

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
FEMALE COUNSELOR EDUCATORS' SUCCESS IN PH.D. DEGREE COMPLETION AT
PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Qualitative research is scant on success factors of professional identity development for female African American counselor educators, specifically those who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions (PWIs). The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI). This study focused on the phenomenon of success factors of professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. This study examined the lived experiences of 10 female African American counselor educators to gain a better understanding of how their experiences at CACREP-accredited counselor educations and supervision programs at a (PWI) impacted success of professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. It used a qualitative, phenomenological methodology grounded in Intersectionality theory, Black Feminist thought, and Critical Race theory as frameworks.

There were three research questions to guide the study in the participants' perceptions of professional identity development and the impact of success factors of professional identity development on doctoral degree completion. This study conducted semi-structured interviews with ten female African American counselor educators who completed doctoral degrees in (PWIs) in the United States. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Moustakas (1994) Modification of Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen data analysis. The goals of this study was to: a) review and present literature on female African American in the academy; b) increase knowledge on professional identity among female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP -accredited counselor education and supervision program at (PWIs) in the United States; and c) explore ways to increase professional identity

development to support female African American doctoral students to complete their doctoral degree and move into counselor education positions. Ten African American females who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs were interviewed. There were six themes: Convenience of the Location, Importance of support from Dissertation chair, Representation of African American women with PhDs in the community, I was needed and access, Being a Black woman in that space and Voice, Faith-based community and I prayed. Recommendations and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: success, professional identity development, professional role, African American, female, counselor educator, predominately White institutions

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the Holy Spirit, and all African American females of whom will enter into their doctoral programs in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. May your journey be successful as you and your professional identity develop.

I further dedicate this dissertation to the African American female counselor educators that volunteered to participate in my study. Your acceptance of my invitation may prove to be of great benefit to all those who will read about your experiences. Thank you so much for sharing your success on the journey to doctoral degree completion. Without you I would have not been able to share the lived experiences that need to be heard to help African American female doctoral students, distinctively at CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. May the God of peace continuously keep and watch over you.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Throughout history, African Americans viewed education as an avenue to succeed and obtain better opportunities to higher education and job satisfaction (Zamani, 2003). However, there is a lack of training and research on how to support female African American doctoral students attending CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions (PWIs) to support their professional identity development. In fact, research has shown that female African American doctoral students in counselor education programs have challenges, yet overcome obstacles navigating the academic journey and graduate from predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012; Ross et al., 2016). According to Gildersleeve et al. (2011), the departmental culture of doctoral programs can be an isolating experience for African Americans, making them to feel unwelcomed in their respective programs. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) requires graduate training programs to have provision of activities and resources to develop a professional identity development in multiple roles (CACREP, 2016). This is a need in the lives of female African American doctoral student's professional identity development in counselor education and supervision programs (Henfield et al., 2011). A qualitative, phenomenological methodology could explain the lived experienced of female African American counselor educators' perceptions of success factors of professional identity who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions to get at the essence of the phenomena.

1.2. Overview of Problem

Doctoral education can be dehumanizing for Black doctoral students and African American women experiencing oppression in academia (Collins, 2000). Female African Americans must encounter a socialization process that connects engagement of oneself in the respective field that provides exposure throughout their doctoral education process at their respective institutions (Gildersleeve et al., 2011). According to Henfield et al. (2013) African American doctoral students encounter racial subtleties in doctoral programs, such as microaggressions, that can leave them with feelings of isolation, resulting in a dehumanization that impacts their professional identity. African American doctoral students have had to navigate and endure the unwelcoming and isolated environments at PWIs and repressed White violence (Henfield et al., 2013). In order to navigate these environments, students of color become masters of deflection through times of adversity to obtain their advanced degrees (Henfield et al., 2013). More specifically, many African Americans females ask themselves based their experiences and intersectionality of racism and sexism to tread forward and achieve their purpose (Crenshaw, 2018). Thus, students of color become masters of deflection, forcing them to dissociate themselves to maintain a sense of safety in these violent and abusive circumstances that may often come in the form of the microaggressions experienced in predominately White institutions that lead them to struggle with their abilities with their counterparts and in disengagement from academics (Ross et al., 2016).

The emotional labor is exemplified through tears and pain endured in their (PWIs) when there is lack of support on campus to overcome the many failures in the academic institutions system to support black students (Henfield et al., 2013; Jones & Bustamante, 2015). Ross et al. (2016) and colleagues highlighted the importance of professional identity in the graduate training

process for Black students to sustain what is needed to maintain a strong self-identity. Therefore, professional development happens through modeling, mentoring, and professional opportunities on how to instruct doctoral students who aspire to become counselor educators (Limberg et al., 2013), and without the initiation of professional identity development in counselor education programs doctoral students might lack connection to become future counselor educators' in the profession and desire less to a faculty position in academia (Farmer & Hope, 2015; Henfield et al., 2013; Jones & Bustamante, 2015).

1.3. Significance of the Problem

As cited by Farmer and Hope (2015) African American students are at more risk of withdrawing than non-white students from college due to financial concerns, lower academic performance, lack of support, resources, lack of supportive mentorship on campus, and have negative experiences on campus. In addition, these factors along with negative experiences on campus often overlook the benefit of developing a professional identity. Therefore, I am interested in the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators.

The enrollment of African American students continues to decrease as they progress through higher education receiving a master's degree and extremely lower for African American students in pursuit of obtaining a doctoral degree, this lack of inclusivity makes a negative interaction and representation of the predominantly White community among students of color who have a desire to seek racial inclusivity at (PWIs) (Farmer & Hope, 2015). Moreover, given the wealth of research on mentorship on female African American doctoral students, without having a faculty member to model the roles and tasks of a counselor educator can impede Black doctoral student's professional identity development (Bertrand et al., 2015; Henfield et al., 2007; Jones, 2015). Therefore, the role of mentorship must be a commitment that is unwavering on

behalf of a faculty member to allow success of professional identity development to come about in occurrences of producing female African American counselor educators.

1.4. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how and what contributing factors of success impacted professional identity development of female African American counselor educators who were awarded a doctoral degree in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI). In addition to success factors to doctoral completion, the research question chosen for this phenomenological study allows a deeper understanding of what female African American counselor educators believe is important for them to doctoral completion and professional identity at (PWIs). Female African Americans counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP- accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution were selected for this study because literature is scant in providing attention to the voices of female African American counselor educators and their factors of success for professional identity development during their doctoral program. The hope of this study was to provide rich information for the counselor education profession and CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions to implement initiatives or platforms to support female African American doctoral students' professional identity development in their respective program and institution. My goal was to discuss the factors that facilitate and those that inhibit their professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. As part of the examination, this study focused on the role that various formal or informal support systems have contributed to female African American counselor educators' professional identity development who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution.

1.5. Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions of terms used in this research study:

African American: An American citizen or resident who is totally or partially descended from Africa. According to Franklin (2007) this definition refers specifically to the historical experiences and identification of individuals of African descent living in the United States.

Black: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Black and non-Hispanic and term adopted following the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. The terminology used to describe African Americans and is tied to the rise of the Black consciousness in the United States. Following the Civil Rights Movement (1945-1965) and the Black Power movement (1966-1975), where the growth and strengthening of Black pride in African Americans had a major influence on how Blacks defined themselves (Ellis, 1997). This term “Black” will be used in this study synonymously with the term “African-American.”

Black Church: The Black Church refers to an institution that includes any Black Christian person who is a member of a Black congregation (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Furthermore, African American denominations, Christian faith identified as a religious institution congregation of predominately African Americans and is trusted in the African American community (Jackson, 2017).

Black feminist thought BFT: For the purpose of this study, Black Feminist thought (BFT) provides a theoretical framework to illuminate instances of resisting oppression. BFT focuses on the intersectionality of race, gender, religion, and politics of Black women with the purpose for Black women to resist oppression. Black Feminist Thought is the belief that Black women's experiences with both racial and gender oppression result in needs and problems distinct from White women and Black men and that Black women must struggle for equality

both as women and as African Americans (Collins, 2000). Throughout this paper Black Feminist Thought may be referred to as BFT.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling Related Educational Programs (CACREP): Is an independent accrediting agency that assures and accredits master's and doctoral programs in clinical counseling and other counseling specializations to meet standards within the counseling profession (CACREP). For the purpose of this study, a counselor education and supervision doctoral program that has been evaluated and met curricula evaluation for the counseling profession that reflect the needs of a dynamic society.

Counselor Educator: Doctoral degree in Counselor Education; Faculty member for at least one year, and involved in one of the five core areas (counseling, supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, leadership and advocacy).

Critical Race Theory CRT: For the purpose of this study, Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides a theoretical framework to illuminate and enhance understanding relative to the subtle persistence of racism and discrimination in higher educational settings at predominately White institutions. Wright (2008) noted that CRT offers a means to theorize, examine, and challenge the ways that race, and racism implicitly and explicitly impact social structures, practices, and discourses. Furthermore, CRT challenges conventional accounts of education and other institutions and the processes that occur within them (Cole, 2017; Harlep, 2009; Wright, 2008).

Intersectionality: For the purpose of this study, intersectionality provides a theoretical framework to the lived experiences of female African Americans intersecting systems of oppression at predominately White institutions based on race, class, religion, or other multiple identities in society.

Spirituality: Patton and McClure (2009) noted that African American women turn to their spiritual beliefs to cope with everyday struggles associated with living in a socially and politically oppressed system. These oppressed systems can be in the academe where spirituality can often serve as coping mechanisms for female African American counselor educators (Jones-Boyd, 2016), promote psychological resistance, and foster identity development among female African American college students (Watt, 2003). Dillard's (2000) contribution to BFT provided an exploration to the religiosity among this population of women.

Success: Graduate of doctoral studies specifically at predominately White institutions having opportunities to professional development activities throughout their doctoral program to develop a professional identity to doctoral completion.

Professional Identity Development: The interpersonal and intrapersonal dimension that occurs in the professional development activities in the doctoral program through social construction associated to enhance career marketability (Limberg et al., 2013) with a strong sense of self as an active contributor in the profession (Curry, 2011) in one of CACREP five professional roles (i.e. supervision, counseling, teaching, research and scholarship, leadership and advocacy).

Predominately White Institutions (PWIs): These are colleges or universities whose student populations are typically and traditionally White with a historically majority Caucasian population in higher education. Although the populations of these institutions no longer have Whites as the majority, they are still referred to as (PWIs). I will also use terms such as institutions of higher education, colleges and universities, and other universities to describe (PWIs).

1.6. Rationale for the Study

According to recent statistics, African American women represent only 15% of the student population in counselor education and supervision doctoral programs, specifically CACREP-accredited programs (Bhat et al., 2012). According to the Annual Report from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs African American students represented 19.56% as the dominate group among students of color in CACREP-accredited programs (CACREP, 2016). In the Annual Report in 2015 from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2015), African Americans represented 12.72% of faculty compared to Caucasian faculty of 74.33% of faculty members in CACREP-accredited institutions (CACREP, 2016). Furthermore, statistics have shown that female African Americans represent 3% of full-time faculty at degree-granting institutions, less than 4% as tenured faculty between African American men and White women, and only 2% at (PWIs) (National Center for Education Statistics). In addition to that African American faculty represent 7% in counselor education and supervision programs (Boyd, 2016). Although these statistics are still small in percentage, female African Americans in counselor education and supervision programs still have opportunities to move into full-time faculty positions in light of their experiences in academia.

1.7. Problem Statement

There seems to be an issue with stages of retention in female African Americans in their CACREP-accredited doctoral programs, primarily at predominately White institutions where female African American counselor educators were faced with the barriers that impeded success factors for professional identity development to doctoral completion. Given the low statistics of female African American counselor educators in faculty positions and dropout rate among

African Americans who desired to continue their degree in contrast to their White counterparts in CACREP-accredited programs encountered trajectories to doctoral completion. This study reaches this point by examining the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who were awarded a Ph.D. degree in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution.

1.8. Need for the Study

While pursuing my doctoral degree in Fargo, North Dakota, much of my doctoral experience in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution has been like the findings in previous empirical research. My experience has been impacted by the role of an African American women and counselor education doctoral student. There continues to be a paucity of empirical research on the experiences of female African American doctoral students who were awarded their Ph.D. degree in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI) and even less on the specific experiences of female African Americans doctoral students contributing factors of success for professional identity development to doctoral degree completion (Bertrand et al., 2015; Bhat et al., 2012; Limberg et al., 2013). Consequently, this study aims to make significant contributions to the body of existing literature on female African American counselor educators who have graduated from a CACREP – accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. In addition, the current study is significant to the field of counselor education because the results can provide important implications for counselor education programs to support the professional identity development and increase the retention and completion rate of female African American doctoral students based on their responses of contributed success factors in their respective programs related to professional identity.

Furthermore, this study will expand the application of Black feminist thought including yet another marginalized identity.

In conclusion, although there is an emerging body of research that focuses on success of female African American counselor educators (Jones-Boyd, 2016), research is absent in the focus on professional identity development of female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The following chapter will present literature that focuses on success factors in female African American and professional identity development in the academy and in other predominately White institutions. In addition, it considers the role of religion in African American life and discusses three theoretical frameworks that form the basis of this study.

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks

This qualitative research design will consist of three theories as the framework for this literature review and the over study as it particularly relates to this population. While there were multiple theories that could be used for this research, Intersectionality, Black Feminist Thought, and Critical Race Theory are the most widely used and assumed by the researcher to be the most appropriate theories for this study (Cole, 2019; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw, 2018; Curry, 2011; Harlep, 2009; Warmington, 2019; Whittington, 2020). These theories are grounded in research and have been applied to the chosen population in this study.

2.3. Intersectionality

Intersectionality theory will be used as the theoretical framework in this phenomenological study. In 1989, African American legal scholar Kimberlee Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in her essay “Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: *“A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”* (Crenshaw, 2018). Crenshaw makes the argument that black women have not only been excluded from feminist theory, but also marginalized on the basis of race, gender, and politics. To the latter, Crenshaw makes another argument against the racist policy discourse and suggest that the black experience should be rethought and recast (Crenshaw, 2018).

Intersectionality helps to bring light on the impact of the multiple challenges and oppressions female African American counselor educators experienced on a daily basis while attending a predominately White institution. Female African Americans are not susceptible to race-only or gender-only perspectives but have a distinct constellation of experiences due to their intersectionality of race and gender (Collins, 2000). Because race and gender both operate as defining constructs of identity status in Western society, African American women are constantly navigating both significant identities in all systems of oppression such as sexism, racism, and religionism, especially when politics are involved (Collins, 2000). Although race and gender specifically appear to share equal status, most African American women identify race as a fundamental feature shaping the everyday experiences of African American women as a group encounter in the essence of their systemic oppressive places (Collins, 2000). Kimberlee Crenshaw made the argument that black women experience the subordination of everyday life in various intersectionality's that impede social power to socially construct black women at the center from her multiple intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2018). Female African American counselor educators experience these subordinations in the academy, particularly in predominately White institutions (Baxley, 2012; Edward et al., 2011; Montgomery, 2019).

2.4. Black Feminist Thought

Black feminist thought is an extension from Black feminism, a movement that addresses issues of race, gender, class, and color as they relate to Black women in society. Black Feminist Thought was developed by Patricia Hill Collins to distinguish traditional feminist theory from experiences of Black women, who also contended with racism (Hooks, 1989). In the 1970s at the beginning of the feminist movement, White feminist scholars did not recognize Black women as full colleagues, and this suppression was not a surprise due to the subordination of Black women

in society (Mason, 2015). Collins (2000) noted that Black women are in contrast from their White counterparts and Black men because they have experienced both racial and gender oppression which resulted from issues of struggling for equality both as women and as African Americans. It is maintained that Black women's lives are negatively impacted by oppressive factors such as racism and sexism. As a result of this constant and conscious awareness of differences in identities, the theoretical thoughts and writings of Black Feminists posit that Black women conceptualize their existence as unique in a place of subordination. Thus, this theory holds that Black women maintain an oppositional worldview in society (Collins, 2000).

Black Feminist thought is the belief that Black women's experiences with both racial and gender oppression result in needs and problems distinct from White women and Black men, and that Black women must struggle for equality both as women and as African Americans (Collins, 2000). The components of Black Feminist Thought suggest that African American women have experienced the various "isms" and, in return, have internalized negative stereotypes developed by society; however, these can be counteracted by developing strategies to bring attention to racism, sexism, and other intersectionalities of negative forms of "isms" that result to negative self-images (Mason, 2015).

Black Feminist Thought consists of three components: self-identification and self-valuation, interlocking or multiple oppressions, and African American culture (Collins, 2000). Black feminist thought emphasizes these three components among Black women. Self-identification and self-valuation allows Black women to name their own reality and to define who they are because Black women have been stereotyped as aggressive, overly sexual, "the angry black woman", or "the objectified other", and this latter is dehumanizing to the view of the

Black women in literature (Collins, 2000, p. 70). Female African Americans encompass several identities, as Crenshaw (2018) viewed as the intersection of Black women's experiences.

The second component of interlocking or multiple oppressions allows Black women to determine the linkages in their intersectionality among the various systems of race, class, and gender by exploring these multiple oppressions of Black women's intersectionality (Collins, 2000). This in turn leads to Black women becoming more aware of their intersectionality as having multiple consciousnesses in their reality (Collins, 2000). Collins (2000) noted that although race and gender are mutually constructed with one another and are intersections within the same category for African Americans, institutionalized racism still exist as an aspect of Black women's experiences that is often overshadowed with sexism and other intersectionality in groups.

The last component in Black Feminist Thought is African American culture (Collins, 2000). African American women have both black sisterhood and black motherhood to describe the culture that reflects the African American history of joining with African American women in oppressive intersectionality to relieve a sense of oppression (Collins, 2000). This third component of Black Feminist Thought can be described as the symbols, values, and beliefs that create the ideological framework of reference by the material conditions in social institutions among Black women in the academy (Collins, 2000). Female African American leaders in counselor education have created a sense of ideological frame of reference to professional identity development (Lester, 2019) through community during their time attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Both self-identification and self-valuation, and interlocking or multiple oppressions are

intertwined in culture, but culture is the key that ties all three components of BFT together (Collins, 2000).

Collins (2000) noted that research scholars have argued for several years about how each group has assigned their own different salience to race and gender, and even though both White women and African American women experience sexism, this experience is lived and seen differently regardless of shared education (Collins, 2000) and political identities in social institutions. Therefore, intersectionality makes the experiences of female African American counselor educators in higher education distinctively different than for their White female peers and colleagues. Furthermore, it is important for African Americans to have their voices heard in their experiences at predominately White institutions in order to create meaning in these three components based on the phenomena under examination.

2.5. Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory strives to equalize the educational opportunities for students of color, attention is more focused on addressing issues that happen in curricula discrimination (Cole, 2017; Hartlep, 2009). The origin of Critical Race Theory began in the mid-1970s, and was developed from legal scholar Derrick Bell's writings about racism embedded laws, and from the movements – critical legal studies and radical feminism (Hartlep, 2009). The latter, radical feminism sought to transform the relationship among race, racism, and social power (Hartlep, 2009). Critical Race Theory became widely applicable for addressing school inequities and introduced in the field of education through the seminal work published by Ladson-Billings and Tate entitled “ Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education” (1995) because it was deemed that all people experienced equity as the lack thereof by ignoring the fact that people of color experienced marginalization and racial segregation in education. Curry (2011) noted that Critical

Race Theory empowers humans to transcend the over barrens placed on them by race, class and gender.

Critical Race Theory consist of five tenets: the idea of counter storytelling, permanence of racism, interest conversion, Whiteness as property, and liberalism (Hartlep, 2009). Critical Race Theory provides a useful vantage point to ascertain the various ways in which race, social class, and gender shaped female African American counselor educators who were doctoral students in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution experiences and impacts the tools that enabled them to succeed in their professional identity development in their respective programs and institution. Moreover, CRT calls attention to the intersectionality of identities in educational contexts (Hartlep, 2009).

Critical Race Theory first tenet, counter storytelling allows participants' voice to be heard in empirical research to close the margins in where Black women voices have been silenced in literature (Curry, 2011). The idea of counter storytelling allows a fuller meaning in literature based on the lived experience among students of color (Hartlep, 2009). The use of counterstorytelling is used through many forms (i.e. discussion, archives, and personal testimonies) to acknowledge members of marginalized groups. More than that, telling untold stories based on experiences that challenges the discourse and beliefs who holds dominant group status (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Female African Americans voices have often been silenced and to be heard in literature brings meaning to their authentic lived experiences in the locations such as in predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012; Henfield et al., 2013). Counter storytelling allows a reframe to occur by African American women based on the narratives given to them in literature (Curry, 2011). African American students find people who look like them and can identify and resonant with their counter stories in established spaces they feel most

comfortable and welcoming for them in response to their marginality on campus (Curry, 2011). The construct spaces that provide necessary relationships among students of color allow them to express their oppressions in various relationships that serve the purpose to debunk embedded stereotypes. According to Delgado (2001), this can validate and contribute to doctoral students' self-confidence to enhance their professional roles in their chosen field. Hartlep (2009) noted that evaluating graduation rates can accomplish the predicted belief that schools are neutral spaces and that school curricula continues to be structured in the mainstream white, and middle-class values.

Critical Race Theory second tenet, permanence of racism, emphasizes racism being ordinary and the manipulation of institutional policies in such conditions of tenure and promotion of faculty, and admissions criteria reflects the systemic oppression of individuals, namely students of color (Cole, 2017; Hartlep, 2009). This tenet is seen often in literature as racism being ordinary and not aberrational. However, when students of color bring forth their successes, literature suggests new ways of viewing racism as being the norm in academia. As a result, female African American counselor educators can share their success of professional identity development in their pursuit of a doctoral degree at their predominately White institution in order to aid in this positive perspective and to contribute in literature.

The third tenet, interest conversion is seen as something benefiting those who are part of the dominate group in academia (Hartlep, 2009). Interest conversion extends the idea of a belief in race that overshadows the notion of social class as being the ultimate primary contradiction in social engagement (Hartlep, 2009). This theory extends that Whites will support racial justice and progress to the extent when there is something of a positive benefit in it for them (Hartlep, 2009). In these instances, serve to silence and distort people of color and their cultures while

simultaneously building up and legitimizing the majority status quo through these transactions (Hartlep, 2009).

The fourth tenet, whiteness as property is the idea of Whites examining race as property or an asset by Caucasians or Whites with a shortcoming of African Americans being seen as ownership (Cole, 2017). Whiteness as property categorizes blacks as not being part of the social construction of race to engage in productive activities in academia (Hartlep, 2009). This tenet explains the perceived notions that Whites have been recipients of civil rights legislation in American history especially in American slavery (Cole, 2017; Hartlep, 2009; Whittington, 2020). It is worth noting that some Whites who have been recipients of civil rights legislation that have contributed to this theory (e.g. Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Delgado, 2009). Critical Race Theorists Delgado and Stefancic understood race as a social construction, a perspective that is a set of beliefs about racism than it is a theory (Warmington, 2019). The *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 restricted equality for African American students because of their skin complexion that was influenced by the society's social construction perspective of race (Hartlep, 2009).

The fifth tenet in Critical Race Theory is liberalism. Liberalism can explain the feelings African Americans express out of oppression in their daily lives of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2018). Liberalism challenges the concept of colorblindness and inequality in academia experienced by students of color (Cole, 2017). This tenet is reflected in the many triumphs African Americans have experienced by challenging segregation laws based on the racial injustice systems. They also fought for Blacks to receive equitable education in court cases such as the *Brown v. Board of Education* which provided educational opportunities support for African Americans (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) through the concepts of

colorblindness. According to Baker and Moore (2015), the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 opened the door in higher education for ethnic minorities as most Historically Black Colleges and Universities remained segregated with poor facility equipment and budgets in comparison to traditionally white institutions until the mid-1950's, however, some schools in the north are still segregated (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

The chosen theories in this phenomenological research design as theoretical framework can help aid in the process of which factors of success contributed to professional identity development in female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Although there is an emerging body of literature that focuses on female African Americans in predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012), few studies address success factors that impact professional identity development to doctoral degree completion among female African American counselor educators.

2.6. Review of Literature

This literature review includes information of the history used to frame the study. Additionally, due to the lack of literature on female African Americans in predominately White institutions and professional identity development, several bodies of literature were reviewed: 1) the role of religion and spirituality; 2) female African American faculty; 3) multiculturalism and the counseling profession; and 4) African American racial disparities in academia. The goal of this study is to determine how the literature about African Americans, particularly female African American counselor educators', defines professional identity development. Furthermore, the success factors that contribute to the completion of female African Americans doctoral

degrees from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions were examined.

2.7. The Role of Religion and Spirituality

Female African American identity originated in the collective cultures of slavery, segregation, and White supremacy in the United States (Murry, 2010). To grasp an understanding of the role of religion, it helps to understand the history of the Black church (Avent & Cashwell, 2015). The Black Church includes any Black Christian person who is a member of a Black congregation (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). African Americans sought out the Black Church from emotional labor during American slavery (Weisenfeld, 2015) and for emotional wellness (Haynes et al., 2017). Therefore, the Black Church, which encompasses African American denominations that are of Christian faith, is identified as a religious institution of predominately African Americans and is trusted in the African American community (Jackson, 2017).

The origin of African American culture originates in American slavery that was the system which ruptured connections to the African history, culture, and religion, and led to the emergence of new religious systems among African Americans (Weisenfeld, 2015). African American human rights were violated as they were brought forcibly to the Americas from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions (Weisenfeld, 2015). African Americans focused on the maintenance of harmonious relationships with nature and supernatural beings, including gods, spirits, and ancestors, because this gave them meaning in how to interpret their relationships to Africa with a vision towards a collective future (Weisenfeld, 2015). Protestant Europeans who forcibly enslaved Africans in the North American colonies did not allow Africans to follow their religious practices (Weisenfeld, 2015). However, some societies in the

predominately white denominations worked toward moving from slave to free during American slavery (Weisenfeld, 2015).

In 1787, after leaving the St. George's Black Methodist congregation, Richard Allen and Jones founded the Free African Society to support the growth of the free Black community to create this independent religious organization (Weisenfeld, 2015). There were two denominations that emerged from this movement, the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in 1792 with Absalom Jones, who was the first African American to be ordained as an Episcopal priest, and the other denomination was the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1794 with Richard Allen as the pastor (Weisenfeld, 2015). In 1816, during a worship service, African Americans, along with Richard Allen, who were members of the same church as White attendees were told to wait to pray until after the White church attendees in service had prayed (Weisenfeld, 2015). Their refusal to wait to pray resulted in a meeting being called by Richard Allen with leaders of the black Methodist congregations (Weisenfeld, 2015). This meeting formed the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which was the initial Black denomination in America with Richard Allen as the Bishop (Weisenfeld, 2015).

As it relates to mental health, Haynes et al. (2017) conducted a grounded theory to understand mental health from the perspective of rural African Americans in in the South and stakeholders to devise culturally sensitive acceptable treatment approaches. There were two focus groups with healthcare providers ($n= 16$), one focus group with persons living with mental illness ($n= 10$), one focus group with college students and administrators ($n=9$), and the last focus group with college students ($n=9$). Stressful living conditions, religious belief and mental health stigma, and the most powerful being mental health literacy impacted perceptions and were barriers to mental health seeking among rural African Americans (Haynes et al., 2017). These

circumstances among African Americans have been an ongoing concern since American slavery (Weisenfeld, 2015). School settings, mental health, and the Black church are the three most important locations in African American communities. Literature continues to highlight the therapeutic benefits that religion or spirituality has in the lives of Black American women including prayer, bible, and church community as their lifestyle (Avent & Cashwell, 2015; Murry, 2010).

African Americans are less likely to seek mental counseling because of the lack of knowledge on behalf of professional counselors of the cultural heritage in the African American community (Avent & Cashwell, 2015) lack of inclusivity of prayer, cultural mistrust, affordability, and racism (Holloway, 2017). Because the Black church is key to the African American community and mental wellness, the Black Church has been found to help African Americans who attend church services at least weekly live 13.7 years longer than those who do not (Sue & Sue, 2013). In a recent survey, over 76% of African Americans say prayer is important and practice prayer as a daily intervention (Pew Research Center, 2015). Therefore, integrating spiritual techniques such as prayer in counseling and learning about the religious concepts and African Americans religious perspectives can foster change in the African American community among counseling professionals (Avent & Cashwell, 2015).

