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Creating an Inclusive School Environment and Experience for Minority Students in a Faith-based University: a Case Study of Undergraduate Programs

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Creating an Inclusive School Environment and Experience for

Minority Students in a Faith-Based University:

A Case Study of Undergraduate Programs

by

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Abstract

Higher education institutions are experiencing the need to advance their understanding of diversity and inclusion on campus. Therefore, this study was to explore the experiences and challenges of minority students in the undergraduate programs of a Faith-based Private University. This case study utilized interviews and focus group methods to understand the challenges and experiences of Asians, Hispanics, Latinos, Africans/African Americans, Native Americans, and other Minority students currently in the undergraduate programs of a Faith-based higher education institution. Responses were collected through interviews from two alumni of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) programs of the institution. Historical records were reviewed to understand key events that involved minority students, and how the institution responded to them over time, including leadership practices and policy changes that resulted due to the issues or incidences. Participants were 18 years and above. Ten College of Arts and Science current students participated in focus groups. Three faculty and nine staff members participated in face-to-face interviews. Data from the interviews, and focus group meetings were transcribed verbatim, coded, and analyzed using the Constant Comparative method of data analysis. Based on the findings of the research, the result indicated that the administration and the environment are trending toward positive inclusive practices, but the pace is slow, with no sense of urgency. However, the institution is committed in creating a welcoming environment for all students.

Dedication

To God, my ever-caring mother Edith, and my daughters, Brenda and Mariam

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

Higher education communities in the 21st Century are experiencing a culture shift that is contributing to the diverse ways these institutions transact business in terms of the use of language, and how education is administered to their students (Washburn, 2005). United States of America's citizens expect to derive some important outcomes through higher education, such as social and economic transformation, and improved international reputation. Although there are many more minority students in public institutions, it is argued that a growing number of these students are making faith-based colleges and universities their first choice, due to the perception that these institutions provide better quality education and inculcate moral values in students who attend them (Barrera-Osorio, Patrinos, & Wodon, 2009). Despite this perception, minority individuals feel they are not included in all spheres of college life; rather, they feel that they are considered as inferior, unintelligent, and are discriminated against in their school environment (Yancey, 2010, p. 25). United States and United States of America will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation, but meaning the same thing.

Some college students feel that racial discrimination against minority student leave them feeling isolated and lost, despite diversity symbols found on school campuses (Early & Murphy, 2014). It has been argued that making the environment of American higher education inclusive, safe, and welcoming to minority students is essential for the growth of the institution, and for the success of the students (Strange & Banning, 2015). Researchers revealed that the well-being of a nation is fundamental to the investments it makes to higher education. Not only that, researchers have also noted that higher education degrees come with lifelong benefits to graduates; in addition, society derives direct and indirect benefits from colleges and universities (Baum &

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Payea, 2004; Immerwahr, 2002; Murray, 2009; Lambert & Felten, 2016). It is therefore no surprise that grants, loans, assistance, and tax credits are being provided every year by state and federal governments, to subsidize for students in their education (Baum & Payea, 2004). While not all the benefits of higher education can be quantified, as people's satisfaction and other life enhancing experiences cannot be adequately measured, private and public benefits exist for individuals with university and college degrees, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender (Baum & Payea, 2004).

Unemployment rates and poverty levels decline as individuals contribute more to tax revenues. According to Immerwahr (2002), of similar relevance to society is that university and college graduates have lower smoking rates, better perception of personal health, and a decline in the rate of incarceration. What is striking about these arguments is that college education is not a 100% guarantee for success, nor is the lack of college education a condemnation to those who do not have it (Immerwahr, 2002). College education enhances peoples' knowledge. Research involving identical twins noted differences in earning capacity related to the twins' level of education (Murray, 2009). Other interview data from 2009 indicated that educators at tertiary institutions in the United Kingdom asked questions about health, self-esteem, civic participation, and values, suggesting that these are benefits derived from education. One other societal benefit of higher education highlighted in the result was social cohesion (Murray, 2009).

Universities and colleges in the United States of America expect to admit students every year who make monumental investments, believing that a college education is foundational for success in a global, knowledge and market-based economy (Lambert & Felten, 2016). Colleges and universities admit students who come with minimal direction or lack a clear sense of purpose. This is because the goal of higher education is to help these students by inculcating in

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them a sense of direction through curriculum, communication and community participation

(Lambert & Felten, 2016). Consequently, university and college campuses across the nation

strive to ensure a transformative experience for students irrespective of their school of choice or

the attitudes, values, norms and behaviors they encounter on campus (Lambert & Felten, 2016).

However, if these goals are to be achieved in a society that is becoming increasingly diverse,

there must be diversity awareness, and socially inclusive strategies.

Background of the Study

According to Figure 1, the fertility rate of the white female in the United States is

decreasing, causing a greater reliance on the minority population for the future workforce

(Passel, Livingston, & Cohn, 2012). Members of minorities account for 49% of children in

United States younger than age five (Ingram, 2001). The United States of America's. Census

Bureau projected that Hispanics will continue to account for higher population growth in years to

come (Passel, Livingston, & Cohn, 2012).

People from other countries, cultures, races, and geographical locations, are moving to

the United States of America, for reasons ranging from escaping civil war to the desire to pursue

a better life and education. Many of these immigrants want higher degrees in education from

America's colleges and universities-private, public, and faith-based institutions (Andrade, 2014).

Understanding the challenges of minority and international students studying in the United States

has a global implication for intercultural education (Andrade, 2014).

Figure 1. Fertility rate by race and ethnicity: Explaining why Minority births now outnumbers White births. Retrieved from: Pew Research Center

Fertility Rate, by Race and Ethnicity, 2010

Notes: Racial groups include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Fertility rate, also known as "total fertility rate," is a prediction of how many children the average woman will have, based on current age-specific birth rates.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2010 American Community Survey Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Globalization and immigration are constantly changing the demographics of the United States. Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) revealed that in 1980, the United States was 83% Caucasian, 11.7% Black, and 6.4% Hispanic. Just over a quarter of a century later, these statistics have changed with the percentage population of Hispanics skyrocketing to 15.4%. Most of these immigrants fall under the category of "minorities." Minorities are people who come to a country from other countries and are different from the dominant group in the country they came in to (Ogbu, 1991)

The general concern is that diversity and inclusion are legitimate concern in higher education campuses. Antwi and Ziyati (1993) noted that several factors contribute to the experiences of minority students, and it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that students are included despite their diversity.

Statement of the Problem

Minority undergraduate students of different races, color and backgrounds face challenges of becoming appropriately integrated into the campus structure and life of higher education institutions in the United States of America, and in other parts of the world. The experiences and challenges of the undergraduate students in a faith-based university have not been comprehensively studied. This case study attempted to understand these challenges and experiences of minority students in a faith-based higher education institution in a metropolitan location in the United States.

The identity of the institution of study and any information that identified the institution was replaced by pseudonyms for confidentiality. The name of the institution's newspaper where information was retrieved was replaced with pseudonyms. The identity of all participants was replaced with alphabets and figures for confidentiality. The intent was to use the findings of the study to enhance the existing policies, procedures, strategies and practices of an inclusive school environment of the institution to support the positive student experience and good academic outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the experiences and challenges of minority students as they pursued their four-year degree program in a faith-based university. The study explored how, over time, the institution had handled the issues of diversity and inclusion. In addition, the study examined what was perceived by the institution's employees as the best policies and strategies for promoting inclusive practices at this four-year liberal arts Christian university in a metropolitan area in the United States.

Rationale

The rationale for this study stems from the numerous needs and concerns of minority students on university and college campuses, including the challenges they face in their learning environments, which can affect their success at school and subsequent career paths. The need for social inclusion is not outdated, but still exists, as the United States of America continued to face problems of diversity and inclusion in many different forms (Bean & Stevens, 2003). Because of the United States of America's economic vitality in an interconnected and interdependent global market, people from all nations seek to enter the United States as students, tourists, or as permanent residents (Bean & Stevens, 2003).

The success of immigrants in this economic milieu is dependent largely on the ability of colleges and universities to prepare them for the work force of the future. This justifies the need for universities and colleges to develop cross-cultural competency through academic training and other strategies aimed at creating an inclusive learning environment for all students, more especially minority students.

Research Questions

The four research questions that formed the focal concerns of this study are as follows:

RQ1: To what extent has the experience of students at this institution been positive or negative in terms of inclusive school experience?

RQ2: What are the institutionally based challenges that impact the experiences of minority undergraduate students?

RQ3: How have the different stages in the historical evolution of the institution influenced the challenges of creating an inclusive environment and school experience? How did each of them influence inclusive environment and school experience?

RQ4: What do undergraduate minority students, faculty and staff see as best strategies and practices that can help minority students experience an inclusive and caring environment?

Significance of This Study

The significance of this study to higher education is that it could help address a social issue in the institution of study, and if successful, will further enable the institution to facilitate and improve institutional effectiveness at managing and valuing diversity. This study could strengthen intercultural pedagogical awareness of teaching and service functions of the institution under study (Schweisfurth & Gu, 2009). This study highlighted the experience of minority students and recommended practices that can be implemented by the institution under study to enhance their school experiences. This study may not be generalized because it involved only one institution, with no other similar institution for comparison.

This study is significant for the institution because if found to be proactive and successful in achieving a positive minority experience, it may become a marketing tool, and the institution under study may see increased enrollment as well as success with fewer dropouts of minority students. It is therefore emphasized that data and recommendations from this study may only apply to the institution of study.

United States of America as other countries in history, has had the need of integrating diverse cultures and races that extended beyond its borders (O'Hare, 1992). With demographic change brought about by globalization, the United States as a nation and its educational institutions are constantly confronted with the need to reform, and the need for creating an inclusive learning environment (Williams, 2000).

The institution of study encounters United States of America's citizens as minority students from different socio-cultural background, race and ethnicity, including students from

other geographical locations. As this study showed, each participant understood and interpreted diversity and inclusive experience differently. The experiences of Asian students differ from Hispanic minority students. The presence of minority students on higher educational campuses makes it possible for students from the dominant culture of the host country to gain cultural understanding without travelling abroad (Foster, Yao, Buchanan-Butterfield, & Powell-Brown, 2013).

Researchers noted that United States of American's culture has succeeded in imposing a myth about American society, often referred to as the "melting pot" (Spradley, 1979). What is striking about this myth is that some people regard everyone as sharing similar values; however, individuals that live in this globalized world live by diverse "cultural codes". The melting pot metaphor has come under criticism in recent decades. There is also the analogy of a "stew" or "salad" where items exist together, but still retain some of their original qualities. In his definition of the term culture, Spradley (1979) referred to culture as the developed understanding that people use to interpret experience and generate social behaviors.

Minority students who enroll in higher educational institutions of the United States come with varying degrees of preparedness and expectations (Jackson, Ray, & Bybell, 2013). Research showed that students' preparedness and expectations prior to enrollment have a very significant impact on their expected levels of adjustments and experiences (Jackson, Ray, & Bybell, 2013). Many universities in the United States have added programs and majors to accommodate the demands of minority students, leading to a revision of school curricula to make them culturally inclusive (Hegarty, 2014). Minority students from Africa and other parts of the world in graduate and undergraduate programs in the United States. has contributed in reshaping both university academic disciplines and the United States. Environment (Hegarty, 2014).

The interest in seeking a degree in United States of American's higher education environments by students has helped in fostering goodwill for the nation (Hegarty, 2014). Jackson, Ray, and Bybell (2013) and Akanwa (2015) encouraged administrators, faculty, and staff of American, Canadian, and United Kingdom higher educational institutions to engage in a joint effort to support minority and international students to enable them to experience a fruitful social and academic life. Cavanagh, Macfarlane, Glynn, and Macfarlane (2012) presented the results of over five years of research focusing on developing the theory and practice of a "culture of care" in schools. They insisted that culture of care demand schools and teachers to be educated on how to synthesize a safe environment for students to engage, to contribute, to belong and to feel confident in their own cultural identities. Teachers and school administrators do not have to be familiar with every culture or race that is represented by their students; rather, they need to develop a shared school and classroom culture. The culture that is built must reflect school environment and classroom values and practices that makes it safe for all students. If schools and teachers succeed at this, they would have created a culture of care (Cavanagh et al., 2012).

Past studies indicated that minority students are sometimes not accustomed to the American classroom environment (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014). The reason given was that they are not familiar with the United States teaching styles (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014 The presence of diverse students not only impact the economy of the United States, it also constitute a vital source of diversity, boosting not only the student population, but also a university's environmental culture and intellectual life (Bang & Montgomery, 2013). To continue deriving financial benefits as well as boost student enrollment, educational leaders need to understand how to create and maintain an environment that is safe and welcoming.

Operational Definition of Terms

Inclusive experience**:** The use of this term in this study means the act of accepting, welcoming, respecting, and genuinely integrating all minorities into the school environment, classroom experience, and school system.

Inclusive practices**:** In the context of this study, inclusive practices mean ways in which the institution has revised curriculum, policies, and practices to support teaching and learning in a manner that is accommodative of minorities.

Campus Social Environment: This refers to perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that describe the institution and its community members organizational culture (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen 1999)

Ethnicity*:* This term refers to cultural practices and outlooks of a given community that sets the people of that sub-culture apart. (Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum, & Carr, 2013, p. 298).

Race: It is a classification that assigns people to a category based on their skin color and culture (Giddens et al., 2013, p. 289).

Culture: Culture is the collective and learned patterns of ideas, values, behaviors, products, and institutions characteristics of a society or organization (Van Rheenen, 1996).

Diversity*:* This term stands for all the differences that exist among people such as race, culture, skin color, age, gender, educational level, geographical location, body size, region, worldview, tenure at place of work, number of years spent in the organization, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, etc.

Student diversity: This term in this context signifies the students who are not considered Caucasian, and particularly those from Africa/African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino and Native American descent.

Asians: This is a category that refers to people whose ethnic origins are East Asia, South Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Philippines (Poon, 2014).

Latino: This category is characteristic of individuals from Latin America or of that descent.

Hispanic: This is a category that relates to people originally coming from an area where Spanish is spoken especially from Spain, Portugal, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.

Africans/African Americans: This category is characteristic of people of African origin (Born in the United States, or immigrant).

Organization: This term signifies groups with an identifiable membership that engages in a concerted and collective effort to achieve a common goal (Giddens et al., 2013).

Globalization*:* This is a term used to describe a state of the world involving networks of interdependence of multiple connections and relations at a distance (Guruz, 2008, p. 15).

Immigration: This is the process by which people leave a country to settle in another (Giddens et.al, 2013, p. 306).

Minorities: This term refers to people who come to a country from other countries and are different from the dominant group (Ogbu, 1991). However, in some parts of the United States, Caucasians are minorities.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

First, people who are in a position of authority are genuinely committed to creating an inclusive environment, and it is the only sustainable way for people to remain and function well in an increasingly diverse society. Second, the study assumed that forces creating diversity are not reversible; for example, globalization, immigration, and demographic changes.

Third, every diversity and inclusion effort are real. People may be well intended but the gap between appearance and reality or substance may be different. Finally, with good systemic planning, policies, determination, commitment practices and strategies, leaders will make a difference in creating an inclusive environment.

Limitations

The study was limited as the researcher chose not to make comparisons of inclusive practices between the institution selected for this study, and with a similar institution of higher learning. In addition, participants were hesitant to openly respond to some of the questions posed during the interviews and at focus group meetings. Another limitation of the study was that the institution under study is in an urban environment in a mid-western region of the United States, which restricts study findings to others with similar characteristics. A further limitation to this study was that this researcher identifies as a minority, and every attempt was made to limit bias. Finally, the number of willing participants was a limitation.

Nature of the Study

This qualitative case study was an instrumental case study (Creswell, 2010, p16-17). This researcher gathered data and evidences on the experiences of minority students, staff and faculty of the university campus selected for the study. The aim was to enable the university to better understand the challenges of minority students in the institution and how to support their adaptations and experiences. The sampling method was purposeful sampling, where the researcher selected faculty and staff participants based on their level of interactions with the students, and their work department. Student participants were selected to represent characteristics such as culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and academic year in school.

The theory of choice was the Organizational Change Theory. The processes in which an organization changes its structure, strategies, operational methods, technologies, policies, procedures, or organizational culture to affect changes on the organization is known as organizational change theory (Markus & Robey, 1988). The organizational change model may reveal why change happens, what will occur, and how to measure the change (Kezar, 2001). Change can be planned or adaptive. Planned change is materialistic, social and subjective, while adaptive change is idealistic, technical and objective (Kezar, 2001). The study examined the institution from a perspective that emphasized historical processes, historical changes, and adaptations. This case study highlighted how the past had influenced the present. Institutional review board approval was obtained prior to the research for compliance due to the nature of the study as it involved contact with human participants. It looked at inclusive issues in the history of the institution, and how the institution responded.

Participant samples were selected among the current undergraduate students of the institution, alumni, staff, and faculty. Participants included both tenured and adjunct faculty from different racial, ethnic and minority groups. Faculty with three or more years of service in the institution were selected to justify the historical context of the study. Staff from departments that encounter minority students on frequent basis, for example, the university library, student life office, dormitory supervisors, and members of staff from the extracurricular activities department were included in the study, because they frequently and regularly encounter and interact with minority students

To comply with the purpose of this study, students were purposefully selected to fully represent minority groups from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Minority students were identified as students from Africa/African American, of Asian ancestry, Latino students,

Caribbean and Native Americans. They were also classified according to their level of year in school and student participants were chosen to reflect their major course of study. Current students were selected to represent gender, and whether the student lived on campus or were commuters. Alumni students were co-opted through interviews to enhance the historical perspective of this study. Alumni participants were recruited with the help of the Alumni office of the institution.

Data was through interviews and focus group meetings. Interviews and focus groups responses were recorded, manually transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Permission was obtained for audio recordings during the interviews and focus group discussions. Historical document review was also part of the data collection process. Different individuals were contacted in the process of historical document review, and records as far back as in the 1960s were obtained and reviewed (newspapers, magazines, assessment etc.). Information retrieved from historical data were integrated into the analysis. Three focus group sessions were conducted, and data were collected and categorized.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The introductory chapter has discussed the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, rationale, significance of the study, and the four research questions. The first chapter highlighted the understanding of the challenges that minority students encounter on campus, and how these influenced their experiences.

The second chapter provided a review of relevant literature with emphasis on diversity and inclusion, including discussions on university and college environments, impact of inclusion and positive experience, role of leadership in institutional change and stability, and faith-based higher education and why students choose to enroll in them.

Chapter Three is the methodology for the study and included the description of the theoretical framework, and the research design. Chapter Four presented the results of the study and the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews and focus group meetings. The fifth chapter concluded the study, by discussing the implications and recommendations for practitioners and academics.

