the playing field for minority leaders.

Applicant qualifications are now the biggest criteria that can be used when selecting a candidate for employment. Both plans bluntly stated, “the qualifications related to the position remain the only criteria for hiring” (U1, 1995, p. 73; U1, 2010, p. 28). However, the U1 1995
plan indicated that “an affirmative action compliance report on the recruitment process must precede or accompany any request to hire an academic employee. Particular scrutiny will be given to appointment decisions made in those units and job groups where minorities are underutilized” (p. 73). The U1 2010 plan did not include this discourse in their staff selection section.

U2. The U2 1993 plan was implemented before Proposition 209 was implemented, so it was not surprising that commitment to increasing and hiring minorities was important. However, the plan did not outline the benefits of hiring minorities or why it was important on a diverse campus. It was clear between the two U2 plans that there was a difference in tone. The U2 1993 plan seemed to embrace the idea of a diverse staff and was dedicated to increasing diversity by different programs and analyzing data to remedy disparities, while the U2 2010 plan merely mentioned they would recruit minority populations without explaining in detail how this would occur. Instead, like both of the U1 plans, the U2 2010 plan focused on qualifications as a basis for hiring and relied on U.S. Census information to ascertain the number of individuals with the preferred qualifications in the recruitment area determined by the job group.

Hiring individuals based on position qualifications is a narrow scope for particular leadership positions. It does not take into account particular forms of knowledge that individuals have that would be beneficial in creating policy for a diverse population of students on campus. There is also a fear that position qualifications will reflect the norms or the dominant culture since those qualifications were likely created by the majority.
Participant Interviews

The hiring process

I received varied responses from participants regarding the hiring process at their institutions. Participants discussed general phases of the hiring process from the perspective of themselves being an applicant (e.g. applying online, initial (often via phone) interview, second interview and possible third interview that included a campus visit, possible campus forum, and presentation). Participants who had more experience being on hiring committees discussed more about the process from their perspectives, including reviewing candidates’ job qualifications. Most participants applied for positions not having any professional connections to aid in their hiring. Nearly all participants knew their institution had an affirmative action plan, but only a few of them had actually read or even seen the document.

U1. When I conducted interviews at U1, they were in the midst of an Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) audit. Upon further investigation, the OFCCP enforces the contractual promise of affirmative action and equal opportunity employment for all businesses that work with the Federal government. I called the OFCCP main number and was able to speak briefly with a representative. She could not tell me specifics regarding the U1 audit (as this information was considered confidential at the time the phone call was made in August of 2014), but she indicated that OFCCP audits were done randomly, or if businesses were out of compliance with OFCCP regulations after being given a reconciliation agreement and a follow up progress report.

All participants at U1 were aware that the audit was occurring on their campus. One participant, Leah, explained that there were one or two informational forums that occurred about
the audit. All of the participants at U1 contextualized their responses based on the audit and described the implications of the audit on hiring practices. Opal stated,

The audit has been going on for two years and it’s more complicated now. Short list, long list, go through and make sure that everyone that meets minimum qualifications, then a committee, preferred qualifications, then have to have significantly diverse pool. There are target demographics for the university, targets for colleges, departments, and institutions. Applicants are loaded into the system. You input comments electronically, there’s a rubric and formula. It has never been like this until the audit, but the institution needs it, particularly in upper level administration jobs and faculty which are not diverse at all. Now professionals of color have a fair shot now that the federal government stepped in.

Opal mentioned the emphasis placed on applicant qualifications. As noted in the affirmative action plans for U1, qualifications were the “only criteria for hiring” (U1, 1995, p. 73; U1, 2010, p. 28). Committee members also needed to show that they had a significantly diverse pool by submitting their applicant pool demographics to the central Human Resources office. Opal mentioned rubrics and formulas and how a computer system determined the target demographics. These data were reminiscent to the placement goals and underutilization (or deficit amount of minorities in a particular job group). Opal could not describe the formulas because the results were given to her on the computer. However, her perception of the rigidity of the process made her feel as though there was more equity and justice occurring for professionals of color. The fact that the federal government mandated these hiring steps gave her the impression that there was fairness in the process and professionals of color had a chance to obtain positions within the institution. Quinn stated, “The hiring process is much more aligned
with HR now, more legal in the last year. More pushback and demanding rationale for everything. The process is annoying but good, I feel like we should be challenged about who we’re hiring and not”. Quinn talked about how committees had to give rationale for why applicants were selected, as well as why they were eliminated from the pool (with a focus on qualifications). Quinn also attributed the newfound austerity of the hiring process as a more fair and equitable process. In contrast to those who thought the audit made the hiring process more unbiased, Nate stated, “You can see peoples’ biases. Things are more fluid and it varies from position to position and office to office. I don’t think the process is fair. At the end of the day, they’re going to hire who they want”. Nate’s comment suggested that hiring committees were still unfair in the hiring process, regardless of the perception that the process was strict. Although Nate did not specifically say that committees would hire White professionals over professionals of color, it was clear he believed that committees hired individuals based on their own desires unrelated to qualifications. From a critical perspective, hiring committees are predisposed to hire professionals who display the valued forms of capital representative of the status quo in the work environment (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986).

Some participants discussed affirmative action as a part of the hiring process. Beth remarked, “The affirmative action review is new. They do a review to see if it meets job targets”. As mentioned previously, a computer system gave committee members target demographics. Target demographics were similar to placement goals found in the affirmative action plan for U1. The term ‘placement goals’ was also the terminology used on the Human Resources website for U1 under the eight step hiring overview. Leah further discussed how the hiring committees needed to ensure a diverse applicant pool,
There’s an online system for recruiting. You get approval for the job description, and you get information about your affirmative action targets for department, division and campus. You are asked to construct a recruitment plan that addresses some of those areas. Training is required for affirmative action or diversity for your committee. There’s an affirmative action rep for every committee. We’re going through a federal audit. It started last year there was a big meeting. There was a series of campus wide meetings. I got the sense that it was routine. I don’t think it was in response to any particular complaint.

Although committee members were required to construct recruitment plans and receive information regarding target demographics, the U1 2010 affirmative action plan “expressly forbid” (p.25) any employer to hire based on quotas. The 1995 affirmative action plan for U1 stated that an affirmative action compliance report had to accompany or precede any hire and scrutiny would be placed on hiring decisions made in job groups that had underutilization (p. 73). However, this 1995 plan discourse was not found in the 2010 affirmative action plan for U1, even though participants discussed how they had to turn in their recruitment plans for approval. In addition, placement goals, as noted in the U1 affirmative action plan, served as evidence that “good faith efforts” were being made to include professionals of color in the hiring process. Matt stated, “There always needs to be a rationale behind selection including those that weren’t chosen. Scrutiny is posed on a search if everyone that interviews is a White male or everyone is female. You’re motivated to conduct a search that's diverse because they could intervene”.

Participants were concerned that their committees could be terminated if they did not construct an adequate plan to address affirmative action targets and recruitment for professionals of color. However, the affirmative action plans indicated that no penalty would occur as long as the committee appeared to have taken affirmative action issues into account. It seemed as though the
OFCCP were not so much making the process more equitable, but rather pressuring and even intimidating hiring committees to prove that they had a more diverse applicant pool, were actively considering professionals of color, and were providing reasons to exclude them from the applicant pool. Leah indicated that the audit had been going on for a year, but Opal mentioned that it had been two years. Leah also mentioned that she did not think it was in response to a complaint received by OFCCP. This could have indicated that she did not perceive any discriminatory hiring processes that would warrant the audit. However, some participants discussed the changes in the hiring process that were made due to the audit, which would indicate that there was a need for change in the process. Roy stated, “The OFCCP audit is driving changes with hiring process. It’s more of a decentralized hiring process. There’s an analysis of ethnicities in departments, and there’s an affirmative action person”. Leah and Roy mentioned the affirmative action person assigned to the committee to ensure inclusionary hiring processes. Although U1 had a five step best practices website for recruiting a diverse staff on their diversity website, no participants cited this information in the interview process. In addition, no one cited the eight step hiring process as outlined on the Human Resources website for U1.

Clark gave a detailed response about the hiring process at U1,

The hiring process has gotten a lot more regimented than it's been in the past. You review a position description and determine if still applies to current needs. It’s vetted all the way up to the vice chancellor and run through HR and affirmative action to make sure no policy or law is violated. The posting is open a minimum of two weeks to upwards of one to two years depending on the luxury of time or particular skills or needs. A committee is formed and the committee will review applicants and forward them to me, I will
interview the short list from them of six to ten. Two or three will be interviewed by me and my boss. The applicant pool is reviewed, those who make the first round will get phone interviews to see if they're meeting minimum qualifications and if their responses are matching what they put into their file. Then it’s narrowed to six to 10 people brought to campus for in person interviews. The interview questions are approved by HR and affirmative action. Director level and up there is a campus forum to include students and a presentation to colleagues in the same organizational unit. Once narrowed to two or three, it’s up to myself and my boss. We'll meet with a little less formality with the candidate. Our job is to probe more deeply and freely. Management style, philosophy of supervision and educational vision, determine congruency with university leadership to make a match.

Clark’s overview of the hiring process indicated that the hiring process was more rigid and lengthy than in the past due to the audit. The various individual and department approvals made the process take months to complete (or even longer). Similarly, Roy stated, “It’s difficult to find the best candidate because the search process is too long…I applied for this position in May and didn't hear until September”. Taking months for the hiring process made it so that candidates already accepted positions elsewhere. Clark also discussed how he and his supervisor met with candidates on a match with regards to congruency with institutional leadership to make a match. Yosso (2005) described resistant capital as a particular form of knowledge whereby people of color oppose subordination. Clark’s comment was interesting because he indicated that he and his supervisor were looking for someone that would have the ability to conform and be compatible with institutional leadership. This could imply that they are in fact (and perhaps even unknowingly as part of institutionalized hegemony (Gramsci, 1971)), looking for someone who
would not challenge the status quo within the institution. Perhaps they were looking to hiring someone who would not revolutionize institutional processes and procedures that were traditionally made for Whites, by Whites (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Clark continued,

Back in the old days, there were fewer checks and balances. We didn't have to go through as many institutional approvals. I don't recall at the turn of the twentieth century turning in and getting questions approved. I'm sure that led to uneven experiences by candidates. I think it's too rigid. I understand the need for protecting the university, ensuring an equitable process or nothing being built into process that discriminates a particular candidate’s background. Because of how rigidly controlled we don't get a fuller sense of background, creativity and vision that candidates might bring. We've ended up in a place where we don't know fully who our potential colleagues are going to be until they arrive. The rigidity is strangling at times, but I respect the need for it.

Clark respected the need for the hiring process to be the same for every candidate. However, he was frustrated with the lack of flexibility to truly get to know a candidate beyond minimum and preferred qualifications and approved interview questions. Clark further stated,

I believe I would not have been hired in today’s world. The core background I have in place when I first got to higher education would not have been considered according to search parameters I'm guided by now to hire. It’s a narrow pool. Folks like myself twenty five years ago would have automatically been excluded from that pool even though we have experience, it could be differentiated. What we get is candidates whose background and experience is highly academic, highly theoretic and very narrow. Candidates are applying with PhDs based on their work of studies of studies. There's absolutely respect and a place for that but what I'm needing is someone who understands the struggle that an
18 year old is going through because their parents want them to be a doctor but they want to be a dancer. An ability to connect with a generation of students who bring with them all the trappings of their generation. While I respect the work that our academic community is doing, I need a practitioner. I need somebody who’s rolling up the sleeves in helping set up the chairs rather than sitting in them.