The Black church, as Avent and Cashwell (2015) noted about help-seeking behaviors, are relatively high in the African American community as it relates to mental health and well-being in the counseling profession. African American churches provide arenas for parishioners for Christian teaching and practices as well as a platform for political organizing (Weisenfeld, 2015). African Americans understand religion as a collective sense of peoplehood (Weisenfeld, 2015). Religion is a way that allows African Americans to frame their work in ways that speak

directly to their concerns in times of celebration and suffering (Avent & Cashwell, 2015).

Needless to say, not all African Americans were Christians.

The Black Church, often known as The Sunday Morning's Group Therapy (Holloway, 2017), has remained the refuge for African Americans to seek mental health support to attend to their mental health and emotional needs (Avent & Caswell, 2015), often times outside of spiritual-religious needs, such as financial support as a working system to accommodate basic needs (Weisenfeld, 2015). The Black Church was the birth of professional identity among the African American race which gave privilege to form schools, political laws, (Weisenfeld, 2015), and aid support in mental health through pastoral counseling (Haynes et al., 2017). This was the African American identity formation of professional identity during American slavery which sprung to the formation of self-identity in society.

Religious institutions have provided resources to African American public institutions to foster against slavery with provision of resources in the African American community as a system of support (Avent & Cashwell, 2015) and even further beyond spiritual resources (Weisenfeld, 2015). The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church made major contributions outside spiritual support for African Americans who pursued their educational endeavors (Weisenfeld, 2015). Eseadi et al. (2016, as cited in Brown, 1987) noted that Fowler described religion as an "attitude determined by the discrimination of an element of utterly-beyondness brought about a mental development which is able to appreciate the existence of more in the world than that to which existing endowment effects adequate adjustment" (p. 30). For African Americans, it meant going beyond the limitations in the White systemic oppressive systems to obtain equality in education to better the African American community to hold positions of political status, especially for Black women.

In 1796, former slave James Varick and Peter Williams decided to leave the John Street Methodist Church in New York, and chartered the Zion Methodist Church in 1800 (Weisenfeld, 2015). In the AME Zion church, women began holding leadership roles as ordained ministers, who wrote religious sectors and published spiritual narratives to recount their experiences (Weisenfeld, 2015). Julia Foote, the first ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church, offered insights into Methodist women's concept of salvation and righteousness (Townes, 2006). Women's purpose in the AME church, such as Sara Richard Allen's role of a religious leader, was to expand the growth of African American women throughout American society by chartering the missionary's society and give African American women a voice in the African American community. Black Feminist theologians embraced womanist theology as a way to address the discourse of Black women's experiences (Townes, 2006). Black women clergy leaders formed women's group clubs for community uplift and support rooted in Black Feminist Thought and womanist theology to do womanist work (Townes, 2006). Black women in black denominations who were clergy leaders were active in the needs of the Black communities with themes evolved in education (Townes, 2006). Later, in the schools, African American women who held faculty positions began integrating spirituality in their pedagogies through journaling with their students (Dillard, 2000). In 1844, Payne Theological seminary was founded by the AME church as a dedication to the training of ministers, and then following that Wilberforce University, a private college for African Americans. These churches, denominations, and schools provided a place for spiritual support, educational opportunities, economic development, and political activism where African Americans made meaning to describe the wide support systems to the role of religion to escape White supremacy.

Black women's ability to sustain healthy relationships is part of the opportunity to grow into who they are with conversations that invite all dimensions of who they are (Murry, 2010). In the history of American slavery, Blacks traveled north in search for opportunities and brought with them religious standards (Murry, 2010; Weld, 2016). According to a 2020 recent report, African Americans represented 19 % in the Midwest (United States Census Bureau, 2020). Patton and McClure (2009) noted as it pertains to education, spirituality is one of the most significant success factors that contribute to African American women attending and completing their college degree. Knowles and Bryant (2011) noted that spirituality has helped African American women accept their daily life experiences to find meaning during difficult times, primarily African American women who commit their careers and professional activities to subside societal inequities and mitigate social injustices. Many Black women use spirituality as identity formation in their careers.

Since the beginning, female African Americans had to be the spiritual beings and in touch with their spiritual selves to survive racism, White violence, and the dehumanizing treatment of their slave's plantation owners (Patton & McClure, 2009). Particularly for African American women the role of spirituality is the means of negotiation and understanding of issues, trials and struggles, and many forms of oppression they encountered daily (Patton & McClure, 2009). African American women have experienced ingrained messages about their roles and responsibilities within the intersections of gender, race, and professional helper (Knowles & Bryant, 2011). Therefore, the role of religion holds spirituality as the essential wellness to construct the limitations outside the Black church for African American women to manage the intersections of race and gender oppression (Knowles & Bryant, 2011) which in turn affirms their cultural values in times to care for individuals and navigate personal intersections of race

and gender within academic institutions (Bhat et al., 2012) that often can be a benefiting connectedness with their colleagues (Knowles & Bryant, 2011).

Patton and McClure (2009) conducted a qualitative, phenomenological research design using Faith Development theory and Black Feminist Thought as frameworks to understand the role of spirituality in female African American college students. Participants were 14 female African American undergraduate students from a large research institution and seven from a mid-size, religiously affiliated institution, both in the Midwest. The purpose of this study was to explore the role of spirituality through the experiences of female African American undergraduate students while attending college. Six themes emerged from the analyzed data: realities of race, coping strategies, the presence of something more, consensus and confusion, thought transitions, and perceived lack of support. Patton and McClure (2009) noted that the role of spirituality plays a source of strength for Black college women attending predominately White institutions.

Lazarus and Stewart (2002) conducted a phenomenological research study grounded in Afrocentric philosophy to understand the role of faith and spirituality in Black college student's development on a predominately White campus. Participants were five Black college students at a predominately White college in the Midwestern United States. Findings in this study revealed that spirituality was salient for Black students integrated identity, spirituality was constructed in various ways, and that higher learning of spiritual maturity may be necessary. Lazarus and Stewart (2002) noted that predominately White institutions are often not prepared to deal with the differences of spirituality among Black college students. As this relates to this population, Spirituality is the "degree to which an individual endorses a relationship with God or a transcendent force that brings meaning and purpose to their existence" (Berkel et al., 2004, p. 4).

Therefore, the meaning that Fowler, noted that faith and belief systems are made up in the universal environment (Dinani, 2018) is reflective to African Americans' faith perspective within their social locations.

Allison and Brodas (2009) noted the struggles through the academe among Black women as students and as educators and the connection between their spiritual beliefs and Afrocentric identity in predominately White institutions remains important among these women in the transition from graduate students to the professorate. This brings importance to the efforts of Black female faculty shared knowledge with others regardless of the challenges they face daily in higher education. These authors emphasized (Allison & Brodas, 2009) as reflected by their experiences towards the professorate as "She who learns must also teach". According to Mitchell (2014), religion and spirituality can sometimes hamper the educational experience due to the amount of time spent engaged in religious and/or spiritual practices (i.e. Bible study, church services, participation in congregational committees). However, religion and spirituality are often described as a source of strength and possible source of contention throughout the educational experience of Black female doctoral students (Mitchell, 2014).

Bacchus and Holley (2005) conducted a qualitative study to understand the perceptions of professional Black women regarding their definitions of spirituality and experiences using spirituality as a resource to cope with work-related stress. Findings from the analyzed data revealed: utilization of spirituality-particularly prayer, meditation, and inspirational readings-to gain personal strengths, inner peace, and guidance helped to reflect on and reappraise stressful situations in their work environments. These stressful experiences can help female African Americans working in predominately White institutions maintain their racial identity in the success of their professional activities.

Jones-Boyd (2016) conducted a phenomenological study to understand the factors that were influential in the success of Black female tenured professors in counselor education programs with specific focus on racial identity. Participants were six tenured Black female counselor educators, four were associate professors, and two were full professors. Participants in this study years in their current rank ranged from three to ten years, all obtained tenure and worked as professors at (PWIs). Findings from the analyzed data revealed that race played a role in the success of Black female counselor educators, their value for education, support and influence from family, academic achievement, racial empowerment, other forms of support, and spirituality was the overall essence that helped them to become successful Black female counselor educators. Jones-Boyd (2016) mentioned that these participants had a spiritual foundation and or component that played an important role in their lives and is used as a value and coping mechanism for challenging situations in the academy.

In conclusion, African American cultural healing practices consists of roots and herbs (Weisenfeld, 2015), and prayer in times of suffering in life's challenging (Ali et al., 2017) experiences in the Midwest (Bacchua & Holley, 2004; Lazarus & Stewart, 2002), particularly for female African Americans in academia (Patton & McClure, 2009). Patton and McClure (as cited in Fowler, 2000) mentioned that collective expression through the rites, myths, symbols, teachings, and music also helps African American women in the academia. Although religion and spirituality is a choice in the path of many individuals in their spiritual journey, it is faith that involves, "a quality of human living that at its best grounds capacities for confidence, courage, loyalty, and generosity even in the face of catastrophe and confusion enables one to feel at home in the universe" (Parks, 2000, p. 24), specifically African American women who function in professional roles in the academe (Bacchus & Holley, 2005; Lazarus & Stewart, 2002; Patton &

McClure, 2009). Among this population of women, the role of religion and spirituality plays a source of strength in challenging times, promotes psychological functioning, and foster identity development in predominately White institutions (Dillard, 2000). Lastly, in the African American culture, spiritual and religious practices among female Black faculty at (PWIs) have been an influence in their self-worth and self-concept (Jones-Boyd, 2016).

2.8. Multiculturalism and the Counseling Profession

Professional identity among African Americans in the counseling profession dates back to the 1950s during the spark of the civil rights movement, when desegregation laws allowed for new opportunities (Robinson & Morris, 2000). Racial/ethnic minority concerns were now viewed by the mental health profession for the efficacy of services to be provided to unrepresented populations regarding racial parity (Robinson & Morris, 2000). African Americans and other racial minority groups received little attention in research and literature and Black professionals were excluded from the movement of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (Robinson & Morris, 2000), now known as the American Counseling Association. As a result, the American Personal and Guidance Association adopted a policy to help serve African Americans and other culturally disadvantaged and marginalized individuals to be treated fairly and promote a more just society (Robinson & Morris, 2000).

In the 1900s, Frank Parsons worked to help underserved communities in the counseling profession (ACAAC, 2018), the Multicultural Counseling and Social Justice competencies (MCSJC) (Ratts et al., 2016), and later the Advocacy competencies, which led counselors to address systemic barriers in counseling (ACAAC, 2018). Later in the 1980s, the Multicultural and Social Justice competencies took a step forward to play a role in advocating for racial/ethnic clients at the individual, systemic, and group level (Ratts et al., 2016). Indeed, this call for social

justice in mental health for both clients and counseling professionals of color was addressed by William Banks and a group of racial harmony advocates to create a shift towards social justice and address issues of racial parity in mental health (Robinson & Morris, 2000).

William Banks and this group also campaigned to establish an office of Non-White concerns in the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) as an attempt to bring about a paradigm shift in mental health concerns for racial/ethnic minority groups (Robinson & Morris, 2000). As a result, in 1985 the Non-White concern was adopted in the APGA and later called the Non-White Concern Association, now known as the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development.

Multicultural researchers of color such as Derald Wing Sue, who published textbooks and articles, along with theorists such as William Cross, who created the racial identity development model, recognized the need to fill in the gap by including African Americans and other ethnic minority groups to meet the racial minority groups standards of care (Sue & Sue, 2013). As a result, sensitivity to the needs of these concerns from professionals replaced the term minority counseling with the terms cross-cultural counseling and multicultural counseling to conceptualize broader meanings in client's worldview (Robinson & Morris, 2000). According to Robinson and Morris (2000), proponents of a universal counseling approach encourage therapists to emphasize attributes that are shared by all people, irrespective of race, ethnicity, or culture rather than focusing on the distinction of characteristics in specific racial groups. However, as it relates to multiculturalism, Avent and Cashwell (2015) argues that the salience in the African American community on spirituality and religion behooves counselors to care enough to increase their knowledge about the African American religious experience. Therefore, as an extension of

these distinctive components racial uplift is important in relation to racial group identity development (Sue & Sue, 2013), particularly for African Americans in (PWIs).

Multicultural counselors emphasize multicultural and social justice theories that are grounded in research to work with marginalized clients (Ratts et al., 2015). Many Black professionals made major contributions to the development of theories relating to race (Sue & Sue, 2013). Psychologist William Cross, Jr., devised the racial identity development model to help Black people embrace a strong black identity as an ultimate goal in stage five. The intention of Black identity development theory was for blacks to have a plan of action committed to Black concerns as a whole that can be used in their professional agenda sustained over time (Sue & Sue, 2013). An African American developmental psychologist, Janet Helms, devised the White Racial Identity Development Model for White people. The ultimate goal in stage six of this model is to become an active anti-racist who has found ways to pursue social justice in their professional agenda and embrace a positive connection to their white racial identity (Sue & Sue, 2013).

Multicultural counseling traces back to the interrelated systems in the American Psychological Association, the academy, and mental health organizations, who collectively engaged in overt racial practices for several decades (Robinson & Morris, 2000). For this reason, these Black professionals, William Cross Jr. and Janett Helms, aided in the success of developmental models for mental health counseling between Whites and Blacks. Racial practices continue to ignore racial and ethnic concerns. Therefore, counselor education and supervision programs should consider these as barriers of Black female faculty and students experiences in higher education to manage ways to become successful through retention and recruitment through mentorship considering these identity developments.

Many counselor educators have contributed their professional role in teaching multicultural courses within counselor education programs. Throughout literature, this is often an assumption made that female African American counselor educators are to only teach multicultural courses. Hall (2010) conducted a phenomenological research study to understand the experiences of female African American counselor educators who teach multicultural counseling courses at Traditionally White institutions across the United States. Hall (2010) used Womanist thought, which centers the well-being of African American women understanding of oppression in their daily experiences. Seven themes emerged from data analyzed: challenge, hypervisibility, challenged authority, lack of identity, hostile environment, spirituality, internal satisfaction and talking. Although female African American counselor educators have successful careers in the role of teaching, experiences among emerging professionals and faculty remain consistent with racism.

Behar-Horenstein et al. (2012) conducted a case study using critical ethnography format to explore the pre-tenure experiences of female African American faculty members in counselor education programs. Findings from the analyzed data revealed five themes: nature of the Academy, efforts of toxic system, social positioning, Academy's potential needs, participant's experiences, successes, and career. Behar-Horenstein et al. (2012) noted the impacts of not only racism, but also sexism have an influence on female African American counselors and in their professional development.

Racist practices in the counseling profession began in 1892 when 26 White men founded the American Psychological Association (Robinson & Morris, 2000). G. Stanley Hall, an early leader in this association, referred to Black people as a primitive race in a state of immature development, and in the past psychologists Lewis Terman and Erick Erickson embraced negative

stereotypes toward African Americans specifically (Robinson & Moore, 2000). G. Stanley Hall's research practices focused on segregating educational institutions by race (Robinson & Morris, 2000). However, Lewis (1969) moved forward to knock down the barriers of racism to advocate for racial/ethnic minority people when he wrote:

We cannot hide the fact that racism is encountered in counseling in many forms. We cannot hide it, so we have got to face it... we must not allow the presence of racism to choke our efforts, to prevent progress in human relationships, to make us less human, to undermine our confidence and ability to do a job (p. 54)

In the 1960s, the beginning of Black feminism was the cause of the second wave of the feminist movement because women of color's rights were not recognized and African American women were referred to as the other. Collins (2000) stated that being called "other" dehumanized the Black women's multiple interlocking systems of oppression that impacts the role "outsider-within" systems (p. 12). Both third wave and fourth wave multicultural movements brought strength to multicultural counseling to intercommunal diversity and challenge the professional core values because there was a need for professional counselors and clients of color to have the possibilities to access/engage in professional contact and culturally sensitivity counseling (Adams et al., 2013; Sue & Sue, 2013). These movements invited the work towards the good for all people which opened the door for professional counselors of color to have the autonomy to reconcile humanity for professional counselors, multicultural researchers and theorists of color to develop and report accurate data relating to racial/ethnic populations because research assessment conclusions and results, theories, misdiagnoses and underdiagnoses, and inappropriate treatment among racial/ethnic minority clients were based on White middle-class subjects who fostered a negative Eurocentric racial stereotype view (Robinson & Morris, 2000).

Efforts to enroll students of color to help aid in the process of appropriate treatment among clients and learning of necessary skills relating to enhancing professional development in counselor education is absent.

Baker and Moore (2015) conducted a qualitative study to examine the perceptions of cultural competence of counselor education doctoral students using Critical Race Theory as framework. Participants were 19 racially or ethnically underrepresented students in a counselor education and supervision program in a predominately White institution. Findings revealed six themes from the analyzed data: playing the game, individual characteristics and attributes, intersectionality, support, voice, and talk the talk, walk the walk. Baker and Moore (2015) noted the climate in counselor education and supervision programs should have more of a focus to understand cultural competence within counselor education programs for Black doctoral students emerging in the field, namely female African Americans.

Salazar (2005) conducted a qualitative, grounded theory study to understand counselor educators of color relationships and interactions with the institutional system of academe. Specific focus was on race, class, and gender. Participants were 14 counselor educators of color who teach in counseling departments in 14 universities across the United States that ranged from large state universities to small liberal arts colleges having academic ranks range from assistant to full professor and two were department chairs. Out of the fourteen participants: ($n=2$) were South Asian immigrants, ($n=4$) were African American, ($n=2$) were biethnic Mexican European American, and ($n=1$) Native American Indian. Nine themes emerged from data analyzed: multicultural selfhood and systems of power and privileged in academe, colleagues' attitude and behavior, in defense of multicultural selfhood, European American colleagues' attitudes about multiculturalism, serving as a role model or mentor, multicultural self in relation to students, the

tenure and promotion process, outsider within a White middle-class environment, and survival and coping strategies. Counselor education departments reported that 90.6% of the faculty were European American, compared with 79.8% being European American in the total U.S. population and this remains at a consistent (Young et al., 1990). As cited by Salazar (2005), female African American associate professor responded that the lack of mentorship puts people of color at a disadvantage of the promotion and tenure process in departments where most faculty are non-African American counselor educators, and how promotion and tenure is a dooming feeling before it starts.

Modica (2011) conducted a qualitative study to examine how African American male and female faculty members perceive their opportunities for career advancement at high research producing institutions. Participants were doctoral or full-time faculty members at one of the six high-research-producing universities with a predominately White population at their institutions. This study found that career advancement in the professorate was attainable, however, female and male African Americans were uninformed about the process of tenure and promotion. Whereas the lack of support in the counseling profession remains a constant within the literature between African Americans, this study has potential to fill in the gaps of what are success factors for professional identity development between this issue and their professional identity in the field that helped at the doctoral level to reframe the negative view in scholarly literature.

2.9. Racial Disparities in Academia

Foxx et al. (2018) conducted a transcendental phenomenological study to describe how racial and ethnic minority students choose to research, apply to, and accept invitations into one counselor education doctoral program that was in the southeast. Of the nine participants, five self-identified as African American, one self-identified as Asian, two self-identified as Latina/o,

and one self-identified as Other. Participants age range between 27 and 48. Four themes emerged from the data analyzed relevant to the recruitment and retention of students of color: emphasis on diversity, location, need for employment and/or financial assistance, and relationships with faculty.

A recent finding in the literature showed female African Americans continuously represent approximately 15% of the student population in counselor education doctoral programs (Vital Statistics Survey, 2012), and this percentage remain at a constant. This percentage reflects the ‘depth’ of the lived experiences of female African American doctoral students and counselor educators’ experiences at predominately White institutions who are not supported in their respective programs. Research shows a lack of support concerning female African American counselor educators and female African American doctoral students in the counselor education profession. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling Related and Educational Programs addresses ways on how to eliminate barriers in the curriculum through its standards (CACREP, 2016).

In a recent report in 2009, there were more African American women (n=1605) awarded a doctorate than African American men (n=1904) and of the total of minority recipients in 2009, 235 doctorates were awarded from Counselor Education and 420 in Counseling Psychology, specifically from more females (n=503) than males (n=152) among the two degrees, counselor education and counseling psychology (Bhat et al., 2012). In 2008, African Americans were the minority group who were (33 of 205) among the dominate group of students of color to receive doctorates in counselor education (Bhat et al., 2012). A later report in 1995, found only 667, 000 African Americans had advanced degrees (e.g. masters, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.) out of the total population of 2.1 million (Black Demographics, 1995). In addition to this finding, in 1995,

Mitchell, reported that female African Americans found persistency and intrinsic motivation as contributing success factors to finish advanced degrees, which brings about a greater sense of empowerment and privilege for many black women in their professional identity in counselor education programs at predominately White institutions (Jones & Bustamante, 2015).

Jetton (2016) conducted a qualitative study to understand professional identity development. Participants involved in this study included twenty-six Danish and eleven Australian university students. Five themes emerged; parallel development of identity supported learning and motivation, entering higher education as an identity transition, description as future professional and loss of goal-orientation, experiences related to lacking professional identity, and educators' role in professional identity formation. Jetton (2016) emphasized that academic identity is the formation process that aims to develop both the students' academic characteristics and their social placement within the environment. Whereas, professional identity is defined as the formation of an attitude of personal responsibility regarding one's role in the profession and a commitment to behave in particular ethical and moral norms, as well as the development of fueling of pride for the profession (Jetton, 2016). Many doctoral students of color in pursuit of the professorate seek racial peer and faculty support in counselor education programs (Foxx et al. 2018; Haskins et al. 2016).

Hasberry (2019) conducted an autoethnographic qualitative case study to understand coping strategies and support mechanisms that led to Black faculty calling in the profession who are educators. Participants included Black teachers working at predominately White and affluent private schools in the United States. Using intersectionality framework and racial identity development four themes emerged from the data analysis: awareness of inequity and discrimination, never-ending pursuit of knowledge, comfort in emphasizing what makes them

different, and the importance of developing a peer support network. The latter is imperative in predominately White institutions for female African Americans in the academy to remain in the profession.

Bhat et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative inquiry to understand the lived experiences of eleven female African American doctoral students who attended a counselor education and supervision program and four who attended a counseling psychology program at a predominately White institution. Six themes emerged through data analysis; impetus to commence doctoral study, adjustment to doctoral study, interactions with peers and professors, discrimination and prejudice, financial and non-financial support, persistent, success and failures (Bhat et al., 2012). Throughout literature, not only is racism an impediment to retention to doctoral degree completion, also a lack thereof financial graduate assistance towards the end of their program to aid in support for a professional identity (Bhat et al., 2012; Foxx et al., 2018). The development of identity and retention is a necessary with the professional roles in the five doctoral core areas throughout the curriculum in counseling, supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy that provides the foundational knowledge required of doctoral graduates in counselor education (CACREP, 2016) and the exposure in the pursuit for the professorate.

2.10. Female African American Faculty

There continues to be a calling in recent literature for female African American counselor educator's representation among counselor education faculty at predominately White institutions (Henfield et al., 2011). In relation to university faculty, it has been found in a 2017 report of racial/ethnic of faculty that only 3% of female African Americans represent full-time faculty in degree-granting institutions (Grant & Simmons, 2008). In the Annual Report in 2015 from the Council for Accreditation and Related Programs (CACREP, 2015), African Americans

represented 12.72% of faculty compared to Caucasian faculty of 74.33% of faculty members in CACREP-accredited institutions (CACREP, 2016). Bradley & Holcomb (2003) mentioned 3% of the 160,000 counselor educator faculty in CACREP-accredited programs identified as ethnic minority faculty in the United States at Land Grant, specifically Research I and II institutions, and more reported being untenured and hold junior faculty or adjunct positions. In relation to university faculty in 2009, it has been reported that only 7% of African American faculty are present in counselor education and supervision programs (Jones-Boyd, 2016), and most recently report in 2015 female African American faculty represented less than 4% as tenured faculty among African American men and White women (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015), and while this remains a constant it is important Black female faculty receive avenues of professional development opportunities at the doctoral level.

Black female faculty are constantly placed in unique positions between racism and sexism challenged with limited accessibility to ascertain privileges in institutions of higher education, as a result of marginality and invisibility (Edwards et al., 2011). These experiences impact female African American faculty differently than their male counterparts, primarily at predominately White institutions who focus on research (Edwards et al., 2011). Winkle-Wagner (2009) categorizes the way Black females navigate their relationships at (PWIs): between-group tensions, meaning tensions can be microaggressions from peers, faculty, or staff, and within-group tensions, meaning interactions that do not exist with African American peers and family both on and off campus. These two categories help to understand the intersectionality around the female African American experiences at (PWIs) concerning socialization. Between group tensions also relates to academic success and social interactions, and within-group tensions also relate to how female African Americans tend to fight against the stereotypes within their own

cultural group, and even more specifically, the intersections of race and gender (Winkle-Wagner, 2009). Black can mean also coming from a low socioeconomic background. Intercultural competence requires the ability to communicate and adapt to function across various cultures (Madyun et al., 2013). These can be seen as White spaces in the lives of many African American faculty at predominately White institutions with the determination to engage cross-culturally without having to ignore parts of core self while interacting inter-culturally (Madyun et al., 2013).

Madyun et al. (2013) noted that African American faculty have made important contributions in scholarship, which aligns with research and scholarship as a core area in counselor education (CACREP, 2016). African American faculty have made strides in the academy with an emic view in scholarly research to promote social justice with fresh ideas (Robinson & Moore, 2000). Critical Race Theory that examines curricula discrimination is an example framework African American faculty bring to the literature to transform the ways education is received and delivered to students of color as a need to build inter-cultural competence in students (Madyun, 2013), and predominately White institutions (Henfield et al., 2011). Therefore, this ability to bring such integrative knowledge to the literature contributes a new culture from female African American faculty perspective who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at predominately White institutions.

Female African American faculty also have the added layer of stress of feeling psychologically divided between home and career or between their community and career (Edward et al., 2011). Edward et al. (2011) noted that there are very few successful faculty women of color that are married with children and that female African American faculty are often left with two choices: sacrifice family and community commitments for several years, or

honor non-work commitments as an essential part of their identity at the risk of earning tenure. In this regard this creates a complex challenge because most female African American faculty significant contributions to the academy tend to focus research on community service, and this added layer of stress is caused by White faculty in Black faculty research contributions that are often seen as unimportant and not valid (Edward et al., 2011).

Haskins et al. (2016) conducted a phenomenological study to explore the lived experiences and intersecting identities of female African American counselor educators who are mothers. Participants were eight female African American counselor educators who were tenure-track counselor educators, mothers of at least one child under the age of 19 living at home. Using Moustakas (1994) data analysis, six themes were identified: makes you susceptible to racialized marginalization, precipitates professional strain and neglect, creates internalized success (i.e. research and teaching), brings mothering into scholarship and pedagogy, affects work-life balance, and necessitates support structures. Out of the eight participants, one responded specifically that she had to choose family over professional activities. Another participant responded that her mothering role causes professional leadership sacrifice. Ultimately, participants responding that professional strain is a result of their mothering responsibilities and overload of work in the department involving the intersecting identity of mother. However, participants in this study were intentional about their wellness strategies and finding supportive communities through personal and professional communities. Haskins et al. (2016) implied this support system among female African American counselor educators can look different in several on and off campus locations (e.g., churches, community organizations). Although these participants experienced racialized marginalization, they stated that non-African American

counselor educators who were mothers and department heads who valued family first were also helpful in their success as Black female counselor educators as educators and scholars.

When looking at the success factors, African American women have defined success in the academy as “finding fit” which lead to redefining their roles within the academy that infuse social justice and community action into their scholarship activities and cultural interests within their respective institutions (Edwards et al., 2011). Edwards et al. (2011) noted collectively in literature the tradition of success in the professorate has been defined as attaining tenure, garnering prestige, increased earnings, and enhancing self-satisfaction. Edward et al.’s (2011) study of Black female faculty used a qualitative inquiry to understand success in counselor education. Participants included six Black female faculty members at a research-oriented university in the southeast. Two participants were assistant professors, three were associate professors, and one full professor. Edward et al. (2011) asked participants two questions to understand their definition of success and belief of whether they were successful Black female professors. Three themes emerged from the first question: success was publishing, success was giving back, and success was a journey. In the second question three themes emerged: being successful was defined externally and comparatively, they believed they have had some successes, and never becoming complacent or satisfied. Success is an important factor in the lives of Black female faculty because this ensures job stability and support in their endeavor in their profession, particularly counselor education.