Summary

This chapter discusses the challenges and opportunities that abound in a pluralistic and diverse culture of higher educational institutions in the United States. Using a faith-based University as a case study, this research used four research questions to explore and understand the question of diversity and inclusion of minority students on university and college campuses in the United States.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Introduction

In the first chapter, this researcher discussed arguments for institutions of higher education in the United States to create environments that would positively influence the educational experiences of minority students. There is no doubt that a vast number of colleges and universities have taken steps to develop a welcoming environment to retain students of all races and creeds. Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, (2011). noted a major problem facing the United States of American's educational system in general and higher education hinges on how to support racial and ethnic minority students to succeed and have a meaningful school experience

Brown-Jeffy & Cooper (2011) argued for the development of relevant cultural pedagogy to support educational institutions in acknowledging and maintaining cultural nuances that help create diversity awareness and meaningful school experiences for minority students. Paredes-Collins (2013) suggested that for minority students to experience the benefits that exist in a diverse learning environment, an educational leadership and community that is supportive and inclusive is required. This literature review was structured closely around the four research questions. The literature review was discussed under four broad headings, with appropriate sub-headings.

The four broad headings were used: (1) the environment of higher education, (2) impact of inclusion and positive school experiences on higher education, (3) role of leadership in institutional change and stability, and finally, (4) faith-based higher educational institutions and why students choose to enroll in them.

Environment of Higher Education

Researchers argued that many universities and colleges have attracted a high number of students who reside on university campuses (Youatt, McCully, & Blanshan, 2014). Interestingly, some students favors to commute to school daily, for reasons best known to them. Whatever the case, students must go through their studies and be able to relate what they learn to their experiences (Youatt, McCully, & Blanshan, 2014). Higher educational institutions have served as a place of learning and community. On the other hand, they are also considered an arena for negative ethnic and racial relations (Paredes-Collins, 2013).

Faith-based higher educational institutions are not totally void of ethnic and racial challenges (Paredes-Collins, 2013). A campus environment consists of a neighborhood sharing a common interest with the goal of supporting all students in their academic and other school experiences (Youatt et al., 2014). Today's school environment calls for teachers who are well prepared to instruct culturally diverse students. However, university students are also involved in a variety of activities, aside from their academic experiences, including their participation in the living communities and other extracurricular activities during and after school hours.

Because students' experiences included their experiences in their residential spaces, some schools have gone as far as creating intentional connections through weekly meetings to continue to create strong rapport among individuals (Youatt et al., 2014). DuFon and Christian (2013) admitted that campus environments not only have challenges, but carry with them ways of introducing people to new ideas, practices, relationships, and how to view this changing world in a new perspective. College campuses are not only larger, they are much more diverse than ever

before. Irrespective of how large or small a campus environment may be, it should be able to accommodate a diverse student population.

Perception of Cultural Differences

Individuals perceived differences as a set of characteristics and processes resulting in patterns of behaviors that account for how similarities and differences interact in institutions (Maltbia & Power, 2009). Cultural inclusion is the expression of promoting laws and policies that ensure cultural participation, access, and the right to express and interpret culture (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], n.d.). From an urban policy perspective, cultural inclusion includes mixing the best problem-solving, creative, innovative and entrepreneurial practices (UNESCO, n.d.).

From an educational philosophy and theory perspective, Jiang (2011) provided a neo-Marxist framework of inter-culturalism to shelter the increasing cultural diversity in the internationalism of universities and colleges with specific reference to Chinese students in New Zealand. The author argued that accommodating this intercultural incompatibility is more than just a question of acquiring some competence in intercultural skill. Buttressing the argument, Jiang (2011), insisted that what really mattered in diverse cultural contact is the acknowledgement that all cultures and members of cultural groups are equal as human beings, and deserve respect.

Managing a Diverse Learning Environment

An important instance in which issues of school experience and inclusion converged is the argument that no one can overestimate how hard it is to manage a learning environment with different individuals, having their own learning needs and expected learning experiences (Westwood, 2013). Faculty, students and staff of higher educational institutions need much

support and guidance in moving toward inclusive practices, which are best provided by the school (Westwood, 2013).

There seems to be a general agreement (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Saunders & Kardia, 2014) that an inclusive learning environment is where instructors, staff, and students work together to create an environment where everyone feels safe, supported, and encouraged, regardless of their social class, ethnic background, gender, and national origin, or other differences. Like most fundamental issues concerning inclusion and student's experience, Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton, and Cooper (2011) insisted that multiculturalism and exclusion of groups marginalized by identity, is a prominent issue on college and university campuses.

Lee (2012) presented the principles for racial and ethnic dialogue into an art education course, an epistemological stance that encouraged students to connect meaningfully to an unfamiliar topic and visual thinking. The study concluded that educational leaders play an important role on how students come to understand what it means to respect, understand, and value diverse cultures. Teachers' understanding of the concepts of culture affects what they choose to include and exclude in their teaching (Lee, 2012).

Despite all the challenges surrounding inclusion and students' experience in the higher educational environment, prior research that investigated the construction and implementation of critical action to encourage equal classroom participation and experience yielded a positive result. 42 out of 63 students in class felt more included, free, bold, familiar and comfortable in the classroom (Mack, 2012). While Mack's study had some limitations, its main value lied in the reports from students as they verbalized inclusion and absence of intimidation.

Today's educators are no longer just "behind the scenes" teachers and leaders; rather, they are assuming highly sensitive roles in higher education as they deal with sensitive issues

that impact higher education, such as those related to students' experience and inclusion. Faculty and educators need to be individuals with cultural skills for successful teaching and learning in higher education (Mack, 2012). Moore et al. (2010) supported this argument by stating that as America becomes more culturally diverse, faculty and teachers' circles have emerged across university and college campuses to exchange ideas of practices that have enhanced an inclusive learning environment over the last decade. These are parts of the efforts put in place to serve the needs of faculty/teachers/instructors who want to examine their pedagogical approaches, values, and biases as they relate to issues of privilege, power, and difference in a multicultural educational environment (Moore, et al., 2010). The intention of having students on college and university campuses is to educate, nurture, and provide a meaningful learning environment and experience to all.

Creating a Meaningful School Environment and Experience

The creation of an inclusive school environment and meaningful school experience for students is the responsibility of the teachers, staff and the students. From the early days of the students' affairs profession, theorists recognized the impact of environment on the lives of the individuals that populate college and university campuses (Cuyjet et al., 2011, p. 37). The authors supported this idea by recommending a formula proposed by Kint Lewin, $B=f(P \times E)$, to explain that behavior (B) is a function (F) of the interaction between person (P) and environment (E). This formula was applied to a college setting identifying a 'transactional relationship' in which the students shape the environment and are shaped by it (p. 37). In line with this interaction, Cuyjet et al. (2011) strongly believed that creating a welcoming, warm and inclusive learning environment influenced students' performance, which in turn impacted the higher education profession

The instructions and directions given by faculty individuals can positively or negatively affect the teaching and learning that takes place in a higher educational environment, including inside and outside the classroom. To this effect, Moore et al. (2010) concluded that faculty development regarding the experience and inclusion of diverse cultural teaching and learning is required to address difficult themes such as socio-economic, ethnic, gender and national differences. In addition, faculty training further develops cultural competencies that enhance cultural proficiencies for faculty, staff and their students for the benefit of higher education. School inclusive experiences not only influence the individual, but also impact institutions.

Impact of Inclusion and Positive School Experience on Higher Education

How inclusion and the experience of students on campuses affect higher education is of crucial and practical importance. Mindful of this, Aydin and Tonbuloglu (2014) argued that with division and discrimination on the decrease because of globalization and immigration to developed countries in the 21st century such as the United States, "the unilateral nature of nation-states has been shaken to its core leading to the transformation of many nation states into multicultural environment" (p. 30). The authors strongly believed that this transformation, which is regarded in higher education as the goal of multicultural education, helped to prepare students for the world with ever-increasing diversity that requires inclusiveness (Aydin & Tonbuloglu, 2014).

Winters (2014) described inclusion as the art of creating a community that accepts, and welcomes, different approaches, styles, perspectives, and experiences, to allow all to flourish, resulting in enhanced institutional and educational success. According to Winters, nations where globalization and the quest for better livelihood, education, and relationships have attracted people from all parts of the world, are bound to encounter cultural differences. Higher

educational environments are seeing these dynamics. The need therefore is for administrators, faculty, staff, and students to embrace cultural and other forms of inclusion in their learning space for the benefit of higher education, and the experience of the students therein (Winters, 2014). Winters (2014) supported the preceding observations by adding that cultural inclusion and inclusion in general can be sustained only when all elements are working in collaboration, both at the micro and macro levels respectively.

Cultural inclusion on campus environments is the responsibility of faculty, staff and students. Bigatti et al. (2012) argued that, without doubt, the perception of faculty and staff on the meaning of a multicultural teaching environment involved a process of using diverse pedagogies and materials. Based on qualitative and quantitative interviews of faculty at an urban Midwestern university on perceptions of multicultural teaching and learning, Bigatti et al. (2012) argued that college and university graduates face an increasingly globalized world. Concluding their findings, the authors noted that the classroom and campus environment, as opposed to one's social network, is the most diverse venue for students to converge. This, perhaps, is the primary foundation upon which multicultural teaching can flourish. The authors further advised that it is necessary for faculty, administrators, staff, and students to take the advantage of such environment to allow for a space and time in which students may explore other cultural perspectives in a safe environment

In a study on developing culturally competent faculty, Taylor, Van Zandt, and Menjares (2013) observed that there is a lack of a successful model for developing a culturally competent faculty. These authors believed that building a culturally inclusive classroom is relevant for higher education to produce students who would be capable to welcome, respect, value, and accommodate diversity. The ability to recognize some of the factors that negatively affect

minority students on college and university campuses is essential in finding ways to eliminate them to create a positive school experience for those who are affected. Students and their families are increasingly becoming interested in enrolling into higher educational institutions that will keep students safe, and provide learning environment that is welcoming.

Minority Students' Experiences in Higher Educational Environments

Study has shown that several factors positively or negatively contribute to the experiences of minority students on university campuses, especially in a faith-based educational institution (O'Reilly, Hickey, & Ryan, 2015). Although the faith-based higher education institutions are more expensive and less open to groups (such as low-income families and people of color), minority students continued to make great efforts to enroll into such schools because of the environment, and the quality of education derived from those institutions (O'Reilly, Hickey, & Ryan, 2015).

In a study conducted by Antwi and Ziyati (1993) on the experience of African graduate students in a multicultural setting revealed that students identified their greatest concern to be how faculty relate to and communicate with, them. The authors further argued that whatever jeopardizes the chances of minority students from reaching their goal of obtaining the educational degree is a very serious matter to them (Antwi & Ziyati, 1993).

Another study pointed out that, due to the history of the United States, individuals will migrate to the nation in very significant numbers, for diverse reasons (Roger, 2003). Embracing diversity and inclusion is not only a problem in higher educational settings in the United States, but also a problem in other countries. For instance, Wilson-Strydom (2014) highlighted the difficult paths students endured in South African universities. The author

indicated that the educational policies in place have not created an equitable college environment.

The purpose of a study conducted by Tienda (2013) was to identify organizational strategies and practices that would help in promoting meaningful and academic interactions among all students who differ in trait, culture, value, worldview, color, ethnicity, and more. According to the Tienda (2012), higher education administrators and staff have a huge role to play in helping to create an inclusive school experience for minority students. Many of these students return to their home countries and assume very vital offices in their government systems (Tienda, 2013).

The world has become interconnected, and people no longer need to get their educational degrees only where they live. Russell, Rosenthal, and Thompson (2010) acknowledged that the challenges minority students face can task their sense of well-being. Based on what researchers have found, United States of American's students seeking education outside the United States experience difficulties abroad as well (O'Reilly et al., 2015).

High quality professional development is central to improving education and students' experience (Guskey, 2002). The product is the improvement of students' experiences and learning, irrespective of how they differ (Guskey, 2002). To improve the experiences of minority students on higher educational campuses, faculty, staff, and students need the required intercultural training to support how they relate to and teach these students. Madsen and Mabokela (2014) believed that professional development is needed for institutional workers, focusing on the ability to demonstrate cultural understanding, and infusing both cultural and linguistic differences into the policies, strategies and practices of the institution. Leading a

diverse population of students requires the leader to carefully understand how these students are socialized and incorporated into the institution (Madsen & Mabokela, 2014).

In a case study conducted by authors Baker and Baldwin (2014), comparisons of change factors for three colleges were examined, as efforts were made to understand the impact of the changes in the institutional experiences from the beginning and over time. Findings at the end of the study revealed that the changes noted were evolutionary, and not revolutionary. Evolutionary in the sense that the change is gradual and continuous, instead of revolutionary change that can be sudden in nature or catastrophic. Evidence suggested that organizations and institutions change to make room for the challenges they face (Baker & Baldwin, 2014). The researchers encouraged future researchers to explore the factors that have influenced change in liberal arts colleges.

The significance of the need to address the issue of diversity and inclusion in the United States can be highlighted by closely examining the rate of fertility among the different cultural subgroups in the country. Understanding variation in fertility rate can help predict with a certain degree of accuracy what the future labor force of the country will be and how to prepare to train them in higher education institutions. Since minorities will be trained in the United States colleges and universities, it is pertinent to address how the inclusion of such minorities is dealt with in higher institutions of learning.

Minority Students' Choice of Institution and the Complexities of Inclusive Experiences

Research findings have shown that several factors affect minority students' choice of enrollment in a four-year degree program of a faith-based institution (Confer & Mamiseishvili, 2012). Students who persist and decide to stay in school do so because they want to graduate with a college degree to enhance their human capital. The combination of a sense of welcome,

along with social and cultural awareness in the academic environment, help students to enroll and remain in the institution (Hausman, Schofield, & Woods, 2007). Positive or negative college experience, Hausman, Schofield, and Woods believe, is a multi-level issue. Institutions are not the only factors that can promote inclusive experience and environment for the students; the individual student characteristics may also determine how the student perceives and interpret his or her experience. Hausman, Schofield, and Woods (2007) support this argument by insisting that peer and parental support and interactions with faculty and staff are all contributory to the experience of minority students. Further, students in general and minority students want to be understood. They also want the complexities of who they are to be recognized by those they interact and deal with in their environment.

Understanding how inclusive school environment and inclusive experience for minority students in faith-based higher education play out is very complex. Dutro, Kazemi, Balf, and Lin (2008) clarified that educators need to be experienced in the theory and practice of culturally relevant pedagogy to precisely understand how to support the diverse students on campus. The authors explained that classroom and residential hall practices, and extracurricular activities are some specific areas where students may want to relate their experiences. Dutro et al. emphasized that, institutions serving all students in general, and minority students specifically, need to engage in a pedagogical practice that will create an inclusive school experience and diversity in higher educational environments.

It is becoming apparent that the world's increasing population of students seeking a higher education degree has included students of color and other minority students. Some research supported the idea of developing educators, faculty and staff who would facilitate and engage in contact-related school activities, in addition to theory-enhancing activities of minority

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students (Ball, 2000). Interestingly, institutional departments and units still struggle to foster a community that creates an inclusive environment for students who are from diverse population and considered minorities in the United States. Mullen, Bettez, and Wilson (2011) acknowledged that in most higher educational environments, administrators, faculty and staff espouse community building; however, negative behaviors, attitudes, stereotypes, approaches, and practices may be read as forcing individuals to forego their identity, and become like the majority. This approach depends sometimes on the founding fathers of the institution and its culture.

Changing Negative Institutional Cultures: Challenges and Opportunities

Studies have explored some possibilities that may help change negative institutional cultures to a more positive and transparent community that values difference and respect of all students, irrespective of the differences that may exist (Mullen et al., 2011). Some of these research findings concluded that multicultural awareness is critical in helping to prepare the students to cope and adjust in the global market economy (Bigatti et al, 2012; Mullen et al., 2011). As conversations on institutional culture continued, the article on "courageous conversation," a strategy by Jacob Ellis (2006), the dean of students and activities coordinator at a school in Seattle commented that some faculty indicated that they feel more comfortable interacting with only Caucasian students on campus. Ellis (2006) started a monthly "courageous conversation" whereby minority students would sit down with staff members and talk about their everyday experiences. To further the conversations, Ellis started inviting minority parents and guardians to talk about their experiences with the school system. This story demonstrated that minority students in the United States educational institutions feel that they are neither welcome nor respected due to the attitudes of those around them.

In another study conducted by Polat (2012), 23 staff differences were emphasized, in addition to 27 organizational values that could be shared by all school staff for an efficient management of differences and diversities. Some of the values that were often repeated included respect of differences, democratic attitudes, giving values to human dignity, fair play/equality, and integration. Some findings from the study showed that organizations or institutions that did not take diversity into consideration kept staff away from each other, while those that practiced inclusion had their staff create some shared values and preserve peculiar differences (Polat, 2012). Minority students need a well-supporting staff with the required skills-set to wade through the challenges of higher education and its environment.

Some researchers have recognized school culture and cultural audit. This process helped to identify how the different cultural perspectives are reflected in the behaviors of minority students (Sailes, Cleveland, & Tyler, 2014). Schools frequently conducted classroom observations, examined documents, and administered interviews from time to time to assist them in updating policies and practices; especially those that helped improve the creation of an inclusive school experience, and a safe and welcoming environment for minority students in their midst (Sailes et al., 2014). Freiberg (1998) supported this argument by insisting that a school environment is essential for creating effective teaching and learning, and for other experiences of the students in the climate.

Using students' concern interviews, entrance and exit interviews, and ambient noise checklists may lead to significant healthy changes in the way the institution practice and transact business (Freiberg, 1998). Researchers have insisted that since inclusive school experiences have been portrayed as a priority in most education environments, there is a need to achieve this goal by finding ways to maximize the participation of minority students (Angelides & Antoniou,

2012). An inclusive school experience is a means to eliminate the hindrances that prevent

students from succeeding and having a good experience (Angelides & Antoniou, 2012).

Findings by these researchers showed that cultural factors influence the creation of an inclusive

school experience. They also noted that leadership of the school is the major drive toward

achieving this goal. Some understand inclusion as only the move to integrate students with

disabilities into the regular school environment and system. Braunsteiner and Mariano-Lapidus

(2014) insisted that to promote inclusive acceptance of students, their cultural and linguistic

differences must be included in all school curriculum and practices.

Owing to demographic diversity, inclusive school experience is now at the frontline of

the 21st century's constantly shifting educational focus. Inclusion is not only about welcoming,

but also includes valuing the diverse population of minority students that come through the

higher education gates (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2013). Looking in-depth into the

meaning of creating an inclusive school experience, Braunsteiner and Mariano-Lapidus (2013)

described it as a "model democracy in action, with relevant values for all students irrespective of

geography, culture, or color(p 37)." Leaders, faculty, staff and students must readjust the lens

that they have been using to view inclusion and inclusive school experience for all students in

higher education campuses (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014).

Leaders in higher education need the skillset to operate in the ways that would value,

welcome and respect all students. Royce Money was the president of Abilene Christian

University in Texas. This institution had excluded minority students until 1965. Money

travelled to the campus of Southwestern Christian College, a historically Black institution in

Terrell, Texas, and made this public statement: "Abilene Christian University has been in

existence for more than nine decades. Its doors were not open to African Americans for well

over half that time. We are here today to confess the sins of racism and discrimination and to issue a formal apology to all, to express regret and to ask for your forgiveness. We understand from the Lord that part of repentance involved the resolve to go in a different direction from the past. But before we focus on the future, we need to confess the sins of racism and discrimination in our past against our African American brothers and sisters. We are sorry." (Cross & Slater, 2004, p391-399). Since 1977, the percentage of minority students at the intuition has risen.