When Clark first entered higher education, he had years of extensive work in an ethnic community. He commented that since the qualifications are so rigid, he believed that he was missing potential candidates that would not be considered because they did not meet minimum qualifications (even though they could bring cultural competencies (Yosso, 2005) to a position). Clark was frustrated that although he was getting graduate students who studied particular ethnic student populations, they may have not had the direct interaction with the students giving them an important cultural awareness and understanding of cultural norms. Clark further explained,

  Because of how our process is rigid I think we potentially miss some talented people that could be brought into and infuse the academic community with different perspectives, with new ideas, and different approaches. Diversity happening. It has limited our ability to be more aggressive in opening opportunity for various communities by not being able to consider race as highly as we have in the past. Many that I think would be best would be on the community side rather than on the academic side. I'm finding I'm getting a solid grouping of MA and PhD programs. Higher education degrees full of enthusiasm and excitement, but so little experience. It's tough because you want to give them a shot. I was given a shot. Someone took a risk on me. What it challenges us to do is put enough support in place where these young professionals can have the development, the guidance, the opportunity to learn their jobs and develop their skills and become
effective…but we just don’t get the financial support in my department. Our challenge is not only attaining diversity but what are we doing with it?

Clark explained that his inability to consider applicants of color with more community experience as opposed to institutional qualifications was a disadvantage. The graduate student applicants he reviewed lacked the direct experience with ethnic students, families, and communities that he desired. He explained that these professionals of color would bring diversity to the U1 campus. Clark’s definition of diversity as, “different perspectives, with new ideas, and different approaches” was similar to the University of California Diversity Statement that defined diversity as “the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance” in the sense that the words ‘different’ and ‘variety’ were used to communicate experiences, perspectives, approaches, etc. that are new, unique, and dynamic. Although Clark seemed to want to hire more professionals of color, he acknowledged that he was constrained by institutional and state policy and suggested that new professionals need substantial professional development and training. However, he had difficulty securing funds for his staff within his department. His final question suggested that the achievement of diversity did not end just by hiring a candidate, but that the future development of the professional was also important.

U2. The institution was not in the middle of a federal audit at the time my interviews were conducted with participants. Therefore, I did not receive comments about how the process recently changed as I did with participants at U1. However, like participants at U1, participants at U2 also discussed the lengthy hiring process and the rules they had to follow. Although some participants talked about how hiring committees had to adhere to fair hiring policy, none of the
participants cited the fair hiring guide found on their Human Resources website, nor did they cite
the website that outlined the best practices in staff recruiting found on their diversity website.
Most participants discussed the prolonged hiring process. Gabe stated,

You apply online through the HR website, phone interview, usually then they’ll move to
an on campus phase. My on campus phase was two days. My colleague had two one and
a half hour interviews on campus. The committee goes into room and puts candidates
side by side and asks if they fit roles. Is this person the best candidate? The processes can
take a while. A lot of red tape to go through. Being of color is not taken into
consideration as far as I know.

Gabe explained how the online application, phone interview, and on campus interview were
standard, but he mentioned how he and his colleague had different on campus experiences. Gabe
had two days, and his colleague had a total of three hours of interviews. Gabe also commented
on candidates and how well they “fit roles”, thereby making them the “best candidate”. It was
interesting that he did not specifically mention qualifications, but rather alluded to not just
particular job descriptions, but to institutional social structures and norms (not including race or
ethnicity). Gabe’s comment about race not being a factor in the hiring process is consistent with
the anti-affirmative action discourse related to color blind policies. For example, in the 2010
affirmative action plan for U2 (the same institution where Gabe was employed), the plan focused
on qualifications as the basis for hiring. The plan relied on U.S. Census data to determine the
number of individuals in a recruitment area who would have preferred qualifications for a
position. These data did not take into consideration forms of knowledge (Yosso, 2005) that
professionals of color had for positions that would make them the ‘best candidates’ to serve
students of color and their families.
Hannah stated,

I submitted things online for this job. Took a long time. I applied in January, first interview in March. Met with three administrators. Gave a 5 minute presentation. Before I came in for the interview I was told the full range of salary wasn't going to be considered. I thought that was interesting. I didn't hear anything for several weeks. Got a call towards the end of April. The supervisor was stepping down and called me to tell me that. I met with entire area staff and met with department managers and met with faculty. I think I also met with the new supervisor. Only one faculty member came. It was a painstaking slow process. I know that they try to make things streamlined but it's a clunky process. Job announcements are often very intimidating for people. Because of fair hiring it takes a certain knack to know how to crack the code. I don't think it's user friendly nor does it really promote access to the opportunities here than perhaps it could.

Hannah described how the hiring process for her position took more than five months to complete from the time of application to when she first began the position. Hannah also mentioned that she was surprised that she was called before the interview process and informed that she was not going to be offered a salary at the top of the scale. In her view, posting a salary range and then not adhering to the information posted is misleading for applicants. Hannah also mentioned how the process was “clunky”, or rather that it was burdensome and not user friendly. She also mentioned how the application process seemed as though it could be seen as a puzzle for potential applicants because of fair hiring. Hannah suggested that professionals of color have to navigate their way through an online application process and try to make themselves stand out without making their ethnicity too known. Due to the narrow scope of job descriptions and corresponding qualifications, the opportunities on campus are not promoted well enough and
applicants are not encouraged to discuss their varied backgrounds and experiences. When asked if she had noticed a difference when she applied for later jobs than before 1996 (when Proposition 209 was enacted), Hannah explained, “Not so much. What I know from doing a lot of hiring over the last several years is that they've tried to be much better about expectations and enforcement and training people around fair hiring practices. But I know at the end of the day they'll do what they want”. Hannah was one of three (Joan and Clark were the other two) out of the eighteen total participants that had been through the hiring process for a position in Student Affairs or Student Services in a California higher education institution before and after Proposition 209 was enacted in 1996. Although I had wanted more findings from participants who had been through the hiring process before and after Proposition 209, it was difficult to find leaders of color who had been in the field for more than eighteen years. Most of the participants that were interviewed were hired after Proposition 209 (in the early 2000s). Joan was hired for a Student Services position in 1995, but after two years she moved to the K-12 sector and did not return to higher education until 2007. Clark and Hannah obtained employment in Student Services related positions in 1988 and continued their employment in higher education institutions in California. Joan did not perceive any differences in the hiring process from before or after Proposition 209 (except for more technology such as applying online). Similarly, Clark also did not describe any significant differences in the hiring process from before or after Proposition 209 from an applicant point of view. However, he discussed (as explained above) how the process had become more rigid from a hiring point of view. According to Hannah, the only processes that changed about the hiring process were the training and administration of fair hiring. At U2, as found on their Human Resources website, their fair hiring guide consists of: developing recruitment plans, search committee members’ roles and responsibilities, fair
evaluation of materials, developing interview questions and conducting interviews, and conducting reference checks. Regardless of the fair hiring guidelines, Hannah stated that committees hired who they wanted, regardless of procedure and protocol. Eve explained the hiring process at U2 from her perspective,

The job posting is listed on the HR website, there’s a layout of qualifications, you submit an application and resume and cover letter. There’s an initial review date, and strong candidates are selected for an interview. Committees are formed with one internal office member and one or two other people. You rank criteria and the top six are screened for an interview. You have to provide an explanation as to why you didn't hire candidates too. Affirmative action is covered in the hiring training too. There’s a course called fair hiring. Everyone on the committee should complete it, all supervisors and committee chairs do. You can't rate by numbers and you can't look at fit, you have to look at qualifications on paper, qualifications on responses. It’s a pretty regimented process. We're pushed to do open recruitments so it's fair so everyone on campus has an opportunity. When you know someone that has the skills, it's harder to promote.

Recruitment takes three months. We don't have to do any recruitment for people of color. Eve’s explanation of the hiring process focused heavily on applicant qualifications. Committees must give explanations for selecting and not selecting applicants based on qualifications. As indicated in the 2010 affirmative action plan for U2, “all selection decisions are reviewed by HR to ensure that they are fully documented” (p.20). In addition, as another participant, Deb explained, “HR determines who gets pushed forward based on qualifications. Then the committee reviews and decides who they want to interview”. Instead of committees selecting the candidates based on qualifications, Human Resources was given the information about the
applicants and who met the qualifications. From there, Human Resources compiled the list of individuals who moved on to interviews. Eve mentioned that the hiring process took months to complete. Eve also described how promotion was difficult, “unless a position is reclassified to show that more duties were assigned”. In other words, if professionals wanted to move up, they typically had to formally apply for higher positions. During the course of the interview, Eve described a story where at the end of the application process for a position in her department, it was between two candidates: the internal candidate was someone already in her office that did their current position well but was looking to be promoted, and the other candidate who was from an external higher education institution who was also a strong candidate in the sense that the applicant met the qualifications with which they were looking. In the end, Eve selected the internal candidate because she described how she went with the candidate that she saw demonstrated they could successfully complete the position duties. For professionals of color in the hiring process, internal applicants are yet another obstacle that they face in trying to access and secure positions. Eve also mentioned that there were not any specific recruitment practices to encourage professionals of color to apply. Although Eve stated that hiring committees could not look at “fit”, it could be argued that one of the reasons she selected the internal candidate in her story was due to fit (or how well the internal candidate got along with the rest of the staff already). Ida also described fit related to the hiring process at U2. Ida stated,

I've watched this campus hire the less qualified people repeatedly. They don't hire the well qualified ones because they're not a fit and that's the excuse they'd use. Fit means you go with the flow, you don't challenge their practices. They're more about compliance than productivity although they don't think so.
Other participants talked about qualifications as the main determinant for hiring. In contrast, Ida declared that committees look more at fit when hiring an applicant. She attributed fit to mean that an applicant does not challenge the status quo. Ida also suggested that applicants are hired based on how obedient they were in relation to upper administrative leaders within the institution. For professionals of color, this obedience means that they must be submissive to White institutional dominance to obtain (and retain) positions in higher education institutions (Gillborn, 2005). Joan described the hiring process at U2 from her point of view. According to Joan,

The hiring process has a lot of levels and it can be very lengthy. The position is written, approved by the department head, then moved to the business officer, then staff HR. HR classifies it and posts it. Then it’s open for a couple of weeks, sometimes a little more. The department head decides if it will be an open search or on campus search. The position closes and it takes a couple of weeks for staff HR to release resumes and people to review. The search lead could involve the committee to review resumes or not. Interviews are set up, then there’s an interview process. I don't think there’s anything targeted to recruit professionals of color, but you can be specific about skills like people who have worked with particular population of students.

Joan explained how the hiring process was not only long, but also included multiple approvals and stages to move forward. Like other participants, Joan stated that there was not any targeted recruitment procedures for professionals of color. However, she did suggest an alternate way for hiring committees to try and be inclusive of professionals of color by outlining their experience with particular ethnic populations of students. Although helpful given the strict policies
surrounding the hiring process, this information does not ensure that professionals of color will be hired.