In regard to intersectionality of racism and religionism among Black women, Montgomery (2019) conducted a qualitative study to explore the challenges that female African American faculty face in predominately White Christian institutions. Participants included nine female African American faculty from the United States from five predominately White

Christian universities. Five themes emerged: stereotyping, student lack of respect, intersectionality of race and gender, imposter syndrome, inequity, and sexism. In all these studies thus far, seemingly there is a pattern of racial inequality in predominately White institutions among female African American faculty (Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Hasberry, 2019; Jetton, 2019). However, racial empowerment enhances their professional identity and despite religionism on the institutional level many sought church and professional organizations relating to their wellness (Haskins et al. 2016).

In comparison to their White counterparts in counselor education, women of color continuously experience microaggressions within the context of their professional roles and academic responsibilities. Harris et al. (2019) conducted a phenomenological study to understand the experiences women counselor educators committing and receiving microaggressions within the context of their professional roles and academic responsibilities. Participants in this study identified as ($n=1$) Caucasian, ($n=3$) African American, ($n=1$) Latina, ($n=1$) Japanese American. In addition, four were assistant professors, two full-time professors, and one associate professor. Five themes emerged from data analysis related to counselor educator experiences with microaggressions: continuum of awareness, responding to microaggressions, power in academia, impact of microaggressions, and intersection of identity. Participants responded experiencing microaggressions related to their professional roles impacted them emotionally and psychologically. Participants responded that it was often hard to find safe places because of aggressive racism and impacted career decisions within counselor education. Participants also responded the most common response to microaggressions is no response, meaning they did not challenge the perpetrator. Furthermore, that the role in these participants academic department had not necessarily created a sense of safety and power for these women counselor educators.

These instances were mainly experienced by their male colleagues. Harris et al. (2019) noted that the influences of these situations experienced by underrepresented faculty of color associate with imposter syndrome in the positions they have earned and can often be problematic in the progress of their professional roles. Particularly, female African American faculty are often positioned in the role of service having increased responsibilities in counselor education that minimize the power they have (Harris et al., 2019). Harris et al. (2019) made particular note that racism and sexism were not motivators to become successful female African American faculty counselor educators.

Baxley (2012) noted that women of color in academia research consistently discuss the barriers that lead to marginalization including isolation, personal “dehumanization”, silenced in research, tokenism, and lack of mentors and support at predominately White institutions. Baxley (2012) mentioned how women of color are excluded from informal peer networking, particularly by White women, in addition the lack of respect, and thus not given credit when the emphasis of their research is about people of color. In other words, African American women scholars have been often pushed to give up their research agendas when it does not fit with the mainstream peer-reviewed journals that is mostly needed to support the promotion and tenure of women of color in academia. Jeffries and Generett (2003) shared their lived reality between African American women and research identity:

Instances in the lives of Black female academics, where we are relegated to the status of the other by our colleagues, constantly erode our sense of self and our ability to trust and exercise the invisible power we have. When our research and teaching methodologies are seen as lacking in rigor and not generalizable, we lose trust in ourselves. When our

writing is deemed unacceptable, despite our prior admission to the rights and privileges granted other Doctor of Philosophy, we lose trust in ourselves (p. 7)

The roles and tasks of a counselor educator requires support through various relationships in the counselor education profession. Needless to say, it becomes dehumanizing when female Black faculty must work alone or be advocates in their own work to support their professional identity. These crossroad experiences bring about change and connecting an understanding to female African American faculty success through skills and strategies of success in predominately White institutions based on lived experiences.

Hill et al. (2003) conducted a quantitative study to understand the encouraging and discouraging factors that influence female counselor educators. Participants were 115 female counselor educators from 77 CACREP-accredited counseling programs (86.1%) Caucasian, (7.0%) African American, (1.7%) Asian American, (2.6%) Native American, and (1.7%) Latina/Hispanic. Hill et al. (2003) found two fundamental themes as challenges female counselor educators revolve around: inequities among male and female faculty and differential experiences with teaching, service, and scholarship which can continue to occur in representation. Throughout literature, female faculty have more teaching and service activities compared to male faculty in research (Hill et al., 2003). Though female faculty endorse a commitment to research (Jeffries & Generett, 2003), exclusion, disconnection, and marginalization are heightened for Black female faculty impacted by racism (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004), and sexism among their colleagues (Hill et al., 2003). Although there still is paucity of literature on female African American counselor education faculty alone, the interpersonal relationships in female African American counselor educators may have been different in their doctoral programs on supporting and encouraging factors in teaching, service, research, and scholarship. Hill et al.

(2003) implied that female African American faculty are confronted with more complex issues and encouraged by teaching and discouraged by hurtful colleagues.

Across the literature, findings have been similar in several other studies across literature on female African American faculty in predominately White institutions and success, meaning questioning their success as Black female faculty. Bottoms et al. (2013) conducted a narrative inquiry to examine the role of participation in learning and identity development through narrative of FRiENDs. The authors who were participants in this study provided meaning in their professional experiences through the perspective of knowledge construction within the community, the role of social relationships in providing a foundation for learning within the community, and the role community plays in supporting the development in their individual professional identities. The first perspective involved mutual engagement, turning to expertise, and developing a style and repertoire. The participants second perspective was learning through professional activities within the community. The last perspective was purposefully engagement in participation as researchers helped to develop an identity as a researcher, specifically through social interaction, and sense making in their participation in their belonging community.

Handley et al. (2006) noted that the learning within one's community brings a focus to identity development which involves both knowing about the roles and tasks, and the "understanding who we are, and in which communities of practice we belong, and are accepted" (p. 644). In addition to information sharing and the provision of psychosocial support to develop their role in the academy among Black female faculty, whereas graduate students lean more on their socialization than faculty (Bottoms et al., 2013). Bradley (2005) noted that female African American faculty are far more disadvantaged at universities than White women including racial groups and promoted for tenure at a much lower rate than African American men and White

women faculty. Because of this factor African American women faculty are presented with less opportunities to collaborate on research projects in the academic environment among counselor educators (Bradley, 2005). As previously stated, there is a paucity of literature on female African American counselor educators and what emerges toward professional identity during their CACREP-accredited counselor education programs at a predominately White institution. Black feminist thought that looks at the gender and racial oppression of African American women to resist these instances reveals the practices within the academy (Collin, 2000).

Information written below furthers the exploration of literature provided by population: (1) the role of professional identity development in graduate programs; (2) mentorship in doctoral programs; and (3) socialization process in the academy.

2.11. The Role of Professional Identity Development in Graduate Programs

Professional identity development occurs through transformational roles from thinking like a student, educator, supervisor, researcher, and leader to strengthen a strong self and professional identity (Limberg et al., 2013) modeled by counselor educators whose professional identity that brings light to the developmental process. The process of professional identity development is understood as the “successful integration of personal attributes and professional training in the context of a professional community” (Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010, pp. 22-24).

Luke and Goodrich (2010) conducted a qualitative, grounded theory research design to understand Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) leaders’ experiences of the influences of professional identity development. Participants were 15 early career counselors who were CSI chapter leaders during their graduate counselor education training program. Of these 15 participants, 10 identified as White, one as Asian, two as Latino/a, and two biracial. Six components emerged from the

analyzed data: authentic learning experiences, personal characteristics and identification and invitation, contextual conditions relating to three systemic levels (chapter, local, and international), relationships, action strategies (internal and behavioral), and consequences (bridging or not bridging the gaps). The paucity of literature in empirical research continues to lack ways in how professional organizations within counselor education programs support black female doctoral students in their professional identity development.

As it relates to Black identity development, William Cross, Jr.'s stages of racial identity development encouraged Black people to embrace a strong Black identity and for Blacks to have a plan of action to commit to Black concerns as a whole that can be used as a professional agenda sustained overtime (Sue & Sue, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative for Black doctoral students to develop an agenda to help sustain a professional identity towards their career in counselor education. In this model encompass the pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment that can be viewed in counselor education programs among faculty at predominately White institutions to ensure growth in Black female doctoral student's identity development (i.e. literature reviews, research projects, professional organizations etc.). The pre-encounter stage emphasizes the view of African Americans low self-esteem and poor mental health, characterized by consciously or unconsciously devaluing their Blackness to cling to more White values and ways. The encounter stage encompasses two events where the individual encounters a profound crisis that challenges previous thinking about being brainwashed by White society with the second encounter to the reinterpretation of the event as a result to shift their worldview. The immersion-emersion stage, an individual withdraws from the White culture and begins embracing and immersing oneself into the African American culture, and through the emersion, feelings of hate, anger, and shame

begin to dissipate with an increasing sense of self identity and pride. The third and fourth stages have been brought into one because Cross observed there were minimal differences that existed between the two stages (Sue & Sue, 2013).

In the internalization stage, the individual's inner security is strengthened from resolved old identities. In the internalization-commitment stage a strong sense of identity is reflected through the essence of their lives towards social justice, civil rights, and equality (Sue & Sue, 2013), for instance, that could be experienced in their programs and institutions. Cross introduces the concept of race salience to which race is important and it the most integral part of a person's life such as African Americans (Sue & Sue, 2013). This last stage can manifest three identities which are blackness nationalists with a positive race salience, biculturalists with together an infused blackness and sense of Americanness or has become Americanized, and multiculturalists as described as multiple identity formation including race, gender, sexual orientation, and other intersectionality (Sue & Sue, 2013).

Black students enter their doctoral programs with a range of knowledge and experiences that has formed their professional identity (Bertrand et al., 2015). Limberg and colleagues (2013) described professional identity as both intrapersonal and interpersonal, intrapersonal being an internalization of knowledge shared by faculty and supervisors about doctoral students' personal strengths and areas of growth in academic roles and these two developmental processes co-occur in their doctoral programs. As doctoral students matriculate in their doctoral programs it is important to enrich the meaning to the roles and tasks within academia to maintain a professional identity (Limberg et al., 2013).

Limberg et al. (2013) found programmatic goals to develop professional identity align with the experiences most influential to counselor education, experimental learning opportunities

enhanced counselor education doctoral students' professional identity development, relationships with mentors and faculty contribute to their identity as counselor educators, and being perceived as a counselor educator by faculty influences professional identity development. As previously mentioned, doctoral students are oriented to their counselor education programs once enrolled and counselor educators recognize program orientation is a developmental process whereby awareness of opportunities in the field are made available to students (ACA, 2014).

Multiple studies have a focus on success factors of professional socialization and professional identity development that are contributors to affirm professional identity for Black graduate students (Fakhoury & Frierson, 2014; Lidell et al., 2014). Seemingly professional identity development is an ongoing commitment to develop a specialized knowledge and skillset in a desired field through integration of personal and professional activities through socialization (Lidell et al., 2014). It has been addressed that among African American women racial socialization contributes to factors of success to doctoral completion at predominately White institutions (Fakhoury & Frierson, 2014). A sense of belongingness to doctoral completion affirms Black women in their professional identity that brings about a greater sense of empowerment and privilege in their counselor education programs at predominately White institutions (Jones & Bustamante, 2015).

The 2016 CACREP Board has addressed ways doctoral students can engage in professional networking through various avenues such as publishing grant proposals, publishing research with faculty, presenting at professional conferences, writing journal articles and newsletters for publication, and so forth to develop their professional identity in a learning environment that includes a supportive and encouraging sense of professional identity development through equity to the exposure in the career as future counselor educator

(CACREP, 2016). The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) is a professional networking system for professional counselors, counselor educators, students, and supervisors to engage in professional activities that produce the knowledge and training in the field of counselor education (About aces, 2020).

Although the United States is still a long way from racial parity of African Americans females being awarded doctoral degrees (Bhat et al., 2012). Ross et al. (2016) explained many Black students opt out of their counselor education programs at predominately White institutions at (PWIs) because of microaggressions, feelings of cultural mistrust, and that a low sense of worth impacts their self-identity. There remains a significance lack of presence to maintain a professional identity among female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Therefore, it is important for Black faculty to receive avenues of professional identity at the doctoral level to transition into faculty positions in counselor education and supervision programs (Jones, 2015). In an effort to mitigate this concern, Henfield et al. (2011) explored a phenomenological investigation of eleven African American doctoral students' perceptions of challenging experiences in counselor education programs at (PWIs). Four themes emerged from analyzed data: assertiveness, more experienced African American students, race-based organizations, and personal and professional care from advisors assisted with their professional development.

According to the Annual Report from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs African American students represented 19.56% as the dominate group among students of color in CACREP-accredited programs (CACREP, 2016). The American Counseling Association “recruits and retains a diverse student body” (ACA, 2014, p.

15), the 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs Standards adopted by the CACREP Board supports a diverse faculty and student representation. Yet, African American women represent only 15% of the student population in counselor education and supervision doctoral programs, specifically CACREP-accredited programs (Bhat et al., 2012). Bertrand et al. (2015) noted mentoring and networking are necessary to support professional development that is often hidden in the curriculum during Black doctoral students' programs. Future professional success is made when resources are made available to assist Black doctoral students to move into the academia (Bertrand et al., 2015).

2.12. Mentorship in Doctoral Programs

Although it is known that challenges co-occur while female African American are in pursuit of their Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012), this author noted a culture that creates opportunities for professional identity development is developed through collaborative, mentoring, and advising supports systems for female African American doctoral students. Ross et al. (2016) noted that acceptance and validation may support the growth and professional development of Black doctoral students in counselor education and supervision programs.

It has been shown in literature that female African American doctoral students and faculty experience challenges at predominately White institutions in counselor education programs (Bhat et al., 2012; Henfield et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2016; Limberg et al., 2013; Ross et al., 2016), and research consistently reports that mentoring, the departmental cultural, support systems (e.g. internal and external), adjustment to doctoral study and commerce to graduate, financial and non-financial support, interactions with professors and peers both positive and negative, religion and spirituality as some of the contributing success factors for professional

identity development to doctoral completion. These were the only studies found related to African Americans and mentorship on professional identity development contributed to success.

Mentoring is often intertwined in the literature in female African American counselor education programs (Bertrand et al., 2015). In a recent report in 2017, of African Americans aged 25 and older were rewarded an advanced degree (e.g., masters, Ph.D., M.D., or J.D.) (Black Demographics, 2017). In most graduate programs, mentors bring forth meaning to the existence of various possibilities of the internal and external rewards as an extended hand of successful completion of a Ph.D. (Jones, 2015). There is evidence that supports tangible outcomes based on mentorship to professional identity development and growth of African American faculty to increase their representation (Tillman, 2011). Several questions have been raised to what facilitates professional growth and development in African American faculty to affirm their identity in predominately White institutions, thus requires mentorship of mentors who will take affirmative steps to ensure female African Americans at the doctoral level in predominately White programs will have strength in their self-identity and professional identity at predominately White institutions (Henfield et al., 2007; Tillman, 2011).

Mentoring has been given several definitions in literature, as it relates to this study mentoring is described as a relationship with a more knowledgeable individual and emerging individual seeking a chosen process for professional networking, guidance, modeling, sponsoring, in a reciprocal relationship that leads to professional growth and development in the purposes this study serves, in particular female African American counselor educators. Tillman (2011) noted a mentor is someone who often shares the same ethnic, religious, political status, and/or social backgrounds. Meanwhile, a few factors that contribute in female African American faculty growth through mentorship with a more experienced colleague in the field is one who

provides assistance in the areas of supervision, research, leadership and service, as new faculty members adjust to being a junior faculty member aided by encouragement, mutual respect, opportunities of enriching professional identity, and exposure and visibility to influence the interests of others in the profession (Tillman, 2011). These locations serve the purposes to make visible female African Americans in their counselor education programs at the doctoral level and roles as faculty members at institutions, and without a personal commitment to mentor these women of color the desire to go forth in countless opportunities becomes unpromising without the benefits from mentorship (Bertrand et al., 2015; Henfield et al., 2007; Tillman, 2011).

Sanders (2016) conducted a qualitative study to understand the mentoring experiences of African American doctoral students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Historically White Colleges and Universities. Participants were twenty-six African American doctoral students. Eight themes emerged from analyzed data: professional and academic growth, professional and academic experiences, characteristics of mentor/protégé relationships, perceived barriers and challenges, team building and collaboration garner success, race and gender characteristics of advisors, rapport with mentor/advisor, and alienation and marginalization. The findings in this study showed that formal and informal mentoring were essential to African American doctoral students' professional growth. However, participants did experience marginalization, neglect, racism, sexism, and other intersections of oppression primarily at Historically White Colleges and Universities.

Fowler (2013) conducted a qualitative study to understand mentoring experiences of African American women doctoral students meaning of mentoring experiences at predominately White institutions. Participants were six African American women enrolled in a Human Resource and Development program at (PWIs). Six themes emerged from the analyzed data:

support from family members, feelings of isolation, disconnected from the program, overwhelmed and no guidance, receiving some mentorship, faculty don't expect much from African American women students and yearning for a female African American faculty mentor. These experiences among female African American doctoral students at predominately White institutions and mentorship is needed for the success of female African American doctoral students' professional identity regardless of race.

Brown and Grothaus (2019) conducted a phenomenological qualitative study to understand the experiences of Black doctoral counseling students' perceptions of cross-racial trust with White counselor educators and clinical supervisors. Participants were 10 Black doctoral students who had one or more trusted White mentor within their counselor education program. Three superordinate themes emerged from the data: reasons for trust, reasons for mistrust, and considering White trust. In this study from the superordinate theme one, four themes emerged from data analyzed: past experiences, trusting by proxy, personal attributes, and the necessity of White people. Four themes emerged from the second superordinate theme: receiving family messages, experiencing overt racism, experiencing tokenism, and experiencing dissonance. Two themes emerged from the superordinate theme three: benefits from networks of privilege and disconfirming over-generalizing of White individuals. In light of Black doctoral students' experiences of racism in their counselor education program participants did co-create successful cross-racial mentoring relationships with White counselor educators and clinical supervisors they perceived as trusting mentors (Brown & Grothaus, 2019). In addition to having White allies benefited Black doctoral students' success in the counselor education program and the profession (Brown & Grothaus, 2019). Most importantly having mentors who had interest to enhance Black doctoral students' professional identity.

2.13. Socialization Process in the Academy

The socialization process has a tremendous impact on students' development and potential to move through cross-cultural communication in social settings that may occur at the institutional, cultural, and political levels to bring light into the ways to enhance one's professional identity (Green, 2015). The socialization process involves learning about the culture, expectations, and engagement in relationships (Fakhoury & Frierson, 2014; Lidell et al., 2014). Curry (2011) noted the socialization process plays a very important role for female African American doctoral students and female African American counselor educators (Lester, 2019) to be agents in the socializing values between faculty, mentors, and students beyond the academy. The impact of isolation from social and educational networks by mentors, faculty, and their peers creates an everlasting impact on their perception in the community (Green, 2015), particularly in their program at predominately White institutions.

The small body of literature on this topic for female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI) and the socialization process at various levels overall can aid in assistance in the socialization of retention. As previously discussed, the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2016 Board, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), along with other professional organizations provide avenues to the socialization process to professional network among counselor educators in the academy.

Gildersleeve et al. (2011) used a critical race analysis to understand the experiences of 22 Latina/o and Black doctoral students using critical race theory to illustrate the endemic racism black and Latina/o doctoral students persist in pursuit of the doctorate. Findings revealed that

socialization, racial aggression, self-censorship, questioning ability or worth, adopting the rules and norms, stifling scholarly endeavors, and peer-support networks constituted to the student's journey through doctoral education. Although black students must overcome the institutional barriers within predominately White institutions, it appears that Latina/o doctoral students navigate in some ways different than black students.

Flowers (2006) conducted a qualitative, grounded theory study to understand how female counselor educators become leaders. This study found six themes from analyzed data: socialization process, gender-based inequities, gender and race, satisfaction with professional organizations, work and family balance, and advice. This study suggested that mentoring played a key role to the professional development strategies in the socialization process in the academy for female counselor educators. Though mentoring often looks different in the socialization process between White and Black females in the academy.

Lester (2019) conducted a transcendental phenomenological study to understand the experiences of gendered racism in female African American leaders using critical race theory as framework. Participants were nine female African American counselor educators. Findings revealed seven themes from analyzed data: multidimensional institutional experiences, leaders being advocates and educators, having to represent one's race, managing expectation (internal and external), developing mechanisms for survival, patriarchal spaces, and the need for counter spaces. Research on female African American leaders in counselor education is consistently short-handed in comparison to available research on this particular population. The socialization at the doctoral level encompasses various professional indoctrination into their academic department and professional career as they navigate the student experience of professional socialization (Curry, 2011; Gildersleeve et al., 2011). Doctoral students are confident in their

institutions and counselor education programs when their professional identity and career are perceived as reinforced with respect to the dignity to the degree serves (Green, 2015). An awareness to these opportunities is made through faculty in their doctoral programs which reflects developing a sense of self as a professional newcomer learning the roles and tasks of a counselor educator (Limberg et al., 2013). Bottoms et al. (2013) explained there are three types of mentoring relationships within communities which help develop an identity, make meaning, and learn the practices within the community. Within the domain of community, the why of the group is formed and the conditions; whereas the community encompasses interactions, relationships and learning that takes place with the context of these social relationships to produce the co-creation of knowledge and structure; and the last is that practice is the what that is created within the community or does together. Within academia this looks like the socialization process for faculty spending time together, critiquing each other's work, problem solving, publishing together, or collaborating on various projects within their profession. However, black doctoral students lean more into the socialization process in the academy (Bottoms et al., 2013). Furthermore, having these profound connections are important to the development of professional identity within one's community (Bradley, 2005), particularly at the doctoral level. These connections are very important for female African Americans in their educational endeavors relating to students' relations on campus.

Robertson et al. (2005) conducted a qualitative study to examine the social adjustment of female African American students at a predominately White institutions in the Midwest using Afrocentric development theory. Robertson et al. (2005) notes that racial tensions can result to maladaptive coping strategies among African Americans at predominately White institutions. Participants in this study ranged from late teens to late thirties. Three themes emerged from data

analyzed: racial prejudice, social alienation, and faculty and student relations. Although black students are more likely to create viable networks of social cohesion at historically Black colleges and universities, encouragement from faculty and student relationships with White faculty and black students can impact healthy social, educational, and personal development of African American college students at predominately White institutions.

In the history of African American culture, campus community beyond academic needs and support is also an outlet for African American college students to be supported in their scholarly productivity, particularly at predominately White institutions (Ray, 2013) through social organizations such as Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, founded on the campus of a predominately White institution at Cornell University in 1906, initially a literacy and social studies club on campus to bring forth a mission to defend African American male students and support college enrollment where they were ostracized in their academic disciplines. Moreover, three sororities were founded, one of these three were Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated founded in 1908 on the campus of a Historically Black University at Howard University to support female African American college students to meet the needs of racial and gender uplift to promote the unity and friendship as this culture reflected sisterhood for the sake of security on campus (Gillon et al., 2019). During this time, efforts in the changes on campus were made because of the segregated systemic laws in higher education and these black organizations extended social construction for African American students at predominately black (Gillon et al., 2019) and white institutions (Ray, 2013) to succeed in their educational endeavors.

Robertson et al. (2005) conducted a qualitative study to examine the social adjustment of female African American students at a predominately White institutions in the Midwest using Afrocentric development theory. Chi Sigma Iota is an international honor society which was

founded in 1985 at a predominately White institution at Ohio University for the purpose of enhancing the personal and professional development of students in counselor education programs, counselor educators, and counseling professionals (History of CSI, 2018). Luke and Goodrich (2010) noted that Chi Sigma Iota chapters in counselor education programs are a social construction to the socialization of students in the field which enhances their professional identity development. Therefore, social engagement among African American culture and access to higher education including professional organizations in their programs provides emotional support to stabilize and nurture environments in educational settings to what is an authentic community for African American students (Tugade et al., 2004) in search for racial and gender uplift and enhancement in their professional identity development.

Grant and Simmons (2008) conducted a qualitative case study methodology grounded in Critical Race Theory to explore the effectiveness of traditional mentoring functions for a female African American doctoral student aspiring for the professorate, and the professional advancement of a female African American professor who matriculate in separately predominately White institutions (PWIs). The purpose of this study was to create a model that would be useful to African Americans at (PWIs) to help administrators attract, retain, graduate, and promote African Americans. Grant and Simmons (2008) noted in the analysis one of the three behaviors that usually focus on mentor and protégé relationships is professional development. Professional development was categorized in this study as encouragement, provision of opportunities, and academic support for the enhancement of the mentee's growth in all aspects of the academy (Grant & Simmons, 2008).

2.14. Conclusion

In conclusion, there are several important factors among female African Americans; the role of religion and spirituality (Bachhua & Holley, 2004; Weisenfeld, 2015) to obtain success (Edward et al., 2011) in the academy (Lazarus & Stewart, 2002; Patton & McClure, 2009), and society (Knowles & Bryant, 2011) that influences their contributions in the counseling profession in college and university settings associated with mentorship and socialization in organizations in their program and on campus (Bhat et al., 2012; Fowler, 2013; Henfield et al., 2007; Ross et al., 2016; Tillman, 2011) to enhance their professional identity development in a community that welcomes a sense of belongingness (Bertrand et al., 2015; Bhat et al., 2012; Fakhoury et al., 2014; Henfield et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2010), particularly at (PWIs) (Henfield et al., 2011; Montgomery, 2019). This next chapter will discuss the methodology in this study which will consists the researcher as instrument, participants, research questions, research design, strategies of trustworthiness, data collection, and data analysis of the ideal frame in this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Researcher as Instrument

In relation to qualitative research, the bias must be addressed to promote the ideal of trustworthiness. For this proposed study, I am a 27-year-old female African American who is working to complete a doctorate in counselor education and supervision. I identify as heterosexual and pursuing doctoral studies in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution located in the mid-western region. I have been involved with this interest area of professional identity for the past 2 years, and in female African American college students for 6 years and had served in a leadership role to help charter an organization for African American students in a university in the mental health profession in the southern region. Moreover, I have provided leadership training workshops and was a teaching assistant at the respective institution in the mid-west region.

I hold the belief that female African American college students have the potential to attain faculty positions in counselor education and achieve advanced degrees at predominately White institutions. I have experienced racial, gender, political, and religious oppression within my own academic program and institution and can identify with the experiences among this population of women who were rewarded a doctoral degree in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. In spite of this, realizing external and internal support from faculty and peers were present to overcome obstacles. These experiences have led to the unwavering belief that predominately White institutions at times can be challenging when being a woman of color. I also have recognized the acceptance gained within the counselor education program and predominately White intuition. While the role of participants in this study is important, my role as the principle researcher is

critical to understand as well. The major role a researcher has is to genuinely understand the meaning of “voice” in qualitative research (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Based on the similarities I have with participants; I will keep in mind the possible impact of the study in terms of my own personal and professional objectives as a female African American doctoral student. I brought to the research a personal and professional investment in the resulted findings because of my goal to finish my Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision. It was important for me to examine how I perceive myself in relation to the participants and how my relationship with participants will influence other findings in empirical research similar to this population. I have hope that this study will glean insight for female African American doctoral students and faculty members in counselor education and supervision programs. In general, the aim of my research will be to fully understand participants lived experiences to the phenomena to make meaning in the purpose of their perception of professional identity development based on events, and relationships in predominately White institutions.

I discussed my considerations of bias with faculty. I acknowledged my assumptions about success factors to professional identity development to Ph.D. doctoral completion for female African American counselor educators who were rewarded a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision at a (PWI) prior to conducting and throughout the research process. I also acknowledged the chances of my views and beliefs being guided by interactions with others and knowledge gained throughout my educational experiences. Prior to this study, I familiarized myself with professional identity development and success, and my awareness to maintain professionalism.

I view success as a female African American having avenues in the doctoral programs to develop an affirming professional identity reflected by the roles and tasks of a counselor

educator. In addition to that made aware and had opportunities to present at conferences or publish research in her respective counselor education program to network among professionals who function in roles within counselor educator. More importantly, a female African American completing her Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision at a (PWI) with a desire to move into a faculty position.

3.2. Research Questions

Exploring the experience of female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI) may result in a decrease in the current disproportionately of women of color in the role of counselor educator. These three research questions were designed to uncover understanding of the phenomenon to understand success factors impact on professional identity development to doctoral degree completion.

This study used the following fundamental questions to guide this inquiry:

1. What relationships contributed to female African American counselor educators completing a doctoral degree in a CACREP –accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution?
2. How does professional identity development influence successful experiences of female African American counselor educators who attended a predominately White institutions?
3. What are the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution?

3.3. Research Design

A phenomenological research design were used because the purpose of phenomenological research was to explore the lived experiences of individuals who share experience with a specific environment such as female African American counselor educators who attended CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at (PWIs) in the United States. This research design was an appropriate methodology to address the following research question: How do female African American counselor educators who graduated from CACREP -accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions perceive factors of success to professional identity development to doctoral degree completion?