Other researchers also agreed that the 21st century global society is going through a historic reform, where America, and the world is no longer predominantly a Caucasian or Black society; rather, it is now ethnically, racially, and religiously diverse (Wentling, 2001). For students to succeed in a society of this nature and to be able to effectively engage, their educational experiences must channel them toward the line of understanding and embracing the differences that exist (Wentling, 2001). It is also relevant that teachers and administrators equally embrace the differences that minority students bring with them to the school environment, and refrain from refusing to acknowledge the degree of conflict that exists on campus.

Systemically Managing and Valuing Diversity

Table 1 shows the likely consequences of diversity management in an organization (Cox, 1994). The table contains a list of factors that create the diversity climate in an organization. Depending on how the factors play out, they may affect individual vocational experiences (employee, staff or students) differently. Individual experiences in turn affect organizational goals. Whatever the impact, it will have a feedback loop impacting diversity climate, and the chain reaction continues.

An Interactional Model of the Impact of Diversity on Individual Career Outcomes and

Organizational Effectiveness: These three are related. The diversity climate impacts individual

career outcomes, which in turn impacts organizational effectiveness. The chain reaction

continues with organizational effectiveness impacting the diversity climate.

Table 1 An interactional model of the impact of diversity on individual career outcome

DIVERSITY CLIMATE	INDIVIDUAL CAREER OUTCOMES	ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Individual level factors • *Identity structures* • *Prejudice* • *Stereotyping* • *Personality* *Group/Intergroup Factors* ***Cultural differences*** • *Ethnocentrism* • *Intergroup Conflict* *Organizational-Level Factors* *Culture and Acculturation process* ***Structural integration*** ***Informal integration*** *Institutional Bias in Human Resource System*	*Affective Outcomes* *Student Satisfaction* • *Institutional prestige* *Achievement Outcomes* *Student Performance rating* *Graduation rate*	*First level* • *Enrollment* • *Turnover* • *Retention* • *Graduation* • *Recruiting success* • ***Creativity/Innovation*** • ***Problem Solving*** • ***Workgroup*** ***Cohesiveness and Communication*** *Second Level* • *Market Share* • *Profitability* • *Achievement of Goals*

Retrieved from: Cultural Diversity in organizations: Theory, Research and Practice (Cox, 1994)

Previous studies noted that educators, staff, and administrators on school campuses tend

to focus more on superficial differences of fashion or skin color while neglecting the underlying

issues of cultural conflict, discrimination, stereotype, lack of respect for people and their values,

and emotional labor that minority students suffer on college and university campuses (Haar &

Robicheau, 2008). Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly (1992) identified the puzzling omission and serious

contradictions that existed in the ways diversity and inclusion are handled in the United States of

American's organizations and educational institutions. These authors agreed that managing and

leading a diverse workforce is a challenge to leaders and administrators, and, require urgent attention.

Although higher educational institutions, both public and private, portrayed awareness of the presence of minority students on school campuses, there remained a lot to be learned, and strategies to be developed to better create an inclusive school experience for all students (Lutz, Hassouneh, Akeroyd, & Beckett, 2013). Continued reflection and collaboration on campuses can lead to a less stressful and negative experience for students who are considered minority. Lutz et al. (2013) emphasized that it is not only the students that experience stress on campus. Faculty from diverse backgrounds experience barriers and challenges as they engage in strategies that would support their success and survival in the academic environment (Lutz et al., 2013).

On this note, action is needed to foster an environment of grace, genuine welcome, respect and inclusion for minority students studying in the United States faith-based private higher educational institutions. Turner (2015) submitted that supporting one another, in a meaningful way across our differences, helped actualize an atmosphere of inclusion on private or public higher education campus. The world is getting increasingly diverse as people no longer only work or live in their geographical location or culture. A higher educational environment that aims to create a supportive learning atmosphere needs to pay conscious attention to strategies that supports shared values and policies that preserves peculiar differences (Polat, 2012).

Cavanaugh et al. (2012) focused on developing the theory and practice of a "Culture of Care" in schools. These authors insisted that creating a culture of care requires that institutions, teachers, and staff be educated on how to nurture a safe environment for all students to engage, and feel accepted, in their own cultural identity.

Perceptions of Differences and Experiences

Generally, students have different perceptions of the higher educational environment and experience. Aguirre, Martinez, and Hernandez (1993) noted that majority and minority faculty and staff exhibit similar ideas that environments of higher education and experiences differ. Turner (2015) highlighted an insight into the power of organizational structure and how it can construct a learning environment that either minimizes or maximizes individual's anticipations. These authors agreed that the characteristics of higher education environments can affect the experiences of everyone on campus, with more impact felt by those who are barely represented (Turner, 2015).

People working in organizations and those studying in higher educational institutions are bound to interact and relate with others who are different from them. These differences, if well managed, can boost organizational or higher educational success. However, if ill managed, the differences may also become a setback for the institution (Turner, 2015). As stated by Turner (2015), institutions have long ignored the reaction of the majority to the minority since people often favored those that are like them. Tsui et al. (1992) brought another perspective to the dialogue by noting that individuals sometimes like to be different from others. Although a large body of research and articles have discussed the reactions of the presence of minority students by their majority peers, little or no research has deemed it necessary to pay attention to the impact that the increasing diversity in the workforce, and higher educational environments have on the majority (Tsui et al., 1992).

Shorter-Gooden (2013) considered the line of inclusive divide, which has not yet been expunged. The author revealed some core components of a culturally competent organization.

In an institution, this means welcoming everyone from all walks of life, color, geography and race. Creating and sustaining an inclusive positive environment is essential for higher education to support the diverse students they serve (Shorter-Gooden, 2013. Shorter-Gooden (2013) believed that an elements of a culturally competent institution is the institution's ability to infuse diverse perspectives throughout their practices and policies

Making Inclusive Experiences Real

One thing is to create inclusive strategies, policies, and practices, and yet another is to create them in a realistic manner. Researchers noted that institutional leaders need to stand visibly for openness, because it sends a unique message to all others in the institution (Conant, 2011). Continuing in his line of argument, Conant (2011) argued that leaders may not be able to serve minority population well if they do not understand them. The author gave some examples of what was done to improve diversity and inclusion in his own organization:

(a) organizational development: developing courses where individuals were able to learn common behaviors that could possibly undermine the institutions' effort, and favor a fraction of the community, (b) helping people learn more about relational effectiveness, how to speak, and listen in the community to enhance positive experiences, (c) confronting the sensitive and hard facts, by making sure, that an inclusive framework is expanded in the diverse population served, (d) creating methodical plans that encourages diverse student enrollment to enhance the diversity reputation of the institution or organization. (e) mentoring and supporting groups, who would help mentor and develop students regardless of their socio-cultural background (p. 2).

Concluding these suggestions, Conant (2011) echoed that the organization should be mindful of the need to improve diversity and encourage an inclusive environment. Perhaps,

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when inclusive experiences become real, individuals will feel that they truly belong. According to Wadors (2016), some leaders and administrators have launched diversity and inclusion initiatives to make diverse individuals in their community feel welcome. Wadors (2016) remarked that although the initiatives were put in place, the institution still failed because they did not "move the needles" on including the minorities among them. Wadors insisted that cultivating a sense of belonging, being one's authentic self and not seen as a number, and a feeling that the individual matters irrespective of nationality or geographical location, is a fair practice. For institutions and organizations to create an inclusive experience and environment, they must be prepared to change, and be able to show where it got its impetus for the change (Wadors, 2016).

Kondra and Hinings (1998) believed that institutions that deviate from their norms may experience a broader range of outcomes. Some of the experiences included the stability of the institution, how the institution handled the change process, and roles of institutional leaders that supported growth, progress, inclusion, and good public relations.

In this respect, people generally want Christian higher educational institutions to change to better accommodate the shifting demographics and the population of students enrolling in the institutions. Change, even when well-intended and desired, can create instability and staying afloat may be difficult for institutions while experiencing instability. Bringing these arguments closer, higher educational institutions need stability to continue to remain competitive

The influence of stakeholders and financial donors has a huge impact on the decisions for change (Storberg-Walker & Torraco, 2004). The market equally has an influence on some the direction of the changes which institutions decide to embark. To remain competitive, stable, and viable, higher educational institutions need to pay attention to their stake- holders, students'

families, and the global market economy. Institutions play a vital role in a society. They control the game that is played within the environment. Different institutions, including economic, governmental, educational, family and religious, generally seem to bring people together for a common goal. Over time, a greater percentage of institutions experience one form of change or the other. The majority of these changes are worthy of note, because they influence the sustenance and stability of the institution. Some of the changes include leadership, policies, curriculum, size, and demographics. Others are location, prestige, appearance, and executive team demographics. With these changes, most institutions have continually been re-inventing themselves to be in a better position to deal with the changing circumstances (Tight, 2013).

Institutions or organizations founded for profit or non-profit, religious, social, educational or other purposes endure change and stability. The 3M corporation for example, was a very small-scale mining venture in 1902, but now has grown into a large company impacting the entire world with its products. Because the initial goal of the five founders of the 3M did not materialize, a change to an innovation and collaboration was born. With the initial motive of harvesting a mineral known as 'Corundum' from the Cristal Bay not producing much Corundum, the founders turned and incorporated other materials and products. One could always make a diagrammatic road map of institutions and the diverse changes that they experience.

Change always follows something new or different, and the degree to which it occurs affect institutional stability. New evidence showed that the implementation of change is challenging, most importantly in the bureaucracy of the institution (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). The researchers believed that Social change may set organizational or institutional employees into a disarray, which may make them wonder how it all started. Change and stability of an institution tell a story. The idea that change examines the evolution of organizations in different places and

times may shed a clearer light on what researchers note in terms of how institutions were conceived, their birth, growth, maturity, process, vulnerabilities, stabilities and renewal across time (Hurst, 2002). Organizations like Healtheast Care System in its 125 years have seen their twists and turns from leadership changes, to creation and implementation of new clinics and technological usage (Healtheast Care System, n.d.). The world's economic market is a very significant drive in the changes that continues to take place in our nations institutions and organizations, and around the world. To buttress this argument, John K. Galbraith and Milton Friedman in a television script argued that we live in a world of uncertainty and change, which also affect the economic behaviors of individuals and institutions (Wolf, 1993).

Models of Organizational Structure and Change

Institutional and organizational change is very important in all societies. All societies must develop the capacity to deal with institutional and organizational change. While this research study is concerned primarily with institutional and organizational change in the realm of higher education, it must be stressed that no institution or organization is an island to itself. What this means is that what happens within an organization or institution is not only generated by the dynamics within the institution, but also by forces within the wider society that relate to and have impact on higher education. It is in this respect that it is worthwhile to examine models of organizational structure and change.

Burke and Litwin (1992), while explaining the causal model of organizational performance and change, propagated the 7S model of organizational performance. The strength of the 7S model included its description of organizational variables in respect to strategy, structure, system, style, staff, skills, and shared values, as the factors which influenced the success of an organization (S in the 7S stands for structure, system, style, staff, skill, and shared

values) . They also recognized the importance of the interrelationship among these 7S

dimensions as a strength. Hence the review of Marvin Weisbord's *six-box model*, Nadler and

Tushman's *model of Congruence*, and Burns and Lorsch *Contingency models*.

The six-box model highlighted organizational structure and design, giving attention to the

role of staff and employee, planning, leadership hierarchy, assessment and accountability. This

model is a category used to perform an organizational diagnosis. Included in the six-box model,

are the very important roles of leadership and accountability, which were not specifically

identified in the 7S model. Leadership is of paramount importance, since it is the coordinator of

the other five components in the six-box model(Burke & Litwin, 1992).

The Nadler-Tushman model of congruence, developed in 1980 is a vital instrument used

to identify what is not working well in an organization, and finding ways to support a change.

This model consists of the following components: task, people, structure and culture. All the key

drivers need to be aligned. The compatibility of these elements determines organizational

performance. If incongruent, the organization needs to amend its practices for change.

Understanding how these components relate to each other helps in an effective organizational

change (Burke & Litwin, 1992).
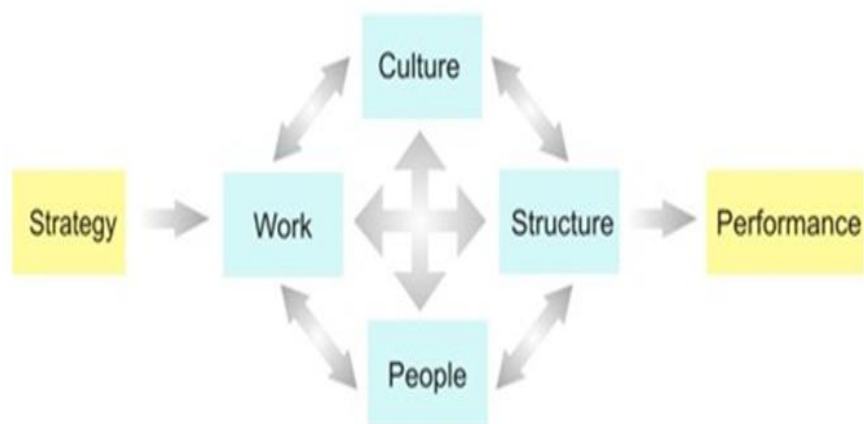
Figure 2. The Congruence Model: Aligning the Drivers of High performance

Another model of organizational structure, functioning, and possible change is that of the contingency, developed by Burns and Stalker (1961), and later expanded by Lawrence and Lorsch, (1969). This model proposed the phrase, "it all depends," and showed that organizational effectiveness is a function of the degree of equality between the organization's external environments (dynamic or static) and the internal structure of the organization, either mechanistic or organic (Burke & Litwin, 1992).
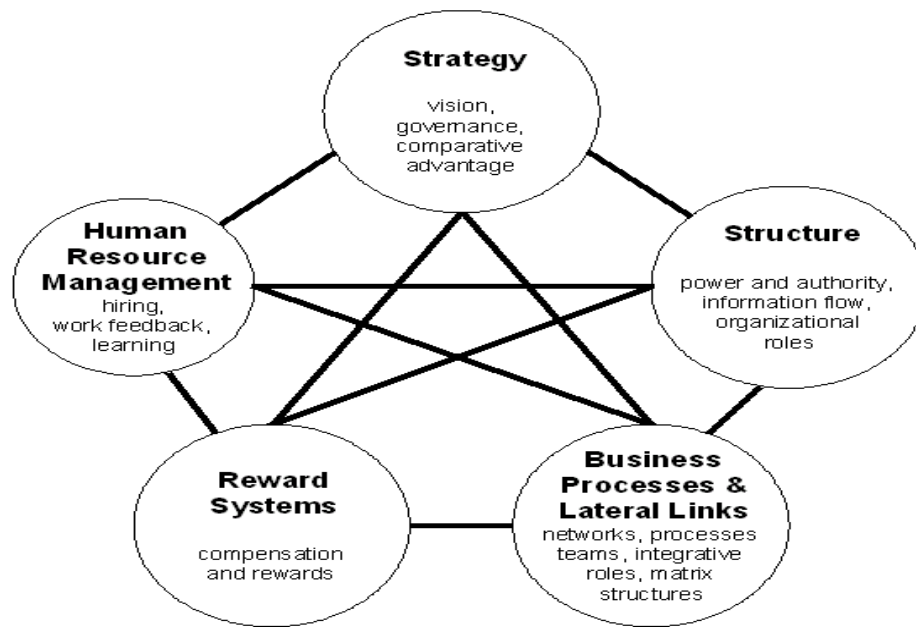
Figure 3. Fiedler's Contingency Model: Matching Leadership style to a Situation

Retrieved from: Mindtools.com/contingency model

Figure 3 showed that the effectiveness of an organization depends on the degree of correspondence between the organization's external environment and its internal structures. For example, one of the values of the institution used for this study is to educate world changers, who eventually might affect transformation, not only at the university, but throughout the world. In this sense, providing a conducive environment for inclusion to take place is paramount for the existence and continuity of the institution

Macro–Impact of Higher Education: Implications for Diversity and Inclusion

Education affects the ability of any society to achieve its macro-objectives. The single and dominant economic system in the world today is capitalism. If minority students fail to flourish in higher education institutions because of the lack of an inclusive environment, they cannot meaningfully participate or contribute in any kind of economic growth that will take place. Education is a critical requirement for achieving economic growth in the era of a knowledge economy.

Education contributes to a nation's economic growth. Researchers argued that the economic growth of a society is greatly influenced by its institutions (North, 1990). The cost of exchange and production in a society is influenced by the performance of its economy (Guruz, 2008; North, 2004). Institutions assume a very critical role in a society, and one such role is to reduce uncertainty through stable human interactions (North, 2004).

Institutions, including higher education , are the fundamental drive to the growth and development of differences across nations (Brady & Spencer, 2010). These authors further noted that the human capital in each society is highly related to the output per capita (Brady & Spencer, 2010). Broad aspects of research also supported the argument that higher education strongly focuses on the preparation of a high-level work force to assist in national development (Ross, 1973).

From the perspective of this research study, though, given that higher education plays an important role in the training of future workers and boosting the nation's economy, the extent to which such institutions are inclusive and how they prepared what demographically will become a diverse workforce needed to be interrogated.

To better fulfill the above requirements, higher educational institutions need to adjust to their national demands. Well-equipped graduates help boost the economic development of a nation as they can perform the tasks that the country expects them to perform. Ross (1973) noted that effective improvements in central management only is not enough to maintain a good educational system that will support the economy. Research revealed that management information services that were instituted in some countries provided some critical analysis for all major changes that have been witnessed since their introduction into the system (Ross, 1973).

The higher education contributes to social change in a country, and to this effect, knowledge has become a driving force to the success and stability of most institutions (Brady & Spencer, 2010; Brennan, 2008;). Well-meaning elites have continued to insist that one of the major functions of education is to transmit societal norms and values (Haralambos, Holborn, & Heald, 2000). If minority students are not well accommodated, they may not strive or succeed.

The United Kingdom in 2010 formed a coalition government that introduced austerity measures to restore economic health because of the huge public-sector deficit. This measure affected students and higher education. This involved a series of sustained reduction in public spending to reduce the government budget deficit. The author noted that there was also a dramatic rise in prices and expenses of graduate students (McGettigan, 2013). Ultimately, whatever transpired at that period influenced the society, and the nation's economy. The author recounted the multiple changes that needed to be put in place to see what was currently happening, and what needed to be reconfigured to suit the market economy at the time (McGettigan, 2013). Haralambos et al. (2000) go on to emphasize that some American economists, such as Theodore W. Shultz, argued that skills and knowledge are forms of capital.

The authors confirmed that capital investments in education will increase productivity and workforce, which in turn would bring extra contribution to the economy.

If skills and knowledge are forms of capital, it is fair to say that in the current information and knowledge economy, the value of such human capital has become even more crucial. Thus, because of the poor ability to integrate diverse and minority students by not creating an inclusive learning environment, many minority students will fail to develop their human capital. The result is that such a situation will have devastating consequences on the degree of social inequality and stability in the future of the United States.