It was interesting to hear the different, often disconnected and segmented explanations of the hiring process from participants. Participant responses from U1 seemed to be only slightly more aligned (likely due to the audit). However, responses from U2 seemed to be more varied and unclear. As literature has indicated about voter behavior for Proposition 209, many citizens are not well informed about anti-affirmative policy and the implications the policies have on hiring and work environments in universities (Saenz & Moses, 2010). In addition, none of the participants from either institution cited the hiring committee resources available to them on the respective institutions’ websites. Hiring committee members who are unaware of the permanence and pervasiveness of racism imbedded in anti-affirmative action hiring policies and practices is problematic because they may underestimate their own responsibility to eliminating discrimination in the process (Bell, 1992). Further, this lack of awareness is a result of the hegemonic power of White privilege that renders racism invisible and enables individuals to excuse racist behavior as a misinformed mistake (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

**Institutional diversity**

Reminiscent of the University of California’s Diversity statement, participants (from both institutions) discussed how they perceived their institutions as diverse. The initial reaction of many participants was to discuss the diversity of the student body. Specifically, nearly all of them discussed their Hispanic Serving Institution HSI status, almost as if they were hard wired to give such a response (Gramsci, 1971). Participants tended to critique the lack of diversity among staff and leadership positions later in the interviews once they were asked to reflect upon the
demographics of leaders who represented their institution. For instance, participants from U2 critiqued their institution’s demographics more because their student body was not as diverse.

U1. Participants from U1 described the institution as very diverse. However, participants referred to the diversity of the student populations within the institution instead of the diversity of the staff. Leah stated, “This is the most diverse workplace I’ve ever been at”. Notice in Leah’s comment that while “diversity” is prominent in her discourse, she described the student population as opposed to the ethnic population of staff and administrators. She positioned herself and her colleagues/leaders of color in terms of institutionalized notions of diversity. In other words, marketing materials and the institution’s website boasted U1 as being “one of the most ethnically diverse research universities in the nation”. In addition, U1 also promotes itself as much more diverse in comparison to other institutions within the University of California system since their top three undergraduate demographics are: Asian 35.4%, 32.1% Hispanic, and only 17% White. Participants discussed how the institution was considered a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Universities qualify for HSI status if at least 25% of their student population is Hispanic. Matt explained, “This institution is unique because diversity is a source of pride here. We are an HSI so diversity is more so here than many other UC campuses. You can see it here”. Beth stated, “This institution in general is very diverse. The student population is very diverse. We have substantial African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino populations, we qualify as an HSI, for the Asian API, NSI. I think it’s just the ethos of the campus in general”. Although participants discussed the diversity of the campus, they did not reflect upon the ethnic composition of staff and leaders as a reflection of the student population. This could potentially be due to the promotion of the HSI status because of the federal money that is involved. Participants also pointed out how their institution had a variety of multicultural resources for
students (unique from other University of California institutions). Opal mentioned, “We’re a special UC out of all of them. We’re different. We are more diverse”. Again, Matt, Beth, and Opal’s comments referred to student demographics and not staff demographics. In particular, they also described how their campus was unique in the UC system with regards to the diverse student demographics. They understood that their campus had more diversity than other UC campuses in the system. Although they did not connect these barriers to professionals of color accessing upper leadership positions, the point was made that one could not easily see the diversity at other UC institutions. For instance, Nate stated, “We have a good campus climate that supports diversity”. Many of the participants at U1 worked with ethnic students and with other ethnic staff in their area. Their responses were influenced by the demographics of the students and staff with which they worked. However, later in the interviews it was apparent that they recognized the lack of leaders of color in the institution overall. Opal remarked, “This is California, we’re about to be 50% Latino in ten more years”. Although Opal mentioned the higher percentage of Latinos expected in the future, the increasing population of Latinos does not necessarily mean that Latinos will reach leadership positions. As noted in the affirmative action plan for her institution, there was underutilization (lack of professionals of color) found in the administrative level.

U2. Some participants discussed the institution as having hiring practices that were exclusionary. Ida explained, “there's also a diversity committee that tries to encourage inclusion. Although the reality is that I think they have racist tendencies”. Ida’s comment points to U2 giving an outward appearance of supporting diversity and inclusion without actually having processes and policies that support that strategically attempt to eradicate discriminatory processes. Ida suggested that U2 was operating under the façade of wanting to increase
professionals of color on campus without being accountable for proving it was actually occurring (due to the elimination of affirmative action legislation). As noted in the institution’s latest affirmative action plan, efforts to increase the number of leaders of color were “good faith efforts” as opposed to being mandated and held accountable to hire more leaders of color. Joan mentioned, “The institution supports a diverse workforce” and later said, “The institution is not very diverse. Not a lot of upward mobility in the university itself”. Joan aligned herself immediately with institutional discourse regarding supporting a diverse workforce. However, she was unable to explain exactly how the institution was supportive (also reminiscent of the Principles of Community document). Joan later explained how the staff was not diverse nor was the upper administration. Hannah stated, “This institution as a whole is not a very hospitable place for people of color”. Hannah’s remark indicated the dominant White ideologies prevalent in the institution. Kim reflected on a particular occasion,

I was the only woman of color in the room. Here we were being told by the institution how important diversity was, but here I was surrounded by white men. Look around. This is just a dog and pony show. The university is covering its ass by going through this dog and pony show. I spoke at a public event last night. I was the only woman and only person of color at this event. I was brought out to talk about Latino issues. They needed to trod out their Hispanic, Latina and I'm going to be the face of the university. But hey, I'm happy to talk to donors if the center I direct will get money.

Kim described how the institution selected her, a non-threatening leader of color (although she is light skinned without an accent), to speak about issues pertaining to students of color. The selection of Kim to present suggests that Whiteness is seen as a valuable good in U.S. society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Further, the fact that the entire room was full of White men
suggests that the institution purposefully protected the demographics of leaders in an effort to maintain White dominance (Gusa, 2010) and power (under a guise of wanting to support diversity). Kim’s comments also portrayed her desperation for funds to support her programs which support students of color. Participants also discussed the institution newly becoming an HSI. Hannah stated, “We’re so blatantly chasing the dollar. We only wanted HSI for the money”. According to Hannah, the institution did not increase the Hispanic student population in an attempt to increase student diversity within the institution, but rather to obtain the federal funds associated with the designation. Deb stated, “As much as (name of institution) wants to be progressive and represent the community, they’re not. One of the things (name of institution) has been talking a lot about is that we're now considered an HSI but the staff and faculty don't represent that”. Deb’s comment further shed light upon the disconnection between the demographics of the student body and the staff and faculty at the institution as well as the community where the institution is located.

The discourse in universities emphasizes the diversity of the student demographics and decontextualizes issues related to the lack of diversity among leadership positions. Critical race theory calls for a systematic deconstruction of the obstacles and barriers imbedded in institutional hiring policies designed to prevent professionals of color from challenging the established hiring processes that protect White supremacy in universities (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The deconstruction of White privilege in institutions can occur by leaders of color taking upper administrative positions at universities and challenging policies established and reproduced by Whites (Owen, 2009).
Leadership diversity. Participants from both institutions acknowledged that there was more diversity among leadership positions at the director level. However, participants discussed a lack of diversity above the director level (mostly White males in upper leadership positions). In addition, the concentration of leaders of color at the director level tended to be in Student Services areas, specifically programming and services or resources for students of color within Student Affairs. Based on participants’ responses, professionals of color were more successful in obtaining positions at the director level related to ethnic programs in Student Affairs and Student Services.

With regards to the ethnic representation of leaders on his campus Pete stated, “The director level is diverse…above that, not so much”. Eve also exclaimed, “At the director level it’s pretty diverse…I’m not sure about after that”. Similarly, Clark stated,

In terms of ethnic representation, we have a very diverse set of leadership within our Student Affairs division at the director level. As I climb higher it becomes less so. As we look into the step above director which would be assistant deans and AVCs that is a much less diverse community or population on our campus. The ratio of White males becomes higher as we begin to look at high levels of leadership. I struggle with those demographics. I think they're good people, but I also think that the way the institution has gone through searches and put people into those positions does not always give weight to the knowledge and experience that candidates of color have brought with them.

Clark explained the reproduction of White privilege (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) that continues to occur with regards to hiring at his institution. Although the Director level positions were more diverse, they were positions related to programs for ethnic students and the leaders of color tended to represent the ethnic group they were serving. This trend was also evident in the
position levels displayed in the affirmative action plans. Clark also advocated for professionals of color in leadership positions due to their cultural competencies (Yosso, 2005) and varied experiences they bring to their positions. Clark further explained, “I bring into conversation a perspective of communities that are not represented in our decision making process so I think in that level I’ve benefitted from bringing the diversity I do bring to the university”. Clark sought to challenge the dominant White ideologies that existed in the policies and practices that persisted within his institution by shedding light upon inequities and advocating for equity. His advocacy was an attempt to dismantle historical policies and practices designed to protect White authority (Bell, 1980). Specifically, Clark described himself as having the following important cultural competencies, as outlined by Yosso (2005): aspirational (determination based on historical oppression), and social (support through peer and community relationships). Leah also spoke about the clustering of professionals of color among the ethnic departments within Student Affairs. Leah stated,

We happen to be in the same division as the ethnic and gender programs and groups and so I do think it’s interesting that…not that there aren’t people of color in other positions, but it's very clear that the ethnic concentration is here. Sort of like serve your people. I don’t know if that’s intentional, but it’s definitely true.

Among the cultural competencies (Yosso, 2005) that leaders of color bring to their positions, Leah also pointed out that leaders of color could better identify and relate to students of color. Leah suggested that she was unsure if leaders of color were more purposefully selected for particular positions associated with serving students of color, or if leaders of color tended to naturally be attracted to positions to where they could help and support students of color. From a CRT and cultural capital perspective, professionals of color were being filtered to leadership
positions within Student Affairs to provide programming and support to students of color. Although it could be argued that leaders of color in these positions are better equipped to serve students of color given that they can better relate to students of color, they are only able to reach Director level positions in this model and would be unable to disassemble policies based on the status quo to protect White dominance. Discourse related to the existence of White institutional privilege (Gillborn, 2005) concerning the demographics of leadership positions was prevalent in other participant responses. Beth stated that upper level administrators were “All men, all White, all old”. Hannah remarked, “Most of the professional meetings I go to Caucasians are the predominant group. I feel like an endangered species”. Andy stated, “Administrators are mostly White men”. Participants’ responses indicated that the demographics of leadership positions still predominantly represented the status quo. The perpetuation of White dominance also aligns with the interest convergence theory (the theory that legislation that benefits people of color is only enacted when it is also in the best interest of Whites) (Bell, 1980). Using the interest convergence theory to critique anti-affirmative action policies, institutions such as U1 and U2 enact race neutral policy and outwardly commit to increasing diversity, but they are not held accountable for proving an increase in leaders of color. In addition, the prevalence of White men in upper administrative positions suggested that institutions not having to be explicitly required to increase the number of leaders of color (beyond token numbers). Joan further explained,

I'm definitely the only Latina administrator. A lot of White males and White females and very seldom do I see another face of color. It makes me more aware that when something’s missing from the conversation, I have to voice it. Top leaders for the most part are White, and when there is that one leader of color things happen, and then they're not there anymore.
Similar to Clark, Joan described how she felt as though she needed to serve as a champion to bring a cultural perspective to discussions about institutional policy and practice since professionals of color were not well represented at meetings. Joan also indicated that when professionals of color took positions of leadership, that there was more of a consideration of cultural implications to institutional norms. To Joan, the existence of leaders of color meant that policy, practice, and programs for students and staff of color were implemented. This aligns with Yosso’s (2005) resistant capital (opposition to subordination) form of knowledge. After director level, leaders of color were scarce. Some participants mentioned the lack of diversity among faculty at the institution. Roy remarked, “Faculty diversity is a problem students complain about”. Matt mentioned, “There is no diversity at the faculty level”. Opal stated, “The institution needs diversity, particularly in upper level administration jobs and faculty…which is not diverse at all”. Clark stated, “Right now our faculty is not diverse”. Eve remarked, “The faculty side is not diverse”. Andy stated, “The junior faculty are more diverse, so maybe in time…” Leadership positions (and even faculty positions) within the institutions did not even remotely mirror the ethnic demographics of the student populations at either institution.