Creswell (2007) identified five main types of qualitative research designs: ethnography, grounded theory, case study, narrative, and phenomenological). Phenomenology, as a philosophy is a tradition that is consistent with counseling because it assesses detailed information about client's experiences that is a natural part of professional practice (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Phenomenological research gathers individual experiences to reduce them into a nature of the shared group experience (Creswell, 2007), and get concrete experiences of subjects being most important in a phenomenological approach. Phenomenological research consists of four philosophical perspectives and is used as an approach in this qualitative study.

The four philosophical perspectives of phenomenology are: return to the traditional tasks of philosophy, emphasizes looking beyond numerical data to explore the phenomena in world in empirical research methods. The second philosophical perspective is philosophy without presuppositions which emphasizes suspending unfounded judgements often known as epoche. The third philosophical perspective is intentionality which emphasizes that one's existence is tied

to the object itself. The last philosophical perspective is refusal of the subject-object dichotomy which emphasizes individual's give meaning to the object from their own perspective (Creswell, 2007).

Edmund Husserl emphasized our everyday existence is the lifeworld in this lifeworld the phenomena illuminate itself by the sharing of a groups voice on a lived experience (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) explained that the fundamental intent of phenomenology is to write individual experiences of a phenomenon into a description of a collective essence. Therefore, the four philosophical perspectives are grounded in phenomenological research to help guide the researcher to understand the fullness of the research participants lived experience to the phenomena (Creswell, 2007) because the goal of phenomenology is to elicit think rich descriptions about what it is like to live a specific experience (Hayes & Singh, 2012). van Manen (2017) noted that the goal of phenomenologists is to elucidate the meanings of experiences as we live them in our everyday lives. A phenomenological approach to qualitative research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of the everyday experiences (van Manen, 2017) of female African American counselor educators who graduated from a predominately White institution to examine success factors that contributed to professional identity development to doctoral completion.

Phenomenology, as a philosophy, places that you can only explore true meaning through participants voices (van Manen, 2017). Therefore, using phenomenology to capture the voices of female African American counselor educators as each give meaning to their own experiences while validating their perceptions will help to get at the essence of the phenomena. van Manen (2017) noted that phenomenologists assume that within each phenomenon there is an essence or essences shared by the individuals that experience it. The essence of this phenomenological

study is the essence of being a female African American doctoral student in a predominately White institution in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program, and female African American counselor educators have been chosen as the population to get at the essence of phenomena.

3.4. Participants

The researcher gave the interview questions a pilot run, just to get a sense of how the questions were received, how long the interview would take, and if there were any confusing aspects that needed clarification. The practice interviewee who participated in the pilot run served as a mock participant for the study by completing a practice interview with the researcher by using the semi-structured interview questions developed for this study prior to using questions with the actual participants. The researcher was aware that the practice interviewee would be critical and authentic throughout her mock interview. Updates were made by the researcher's chair from the initial interview questions. Qu and Dumay (2011) suggested that the researcher use various skills to aid in the research process such as active listening, not only that but strategic planning and preparation before, during and after the interviews to collect data emerged from interviews that is useful for research purposes.

Participants who met inclusion criteria helped to ensure that participants in this study consisted of counselor educators from across the United States who had been awarded a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision in a CACREP-accredited program. To meet criteria for the study, the researcher recruited participants who (a) identify as a female, African American; (b) hold a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision; (c) graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision doctoral program at a predominately White institution; and (d) is employed as counselor educators or has worked at least one year as

faculty. These inclusions of criteria were to ensure consistency to the phenomena as lived experiences as female African American doctoral students. Each participant completed an informed consent, preliminary confidentiality questionnaire, and demographic form online. Once participants volunteered to participate in this study, each potential participant were screened for eligibility by asking about the inclusion criteria.

The researcher combined interview questions from a wide range of research that focus on professional identity development and success factors that would address the research questions (i.e. How does professional identity development influence successful experiences of female African American counselor educators who attended a predominately White institution). The following interview questions were given to participants prior to the interview and asked throughout the semi-structured interview process.

3.5. Interview Questions

1. What led you to choose a predominately White institution?
2. Describe your educational journey leading up to your doctoral degree at a PWI.
3. How would you define professional identity development?
 - i. How did your professional identity develop at your CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution?
 - ii. What type of professional development activities contributed most to your success at the doctoral level?
4. How did gender affect your professional identity development at the doctoral level?
5. What role did religion and/or spirituality play at the doctoral level at your predominately White institution?

6. Describe the type of messages you received from prominent people in your life related to race, gender, education, religion/spirituality, and success?
 - i. What role do they play in your life?
7. Which educational and/or professional development experiences in the five doctoral core areas (*1. Counseling; 2. Supervision; 3. Teaching; 4. Research and Scholarship; and 5. Leadership and Advocacy*) contributed most to your success as a doctoral student at a predominately White institution?
8. What factors, if any, do you believe contributed most to your success at the doctoral level?
9. What were some of the influences that helped you obtain your Ph.D.?
10. Is there anything you would like to comment on that we did not cover?

These questions were chosen because they would likely get at the essence of the phenomena to understand the path that led participants in counselor education to doctoral completion. The previous chapter presented literature about African American women who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution who have been able to complete their Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision. However, this research provided minimal information about how these women have been able to achieve factors of success to professional identity development to doctoral degree completion in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. However, these could be contributing factors to support female African Americans to have a firm professional identity in counselor education. These gaps in the literature around success factors to professional identity to doctoral completion reduces the transferability in literature similar to this population. Therefore, it is important for

future research to conduct qualitative studies on topics through the lens of supporting African American women professional identity in counselor education to give space in qualitative research to hear their lived experiences about avenues afforded to them to develop a professional identity in their doctoral program.

The study was conducted at the North Dakota State University Stop-N-Go center in a counseling room located in a Midwestern state. This university is referred to as a land grant Research 2 Doctoral university. The safety of the environment is important when conducting interviews. As mentioned by Fakhoury et al. (2015), researchers stressed that in order to understand, examine, and identify the factors contributing to the success of female African Americans who attended predominately White institutions, researchers are charged to position their experience and voices within the context of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, religionism and other interlocking systems of oppression (Collins, 2000).

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

After approval for this study granted by the North Dakota State University Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB), the researcher sought to make contact with the participants (ACA, 2014). Initially, the researchers was going to send a recruitment script on CESNET Listserv as an alternative method. However, due to this study participants small population participants were sought through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling at its best was thought to be a useful strategy to get information-rich to learn about the phenomena under examination because it is likely prospective subjects will have greater understanding in relation to the phenomena and will meet the predetermined criteria (Hayes & Singh, 2012). The researcher sent an email with the three highlighted Qualtrics links to known African American female counselor educators. Nine participants replied to a direct email sent by the researcher. The researcher also

asked identified participants to recommend other participants that may fit study criteria and be interested in participating. In addition to that, the researcher also encouraged participants interviewed to connect potential participants with the three highlighted Qualtrics links who met study criteria to participate in this study using snowball sampling. Snowball sampling as a respondent-driven technique to recruit at least 10 female African American counselor educators was also another preferred method because there is a limited scope of participants in this group and barriers or difficulty to access this group would make possible to eliminate any barriers (Hayes & Singh, 2012). One participant expressed interest in participating in the study from an interviewed participant through snowball sampling. The researcher continued seeking data collection until reaching 10 interviewed participants. Therefore, I sent an email with the three highlighted Qualtrics links to known counselor educators to forward an email with this information to recruit potential participants who met criteria of inclusion where this is often referred to as “nominated sample” (Hayes & Singh, 2012), and is a culturally sensitive way to reach marginalized participants. Four decided not to participate in the study, due to unknown reasons, leaving a total number of ten interviewed participants.

Phenomenological research suggests that at least 10 subjects will provide information-rich to the phenomena under examination (Hayes & Singh, 2012). In this qualitative phenomenological study, consisted of 10 female African American counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at a predominantly White institution. Female African American counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution were selected because there is an assumption that female Black doctoral students experience racial and gender discrimination to overcome the challenges to experience factors of

success of professional identity development to doctoral degree completion at predominantly White institutions. Specific criteria to be met to participate in this study included African American, female, awarded a Ph.D. at a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution, and had worked at least one year as faculty.

Prior to interviews being conducted for screening purposes, participants who were interested to participate in this study had to complete the informed consent form (see Appendix B), participant demographic form (see Appendix C), self-administered confidential preliminary screening questionnaire (see Appendix D), online using the highlighted links through Qualtrics located in the email sent to them directly. The self-administered confidential preliminary screening questionnaire provided an introduction of the study with instructions for participants to indicate their interest to be a participant in this study, if African American, sex, number of years as a counselor educator, if doctoral program was CACREP-accredited, at a predominately White institution, whether they would be available to participate in a one 60-minute semi-structure interview, and preferred method of communication while this research is being conducted in the dates approved by IRB (ACA, 2014).

The inform consent disclosed the nature of the study and affirmed the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, and includes participates agreement to participate along with an electronic signature. The demographic questionnaire form consisted of asking participants about their age, race and ethnicity, marital and relationship status during their doctoral program, sexual orientation, gender, religious affiliation, faculty status, professional role, Association for Counselor Education & Supervision region during their doctoral program, contact information if follow-up is necessary, and additional information the participant would like for the researcher to

know. Religion was selected due to the findings that in the African American community (Weisenfeld, 2015), and at predominately White institutions religion and spirituality play a major role (Patton & McClure, 2009; Lazarus & Stewart, 2002).

Once participants had consented and identified the confidential preliminary questionnaire, and demographic form online through Qualtrics, participants that met study criteria were sent an email asking if they were interested to schedule an interview to participate in this study (ACA, 2014). Once participants and the researcher had agreed on a date and time to conduct interviews, the principal investigator emailed a Zoom link with a password to participants who consented on an agreed date and time to be interviewed along with the 10 open-ended interview questions (see Appendix E). Participants confirmed their availability in this research study by e-mail and an electronic signature of the informed consent document were needed from participants in Qualtrics prior to interviews being conducted.

The study was conducted at the North Dakota State University in a private room at the Stop-N-Go Center. During the interviews, the researcher again explained the purpose of the research study, the procedure to be undergone, instructions for potential participants to review the informed consent and reply if they were willing to participate, and possible risks and benefits to participant in this current study (Patton, 2002) suggested by ACA (2014). Participants were told every measure would be taken to protect their confidentiality and encouraged to ask questions about their confidentiality at the time of their interview. Participants were likely to experience distress while being asked questions during the interviews. However, there was no direct demand to participate in this study or complete questions, and because this study was entirely anonymous the risk was considered very small as an obligation to reflect the ACA principle nonmaleficence to do no harm (ACA, 2014). The researcher promised to deal truthfully

in all professional contacts as reflected by the ACA principle of veracity (ACA, 2014).

Participants were given the option and space to engage in relationships beyond conventional parameters as to what they perceived as comfortable and there were no penalties to choose the scope of their relationship with the principal investigator or participants as reflected by the ACA principle of autonomy (ACA, 2014).

The modality that was used to conduct the semi-structured interview were recorded in a videoconferencing method using Zoom because this software platform has enhanced encryption and embeds a meeting password as a way to safeguard the confidentiality of the participants (ACA, 2014). Therein the Zoom settings the researcher enabled the audio transcription option and used this while the interviews were being conducted. This granted participants the option to view their transcription and ensure that their perspective was fully understood during the interview process to provide accurate findings, and to focus on the interview dialogue than note taking.

After the participants had verbally and electronically reported understanding and agreement of the informed consent, the researcher pressed record and the interview started, and participants shared their experiences related to the essence of phenomena responding to the interview protocol as a guide with the 10 semi-structured interview questions sent to them to reflect over in the email that included the zoom link and password. The meaning of the method of interviewing is to satiate an interest in understanding the daily experiences of participants as they embarked on a part of their journey in a specific course of their life. Interviewing is one of the several ways to collect data through phenomenological study. In this qualitative, phenomenological study interviewing was the method for exploring participants context of female African Americans lived experiences in CACREP-accredited counselor education and

supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Hayes and Singh (2012) noted that good strategies and skills when conducting the interview process is to listen carefully to participants, show personal interest in their experience and encourage them in the interaction to allow participants to speak freely and comfortably. Therefore, the researcher took whichever path necessary to get at the essence of the phenomena.

The researcher also shared the responsibility to asked semi-structured questions during the interview to help keep track of the participants semi-structured interview while being conducted. Each interview lasted no longer than approximately 60 minutes and at the end of participants interviews the principal investigator provided participants with an opportunity to choose her own pseudonym.

After interviews were conducted, the researcher downloaded the Zoom recordings and audio transcription from the Zoom recordings. The researcher transcribed the Zoom recording and compared the audio transcriptions downloaded from Zoom recordings with the written transcription of each participant's interview. The interview protocol that consisted of 10 open-ended questions and all interviews and responses from all participants were transcribed on a password protected computer (ACA, 2014). An electronic file folder was created on the same password protected computer for the participants that included their recorded interviews and a copy of all information.

The principal investigator analyzed research data, created codes, and recorded themes from participants lived experiences to keep my promise to not disclose participant identifying information as reflected by the ACA principle of fidelity (ACA, 2014). After transcribing data, the researcher consulted with a researcher to enhance the meaning-making of findings and participants were sent an email of their transcripts to check if there were any misinterpretations

of the coding from the written transcriptions to ensure my coding aligns with their perspective of the phenomena and to note changes as needed. This ensured a way to verify findings and a form of member checking. Member checking refers to the process of bringing findings back to participants so that they can ensure their responses are accurate to them (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Participants did not recommend any changes that needed to be made to the coding on their transcripts and there was no need for any follow up interviews.

The principal investigator kept all data collection on a locked computer and after participants checked their transcripts transcribed into a written paper document it was stored in a binder in a locked room that was only accessible to the researcher and co-investigator. Every possible precaution was taken to ensure that participants' information would be treated with the upmost confidentiality, including participants pseudonyms. Any identifying information obtained by the researcher while contacting or interviewing the participants that may comprise participant's identity were excluded from this study.

3.7. Data Analysis

The researcher used Moustakas (1994) Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen Method data analysis, that was originally formed by Moustakas (1994), and later modified by Creswell (2007). Moustakas (1994) Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen outlines six steps to identify meaning units and themes into universal themes and is most frequently used in literature (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Using Moustakas (1994) Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method the researcher began with a full description of her own experience regarding the phenomenon. After providing a full description of my personal experience and conducted the interviews, each interview was transcribed. The researcher obtained a full description of each participants experiences using the verbatim transcripts as it related to the description of the experience. All significant statements relevant to the participants

experience were listed to allow the content to have equal weight using horizontalization related to the phenomenon, that were color coded to represent each theme as a way to gain an accurate interpretation of their perspectives based on the historical context of the success factors emerged from data analyzed. Color coding were based on themes that were respectively coded as a reflection of the lived experiences in African American historical context that contended with the theories chosen in this study and that were similar to findings in empirical research with Stevick Colaizzi-Keen data analysis as an approach. Then, all non-repetitive, non-overlapping statements, as known as invariant horizons of the participants experience were categorized into groups called themes, and the Highlighted feature, accompanied by the Comment feature, within Microsoft Word was used to document themes. After categorizing each statement into groups or themes, the themes identified and derived from the transcriptions were used to provide a “textual description” of what the participants experienced (Creswell, 2007; Hayes & Singh, 2012; Moustakas, 1994) which refers to what participants stated happened. Thereafter, the researcher used verbatim quotes, and during their time attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. The “structural description” of the phenomenon was constructed next, providing a detailed explanation of how the phenomenon occurred (Creswell, 2007; Hayes & Singh, 2012) of each participant’ experience from the individual textual descriptions. Finally, to complete the analysis, the textural-structural description from each participant were used to write a composite description of the phenomenon to identify the essence of the experience for the group as a whole as their shared experience (Hayes & Singh, 2012).

According to Moustakas (1994), the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen data analysis method can be used in qualitative research to organize, examine, and integrate data for the

purposes to develop individual, composite and synthesized essences of a groups shared experience. This data analysis method is different than other methods because it uses the experiences of researcher regarding the phenomenon under examine to create themes during phenomenological reduction (Hayes & Singh, 2012), in that the researcher's experience to the phenomenon is based on personal knowledge and considered a benefit when applying this method because the researchers experience can be included in the study. For this reason, the researcher used Moustakas (1994) Stevick Colaizzi-Keen data analysis method in this current study as the guiding methodology.

The researcher transcribed verbatim of all responses from the Zoom audio and video recordings into a written document and read and reread each transcript as needed, each transcript was color coded, and reviewed using member checking to allow research participants to provide clarity of their transcripts to promote credibility (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Coding is the process of placing participants responses into themes that have been identified throughout the analysis (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Data originated from video recordings from Zoom and transcribed into a paper document. Once transcribed into a written document and analyzed all information was disposed. Video files and all written information were stored in a password protected file on a computer that were only accessible to the principal investigator and co-investigator for security provisions to protect the data and remained in this location when not in use. Electronic copies of the interview transcripts were saved and protected in the same fashion. After the data had been analyzed, the Zoom recordings and transcripts were deleted. In this research process there were discussions with the research team following Foster and Ray (2012) ethical decision-making research model. The rules and regulations of the IRB were strictly followed to maintain the

ethical standards and most importantly to protect the rights and welfare of the participants in this study.

3.8. Trustworthiness

There were various approaches to ensure trustworthiness in this phenomenological research process reported accurate results to increase validity (ACA, 2014; Almaki, 2017), and mitigate researcher bias (Creswell, 2007; Hayes & Singh, 2012). Consulting with researchers who are familiar with the topic to promote credibility is how I enhanced meaning-making of findings and furthered emergent findings, in addition to that I kept an audit trail throughout the research process in a locked binder and placed in a locked room to keep evidence of the research process as an ethical and professional obligation of the research conducted (Hayes & Singh, 2012). To ensure credibility, I secured IRB approval on November 5th, 2020 and maintained integrity of IRB guidelines throughout the process (see Appendix A). For the last strategy of trustworthiness in this study, I was careful to provide enough information or thick description about the extensive description of the data collection process and analysis methods, and contextualization of the participants experiences to which any findings were applicable to participants and settings in which they work that could be generalized (Hayes & Singh, 2012) to produce transferability with similar populations in empirical research (ACA, 2014). Sample diversity included balanced representative of interviewees by gender, age, marital status during doctoral program, race/ethnicity, years as a counselor educator, and religious affiliation. As previously stated, the principal researcher aimed to recruit at least 10 participants to ensure the sample size was large enough to produce confirmability and that saturation was reached and small enough to gather rich, thick descriptions about participants experiences (Hayes & Singh, 2012). For confirmability, the Stevick Colaizzi-Keen modified method data analysis honored the

core concept of bracketing as essential to phenomenological research by sharing my lived experience to the phenomena, thereby fulfilling the standard of confirmability. Therefore, requiring me during the interviews to listen deeply and seeing fresh the themes to come to emerged themes after analyzing data. In addition, checking and rechecking the data and themes to avoid bias to report data directly as possible, and member checking during the interviews through engagement with participants to ensure that participants' perspectives were fully understood where they were able to note if my understanding and research coding was in alignment with their own understanding of the interview process to provide accurate findings in this research study (Hayes & Singh, 2012). Moreover, based on the invariant horizon essences of the phenomena in text narratives with quotes were provided to produce confirmability with participant pseudonyms to shield participants identity (Hayes & Singh, 2012), and all pertinent information and acknowledgements were given credit to appropriate authorities and bodies (ACA, 2014). Quotes are saved under the appropriate pseudonym and placed in the section where participants results were reported and given a brief introduction of their physical and demographic information.

3.9. Priori Limitations

The limitations of the study are those that are most commonly found in qualitative research. Participant demographics who met study criteria reflected differences in their age, sex, ethnicity, marital status during doctoral program, religious affiliation, sexual orientation. However, inclusion criteria for participation in this study is identification as female, African American, counselor educator who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution and had worked at least one year as faculty. In particular, I was interested in female African American counselor educators who

attended a predominately White institution, this attribution may not necessarily speak to the significance of female African American counselor educators who attended a Historically Black College or University. Specifically, this study included female African American counselor educators who were awarded a Ph.D. in a CACREP-accredited counselor education program at a predominately White institution.

Because this study only used semi-structured interviews, it is possible there were other contexts that female African American counselor educators perceived to be more salient along with a focus group. However, interviews are in alignment with phenomenological research as a data collection method. Finally, this study examined the perceptions of female African American counselor educators only. Including the perceptions of success of professional identity development to doctoral completion in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions of female non-African American counselor educators and males could have broadened the scope of this study. These priori limitations of this study also included individuals who do not chose to participant in this study.

3.10. Contributions

This study hoped to make several contributions to the existing body of literature as it relates to the population in need of success towards a professional identity at various stages (i.e., enrollment) in their counselor education and supervision doctoral programs at (PWIs). Specifically, female African American doctoral students and their professional identity experiences in their respective institutions, and the broader context of literature on existing perspectives and findings of women of color to reveal several key components of success for professional identity at the doctoral level. Knowing the importance of the role professional identity development plays in career exploration/exposure for female African American

counselor educators' occurrences that took place during and beyond their academic institution reveals the significant statistics (Black Demographics, 2013; CACREP, 2016; Vital Statistics Survey, 2012). Professional identity development is a social engagement process throughout the lifespan for counselor educators serving on any platform or initiative on any level to shift towards the growth in what is needed so that everyone can thrive off of success in the academy. Therefore, the engagement in professional activities is needed as Black females enter their Ph.D. programs with direct contact in their early stages of development to become a counselor educator (Bertrand et al., 2015; Bhat et al., 2012; Limberg et al., 2013). It is my hope to produce knowledge in the counselor education profession on professional identity development and success factors that occur in the socialization process in female African American doctoral student's CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at (PWIs). Moreover, position counselor educators as the chief career development professionals for the field of counseling, to specifically demarginalize female African American counselor educators to center in empirical research. This will also help reduce the limitations of professional identity and belonging among female African Americans desired to fulfill the tasks and roles of a counselor educator. Lastly, I hope to reduce the limitations in counselor education and supervision to make effective professional identity and success among female African Americans aspirations to fulfill the tasks and roles of counselor educator in the academe.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to examine the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. In addition to provide a reframe in literature of success through the use of counter storytelling. Chapter Three outlined my process of gathering this information and participants provided information-rich based on responses through semi-structured interviews that will be presented in this chapter. Black feminist thought addresses African American females as being visible beings in society, where through this ideology, black women are empowered to define who they are given their characteristics and through intersectionality recast their own reality by telling their own story about a lived experience (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 2018) in their social location. This social location was at a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Critical Race Theory allowed female African American counselor educators to share their lived experiences based on the essence of the phenomena through storytelling to create social inclusion in predominately White institutions. As an African American female doctoral student, in my intimate knowledge of the challenges and success factors of professional identity development, I understood and allowed participants to share with me based on their comfort level and familiarity their experiences of the phenomena, that is success factors for professional identity development during the interview process, or barriers related to their educational journey throughout their doctoral program at a PWI.

As previously discussed, a pilot interview was run to check for question clarity and to better ensure that the questions would elicit the type of rich, nuanced information that was

needed to answer the research questions. Members of the dissertation committee reviewed the questions in the interview guide and provided feedback resulting in the interview guide revisions for approval. Interviews with participants were conducted in a semi-structured format to better understand the phenomenon under examination. The semi-structured interview guide that was used consisted of 10 open-ended questions related to their perceptions of factors of success for professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. The semi-structured format allowed me to explore the process with participants related to the phenomena, I remained open and flexible and took whatever path needed to be taken to get a full picture of each participants experiences. The interviews lasted no longer than 60 minutes each. My role as the researcher interviewer was somewhat directive with regard to my interaction with study participants and how I facilitated their interviews as a collaborative conversation to help with keeping the interview questions on track based on the flow of conversation. The participants were assured that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Each interview was downloaded from the Zoom recorded and audio transcripts and transcribed verbatim into a written document, and the transcripts were emailed to the participants to check for accuracy and to clarify any misunderstandings to ensure my coding was in alignment with their perspective to the phenomena. Stevick Colaizzi-Keen Modification Method was used to analyze the data, which provided structure for the data analysis process (Creswell, 2007; Hayes & Singh, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). The steps include:

1. Providing a full description of each participant's personal experience with the phenomenon. In this study semi-structured interviews were conducted.

2. Developing a list of significant statements from the interview transcripts, (horizontalizing the data); treating each statement as having equal value; developing a list of non-repetitive, non-overlapping statements.
3. Grouping all significant statements into themes.
4. Writing a textual description of participants' experiences; that is, describing what the participants experienced, including verbatim quotes as examples.
5. Writing a structural description of participants' experiences; that is, describing how participants experienced the phenomenon or experience being described, the setting and context in which they experienced the phenomenon, including verbatim quotes as examples.
6. Writing a composite textural-structural description of the phenomenon or what is being described that captures the essences of the collective experience.

In this study, I provided a full description of my own lived experience with the phenomenon, and bracketed my experience also known as *epoche* served to reduce bias. Steps 5 and 6 were combined. Participants verbatim quotes related to the textual and structural aspects of participants experiences are included under the themes that emerged through Stevick Colaizzi-Keen Modification data analysis process to move inductively from significant statements to 6 themes: a) Convenience of the Location; b) Importance of Support from Dissertation Chair; c) Representation of African American Women with PhDs in the Community; d) I Was Needed and Access; e) Being a Black Woman in that Space and Voice; and f) Faith-based Community and I Prayed.

4.2. Research Questions

Given the research questions asked in this study, a qualitative study was most fitting for the selected population. The following research questions served as a guide for this study:

1. What relationships contributed to African American female counselor educators completing a doctoral degree in a CACREP –accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution?
2. How does professional identity development influence successful experiences of African American female counselor educators who attended a predominately White institutions?
3. What are the lived experiences of African American female counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution?

African American students in counselor education and supervision programs have addressed that external and internal support systems contribute in their success at the doctoral level along with a belief in God at predominately White institutions. In addition to that, literature of African American female counselor educators relating to success factors in tenure report that peers and faculty along with external support contributes to their retention as faculty. Primarily, when African American female counselor educators have an awareness of the promotion and tenure process. However, as it relates to research question two literature reports research and teaching skills are helpful in the professional identity development of female African Americans who attended a predominately White institution (Bhat et al., 2012). This path could also help female African American doctoral students in their publishing skills at the doctoral level to brand a successful journey in the academe in their multiple identities (Haskins et al., 2016). Throughout literature majority of the professional roles reflected of female African American

counselor educators is of research, scholar, and educator (Haskins et al., 2016; Jones-Boyd, 2016). Seemingly these roles are important to the success of their professional identity. In regard to research question three, literature is scant on the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. However, there are several studies that focus on professional identity of female African American counselor educators in the academe concerning promotion and tenure, and becoming successful Black female counselor educators (Jones-Boyd, 2016; Haskins et al., 2016).