Dialectical Relationship between Education and Society

American society in the 21st century is becoming increasingly diverse because of the intensity of globalization. Amid of such increased societal diversity, higher education institutions are expected to perform many positive functions regarding bringing people from diverse social-cultural backgrounds together with a view to increasing cross-cultural hermeneutical understanding (Giddens et.al, 2013). This role of educational institutions is becoming more pressing because if society waits until diverse people meet in the workplace for the first time, with no prior knowledge of each other and how to relate to one another effectively, it will affect the degree of productivity in the workplace. The challenges in society prompts the need for higher educational institutions to broadly prepare the diverse population to work with each other in a respectful and productive manner. When students from diverse backgrounds graduate with appropriate training that enables them not just to acquire technical skills but also social skills, then they become agents of positive social transformation in society. It is in this respect that education brings people together.

Education brings people together, even those who may never have entered into any form of deliberation with one another (Shulman, 2014). Research showed that many students have acknowledged that their lives were forever changed because of the actions of educators. Most schools also have seen changes from failures to success, due to the presence and hard work of committed and caring educators (Shulman, 2014). For a society to experience and enjoy basic needs like health, equitable access to resources, and a future where waste is eliminated, it would depend on a long term transformative effort at all levels of education (Cortese, 2003).

Cortese (2003) noted that Albert Einstein envisioned that most of the issues seen in the universe might never be solved at the same level of mind-set that was used when they were initially put in place. Interestingly, most individuals graduating from higher education institutions are making efforts to transform the society with the knowledge they acquired. On the other hand, researchers also argued that graduates of higher education institutions have contributed to some of the recent unhealthy decisions and actions.

According to Kezar, Chambers, and Burkhardt (2005), universities and colleges are seen as knowledge creators, the milieu where great inventions and great discoveries are made, drivers of the economy, producer of leaders, and major role players for societal well-being and sustainability. Judging from this trend, much of the expectations however, have greatly changed. If the colleges and universities are places where great inventions and discoveries take place, and such discoveries are made possible by the kind of education students received, it is fair to say that if there is no inclusion in the way the colleges and universities operate, there will be few or no minorities contributing in the realm of invention and discoveries(Kezar, Chambers, and Burkhardt ,2005).

To sustain the initial hope of the inter-connectedness between education and the

society, every individual needs to give voice to education. From families to educators, and to community partners, all are central to the movement that supports the growth and stability of the society at large (Haralambos et al., 2000). In addition, scholars have consistently agreed that a huge benefit stands to be derived from higher education beyond those of an individual and economic nature (Cortese, 2003; Haralambos et al., 2000; Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005; Pescosolido & Aminzade, 1999). Bringing this broad relationship closer, the United States sees the country's universities and colleges as an asset and sustenance to the democratic life that sets the United States aside from other nations of the world (Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005).

While the focus of higher education degree is on how to increase knowledge, and provide good jobs and paying careers, a good number of scholarly studies continue to argue that varied structural aspects of the system contribute to the problems that exists between higher education and the society (Shulman, 2014; Storberg-Walker, & Torraco, 2004). Some of these issues include the interactions between the population and human activities, environment and strategies, technology, policies, and procedures (Cortese, 2003; Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005).

In view of a complex industrial society, some researchers insisted that education, and the school, provide the services which neither the peer group nor the family can provide (Haralambos et al., 2000, p. 778). Although the nation is committed to making education accessible, the widening gap between the poor and the rich continues to increase, as higher education becomes more expensive and difficult to afford. Glatter (2015) warns that education is more than what happens in the classroom. It also includes the transmission of cultural values to a modern society. It is important to understand that the culture of higher education institutions plays a role in its change and stability processes.

Higher education and other institutions need to consult and reassess their culture before engaging in any change that can be productive. Every college or university has its own unique culture right from the inception of that institution (Simplicio, 2012; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). The culture of an institution is noted to provide stability and continuity. Haralambos et al. (2000) described culture as a way of life of any society. Culture is also viewed as a state of mind, and closely related to the idea of civilization

Different higher educational institutions assume different cultures, be they public, private, faith-based, two-year, or four-year institutions. The culture of an institution includes their mission statement, language, symbols, beliefs about right or wrong, curriculum, demography, or leadership, and other stakeholders (Haralambos et al., 2000, p. 888). Higher education institutional culture allows individuals to communicate and function collectively toward a goal. The stability of any higher educational institution depends on how the community understands one another as they work in cooperation (Haralambos et al., 2000).

Role of Leadership in Institutional Change and Stability

Slow moving policies, procedures, strategies, and reforms have greatly influenced higher education in recent years. The role that leadership plays during change in an institution is very crucial to the expected outcome. Institutional stability depends on how the institution and their leadership handles the day-to-day issues that arise, the issue of creating an inclusive experience for minority students being a part of the whole. Higher education institutions need leadership that can get results. The *Harvard Business Review* of April 2000 echoes that what leaders need to do to bring stability and sustainability to their institutions is long overdue (Goleman, 2000).

Goleman (2000) noted six leadership behaviors that could lead to positive change and stability (1) leaders who do not rely only on one leadership style; (2) working atmosphere; (3)

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the demand for prompt compliance; (4) leading toward a realistic vision; (5) creating emotional bond and harmony within the group; (6) and, demand for excellence and self-direction.

Higher education leaders do not only develop decision makers of tomorrow, rather they have a more important role of shaping, and mentoring individuals who in turn would influence the educational community, and the society at large (Cortese, 2003). The changes expected of higher education leaders of the 21st century are imbued with collective values and actions. Cortese (2003) recommended that higher education leaders need to lead toward the sustainability efforts needed by the society.

Role of "Others" in Institutional Change and Stability

United States educational systems have the responsibility of training future world leaders who provide the needed actions, help solve problems, invent technology, and bring required information to the world (Pescosolido & Aminzade, 1999. It is not only the leader or a change agents that influence change, rather, it is everyone's responsibility. In higher education environment, for example, students, staff, faculty, stakeholders and individual families have a role to play to make change process a success and to maintain stability. Institutions need to maintain stability and change even amid economic and institutional crisis.

Looking outside the United States, Russia's education went through changes and stability during the Soviet era. Amid their economic and social crisis, the country continued to pay attention to the educational system, focusing greater attention to equal access for all groups (Gerber, 2000). In this context, the challenge of the world is to provoke researchers to get involved in the process of change that supports the stability of the world's institutions, including higher education (Gerber, 2000). This literature review may not be well concluded without mentioning "Neo-liberalism" relating to higher education and the diversity that exists within it.

The argument in neo-liberalism is all about privatization. If this were the case, many minority students may not be able to afford higher educational. John Rawls, Robert Nozick, F.A. Hayek, and Milton Friedman are distinctively liberal. The first two are known for their political liberal thinking, while the latter are neoliberalists (Hardin, 2014). American neoliberalism originated as a reaction to the federal government's involvement in the programs that address segregation, education, and poverty (Hardin, 2014). In the United States, neoliberalism is more of a system of moral and ethical 'thinking' than just a form of government. United States neoliberalism is known to focus on the application of market economic analysis to all public policy issues. According to Hardin (2014), neoliberalism is a form of governance that operates in two co-constitutive but analytically distinguishable modes: theoretical and practical application. Waller et.al, 2015 noted that there is now a broad disparity between the haves and the have nots, and a shift in governmental rhetoric and policies on the role of universities in increasing access to education. This notion categorically states that what affects schools is not only what happens on campus, but includes what is happening in the market economy as a whole.

Faith-Based Higher Education Institutions and their Challenges

The core value of faith-based higher education institutions is to create an understanding of how all aspects of learning converge under God's supervision (Ream, Pattengale, & Riggs, 2012). Higher education institutions under this category are the Christian colleges and universities. Faith-based higher education institutions have seen qualitative and quantitative success, as they are known to be academically better prepared, and properly invested in their respective programs (Ream et al., 2012). Faculty in faith-based institutions are now required to provide faith and learning integration papers as part of their promotion requirements (Ream et al., 2012).

Scholars like Mary Stewart and David Lyle made it possible for integration of faith and learning to benefit 21st century scholars (Ream et al., 2012). Research indicated that students of all color, geography, worldview, culture and race desire to acquire a higher education degree from developed and respected countries such as the United States of America (Yancey, 2010). The concord between education and Christianity is highlighted when leaders in faith-based educational institution act as mentors for other Christians who need to answer their own questions about faith (Ream et al., 2012).

The conversation on faith-based higher education begins with the question on learning and revelation, and how the Christian Bible directs how we teach and learn (Plantinga, 1980). Research noted that the academy (educational institutions) is regarded as a philosophical symbol which is the general outlook of classical civilization, which makes Christians throughout history continue to desire to understand if the church can build on the academy. Records have it that the people of God have struggled to make sense of education. They embrace it sometimes, rejecting it at other times, seeing it as unnecessary with a life of obedience to God (Plantinga, 1980). Some Christian colleges and universities boast of their long-term existence. Plato's academy, established near Athens in 387 B.C, was not just a center of learning, but had practical implications to its credit (Plantinga, 1980). Plato's academy is a reminiscence of modern colleges and universities.

Distortions like the ones created by the 'Gnostics' haunts the church and the university to this day. It is the belief of the 'Gnostic' that humans are creatures of two worlds, the natural and the supernatural (spiritual). This idea has sometimes made some Christians have tensions between faith and culture, and sometimes anti- intellectualism (Holmes, 1975).

Varied obstacles hinder minority students from forming a solution to help solve their collective

problems, as minority students experience subtle racism in relation to the majority group

(Yancey, 2010). While it is true that all classes have contributed to the establishment and

support of higher education, there are objections from the opposite side that all classes have

reaped the same benefits (Snavely, 1955). These and other reasons contribute to the reasons why

some students of color are uncomfortable on some educational campuses.

Education is a way of supporting learners for more truth and a better life that helps them

understand what is real, useful, and satisfying (Ferre, 1954). Communal culture of students of

color contributes to their campus experience (Yancey, 2010). Research further suggested that

educational leaders need to theorize on the sort of educational culture that will be warm,

inclusive, welcoming to better understand the challenges of minority students (Yancey, 2010).

The lack of higher educational cultural influences on minority cultures contribute to reasons why

faith-based educational institutions struggle to further create welcoming environments for

students who are considered non-white or minority group (Yancey, 2010).

Mainline Protestants attribute the lack of inclusion in faith-based educational institutions

to historical circumstances, or very low number of minority students in their midst. This context

makes it difficult for such institutions to attract and retain minority students (Yancey, 2010).

Minority students do not have individuals to mentor them on their own nonwhite traditions;

hence, they emulate Eurocentric traditions that reinforce exclusion and the absence of diversity

(Yancey, 2010). The effect of this on faith-based higher education institutions is that minority

students' enrollment numbers remain low.

Many white families prevent their children from being exposed to minority students and

encouraging cultural integration, by sending them to all-White or mostly-White schools (Yancey,

2010). Objecting from the opposite side, Sidanius, Levin, Van Laar, and Sears (2008) noted that contact with ethnically diverse roommates facilitates the reduction of prejudice. Study has focused on the impact of higher education on research, but pay less attention to diversity, tolerance, and inclusive school experience (Sidanius et al., 2008).

Protestant leaders have made efforts to address the issue of diversity and inclusion. Such efforts include utilizing diversity initiative programs and having diverse perspectives around the leadership table, utilizing "teachable moments" that help prevent the pain associated with leadership change, leading from above where leaders have access to resources to make things happen, and implementing positive change (Longman, 2012). Further efforts by this group included influencing people, listening to people, forming networks, understanding what makes people respond and the willing to participate, putting together all available resources for success and productivity. The love of learning and positive school experience occurs when educators make true effort to understand the diversity that exists in the teaching and learning environment.

Understanding Diversity

The word diversity connotes an intentional recognition of individual differences in persons. These include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical abilities, beliefs, age, religion, or other ideologies and worldviews. It is the exploration or considerations of these differences in a safe, positive and natural environment (University of Oregon, n.d.). Diversity is considered to be a characteristic of groups that refers to demographic differences among members (Robertson, 2006).

United States institutions, communities and organizations are becoming more pluralistic (Farley, 2000). In a society like the United States of America, with its growing population of diverse minority groups such as African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics, the issue of diversity

is inevitable. Some individuals criticize diversity and multiculturalism claiming that it creates division and inhibits cooperation (Farley, 2000). Yet, it is argued that educators and individuals who associate, communicate, and interact with those who are different from themselves need to have a clear understanding of diversity in its broadest context (Mor Barak, 2015).

While evaluating a company's diversity policy, Mor Barak narrates how some employees of that organization felt excluded as they were expected to conform to the mainstream culture, and abandon their identity. Mor Barak (2015) argues that in recent years, many institutions and organizations have made tremendous progress through their policies, procedures, strategies and leadership toward understanding and embracing diversity. While this may be true for some organizations and higher educational institutions, there are also some consequences that institutions face even as they excel in pursuing integration and inclusion on campus.
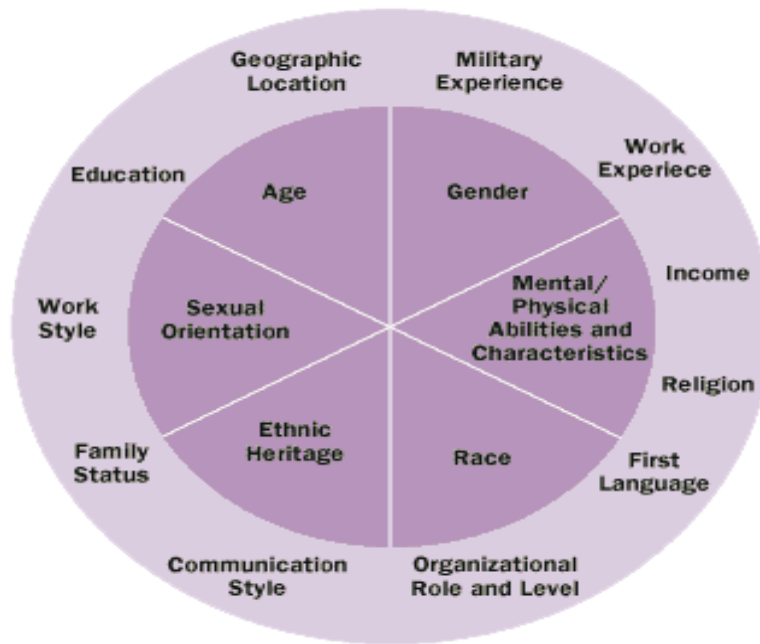
Figure 4: Dimensions of diversity with emphasis on primary and secondary characteristics. Retrieved from: Implementing Diversity: Dozens of practical tips for leading the change effort (Loden, 1996).

Figure 4 shows dimensions of diversity (Loden, 1996, p. 16). Loden identifies two dimensions of diversity--primary and secondary diversity. The inner dark purple represents primary diversity, while the outer larger circle represents secondary diversity. Primary diversity includes characteristics that do not change, such as race. However, these characteristics might be changing through intermarriage over time. It has been interesting to hear stories of the Native American situation as some tribes have gained wealth through legal gambling in the state of Minnesota. As the wealth is distributed, they have established rules about the percentage of Native American "blood" that a person needs to possess to receive a portion of that income. Secondary diversity includes characteristics that may change, such as socio-economic status (Ingram, 2015). Loden's study notes that many organizations and institutions are showing

interests in understanding diversity and building inclusive practices, but the initiative to support

the efforts continues to dwindle (Loden, 1996).

Loden insisted that the choices individuals and organizations make will determine the

success or failure of inclusive practices in institutions. Certain individuals or groups look at

diversity as only related to skin color and or race; but it is broader than most individuals perceive

it to be. A broader description of diversity includes age, gender, religion, beliefs, values, culture,

family status, work style, military experience, worldview, sexual orientation, ethnicity,

geographical location, color, body size, socio-economic status, educational status, and race

(Loden, 1996). The student diversity that exists on campuses varies, and every form of diversity

demands inclusiveness in the environment of higher education.

Understanding Inclusion of Minority Students in Higher Education Campuses

Inclusion in the context of this study represented what higher education institutions are

doing to welcome, accept and integrate students who are considered minorities due to differences

in race, color, socio-economic status, religion, faith, sexual orientation, sex, age and more.

Roberson (2006) saw inclusion as a way of giving individuals the capacity and opportunity to

participate and be empowered in an institution. The author further noted that inclusion is the

extent to which individuals can be allowed to impact the decision making process, and feel as

part of a critical institutional process. Inclusion represents the ability of individuals to contribute

fully and effectively to an organizational process (Roberson, 2006).

After much discussion to determine an umbrella term to describe minority students,

Harry and Klingner (2014) suggested that it included students from a culturally and linguistically

diverse population, as well as students of color. The term. "minority" in the context of this

research, included Africans/African Americans, Asians, Native Americans, Hispanics /Latino students, and others who are classified as non-Caucasians.

Giddens et al. (2013) noted that the expression "minority groups" can be confusing if not well explained, because the term refers to political power and not numbers. Minority in a statistical sense may refer to people with coarse hair, or overweight. However, in a sociological context, individuals in a minority group are usually very disadvantaged compared to the majority or the dominant group (Giddens et al., 2013, p. 300). Modood et al. (1997) noted that minorities do not have to become like the rest to belong. If higher education in the United States of America is to achieve its objectives, colleges and universities must model inclusion by addressing integration and creating a cosmopolitan worldview and learning environment (Mrig, 2015; New, 2016; Embrick, Brusman, & Thomas, 2016).

Individuals in some organizations and institutions sometimes feel a lack of inclusion. Mor Barak (2015) observed that exclusion could be openly exhibited, or concealed. Research showed that in most organizations and institutions in the United States, individuals of ethnic and racially diverse backgrounds have expressed lack of recognition, appreciation, and respect regarding their identities, and are expected to follow and obey the set down culture of their organizations (Mor Barak, 2015). When students are learning in environments that are not sensitive to their socio-cultural identity, socioeconomic status, values, worldviews, background and beliefs, they do not tend to thrive well, but if they do succeed, it is at a very high cost (Mor Barak, 2015). Maintaining and growing the higher education industry becomes a concern for their overall experience. Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) believed that students need to feel accepted and comfortable in their learning environment to succeed, as knowledge of changing demographics can help higher education institutions understand how to respond, address, and

handle the change they experience. Minority students need to know that the institution of their

choice is willing to give them the chance to be part of the community. Hurtado et al. (1999)

argued that since the pool of middle class students seeking admissions into private universities is

shrinking, the cost of education is rising. Consequently, minority students need to know that

their interests are being factored into the decisions of the institution so that they do not feel

neglected (Hurtado et al., 1999).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, n.d.)

defined cultural inclusion as "the promotion of laws and policies that ensure cultural

participation, access, and the right to express and interpret culture" (para. 1). School experience

is different for everyone, including minority students. To some students, it meant experiencing

new things and new ideas (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000). Ancis et al. (2000) collected a

questionnaire from 578 minority students, assessing their perceptions and experiences on

campus. The research results showed different responses between racial groups. Some described

their experiences as positive, while some had some negative experiences.