**Forms of capital**

All of the participants described how important their families were to them. Participants talked about the sacrifices that they made professionally for their families. Even though nearly all of them did not learn anything specific from their families about skills such as resume or cover letter writing, they reflected on what they learned about being a professional in general. They also listed their strengths and weaknesses as professionals of color within their institutions.
Family background. Almost all of the participants who were interviewed learned little about the hiring process (interviews, resumes, cover letters, etc.) from their families. For example, Gabe remarked, “My family calls me when they have interviews. My bachelor’s is in communications”. However, some participants discussed general skills they learned from their parents. Opal stated, “Be confident, speak clearly, speak articulately, be personable. You're the host of the party. Those things I learned from my father”. Nate mentioned that his family told him, “Be twice as good”. Leah explained, “My parents taught me the value of education in general and doing well in school. The job search was an extension of that”. Hannah stated, “Most of what's allowed me to be successful I learned from my mother. Most of the lessons on how you treat people and how you conduct yourself in the world”. Because participants did not receive explicit advice or skills related to the hiring process, almost all of the participants had professional mentors (typically colleagues or bosses). In many cases, these individuals were not formally called ‘mentors’, but they acted as trusted advisers who provided information, advice, and consultation about applying to higher education positions and share best practices.

Participants’ mentors (many of whom were White), were able to give them the capital they needed to be more successful as professionals as well as in the hiring process. Opal stated, “I have a massive list of mentors and people I worked with from undergrad all the way to here. All of the institutions I've worked at I've made really strong connections with people that still continue to support me even now”. Nate stated, “I’ve had plenty of professional mentors. I had mentors as a college student. I have more professional mentors now”. Leah mentioned, “I went to colleagues for feedback”. Hannah stated, “I never really thought about the name (mentor), but I have been very fortunate to have people take an interest in me”. Eve stated, “My mentors have been bosses, a couple of my former supervisors… colleagues and making connections for advice
and connections and feedback has been helpful”. All participants agreed that they would not have been as successful professionally had it not been for the support they received from their mentors. The participants’ mentors had the valued (White) cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) necessary for leaders of color to learn to be successful and navigate institutional barriers they encountered due to their race in an attempt to secure leadership positions.

**Family as a priority.** Many participants described their families as a determining factor in their professional careers (this included their immediate families, in laws, and their own families). Quinn, Opal, Deb and Hannah discussed the necessity of having a position that had “life and work balance”. Hannah explained, “I'm not killing myself for (name of institution). My family is very important to me and my values are important. I feel fortunate to know that my life is more than my job. That's how I've navigated the choices that I've made”. Although dedicated to her work and helping the students she served, Hannah was very adamant about her family and her life being more of a priority than her position within her institution. She did not jeopardize her personal life due to her work. Joan stated,

> I made a conscious decision to change my lifestyle and trajectory and I'm okay with where I am right now. I put markers in place and a system and a rhythm so that I'm not sacrificing my personal life because I'm trying to do good at work. If I wasn't committed to my kids and my family I would definitely go out and seek a job working in a bank or try something international or something that has more to do with a faster very different lifestyle than what I have right now.

Joan stepped down from a high paying but demanding position outside of the institution to pursue a position within the university that allowed her more personal time to be with her family. Although she was motivated to pursue other avenues professionally, she remained in her position
so she could have more flexibility as a wife and mother. Kim mentioned, “I got married in 1997 and I married a fellow graduate student and I've just been following him”. Kim and her husband discussed professional opportunities for them and she ended up obtaining positions that she could get in cities where her husband was offered higher positions. She may have had a higher position as a professional if she had chosen to pursue opportunities for herself individually. However, Kim chose to prioritize her family and actually felt lucky that she was able to obtain decent positions where her husband obtained work. Deb remarked, “I like where I live, my family is close, my daughter is safe, I enjoy my work, and I trust my colleagues. I feel really blessed”. Similarly, Beth stated, “I’m geographically bound because of my kids”. Deb and Beth prioritized the happiness and safety of their families. It was clear that family was a priority to all participants, regardless of the impact that the situations had on their professional careers.

**Strengths and weaknesses.** Participants were asked to describe their strengths and weaknesses related to being a professional of color. Participants responded by listing particular traits and characteristics as opposed to giving examples of their strengths by contextualizing them during the interviews. They may have responded by one worded lists due to having experience with Strength Finding programs (users answer a series of questions and then are given one word descriptors that have corresponding definitions). With regards to strengths, five general themes emerged among all of the eighteen participants: interpersonal skills (which included collaborating with colleagues, being able to network with other professionals in higher education, and the ability to build relationships with colleagues); management skills (participants discussed their abilities with regards to supervising, leading, training, and professionally developing staff); communication skills (having superior presentation and public speaking skills, being able to facilitate and further dialogue, and translate policy and upper level decisions to
staff); strategic planning (skills related to decision making, big picture thinking, organizational, and being able to create a vision, purpose, and goals); finally, care (participants truly cared about students, colleagues, and staff, and described themselves as advocates and listeners with the ability to empathize with others). Participants discussed interpersonal, management, communication, and strategic planning skills as well as care as competencies similar to the social, linguistic, and navigational forms of knowledge identified by Yosso (2005). In addition, participants also relied on familial knowledge when working with colleagues and students.

Regarding weaknesses, participants discussed their inability to be assertive and challenge authority (this is in contrast to the resistant capital form of knowledge outlined by Yosso (2005)). WoodBrooks (1991) found that professionals of color had to balance and gauge their level of assertiveness in the workplace so that they would not be stereotyped due to their race (such as being the angry Latina or the confrontational African American woman). Further, professionals of color also have to negotiate their biculturalism and exhibit the valued forms of capital to obtain and success in their positions (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986). Participants also mentioned being sensitive when it came to work related problems or office conflicts as a weakness. Finally, many participants talked about taking on too much work. Volunteering to acquire more work could suggest that participants felt the need to prove themselves as professionals of color in the workplace in order to get recognized with the intention of trying to achieve higher positions within their institutions. However, none of the participants cited professional gain as a reason they took on more work.
Professional identity

Many participants explained how they changed their mannerisms and dressed more professionally to reflect the status quo when they worked with their predominantly White upper administration. Some participants explained how they used their cultural identities to navigate their institution. In some cases, they amplified their cultural identities to fit in with other professionals of color or used it to signify expertise when talking about or working with students of color.

Participants discussed the need to dress and present themselves more professionally. Nate explained,

I engage with staff in a way more reflective of me than anyone above my level because I'm more comfortable with them. Collegiality has context. Cultural context. Everyone must ascribe to. I can do it, I know how to fit in and navigate that and engage…from the way I communicate to dress, things of that nature.

Nate described how he felt more like himself and did not have to change or alter who he was when he was interacting with his staff. However, Nate talked about the necessity to represent himself differently with administrators and leaders. He pointed to specific forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) (such as language, dress, and body language) representative of the status quo that would make him fit in as a colleague. Nate seamlessly was able to successfully negotiate his cultural identity in different circumstances (similar to the navigational form of knowledge (Yosso, 2005)). As stated by Bourdieu (1977, 1986), higher education institutions culturally reproduce the culture of the dominant (White) class. The reproduction of White privilege enables Whites to dictate particular discourse (and linguistic competency) and social norms that are legitimate. Thus, the White valued culture becomes defined as worthy and
those not part of the status quo must assimilate to be accepted and successful. A few more female participants discussed the need to dress more professionally. Deb explained,

One of the things that I realized was that I would be judged by how I looked. How I dressed, the clothes that I wear, if I wore make up. When I started to look more professional, I got more respect and people paid attention to me. I have still continued to look more professional, even here.

Deb described the need to appear more professional to obtain more respect and be recognized. Her more professional wardrobe could have acted as a counterbalance because she was a leader of color. Her work appearance could make her look as though she had the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) representative of a higher social economic class. Beth (who appeared much younger than she was) talked about the need to dress more professionally to look older. Beth stated, “I take an effort to look more professional and work. If I don't, I look like a student”.

Beth’s ethnicity made her appear much younger than she actually was compared to her White female counterparts. Due to her youthful appearance, she had to dress more professionally so that she would be taken more seriously at work.

Some bilingual participants also talked about using foreign language in the workplace. Quinn stated, “I’ve been told that speaking Spanish is not inclusive because not everybody understands. I only try to speak Spanish with other Spanish speakers when we are alone. I don't speak very much Spanish at work…but the cultural offices are okay”. Although the POC explained that the campus embraced diversity, Quinn was told by someone at the institution that she was not free to speak Spanish at any time. Her bilingual abilities were only tolerated (and even sought after to communicate with Spanish speaking students and families) within the cultural offices. Matt also discussed bilingualism in the workplace. Matt explained, “I have
assimilated in a lot of ways to the dominant culture. The use of language. I didn't lose the language and didn't lose identity. I haven’t completely lost touch with my culture“. Matt described how he had to adopt cultural norms representative of the status quo of English language dominance so he could be hired and successful in the workplace. However, it was important to him to retain his cultural identity, even though he had to adapt. Matt further stated, “To be successful you must assimilate and not retain. You have to look at people in power. You can't hide the color of your skin or accents, but you're going to assimilate more than one would think”. Matt discussed the need to mimic cultural norms of those in leadership positions of power and privilege. As indicated from previous participant responses, those in power are primarily White men. Thus, Matt felt the need to imitate White male leaders within the institution to be accepted at work. Opal explained, “I hide my queer identity more. Some spaces are not safe either from student take or faculty take. Microaggressive environments”. Although Opal felt the need to hide her queer identity more than her cultural identity as a Latina, her comment still indicated that she felt she needed to assimilate to the norms established by White leaders so that she could be comfortable and not discriminated against. Clark explained,

It’s very contextual. I think as the administrator overseeing my particular unit, I find myself playing it up as much as I can. Accentuating the fact that I am a man of color and a come from a community of color and I represent a man that has a voice that have been absent from this institution. Part of that is the role that I know I need to play. I know I need to be an advocate or the voice representative of the units and students and student communities that they work and have service in in my interactions with university leadership.
Clark took the opportunity to use his leadership position to serve as an activist for staff and students of color. He accentuated his cultural identity and used it as an asset and to portray himself as an expert in serving and supporting staff and students of color. Since Clark was at the Dean level (without a doctorate), it is possible that he may have felt more comfortable with accentuating his cultural identity since he felt he reached the pinnacle of his professional career.

Other participants discussed how they felt their cultural identities were regarded in the workplace in terms of cultural stereotypes. Hannah stated, “Some people think I'm confrontational but I'm not, I'm just direct, but I guess that's the way African American women are perceived”. Hannah’s statement sheds light on the cultural stereotypes which can be used to be discriminatory for professionals of color. These stereotypes become barriers for professionals of color trying to secure and be successful in leadership positions. Similarly, Joan explained, “I don't have a lot of filters, but I'm careful to not always be the angry Latina. I used to rehearse things in my head to have the right tone and expressing myself correct so I wouldn’t be misconstrued. I think about things first before I say them”. Joan also described stereotypes that professionals of color have to navigate to obtain and retain a position. She talked about the need to assimilate to institutional and cultural norms so that she would be taken seriously and her words would have merit. Hannah stated, “People say ‘I don't see color.’ Well unless you're blind, you're not being true”. Hannah’s statement challenges color blind policy due to the racial stereotypes and assimilation to White cultural norms that professionals of color must navigate daily.