4.3. Participants

For this study 10 African American females who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution was purposefully sampled as participants for this study. According to Hayes & Singh (2012) qualitative researchers use purposive sampling in order to identify and select information-rich participants that provide lived experiences closely related to the phenomenon of interest. Participants in this study participated in video interviews using Zoom that incorporated a semi-structured interview protocol to obtain data about their experiences of success for professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. Chapter three discussed the process of gathering participant information and how responses would be analyzed. In brief, the researcher emailed known counselor educators who met study criteria and encouraged participants interviewed to email potential participants who met study criteria. The researcher used snowball sampling to recruit more African American female counselor educators' participants for the study. The snowball approach was used as a sample recruitment strategy, whereby the researcher does not directly recruit participants but participants who had been interviewed were asked to

connect other persons who met study criteria to be participants in this study to add saturation to the study. Snowballing was used because there were no resources or specific lists available. Due to the small number of African American female counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution, snowball and purposive sampling was an effective approach to saturating the sample of 10 African American female participants. After participants completed the preliminary screening questionnaire, informed consent, and demographic survey participants who met study criteria were emailed about their interest to participate further in this study, and with their availability to schedule an interview. Ten participants expressed interest in participating in the study. Nine participants replied to a direct email sent by the researcher. One participant expressed interest in participating in the study from an interviewed participant through snowball sampling. Four decided not to participate in the study, due to unknown reasons, leaving a total number of ten interviewed participants. Specifically, demographic information was collected from each participant to assist in obtaining a full description of participants being studied. To maintain anonymity of each participant, there will be no explicit identifying information presented. Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the participants in this study including their physical description and demographic information (i.e. age, sex, years as counselor educator, religious affiliation). Following the table, there will be a brief introduction of each participant to allow a more rich and full understanding of their responses using their chosen pseudonyms. Each participant was given the opportunity to choose her own pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of the participants and all identifying information was removed or altered. All of the participants in this study identified as African American females who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Following

participants brief summaries will be the results from the semi-structured interviews conducted on video-conferencing platform Zoom with ten participants. The participants' experiences are discussed in the sequence as the interviews were conducted, beginning with Rose and ending with Joy. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Descriptions of the participants include demographic information, age, race/ethnicity, sex, marital status during doctoral program, number of years worked as counselor educator, and religious affiliation which can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographics of Research Participants (n=10)

Pseudonym	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Gender	Marital Status during program	ACES Region	Number of years worked as a counselor educator	Religious Affiliation
Rose	41	Black/African American	Female	Divorced	Atlantic	4 years	Christian- African Methodist Episcopal
Hadassah	48	Black/African American	Female	Divorced	North Central	6 years	Christian- Adventist
Sierra	32	Black/African American	Female	Single	North Central	2.5 years	Christian- Baptist
Penelope	40	Black/African American	Female	Married	Southern	2.5 years	Christian- Baptist
Marie	44	Black/African American	Female	Married	Southern	4 years	Christian- Baptist
Georgia	40	Black/African American	Female	Single	Southern	5 years	Christian
Barbara	29	Black/African American	Female	Single	Southern	2 years	Christian
Tori	43	Black/ African American	Female	Married	Southern	1 ½ years	Christian-Non- denomination
Ann	27	Black/African American	Female	Married	Southern	1 year	Christian-Catholic
Joy	34	Black/African American	Female	Single	North Central	1 year	Spiritual

Rose was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and was divorced and single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Atlantic region. She has been currently working as a counselor educator for 4 years and is an adjunct faculty. Rose

identified her religious affiliation as Christian-African Methodist Episcopal and shared her views about counseling and support, and thoughts about representation of African American women with PhD's, support, and professional identity.

Hadassah was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and was divorced and single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the North Central region. She had worked as a counselor educator for 6 years. Hadassah identified her religious affiliation as Christian- Adventist and shared her views about barriers in the profession, visibility, professional identity, and support.

Sierra was in her 30's, identified as a Black/African American female and single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the North Central region. She had worked as a counselor educator for 2.5 years. Sierra identified her religious affiliation as Christian-Baptist and shared her views about the importance of visual representation of African American women with PhD's, self-advocacy, and support.

Penelope was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and married during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She has been working as a counselor educator for 2.5 years and is an assistant faculty member. She identified her religious affiliation as Christian-Baptist and shared her views about professional identity, support, and advocacy for African American female doctoral students relating to retention.

Marie was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and married during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She had worked as a counselor educator for 4 years. She identified her religious affiliation as Christian- Baptist and shared her views about visibility, lack of awareness, support, and professional identity.

Georgia was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and was single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She has been currently working as a counselor educator for 5 years and is an assistant professor. Georgia identified her religious affiliation as Christian and shared her views about counseling and support, spirituality in counseling, and professional identity and representation of African American women in academia.

Barbara was in her 20's, identified as a Black/African American female and was single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She has been currently working as a counselor educator for 2 years and is an assistant faculty. Barbara identified her religious affiliation as Christian and shared her views about counseling, support, and professional identity.

Tori was in her 40's, identified as a Black/African American female and was married during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She has been currently working as a counselor educator for 1 ½ years and is an assistant faculty. Tori identified her religious affiliation as Christian – Non-denomination and shared her views about access, and professional identity.

Ann was in her 20's, identified as a Black/African American female and was married during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the Southern region. She has worked as a counselor educator for at least 1 year. Ann identified her religious affiliation as Catholic and shared her views about visibility of faculty of color, professional identity, and support.

Joy was in her 30's, identified as a Black/African American female and was single during her doctoral program. Her degree was received in the North central region. She has been currently working as a counselor educator for at least 1 year and is an adjunct faculty. Joy

identified her religious affiliation as Spiritual and shared her views about support in research and professional identity as a spiritual journey.

4.4. Procedures and Results

4.4.1. Procedures

In this qualitative, phenomenological research study, the researcher utilized Stevick Colaizzi-Keen Data Analysis as outlined in Hayes & Singh (2012): a) researcher providing a description of their own lived experience based on the essence of the phenomena; b) providing a description of participants lived experiences; c) listing all significant statements; d) grouping all significant statements into themes; e) writing a description of each theme; f) writing a description of each theme; and g) grouping all significant statements into one textural and structural description. 950 significant statements were found in the ten interview transcripts, of those statements 6 themes emerged from data analyzed. Stevick Colaizzi-Keen six stage data analysis was completed after #10 interviews to analyze data to generate themes to get at the essence of the phenomena under examination, and because saturation had been reached.

Beforehand, participants had to complete the informed consent, preliminarily screening questionnaire, and demographic form links using Qualtrics sent out through email. As previously discussed, the researcher emailed known African American females who met study criteria. Purposive sampling was used because it was thought that this specific population would have the most information about the phenomena. In addition to that, the researcher encouraged participants interviewed to connect other potential participants who met study criteria to participate in this study. Through snowballing sampling, the researcher also encouraged interview participants to send an email to known African American female counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a

predominately White institution. The inclusion criterion for this study included: a) identifying as an African American female; b) graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution; and c) had worked at least one year as a counselor educator. The exclusion criteria were any counselor educator that is not an African American female, graduated from a non CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a Historically Black College and/or University, and has not worked at least one year as a counselor educator.

I sent an email to known African American females who met study criteria with the three highlighted links. After receiving inquiries from participants through Qualtrics, participants who met study criteria were sent an email asking about their interest to participate in this study further and reply with their availability to schedule an interview. Ten participants agreed to participate in individual semi-structured interviews and scheduled interviews. The participants were interviewed in the video conference method Zoom. All participants interviews were video recorded, and audio transcribed on Zoom then downloaded into a paper document for data analysis. Participants had the option to check my coding of themes to ensure trustworthiness of confirmability because the researcher wanted to be sure that participants perspectives were fully understood to make note if my understanding and research coding was in alignment with their own understanding to provide accurate findings in this research study. Participants did not have any corrections for the researcher to make on their transcripts. All data was disposed once analyzed and interviews were conducted at the North Dakota State University Stop-N-Go Center in a private room.

4.4.2. Results

Phenomenology is consistent with counseling, and for several years has been used as a component in various theories such as Gestalt and existential therapy. Phenomenology allows participants to share their lived experiences by providing concrete examples to be carefully examined based on the essence in its nature of a phenomena (Hayes & Singh, 2012). This method aims to describe and understand the meanings of experiences of human life that focus on research questions such as what the success factors for professional identity development for African American females were who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. For this reason, the researcher sought to understand and explore which concepts of African American females' personal and professional identities could exist and remained affirmed (Vereen et al., 2017) in their program and institution to capture a full picture to understand the meaning in their worldview experiences at a predominately White institution.

Edmund Husserl emphasized our everyday existence is the lifeworld, in this lifeworld the phenomena illuminates itself by the sharing of a groups voice on a lived experience (Creswell, 2007). The meaning participants provides adds to the exploration of the phenomenological world in academic literature and engenders a deconstruction of the lived experiences in this particular setting. The phenomenological method focuses on two consciousness: first, to determine the role of the subject experiencing process in how meaning is created, and to better understand the nature of reality (van de Riet, 2001). Therefore, the ways in which people make meaning relies on the function of remembering. Husserl believes time is regarded according to one's experience, that is past, present, future, and the now is bound by memories in the past.

This methodology allowed participants to paint a portrait of the everyday struggles and successes in their intersectionality's experienced in a predominately White institution. Through counter storytelling-telling participants shared their lived experience based on the essence of the phenomena. In return this provided the knowledge production in a Black woman lived experiences, that is their reality in a predominately White institution. These past experiences can be resulted in participants being-in-the world with a definition of who they are in the study in responses through counter storytelling in how they resourced themselves in spaces they perceived were not reserved for them or resisted oppression in their programs and institutions. In fact, reveals which multiple identities of interlocking systems of oppression worked together and against one another.

I used a modified Stevick Colaizzi Keen data analysis method (Hayes and Singh, 2012) to move inductively from significant statements to 6 themes: a) Convenience of the Location; b) Importance of Support from Dissertation Chair; c) Representation of African American Women with PhDs in the Community; d) I Was Needed and Access; e) Being a Black Woman in that Space and Voice; and f) Faith-based Community and I Prayed. Textural and structural descriptions were generated for each of the six themes, then analyzed for participants experiences and total related words. Finally, a composite description was generated for each theme.

4.4.3. Theme One: Convenience of the Location

The first theme that emerged in this study was the prevalence the convenience of location related to attending a predominately White institution within their educational journey. The participants also shared their views about what they were told in their youth and in adulthood. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

...it was cheap, it was accessible...it was CACREP and I needed to get my PhD

(Hadassah)

She further expressed what supported her decision:

So, I didn't look at it was a predominately White institution, I look at it was more of my need. (Hadassah)

Hadassah shared messages she received as a child growing up hearing about education from her parents:

...they always said, "the sky is the limit for you," and sometimes now as a grown up I think that they inflated my ego because they just say that and there were no resources for me to you know achieve that uh but I did... (Hadassah)

She described how the location of her CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program was accessible for her to meet her need to complete her PhD that just so happen to be at a PWI. Another participant mentioned the reason for attending a predominately White institution:

What lead me to choose a predominately White institution was the location. (Penelope).

She shared her experience attending a predominately White institution:

...I felt like I was an outsider-within and I questioned at times my performance and abilities, and what I got tired of when it came to despite having high aptitude especially in some of my classes I was the odd person where you know we gonna get in dyads or triads they would always have that one person left over which was me. And I remember the professors would ask either I could pair up with one of the other groups or do it by myself. (Penelope)

Similar to participants choosing predominantly White institutions, another participant discussed:

I think two things factors in, the location, it was an area that my husband and I were willing to relocate to...my decision where I would go to was based off of that. (Marie)

She further discussed what was helpful in her decision:

..the specific program that I went to had a social justice framework uh and that particular framework was something I was also very attracted to the idea that uh that um as a counselor education program they recognized the idea and the importance of social justice is part of the work we do as counselors as professionals uh as faculty things like that so I was really really drawn to that. (Marie)

Marie shared messages as a child and those received from professors in her program:

...people who were family, friends, and people who knew me um those messages were most Black women hear “You’re strong, be strong, you got this, pray, um white people do white people stuff” you know kinda thing...who were closest to me reminding me that as a Black woman to be strong um to pray um and to be vigilant I think of racism and White supremacy...On the other hand, what comes up for me is uh who were people in the program, faculty...like those messages were mixed messages uh so on the one hand I received messages of respect and appreciation for me as a doc student and what I brought to the space as a professional and as a student...On the other hand messages were also “don’t get out of line, stay in your place uh if you want to finish” right, “don’t do too much don’t say too much” and um and I think those messages had everything to do with me as Black woman right and again the belief that Black people have a place and that place is at the bottom. (Marie)

These messages from faculty contradicted her experience within the context of these relationships she received from her family members relating to race and gender. Similar messages participants received were:

...” you’re black you have to work harder” which kinda put a lot of stress on me. (Sierra)

Rose shared that her program had good representation, she expressed:

I would say the representation, I think what they did well is um displayed a diverse faculty um that’s whether its gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity uh that’s what I appreciated most about it. (Sierra)

Another participant elaborated further to similar messages about Black women having to work harder than white people:

...” you always work hard never let the outsiders see you sweat, never let them see you cry, try your best, be your best”. It was almost like you had to not necessarily perform but yeah you had to perform, you had to have that exterior that resembled that you were of power of intelligence you were discipline and you know you are just worthy because you are. (Rose)

Rose elaborated on why she chose to attend a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution relating to the location:

...they provided me with funding that I needed to make it affordable...it made sense for me to go to a school that was in my city...They had the program I wanted to go into which was counseling so that’s how I ended up there...and offered a program that was CACREP-accredited...that did not require the GRE. (Rose)

Georgia mentioned she was particularly looking for a program that would offer spiritually integrative counseling:

There's not many very programs that offer that. Um in the location that I was looking because my family was in (state) so um that's why I chose that particular institution.

(Georgia)

She further noted on her reason:

and it was CACREP-accredited in counselor education and supervision...I felt this call, this vocational, um probably the best words I wasn't quite hitting the mark on what I was supposed to be doing. There was still this incomplete aspect of the work that ultimately my purpose and um I was like well I'll try. I'll take the GRE again, I'll apply...Um and I ended up getting into the program. (Georgia)

Georgia expressed that she typically received messages from childhood that resulted to the need to help the African American community:

...education is very highly valued in my family. Um and that was a component, that was like going to college wasn't even an option, it felt like high school this is just what you do. Um the importance of that for African Americans and in the community. (Georgia)

Barbara discussed why she chose to attend a predominately White institution relating to location:

I think I went to an open house and the faculty who were speaking were like wherever you decide to come here great, or if you decide to go somewhere else great, but make sure you go to a CACREP program...And uh went on a few interviews. You know then there's that whole pressure of once you've been accepted into a program you have very little time to tell them what you decided to do. So, they kinda made my decision pretty easy...doing my own research in PhD programs where those schools were located.

Where I felt safe enough, where I could tolerate you know being the only black person there and what areas I refused to...live in...After the interview with this institution...

Was just driving round the city was like seeing different parts of the city, talking with others about living in this area. (Barbara)

She further mentioned what supported her decision:

I kept going back to the institution. I kept going back to um and that was going back to faculty in how well they were known...There were faculty that were studying the research interest similar to mine.

Barbara shared the type of messages she received as a child:

You know I think race is a big one early and often having conversations with my parents and even you know grandparents and extended family members about um you're not going to be treated the same just solely based on the way that you look. You're not gonna always be able to convince people otherwise. You know the road to success will be a lot more challenging than some of your other friends. (Barbara)

She was still open to attending a predominately White institution despite those messages from childhood about race and success, she elaborated:

I knew what, I knew what the experience would be like going in there. Just primarily because my master's program was at a PWI. And so, it wasn't, I wasn't shock, I wasn't surprised going into what I could expect because I already experienced it. Um but more so for at least more so for my doctoral work I'm here for the program and like what's gonna make me the best counselor educator. (Barbara)

Another participant shared her decision to choose a predominately White institution relating to the location:

...I was looking for a program, proximity wise if I had to you know commute to class that I could get there within an hour, hour half, one way with the combination with

perhaps online classes...I was looking for kinda a dualistic program with kinda a asynchronous and synchronous learning style...Um and so that was really important to me whether it was a PWI, whether it was a HBCU it was really tryna find the best program that satisfy my need professionally as far as being able to work or not and um personally to be able to help still maintain life at home with family, family responsibilities so I needed a good fit. (Tori)

Tori also mentioned:

I had just met my ceiling and so I decided to start looking into PhD programs. And there were a couple, there were only two PhD programs in the state where I lived at the time. And of the two the one that I chose was just closer, it was closer to home where I lived and worked...So that helped me make my decision. (Tori)

Another participant discussed:

...I found out about it uh when I was at (some state) in (some state) cause it was about two hours away so when I was looking at programs I was looking in that area or at least not too far away and found the new, fairly new doc program at (state university). (Ann)

She further mentioned what she liked about her program:

...ultimately what made me decide on the institution that I went to was that for a PWI they explicitly talked about social justice and the importance of social justice and advocacy in their program. (Ann)

Similar to Ann, Marie also decided to attend her program because it had a focus on social justice, more specifically had a social justice framework. Joy shared how she had a father who passed and so she went through her master's and then to her doctoral program relating to location:

...my father passed um a year and I decided to apply again back to school. I got into the masters program um and then I went straight into my doctoral. (Joy)

Similarly, all participants chose to pursue their doctoral studies because the location was convenient for them and family members who were included in the decision-making process to attend a CACREP-accredited program. Participants discussed how they had challenges within their programs and some discussed that messages from childhood were congruent with their experiences at a PWI even while having a social justice perspective. However, only one participant found mixed messages because she felt respected and appreciated from faculty. One participant discussed how she expected such experiences because of past experiences at a PWI. Another participant looked at attending a PWI because of the encouragement and direct relationship she had with her mentor and mentor had with the program because she attended the program and spoke positive about her experience at a PWI. This theme reflects advocacy on behalf of faculty advocating for diversity in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at PWI's. This theme also reflects permanence of racism concerning admission criteria. The intersectionality that worked with participants was race because they sought racial inclusivity as it concerned location, including politics.

4.4.4. Theme Two: Importance of Support from Dissertation Chair

The second theme that emerged focused on the importance of support from their dissertation chair. Through the context of relationships attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at predominately White institutions, participants experienced support from their chair who ultimately contributed to their success in research and scholarship throughout their doctoral program. Two participants discussed having past research

experience and that their advisors who served as chairs contributed to this success. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

One thing she said to me, uh at first I was offended by it she was like you can't do that project and you know she used her words and she said if you do that project focusing on that you'll never finish, the goal is to finish. I want you to finish. Pick something that is going to get you the diploma and then you can come back to that research, that body of research that you are so passionate about. That is what had an impact on me of seeing the bigger picture, you know finishing what you started... (Rose)

This relationship from her dissertation chair was about passion and concern for finishing the doctoral degree recognizing there will still be work needed to be done after the degree has been obtained. Another participant described the relationship with her dissertation chair:

She believed in me. She helped me (Dissertation chair). You know all I heard about dissertation was its hard, it's this, it's so much fear. Yeah dissertation... and I almost died, you know you're a Christian. At that point I prayed like Jesus, what did I put myself into, you know it's like I'm gonna die, or Jesus come so I don't have to write a dissertation. So, when I crossed over it's like I'm alive nothing happened. (Hadassah)

She explained how this relationship also supported her racial identity completing the dissertation process, after learning she did have support despite messages from childhood because her dissertation chair was involved, Hadassah further commented:

So, it just helps with my identity in a way that I wish a community was there to say you know what you can do you're ambitious, but you don't hear those narratives. All you hear, it's against us, the system is against people like us I would say until you know otherwise for yourself. (Hadassah)

Another participant described the support with her dissertation chair when connecting her research ideas to the field and saw her ideas as important:

When I brought forth my ideas whether they seemed unconventional or whether they didn't fit because I was struggling to connect it with counselor education and supervision. Um, however what she did for me made me feel like I had a space there, made me feel like my research had a place there while it's not um typical. She created a space to say um, but we welcome that for you. (Sierra)

This relationship with her dissertation chair made her feel welcome to introduce her thoughts and beliefs about research that she was concerned about while still realizing the connection that needed to be made with counselor education. Another participant mentioned:

...what else I loved about my program was with one of my co-chairs, I remember going in the office and some of the imagery I would see... I remember there was the cross and I remember seeing like this I call it the black Jesus type painting and I was like YES, kindred spirit. (Penelope)

This relationship with her dissertation chair was important because the religious imagery was a spiritual connection that was authentic to her racial identity. Another participant mentioned in alignment to support with research and race:

...my dissertation chair was a woman of color who I think, she understood that I was trying and that she understood what I was doing...she believed in it and that was important for me. (Marie)

Unlike other participants Georgia discussed how past research experiences helped her get through her dissertation at her predominately White institution relating to success:

The process of doing a thesis in my master's program was really helpful, a qualitative phenomenological study there. So that prepped me a little bit into the workload in completing not only completing but completing my dissertation...Um when you think about the dissertation process, I was like no. I know I'm gonna finish at this time. You know I'm gonna do everything in my ability. If its delayed it's not because of me, it's because of my committee members being slow. So, I just applied that to all my work across different programs that I was in. (Georgia)

Another participant specifically discussed how she felt about feedback relating to her research identity:

I think I didn't start off as a strong writer. And the feedback, the feedback some faculty provided great constructive feedback that I still rely on to this day that helped me craft my writing to the level that it is now. (Barbara)

Receiving this type of feedback supported her to become a counselor educator even when she did not receive positive feedback, she discussed:

I vividly remember one interaction with one faculty member feedback that is was so harsh and almost like to me as a person rather than like my quality of work...I think from there I tried really hard then in my professional growth to be like the best scholar I could possibly be... (Barbara)

Unlike other participants, Tori in particular discussed the closer relationships she had in her program with faculty who were not serving on her dissertation committee, she described the relationship she had with her dissertation chair:

So, within the staff at the PWI that attended there was two minority men, Asian, African American and one minority female. Uh I didn't work closely with them I had class with

one of the instructors and one of the other professors ended up being on my dissertation, but it wasn't a close relationship. Ironically my close interactions and encounters at the PWI were with Caucasian men and women. That's just because of specialty areas quite frankly. (Tori)

Tori was close to her dissertation chair because of racial identity instead of specialty area.

Another participant discussed the relationship with her dissertation chair:

...my dissertation chair...I think...operated academic very confidently. So, I think there was a level of confidence that was transferred over to me. (Ann)

Another participant discussed advisors were there to support her throughout her educational journey to support her in the context of research at both of her PWIs at the masters and doctoral level:

...advisors...um that were for me and they didn't have anything to gain from me. (Joy)

These relationships from chairs were important for Joy to have as she grew in her research identity and gave her space to grow authentically without it being a gain towards the dominate group, she benefited from her own research interest. She described the relationships:

...advisors they really were best, they really wanted the best for me. Not just to help them get them where they wanted to go. And um just to be able to know the difference. And so, I think that's the biggest thing. (Joy)

Because of these relationships with advisors who helped her with research she found a greater purpose in why she found research to be so important in the African American community and for Black counselor researchers. She described:

Um I wanted to be a researcher; I know I saw myself as a teacher for me research was more important for me than teaching. Um because I think that research is going to push

the profession in the direction that is necessary verse teaching what thinks needs to be taught. So, I gravitated more towards research...Um it is something about people of color steering away from research and are skills that are a lot less than those that are white... it's like research isn't for us but if we're gonna tell our stories it needs to be in the mix...research is, can be very powerful... (Joy)

Similarly, participants predominately had support from their dissertation chair who supported their research topics and encouraged them to doctoral degree completion that included race, ethnicity, and spirituality. The religious image Penelope described removed religious and racial oppression in her experiences attending a predominately White institution. Participants also shared how these relationships made them find purpose in furthering research. This theme reflects participants' research and scholarship identities. The intersectionality that worked with participants in this theme was race, gender, and religion, speaking of religious images in the context of the relationship with a participant's dissertation chair within the environment.

4.4.5. Theme Three: Representation of African American Women with PhDs in the Community

The third theme that emerged from data analyzed relating to the importance of representation of African American women with PhDs in the community and their responsibility to finish. Through the context of success factors to doctoral degree completion, participants particularly had an eye-opening moment within their family and one participant discussed this moment happened in the Black Church as the need for more representation of Black women having PhDs. These influences in their daily lives were when they realized representation in society and in the counseling profession was of upmost importance to person's looking up to

them, as a result to complete a doctoral degree. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

I realized how my nieces and nephews um looked up to me and were very proud of me for pursuing my doctoral degree. It was like a badge of honor and even when I didn't want to wear that they made sure they were going to put that on me um because my auntie is going to be a doctor um you know um this is bigger than you, and it made me go harder, it made me study more, it made me at some points, I got weary where it was like something has got to give I can't do this. Life was happening, professional life was still happening um and then also trying to still do a private practice too at the same time and go through a doctoral program. I was going to give up, but I knew then that there were younger people, and then finding out that soon thereafter that the older cousins, aunts, and uncles all in their own way rooting me on because it was a representation of themselves if I won everybody won. It was just like a real eye-opening moment like yeah, you're not really doing this for you uh you got people that are looking up to you to see this through. So, its not just about you, you can quit on you, but you can't quit on them. Uh if you stop now what message would you be sending them. (Rose)

Rose noticed how family members were looking up to her and it was a responsibility she had given herself to finish the degree. Similarly, another participant described the success for finishing:

My three children, plus friends that we collected over the years. So I think we need to do more research, and write, and put that data out there because I think they bias, and I think they lie and because we don't have the resources you can't question certain things, but you can if you have resources, and you have the people, and you have the community

there are things you can question. You know so I think to be well informed about certain things and structure. I can tell the level of my children because I'm informed right. Their level and their access toward information they are getting from society, the effect of that, the impact of that in compared to other people that don't have what I have...so I look at my children after being put in uncomfortable situations, uh three children who look to me as a mini God whether I have it or not they knew that they were loved so I cannot disappoint these little people. (Hadassah)

Hadassah realized if she finished her degree then other people like her children would have more access toward information. Another participant further described how her eye-opening moment heightened her awareness of the need for women of color representation with PhDs. Sierra recalled an experienced:

One time I went back to my church and there was this little girl and she could have been eight or something I don't know but like she lit up when she seen me and I'm like what's happening and um because at the time I was used to being around people with PhDs. It was like a second nature, and I didn't realize again back to representation what that did for that little girl I was at that time you know working on my PhD and what that did for her in that moment! (Sierra)

She expressed how visual representation in her program influenced her to finish:

I think most of all it was the representation of the faculty overall that helped me develop that for me. To see how they navigated that space um how much it meant for them in order to be successful. And again the standards were in place, I seen how at the PWI the faculty they were more intentional not only to be a standard, but it to play out in our day to day professions...my advisor was a Black female she was educated at a PWI for her

doctoral degree. So, for her it was seeing her representation of seeing her navigating this journey. (Sierra)

For Sierra it was important for her to see Black women in faculty positions navigating in a predominately White institution at a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program. Another participant expressed the importance of representation of African Americans:

...being exposed to leaders in the field at different levels that helped with matriculation and development...I wish there were other Black females that were faculty whereas the Black males they did a lot with mentoring through certain things I was not able to talk with them about because of the gender dynamic. (Penelope)

Similarly, Penelope needed to see people in the counseling profession navigating the possibilities to develop a professional identity. Marie elaborated on the importance of the need for representation for Black women currently:

Um and so I think how I moved as a professional counselor was through the lens as a Black women...it came as a result of being in the profession supervising folks you know who were professional counselors and coming across people who were unethical, fragile not very good counselors in my opinion. I think it then also professional identity reflects particularly as a Black woman in this space, you know a trained counselor educator, a supervisor who my professional identity exists along with aspects of my identity that include race and gender. (Marie)

Another participant mentioned:

Um I think seeing my experiences personally helped me in the process of seeing a need for more representation...Um and the importance of that for the African Americans and

in the community um as a Black women in seeing how independent my mom had to be eventually becoming a single mom. (Georgia)

Barbara commented how she wanted to provide a better place for her family members and having a PhD would help with representation:

I have um several nieces and nephews and I think I always strive to...I don't have kids yet so I always think to look and I think I always had this mentality of how do I want to have a better space for others after I'm gone. And I often thought about my family particularly my nieces and nephews....So they influenced my decision to get a PhD, even with work I do now I'm trying to highlight children's grief, and children and adolescence grieve, and we can't forget about them because they need us and so because trying to make it a better space for them and for all children. (Barbara)

Another participant discussed how past professional experiences working in the school setting influenced her to see the need for more representation and share with those experiences in the university setting:

...to be able to bring some of those experiences...back and forth to the school to the beyond the school and what I learned outside the school the walls of the university back. So, it was kinda a two-way street. (Tori)

Similar to other participants, representation of Black women having a PhD and to see black faculty navigating representation in the academy relating to visibility. Ann mentioned:

...a black woman who joined our department in my second year and she also was helpful um in giving me another view in what it means and what it was to be a Black women in counselor education as well and she was productive. Again, um confident uh go getter. And so that was another kinda image that I saw and that showed me um the level the

work ethic, the organization that's needed to be productive of counselor educator and also counselor educator of color...helped build that professional identity and build my confidence and ability to be in this role. (Ann)

Ann needed to see how the responsibilities played out in the university setting so she could therefore be able to illustrate that same confidence of skills a Black female counselor educator had done to uphold representation. Another participant shared why it was important to have representation relating to intersectionality:

...um I wouldn't say it was one part of my identity influenced anything it was more like learning how to be a better version of myself so I can do what is necessary for others behind me. Um whether that was my gender, whether that was my race uh my sexual orientation uh whatever any of them, how can I be the best version of myself throughout this process. (Joy)

Joy also realized like all participants that there were people behind them, looking up to them at the society level. She described in her location at her doctoral program how this representation of her obtaining a PhD was influential to her:

Um and so yeah that wanting to do what I wanted to do anyway and just went there felt like the door was opening for me... (Joy)

She described her reason:

I just want people to come in contact uh the best version of myself...I want people to be in contact with the best version of me. Um and so whether that's through my mentors through people that are behind me as far as getting their doctorate of being able to just bring that because I feel like we're all in this together if we're gonna get to the next phase in life...(Joy)

Similarly, all participants discovered how representation of being a Black woman with a PhD was important within the context of race and society to obtain for people looking up to them. In this reflects some aspects of African American motherhood encouraging education. Participants encountered spiritually awakening moments through their daily experiences. Participants reframed the language on what matters at the societal and academic level for representation. This knowledge production of participants experiences was the transformation that Black women doctoral students' experiences relating to these experiences influence the status quo of Black women in society after obtaining doctoral degrees for accessibility and to make change in counselor education. These interpersonal interactions had informed and defined their purpose of finding meaning in their life and shaped their racial and gender identity. This theme reflects participants counseling identities. The intersectionality that worked with participants in this theme to finish were race and gender.