Campus experience includes classroom experience, interaction between faculty and

students, students and staff, experience in the dormitory, library, cafeteria, and in other

extracurricular activities. Diversity and inclusion go beyond dealing with immigrants or ethnic

minorities, as different socioeconomic backgrounds can lead to different school experiences

(Ancis et al., 2000). Schools therefore must be constructively sensitive, and students need to

understand the institutional culture and level of adaptation needed to succeed or function in the

culture.

Discussing inclusion and school experience in higher education cannot be done in

isolation without looking at what happens during high school, within the family, and in the

society. The responsibility of building an inclusive school environment and experience falls on the shoulders of family members, teachers, students, staff, and administrators (Van Dyke, Stalling, & Colley, 1995).

Antwi and Ziyati (1993) submitted that being a minority student has both positive and negative aspects. Some of the positive aspects include the idea that gaining admission into American higher education institution is an important landmark in the lives of minority students. Further in this line of thought, is the negative aspects, which included interactions and communication difficulties, isolation, loneliness and frustrations. These authors further noted that while it is not unusual for higher education leaders to propagate numbers and images to create a multi-cultural school environment, it is worth noting that multiculturalism is also a way of cultivating a welcoming atmosphere for all students, and especially for those who are different (Antwi & Ziyati, 1993). The issues of diversity and inclusion on the nation's college and university campuses greatly affect the experiences of the general students' population and the minority students. This has broader implications for society at large

Diversity without Integration

Mrig (2015) pointed out that society and educational institutions are at that stage where the issue of diversity and inclusion on college and university campuses are on the front burner when contemplating problems confronting leadership. Institutions that lack or resist inclusion may experience issues in their sustainability (Mrig, 2015). Due to the increasing change in the demographics of the global community, Taylor et al. (2013) believed it is important to equip college students, administrators, staff, and educators with the competency and cultural skills that will guide them to survive the culturally diverse learning environment of the 21st century and a

competitive market. Roger (2003) highlighted that the United States universities and colleges possess environments that can respond to the changing imperatives of our global society.

The United States rich history indicated that leadership, practices, policies, environments, values, missions, and programs have constantly been changing over time (Baker & Baldwin, 2014). Statistics showed that Black and Hispanic students have become the fastest growing segments of the student body (Mrig, 2015). More specifically, the National Center for Educational Statistics showed that the percentage of Black college students rose from 11.7% to 14.7 % between the year 2000 and 2013, while the percentage of Hispanic students increased from 9.9% to 15.6 % in the same thirteen-year frame (Mrig, 2013). " Between 1990 and 2013, total fall undergraduate enrollment of some racial/ethnic groups grew faster than that of other groups, and the racial/ethnic distribution of students therefore changed."(Musu-Gillette et al, 2016, pp 87-103). The Hispanic and Black students largest enrollments were observed during 1990 to 2013 to be 11% point (from 6% to 17%) for Hispanics, and 5% increase (from 10% to 15%) for Blacks (Musu-Gillette, et al,2016).

Higher education environments are platforms where difficult and sensitive discussions about race, ethnicity, culture, religion, socio-economic issues, and diversity should take place. Scholars have a wide range of views on what happens to higher educational institutions that lack an inclusive environment, including the negative impact on students' experiences (Mrig, 2015; Mor Barak, 2015; New, 2016). Some argued that tensions may rise over issues of discrimination, marginalization or the absence of inclusion on the campuses of higher institutions. Others stated that if open dialogue which is a vital part of academic activities is halted, resentment, friction, growth inhibition, poor success and collaboration inhibition become

the order of the day (Embrick et al., 2016). Some leaders of educational institutions attempt to downplay or deny racial tensions in their own institutions (Embrick et al., 2016).

Although higher education leaders scored a high percentage on diversity and inclusion (good and excellent), records showed that the 2015 academic year was marked by numerous high-profile protests on campuses across the nation indicating dissatisfaction (Embrick et al., 2016). These campus-wide protests by students sometimes spring out of ignorance about the other. Some individuals do not understand who is classified as a minority. Many people believed that it is only Blacks or non-White individuals who are considered minorities. Understanding the term minority is helpful in knowing who these people are, and what is unique about them.

Some people are exposed for the first time to other individuals while in college. As college and university students are expected to interact with others on campus, some of these individuals may not have had the opportunity to engage with diverse learners at home or in high school (Embrick et al., 2016).

Summary

From this literature review, it was observed that the constantly changing demographics of the United States as influence the socio-cultural compositions of higher educational institutions, demands the development of appropriate strategies, policies and practices that will enhance diversity and inclusion in these institutions

Chapter 3: Methodology

Philosophy and Justification

Creating an inclusive school environment and experience for minority students continues to be a work in progress, and requires the efforts of institutional leaders and students to implement and practice inclusion in the ever-changing institutional demographics in the United States. Educators, staff and students in the field of higher education need continuous awareness and training to help keep the idea of identifying, welcoming, and integrating diversity into the everyday practices of higher education. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and challenges of minority students, who are enrolled in a four-year undergraduate program in a faith-based Christian higher education institution, to determine the level of diversity and inclusion, and to identify how the practice and strategies can be further improved. Participants were adults who are 18 years and above.

Theoretical Framework

The theory that served as the lens for this study was the organizational change theory. Burke (2013), who is an expert in organizational change theory, noted that even the "Pharaohs of ancient Egypt" struggled with the need for change. Burke (2013) described the first organizational change in the Old Testament as "*loosely coupled systems*" (Burke, 2013). The term "loosely coupled systems" was used in contrast to the prevailing concept that elements in organizations are coupled through close-fitting linkages. It was suggested that elements are often tied together frequently and loosely (Weick, 1976). In the environment of higher education, it was submitted that the concept of "loosely coupling" combined a surprising amount of dissimilar observations, suggested novel functions, created stubborn problems for methodologies, and generated intriguing questions for scholars (Weick, 1976).

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Organizational change management is the "process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, practice, strategy and capability to serve the needs of external and internal customers." (Moran & Brightman, 2001, p. 111). Organizational change today occurs to respond to the changes taking place in the society, brought about by such factors as globalization, immigration, rising socioeconomic inequality, the knowledge economy and issues surrounding cultural identity (Benjamin, 2003). Strategies that organizations use depend on the type of change they endure, and whether the social environment would support that change.

Higher education institutions of the 21st century are equally dealing with multi-system issues that affect how they adapt, handle and implement diversity and inclusion. Adaptation in respect to this study is how these organizations acknowledge the changes, interpret these changes and the actions taken toward the changes (Milliken, Dutton, & Beyer, 1990). Organizations and institutions need to adapt to survive in the ferociously competitive market economy. Through adaptation, organizations face challenges throughout their existence, and has to make changes if they want to remain relevant and competitive.

Institutions of higher learning have been going through changes due to certain factors including changes in the market place. If institutions are to survive, they must learn to adapt (Burke, 2013; Kondra & Hinings, 1998). This is because the external changes that are taking place necessitate that organizations have a better understanding of change (Burke, 2013). Burke recommended that leaders need to understand how to lead and manage in any organizational change (Burke, 2013). Burke further noted that implementing changes in an organization impact organizational policies, strategies and practices. In effect, organizational change may result in positive or negative consequences, as individuals may have different experiences at different times and stages of organizational change (Burke, 2013).

Research Design Strategy
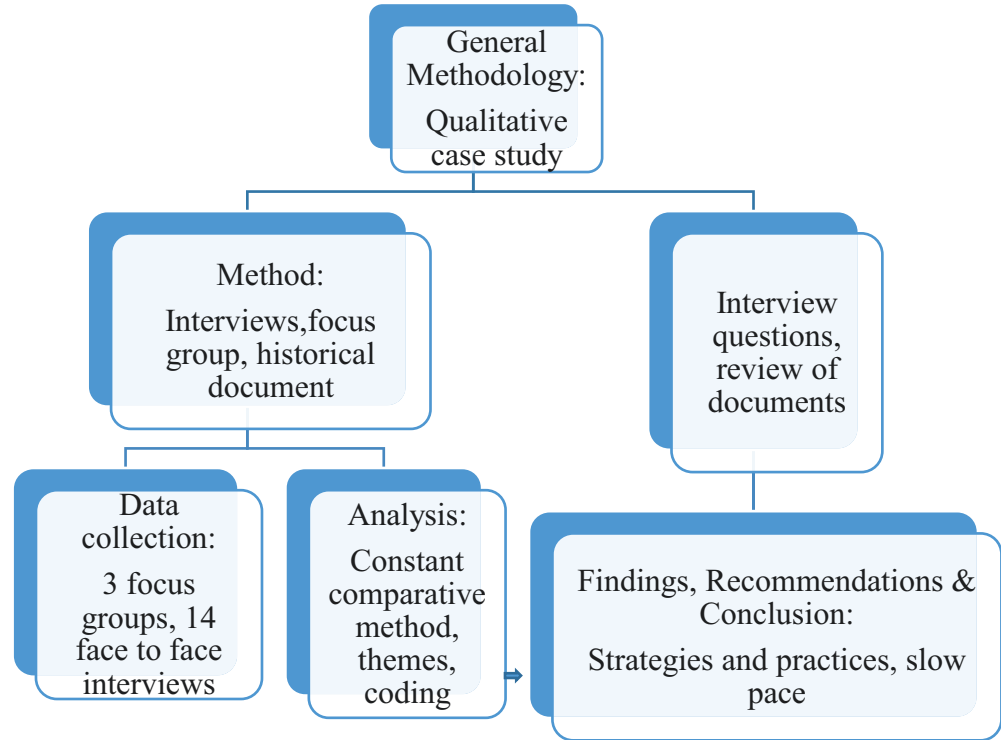
Figure 5. Research design strategy in relation to the topic:

This is a chart of the process within this study, with a logical flow from one process to the next.

The process of analysis lead to the findings recommendations and conclusion.

Measures

This study used interview responses, focus group discussions, and review of past historical records for analysis. The interviews and focus group questions were constructed primarily for this study. Historical documents were reviewed for the purpose of understanding the enrollment patterns of minority students, demographics, leadership trends, diversity issues that existed, and what the institution and its leadership did to maintain an inclusive environment. This study explored historical records for any policy change and practice that accompanied efforts to maintain inclusiveness and improved school experiences for the students under study.

Sampling Design

Faculty/Staff	•Content Area, Ethnicity, Gender, Race and Years of Teaching •Department
Students	•Gender, Race, Majors and Years of Studies •Cultural Background, Graduates from last three to five years. Participants were 18 years and above
Documents	•Culture, Diversity, Inclusion. • Time Frame greater than 1950, Look for key points and how the institution responded
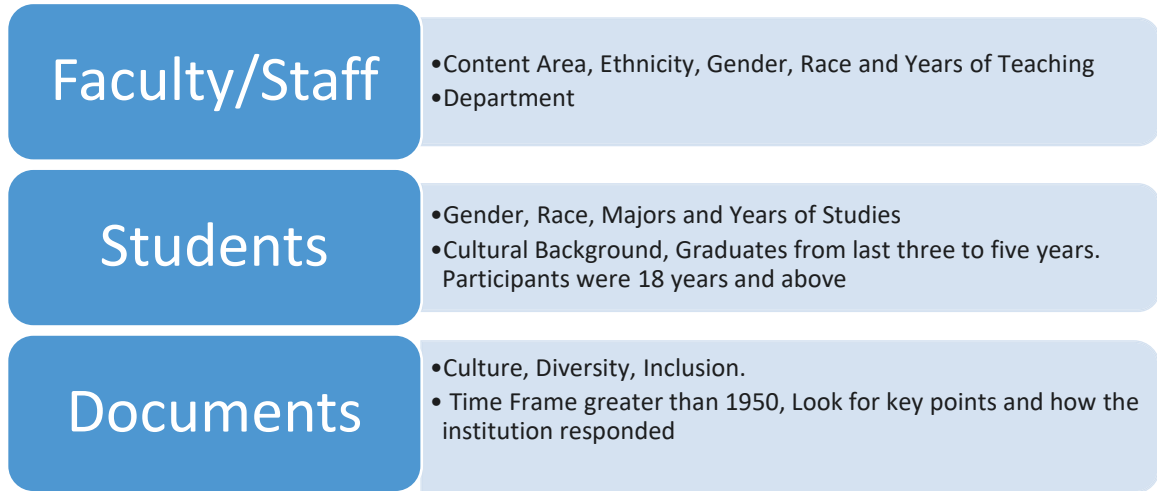
Figure. 6. Sampling design to represent characteristics within the population under study

The interview participants included nine staff members, three faculty members, two alumni, and 10 current college of arts and science students. A purposeful sampling method was used to specifically represent all the characteristics within the population.

The study focused on the college of arts and sciences undergraduate students. Specific attributes that was measured included the perception of participants toward the issue of inclusive campus environment and experience. The sample size was 10 current undergraduate students to represent minority groups according to race, country of origin, academic year of study, gender, ethnicity, American born or immigrant, and those living on campus or commuting. In addition, 12 institutional employees were purposefully selected according to their interactions with the students, their disciplinary area, and teaching department. Historical documents were reviewed with emphasis on culture, diversity, inclusion, and period. Two alumni students participated in the study. To ensure their participation, a letter was written to the office of alumni to request their participation. Over 100 invitation letters were sent to invite alumni participants, however, only two willingly participated. All participants were selected from one campus.

A ten-dollar gift certificate was given to each student and staff participant as an incentive at the end of the study. Their participation lasted between 30 to 45 minutes each. The period for completing the data collection was long (12 weeks), because the undergraduate students were away from school during the summer. All participants participated until the end of the study, and none withdrew. Some participants, who were invited but declined, were dropped and others pursued as appropriate. As a backup for unforeseen circumstances in respect to participants who might withdraw before the end of the study, three students were notified. A similar process was put in place in the selection of staff and faculty participants.

Data Collection Procedures

Interview and focus group questions for this qualitative case study were determined based on the four research questions that guided this study. Considerations included diversity, minority, inclusion, perceptions and experiences. Interviews were semi-structured and open-ended to allow for detailed explanation by participants. Some follow up questions emerged during the interviews to seek clarification or better explanation. Interview and focus groups questions "used exploratory verbs that conveyed the language of emerging design. The verbs told the reader that the study explored processes." (Creswell, 2014, p. 141). This researcher conducted all interviews, focus group meetings. and reviewed all historical documents. Both interviews and focus group meetings were audio recorded with the permission of participants. Locations for face-to-face interviews varied according to participants' choice or request. Historical records were collected from specific departments with the help of participants. Interviews opened with words of greetings, appreciation, and introduction. Focus group meetings were conducted within the school environment, in a center where the participants felt

safe and comfortable. Field notes were taken during interviews and focus group meetings in addition to recordings, as a backup.

Audio recorded interviews were downloaded on an encrypted computer verbatim. The downloaded interviews and focus group data were manually transcribed, coded, and analyzed. This study utilized the constant comparative method of data analysis. All transcribed interviews were read repeatedly to identify emerging themes. Ideas were compared within participants. Participants identities were replaced with letters and numbers for confidentiality. All recorded data were erased at the end of the study.

Alumni Interview Questions

Brief introduction.

My name is Caroline Abiaziem. I am a graduate student at Bethel University, and I am pursuing a doctoral degree in higher education administration (Ed. D). The purpose of this interview is to explore the experiences of minority students in the university's college of arts and science programs. I promise that your privacy will be highly protected, and all related ethical considerations will be observed. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. These interview questions are structured to allow deviation as needed to obtain in-depth information (Patten & Bruce, 2014). I have selected a cluster of questions to help answer the four main research questions. Kindly respond to the questions that are applicable to you and be as detailed as you can. Thank you.

Alumni Interview Questions.

How do you identify yourself?

(1) Male (2) Female (3) Choose not to answer

How old were you when you started in this institution?

(1) 18 -19 (2) 20 – 22 (3) Above 22

What level are you in your education?

(1) Freshman (2) Sophomore (3) Junior) (4) Senior (5) Alumnus

What racial background do you identify with?

(1) Black/African American (2) Asian (3) Hispanic (4) Others

(5) American Indians/Alaskan Natives

What type of high school did you attend?

(1) Public (2) Private (3) Christian (4) Others (select all that apply)

All the key interview questions are applicable to research question number one.

The key interview questions that serve my research question number two are as follows:

1. What motivated you to make this institution as a university of choice?

2. Do you reside in the school dormitory? If yes, what would you say about your experiences in the dormitory?

3.If you do use the school library for studying and or for other academic activities, how would you describe your experiences, and your encounters with library staff?

4. If asked to describe your classroom experiences what would be your responses?

5. If asked about your interactions with faculty, what would be your responses?

6.Do you participate in any extracurricular activity? If yes, which one?

7.How is the climate, and what is your degree of comfort?

8.What do you think about the culture of this community and what factors or forces do you think is shaping it?

9.Given your time on this campus, has there been any moment your experience was difficult? Please explain.

10.   Given your time on this campus, have there been any great moments that have had positive impact and memory in your life? Please, explain.

The key interview questions that serve my research question number three are as follows:

11. As a minority student in this institution, how do you feel the institution has changed since you started? Please, identify some of these changes. (This study understands that some events that have changed the culture may have happened long ago).

12. Since you started your education in this institution, have you observed any major changes, such as policies or strategies that have taken place that influenced a move toward inclusiveness? Please, explain.

13. If yes, what were they?

14. How do you describe diversity?

The key interview questions that serve my research question number four are as follows:

15. Are there things that you wish the institution could add to its policies and practices that would help create a more inclusive school experience for minority students?

16. Do you feel there is a specific place designed for minority students to seek for academic and other assistance when needed? If yes, how would you describe your experience there?

17. Would you recommend this institution to your friends, and to other minority students? If yes, why? If no, why?

18. What do you have to add as a final thought?

Table 2: Interview and Focus Group Matrix for Students

Interview Questions	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8	.9	.10	.11	.12	.13	.14	.15	.16	17.
Research Q.1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Research Q.2						X		X									
Research Q.3												X					
Research Q.4																X	

A matrix for evaluating student interview and focus group questions was adapted and modified

from Lind (2016).

Faculty and Staff Interview Questions

How do you identify yourself?

(1) Male (2) Female (3) others (4) No response.

How many years have you been employed in this institution?

(1)1-5 years (2) 6 – 10 years (3) 11 – 20 years (4) 21 years and above

With which ethnic group do you identify?

(1) Black/ African American (2) Caucasian (3) Hispanic (4) Asian (5) American

Indians/Alaskan Native (6) Others

Is this institution your first place of work?

(1) Yes (2) No

In what department do you work, and what is your connection with the students? Please indicate.

The key interview questions that serve my research question number one are as follows:

What attracted you to take employment in this institution, what department do you work, and how long have you been working for this institution? Please, explain.

What areas do you feel this institution has done well, and what areas do they need to grow regarding diversity and inclusion practices?

What specific areas need improvement?

The key interview questions that serve my research question number two are as follows:.

Based on the length of time you have served in your capacity in this institution,

a. What turning points have you experienced in terms of the culture of inclusion and diversity? Explain

b. What were the issues? Explain

c. Who or what brought about the turning point or change.

d. How did it impact inclusive school experience? Explain

What organizational or institutional challenges and issues were in place when you were hired? Discuss.