Some participants discussed how they accentuated their different racial identities for particular purposes (especially in racialized professional circles). Roy stated, “I’m actually multiracial and I accentuate my Hispanic (Costa Rican) side sometimes to my benefit. I even
understand Spanish”. When Roy felt as though he needed to fit in or be accepted in racialized environments, he would make his Hispanic side more prominent. He would make a point of mentioning his Hispanic heritage and make it known that he understood Spanish or insert himself into conversations with Spanish speakers. One participant talked about having the physical appearance of being White and how he negotiated his perceived Whiteness in the workplace.

Andy stated,

Culturally I can pass as White even though I don't look it. I can act it and I think that opens doors for me in a different way or maybe it doesn’t open doors, but once I'm in the door, I can fit in. It's not something I'm trying to do, it's just who I am, it just happens sometimes. What does that mean? I may talk a little different in the two groups. It's not something I do consciously, it's a learned behavior. I don't talk like a minority and my cultural behaviors are consistent with what White men do. I think it gets me a different interaction in the senior levels than a traditional minority would. I don't think I've faced the same obstacles as minorities in senior roles partly because I happen to pass. It wasn't intentional. I think it happens a fair amount. It makes it easier for me career wise.

Although Andy’s perception was that he did not look White, other professionals of color within the institution were unsure of Andy’s true ethnicity (other than he was multiracial). His appearance looked as though he could be a number of ethnicities, even White. Andy was light skinned, but you could not tell his true ethnicity relying on his appearance alone. This could have made his assimilation easier. As outlined by Ladson-Billings (1998), Whites have not faced the inequities and barriers that people of color have because of their race due to Whiteness being the valued culture in society. As a leader of color, Andy could have more expected racial discrimination or stereotyping within his institution. However, his White appearance and cultural
capital reminiscent of the dominant class, made him exempt from these challenges. Andy described himself as having “high class cultural signals” (Lamont & Lareau, 1988, p. 153) and specifically mentioned language as a form of cultural capital that were valued by his institution (Bourdieu, 1977). In particular, he explained how he spoke differently among leaders in the institution, and even positioned himself as someone in the upper echelon of society when he mentioned that he did not “talk like a minority”. His comment indicated a deficit model way of thinking about the way minorities or professionals of color communicated within the institution (as opposed to viewing his ability to speak differently among different groups as an asset or cultural competency). However, this could be because Andy’s habitus (Bourdieu. 1977) was one of privilege and marked by dominant norms representative of high class social traits. In addition, he suggested that professionals of color indeed have barriers with obtaining and advancing in the institution, and that his cultural capital made it so that he did not have to face these obstacles. His comment about how he “happened to pass” seemed as though he may have felt lucky and possibly relieved that he was able to fit in among the White leaders within the institution.

Many participants explained how being a professional of color was an asset for them professionally due to being able to identify and connect with the students they served. Matt remarked, “I identify with students being a professional of color”. Matt felt that he was able to connect with students of color because he had many of the same experiences as a student himself. He was able to better understand cultural traditions and family expectations and could help students adjust to being a student at the institution. Similarly, Hannah stated,

I'm someone who cares a lot about what happens to our students. I can empathize with students or help them problem solve without solving it for them. Students feel comfortable opening up to me. If a black student sees me on campus she’ll be surprised
and say hi because we're so few and far between. But I'm here for all students. I understand I'm a role model for students of color. I keep my work as close to the things that matter to me as possible: my staff, relationships with students, scholarships, working with parents.

Hannah described how she was able to bond with students. She mentioned how African American students would greet her because of the low percentage of African Americans on campus (the undergraduate African American population at U2 for fall 2013 was 3.7%). She felt that she set an example and served as a role model for students of color. Although she stated that she was there to serve all students, she discussed her ability to sympathize with students (particularly students of color). Like the other participants, she also wanted to focus her career on working with students and their families. Similarly, Eve stated, “Knowing what it's like coming from underrepresented groups helps us to understand our students”. Eve mentioned that her ethnicity gave her an understanding of students and their families so she could better serve them. Professionals of color are more able to prepare students of color for the barriers they themselves faced in the process of being successful. Joan stated,

I represent a lot of different groups: first generation college student, poor farmers, and immigrants. All of those are benefits because I can see things from different perspectives. Because of who I am I have sensitivity to some of the experiences that traditionally marginalized students and families have.

Joan’s multiple identities equipped her with the tools needed to prepare students with similar backgrounds and experiences. Although White professionals could also serve students of color and prepare them to be successful, professionals of color are more keenly aware of cultural norms and values and thus better able to serve students and families with these cultural factors in
mind. Also, working with a professional of color would help students to feel as though they would not have to sacrifice their own cultural identities in order to be successful. Rather, that they could increase their cultural capital by keeping their own cultural identities intact while simultaneously learning how to navigate through an institution that rewards privileged social and cultural identities.

Some participants did not want to take upper leadership positions because the amount of student interaction decreased. Pete stated, “I want to be in a position where I still work with students…the upper administration crap is not appealing”. Pete was not interested in the frequency of meetings that leaders attended and how their work took them away from working directly with the student population. Clark stated, “I like working for a living, I like and miss tremendously the direct student interaction”. Clark talked about how he was always in (programmatic, planning, professional development, etc.) meetings and how he never got to work with students. Deb explained, “I like the level of responsibility that I have right now. I really love working directly with students. The level of interaction with students decreases and the level of interaction with other administrators increases, and honestly, I don't know that I want to do that”. These participants’ dedication to working with students outweighed their desire to obtain upper leadership positions.

Career aspirations

Fourteen participants felt that they were at the position level with which they were comfortable (related to job duties, salary, and work environment). One participant felt that she should have already obtained a director level position (she was an interim director). One indicated that although he felt that his director level position was where he should be, his salary
was not high enough. Only one participant overall stated that he thought he should have a higher position than he currently had, but he did not attribute this to racial discrimination.

Half of the eighteen total participants had high career aspirations. Out of the half that did not have higher career aspirations, one wanted to change career fields, another planned to move out of the country to be closer to family, and two participants planned to retire in their current positions. Five participants did not wish to get higher positions because they were comfortable where they were, they did not want the extra meetings and paperwork of an upper administrator, and or they wanted to be able to work directly with students.

Interestingly, at U1 in particular, five of the nine total participants were surprised or felt lucky to be at their respective position levels. Roy stated, “I don't know how I made it to (institution)… luck I guess. Really surprised I'm here as a director”. Roy did not attribute his position to his hard work, but rather believed achieving his position level was a fluke. Beth mentioned, “I've been lucky and have gotten most positions I applied for. I was surprised to get this position…it was a long shot”. Beth applied for her provost level position not believing she would even get a phone call. Leah stated, “I lucked out for this office”. Similarly, Opal mentioned, “I didn't even think I was going to be a director”. Clark explained, “I was lucky enough to get the position. Every position I've applied for I've been lucky enough to get. I've been lucky in that respect”. The luck that the participants felt was intriguing given how many of these participants discussed how diverse the student population was at U1. This could be tied to these participants having a collective hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) where they simply accept White dominance and power within their institution and feel surprised and lucky as opposed to justified and substantiated with their leadership position.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings of the study, implications for leadership development and theory, recommendations for further research, and conclusions. This multi-case study examined how professionals of color narrated their experiences accessing leadership positions at two universities in California before and after anti-affirmative action legislation (Proposition 209) was enacted in 1996. I conducted semi-structured interviews of fifteen director level, one dean level, and two provost level professionals of color who represented the following ethnicities: African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Chicano/Latinos as outlined in the affirmative action plans at University 1 (U1) and University 2 (U2). I used cultural capital and critical race theory (CRT) as the theoretical frameworks to analyze the counter narratives of my participants and to frame my discourse analysis of the affirmative action plans at U1 and U2. I utilized critical discourse analysis as outlined by Fairclough (1995) to analyze affirmative action plans at U1 and U2. I also reviewed and analyzed participant resumes, institutional websites related to hiring and diversity, California’s statement regarding diversity, and each campus’ Principles of Community document. I reviewed literature on court cases regarding universities and affirmative action legislation, affirmative action policy and access to higher education institutions for students of color, access to leadership positions for individuals of color, and the influence of affirmative action policy with regards to citizens and universities. My research focused on addressing a gap in the literature with regards to professionals of color and the barriers they face in the hiring process in an era of anti-affirmative action legislation. My research questions were the basis of this study guided by my theoretical frameworks and review of the literature. This multi case study revealed four overarching themes and I will present the themes related to my research questions, the literature,
my theoretical framework, and methodological perspective on discourse (although there will be some overlap):

1. To what extent (if any) has the discourse in California university affirmative action plans affected hiring practices for leaders of color?
   a. Discussion on the analysis of the affirmative action plans.
   b. Institutionalized discourse prevalent in participants’ responses.
   c. Hiring barriers for professionals of color.

2. To what extent (if any) do leaders of color narrate their personal experiences regarding access to leadership positions at universities in California before and after Proposition 209?
   a. More diversity at the director level.
   b. Identities and characteristics needed for success.

**Research Question 1**

To what extent (if any) has the discourse in California university affirmative action plans affected hiring practices for leaders of color?

**Discussion on the Analysis of the Affirmative Action Plans**

The U1 and U2 affirmative action plans that were analyzed had interesting similarities and differences. In the earlier plans from both institutions, more charts were present, and explanations were detailed. In the newer plans, explanation of underutilization among the different minority groups and job groups was nonexistent. This showed that the underutilization numbers were of little importance since the institutions were not held accountable to their placement goals after Proposition 209 was in place.
There was exclusionary discourse used in the affirmative action plans. The term ‘underutilization’ was used in all of the plans to signify a lack of minorities in job groups. The term ‘underutilization’ is characteristic of linguistic capital, or valued discourse that is used as a means of reproducing the dominant ideology (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986). Even the U2 1993 plan that was created before Proposition 209 was enacted used this term and though this plan focused more on increasing diversity among staff than the other plans did, the term still represented dominant discourse. The term ‘underutilization’ is ambiguous and does not refer to a particular problem regarding a lack of minority leaders at the institutions. It is also a general term that is not contextualized as stemming from affirmative action and historical oppression for minorities. In addition, it was also apparent that minorities were not being hired for upper level leadership positions. This was true even for the U2 1993 plan that explained even though minorities were being hired, they were being hired for lower level positions. Participants that were interviewed from U1 stated that they were lucky to have been hired and promoted even though they acknowledged their hard work and dedication. Analyzed through a critical race theory lens, this phenomenon suggests the existence of racism imbedded in the personnel processes of hiring and promotion at the institutions.

The goals for the institutions also indicated a reproduction of privileged social identities occur at the institutions (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). At U1 it was not a high priority for the hiring goals to be immediately met. This suggests that U1 was not committed to making sure that minorities are in leadership positions. Further, the plans that were created after Proposition 209 was enacted (both U1 plans and the U2 2010 plan) had discourse that was vague with regards to recruitment and hiring of minorities. Words such as “good faith efforts” and “special efforts” were used instead of concrete actions that would produce outcomes. Though the goals in all of
the plans were to increase diversity, the highest job groups had the largest percentages of underutilization. This suggests that privileged identities are still being favored in the higher leadership positions.