4.4.6. Theme Four: I Was Needed and Access

The fourth theme that emerged from the study was the participants' report of professional development activities that contributed in their professional identity development. Throughout the process of being a doctoral student to degree completion at participants predominately White institutions, participants predominately discussed how their identity was a contribution in their programs, primarily in classroom spaces and realized how they needed exposure in spaces off campus. Their professional identity was also developed due to their exposure and engagement in these professional development activities. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

I want to say it was just reaffirmed and I think it had been already developed for the most part because I had been practicing already in the field and I had so much so many years

of experience in the field already when I did my doc program it was post licensure. So, uh a lot of my experiences I found I provided my experiences to my colleagues.

Sometimes my professors wanted me to add to the content and curriculum that we were studying at the time to help others learn and solidify different concepts so my professional identity was enhanced in knowing that you are indeed a counselor educator because you are helping them to understand the field of counseling as well as the concepts of counseling, applying um experiential situations to the concepts to help them further understand what these theories and these other factors look like in practice. (Rose)

Rose felt like what she contributed in courses enhanced her professional identity and reaffirmed what it meant to be a counselor educator because she was bringing in her own professional experiences as a counselor in a way to enrich classroom dialogue. She further described how her professional identity was developed off campus and how she defined professional identity development:

I did attend workshops, as well as webinars to help keep me abreast of what I was practicing in the field and just to uh keep my knowledge contemporary and relevant not just to the population I was serving you know, thinking of other populations and areas of the field I wanted to get into so if there were webinars and trainings to sit down with other professionals in the field to gain their knowledge I took them. (Rose)

Similarly, Hadassah mentioned her experience of feeling reaffirmed in her professional identity:

My education and the program just validated what I am already or what I was already, and I just grew with that, but it didn't form because it was already formed it just validated me. I found during my doctoral program I can't find that article about how a professional can be a carrier of just a job or calling I think counseling is a calling for me. (Hadassah)

Hadassah already had some sense of her professional identity and like other participants had briefly heard of opportunities that influenced her desire to be visible off campus influenced by a faculty member to gain further access in the field by attending professional counseling conferences. Hadassah described candidly how a faculty member who was her dissertation chair influenced her to be visible, and view of professional identity development. Hadassah expressed:

I went to a lot of conferences to see what was out there. I did interact with doctoral students and doctoral candidates. I published in ACA just book review you know I was exposed to things like that. (dissertation chair name) was very encouraging to say put yourself out there and you know I was interviewed because I wanted to teach so I interviewed a lot outside (of city and state of doctoral program) to see what was out there and just to interact with people, so traveling to conferences...(Hadassah)

In relation to Hadassah's view on professional identity development she expressed:

I was already in the helping profession so uh it wasn't necessarily defining me, my identity because I think my identity had already been formed anyway. (Hadassah)

Sierra had a positive experience and found her own definition of being a Black woman off campus that adds to her importance of being a Black woman having a doctoral degree. Sierra described:

I had a responsibility far beyond the doctorate title but actually that was the work, it does create access, it does create a level of respect but also like the scripture says to much is given much is required so I truly believe that I have a responsibility and if I have this, this degree and not doing anything with it to impact change to serve in whichever way I choose it feels useless to me and I think for me it was never about the title, I came in touch with it. (Sierra)

Sierra realized the need far beyond the doctorate title and the responsibility it would carry once obtained and charged herself to that responsibility. And further, Sierra described how her professional identity was developed at her CACREP-accredited program:

I went to a conference and I was listening to Shawn Harper. I was going to conferences not seeing many people who look like me. Um historically white male dominated field. Um initially I really struggled with that um but what I had to do as a counselor was recognize who I was in the community that I wanted to serve and while those spaces didn't feel comfortable for me because people didn't look like me, I recognized um that I was needed in those spaces and representing a whole body of black women in those spaces...I more so think of a self-reflection journey in finding what it looks like for me in a profession that where people didn't typically look like me. (Sierra)

She realized how she was needed in her CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program, and described her view on professional identity relating to the experiences of not seeing people who look like her as a result to her personal identity:

Um I think there was that professional identity piece but in my own way a personal development within the counseling profession um and so entering the counseling profession per se was one thing, but I think I had to connect with who I was even more so. (Sierra)

This realization came with connecting her personal and professional identity at the doctoral level. Penelope had similar experiences relating to how her professional identity developed beyond her CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program:

I had participated in a leadership academy um on state level and then... I had went to um a leadership institute development uh that was through ACA so then for me that

definitely helped with my professional identity...being able to collaborate uh on search projects and uh attending professional counseling conferences. (Penelope)

She further mentioned:

I did Chi Sig where I was accepted as a leadership intern to fellow. (Penelope)

Penelope had opportunities to develop her professional identity within her program and off campus by attending professional counseling conferences. Similarly, another participant described:

I think participating in conferences were definitely influential...I used to look forward to conferences you know and at the time being a doc student, traveling with my cohort and and colleagues to these conferences and meeting people who were either doc students like we were or you know meeting some of the professors that we read about...(name) oh my God that so and so and I was like ah! And so, um you know I think teaching, but also attending professional conferences definitely influenced. (Marie)

Marie discussed teaching in class and candidly the need how off campus access was influential in her professional identity developing and those relationships involved. She shared her definition of professional identity development:

I think professional identity development is defined in a number of ways. I think as a professional it was always important for me to first and foremost be clear about what I believed and what I valued just as a person, what were my values, what were those things I always thought were true um real and good so I had to answer some of those philosophical questions for myself with that as a foundation um being about to be in the counseling profession where there was a lot of alignment to my personal values and the

professional values really. I think um I guess what is coming up for me I felt it was congruent right, what I personally believed was what the profession believed. (Marie)

Georgia was the only participant that had a teaching assistant. She discussed her experience:

...um so having teaching assistantship...I was a teaching assistant for two different professors' um, so I had a little bit of that experience and I liked it. And I was like well maybe I can shift into...thinking about teaching. (Georgia)

Because her experience was positive in her relationship with faculty as a teaching assistant, she considered teaching and it was influential in her becoming a counselor educator. Georgia shared her definition of professional identity development:

It really is a type of formation professionally and personally that there is such uh personal work in what we do as counselors and the process of becoming a counselor and being a counselor in training takes you through so much to look at your own stuff and um to be able to bracket whatever comes up as you best serve your clients. (Georgia)

Georgia realized the importance of personal and professional development based on her experiences as a teaching assistant and desire to be a counselor educator. She further elaborated:

So that's part of that formation and there's professional of being on top of the various different researches that comes out, so staying knowledgeable about that, um uh developing clinical skills of expanding competency, and empathy. And so, I see that you know as chief primary components. (Georgia)

Georgia also mentioned how she had to get access to learn about additional opportunities off campus:

...there was a new professor um my last year. First year there and um I was her research assistant and she was telling me all of these things. I did not know about ACES. She was

telling me all these things. Oh! There's a conference in (state). You should go if it's something you're interested in. It's in two weeks. And I was like okay! I can go for one day and I went um and I saw other classmates...(Georgia)

Another participant shared how having access to professional conferences influenced her personal and professional identity development:

I think also attending and presenting at conferences whether it was national, regional, local was helpful for me just cause...so it was just hearing from other people hearing about things that I know nothing about and that someone is telling me something that is important for me to know about have been, was helpful when I was a doc student...it was also just a nice way to see people who look like me even if it wasn't a lot of us it was still more than just me. So that was a all be it expensive professional development. It was helpful development for me in my growth in who I connected with. (Barbara)

Several participants noticed how these connections were influential in their growth off and on campus relating to access. Barbara further described:

...having conversations with them and learning what their professional experiences have been like and comparing their experiences at a PWI with my experiences. (Barbara)

It was important for Barbara to be around other doc students who looked like her to connect with professionally and personally. She also mentioned how in her doctoral program her professional identity developed and shared her definition of professional identity development:

I was involved in the CSI chapter um within my PhD program...I see professional identity as a process of coming to understand who you are in your professional world um and how does all aspects of your life play a role in that. (Barbara)

Tori shared how she thought she needed to develop her professional identity and why she was intentional relating to race:

...caused me to recognize what was in front of me. What are the resources um accessible to me and if what I need is not there, when would I need wasn't there...So I was intentional about trying once I got there and once I realized you know I was kinda at a loss of where to go and how to navigate the PhD world. Let me be clear once I got a good year under my belt, I quickly ascertained the notion of, I gotta go out there and establish some things. I gotta figure somethings out for myself. And start gleening for experiences from experiences within my school and in my college within the university and also looking beyond. (Tori)

Tori believed that it was also necessary to be proactive in discovering what was accessible to her despite not having what she thought would have been there for her ready and prepared in her doctoral program. So, she advocated on her own to gain access to resources. Tori mentioned how she had access to conferences and meeting doctoral students as an NBCC fellow:

I was fortunate to be, I applied for and uh got accepted for the NBCC minority fellow. So, I was a minority fellowship participant and that was for establishing professional identity because I was able to connect with other minority PhD students and EdD students in counselor education across the nation. And we were a cohort and so we were able to attend professional conferences, trainings, we connected among our group, we shared resources. (Tori)

She described:

So that experience was invaluable because NBCC was very generous with financial support uh as far as a stipend. In addition, we were able to attend conferences at no

expense from out of our pockets. We were able to again meet together as a group, they trained us on professional development, CV, uh um research tips, leadership within counselor education. So that fellowship opportunity was priceless in many ways both personally and professionally. (Tori)

She also mentioned how she gained access to develop her professional identity within her program. And shared her definition of professional identity development:

I applied for and was accepted into the Chi Sigma Iota uh fellows program.
...looking beyond the current PhD at my school and for opportunities through professional organizations affiliated with counselor education to help shape my professional identity as a counselor educator. (Tori)

Another participant also mentioned how she had to look beyond her doctoral program to access ways to continue developing her professional identity outside her program at conferences as she held a leadership position:

...outside the program so I started joining um ACA and being more involved in whether it was a like being a conference proposal reviewer...it helped to build my professional identity around counselor education. (Ann)

She also mentioned in her program:

...I was uh the secretary of the CSI chapter for one year and I helped with the social media. (Ann)

She described:

...so that helped me to interact with master's students and also um to help kinda run an organization. (Ann)

This was a meaningful experience to Ann because it was important for her to build her skill set to be on a team of counselor educators. Another participant mentioned and shared her definition of professional identity development:

Uh I presented at ACA this...all my research not just the ones with other people but pretty much I had ACES uh both north central and and at ah large uh national. I did presentations in the community...And so for me I think professional development is, its best suited with when its aligned with what your best suited to do. What's purposeful for you not for what everyone else thinks is purposeful for you...(Joy)

Joy always found meaning in her professional development in the work of research and what that meant in the Black community. She mentioned what professional identity means in the context of spiritually:

...I think for me just my personal and professional development kinda coincide together. Um I think that when your fully present spiritually in your journey your gonna develop in your profession as well. (Joy)

Similarly, as a shared group experience, participants discussed how attending professional counseling conferences contributed to their professional identity and supported their racial and gender identity as Black women. This was as a way that their professional identity developed in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution could be sustained in the opposition of race. Participants discussed being a member of Chi Sigma Iota organization in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program. Given their prior knowledge and professional experience around specific topics was a major contribution to their voice in class discussions being licensed professional counselors. Participates described how participating in class discussions on course

content and concepts contributed to their professional identity. Participants definitions of professional identity development primarily centered Black women values in counseling that they felt contributed to access to success which eliminated barriers attending a predominately White institution to advocate further for the counseling profession off campus beyond classroom spaces at professional counseling conferences to enhance their professional identity meeting people and discovering what is accessible to them in the profession. Primarily attending conferences in the area of leadership and advocacy. Participants had some capacity in classroom spaces to teach. Only one participant had a teaching assistantship. Respectfully, becoming a professional takes place on two different levels, that is structural and attitudinal (Hall, 1968; Kerr, VonGlinow & Schriesheim, 1977). The structural level encompasses formal educational and requirements for entry into a profession. On the other, the attitudinal level can be defined as a person's "calling" to a particular field. This theme reflects participants teaching, and leadership and advocacy identities. The intersectionality that that worked with participants in this theme was political status and against was gender and race.

4.4.7. Theme Five: Being a Black Woman in that Space and Voice

The fifth theme found in this study that emerged from data analyzed concerns gender and their professional identity development relating to success factors. Through the context of how gender played a role and impacted their success at the doctoral level at their predominately White institution, some participants discussed how they never thought critically about gender affecting their professional identity attending a PWI. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

Um I'm not sure if gender affected it at all um our cohort was mostly women, we definitely had less men in our cohort, definitely significantly less, but I do want to say the

cultural and ethnic diversity amongst the minority women um that was significant because we were not all just Black and African American um we weren't all just you know from the north we had one who was from another region. There was just distinct things that connected us... we were diverse so we connected on that level. So, I don't think it wasn't so much as being a woman impacted, it was more so we noticed that we were the only minorities and more so uh the only women of color in our cohort. (Rose)

Rose saw the significance of how cultural and ethnic diversity connected who they were as women of color. Another participant described through the context of being a woman of color in her program through the intersection of gender and race:

Well I never really payed attention to that, there was a guy that was in the program with us, he was a White male and he was just talking big, and he was payed attention to more because he was talking big... you can see how my voice was underrepresented...you know it's like I have a lot of baggage of things that would put me down and these other people in the class don't have all those things that I have, you can see whatever they say is being payed attention than mind. So, I wouldn't necessarily say gender even if it played a role, more so race. (Hadassah)

It was obvious Hadassah experienced sexism in class as her voice was overpowered by a White male who held dominate group status. Hadassah discovered through her experience how her voice was needed to be heard as a result of being overpowered, in the classroom, yet not really thinking about gender. Another participant described in a similar way:

I wasn't thinking critically about gender um when we came in cohort style, so when we first walked in the class it was seven of us, males and you know females, and I instantly felt imposter syndrome. I'll never forget the first day of classes in qualitative research

class that was my first ever class I walked in to I had just moved into (a southern state) and I literally called my mom after the class because I felt like I didn't belong um I felt like again I walked into a class they were males, a white male dominate field historically. Um then to add to race and ethnicity on top of that at a PWI so then all those intersecting identities. I instantly felt like I didn't belong uh I instantly felt like I didn't have a voice um I felt um they had made a mistake I shouldn't be in the program...(Sierra)

Similarly, Hadassah and Sierra who felt imposter syndrome as a result of not realizing they had a voice in the program, Sierra described how she overcame her challenges:

It took me to own my voice, own my position in the program and you know that it wasn't a mistake but that took a lot of self-reflection on my end so then not necessarily anything changed about my circumstances or my surroundings but more so my um how I received my space in a doctoral program. (Sierra)

In light of their experiences, Sierra expressed ways how she resisted oppression and shared her view about CACREP while being in the program:

...just the design of CACREP...I do believe the standards created an environment that welcomed various identities...(Sierra)

Another participant described in context the need for understanding herself in that space in her program:

...uh starting with my very first semester, one of my faculty advisors slash mentor had encouraged me to join not only the American Counseling Association, but get involved with the (a southern association of counselor education and supervision state) for multicultural counseling and development. So, I had to learn about the history structure and organization in that. (Penelope)

Penelope had to gain a deeper meaning of why it was important for women of color to be apart of black counseling organizations to fill in the void for gender and racial uplift that would not only help them in the program, also in the field, and along that experience she mentioned:

...in the classroom space uh one of the issues I experienced is being a black woman and doctoral student was being black, black female...I remember in classroom spaces people would identify as feminist, I identify as womanist, and what I would notice in classroom spaces especially when professors were not around there was like...I experienced microaggressions and macroaggressions. (Penelope)

Penelope described,

I remember having discussions with some peers... I been in every single classroom with you throughout the program and you still don't know my name...I'm just like, I can't... (Penelope)

In another encounter of discrimination, she mentioned,

There was a black male uh he graduated a year ahead of me, uh he was more mature, he was the one everybody wanted to do a project with, and I remember they were like ahhh he's just so awesome and he really was awesome. They just wouldn't be able to give examples of how awesome he was. It was just he was so awesome. (Penelope)

Participants began to realize what it meant to not only be Black, also a woman in a predominately White program. Another participant described,

Going through that process as a black woman and then as I'm in research looking at how black women are affected by stereotypes it was hard to see some of those dynamics play out in the program that was supposed to be about social justice...same issues about stereotypes and bias were present in that program... it was disheartening for me to

learn...so it's not just about being a woman, it's about being a black woman in that space.

(Marie)

Similar to other participants experiences of being a Black woman in classroom spaces, Georgia also discussed her experiences:

So, in my classes themselves there were a lot less space for the one or two of us females who were present to speak. And I sort of think about double duch, if your familiar in the process of getting into it. You're like seeing the ropes go and your trying to figure out when's the best time to jump in and it felt there's an opening, no no it's closed another one is speaking. (Georgia)

Similar to other participants who had to find their voice, Georgia discussed in this experience how she also had to learn how to find her voice relating to gender differences in classroom spaces:

So, I had to learn to speak up a little bit more. Um especially when the perspective didn't include not only a female perspective but a perspective of someone who has experienced marginalization. (Georgia)

Participants have discussed essentially what they have had to do to bring their voices in spaces.

Georgia further described why she felt the need her voice should be heard in the classroom:

I just also opened my eyes to what also comes up for me um and saying yes, I do have a master's degree and I can share what I've learned with you. Um but stepping into that sort of power that that's not only something that can be done for one class, but that is real across the board that I do have something to offer and to share. And my way of doing this is creative and I think you need to know who I am. (Georgia)

Another participant discussed a similar experience in the classroom related to attention to men being heard more:

I definitely think in my program there were more women than men...I think when the men spoke, I think that there was more attention to what they were saying in some capacities both inside the classes and outside the classes. Ugh and that was tough...
(Barbara)

She further mentioned how these experiences made her feel:

So, I think the gender piece may be recognized more similar um so of the oppression I might have faced, and they would have seen the privilege others might have had, and in their own professional growth. (Barbara)

Another participant mentioned coming to her own reality relating to gender and positionality in a room to create space for her to show up in how she used confidence being a Black woman:

...um gender and position and um in the confidence in who I was and what I was bringing to the table...(Tori)

She described:

I started to kinda navigate the doctoral world, so I don't think gender... in some instances I don't think it helped or hurt but quite frankly. Uh I'm always mindful that uh I consider myself as a double minority right, that a woman and also a woman of color. Um and being a woman of color sometimes the only women in the room or only women with leadership and that kinda thing at the table...as a Black woman, as a woman of color interestingly enough whereas that's a no brainer when I showed up you know who I am. When I showed up, you knew who I was as far as trying to fit or not even not fit into what was already there. Or find a space. Or create a space for me that was already there at

a PWI. I'll be honest with you there were times when you know the magnitude of all of it was so big that there were times when I did feel race was a huge factor. And I know that may sound strange but that's just the reality of it. Sometimes the learning there was so much new learning experiences that maybe race and being a female wasn't there, but it was always overt. I always knew and would also say those were the things that fill me.
(Tori)

Tori also had to find ways to use her voice in her program. She discussed:

...I voiced when evaluations came, and opportunities came to speak up...better believe I was able to communicate and articulate what I liked and didn't like or what I thought could have been handled differently. But at the same rate I didn't stay in that space um. I did go out and look for ways just to make this experience better for me. (Tori)

Another participant mentioned how the relationship with her dissertation chair who was a black male helped her relating to being a Black women in that space relating to voice:

... it made it feel more natural to feel like I can speak up. (Ann)

This was important for Ann because she had a desire to be in the profession as to how she thought about and saw herself as a faculty member through owning her voice. Another participant mentioned how it was with her being a Black woman in that space:

...in some of my classrooms um they tried it and I was like nope...like I said it was all women...so I just seen it as being catty women...(Joy)

Joy mentioned how politics surfaced around the tension relating to gender:

...I was blinded to a lot of the politics at first um by the end of it I was like oh I know what this is...I kinda just took it for what it was when you see the same things in different areas. And uh I'm glad I had mentors being able to be able to help me through that. (Joy)

Similarly, all ten participants experienced gender and race discrimination. However, six participants did not initially think critically about how gender would affect their professional identity development in their doctoral program, and race became more salient to all ten of them as they navigated in their spaces in classrooms and institution. Participants felt like their voices were silenced in the program because of their intersectionality of race and gender. One participant discussed how she experienced microaggressions due to people in the program not knowing her name. Participants felt imposter syndrome because of their race and ethnicity while in the classroom attending a predominately White institution. There was seemingly a significant difference between professors being present and absent in the classroom and how black women had a vocal opinion to what matter in conversations. Only one participant discussed having a mentor to help in her space.

As previously discussed, they were mostly needed due to their political status as professional counselors. Participants experiences were not necessarily successful, yet overcame, in such instances they had to recast and rethink about gender and what it meant to be Black women in a predominately White space. Participants experienced microaggressions by their white counterparts, due to stereotypes. Participants resisted oppression by utilizing their voices and owning their positions in that space. Given that students of color become masters of deflection, forcing them to dissociate themselves to maintain a sense of safety in these circumstances that may often come in the form of the microaggressions experienced in predominately White situations that lead them to struggle with their abilities with their counterparts and in disengagement from academics (Ross et al., 2016). All participants described how they used their voice and sought ways to keep their racial identity in balance through gender uplift with theories that resonated with their lived experiences (i.e. Womanist theory). Womanist

thought is indigenous to Black women history, heritage, and communal experiences as woman of African-American descent (Rousseau, 2013). This theme reflects advocacy on behalf of counselor educators in the classroom. The intersectionality that worked against participants in this theme was race and gender.

4.4.8. Theme Six: Faith-based Community and I Prayed

The sixth theme that emerged in the study was the prevalence of religion and spirituality related to participants experiences. Through the context of how the role of religion and spirituality played at their doctoral program attending a predominately White institution, participants stated prayer was as way to communicate their struggles to God. They discussed insight on how prayer opened awareness and avenues for them to obtain their PhD and is a symbol of faith. The participants strong sense of faith, religiosity, and spirituality in the context of community represents their lived experiences. The participants also shared the types of messages they received from their childhood about religion and spirituality from prominent people in their life. Below are supporting quotations from participants.

Having a support system, um my church sisters, um my church family, my pastor he prayed for me a lot um because he knew what I was going through with the doc program and he also knew all my personal stuff too so he was praying for me even though you know that's what pastors do they pray for their members. (Rose)

Having support not only from the church was helpful but also her pastor being symbolic of faith. She described through the role of spirituality in her relationships with cohort members:

You know having faith and hope and praying for each other for whatever it was we were struggling with, the course work or we were struggling with life balance, or whatever was going on personally um but we did talk about prayer, meditation, we talked about at one

point or time, you know my cohort member threw a scripture out there every so often.

(Rose)

Rose's prayers fostered a sense of connection in the environment, and with other people like her cohort members strengthened her faith that provided a sense of relief to finish the degree.

Spirituality was used as a coping mechanism. Rose contributed to the richness of this theme as well as by explaining her feeling of what she heard growing up about spirituality:

I was raised to definitely "keep God in your life, keep spiritual Christian people around you", um my mom would say, "don't take no wood and nickels", and initially that was applied to relationships and um relationships with men...but then that turned to in period in life you don't take any wood and nickels, you don't let people you know play you like a fool, um be proactive, be wise, pay attention to your intuition. (Rose)

Another participant described the role of spirituality that was prayer:

I prayed and I was a part of the leadership in my church, the pastor was a professional counselor too. So, he gave me perspective he helped my work (professional work) ...with English, so you know everything had to be looked at. (Hadassah)

Hadassah used religion as a way to support her professional identity in leadership at the church through the support from her pastor. She further discussed the significance of spirituality-particularly prayer as an act of faith at the institutional level:

I had a writing consultation through the library every week and so I prayed, and I prayed, and I prayed, and I prayed, and I prayed, and I fasted, and I cried.

(Hadassah)

Both Rose and Hadassah discussed the role of pastors within the church and influence of spirituality through prayer attending a PWI. For Rose it was a coping mechanism, and Hadassah,

it fostered her identity development as a professional counselor. Sierra discussed specifically why there was a need for her pastor in the role of religion and how this allowed her to have faith within her own institution while seeking community:

. . . maybe like my second year a pastor he was a Baptist pastor and I think he came to the area because of his wife job so he started up his church so it was literally maybe like ten of us and there were students, undergraduates, grads and we would get together in one of the classrooms every Sunday. Some of my lowest darkest moments were in that program, I knew that I would have community, I knew that I could be transparent with them uh and I knew I could show up with my raw emotions. Uh so I was connected with them. I could see. I established that relationship with them I noticed my confidence changed. I noticed my ability to say I needed help changed uh and I noticed clarity in my relationship uh with God...(Sierra)

She described this in a way where she was able to be black in a predominately White program as she sought transparency with people who she could be vulnerable with on campus. She described:

When I first moved to (doctoral institution) that was one of the most important things, how I can stay in touch with my spiritual practices, how can I continue prayer, how can I stay grounded....I felt disconnected particularly when I was going through a doctoral program which I relied heavily on prayer because there were moments when I wanted to give up or moments when I did quit in my mind I was going to quit uh I didn't feel I had that cornerstone which was the church. (Sierra)

Sierra sought a faith-based community that resulted for her on campus because there were no Black church's in the area. This manifested her faith in knowing that God was with her at her

predominately White institution. Another participant mentioned how she was isolated in her religious beliefs because of the assumption from her peers on campus:

...quite a bit would go down about my abilities that I was deficient because of my intersecting identities or another project I worked on because of my beliefs it was assumed I would be super conservative or super liberal. And there was like no in between and I was like yes, I identify as being Baptist, however I'm very open. I remember ohhh yeah this would have been my second year in the doc program, and I remember a peer had a comment about I identify as being Baptist-Christian, I must hate one particular group of people and I was like no. (Penelope)

She discussed how religious discrimination was made through the assumption by peers that took away from the experience of her developing a professional identity as a scholar because of the role of religion. She described:

I would say religion and spirituality was actually a coping mechanism for me. So being able to uh have a higher power to guide me um that was something that helped me go on throughout my process cause there were times when I thought about giving up with the program...but having my faith based community that definitely helped with restoration not only my thoughts (prayers) and ideas but to keep me motivated to continue throughout that process. I kept a journal and I actually still have this journal where I have a journal and posts it where I write inspirational messages...so remembering trusting the process and letting my light shine or being able to live the dream or I say slow and steady wins the race. (Penelope)

For her it was important that she had religious concepts and scriptures that would buffer against negative messages from peers that lead her to prayer in challenging situations as a coping mechanism. Another participant described:

...being able to pray and you know having that connection to a faith community uh reading my bible and also trusting and knowing that God uh is with me and that God had me and at some points was all I had to really kinda lean on. (Marie)

She further emphasized how in relation with prayer through similar experiences with participants in their program she was able to find meaning in her purpose in her dissertation. She expressed:

There were definitely some critical moments that happened during the doctoral program for me...what actually led to the research... I was working for an agency I had been working for years worked my way up to a senior leadership position and experienced discrimination, race and gender discrimination this happened when I was in the doctoral program and it was the worst fight of my life...because of that fight there were a lot of physical and mental health things that I dealt with in that space and it was God that really brought me through that um you know reading, praying, going to church and really talking with God trying to get an understanding why is this happening to me ah! And then the experience became the research. So, then I was like okay God I see what's happening here...it was you know my belief in God at the end of the day. (Marie)

Marie contributed to her experience with the types of messages she received in her childhood relating to prayer:

...it was about be strong, pray and you know "white people gone do what white people do". (Marie)

Georgia used spirituality to enhance her role as she acquired skills and training in spirituality in her counselor education and supervision program. Spirituality for her enhanced her identity development. She mentioned:

I focused on spirituality for my master's thesis there. Um but what we were taught, we were taught you don't talk about it. Um address spirituality unless the client does, let them say what they have to say and move on. (Georgia)

Her program discussed spirituality because it included pastoral counseling as a specialty area. Once she was in her program, she discussed how spiritually played a role for her personally:

I felt like the world kinda turned upside down when I started the program. Um and I talked with another, I had a friend, who was a year ahead of me an African American woman as well. And I was like do this feel like spiritual war far to you. (Georgia)

She described:

Like there are all these things that are coming. Whether it was personally or throughout the program that felt like obstacles to actually completing the process. Um and she was like absolutely there are so many things that went hay wire during that time. Um so I think my faith deepened as I leaned on it more specifically, grounded myself to remind myself, why I was doing it and the purpose for it. (Georgia)

Similar to Georgia's program focusing on the component of spirituality and religion. Another participant also had classroom conversations about religion and spirituality that particularly came up relating to professional identity:

I was...at the institution the state was having conversations about whether or not counselors could refuse to see clients based off their personal uh professional value...And so that was big...because that is not the way our profession um and then like

all types of ethical concerns came up with that when they were introduced with this law.