The key interview questions that serve my research question number three are as follows:

Do you know of current policies and practices that this institution has in place that supports inclusive school experiences and an inclusive environment? If yes, name some of them?

Do you think that the institution has a solid staff and faculty development package? If yes, do you feel it includes diversity awareness and instructional strategies? Do you think that all of them are effective? Please, elaborate.

What do you have to add as a final thought?

A matrix for evaluating staff interview questions was adapted and modified from Lind (2016) (

Table 3. Interview Questions Matrix for Institution Staff

Interview Questions	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4a,b,c,d	Q.5	Q.6	Q.7	Q.8
Research Q 1		X	X	X		X	X	X
Research Q.2		X	X					
Research Q.3				X				
Research Q.4						X	X	X

Focus Group Meeting Questions

Demographic questions.

How do you identify yourself?

Male or female, or other?

What racial background do you identify with?

(1) African/African American (2) Asian (3) Hispanic/ Latino

(4) American Indians/Alaskan Natives (5) Others

How old were you when you started in this institution?

(1) 18 -19 (2) 20 – 22 (3) Above 22

What level are you in your education?

What type of high school did you attend?

(1) Public (2) Private (3) Christian (4) Others (select all that apply)

What motivated you to make this institution as a university of choice?

How would you describe the terms (1) Diversity (2) Inclusion (3) Minority student?

Are there any positive or negative experiences you would like to share with regards to

e.g. library, chapel, hostel, cafeteria, extracurricular activities?

If asked about your interactions and experiences with faculty, staff, and fellow students,

what would be your responses?

What are some institutionally based challenges that impact your experience as a

minority/student of color?

As a minority student in this institution, how do you feel the institution has changed since

you started? Please, identify some of these changes. (This study understands that some

events that have changed the culture may have happened long ago).

Can you identify some practices and strategies the institution has in place, and do you

think they support minorities in terms of inclusive experience and environment? Please,

explain.-If yes, what important events was it?

Are there things that you wish the institution could add to its policies and practices that

would help create a more inclusive school experience for minority students?

Do you feel there is a specific place designed for minority students to seek for academic

and other assistance when needed? If yes, how would you describe your experience

there?

Would you recommend this institution to your friends, and to other minority students? If

yes, why? If no, why?

What do you have to add as a final thought?

Data Analysis

Data collected from one on one interviews, focus groups and historical document reviews

were analyzed through a constant comparative method of data analysis. All recorded interviews

and focus groups responses were manually transcribed verbatim, coded and analyzed. The

transcribed data were read repeatedly to become familiar with participants' responses, and to

identify emerging themes. Themes were discussed, referring to participants and their responses

as it pertained to diversity, inclusion and experience. In the writing, participant responses were

sometimes quoted as directly stated, and some of the stories extracted or paraphrased. Responses

were compared and related as it pertained to participants and their responses. Correlations

between themes were identified.

Table 4 Coding Criteria

Numbers	Emerging themes	Focus group response where themes emerged	Interview responses where themes emerged	Historical record where themes emerged	Page number on which the unit of data appears

Limitations of Methodology

Some of the limitations of the methodology included the use of a small number of

participants, access to information, and available time and resources.

Qualitative approach was not extended to wider population with the same amount of certainty.

The region the institution is located, and the type of university selected for the study limited the

researcher to fewer minority students for inclusion in the sample. To determine the

generalizability of these results, more study is required using more than one school, to give room

for comparison. Finally, there was no way to find out who would want to participate or not.

Ethical Considerations

This study considered informed consent, privacy and identity protection and respect of

participants irrespective of differences. Further ethical considerations were the

acknowledgement of popular digital technologies such as voice recorders used during interviews

and focus group discussions, security of information, and bias. Bias was protected as this writer

only reported what participants responded, and did not add personal emotion into the responses

and analysis. Privacy of participants were protected by replacing their personal information,

such as names and age with pseudonyms. All documents containing participants' personal

information were kept in a secured place throughout the study, and shredded or deleted after the

study was completed.

Promised incentives were given to participants who stayed until the completion of the study. Participants were assured that their participation or comments would not put them at risk in any way for their grades or enrollment in the university. Focus group meetings and interviews were conducted in a location where the student felt comfortable and safe. The institution's name was carefully disguised for confidentiality. All reviewed historical documents and sources were kept confidential, and some did not appear in the appendix of this document, to protect the confidentiality of the institution and the participants.

Chapter Four: Results

The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences of minority undergraduate college of arts and science students, in a faith-based higher education institution, in the Midwestern region of the United States. Through interviews, focus group meetings, and a review of historical documents, this researcher examined the positive and negative experiences of minority students in terms of inclusion and diversity. The study also explored the challenges that pertained to diversity and inclusion, which students face in the institution, and how the institution responded and handled these issues. The different stages in the historical evolution of the institution were examined to understand how it related to issues of diversity and inclusion. Finally, what minority students, faculty and staff of the institution saw as best strategies and practices that can help in fostering an inclusive environment and experience were also explored.

Staff participants were selected based on their level of interactions with the students under study. For example, the library staff encounters students, who come to study or borrow study materials from the library. Current students and alumni were purposefully selected to represent minority groups in respect to race, ethnicity, gender, age at which the student entered the university, their academic majors, and their year level in the institution. Twenty employees both faculty and staff were invited to participate in the study. Nine staff members and three faculty members willingly accepted the invitation and participated in the study. The office of alumni was contacted by to help with inviting alumni to participate in the study. Over 100 invitations emails were sent, but two individuals (a male and a female) willingly responded and participated in the interviews. Historical documents were reviewed to look for key turning points that reflect issues or events pertaining to diversity and inclusion of minority students in the institution, and how the institution responded. Ten current college of arts and science

students participated in three different focus group meetings (four participants for the first group, three students for the second group and another three students participated in the third focus group).

The same interview questions were used for both faculty and staff. Alumni were asked a different set of questions. The focus groups were asked questions that were different from that of faculty, staff and alumni. Interview questions were exploratory and open-ended. This made it possible for additional follow up questions, which evolved in the process of the interview for clarification or for additional responses and or opinions. Interview questions were made available to faculty and staff participants, who requested to have them prior to the day of the interviews, to enable them to gather their thoughts and prepare for the interview. Consent for participation were provided and collected. Some participants indicated that they did not have answers to some of the interview questions. Current college of arts and science undergraduate students were recruited through the Cultural Connection Center (CCC), where they spend time with one another, relaxing and connecting with their fellow students.

This study used the constant comparative method of data analysis proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) comparing statements, themes and ideas within and between interviews and focus group responses. Data from historical documents were also incorporated into the analysis. Conducted interviews were manually transcribed verbatim, coded, and analyzed. All identities were made confidential, and replaced with pseudonyms.

Emergent Themes/Findings

Several emerging themes were identified in the process of coding interviews and focus group responses. Some of the emergent themes were: participants' perceptions of diversity, inclusion, minority and interpersonal relationships. Other emergent themes were staff and

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student body diversity**,** challenges impacting inclusive school environment and experiences, sourcing and admission of students, diversification and retention of minority faculty, staff and students**,** current practices and strategies that foster inclusive environment and experience, and lastly turning points. Turning points in the context of this study referred to incidents, events or issues that happened in the institution that brought about either a change in ideas, communication, practice, policy and concerted actions.in response to the incidents

Table 5. Study participants and their coded identifications: For race and ethnicity, the exact words were used , hence "Afro" in the text.

Study Participants Identifications	Code	Race/Ethnicity
Participant	A1	Bi-Racial = Afro Latino
Participant	A2	African American
Participant	F1	Bi- Racial =Afro Latino
Participant	F2	Black, African American
Participant	F3	Caucasian (White)
Participant	S1	Caucasian (White)
Participant	S2	African (Black)
Participant	S3	African American
Participant	S4	Asian
Participant	S5	Caucasian (White)
Participant	S6	African American
Participant	S7	Caucasian (White)
Participant	S8	Bi-Racial =Afro Caribbean
Participant	S9	Caucasian
Focus Group	CAS FG 1: 4 participants (1male, 3 females)	FG 1:1 = African American FG 1:2 = African FG 1:3 = Biracial (Indian & British) FG 1:4 = Latino
Focus Group	CAS FG 2: 3 participants (1 male, 2 females	FG 2:1 = African American FG 2:2 = Asian FG 2:3 = Asian
Focus Group	CAS FG 3: 3 participants (1 male, 2 females	FG 3:1 = African FG 3:2 = African American FG 3:3 = Bi- Racial (African American & Hispanic)
Total Number of Participants = 24		

Table 6

Participant Identifications by Gender

Group	Male	Female
Alumni	1	1
Faculty	3	0
Staff	4	5
CAS focus group 1	1	3
CAS Focus group 2	1	2
CAS Focus group 3	1	2
Levels Freshman = 1 Sophomore = 2 Junior = 7		

Perceptions of Diversity

Participants perceived diversity in slightly different ways. Some described diversity as

"all of the ways humans differ and or are similar." Although all people were created by God,

they may differ in terms of color, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, socio-economic status,

body size or intellectual capability. Participant F1 defined diversity as a "socio-historical fact of

all the ways humans differ and or are similar." S3 described diversity as "a broad term to

identify any individual group outside of the normative white heterosexual groups of individuals."

F3's view of diversity was that it is a "relative generic term which can be subjective depending

on who is using it." This participant supported the line of thought with participant F1 by adding

that diversity is "broad-based and may represent culture, sexual orientation, gender, religion,

race, or color." As noted by participant S1, people differ in areas that may include race,

ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

All the participants identified the institution as a predominantly White institution. Although this seems to be the case, minorities at this institution still feel culturally alienated. Minorities seem to feel like "guinea pigs" as others always analyze them (University Newspaper, May 2, 1975). From a diversity mapping conducted by an external agency on behalf of the institution in 2013, this agency rated where the institution was in the level of diversification, and in terms of values, principles, objectives, goals, outcomes and resource allocation(External Agency, 2013).

Some of the findings from this study included: "while every major division at the university is involved in some form of diversity effort and there is some solid momentum (with 155 diversity efforts and 139 diversity-related courses) in diversity and inclusion in the institution, there is no evidence of a concerted or intentional, organizational approach/strategy to diversity and inclusion on campus."(external agency, 2013). The recommendation intimated that such an approach or strategy is needed to make major impact and sustain targeted momentum in the achievement of diversity at all levels. Second, the external agency project identified that "most of the institution's diversity efforts was geared for the larger campus, which helped in terms of including everyone, especially students." The recommendation was that there was a need for targeted diversity effort for specific groups of students, for example international students, and those from other races.

Other participants perceived diversity as a strength, and a resource in the classrooms, and workplaces. Participant S7 tied it to theology by stating "God created many manifestations and when we are in a very small place where we do not encounter a lot of people who are different from us, we are starving ourselves from tasting more of the greatness of God." S7 further stated

that, "diversity is anything that gives more flavor or aspect to things, and can be a place of in-group and out-group exclusion."

Another vital concept of diversity as described by participant S2, is that it pertains to "multiple kinds of people, ideas, or culture, and all together, not just one culture dominating the others and others being diverse." S2 added that there is tension in the term diversity, as it is used to refer to minority groups. Participant S7 described diversity at the institution with the concept of "Tokenism." When this researcher asked for clarification, S7 responded saying, "like you represent a certain group is just by numbers." If you have 100 people for example, and 1% are minority, no matter how interculturally relevant you might be, just by the numbers, those people in the minority group are just going to be a "token". S7 concluded by stating that the low numbers limits the institution in terms of inclusion.

In summary, research participants and focus groups participants perceived diversity differently. Some participants indicated that they are of dual culture. The responses from the interviews showed the understanding of diversity or diversification as the attempt to bring all people of different cultures together for maximum productivity and effective outcome. The responses showed that different lenses could be used to interpret the meaning of diversity, and that the word diversity for example, sometimes may lead to an uneasiness depending on who and how it was used. Some participants tried to guide their responses to some questions on diversity. Another emergent theme form the study is the participants' understandings of inclusion.

Perceptions of Inclusion

Interview participants perceived inclusion differently. S7 viewed inclusion as "having minorities on campus as the first step toward inclusion, but how the institution continues to cultivate in them a sense of belonging is more important." S7's further noted that inclusion

means, "what you are bringing, who you are, and not just about your race." People may ignore someone because of who they are or exclude them because of their race. It is important to see someone for what that individual has contributed or can contribute to the context and community, and not just the color of the skin or the hair texture of the person (S7). Participant S7 argued that inclusion takes a great effort to understand one another, because we are different in so many ways and coming together should be a strength and not a weakness.

S6 described inclusion as more of a verb and practice, rather than just an existence or appearance of differences in a community, but intentionally cultivating a framework of structures in an institution, so that everyone has a place and not just a place belonging to the majority group, and others feeling as if they are borrowing the space. F1 stated that inclusion takes the facts of diversity and use them as "cherished assets."

From a historical viewpoint, in a letter to the editor of the University Newspaper of March 1988, Eli Escobar wrote:

> Besides getting an education, the main reason I came here was to provide some companionship to a friend of mine, as I have now discovered that if it was not for my decision to come to this state, my friend might still be suffering through the nightmare he went through last year. It is unfair that people have to feel like they are outsiders at a place where they should be accepted as brothers(p. 7).

F1 buttressed this point by adding that inclusion begins to get into the territory of "who gets to be invited, who gets to be a part of us, why, or why not?

F1 described inclusion in a faith-based higher education institution as "these are my beliefs, and there is no condition that I'm going to treat you as anything other than someone that is created in the image of God and whom God cherishes." Participant F1 added that inclusion means that we

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should be able to treat each other with same respect and love that God wants us to. This calls to mind Jesus' principle of the golden rule, which is to treat others as you would want them to treat you(F1).

F2 noted that before 2008, a student could complete his or her degree in a department without reading any written work by Latin American, African, or Asian writers. Intentionally bringing in voices of men and women from other parts of the world and outside the western world was helpful, because non-western writers are equally very good(F2). Participant S3 supported this idea by adding that inclusion is "the intent to or the importance of including individuals who are outside of a normative group to be able to draw them in and to pay particular attention to that group."

> Eli Escobar in his letter to the University Newspaper of 1988, highlighted a comment
> from a Caucasian friend of his, who stated, if I was black, I wouldn't touch this place
> with a mile-long pole, as racism at this institution is of the worst kind. Eli Escobar
> added, I am a racist, so what? But what is worst is that I tell myself that I am not(March
> 25, 1988, Vol 63, No. 12, p. 7).

In contrast, participant S3 affirmed, "I think the institution has done well particularly since the year 2004 in addressing the systemic racism that has existed in the university." F2 also reaffirmed that "the institution is developing, but very slow, because from the year 2008, we have seen more being done in terms of diversity and inclusion." The institution recognized the need for inclusion at least from the administrative point of view." F2 concluded by saying that the institution in his perspective has not only tried to bring minority individuals, but has also tried to bring structure that can help them flourish.

One participant likened inclusion as, "looking more like the kingdom of God as expressed in Revelation 7:9." In this Bible text as explained by this participant, the apostle John sees a multitude of people from every nation, kindred, people, religion and tongue standing before the throne of God in heaven, thereby encouraging inclusion from a Christian perspective. S4 added that multicultural students "have enriched my life, and have opened my eyes to see the world outside my small world."

Creating environment that is inclusive in higher education helps individuals to deal with the challenges associated with inclusion. Social background of an individual shapes his or her perception, and how people perceive things largely depend on their socio-economic background. Most minority students come from low-income families, and students who come from poor socio-economic background may suffer inferiority complex irrespective of the level of inclusive gestures extended to them(S4)

Some minority students exhibit passive approach to inclusion. There is the tendency for some students and individuals to think that because they are the minority they must sit down and wait for others to do everything for them(F1). However, every student, irrespective of who they are should be proactive and not see themselves as victims of discrimination, racism and isolation all the time. Most focus group participants identified their similarities with other students more than their differences in terms of race and color. Most of the participants also talked about the existence of differences within groups in addition to similar differences between groups.

In summary, most of the participants saw inclusion as an action word. Inclusion to some of the participants meant that individuals should be able to at least treat each other with mutual respect and love,

Perception of Minority by Minorities and Non-Minorities Alike

Minorities are also known as multicultural or persons of color. For the sake of this research, these words were used interchangeably. Participants in this research described minority in different ways. S5 described minority as anyone who can identify with the group that is historically disadvantaged. S6 stated that the term "minority is dependent on the power that the group holds or does not hold in an institution." According to participant S8, minorities are groups who are oppressed or marginalized. Physical outward appearances and other features, such as color of the skin, accent, hair texture, which are different from those of the predominant group usually lead to discrimination(S6).

F1 added that groups that are historically devalued and not included in the society are often referred to as minorities. Most participants associated minority with poverty and inferiority. Many of the participants used concepts such as lack of value, marginalization, and oppression to describe minorities. In F1's understanding, "minorities are not born, minorities are made." The idea that minorities are made through attitudes that are translated into policies featured prominent in F1's description. This participant submitted that law by law, court case by court case, treaties by treaties, in states like California and Texas for example, people groups were reduced to minorities. F1 added that Native Americans, Muslim sisters and brothers are not well represented

It is obvious that the category of minorities is broad, and minorities as groups do not speak with one voice(F1). There are internal divisions among them, as there are internal divisions among minority students in the institution. Depending on their background, there are brilliant minority students, who can stand out, and are highly respected(F1). They are confident,

and can handle themselves, caring less about anyone who thinks they are inferior. However,

other minorities focus on complaining and feeling excluded.

Some of the responses of the participants leaned towards the work of Gayatri Spivak

(1988), and has relevance in helping to understand the variety of participants responses.. Spivak

belongs to the subaltern school of postcolonial studies. Subaltern simply means persons who are

subordinated along the lines of social class, cast system, gender, race, and culture. The subaltern

school renders a critique of Eurocentrism in the writing of postcolonial history. The scholars in

this tradition thought that Eurocentric history devalues the capacity of peasants as subaltern

persons to challenge social systems that oppresses and marginalizes them. The fact, however, is

that when the peasants do that, they act in ways that may not fit western models of protest,

organizing and rational thinking.

The traditional scholarly analysis of the subaltern school when it started assumed that

oppression or exploitation is binary in nature, i.e., just between White Europeans on the one hand

who are the subjects and oppressors, and all postcolonial persons that were colonized on the

other hand, who were oppressed, marginalized and treated like objects. Spivak's (1988) main

contribution was to clarify that the subject role in which the subject marginalizes or oppresses

others, is theoretically vacant with the implication, that in terms of empirical reality, the role can

be occupied by not just White Europeans but anyone in position of power and privilege,

especially given the different gradations of power and privilege that exist in postcolonial

societies. Spivak is of the view that there are so many contradictions in the social structure of

such societies, where subalterns live, such that the subaltern people are unable to speak from one

coherent position or location in the social structure, because of the heterogeneity in the situations

they existentially live through. For instance, a minority person can be black, and at the same time from a lower socioeconomic or higher socioeconomic status, or an immigrant.

Consequently, owing to the multiplicity of identities and heterogeneity of situations that characterized the status and positions of the subalterns, the subalterns cannot speak with one coherent voice or identity.