The affirmative action plans created after Proposition 209 was enacted indicated that qualifications of applicants were the main criteria for hiring. Participants that were interviewed from the pilot study also indicated that they had to hire applicants solely based on qualifications based on job descriptions without taking into account cultural competencies. This focus on qualifications excludes many other forms of knowledge that minority professionals bring to leadership positions based on their community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Some of these traits that minority leaders possess are resiliency, determination, various forms of communication, and strong family and community relationships (Yosso, 2005). These are traits that are important for leaders to exhibit that are not recognized in these affirmative action plans. These traits are especially important for leaders to possess on campuses with diverse student populations since minority leaders can relate to minority students and their struggles. Even in the U2 1993 plan, though affirmative action policy was in place, the plan did not specify why the hiring of diverse individuals was important at their campus. This would have been important to strengthen the reason for affirmative action policy in hiring practices at the university.

Finally, among the four affirmative action plans (U2 1993, U1 1995, U2 2010 and U1 2010), it was apparent that some data, definitions, and details were more vague (and in some cases non-existent) in the newer affirmative action plans. This indicated that less attention was paid to affirmative action issues and that the institutions were able to get away with having weak plans since there were no consequences for not hiring minorities.
Institutionalized Discourse

Participants used institutionalized discourse regarding diversity at their campuses, meaning that they discussed marketable but insubstantial language about diversity on campus. When asked about diversity on campus, it was interesting to note that all of the participants immediately began to discuss the diversity of the student populations on their campuses. Nearly all of the participants at both institutions spoke about being classified (or almost classified) as an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The participant responses about the student body and HSI status suggested an institutionalized discourse was adopted by the participants. This institutionalized discourse is reminiscent of a discursive field, or intersection of particular ideologies, social meanings, and power struggles (Fairclough, 1992). Discourse shapes society and culture by reproducing and transforming power relations (Fairclough, 1992). Higher education institutions contribute to the process of reproducing the valued cultural capital of Whites using discourse in policies to subjugate professionals of color. Further, Wodak and Fairclough (1997) asserted that discourse is understood with a historical context. Critical Race theory also utilizes a historical context in analyzing inequities for individuals of color in U.S. society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The ideological foundations evident in institutionalized discourse to protect the power and privileges of the status quo are found in policy as well as marketing materials. Participants in the institutions aligned themselves to discourse found in campus marketing materials that boasted campus diversity, the campus’ Principles of Community documents, and the University of California diversity statement. The discourse represented White dominant ideologies such as the UC diversity statement stating that it was the UC system’s intention to make individuals ‘perceive’ (as opposed to ensure) that the campuses were diverse. Further, participant responses related to the diversity of the student body on
campus also signified an institutionalized collective discourse (similar to Gramsci’s (1971) concept of hegemony) about the importance of campus diversity for federal funding associated with the HSI status. In other words, the importance of having a diverse student body for campus cultural enrichment, racial and cultural tolerance, or incorporation of ethnicities was not as emphasized from the institution and White leaders as federal funding. The Principles of Community documents do not outline ways that cultural enrichment and tolerance can be achieved which suggests that federal funding related to campus diversity is most important. This is consistent with research conducted by Iverson (2008) and her assertion that policy discourse related to market-driven endeavors are more important than institutional equity.

Participants at U1 discussed the diversity of the student body being very high and visible on campus and even referred to the campus as being “special” in the UC system with regards to student body diversity and the resources that students of color had on campus. However, literature suggests that admission, application, graduation, and retention rates for minority students have suffered in states that have implemented anti-affirmative action legislation (Aguirre, 2000; Brown & Hirschman, 2006; Contreras, 2005; Cortes, 2010; Dickson, 2004; Santos, Cabrera & Fosnacht, 2010). These rates also point to the likelihood of institutions being less diverse in time (Blume & Long, 2014). The student population data at U1 indeed pointed to a high level of diversity on campus. In fact, U1 has one of the most diverse student bodies in the UC system. However, participants that were interviewed work directly with students (especially students of color since many interviewed has positions related to leading ethnic programs). With this in mind, they see the diverse students on campus more than other administrators. In addition, U1 is one of the least highly selective institutions in the University of California system (University of California Office of the President, 2014). Therefore, the diversity of the campus
could be attributed to the high admissions rate. Contreras (2005) found that admission criterion after Proposition 209 became increasingly more competitive with a focus on student merit. The low selectivity of U1 could be a contributor to the diversity of the campus in the face of anti-affirmative action legislation as well as the resources that are available for students of color at U1 specifically. This navigation of racialized policy, practice and selectivity limited opportunities for professionals of color as students and later aspiring leaders in the process of attaining leadership positions in the institution (Cohen & March, 1974; Ferrari, 1971).

**Hiring Barriers**

Participants gave inconsistent and segmented responses about the hiring process at their institutions. Although some of their responses about the hiring process for applicants generally matched (application, phone interview, campus visit that included in person interviews and presentation), they all had different interpretations of the hiring process from the hiring side. In comparison to the literature, like voter behavior with regards to anti-affirmative action legislation, it seemed as though participants were not completely aware of the process, implications, resources, limitations, and even benefits about the hiring process at their institutions (Jones, 1998; Saenz & Moses, 2010). Nearly all of them had not read their affirmative action plans (nor the California diversity statement or their Principles of Community documents) for their institutions and some did not even know they existed (and thus may not have known the mission or importance of them). The varied responses did not solely indicate the lack of comprehension of the process on the part of the participants, it also pointed to the seemingly intricate and even, at times, incomprehensible complexity of the process. However, none of the participants cited the online resources available to them at both institutions to aid in the hiring process for hiring committee members, suggesting that they may not have been aware
of the resources available to them. All participants agreed the hiring process was lengthy (months long), rigid, and complex. If the participants interviewed could not give clear details on the hiring process, it is likely that professionals of color have a difficult time navigating the hiring process. One participant, Hannah, even indicated that she felt it was a puzzle and applicants had to know how to “crack the code”. It is unlikely that professionals of color have the privileged capital to be able to navigate and decipher the application process to access positions. This is especially true due to the literature that indicates how hiring committees view professionals of color as having deficits, as well as their propensity to hire individuals that more closely represent the status quo (Jackson, 2006; Ramos, 2008).

At both institutions, there was a definite prominence on qualifications associated with fair hiring practices. Many participants (particularly at U1 due to the audit and more strict guidelines) the hiring process was fairer because all applicants were treated equally regardless of race or ethnicity. However, Clark, a participant at the dean level at U1, explained that this “equal” treatment of applicants created a process that did not legitimize and value candidates with varied knowledge and experiences. The rigidity over how applicants needed to match the job qualifications for the positions did not allow for applicants with a differentiated range of backgrounds. Bourdieu (1977) has stated that higher education institutions sustain inequalities by rewarding the embodied capital (gestures, language, and mannerisms) that is recognized as valuable. Not only do leaders of color have to negotiate their biculturalism so that they are not stereotyped in the workplace (WoodBrooks, 1991), but they also internalize the expectations of their workplace environment as part of their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). Therefore, professionals of color assimilate to the White societal norms and hegemonic influence. However, regardless of their cultural adaptation (and in some cases abandonment of their cultural identities), leaders of
color will continue to be subjugated due to their race. Professionals of color should be encouraged to use their cultural forms of knowledge to contribute to their work and work environments. Instead, as Clark explained, professionals of color with forms of knowledge who could identify with students, as well as who had personal, cultural, and practical experience with students and communities of color had a more difficult time being considered for positions. The emphasis of qualifications over cultural and community knowledge (Yosso, 2005), was also prevalent in the affirmative action plans. This focus on qualifications in the affirmative action plans and the job descriptions inherently limited opportunities for a diverse applicant pool, regardless of the stipulations posed by the hiring process which, for example, included: submitting a recruitment that would promote a diverse applicant pool, having interview questions approved, and noting why candidates were selected and not selected based on job qualifications. In addition, participants talked about needing to keep in mind the target demographics (or placement goals as noted in the affirmative action plans) that were based on formulas generated by a computer system related to underutilization. However, as noted in the current affirmative action plans, there was no penalty for not hiring professionals of color to address underutilization issues. Even in the case of the rigid hiring process at U1 brought on by the federal audit, the institution merely had to demonstrate that they were attempting to address diversifying the staff, not actually prove it was occurring.

Some participants indicated that they had seen unfairness in the hiring process with regards to committees hiring who they wanted, regardless of the process and policies. One participant indicated that she had witnessed committees hire less qualified people and another indicated that she had hired an internal candidate. Although the participants did not indicate specifically that the candidates the committees hired were White in these cases, the narratives
provided by the participants suggested that inequities existed in the process. Literature points to discrimination in the hiring process related to: political, dishonest, inhospitable, and uncomfortable experiences (WoodBrooks, 1991), racial stereotyping and biases (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; Sagaria, 2002), tokenism (departments having one minority per area) (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988), expecting professionals of color to attend to racial issues on campus (Bridges, 1996; McHargh, 2010; Seawood, 2005; WoodBrooks, 1991), and the devaluing of research and experiences that focused on minorities (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; WoodBrooks, 1991). Interestingly, although the literature above outlines discrimination in the hiring process, participants also described their experiences with discrimination (related to the above literature) in their current positions: some participants referred to their work environments being uncomfortable such as feeling “like an endangered species” (Hannah), being racially stereotyped, such being perceived as a “confrontational” African American woman (Hannah) or being labeled as an “angry Latina” (Joan). One participant, Kim, noted that she had felt like a token professional of color related to her experience speaking about Latino issues at an event attended by all Whites. It was also apparent that the professionals of color that were interviewed had being hired to address racial issues on campus since nearly all of the participants lead a department or program related to serving ethnic students, finally, the devaluing of a focus on minorities was indicated by Clark when he explained how his department struggled for money for professional development and conferences because the departments he led that served ethnic students lacked legitimacy within the institution. The findings indicated that not only do professionals of color have barriers in the hiring process, but they also face unique obstacles as professionals in the workplace. With these barriers in mind, it is not surprising that some of the participants felt that luck was the reason why they were hired.
Research Question 2

To what extent (if any) do leaders of color narrate their personal experiences regarding access to leadership positions at universities in California before and after Proposition 209?