(Barbara)

Spirituality and religion for Barbara fostered her identity development at the doctoral level at her CACERP-accredited institution. Tori discussed how her faith-based environment was at home where prayer was used and having a church community to help get her through the doctoral program:

It wasn't anything I was apart of a group; it was never apart of like a religious organization on campus but in my home and in my personal life uh at the core of who I am and my beliefs it helped propelled me through the program. Absolutely... It came from home it came from church...(Tori)

She further mentioned:

For me personally now I am very clear I would have not have made it through my journey without relying on um my Christian experiences background and quite frankly my Lord and Jesus Savior Christ. I am very spiritual. (Tori)

Similar to Hadassah, who mentioned that she had to go to the writing center weekly at her PWI. Another participant shared the types of messages during childhood relating to working harder and how this related to her experience:

I was told with a lot of African Americans...told that we needed to work harder. So, I felt there were times when you know I had probably study twice as long or had to write or rewrite uh trying to get a handle on academic writing in ways my peers may or may not have had to do...(Tori)

Several participants discussed how messages and also their experiences were congruent to those at their PWI's relating to course work at the doctoral level and spiritual practices. Ann described

her experiences in the program and way she relied on her faith and prayer as a coping mechanism:

...I relied pretty heavily on my faith so you know I would pray before test...I was praying that what is for me will be for me. (Ann)

In the context of those words in her prayer she described:

So that allowed me to kind of not take in on as much stress as maybe as my peers because I did have faith to rely on...I really leaned into my faith in times of struggle when anything big came up like when I had comps. I prayed right before comps. I prayed like over the email that I submitted my comps through and so for me I think it was a sense of support uh something to lean on during a doc program that's challenging. (Ann)

Prayer was important for Ann and provided a sense of emotional release from things that could cause and effect her emotional well-being as she realized her faith in God would sustain her through the context of the words she had prayed as she provided a reframe in this:

... there has to be something at the end of this program. (Ann)

Another participant used spirituality to promote psychological resistance in her doctoral program. Joy mentioned:

...if it wasn't for my spirituality background, uh just believing that things has a higher purpose than what I'm dealing with...So it kept me grounded in my work in doing the work that was necessary...like I said...a spiritual journey. (Joy)

Similarly, three of the participants further discussed how a relationship with their pastors was an avenue to get through the program. Faith-based communities were spaces where participants could be fully transparent about their experiences attending a predominately White institution. All participants prayed continuously, which was an influence of their experiences to

complete their course work and doctoral program. Prayer is symbolic to the African American culture and Black women attending predominately White institutions that demonstrates trials and what had they done in their experiences to obtain success to doctoral degree completion. This theme also reflects how Black women have resourced themselves in spaces they perceived did not welcome their spiritual practices-particularly prayer in response to their marginality in their program leading them to off or campus locations that are more restorative, as a result to resist oppression. Womanist thought is rooted in how African American women navigate race and gender oppression using the spiritual dimension as a foundation to provide optimum well-being, and to maintain their cultural distinctiveness and integrity (Rousseau, 2013), thus a reflection of African American culture of women in academia and used as a theory for some participants in this setting in the study. One participant described how her pastor contributed to her professional identity in response to her marginality within her institution as a professional counselor because her pastor was a professional counselor too. One participant spirituality was used to enhance her identity development because she wanted to develop her identity in this as an area of specialty. The context of participants prayer described their thoughts and words that addressed a divine force will act on their behalf to complete the PhD degree by faith and keep them spiritually grounded as a higher power would guide them. This theme reflects leadership and advocacy identity. The intersectionality that worked against participants in this theme was race and gender because of the lack of cultural sensitivity of their religious practices.

4.5. Summary

The purpose of this Chapter was to present the results of African American female counselor educators' perceptions of success factors for professional identity development who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at a

predominately White institution. A phenomenological research study and Stevick Colaizzi-Keen six step analysis method was used to understand the success factors for professional identity development and answer the research questions. Utilizing the Modification of the Stevick Colaizzi-Keen Method of Analysis of Phenomenological Data, a composite textual-structural description of all participants' experiences was created as discussed in chapter three. The individual textual-structural descriptions of each participant were combined into a composite description of the experience related to the phenomena, representing the group as a whole (Hayes & Singh, 2012). For each of the participants was included a textural and structural description based on the transcribed interviews conducted through Zoom, which offered the what and the how found in the experience of each participant. Specifically, textural aspects of the phenomenon, that is, what was experienced and structural aspects of the phenomenon, that is, how the phenomenon was experienced. Then, I provided a composite textual-structural description of participants to highlight the essence of the phenomena which was their lived experience. Ultimately, these lived experiences shared by participants provided a picture that painted the way in which these women moved in this particular social location based on their personal and professional identities.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter One, the researcher reviewed literature related to professional identity development and African American females in counselor education. This qualitative phenomenological study focused on the perceptions of success factors for professional identity development of African American female counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. In Chapter Two, literature on female African Americans in predominately White institutions and professional identity development, and several bodies of literature were reviewed: 1) the role of religion and spirituality; 2) Female African American faculty; 3) Multiculturalism and the counseling profession; and 4) African American racial disparities in academia. In a separate section in Chapter Two furthered the exploration of literature by population: 1) the role of professional identity development; 2) mentorship in doctoral programs; and 3) socialization process in the academy. In Chapter three, I outlined the methodology of Stevick Colaizzi-Keen Data Analysis and presented the results in Chapter Four. In this chapter, I will discuss the results in light of African American females' experiences in academia literature, outline the limitations of the study, and provide implications and suggestions for CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions, and counselor educators. Furthermore, ways in how future research can assist in the knowledge production regarding this topic.

5.2. Current Findings in Relation to the Literature

Previous literature discussed does generally corroborate with this study's findings which are born out of Black women's experiences throughout their educational journey to doctoral

degree completion. The first theme found in the data analyzed from this study was *convenience of the location* relating to success factors attending a predominately White institution. This theme has been mentioned in previous literature. Foxx et al. (2018) used Critical Race Theory and found that location was an important reason among racial and ethnic students of color to accept invitations to apply for admission and to complete research at counselor education doctoral programs in the southeast region. Critical race theory provides a foundation to understand and is relevant to the recruitment and retention of students of color because the majority of this study's participants attended doctoral programs in their communities. Educational systemic barriers to obtain higher education degrees for many African Americans have been constant due to admission criteria and have been reflective of the African American disparities in academe (Bhat et al., 2012). Participants' decisions to attend doctoral programs at predominately White institutions in America were often due to the convenience of the program's location. It also is important to note that churches and race-based organizations in the area provided gender and racial uplift, and mental health agencies are important success factors among African Americans at predominately White institutions (Haskins et al. 2016; Hayes et al., 2017), and participants in this study.

The second theme found in the data analyzed from this study was the *importance of support from dissertation chair*. Participants discussed how their dissertation chair contributed to their professional identity development to doctoral degree completion, and reflected their research and scholarship identities relating to one of the five CACREP professional roles. However, this theme is inconsistent with some of the previous studies which indicated that African Americans explicitly focus on harmonious relationships with supernatural beings, including gods, spirits, and ancestors because this gives them meaning to interpret their

relationships within their environment at predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012; Watt, 2003; Weisenfeld, 2015). However, Foxx et al. (2018), using a phenomenological study with Critical Race Theory, found that relationships with faculty were important to students of color as it was relevant to the retention of being in a doctoral program. Grant and Simmons (2008) noted in the analysis one of the three behaviors that usually focus on mentor and protégé relationships is professional development. However, participants in this study were specific about which relationships in their CACREP-accredited program such as relationships with faculty and mentors contributed in their professional identity to doctoral degree completion. Additional success factors from this study that related to previous findings in the literature were in alignment with the impetus to commence doctoral study, discrimination and prejudice, and success and failures (Bhat et al., 2012).

The third theme found in this study was *representation of African American women with PhDs in the community* and this theme has not been mentioned in previous literature. Previous literature has found that representation of African American faculty on campus have helped to increase African Americans racial identity through mentoring relationships (Bertrand et al., 2015; Farmer and Hope, 2015; Henfield et al., 2007; Jones, 2015). Bhat et al. (2012) found the impetus to commence doctoral study important to finishing doctoral degrees for African American females in counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions using Critical Race Theory. Representation of African American Women with PhDs in the Community changes the status quo of Black women's stereotypes and is rooted in the theory of Black Feminist Thought. This is based on the history of African American motherhood that encourages education within the African American community seeking liberation for the entire community in an overarching oppressive society (Collins, 2000). Jones-Boyd (2016) noted

African American female counselor educators have discussed the importance of representing one's race based on gendered racism (Lester, 2019). Patton and McClure (2009) found the realities of race important to African American females at a predominately White institution located in the Midwest using Black Feminist Thought. Moreover, participants' counseling identities had a deep meaning to Black women's values in counseling rooted in womanist thought strategies of catalyst actions in counseling (i.e., spiritual traditions, networks of support and connection in the African American community, social justice activism, and significance of social and historical context in the lives of African American women). This is reflective of their Black theology in religion and spirituality to move to a place of liberation from oppressive multiple identities (Williams and Wiggins, 2010). Dinani (2018) found that within faith-based communities, it is reflective to African Americans' faith perspective within their social locations.

The fourth theme found in the data analyzed from this study, *I was needed and access* reflects previous literature in how participants had to navigate in a way that transcended barriers in their success factors because of the adjustment to doctoral study (Bhat et al., 2012). As it relates to success, African American women's professional identities are enhanced through their professional development experiences which include leadership and advocacy activities in their communities (Bottoms et al., 2013). Previous literature has been consistent with the paucity of limited access to privileges in higher education between racism and sexism of Black women experiences (Edwards et al., 2011). However, due to the theories chosen in this study, participants formed an African American culture which reflected their marginalization while attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Bhat et al. (2012) found discrimination and prejudice in the lives of African American females at predominately White institutions using Critical Race Theory. Knowles and

Bryant (2011) found that spirituality helped African American women accept their daily lives in the commitment in their careers and professional development activities to mitigate inequities and mitigate societal injustices.

The fifth theme found in the data analyzed in this study, *Being a Black woman in that space and voice* which meant that Black women had to utilize their voice because they felt it was silenced from their white male counterparts (Bhat et al., 2012, Curry, 2011, Henfield et al., 2013). However, this theme is inconsistent with previous literature because unlike participants in this study who used their voices, African Americans are often silenced in predominately White institutions, especially in research and scholarly literature, and as educator which are important professional roles to help brand a successful journey in the academe for black voices (Haskins et al., 2016; Jeffries and Generett, 2003; Jones-Boyd, 2016). Clearly, African American women's voices have been the marginalized in literature (Curry, 2011). Baker and Moore (2015) found in their study using Critical Race theory that voice is important to Black female students at predominately White institutions. Montgomery (2019) found intersectionality of gender and race important among female African American faculty at predominately White Christian universities using intersectionality theory.

The last theme found in the data analyzed from this study, *Faith-based community and I prayed* is in alignment with previous findings in literature (i.e. successes and failures) as it related to the essence of the phenomena. Lazarus & Stewart (2002) found in the exploration spirituality was not a coping strategy and was used as a way to constructively enhance the Black identity and higher learning of spiritual maturity at predominately White institutions among African Americans. Futhermore, Patton and McClure (2009) used Black Feminist Thought and found that spirituality was a source of strength for African American females at predominately

White institutions. In Bhat et al.'s study (2012) which used the lens of Critical Race Theory and included 11 African American female doctoral students who attended a counselor education program at a predominately White institution, success was viewed as having research and teaching assistantships which helped prepare for the professorate and for developing publishing skills.

The theme of *faith-based community and I prayed* related to the important role that spirituality and religion played at a predominately White institutions. For example, pastors reserved rooms at participants' predominately White institutions to provide a path to experience racial, gender and spiritual uplift for restoration and were seen as another form of support. This activity helped Black female doctoral students become successful Black female counselor educators and helped them form their professional identity development (Haskins et al., 2016). In addition, African American female counselor educators have discussed throughout the literature the need for counter spaces (Lester, 2019) as a way to experience African American sisterhood (Collins, 2000). The majority of participants used scripture as a way to understand their experiences at predominately White institutions and how they contextualized their experiences through the examination of biblical scripture. Therefore, participants discussed womanist thought that included a spiritual focus. Womanist thought is linked to the Black Church experiences of African American women on issues of empowerment and identity enhancement for African American women, and questions what is political through social justice activism (Williams & Wiggins, 2010). Alice Walker (1983) wrote in the preface to her book *"In Search of Our Mother Gardens,"* several definitions of womanist such as "Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender" (pp. xi-xii), Walker stated that a womanist is a black feminist. While distinguishing them, she chose purple and lavender to reflect what she believed made them beautiful and strong

beings (Das, 2014). Previous literature encourages the use of spirituality and religious concepts in counseling with African Americans and how this area of specialty practice contributes to effective treatment and rapport building (Avent & Cashwell, 2015; Murry, 2010). However, it is important to understand the theology of the Black Church (Avent & Cashwell, 2015; Murry, 2010; Westfield 2015) because the majority of participants in this study had religious affiliations ascribed to Black Christian denominations. Patton and McClure (2009) used Black Feminist Thought and found that spirituality was a source of strength for African American females at predominately White institutions.

Black Feminist Thought is about putting an idea into action, and learning about resistance and persistent behaviors in a particular location that Black women face daily. In return, this brings light to the experiences of African American women in similar populations found in research which was candid about the past reality of African American culture in this study. Critical Race theory then in this study illuminated curricula discrimination and the marginalization of participants experiences based on race and racism. Therefore, intersectionality theory illuminated the multiple identities of interlocking systems of oppression and the ways in which they worked together and against one another with the intent to create networks of social support and connection based on the findings and supporting African American culture.

5.3. Discussion of Results

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the success for professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. Additionally, it was important to understand African American female counselor educators lived experiences at predominately White institutions by exploring their intersecting identities. I will illustrate participants responses to the three research questions below.

What relationships contributed to female African American counselor educators completing a doctoral degree in a CACREP –accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution? To answer the overarching research question, participants were asked interview questions of what factors they believed contributed most to their success at the doctoral level, and influences that helped them obtain their Ph.D. Some participants discussed how messages from their parents reminded them to finish what they started as an ultimate goal that success equated to education. Participants exclusively discussed how the relationship with their dissertation chair was an influence that helped them to obtain a PhD. Dissertation chairs offered encouragement on their research topics, and in these relationships influenced them to attend professional counseling conferences to ultimately get themselves out there in the counseling profession as Black women.

How does professional identity development influence successful experiences of female African American counselor educators who attended a predominately White institution? To answer this research question, how did they define professional identity development, subset question: participants were asked how did their professional identity develop in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution, subset question: what type of professional development activities contributed most to their success at the doctoral level, and which educational and/or professional development experiences in the five doctoral core areas (*1. Counseling; 2. Supervision; 3. Teaching; 4. Research and Scholarship; and 5. Leadership and Advocacy*) contributed most to your success as a doctoral student at a predominately White institution?

Participants responded that defining professional identity is representation in the community and academe as black women as carriers of a calling in the counseling profession.

Participants discussed how faculty supported them by creating a space for them to show up as a whole person and assisting faculty with linking the context and textbook theories and concepts with their professional and personal experiences in classroom discussions. In addition to access to explore their topics beyond the classroom spaces at conferences. One participant discussed how attending conferences and participating with faculty in a published book chapter were professional development activities that contributed most to her success at the doctoral level. Another participant discussed how having a research assistant contributed to her having access to the profession in the context of the relationship with a faculty member and desire to become a counselor educator.

Moreover, having prior professional counseling experience being invited into their doctoral program at a predominately White institution enhanced and revalidated their roles as professional counselors to contribute to other doctoral students learning in class among faculty who invited them in these discussions with applying concepts and theories. There was not a dominate theme as to which educational experience contributed most to their success other than research and scholarship to finish their doctoral degree. Participants did discuss leadership and advocacy, and counseling contributed most to some of their success at the doctoral level because it helped them with being visible in the counseling profession. Furthermore, participants predominately discussed how the location was important because either it was accessible and/or affordable in their decision-making process with family to obtain their PhD at a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program. Needless to say, participants also shared the significance of having more representation of African American women with PhDs in the Community as they watched a diverse faculty, especially Black women faculty navigate in

the profession and doctoral program. Furthermore, people who were looking up to them to complete their PhD and what that meant for the African American community.

What are the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program in a predominately White institution? To answer this question, participants were asked how did gender affect their professional identity development at the doctoral level, what role did religion and/or spirituality play at the doctoral level at their predominately White institution, additional questions to describe the type of messages they received from prominent people in their life related to race, gender, education, religion/spirituality, and success; and the role they play in their life.

African American female doctoral students who attended a counselor education and supervision program discussed how difficult it was to adjust to doctoral studies, impetus to commence doctoral study, interaction with peers and professors were often times negative than positive, discrimination and prejudice, financial and non-financial support, persistent, success and failures (e.g. research and teaching skills contributed to their success) (Bhat et al., 2012). However, once these women have graduated from their predominately White institutions and now are faculty at predominately institutions they discuss how their value for education, support and influence from family, academic achievement, racial empowerment, other forms of support, and spirituality are the overall essence to become successful Black female counselor educators on their professional identity development (Haskins et al., 2016).

Participants discussed how race had more of an impact than did gender on their professional identity development at the doctoral level because of their racial and ethnic differences in their cohorts and program. Participants expressed in their own way how they felt

imposter syndrome because they instantly noticed they were the only women of color in their program, that resulted to marginalization. However, participants had to find their voices in these spaces when they felt invisible and unheard, as a result they did attend conferences that gave them an outlet to understand their racial and gender identity in the counseling profession, as well as found ways so their voices could be heard either through evaluations or speaking up about their concerns in class. This awareness influenced them to understand their responsibility as a Black woman in the counseling profession and the lack thereof Black women in classroom spaces.

Participants discussed that faith-based communities and prayer were factors that contributed to the completion of a doctoral degree. Literature has shown that African American females use spirituality-particularly prayer as a coping mechanism or to resist psychological oppression in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions (Bhat et al., 2012). In addition to fostering their identity development at predominately White institutions (Watt, 2003). Participants predominately used prayer as a coping mechanism, relied heavily prayer and their faith in God, and that the Black Church and on campus spaces where pastors reserved rooms provided a place for vulnerability for them to navigate the multiple interlocking systems of oppression that were challenges on the road towards doctoral degree completion at a PWI. One participant shared how she resourced herself in role of leadership in her church while she attended a predominantly White institution. Therefore, spirituality was used as a coping mechanism and psychological resistance from oppression in their spiritual practices. On and off campus locations such as the black church was a place of refuge that gave them a balance in their professional role as counselor and personal

identity as Black women to buffer against racial oppression and the academic demands, specifically in a CACREP-accredited program.

Throughout literature the black church and spirituality has been a value to African American female doctoral students and counselor educators at predominately White institutions in their wellness and pedagogy (Bhat et al., 2012; Foxx et al., 2018; Haskins et al., 2016; Jones-Boyd, 2016). Recent literature has shown African American female faculty use spirituality in their work with students through journaling as fostering their identity development (Dillard, 2000), and religion as a way to resource themselves against oppression in predominately White institutions resulting to the Black Church (Haskins et al., 2014). Lastly, this finding contends that African American females leaders in counselor education have created a sense of ideological frame of reference to professional identity through community during their time attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a PWI (Lester, 2017). Because African Americans are often found as persons of faith, Fowler noted that faith is made up in a person's universal environment (Andrade, 2018). Participants prayers were avenues for success as it made a sense of connection with others and the environment in which they had faith because they had faith in the environment in which they felt called to. They ultimately had to learn how to be a Black woman in that space, including their spiritual practices.

Racial and ethnic students, namely African American doctoral students choose to pursue counselor education and supervision programs because of the need for employment and financial assistance, location, emphasis on diversity, and relationships with faculty (Foxx et., 2018). When participants were asked what led them to choose a predominately White institution, they responded that they were looking for a CACREP-accredited program that did not require the GRE. Predominately because of the location and the social justice framework of the program. In

addition to that one participant discussed she was looking for training in spirituality. However, once they were enrolled in these doctoral programs at PWI's participants experienced many forms of microaggressions such as religionism, sexism, and racism.

When participants were asked to describe their educational journey leading up to their doctoral degree at a PWI, participants predominately discussed how they attended a HBCU and that it was important for them to find a CACREP-accredited program at the doctoral level. Participants attended both HBCU's and PWI's and saw differences in the treatment they received from cohort and faculty members, primarily at predominately White institutions. Only a few participants shared how they had teaching and research assistantships, and other participants were awarded financial assistance as a fellow of some outside program.

The additional intersectional identity as mothers of African American female counselor educators discuss how it makes you susceptible to racialized marginalization, precipitates of professional strain and neglect, creates internalized success, brings mothering into scholarship and pedagogy, affects work-life balance and carefully considers spirituality as a value in their wellness, and necessitates support structures (Haskins et al., 2016). One participant discussed how being a mother influenced her experiences through their doctoral programs because she knew her children were looking to her. Other participants discussed how family members, and children at church, and professional experiences contributed to their experience as to how they saw this eye-opening moment of the need for representation and if they did not finish, they would have failed them.

5.4. Limitations

The limitations of the study are those that are most commonly found in qualitative research. A small sample of 10 participants does not allow for generalization of findings to the

population. The goal of this qualitative, phenomenological research design was to not generalize, instead gain information-rich, a thick description of this study's phenomena that can only be done through in-depth interviews in qualitative research. Participant demographics reflected differences in their age, race and ethnicity, marital and relationship status during their doctoral program, gender, religious affiliation, number of years as counselor educator, professional role, Association for Counselor Education & Supervision region during their doctoral program, contact information if follow-up is necessary, and additional information the participant would like for the researcher to know. However, inclusion to participate in this study was that must identify as African American, female, counselor educator who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a (PWI) and had worked at least one year as faculty. In particular, I was interested in African American female counselor educators who had attended a predominately White institution, this attribution may not necessarily be the case for significant number of African American female counselor educators who attended a Historically Black College or University.

Because this study used semi-structured interviews, it is possible there were other contexts that female African American counselor educators perceived to be more salient that were not discussed in Chapter Four. Finally, I examined the perceptions of female African American counselor educators only. Including the perceptions of success of professional identity development to doctoral completion in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions of non-African American female counselor educators and males could have broadened the scope of this study. Limitations in this study also include the fact those who chose not to participate and may had not experienced this phenomenon.

5.5. Implications

This study adds to the breadth of knowledge of qualitative research on the lived experiences of female African American success at the doctoral level. Moreover, provides several implications and suggestions that should be explored by aspiring and current African American female counselor educators because only 7% of African Americans are represented in counselor education and supervision programs (Boyd, 2016), and African American female tenured faculty represent less than 4% between African American men and White women (Grant & Simmons, 2008). This is a call to help aid in doctoral retention to degree completion with professional development activities that prepares female African American doctoral students who attend CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions for the professorate, with a need to increase the retention in academia.

This phenomenological examination was conducted because of my personal experience with the phenomenon and the gap in literature related to the experience on the other. The purpose of this study was to examine African American female counselor educators' lived experiences and perceptions of success factors of professional identity development who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Participants were clear about the significance of success of professional identity development in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. As it is important to gain an understanding of how our counseling, teaching, research and scholarship, leadership and advocacy, and supervision impact the success of these women professional identity development at the doctoral level.

Based on the literature, education was clearly important to African American females and important to participants success in academe. Moreover, spirituality was important to

participants and may be beneficial to their overall personal and professional identity development in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution. Research has shown that female African American faculty reappraise spirituality in stressful situations in their work environments (Bacchus & Holley, 2005). However, as there are still struggles through the academe as students and as educators, spirituality and religion can often be a possible source of contention throughout the educational experience of Black female doctoral students (Mitchell, 2014) at predominately White institutions (Allison & Brodas, 2009) that can also be a contributing factor to their Afrocentric identity, and African American female counselor educators who have been trained to integrate spirituality as a component into their field work (Haskins et al., 2016). Moreover, African American female faculty who integrate religiosity and spirituality into their pedagogy's (Dillard, 2000).

Counselor education programs should seek to racially diversify their counselor education programs so that a more diverse group of doctoral students can emerge, as literature is consistent and participants were explicit in their desires to have Black peers, particularly more experienced African Americans (Bhat et al., 2012). Counselor educators should look more closely or monitor how black women doctoral students' gender and race impact their professional identity development specifically in classroom spaces. Exploring faculty members' perceptions of their roles as mentors to African American female counselor educators at the doctoral level may have been important to participants in this study because this relationship appeared to be important to participants in this study, namely mentors who were advisors of these women that served as dissertation chair. African American females have reported that personal and professional care

from advisors assist with their professional identity development (Bhat et al., 2012). Therefore, Counselor educators should also seek to hire African American female faculty.

Involvement in counseling organizations and entities such as the American Counseling Association (ACA) the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) offers avenues to advocate for professional development in scholarly activities through professional networking in various roles. Furthermore, race-based organizations in the counseling profession such as the National Association of Black Counselors and other black student associations could be resources for African American females in counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions to place importance on racial empowerment because attending conferences was important to participants.

One participant in this study relied on her sorority sisters for prayer. Predominately white institutions were not spaces in the program reserved for African American women who were participants in this study to continue their ongoing spiritual practices-particularly prayer, as a result pastors within these faith-based communities aided in this process to help through challenging circumstances relating to the microaggressions participants encountered in their programs. These practices were welcomed outside the classroom in the programs in classrooms where pastors created spaces to welcome their sense of spirituality. In some way this provided a safe environment and a way to stay grounded in their program and institution where they had earned a higher education degree. More importantly, their faith-based communities had to do with being with those who identified with their cultural and personal identity. Counselor educators should be open to allowing prayer practices to be used in subjects that focus on wellness. To bring an awareness of coping strategies, in turn may be used in a way to foster

identity development in their clinical practice. Counselor educators can also be more sensible to the demands of CACREP standards on racial and ethnic students and their cultural backgrounds because participants primarily discussed in this study that coping strategies were a result to course work, writing, and racial oppression at a predominately White institution. Counselor education and supervision CACREP-accredited programs should offer a course in religion and spirituality to support the need for professional development and cultural practice of African American female doctoral students to have an educational experience in one of the five CACREP professional roles (i.e. teaching, leadership and advocacy, supervision, counseling, research and scholarship). In addition to that counselor educators could include an experimental activity such as journaling to aid in cultural sensitivity. Moreover, include womanist activities in courses, for example, bibliotherapy related to Black women authors, HERSTORY journaling exercise, and God within Drawing Techniques (Williams & Wiggins, 2010) because participants primarily chose this theory as their theoretical counseling framework in which was cultivated in their religious worldview at a predominately White institution.

These findings can serve as a way to specifically identify and address the concerns from female African American counselor educators' perspectives to assist with implementation and initiatives to address institutionalized racism, sexism, and forms of microaggressions that impede professional identity development. It is my belief that this examination resonates and identifies among doctoral students of color that speaks to the need for additional emphasis to be placed on this need in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Counselor educators need to have the capability of looking at ways to support the retention and completion of African American doctoral students to shift the lens in research to success throughout doctoral programs with specific focus on success

concerning professional identity to doctoral degree completion. Because a plethora of literature focus on the challenges to doctoral degree completion.