In conclusion, different participants described minority in different ways. One thing that is common in all their responses is that minority signifies devaluation and marginalization. Next in line of discussion are the current practices and strategies that the institution has put in place to foster an inclusive environment and experience for all students at the institution of this research.

Current Practices and Strategies that Foster Inclusive Environment and Experience

Numerous strategies and practices that foster inclusive environment and experience for minorities at the institution of study were uncovered. Some of these strategies and practices are briefly elaborated upon in this section. They included the establishment and functions of the Cultural Connection Center (CCC), the Act Six program, Title IX, United Cultures of the students, the creation of the office of the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), Shalom Seminar, Peer Empowerment Program (PEP), the institution experience, Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), staff and faculty development workshops, faculty retreats on students of color and their experiences, and the Presidential Commission on Interfaith Dialogue and Reconciliation Tax Force.

The Cultural Connection Center (CCC)

All the participants in the interview identified the cultural connection center as a strong initiative directed toward creating an inclusive environment and experience for all cultures on campus. Many of the participants in the study agreed that this center is designed to promote

understanding, friendship and shalom. The understanding of some of the participants in this study, about the CCC is that it is a space, created only for minority students. The space is intended for all college of arts and science students of the institution, but with specific focus on minority students or students of color, which offers a place of gathering, dialogue and support to the students(S3).

Participant S3 agreed that the CCC is a place for students of color and Caucasian students who want to learn to dialogue. One of the participants, when asked what made the students to request for a space like the CCC, responded by saying that it is a space that makes the students to feel at home, and that they can be who they are at the CCC. This same participant further added that "the CCC is a cry center, a learning and a communal space." S4 expressed that sometimes minority students run into people that do not understand their culture, and who do not show interest to find out more about them prior to judging them. S4 believed that minority students feel alone because of their small numbers. Participant S4 called the CCC a wonderful place that she is happy about. Participant S2 concurred that the CCC and the events and conversations surrounding it have shown progress, but the institution still needs to grow.to better put the CCC into a more efficient use.

Participant S8 noted that the space was desired eight years before it was granted, and that the space is just enough to get by. To provide an explanation for the race relationship at the institution of the research, S8 saw it as a microcosm of the larger society. What is happening in the institution is a reflection of what is taking place in the larger context of the society. Another aim of the CCC is to foster a cultural intelligence among the students, faculty and staff. This means that the CCC should not really be seen as a space only for minority students, faculty and staff, but for everybody, where cross-cultural interactions can take place, and thus create

opportunities for cross-cultural competencies(S5). Some of the participants felt that the CCC may seem to be a space that aimed at fostering a better understanding and appreciation of diversity, but it may as well become a space that creates a farther distance between Caucasian student and students color. S5 and all the focus groups participants saw the CCC as a turning point.

In addition, participant S5 added that although the intent of the CCC is to have a place where minority students come together, he wonders if this is not turning into an "unintended consequence." When this researcher asked for clarification, S5 responded that "there is almost the expectation that when minorities come together, they are expected to have a chip on their shoulders to be angry." Participants in focus groups one, two, and three pointed out that the CCC is an encouraging place where students who identify as minority come for rest, seek help, and interaction with others who look like them. It is a place of understanding and not a place of division.

The CCC came about as some staff members and students felt the need to have a space that represents a step in the institution's attempt and effort to become more Christ-centered and a culturally inclusive community. This research participants saw the CCC as a request because most students of color do not feel at home on the campus, and the space will foster their inclusion. A staff member stated that "the world has always been diverse and is becoming more so every day." Some of the participants noted that a space like the CCC provided a venue where a sense of belonging, Christ-redeemed self-worth, and community can be fostered among students who are not part of the historical mainstream." However, it must be pointed out that such a space is not designed to keep the majority out. The CCC is about learning how diverse people can live together in understanding, friendship, and shalom(F1).

The challenge lies in understanding the proper ways to develop a cross-cultural understanding. The approach should be to encourage Caucasian students to develop interest in minority culture, and minorities too to develop interest in Caucasian culture, and the cultures of their fellow individuals of color(S7).

People have recognized inequality and racial division as a major problem in the United States, but up until now, there is no clear consensus on what needs to be done about that, let alone pursuing such an agenda with any level of urgency(F1). All the participants acknowledged that the problem of lack of inclusion and discrimination are undesirable. The question here is to ask if there can be a way to reach a consensus on how to handle the situation effectively. However, if Christians who are guided by the Holy Spirit still struggle with this issue, how much more struggle is expected from the secular society(F1)?

Act Six Program

As noted in the institutions website, and supported by F1, in an effort for the institution to continue to support and encourage diversity and inclusion, the Act Six program, which is an ongoing commitment, collaboration with Twin Cities Community Organization Urban Ventures was initiated. This program was inspired by chapter six of the Acts of the Apostles, designed to develop homegrown leaders who are committed to building a community that is vibrant and dynamic (The institution, n.d., F1). Research indicated that African Americans and other minorities have gained more access into institutions of higher learning that previously would have denied them access based on affordability, socio-economic status, race, or color (Reaves, 2013).

The Act Six program is a kind of an affirmative action program (Reaves, 2013). Some participants in this study argued that this program is not an affirmative action policy(S8).

Affirmative action gives preferences to underrepresented minorities, broadening the scope of opportunities for blacks and other minorities seeking admissions into universities and employment (Reaves, 2013). Affirmative action in higher education began in the 1960s and racial preferences were the center of political debate at the time (White, 2014). Affirmative action as defined by White (2014), is the act of taking positive actions to increase the likelihood of equality for individuals of different groups. This came about as a complex system of government policies was employed to address a history of racial discrimination in employment, housing and education.

Participants acknowledged that they are recipients of the Act Six program and are grateful, because, it gave them the opportunity that they would otherwise have not had access to. Participants noted that this special program was geared towards many disadvantaged minorities.

Participant S9 saw the Act Six program as an intentional effort to recruit and enroll students of color and an intentional effort to provide financial aid to those students. During focus group one discussion, one participant identified as a beneficiary of the Act Six program, and expressed gratitude for the opportunity. Participants S1, F3, S6, S7 and FG 1:3 noted that the Act six program is "good, encouraging and a way to encourage diversity."

From the history of the institution, it was noted that the founder of the institution responded to one of his first students named Silene, who refused to relocate to Chicago for study for fear of the lack of funds. The founder said to him "come brother, God will provide," and God did provide (Saari, 2002). Participant S9 pointed it out that the creation of the Act Six program is a turning point in the institution, to foster diversity and inclusion, based on the vision and practice of the founding father of the institution.

The Creation of the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)

Another strategy the institution had embarked on to foster diversity and inclusion was the creation of the office of the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) of the institution. The relevance of the chief diversity officer's position in the institution was widely recognized and applauded by almost all the participants, including some of the focus groups participants. The office of the CDO, most participants said "appears to be a distinctive and intentional step toward inclusion and diversity in the institution." Participants S3 and S4 submitted that the creation of the position of the chief diversity officer was a turning point, and a concerted attempt to create a welcome and inclusive environment of learning for the students. F3 in his own words stated, "so the fact that the institution has a diversity officer for several years now is a distinctive positive step."

Part of the responsibilities of the chief diversity officer included organizing and guiding the diversity agendas of the members of the school community (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). Participant S5 applauded the institution for creating a chief diversity officer's position, and making him to report directly to the president. S5 added, "If we are going to have someone in that role it is important that the role be given credibility." Some focus group participants recognized that the chief diversity officer and his office represented one of the ways the institution was pursuing toward recognizing the need for a diverse and inclusive community.

The chief diversity officer acts as a gap Bridger, providing and encouraging cultural intelligence and ongoing diversity and inclusive support to all members of the school community-students, faculty and staff (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). This position was created out of the institution's zeal to continue to act like a Christ-centered institution, and a reconciler of the differences that exist(F1).

Title Nine (Title IX)

As an amendment to the Civil Rights act of 1964, which was an order to end discrimination based on color, race, and national origin, the United States enacted federal legislation in 1972. As a response to raised complaints at federally funded universities regarding inequalities by female activists and academics, the Title IX of the educational amendment of 1972 was born, helping to breathe a new life into the women's right amendment (Edmondson, 2011).

As part of the institution's commitment to inclusion and provision of a safe and conducive environment for students and employees, the sexual misconduct and Title IX policy was made to be complied by all members of the institution's community. During the interviews for this research, some of the participants reiterated the importance of the Title IX policy and practice. Participant S7 stated that the Title IX office is committed to following up with investigations and bringing in a quick end and resolution to issues that arise. None of the focus groups participants had anything to say regarding Title IX, but some staff and faculty participants had somethings to say. Some staff and faculty participants believed that Title IX gave them the privilege that otherwise may have been denied.

The United Cultures of the Student Body (Club)

Two students were instrumental in starting the United Cultures of the institution where this study was conducted. These students at the time received support from few faculty and staff members of the institution. One of the students grew up with 14 siblings on the Chicago South side, but her family moved to the state of Minnesota in the 1980s. When it was time to go to college, she had two choices, to either go to Tennessee and play basketball, or to this institution of the study and deepen her relationship with Jesus. She chose this University. During her time

at the institution, few students of color began to meet, and later met with the institution's

leadership and asked to form a club. The group started then became the United Cultures of the

Student Body. One of these students and some other students insisted that "it was intimidating to

walk into an institution like this (Mclnroy,2015)"

At the 25th anniversary of the United Cultures of the Student Body, she narrated to the

group of about 35 students, faculty and staff that although her family never supported her choice

of the institution, 35 family members attended her graduation. She sits on the institution's board

of trustees and sees first-hand the leadership's desire to increase campus diversity, so that the

institution "looks more like heaven" (Mclnroy, 2015).

During the interviews and focus groups meetings, many of the participants identified the

existence of the United Cultures of the Institution as an important step and practice towards

inclusion. To buttress this point, participants S7 and S8 stated that the United Cultures of the

Institution is a good diversity and inclusive practice. The two students time at the institution

culminated in the formation of the club. This club supported culturally diverse students to engage

in a cultural understanding of their fellow students." (Mclnroy, 2015).

The club is a platform where multicultural students celebrated their heritages, by

showcasing their culture and creating awareness of their culture on campus(FG1,2,3).

Undergraduate college of arts and science students who participated in the focus group meetings

pointed to the club as an avenue to which diverse cultures in the institution showcased who they

are, and what their cultures represented.

Shalom Seminar

The institution under study and its community encountered hard conversations in many

spaces around the institution, including the classrooms, cafeteria, library, and residential

dormitories (F1, F2, F3, S1, S2, S3). Some faculty and staff participants have said that "when we avoid difficult conversations, we trade short-term comfort for long-term dysfunction." Shalom as explained by participant F1 is "the mutual wellness of all people and things under God's loving rule, encompassing peace, justice, and harmony of all relationships in the community." F1 noted that the world today seemed to experience so little sustained Shalom.

Staff and faculty members who participated in this research demonstrated an awareness of the concept of the "shalom paradigm." shalom is a training program designed to facilitate cultural intelligence, and the idea of a peaceful coexistence of all members of the community, irrespective of race or culture(F1). S3, S5, and F1 all attested to the positivity of the shalom paradigm, noting that the language is very specific about the importance of inclusion and diversity. F1 suggested that the language of the Shalom should be included in the core documents and statement of faith of the institution. The focus groups participants did not mention the Shalom Seminar, but were more focused on the CCC, and the club.

Peer Empowerment Program (PEP)

The institution organizes a pre-welcome week program for students of color, as part of the institution's intercultural programs. This program does not exist to devalue or disrespect others; rather it exists to honor the cultural realities of diverse students, while encouraging them to welcome the institution, the community and its members (the university.edu). A participant in focus group one did not find this program useful to her as she claimed. When inquired, she stated that, "it does not change the way people feel about you, or how they have been stereotyped to relate with you." Other participants who mentioned the PEP said that only Caucasian students favor the PEP, and the exhibition does not change how the Caucasian students feel about minority students.

The University's Experience

Students of color (SOC) who came to the institution under study and either graduated or left before graduating, have some encouraging comments and stories, while others have ongoing challenges related to their experiences. In the spring of 2017, student exit interview was conducted in contribution to ongoing discussions and learning on how the institution may continue to grow into a diverse, working, learning and living community.

Most students in the interview linked their academic experiences at the institution to their level of preparation in high school. Most of the students stated that they were good students in high school, but took college for granted in terms of academic work. Some of the students mentioned a minority staff member as a resource person who is "cool" in helping students of color struggling with time management and other academic and social challenges. Some students in the exit interview described their positive and negative experiences as something that would change their lives in the future better than their grades or GPA. Students in the exit interview admitted that the institution helped them to challenge their faith apart from attending church services alone. Their experiences also helped them to learn how to advocate for themselves, and to learn how to tell their stories.

One of the participants in this study mentioned the creation of an office on the university experience as an avenue to express one's genuine experience. This program is a new and hands on experimental learning program. Participant F3 added that this program conducted exit interviews with the students as they leave, and used their responses as feedback to help the office of student life

Staff and Faculty Development Workshop

As identified in the mission of the institution, faculty development teams partnered to provide occasions for collaboration and conversations around common issues, offer resources that support effective teaching and learning, and encourage scholarly activities. Based on the feedback from the conversations, the team provided development by improving, increasing, developing, instructing and managing general teaching skills, innovation of instructional practices, classroom based assessment and professional roles of professors. Staff and faculty development programs deals with how to continue to further support faculty and staff to both acquire leadership and teaching skills, and paying serious attention to issues of diversity and inclusion. The year 2017's focus was on being 'partners in Christ'–Philippians 1:3-6.

Some participants mentioned development workshops and training during the interviews. F1 indicated that a session was held in February of 2016, during which discussions were held on difficult conversations, diversity awareness, and setting the stage for success, and the impact it had on their preparedness and predisposition toward an appreciation of diversity and inclusion.

S2 further noted that some staff members are involved in this process, and are seeking how to continue to support faculty to prepare themselves to respond in the moments of difficult conversations. When this researcher asked for clarifications on the meaning of difficult conversations, S2 defined difficult conversations as "those conversations that both parties care about." S9 noted that some of the trainings were effective while some were not. Those trainings that were considered ineffective were said to be the trainings that some members of the school community attended just for attendance sake without paying much attention to it. It had to do with the topics of diversity and inclusion. S9 noted that some community members said that

they felt overwhelmed talking about race, color, discrimination, diversity and inclusion always around the campus.

Interfaith Dialogue

In April 2016, about 50 students and employees in the institution attended "Responding to Islamophobia," an event organized by the newly formed "Better Together Students Group." Three Muslims were invited to campus to share their stories and discus their experiences as Muslims living in the city where the university is located. The purpose of the event was to discuss the issue of diversity with regards to Muslims and their representation in the institution. Many Muslim men and women are within the city the university is located, but very few are represented in the institution. The institution of study required undergraduate students to sign a "covenant" (faith screen for admission). This "covenant is a relationship involving lots of people. What the covenant is included a promise, a relationship and a celebration. What it is not was that it was not written to control people in the campus or discipline students (the university covenant community). On October 2013 at the campus library, two professors shared their views on the relationship between three "pious desires" of the 17th century founder of pietism, Philip Jacob Spence. This was the first of the series of presentations on the topic "Pietism Approach to Higher Education."

The "Better Together" Group at the institution had helped to organize events that brought people of different faiths together on campus to share their stories and discuss their experiences. The events do not focus on discussing religion, rather to think about how to respond to other religions in a Christ-like manner. Participant S3 intimated that the president's commission on inter-faith dialogue was "helpful," to encourage diversity and inclusion.

In summary, the institution cares about and has many practices and strategies as identified above to help foster an atmosphere that is welcoming and inclusive. However, participant F1 argued that just because you care about diversity does not mean that you know how to make it flourish. F1 added that diversity will always be a problem in the institution, because the institution is a place of "cycles" where people come, get educated, and learn about other cultures briefly and then they leave, and another batch comes in, and the cycle continues, necessitating the need for a constant cultural training and creation of cultural awareness and competencies for faculty, staff and students..

Assessment of Current Practices and Strategies on Diversity and Inclusion

This researcher would like to use this section to submit a brief assessment of the current practices and strategies, which are geared toward creating an environment of inclusion on the campus of the institution under study. The commissioned diversity mapping project, conducted for the institution in 2013, was to ascertain the future needs of the institution in terms of baseline diversity efforts, progress and curricular components, and to find directions for progress and moving forward (External agency, 2013). The external agency's assessment of the institution rated it at the second order stage (demonstrating diversity commitment through concrete actions and efforts) (External agency, 2013). This rating commended the institution, which means that based on these strategies and practices which are geared toward creating an inclusive environment for learning at the institution, it is committed to diversity and inclusion. The recommendation was that the institution should make a more concerted effort to evolve from the second order stage to the third/fourth order stages. The third/fourth order stages are the stage of sustained, meaningful actions that demonstrate high impact and campus transformation (External Agency, 2013).

All staff and faculty participants in this study affirmed and agreed to this rating. Some focus groups participants also affirmed that the institution is still in an underdeveloped stage in respect to sustained and meaningful quicker actions.to resolving racial or diversity challenges in the institution. Participant F1 opined that most of the diversity programs on campus are "only event-oriented" and do not have the capacity to change the culture of the institution.

Participants in focus groups one, two and three blamed the state of diversity and inclusion in the institution on the culture of the institution over time. Specifically, S7, F1, F2 and F3 agreed that the institution is making some efforts to address the issues of diversity and inclusion, but the pace is very slow. F2 pointed out that since the year 2008, the institution has done and seen more in terms of diversity and inclusion. F2 praised the institution by stating, that "from my own perspective, the institution had not only tried to bring people in, but have also tried to bring structure that can help them flourish. Participant S2 and S5 supported the diversity mapping analysis by jointly agreeing that the institution needs to be more proactive, and continue to move towards a practical transformation. Participant F3 noted that the institution is taking positive steps to achieve the goal of a sustained and meaningful transformation. Nevertheless, recruiting, retaining and creating an inclusive environment and experience for minorities on campus is still a widely held aspiration.

The Cultural Connection Center (CCC), which is a space created for students of all cultures who want to learn and dialogue seemed to have been relegated to the use of minority student/ students of color alone. One of the participants likened the CCC to a "Reservation," which he noted as a deviation from the original intent. The center is supposed to be a place of intercultural connections, where students of all cultures, including Caucasians can connect and learn from one another. However, S5 saw the center as turning into a "Unintentional

Consequence." All staff and faculty participants applauded the relevance of this office of the chief diversity officer, and its active and positive contributions in fostering an inclusive environment for all students, staff and faculty. Participants saw the implementation of most of the practices and strategies as turning points.

In a change process such as implementing diversity and inclusion, there are different categories of participants. Not everyone in an institution or organization adopts the values of diversity and inclusion the same way and speed (Loden, 1996). Loden, 1996 identified five different individual profiles. Individuals in the "innovator" profile are eager to explore, see diversity as a creative opportunity, seek creative fulfilment, and are at the lowest level of perceived risk. The "change agent" sees diversity and inclusion as knowledge-enhancing and good for the people. Change agents are optimistic and early testers of new ideas. They like to influence implementation and lead change. Change agents are on the low level of perceived risk.