More Diversity at the Director Level

When I began to search for participants to interview for my study, I noticed that there was a concentration of professionals of color at the director level. In fact, 15 out of the 18 leaders of color I interviewed for my study had positions at the director level. The participants I interviewed also acknowledged that there was more diversity among professionals at the director level, but not much diversity higher than director level. In addition, professionals of color at the director level also tended to lead programs or departments related to services, initiatives, and resources for ethnic populations of students. Research has indicated that professionals of color hold positions related to diversity on campus (McHargh, 2010). The literature has also described how professionals of color are chosen specifically for positions related to diversity with the intention of using them not only as a symbolic representation of their alleged commitment to diversity for the institution, but to also resolve racial and ethnic tensions on campus (Bridges, 1996; Seawood, 2005; WoodBrooks, 1991). Thus, professionals of color are pigeonholed into diversity positions on campus and are not utilized for the broad talent and knowledge of serving students in higher education institutions (Bridges, 1996). Further, this ideology could contribute to the notion of professionals of color being described as unqualified for particular leadership positions in institutional policies such as affirmative action plans (Iverson, 2007). The concentration of professionals of color in diversity and ethnic programs on campus points to Student Affairs and Student Services being the only permissible (and also less prestigious) areas where diversity is permitted within higher education institutions.
The diversity of the director level also suggests that a glass ceiling exists for professionals of color trying to obtain leadership positions in higher education institutions (Bell & Nkomo, 2003). Professionals of color can see upper administrative positions, although they cannot obtain the positions due to institutional barriers. The arguments against the existence of a glass ceiling point to professionals of color focusing more on family instead of their careers (Cutler & Jackson, 2002). The professionals of color who were interviewed indeed made sacrifices professionally due to their immediate and extended families. However, many of the participants still had high aspirations for upper leadership positions and perceived more barriers as professionals in the hiring process and the workplace rather than family concerns. They also understood that upper administrator positions were held by White administrators (typically men), and they seemed more determined to obtain leadership positions to advocate for students and professionals of color. Literature has indicated that people of color typically hold lower level positions and are subjugated by Whites in higher education institutions (Bell & Nkomo, 2003; Jackson, 2006). By subjugating professionals of color in lower level administrative positions, Whites can dominate the highest levels of leadership position and maintain the interests and vision of the institution to benefit Whites through institutional policies (Owen, 2009). This subjugation of professionals of color by Whites could be done unintentionally due to the normality of racism within the institution over time (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

**Identities and Characteristics Needed for Success**

Participants outlined the ways in which they were successful both in the hiring process, and as professions in the workplace. Specifically, they outlined characteristics that made them successful professionally. The literature about leaders of color who obtained leadership positions in higher education institutions outlined particular characteristics needed for success
These characteristics included: getting a doctoral degree, general leadership and managerial skill sets, influential mentors, and membership in professional organizations. Only a few of the participants (typically the younger professionals I interviewed) discussed the prospect of getting a doctoral degree to advance professionally. At the director level, it would seem that (perhaps not in all cases) in general, participants would have to obtain the higher credential to reach the next level. However, it was apparent that some of the participants did not want to obtain a higher position. Many of the participants were either satisfied with the life and work balance that they had in their current positions, they did not want the headaches and frequent meetings of upper level administrators, or most importantly, they did not want to lose the student interaction they enjoyed. Many of the participants discussed how being a professional of color made them better able to connect with their students. They also were personally and professionally fulfilled due to their relationships with parents and families. With regards to general skill sets, participants listed their strengths and weaknesses as a professional. They outlined interpersonal, management, communication, and strategic planning skills as well as care as competencies they brought to their position. These competencies were similar to the social, linguistic, and navigational forms of knowledge identified by Yosso (2005). In addition, nearly all of the participants mentioned their professional organizations, particularly the professional organizations related to ethnic professionals. These organizations were a way to network with other professionals of color and not feel isolated as a leader of color. Finally, since nearly all of the participants could not rely on their families for professional knowledge (because almost all of the participants were first generation college students and professionals), nearly all of the participants had professional mentors. Their mentors tended to be previous bosses, but many of them were colleagues as well.
They turned to their mentors for support, advice, and feedback. It was apparent that the mentors were an integral part of their successes as professionals in the higher education setting.

Although some of the participants had experienced more racial discrimination than others, they all outlined ways they navigated the institution and negotiated themselves professionally to obtain or maintain positions. Participants realized that, since they were of color, they needed not only skills and credentials, but they needed to assimilate to the status quo to be hired and respected. Cohen and March (1974) found that leaders with privileged and valued backgrounds had a better chance of moving closer to the presidency. Participants discussed the need to dress more professionally, use different language, and display particular mannerisms reminiscent of the status quo. One bilingual participant was told that she could not speak her native language unless she was in the cultural centers, even though the bilingualism was an asset in the workplace because she was able to better communicate with students and families. Interestingly, some participants accentuated their cultural identities in particular racial environments (such as conferences for professionals of color) to fit in with other professionals of color. Participants were able to culture switch to fit the context, or rather hide or enhance their cultural identities to be successful in different professional settings.

**Findings Related to Theoretical Frameworks**

Cultural capital, as outlined by Bourdieu (1977, 1986), was used as one of the theoretical frameworks for this study to understand how universities reproduced inequalities in their hiring process. The findings indicated that applicants who had “high status cultural signals” (Lamont & Lareau, 1988, p. 153), such as the capital necessary to navigate the application process as well as the culturally dominant norms (dress, behaviors, vocabulary, and mannerisms) had an advantage over professionals of color in the hiring process. Participants discussed their need to assimilate to
the status quo in order to obtain as well as sustain positions at their universities. As part of the embodied state, participants had to adopt linguistic patterns and ways of speaking so that they were taken more seriously and not seen as deficient. In addition, some participants had to hide their bilingualism instead of being encouraged to utilize their skills to speak to students, families, and even colleagues. I utilized Yosso’s (2005) forms of knowledge to explain the cultural contributions professionals of color bring to their positions such as navigational, social, linguistic, and familial knowledge. Although these forms of knowledge were discussed by the participants as being beneficial to their professional positions while working with students and families, they are unrecognized as being important assets. In addition, these forms of knowledge are also disregarded in the hiring process; particularly due to anti-affirmative action hiring policies.

Critical race theory was used in this study to uncover the inequities for leaders of color in the hiring process and workplace due to their race. As Parker (1998) stated, “critical race theory documents minority exclusion and the ways some have had to compromise their race to survive at predominantly white colleges and universities” (p. 49). The three tenants of critical race theory, as outlined by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) are: race continues to determine inequities for individuals of color in U.S. society, Whiteness is a valuable and sought after asset in society, and the idea that historical racial inequities and Whiteness as a good in the U.S. (marked by privilege and power) can be used as an analytic tool to examine inequitable institutional policies and structures. Participants in the study explained how they felt disadvantaged as professionals of color in the hiring process and the work place. They discussed the need to assimilate to the privileged dominant norm to be successful. The participants in this study lacked the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986) seen as valued in higher education
institutions. Participants discussed the need to dress, speak, and behave in ways representative of White societal norms. This study found the following forms of White institutional presence, as outlined by Gusa (2010): White ascendancy was found in the reproduction of White dominant ideologies imbedded in the affirmative action plans devaluing the forms of knowledge professionals of color bring to their positions as well as Whites presently and historically holding upper leadership positions in the institution. White victimization was apparent in the hiring of small (token) numbers of professionals of color (particularly ones that exhibited White cultural norms), suggesting that Whites were less feel threatened by people of color obtaining positions. Monoculturalism was found in the hiring and work expectation of professionals of color to assimilate to valued White norms. Interestingly, some participants in this study displayed White blindness because it seemed as though they did not recognize how White norms and policy were imbedded in the hiring process designed to exclude professionals of color. For example, many of the younger professionals that were hired well after Proposition 209 was enacted had higher career aspirations than older professionals of color, even though they acknowledged the dismal number of leaders of color at their institution. White estrangement was found in the anti-affirmative action hiring process as a way to segregate Whites from professionals of color since they were not required to hire people of color. Anti-affirmative action policies enable institutions to preserve White institutional presence because they are not held accountable for hiring leaders of color. One participant, Kim, discussed the “dog and pony show” of the institution representing themselves as committed to increasing diversity, even though they did not actually have to prove that they were increasing the actual numbers of professionals of color hired in the institution. Thus, related to Bell’s (1980) interest convergence theory, anti-affirmative action legislation simultaneously protects White privilege since higher education institutions are not held
accountable for increasing the number of administrators of color. Instead, the discourse related to diversity was aimed at marketing the institution in order to secure federal funding related to HSI status. This is in contrast to notions of diversity being important to understanding and changing inequitable structures (which could be partly achieved by hiring leaders of color dedicated to dismantling inequitable policies and procedures). Critical race theory sheds light on the dominant White ideology by focusing on societal racial inequities and emphasizing the idea that Whiteness is normative and valued in society Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995).

**Recommendations**

I have separated my recommendations into two sections. First, I give recommendations for further research on professionals of color with regards to hiring and successfully maintaining leadership positions in higher education institutions. Second, I give my recommendations for leadership development and practice in higher education institutions for leaders of color.

**Recommendations for Research and Theory**

Further research needs to be conducted on the lived experiences of professionals of color and their experiences in the hiring process in higher education institutions, particularly in states with anti-affirmative action legislation. This is particularly true since anti-affirmative action legislation is being adopted in more states across the country (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Specifically, research related to the narratives of professionals of color and the barriers they experience in the hiring process should have a direct influence on institutional policy and practice. Institutional policies and documents should also be analyzed to remove exclusionary discourse and to provide clarity for all professionals, not just those of color.

Based on the limitations of this study, other states should be researched to understand the influence of affirmative action policy and possible variances depending on state. Research
should analyze policy and affirmative action plans for possible differences (in discourse or even practice) by state. In addition, research that analyzes the career trajectories of Whites compared to leaders of color would provide useful information on further barriers and inequities. An analysis of education would also be useful in determining how to best develop leaders of color and provide them with professional pipelines to reach administrative positions. Research should also look at the career trajectories of professionals of color with academic related leadership positions since this study focused on non-academic leadership positions. An analysis of the career trajectories and hiring experiences of professionals of color should also be compared between the public and private sector, as well as two year and four year institutions.

Research on professionals of color should be developed so that leadership theory could include ways that leaders can develop the attitudes and perceptions of workers about racial stereotypes and racial oppression. Research should also focus on skills needed by White leaders to manage and develop professionals of color and recognize their cultural forms of knowledge as beneficial in the workplace. Campus diversity initiatives should be analyzed to determine the amount of positive influence they have in promoting understanding and appreciation for cultural identities in the workplace.

**Recommendations for Leadership Development in Higher Education**

I offer a number of recommendations for higher education institutions with regards to developing leaders of color. While many of these recommendations are also relevant for White applicants and leaders, they are particularly important for professionals of color who often lack the privileged capital needed to be successful in higher education institutions (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986). With regards to hiring, the process should be simplified and outlined on the institutional website. Applicants would know exactly what to expect (what the process looks like with regards
to interviews and visits), and employees know what they should be doing in the hiring process. There should be explanations for formulas (such as underutilization and placement goals), and these data should be easily accessible. Although the websites at the institutions that were reviewed had resources available to committees to assist in the hiring process, these resources and documents should be more streamlined, broadcasted, and simplified (even in steps). In addition, hiring committees should be racially diverse, in addition to any affirmative action training required. Affirmative action training should also be required of all committee members. Hiring committees should also have help constructing recruitment plans to ensure a diverse applicant pool. Institutional processes and procedures related to hiring have become very standardized with no connection to communities of color. Hiring committees should be creative in creating job descriptions that could include a more diverse applicant pool. For example, although qualifications cannot specifically ask for professionals of color to apply, language could be included that encourages applicants to apply who have experience with diverse communities or working with particular minority student populations. In addition, Human Resources should allow hiring committees to be more flexible in creating job descriptions in an attempt to allow for more cultural competencies (such as community, social, and familial cultural knowledge). Human Resources should also allow hiring committees to conduct strategic hires to specifically select from a pool of professionals of color to fill leadership positions.