Literature consistently reports in qualitative research of African American students attending predominately White institutions relating to retention that financial support meets the needs to doctoral degree completion (Bhat et al., 2012; Foxx et al. 2018). African American female doctoral students in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs have reported that graduate assistantships in research and teaching enhance their skills in these two professional roles as they felt prepares them for the professorate (Bhat et al., 2012). Participants in the study discussed how helping in classroom discussions as professional counselors made them feel needed. Attending a CACREP-accredited program that would fully fund their doctoral studies to degree completion would help with retention through teaching assistantships, and research assistantship since this was important to participants in this study.

As it relates to the professorate, concerning success factors of female African American counselor educators at various ranks, racial empowerment, support structures increase their success in their professional identity as scholars and educators (Haskins et al., 2016; Jones-Boyd, 2016). CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs could offer assistantships that would help female African American doctoral students in one of the five CACREP professional roles (i.e. research, teaching, supervision) to enrich their skills and prepare for the professorate to maintain retention in their respective programs and institutions, more so career endeavors as counselor educator through tenure. In this way doctoral students have exposure in the social construction of counselor educator identity to demarginalize the often-known experiences of female African American doctoral students' barriers of racial inclusion at predominately White institutions and academe. The implications of this study is that

counselor educators should use this information to increase their understanding of how the optimum wellness can be achieved in this social location, namely incorporating the following strategies in retaining African American females at the doctoral level in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions.

5.6. Future Research

Future research investigations could provide a more in-depth focus on specific cultural challenges related to African American female counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions overall experiences. This study provided information-rich to describe the lived experiences of African American female counselor educators who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution perceptions of success factors of professional identity development to doctoral degree completion. Every finding could not be included, however, there remains significant room to further this research. Given that African American females come from backgrounds that are contrast than their White counterparts and are more collective in nature, a focus group might have been beneficial, culturally responsive and could have provided more nuanced meanings to the phenomena under examination with a community-based participatory research using Womanist thought. Participants could have provided more information through in-depth dialogue using focus groups and because this population values the community over autonomy, including the value of faith because most female African American faculty participate in advocacy and have research and leadership roles in the academe and community. Moreover, as participants shared in this study, using intersectionality as framework looking at how the perspectives of race and gender impacted professional identity among black women counselor educators using a

focus group. Furthermore, future research could use a hermeneutic methodology design using womanist thought, and black feminist thought, and counterstorytelling as tenet because of participants integration of biblical interpretation and black religious images as it relates to Black theology and scripture interpretation of their lived experiences in relation to gender and race.

As stated in the limitations, this sample consisted of self-identified female African Americans who attended a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at predominately White institutions. Particular focus was on their success and the factors of their success on professional identity development based on their lived experiences in this social location. Literature has indicated that professional identity development are individual occurrences at the beginning of one's training in their profession (Limberg et al., 2013). Moreover, Limberg et al. (2013) noted that professional identity is formed to help doctoral students begin thinking and functioning early in counselor education. Curry (2016) noted that professional identity is rooted in the professional socialization process in communities that develops over time in the social learning process where specific knowledge and skills are shared in various professional roles to the career path. These communities could look like counselor education and supervision programs where African American females begin their learning about the responsibilities and duties of a counselor educator with various professional roles that offers many paths. Female African Americans in academia are often marginalized in their respective programs (Bhat et al., 2012). Therefore, developing an identity in various roles (i.e. supervision, research, teaching, leadership, counseling) and in their personal identities (i.e. race, and gender) may be difficult to develop when positioned as the margin in their predominately White institutions, community, mentoring, and advising is of most importance.

Literature has shown that African American women experience microaggressions at a much higher level than do their White female counterparts (Harris et al., 2019). As former graduates of counselor education programs, research has reported that this has lead students of color at the doctoral level to become masters of deflection, often forcing them to dissociate themselves and disengage from their desire to academic collaboration resulting to maintain a sense of safety (Ross et al., 2016). Although female counselor educators experienced microaggressions, future research should explore the impacts of sexism and success for professional identity development at predominately White institutions using Intersectionality as theory with counter story telling as a tenet to understand this form of microaggression through the voices of African American females to add to the knowledge production that should be rethought to understand why African American females navigated in predominately White institutions. In addition to that future research studies should examine the marginality of African American females in predominately White institutions and subordination in their programs, using Black existentialism that is concerned with the critiques of domination and dehumanization in the social discourses to empower and affirm black people (Bassey, 2007). In return to explore ways to offer liberation to African American females from oppression in the future.

Although African American female counselor educators' voices are silenced in research, regardless of often being the margin in academe, several female African American faculty have made significant contributions to qualitative research productivity (Jeffries & Generett, 2003) to increase the validity and visibility in scholarly literature. More importantly, provided the knowledge production of female African American counselor educators lived experiences based on several intersectionality's faced daily at their predominately White institutions. An exploration such as this could help provide awareness of how professional and racial identity

development occurs for African American female counselor educator's success on professional identity development at the doctoral level in predominately White institutions using Black Feminist thought as theoretical framework.

Also, because African Americans have such a rich historical background in religion and spirituality, faith and God were found important to participants in this study. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand how African American females who ascribe to a religious affiliation and/or spiritual component experience success and refer to spirituality in their counselor education programs. Future studies could look at racial identity and professional identity using Womanist thought as framework. Furthermore, this study only focused on African American female counselor educators, these women may have had experiences that were different of Afro Caribbean and African immigrant counselor educators at predominately White institutions.

What was important to participants is racial and ethnic diversity for the purposes of racial uplift and opportunities to be visible in the counseling profession throughout their doctoral program by attending conferences because this allowed them to see that they were apart of the counseling profession with respect to race and gender. Given, the racial dynamics in their courses such as being majority White women and men, participants predominately discussed how important their voice was needed in class discussions that provided a different perspective to course material, in turn enhanced their counseling and racial identity as a Black woman. Furthermore, participants discussed the importance of how seeing a diverse racial and ethnic faculty model their professional roles was important, in that confirmed they could see possibilities their doctoral program with support in their spiritual journeys.

Intersectionality Theory, Black Feminist Thought, and Critical Race Theory were used to frame this study: however, due to the attention on success of professional identity development, other theories may have been a better use to bring more meaning in a nuance way to allow participants voices to be heard such as Critical Social Theory. Including Womanist thought as that focuses on African American women navigating through both race and gender oppression using spirituality as a foundation for coping (Rousseau, 2013), and identity formation as faculty (Dillard, 2000) to bring meaning to success.

In particular, the majority of research that focused on female African Americans and success for professional identity development was found in dissertations. However, more research was found on African American female faculty success, and challenges in peer-reviewed journal publications than in dissertations. This would suggest that there is an interest in this emerging topic. There was no quantitative research that address success of professional identity development among female African American counselor educators who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program. This suggests that conducting a more extended study would be helpful as a way to allow a broader analysis of this topic to be made. For example, a mix-methods using a larger survey study asking participants to rate their success measured by a professional identity development scale could lead to the development of a suitable measure of success for female African American counselor educators perceptions of success in their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution using Black Feminist thought, womanist thought, and counter storytelling as tenet. In return, could provide a mentoring model based on respondent's success factors for professional identity development. In addition to that a case study using grounded theory to develop a mentoring model for faculty in CACREP-accredited

counselor education and supervision programs where to assist with the retention and completion of doctoral degree at a predominately White institution for female African American doctoral students. Specifically, this sample only consisted of female participants, future researchers could replicate the current study and include male counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at (PWIs).

5.7. Conclusion

This qualitative, phenomenological study examined the perceptions of success factors for professional identity development among African American females who graduated from a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a PWI. Within this setting, the following themes emerged from semi-structured interviews: a) Convenience of the Location; b) Importance of Support from Dissertation Chair; c) Representation of African American Women with PhDs in the Community; d) I was needed and Access; e) Being a Black Woman in that Space and Voice; and f) Faith-based community and I prayed. Thus, were contributing factors to success to doctoral degree completion in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program at a predominately White institution.

Overall, although the African American female counselor educators in this study have overcome the many challenges to obtain success at the doctoral level with provision of opportunities of developing a professional identity to move into a faculty position, I hope to continuously see an increase of retention and completion at the doctoral level. More so, promotion and tenure in role as counselor educators in the academe, and studies on success factors at the doctoral level from African American female counselor educators as research participants. Regardless of the continuous struggle with impacts of racism and gendered sexism in the academe, they have been able to find external and internal support systems to overcome

the barriers in their lives to achieve success that enhanced their professional identity in multiple roles at their CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions.

The theoretical frameworks that formed the bases for this study were Intersectionality, Black Feminist Thought, and Critical Race Theory. It is important to use theories for African American women in research and relevant settings based on their personal, social and cultural context in which they had experienced a phenomenon such as Intersectionality, Black Feminist Thought, and Critical Race Theory (Howard- Hamilton, 2004). Intersectionality was coined by Kimberlee Crenshaw as a prism to understand race and gender discrimination as the intersections in the lived experiences of African American women (Crenshaw, 2018). Black Feminist Thought was developed by Patricia Hill Collins to create the knowledge production of Black women's experiences based on race, gender, and politics and how these women resist racial and gender oppression in their social locations based on Black women sharing their stories (Collins, 2000). Lastly, Critical Race theory, originally a law theory, developed out of the writings of Derrick Bell and later moved to higher education in predominately White institutions to examine curricular discrimination by the work of Gloria Laddings-Billings (Hartlep, 2009).

In this study Intersectionality was utilized to understand which multiple identities of interlocking systems of oppression work with and against each other that should be rethought and recast based on participants discriminatory experiences. This theory is an alternate way of illuminating gendered racism, gender and race are often impossible to separate to determine discrimination that is an often struggle in society felt by African American women (Crenshaw, 2018). Because colorblindness treats everyone the same no matter the race, class, or background of individuals, it conversely ignores the intersections that are evident in each person (Collins,

2000). Therefore, not everyone can be treated the same because of how intersectionality operates in a setting (Crenshaw, 2018) which creates more problems than solutions. Being an African American was essential to their understanding of being in connection with their race and gender identities as women, and ways of being in this social context, including society.

Black Feminist Thought was utilized to understand how African American females resisted oppression at their predominately White institutions and resourced themselves in spaces that they perceived were not reserved for them, whether resulting to the Black church or in black national organizations in the counseling profession, and so forth, as a result of oppression. There are three tenets: self-definition and self-valuation, interlocking or multiple oppression, and African American culture (Collins, 2000). Self-definition and self-valuation allowed participants to question their reality which inherently derives through choice and define professional identity development through the dynamics of social construction. This tenet also explains participants characteristics while attending a predominately White institution to doctoral degree completion. Black people have been in a pursuit for self-defined identity that is in part due to a lived experience of colonization of Black people intersecting in the component of freedom, and hegemony where they have not been included or desired in a hegemonic society (Vereen et al., 2017) or within their institutions or program. Collins (2000) refers to the controlling images that have categorically distorted the humanness of African American women in society, and exclusion in academic settings. In the lens of academia, in this study, additionally explores the growth of African American females' professional identity. One can look at this to mean, who am I in my freedom from oppression. Black people continue to make meaning in their existence when associated with racism (Vereen et al., 2017), thus experiencing marginalization. Through self-definition and valuation African American females defined professional identity

development and the relationship to professional identity development that enabled optimum well-being as a calling in the profession. Therefore, reveals their truth and allowing resistance to certain structures of oppression.

Interlocking of multiple oppression allowed African American female counselor educators to explain how they became double consciousness based on race, gender, and religion at their predominately White institutions. Collins (2000) noted race and gender as double consciousness. In historical and present-day society black people have fought for their freedom and against oppression resulting to spaces to recover from white supremacy, functioning in a place where their identity exists and is empowered (Vereen et al., 2017). Vereen et al. (2017) noted that Black people have duality of existence or two systems of reference; a non-White person in the world, and second, as a Black person in relation to a White dominate society. Du Bois described this as double consciousness. These women encountered a race and gender consciousness and non-White person worldview in the counseling profession.

African American culture combined all three tenets together to provide the ideal frame of reference of success factors for professional identity development based on African American female counselor educators who graduated from CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. This tenet also combines the culture, symbols, and language that is not imposed by the dominate culture (Collins, 2000). Furthermore, hooks (1990) described that Black people feel a sense of homeplace that corresponds to faith and belief in a safe space for freedom where intersectionality's work against them. Participants shared their voices and added cultural language and symbols that represented success.

Critical Race Theory was utilized to explain the racial inequalities in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. In

addition to that the professional development activities. There are five tenets of CRT: permanence of racism, interest conversion, whiteness as property, counter storytelling, and liberalism. Permanence of racism implies that racism is permanent, this racial permanence stems from the foundations of institutionalized racism in America that was built to support the idea of white supremacy (Hartlep, 2009). This could look like racism had never dissipated in participants program to doctoral degree completion. Participants in this study succeeded in their research agendas. Students of color are often times unreluctantly to pursue such research ideas because they are not embraced fully. These Black women in breadth discuss how their social justice lens with their professional identity as researchers helps with their becoming personally and professionally whole as a human being. Participant dissertation chairs were, however, the support and encouragement they needed to not only finish but further their research topics that would result to the essences of being a Black female counselor educator to obtain their PhD.

Interest conversion describes the advances America has made in regard to racism and explains that for every step forward in an African American's gain, the oppressor must also gain something from the profit, or else the African American student or faculty member will not profit from their own earnest work of labor. This also explains the overload of work African American women are forced to bear in the academe to gain tenure and promotion (Modica, 2011). This is dehumanizing to the Black women and whatever gains are seen as a win for only the dominate culture (Hartlep, 2009). Vereen et al. (2017) noted that seeing black people as inhuman furthers the justification in the use of forced labor about people of African descent. This could also look like participants working on research projects and not receiving partial or total credit for the work they had put in, that is a form of oppression to intentionally force labor to draw benefits for the dominate culture. Participants in this study were invited to participate during class

discussions that dismantled the status quo of dominant group status and Westernized view of counseling. In fact, unsilenced participants perspectives on various approaches that provided meaningful feedback in their personal and professional experiences in the field that demonstrated cultural sensitivity on behalf of faculty.

Whiteness as property, is a reflection of white privilege. Meanwhile in academia literature privilege is often associated with skin color as a gain. This tenet explains the monocultural goals embedded in the curriculum (Hartlep, 2009) that impact African American female faculty who struggle to find fit to define their success within the institution (Haskins et al., 2016). Whiteness as property is accounted for when students of color are seen as ownership by Whites such as being excluded from white privilege that is exercised by White violence and power (Hartlep, 2009). This exclusion can be seen through the lack of invitation for participants to be involved in professional development activities in their programs, and never or often dismissed from classroom conversations. One participant in this study was isolated from class projects because of her peers false perceptions relating to her religious beliefs. Participants in this study discussed how faculty who were non-Black encouraged them to be visible in the counseling profession of counselor education which influenced them through the social construction process in the field for career marketability.

Counter storytelling is based on African American female counselor educators having firsthand knowledge and experiences of multiple intersecting identities of interlocking systems of oppression. This tenet allows participants to voice their lived experiences to provide language and knowledge to discourse learned behavior in predominately White institutions that is upheld in the constructed norms embedded in the curriculum from the monocultural goals to maintain white privilege and White supremacy. One participant discussed how she had to navigate the

politics in her program even while being a licensed professional counselor because of her racial identity. This is where Black female counselor educators through their voices construct and ground truth-telling about the experiences in predominately White institutions as an act of self-revelation, in return that can serve as a catalyst for exploration and expansion of thoughts and feelings in a given topic.

Liberalism is based on the challenges' of colorblindness and inequality in the academe experienced by students of color (Cole, 2017). Liberalism can explain the feelings African Americans express out of oppression in their daily lives of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2018). One participant had a published book review; however the shared group experience remained with CACREP standards, in which they reported mixed feelings on. Participants expressed their feelings about the experiences they had with oppression in their programs with their pastors and in faith-based communities, and it was through prayer in these spaces they could be vulnerable as Black women, being transparent and vulnerable regarding their intersectionalities' of multiple oppressions. Specifically, the CACREP standards helped to shape participants professional work and experiences that enabled them to succeed in their identities as Black women and in their professional identity development in their programs off campus.

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experiences of female African American counselor educators' perceptions of success factors for professional identity development in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Six themes emerged from the analyzed data, which reflect and further the current body of literature on female African Americans counselor educators. Ultimately participants did not have opportunities to the social construction to prepare them for the professorate. Participants did have access to attending and presenting at conferences for

career exposure for the purpose of racial and gender uplift. However, participants did discuss that organizations in their department such as Chi Sigma Iota afforded them to develop skills necessary to work as faculty in a department. The lack of representation of Black faculty influenced participants to continuously seek meaning to their purpose of representation of Black women having a PhD in society and counselor education.

It is my hope that this research can be used as a vital instrument to challenge the status quo, unblind gendered racism and White supremacy, and reconstruct the future lived experiences of female African American doctoral students' success who desire to seek racial inclusivity attending CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions. Moreover, provide healing and ways to repair experiences based on participants responses in this study for future experiences in this location that requires a self-awareness and cultural sensitivity. African American females can provide a different perspective on counseling theories concepts that lead to a more authentic and collaborative approach in discussions and professional activities with peers and faculty. Because it is important to think critically about our intentionality in the profession, and motives on diversity to view each other as equals regardless of political, racial and gender differences in CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision programs at predominately White institutions, and academe. Lastly, point us toward what is sacred and symbolic among this population to live their calling in the counselor education profession.

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APPENDIX A. IRB PROTOCOL AMENDMENT REQUEST FORM



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

office: Research 1, 1735 NDSU Research Park Drive, Fargo, ND 58102

mail: NDSU Dept. #4000, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050

p: 701.231.8995 f: 701.231.8098 e: ndsuirb@ndsu.edu w: www.ndsu.edu/irb

Date Received

IRB Protocol #:

Protocol Amendment Request Form

Changes to approved research may not be initiated without prior IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. Reference: [SOP 7.5 Protocol Amendments](#).

Examples of changes requiring IRB review include, but are not limited to changes in: investigators or research team members, purpose/scope of research, recruitment procedures, compensation strategy, participant population, research setting, interventions involving participants, data collection procedures, or surveys, measures or other data forms.

Protocol Information:

Protocol #: HE19201 Title: Professional Identity Development: Perceptions of African American Female Counselor Educators Success in Ph.D. Degree Completion at Predominately White Institutions

Review category: ☒ Exempt ☐ Expedited ☐ Full board

Principal investigator: Dr. Carol Buchholz Holland Email address: carol.e.buchholz@ndsu.edu
Dept: School of Education

Co-investigator: Kelsey S. Wilson Email address: kelsey.s.wilson@ndsu.edu
Dept: School of Education

Principal investigator signature, Date: Carol Buchholz Holland via email 10/31/2020



In lieu of a written signature, submission via the Principal Investigator's NDSU email constitutes an acceptable electronic signature.

Description of proposed changes:

1. Date of proposed implementation of change(s)*: October 31, 2020 or After IRB Approval

* Cannot be implemented prior to IRB approval unless the IRB Chair has determined that the change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

2. Describe proposed change(s), including justification:

1) The beginning and ending dates of this research project. 2) The research project title has been revised to better reflect the focus of this research project. 3) The method used to conduct the interviews for this study will change from Skype to Zoom. 4) This study's PI has changed from a past course instructor to the doctoral student's academic advisor. 5) Qualtrics will be used as an electronic screening tool and to collect participant demographic data. When setting up Qualtrics to collect data,

necessary:

3. Will the change(s) have any impact to *previously* enrolled participants?

☒ No

☐ Yes - describe impact, and any procedures that will be taken to protect the rights and welfare of participants:

-----FOR IRB OFFICE USE ONLY-----

Request is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved	
Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exempt, category#: <u>2(ii)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited method, category # <u> </u> <input type="checkbox"/> Convened meeting, date: <u> </u> <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited review of minor change	
IRB Signature: <u>Kristy Shirley</u>	Date: 11/5/2020
Comments:	

the researchers will select the option that does not allow Qualtrics to save the IP address and no tracking information will be collected.

3. Will the change(s) increase any risks, or present new risks (*physical, economic, psychological, or sociological*) to participants?

☒ No

☐ Yes: *In the appropriate section of the protocol form, describe new or altered risks and how they will be minimized.*

4. Does the proposed change involve the addition of a vulnerable group of participants?

Children: ☒ no ☐ yes – include the *Children in Research* attachment form

Prisoners: ☒ no ☐ yes – include the *Prisoners in Research* attachment form

Cognitively impaired individuals: ☒ no ☐ yes*

Economically or educationally disadvantaged individuals: ☒ no ☐ yes*

**Provide additional information where applicable in the revised protocol form.*

5. Does the proposed change involve a request to waive some or all the elements of informed consent or documentation of consent?

☒ no

☐ yes –  Attach the *Informed Consent Waiver or Alteration Request*.

6. Does the proposed change involve a new research site?

☒ no

☐ yes




If information in your previously approved protocol has changed, or additional information is being added, incorporate the changes into relevant section(s) of the protocol. Draw attention to changes by using all caps, asterisks, etc. to the revised section(s) and attach a copy of the revised protocol with your submission. (*If the changes are limited to addition/change in research team members, research sites, etc. a revised protocol form is not needed.*)

Impact for Participants (future, current, or prior):

1. Will the change(s) alter information on previously approved versions of the recruitment materials, informed consent, or other documents, or require new documents?

☐ No

☒ Yes –  attach revised/new document(s)

2. Could the change(s) affect the willingness of *currently* enrolled participants to continue in the research?

☒ No

☐ Yes – describe procedures that will be used to inform current participants, and re-consent, if

team consisting of both the principle investigator and faculty advisor. When the interview is transcribed, you will be given a pseudonym, and other potentially identifying information will be left out of the transcripts. In any written documents (including publications) regarding the study, only the pseudonym will be used.

Video files will be stored in a password protected file on a computer that is only accessible to the principal investigator and co-investigators. Electronic copies of the interview transcripts will be saved and protected in the same fashion. After the data has been analyzed, the video recordings will be deleted.

For further information or questions regarding this research, please contact, Kelsey Wilson, MS at (205)-246-5042 or by email at kelsey.s.wilson@ndsu.edu, or contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Carol Buchholz Holland, PhD, NCC at (701) 231-7103, campus phone (701) 231 -7202 or by email at carol.e.buchholz@ndsu.edu.

You have rights as a research participant. If you have further questions about your rights or complaints about this research, you may talk to the researcher or contact the NDSU Human Research Protection Program at (701)-231-8995, toll-free at 1-(855)-800-6717, by email at ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu, or by mail at: NDSU HRPP Office, NDSU Dept. 4000, P.O. Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050.

Thank you for your taking part in this research and if you wish to participate in this study, please return a signed copy of this letter, using Qualtrics completing the informed consent.

Please indicate your agreement to participate in the study **Professional Identity Development: Perceptions of African American Female Counselor Educators' Factors of Success in Ph.D. Degree Completion at Predominately White Institutions** by signing below.

I am 18 years or older, have read and understood this informed consent form and agree to participate.

Yes

No

Signature: _____

APPENDIX B. INFORMED CONSENT

NDSU

North Dakota State University

Department of School of Education
1340 Administrative Ave, Fargo, North Dakota 58102
NDSU Dept.
PO Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050
701.231.2526

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Research Study: Professional Identity Development: Perceptions of African American Female Counselor Educators Factors of Success in Ph.D. Degree Completion at Predominately White Institutions

Dear Counselor Educators,

My name is Kelsey Wilson and I am a third year doctoral candidate in the School of Education in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at North Dakota State University (NDSU).

This study will examine the perceptions of past African American female doctoral students who graduated from a predominately White institution in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program relating to their process of professional identity development that accounted as factors of success to doctoral degree completion. The purpose of this study is to provide further support for counselor educators to conceptualize students in a culturally sensitive manner and it is our hope, that with this research, we will learn more about the experiences of African American female factors of success in Ph.D. Counselor Education and Supervision programs. Therefore, this is intended to aid in retention efforts and program completion of African American female students in counselor education and supervision.

Because you had worked at least one-year faculty, obtained a PhD in a CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision at a predominately White institution, identify as female, and African American you are invited to participate in this study. You will be one of approximately 3 to 6 people being interviewed for this study.

You may find it interesting and thought provoking to participate in the interview. If, however, you feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, you have the right to decline to answer any question(s), or to end the interview.

It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the interview. We will ask you about your experiences as a doctoral student in counselor education and factors of success which contributed to professional identity development. The interview will be video recorded using the online platform Zoom. We will keep private all research records that identify you stored on a password protected drive online that the research

APPENDIX C. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

Participant Demographic Form

Professional Identity Development: Perceptions of African American Female Counselor Educators Success in Ph.D. Degree Completion at Predominately White Institutions

Thank you for your consideration in participating. Please note that all information shared in this document will remain confidential and will only be accessed by Kelsey Wilson, MS, and faculty advisor/chair, Dr. Carol Buchholz Holland, PhD, NCC

Age: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____

Marital/relationship status during doctoral program: _____

Sexual Orientation: _____

Gender: _____

What is your religious affiliation? _____

If you are current faculty, what is your status? (e.g. adjunct, instructor, assistant, associate, full professor) _____

What was your Association for Counselor Education & Supervision region during your doctoral program? (e.g. Western, Rocky Mountain, North Atlantic, Southern or North Central).

May we contact you for follow-up?

Yes

No

How do you wish to be contacted? Phone or E-mail/Other (Please specify)

Phone number: _____

E-mail: _____

Thank You!

APPENDIX D. SELF-ADMINISTERED CONFIDENTIAL PRELIMINARY SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Self-Administered Confidential Preliminary Screening Questionnaire

Professional Identity Development: Perceptions of African American Female Counselor
Educators Success in Ph.D. Degree Completion at Predominately White Institutions

Thank you for your consideration in participating and please note that due to participant requirements, completion of this questionnaire does not guarantee participation in the study. Please note that all information shared in this document will remain confidential and will only be accessed by Kelsey Wilson, MS, and faculty advisor/chair, Dr. Carol Buchholz Holland, PhD, NCC

My name is Kelsey Wilson, MS (she/her/hers) and I'm a third year doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at North Dakota State University. Please note that your name will be used only for communication purposes and will not be shared.

Question 1: What is your race/ethnicity?

Question 2: What is your sex?

Question 3: Number of years as a counselor educator?

Question 4: Was your doctoral program CACREP-accredited?

Question 5: Was this doctoral degree awarded from a predominately White institution?

Question 6: Please note that the study requires one 60-minute semi-structured interview. Are you available to participate in the study?

Question 7: What is your preferred method of communication while this research is being conducted? Please give contact information based on your comfort and best times to contact.

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

NDSU

North Dakota State University

Department of School of Education
1340 Administrative Ave, Fargo, North Dakota 58102
NDSU Dept.
PO Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050
701.231.2526

Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study: **Professional Identity Development:**

Perceptions of African American Female Counselor Educators Success in Ph.D. Degree

Completion at Predominately White Institutions. The following questions will help guide us through the 60-minute semi-structured interview on our agreed date for your interview in Zoom.

1. What led you to choose a predominately White institution (PWI)?
2. Describe your educational journey leading up to your doctoral degree at a PWI.
3. How would you define professional identity development?
 - i. How did your professional identity develop at your CACREP-accredited counselor education and supervision program in a predominately White institution?
 - ii. What type of professional development activities contributed most to your success at the doctoral level?
4. How did gender affect your professional identity development at the doctoral level?
5. What role did religion and/or spirituality play at the doctoral level at your predominately White institution?
6. Describe the type of messages you received from prominent people in your life related to race, gender, education, religion/spirituality, and success?
 - i. What role do they play in your life?

7. Which educational and/or professional development experiences in the five doctoral core areas (*1. Counseling; 2. Supervision; 3. Teaching; 4. Research and Scholarship; and 5. Leadership and Advocacy*) contributed most to your success as a doctoral student at a predominately White institution?
8. What factors, if any, do you believe contributed most to your success at the doctoral level?
9. What were some of the influences that helped you obtain your Ph.D.?
10. Is there anything you would like to comment on that we did not cover?

Please feel free to contact Kelsey Wilson, MS at kelsey.s.wilson@ndsu.edu and/or my faculty advisor Carol Buchholz Holland, PhD, NCC at carol.e.buchholz@ndsu.edu if you have any questions about the interview questions or research. You are also welcome to contact the NDSU Human Research Protection Program, at (701) 231.8995, or ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu if you have any questions about the research.