With regards to developing professionals of color, institutions should facilitate a way for professionals of color to network within their institution. This would create opportunities for professionals of color to build supportive relationships (a professional community of color) and not feel so isolated in their work environments. This would also provide a venue for professionals of color to mentor each other and share best practices and professional successes.
Young professionals of color should be encouraged and developed to attend graduate school in the pursuit of a doctoral degree. A doctoral degree would assist in their career advancement. Leaders of color should also be groomed, mentored, and developed to take more senior level positions (even if they do not have an academic background). The number of professionals of color in leadership positions is dismal in comparison to Whites, and the age demographic of current (White) leaders suggests that many leaders will be leaving their positions, leaving an opportunity to diversify the upper administration levels (Kim & Cook, 2013; King & Gomez, 2008). Professionals of color should also be encouraged to pursue positions on campus unrelated to diversity initiatives on campus. This would lead to professionals of color having specialization in more areas. In addition, leadership positions should also incorporate some aspect of student interaction, such as mentoring or campus community service, or time in a campus resource center. Higher education institutions should recognize and develop cultural competencies of professionals of color and encourage them to utilize these skills in the workplace to benefit students of color on campus.

Finally, as suggested by WoodBrooks (1991) higher education institutions should facilitate conversations about what cultural diversity means and why it is important to various stakeholders on campus. Conversations about the institution’s commitment, mission, and goals regarding how to support diversity need to occur before any commitments to cultural diversity are made. In addition, these conversations should be based on research and data and have expected outcomes, results, and accountability. The conversations should also include discourse on power, privilege, and how the dominant culture (or status quo) creates or maintains White institutional presence Gusa (2010) and what needs to be changed to better promote diversity on campus. This is particularly important due to the fact that ‘diversity’ has become part of the race-
neutral institutionalized discourse that tends to be more symbolic and marketable rather than a term that contextualizes racial inequities (Moore & Bell, 2011). Analyzing and clearly articulating the meaning of cultural diversity could be instrumental in providing a new direction for the institution.

**Limitations**

Yin (1984) discussed three types of arguments against case studies: first, case studies can be accused of not being rigorous enough and having too much researcher bias. As the researcher in this study, my outward appearance as a White female (although I am half Hispanic) may have influenced the responses I received from my participants who might have felt uncomfortable talking with me about issues of race and privilege. However, I took steps to ensure validity and trustworthiness during the interview process (such as using triangulation). The second argument against case studies as outlined by Yin (1984) is that since case studies are focused on a small number of subjects in specific areas, the findings cannot be generalized. Although the participants in the study only included a small sample size of professionals of color representative of two universities in California, the multiple sources of data as well as the thick descriptions (Cresswell, 2009) provided a detailed account of the lived experiences of professionals of color and their career trajectories. Further, Merriam (2009) has stated that formal generalizability is overvalued as a source of scientific development and that value of single context-dependent specific cases is underestimated. The third argument against case studies Yin (1984) described is that case studies tend to be too long and produce too much documentation that can be mismanaged. Since I collected data from multiple sources, I took every precaution to be organized and ensure confidentiality. Although there was a lot of data for me to analyze, this strengthened the validity of my study. The arguments against case studies
made by Yin (1984) are important for multiple case study researchers to address and strengthen their studies. However, it should be noted that Yin (1984) operates from a more positivistic paradigm (more experimental and quantitative), which differs from the critical (qualitative, multiple case study) approach I took with my research.

**Significance**

Research that focuses on the lived experiences of leaders of color as they navigate the hiring process to secure leadership positions in the context of anti-affirmative action legislation has yet to be explored. However, as universities continue to become more diverse, leaders of color will continue to become more important to mentor and advocate for students of color and reform inequitable structures and policies (Chang, 2006; Franklyn, 2005). Since a growing number of higher education institutions are establishing anti-affirmative action policies, it is important to understand how leaders of color navigate the hiring process to secure leadership positions and work in racialized contexts.

**Conclusions**

There is a considerable amount of literature that has focused on leadership styles that administrators can utilize in their positions after they have been hired (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006; Ayers, 2009; Kezar, 2007, Kezar, 2008; Kezar & Eckel, 2008). However, there is less literature about candidates’ experiences related to the hiring process for leaders of color; specifically pertaining to research that focuses on race (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; McHargh, 2010; Sagaria, 2002; WoodBrooks, 1991). This study focused on the lived experiences of professionals of color as they navigated the hiring process in higher education in a state that eliminated affirmative action. In addition, this study provided insight as to the pressures that professionals of color face in the workplace such as negotiating their bicultural identities.
Much of the literature does not contextualize candidates’ experiences with discriminatory discourses found in policy (particularly in higher education institutions). However, this study provided an analysis of discourse found in affirmative action plans that influenced the experiences of professionals of color in the hiring process (such as the focus on qualifications instead of cultural forms of knowledge). The hiring process as well as the discourse in institutional policy has continued to privilege and protect the interests of Whites who originally crafted the processes and policies (Owen, 2009).

The professionals of color that were interviewed for this study had to navigate very racial and political environments as students accessing universities, and later as professionals when they attempted to access leadership positions in universities (De la Luz Reyes & Halc6n, 1988; Samaria, 2002). It can be expected that more states (and thus, more higher education institutions) will adopt anti-affirmative action legislation similar to California’s Proposition 209 in response to the changing political climate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The likelihood of anti-affirmative action legislation being enacted in other states is concerning given the already dismal representation of leaders of color already present in higher education institutions (Kim & Cook, 2013). As anti-affirmative action legislation continues to be adopted in states across the country, racism can be identified in the discourse found in state as well as university policy (Alvarez & Bedolla, 2004; Iverson, 2007; Tolbert & Grummel, 2003). Anti-affirmative action policy is not simply legislation, but rather a reality that has influenced the personal, academic, and professional lives of professionals of color (Moore & Bell, 2011). The leaders of color in this study had to learn to negotiate themselves professionally in the racialized context of their institution and navigated oppressive structures, policies, and processes (Cohen & March, 1974; Ferrari, 1971). Consistent with a cultural capital framework, leaders of color had to assimilate to
the valued norms, language, dress, and mannerisms of the status quo to be successful in the hiring process and the workplace (Bourdieu, 1986). In addition, critical race theory provided a relevant lens to analyze the institutional systems that valued White institutional power and privilege (Gillborn, 2005). Participants in the study discussed the how the student bodies were becoming more diverse at their respective campuses. As the demographics of students becomes more diverse at universities, the diversity of the entire campus must be considered not only to serve and support students of color, but to also recognize the benefits of having institutions that support inclusiveness (Chang, 2006).
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When did you enter higher education administration as a profession?
2. Have you had any changes in higher education administrative positions?
3. What jobs have you had?
4. For each of the positions you have had at (name of institution):
   a. How did you hear about the position?
   b. Did you have any inside information about the position?
   c. Were you recruited for the position? How?
   d. Were you satisfied in this position? Please explain.
   e. Why do you think you got this position?
   f. Did you have to change something about yourself to get this position?
   g. Did you have to sacrifice anything to get this position?
5. What positions have you applied for and not gotten?
   a. Why do you think you were not hired?
6. Tell me about the hiring process for your institution.
   a. Tell me about the hiring process for your current position.
   b. Do you have a sense of the hiring process for professionals of color?
      i. Have you seen the diversity action plan for this institution?
7. To what extent (if any) does your institution support a diverse workforce?
   a. To what extent (if any) have you felt supported as a professional of color?
8. When you attend professional meetings, what do you notice about the demographics of the administrators in attendance?
   a. How do you feel about your own identity in relation to these demographics?
   b. Do you have a sense of the demographics of professionals of color in relation to particular leadership positions?
      i. To what extent (if any) have you seen these trends?
   c. To what extent (if any) do you see yourself negotiating/hiding/accentuating your own demographic identity?
9. What did you learn from your family about the hiring process (if any)? (Resume, interview, application)
10. What strengths do you bring to administrative positions? Weaknesses?
    a. What (if any) are the benefits of being diverse in your position?
11. What are your career aspirations?
    a. To what extent (if any) have you felt supported in pursuing those aspirations?
    b. Have you received any sort of messages about whether those aspirations are “realistic”? If so, what has been said to you?
12. Do you think you should have a particular position at this point in your career?
13. Tell me what you have heard or know about recent state policies that affect the hiring process.
    a. To what extent (if any) have these policies shaped your work environment?
b. To what extent (if any) have these policies affected diversity in your institution?
c. Do you feel these changes have (or will) influence your position?
APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear ________________,

I would like to invite you to participate in my research study. You were selected based on your administrative level in your institution as well as your professional identity. The purpose of this study is to understand how leaders of color describe their experiences with regards to accessing leadership positions at universities before and after anti-affirmative action legislation.

If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed based on a set of interview questions in person or via telephone. The interview questions will focus on your experiences related to the hiring process at your institution. Your participation will last no longer than a year and your study related information will be kept confidential. There is no cost to you for your participation in this study. In addition, you will not be paid for your participation in the study.

You may refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part in the study, you may leave the study at any time. No matter what decision you make, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any of your usual benefits.

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Nicole Kontak via email at nicoler@email.arizona.edu or by telephone 520-309-0242. Thank you for your time.
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

The University of Arizona Consent to Participate in Research

**Study Title:** Anti-Affirmative Action Legislation in Universities: Whitening the Ivory Tower

**Principal Investigator:** Nicole Kontak

**Sponsor:** Rose Ylimaki

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to discuss the study with your friends and family and to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate.

You may or may not benefit as a result of participating in this study. Also, as explained below, your participation may result in unintended or harmful effects for you that may be minor or may be serious, depending on the nature of the research.

1. **Why is this study being done?** The purpose of this study is to understand how leaders of color describe their experiences with regards to accessing leadership positions at universities before and after anti-affirmative action legislation. Research that focuses on the lived experiences of leaders of color as they navigate the hiring process to secure leadership positions in the context of anti-affirmative action legislation has yet to be explored.

2. **How many people will take part in this study?** 20

3. **What will happen if I take part in this study?** You will be interviewed based on a set of interview questions in person or via telephone. The interviews will be audio recorded. You will be asked for a copy of your curriculum vita to help guide the interview from your previous to your current professional position at your institution.

4. **How long will I be in the study?** No more than one year

5. **Can I stop being in the study?**

Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part in the study, you may leave the study at any time. No matter what decision you make, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any of your usual benefits. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The University of Arizona. If you are a student or employee at the University of Arizona, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

6. **What risks, side effects or discomforts can I expect from being in the study?**
There are no obvious risks associated with this study. Participants will be encouraged to keep their interview responses in order to minimize risks from gossip about perceptions of anti-affirmative action policies.

7. **What benefits can I expect from being in the study?**

Benefits include being able to reflect on hiring practices at your institution in an effort to be more inclusive for professionals of color. You will also be contributing to new research on the diversity of leaders in higher education institutions.

8. **What other choices do I have if I do not take part in the study?** You may choose not to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

9. **Will my study-related information be kept confidential?**

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law.

Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies
- The University of Arizona Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices

10. **What are the costs of taking part in this study?** There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

11. **Will I be paid for taking part in this study?** No

12. **What happens if I am injured because I took part in this study?**

If you suffer an injury from participating in this study, you should seek treatment. The University of Arizona has no funds set aside for the payment of treatment expenses for this study.

13. **What are my rights if I take part in this study?**

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

You will be provided with any new information that develops during the course of the research that may affect your decision whether or not to continue participation in the study.
You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The University of Arizona reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

14. Who can answer my questions about the study?

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Nicole Kontak via email at nicoler@email.arizona.edu or by telephone 520-309-0242.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Human Subjects Protection Program at 520-626-6721 or online at http://orcr.arizona.edu/hspp.

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form, and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

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**Investigator/Research Staff**

I have explained the research to the participant or the participant’s representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or to the participant’s representative.

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