The third group are the "pragmatists." These individuals are on the moderate level of performance-based and image-based risk. They are cautious about exploring opportunities, and want to simplify and follow at a distance. The fourth group are the "skeptics", and are perceived to be of high degree of risk associated with change and innovation. They are suspicious of any case made for diversity- even the strategic business case. The last and the highest level of perceived performance-based and image risk are the "traditionalist profile." This group wants to avoid involvement, relies on the past and selective history to disprove the values of diversity, and sees diversity as dangerous, and a threat to the status quo (Loden, 1996). Applying Loden's categories to the issue of diversity and inclusion to the institution, some study participants saw individuals in the institution as suspicious of new ideas about change. The leadership and

administration of the institution, however see diversity as a creative opportunity, and have put some strategies in place.

In summary, the responses from interviewees suggested that the institution and its administration are interested in diversity and are exploring different strategies on how to build an inclusive environment that is healthy and nurturing. Participants noted that the pace toward diversity and inclusion in the institution is very slow, and that only a "small group is doing a lot, while a large group is only doing some."

Interpersonal Relationships and Experiences between Students, Faculty, and Staff

Another prevalent theme that emerged from the interviews was the possible impacts of interpersonal relationships and experiences between faculty, staff and students on diversity and inclusion and the sense of belonging in the institution. Interpersonal relationship in the context of this study means how faculty and staff relate with students, how students relate with fellow students, how faculty relate with staff, how staff relate with fellow staff, and how faculty relate with fellow faculty. Interpersonal relationship is important where individuals who differ in one way or the other exist together. The level of respect, acceptance, interaction and communication has a strong impact on the environment and the experiences those people would have.

Every participant in this study was asked about their experiences both positive and negative as it relates to diversity and inclusion. Many attested to having good experiences, while some came up with stories or statements to describe their negative experiences. While reviewing historical documents, it was encouraging to identify some inclusive words used in some of the letters to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by the president of the institution in the 1960s. The president in those letters addressed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as "brother." People feel included when words that signifies love, care and acceptance are used to address them.

While participant A2 indicated that she had a very good experience with faculty and staff, she also noted that she had some roommate dramas where her money was stolen by a fellow roommate, leaving her to suffer. In the same thought, participant A1 told a story about his extracurricular activity experiences with his director. A1 pointed out that, "my last year in school was the most uncomfortable year I've ever had participating in the activity that I love, due to the way I was treated by my director. It became a sport that I grew up to play and enjoy to a game I no longer wanted to be a part of, because of the lies told to my face and the politics played to humiliate me. I can say that my last year in school participating in this activity really made it very hard for me to stay here at the institution." A1 concluded, "I am glad I had good friends, and that was why I did not leave the school." The experiences of students, staff and faculty were shaped by their relationships with others. Our environments and those that share them with us go a long way to determine how we thrive and flourish.

Participant A1 attested to having good experiences in the classrooms, library and in the dormitory. A1 also noted that the foods at the cafeteria were good, but suggested that "some good soul foods" be added to diversify the menus. The General Manager of the dining services of the institution encouraged individuals with special or favorite recipes from home to bring them forward. This is encouraging to know that even when away from home, you can still get your favorite meals.

In another instance, participant S6 affirmed that some of the negative experiences she had did not come as spoken words, but through unspoken and silent aggressions. She added, "I had a colleague who yelled at me and my supervisor defended him." She also noted that the security told her they needed to "look me up at the institution's entrance gate because I looked suspicious." Discriminatory acts are casted on some people due to either the color of their skin ,

race, hair texture, sexual orientation, culture and religion(S6). S8 attested that a student once came to her to report that she was called a "Nigger." S8 said that she had to journey through that experience with the student. According to S8, some students of color in the dormitory may be cooking and someone walks by and says, "What's that smell? It smells like something is burning, or the smell is disgusting." These might be students who were cooking their heritage foods, and such statements and expressions of disgust leads to the feeling of intimidation and discrimination.

Also in another instance, participant S5 told a story, "I spoke with one student who said his experience was that he felt he had to not be himself to fit in, and that tells me that to him, inclusion was something he was struggling with." One of the participants in this study noted that the people who came through our institution's gates do not have to change who they are to fit in.

H and H explored the question of whether the institution under study was ready and willing to accept and incorporate blackness into their culture. The responses that were received included the norms obtainable in predominantly White institutions (University newspaper, May 2, 1975) White institutions wanted the blacks to conform to the White milieu to fit in. However, to achieve diversification and inclusion, it is rather expedient the institution change to accommodate and nourish these people. F1 supported this opinion by stating that, "one problem with predominantly White institutions (PWI) is that there is no sense of urgency to change anything." F1 added that " if you focus on the thriving of dominant students, non-dominant students do not thrive, but if you can get those who are not thriving to thrive, everyone gets to thrive".

Supporting the above submission, S3 stated, "I would say that in respect to diversity and inclusion, I have experienced a great movement within higher education." S3 continued by

adding that predominantly White institutions are to be mindful of their White privilege, and to be able to begin a process to hold themselves accountable, and to progress forward by creating an atmosphere, which is more conducive to learning and living with individuals who do not fit the traditional stereotype or narratives. The freshman in focus group one was unsure of how he would survive in the institution, and if he would be given the opportunity to prove himself, and to succeed.

In conclusion, many participants had good interpersonal experiences and relationships with people on campus. Many indicated that they felt they had better experiences than some of their friends, due to the racial differences that exist. Caucasian participant stated "there is a strong desire for me to be more of an advocate for my friends, who are minority, as there is a stronger interest in the social cause of creating more just environment, or preventing the injustices that come, due to differences and subsequent discrimination."

The Chief Diversity Officer's (CDO) Position and Responsibilities in the Institution

Numerous universities and colleges in the United States consider the issue of diversity and inclusion as one of the major issues facing their campuses. As a multidimensional phenomenon, campus environment is shaped and impacted by several forces, and higher education institutions cannot afford to ignore the dynamic interactions that exist (Leon, 2010). The CDO's responsibilities included, but are not limited to, developing, managing, and maximizing diversity resources of the institution, as they provide strategies, guidance, and incorporation of diversity and inclusion reasoning into the culture of the institution (Leon, 2010).

Sourcing, Admission, Retention and Diversification of Students, Faculty, and Staff of Color

Another emergent theme from the research was the need to source for diverse faculty, staff, and the need to intentionally admit students of minority background, to improve the

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institutions population of minorities. Higher education institutions in the United States are becoming more diverse, and colleges and universities are competing on student sourcing, enrolment and retention(F1). A focus group participant noted that multicultural student wants to be able to see staff and faculty who look like them, and understand their culture on campus. The two alumni who participated in the study wished they had a more diverse faculty and staff during their time in the institution. While reviewing historical documents, S H and D H of May 2, 1975, attempted to explore a question that lies at the very heart of the subject of Blacks at the institution (The University Newspaper, 1975). The question at the time was "Is the institution ready/or willing to accept and incorporate Blackness into its culture"? In the opinions of one of the students at the time "The institution as a whole doesn't seem to want Blackness here, but want Blacks to conform to White society, placing their emphasis on the minority students conforming to majority culture."

Most of the participants suggested a more aggressive sourcing and admission of students of color. However, some participants pointed out that the implementation of ACT Six program is a strong way of sourcing and admitting minority students, who otherwise may not have had the opportunity to come to the institution. A participant in the focus group who identified as a beneficiary of this program encouraged the institution to do more in this respect, by giving more students of color the opportunity to attend a good university like the one under study. F2 expressed concern that their department has very few non-Caucasian students and faculty. F2 further noted that it is part of what makes his life at the institution difficult, especially on commencement days. S3 pointed out that the residential hall managers and directors are not well diversified. She would want to "see a change in that dynamic, whether for students of color or not, people will benefit from learning from individuals other than themselves."

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One participant specifically noted that the institution needs to do more in terms of encountering different theological ideas or practices." S3 affirmed that the institution has plans to train key individuals for hiring for inclusive excellence.

In the 1960s, record has it that a staff member was given the task to recruit more students of color, resulting into recruiting several male athletes from Chicago (the university newspaper, p.4). The institution however, did not prepare the environment to be receptive and conducive for these students (Nelson, 2001). This next section will briefly examine some factors militating against sourcing, admissions, diversification, and retention of students, faculty and staff of color.

Factors Militating/Enhancing Sourcing, Admissions, Diversification and Retention of Students, Faculty, and Staff of Color

Based on participant response ,some of the factors identified as militating against successful admission and diversification of faculty staff and students included, the lack of perceived conducive atmosphere to thrive and flourish, micro and silent aggressions toward minority students, lack of trust on the side of the students toward the employees, and also , affordability. Act Six, however, is part of the steps being taken to provide a remedy to the problem of affordability. S9 supported the idea that Act Six program is of a tremendous help to these students. Participant S4 would want the institution to improve and enhance their website to make it more accessible to students outside of the United States

Some of the factors that enhance sourcing admission, diversification and retention of students, faculty and staff of color included the Act Six program, the implementation of current practices and strategies by the institution, and addressing the issues of diversity and inclusion with the gospel of "Shalom," and not just from a secular point of view. Participant S9 indicated that he felt more comfortable when a group decided to address the issues of inclusion and diversity with the Gospel.

Challenges Impacting Inclusive School Environment and Experience for Minorities

As stated by this study participants, the institution has done well, but still has room to continue to improve. Ten American black students, all male, were enrolled in the institution for the Fall Semester of 1970 (The University Newspaper, 1975). For the 2015-2016 academic year, data record has it that about 12.9% of students enrolled in the school were students of color. This showed some improvement judging from how it was in the historical past. Participant F1 advised that the "university needed to build institutional capacity so that they would begin to translate caring about diversity and inclusion into action." F1 further noted that the initial stages of anything is always problematic. This participant added, "Just because the institution is growing demographically diverse, does not mean that everyone is going to go along well." Participant F1 further intimated that the issue of diversity and inclusion cannot be totally eradicated anytime soon.

F2 and S3 agreed that the lack of multicultural contribution in the institutions curriculum is a challenge. F1 and S3 suggested that there is the need to diversify the curriculum across the board, so that not only students of color, but Caucasian students will receive the benefits of reading works other than those written by European Americans, and they will learn to consider the excellence of individuals from around the world, not just those from Europe, but from Africa, Asia, and Central America. The students further clarified that it is problematic to use only the geographical location or skin color of a writer to judge, because a writer can be an Asian or African but very Eurocentric in ideas and writing. On the other hand, some writers may be Caucasian European or American and write from the perspective or voice of Africans. Apart from the geographical origin of an author, there are also some ethical and moral compass informing the perspective he or she uses to write. While regional or geographical origin is

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important, it should not be made the only criteria for input in the curriculum of the school. Participant F2 pointed out that the quick fix method of approach of dealing with diversity and inclusion issues in the institution continues to be a challenge. F2 suggested that creating lasting practices and strategies to deal with issues of diversity in a systemic way, and making it become "a part of the institutions DNA and consciousness is of great importance." One participant in focus group two suggested that the institution should allow its policies to influence everyone, irrespective of who you are, instead of picking and choosing who gets spared and who gets to be punished.

Turning Points and How the Institution Responds

In the process of interviews and focus groups meetings, several turning points relating to the issues of diversity and inclusion in the historical evolution and development of the institution of study were observed. However, some did not know how the institution handled the issues, or if there were any policy or practice change following the events. Turning points in the context of this research are incidences and or issues that happened in the institution that brought about either change in ideas, communication, practices, policies and actions. Some of the identified turning points by participants included, the "Mr. University Black face" incident, the painted rock incident, Black Lives Matter, the painted mirror, and micro aggression incidents.

Historically, there was a faculty call for a larger representation of American Blacks on the institution's campus, resulting in the formation of a minority recruitment committee recommended on November 11, 1969. The outcome of this call was the enrollment of 10 African American students for the Fall of 1970 (The University Newspaper, 1975). Coming out of these incidences were the implementation of some of the current practices discussed earlier in

this analysis. Some of these outcomes are, the Cultural Connection Center (CCC), United Cultures of the Institution), and the creation of the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO).

Summary

From this study, diversity, inclusion and minority have been perceived and described in different ways by participants. Emergent themes included the several practices and strategies put in place by the institution to foster inclusive and a diversified environment for faculty, staff and students. Some of these practices and strategies are identified as being effective, while some are not effective, needing reevaluation and revision. Those practices that were deemed ineffective were not achieving the goal of why they were put in place. People tend to go through them for the sake of obedience, but do not keep to the promises of such practices. Other reasons some of the practices were deemed ineffective was because some members of the community lack the demonstration of the objectives. Historically, the institution has gone a long way in its endeavors to continue to create and encourage an inclusive environment. and experience for everyone on campus. Nevertheless, the progress has been very slow, but there is still room for improvement.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Implications, Recommendations

The purpose of Chapter Five was to give an overview of the study. In pursuit of this, the four research questions were restated, then discussed with the analysis highlighting the broader implications of the research and concluding by providing recommendations for practitioners and academics.

Overview of the Study

Detailed diversity and inclusive strategies and practices involved open minds, open doors and open systems (Maltbia, & Power, 2009, p.13). Creating an inclusive school environment and experience not only means giving admissions to minority students, but also includes the ability to treat them with the same respect and love that God demands and that is required for them to flourish and excel in their studies. Faith-based universities and colleges continued to meet with barriers on how to handle the issues of diversity and inclusion, and how to create lasting policies and practices that help curb and challenges related to differences (Lafreniere & Longman,2008).

The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences and challenges of minority undergraduate College of Arts and Science students in a faith-based higher education institution, as they pursue a four-year degree. The study targeted minorities from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The study explored diversity and inclusion issue these students encounter, how the issues impact the environment and their overall experiences on campus, including how the institution responded or handled the issues. This study explored historical documents to gain insights into issues relating to diversity and inclusion, and how these issues have affected the institution over time.

Faculty and staff were purposefully selected based on their interactions with minority students, and data collected generated a rich resource for analysis. The study explored interpersonal relationships between students, staff and faculty, and between students and fellow students, and how these influenced their experiences and atmosphere for learning. Students from different levels in their academic work were recruited as participants. This study also utilized the participation of alumni to buttress the historical understanding of the topic of study. There were twenty-four participants in the study; comprised of three faculty members, nine staff members, two alumni, and ten current undergraduate students. Findings from this study may be shared with the administration of the institution as appropriate, and as desired.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided the case study and the data collection were as follows:

(1) To what extent has the experience of students at the institution been positive or negative in terms of an inclusive school experience?

(2) What are the institutionally based challenges that impact the experiences of minority undergraduate students?

(3) How have the different stages in the historical evolution of the institution influenced the challenges of creating an inclusive environment and school experience? How did each of them influence inclusive environments and school experience?

(4) What do undergraduate minority students, faculty, and staff see as best strategies and practices that can help minority students experience an inclusive and caring environment?

Question One Findings

RQ1: To what extent has your experience at the institution been positive or negative in terms of inclusive school experience?

Some of the student participants indicated that their experiences were good, due to the spiritual, emotional and academic support received from staff and faculty, smaller classroom sizes and fewer distractions. Others narrated experiences they deemed uncomfortable, undeserved, degrading, saddening, disrespectful, discriminatory, painful, and offensive. Participant A2 and some participants in focus groups one, two, and three noted that some of their positive experiences related to the institution's mission statement, and its historical connection as a Christian-based higher education institution, where everyone is expected to be treated without segregation and equally as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Another participant in focus group one who described her experience as painful, said, "I feel isolated in the classroom as students tend to fall into racial group dynamics, making me feel overlooked as a student of color, and not being given a chance to prove myself." Some participants found most faculty and staff very helpful and supportive in their academics.

Most faculty members were identified as supportive, resourceful and willing to help and direct students with academic work. One participant a junior in focus group two described his experiences with faculty as 50:50, as he stated, "Most professors do try, but sometimes the lack of cultural intelligence, competence and\or awareness get in the way." Further, most of the student participants identified the library staff as very resourceful, knowledgeable, respectful and supportive. An alumnus participant noted that the university library should find ways to display materials that represent other cultures' achievements and contributions to learning. The alumnus noted, "You barely get to see materials from writers other than from European writers."

Many of the interviewees identified negative institutional cultures that required a more transparent practice, genuine value for diversity and inclusion, and a willingness to do more to continue to encourage inclusive school environment and experiences for minorities on campus.

The residential areas and extracurricular activities were discussed by participants as environments in which they had the most uncomfortable and unfavorable experiences. Student - student micro aggressions and name-calling were on top of the offensive experiences.

In general, almost all the participants acknowledged that their experiences were impacted in both positive and some negative ways by the actions of the administration and leadership of the institution. Most of the participants' positive experiences came from implementing some of the current practices and strategies the institution had in place that fostered inclusive environment and experience. Interpersonal relationships were the aspects identified by participants as impacting the experiences of minorities on campus (student to student, student to faculty, student to staff, staff to staff, staff to faculty).

The body language and reactions of one participant (a freshman) in focus group one, showed confusion and a great degree of uncertainty as to whether he was in the right school environment. When this researcher attempted to better understand his reasons, the participant stated, "I have given up on most Caucasian students, and unless I find them genuine, I do not focus on them anymore." However, some students of color in predominantly Black higher education institutions have similar discriminatory and uncomfortable experiences, though they are the majority in such situations(Olaogun, et al 2015). Taking this discussion back home to my country of origin, students in Nigeria (West Africa) who attend higher education institutions that are not located in their tribal region (although from same country), do experience discrimination and segregation. The trend in segregation and discrimination against women, and non-indigenes of a region is becoming a great concern, and getting people agitated and nervous (Olaogun et al 2015).

Olaogun et al, (2015) noted that gender discrimination in Nigerian Universities has been a focal point of discussion in many regions. Nwagwu (1997) argued that a society or community that fails to provide qualified and dedicated faculty and staff, teaching and learning operating funds is obviously creating a university community and environment where diverse facets of issues will not flourish. Nwagwu (1997) further buttressed the point by adding that various issues plaguing Nigerian universities are due to poor and unstable leadership. However, in the institution of study, participant F2 believed that the institution has good and capable leadership that provide structure and growth to the school community. There is the need to continue to provide reasonable support for minorities in the institution by increasing attention to the systemic resolution of issues arising due to all kinds of differences.

Question One Conclusion

From the findings relating to question number one, it was apparent that the experiences of minorities at the institution varied depending on who and where the interactions occurred. The analysis of all data intimated that both positive and negative experiences were evident. The institution has strategies, policies, and practices in place to foster and support positive experiences, but the pace has been slow, and there is the need to do more work to facilitate genuine inclusion of minorities in the institution. Some students of color, who were the first to be admitted to the school, attested that coming to the institution exerted a good influence on their spiritual experience. Others indicated that they had learned about Black sensitivity, and there was a lot to learn from what seemed to be bad experiences.

Question Two Findings

RQ 2: What are the institutionally based challenges that impact the experiences of minority undergraduate students?

The findings in response to research question two demonstrated that the institution is predominantly a Caucasian institution. Based on this finding, participants described the institution as one that has no sense of urgency to change the status quo. Participants described the institution as taking some steps to create an inclusive environment and experience for minority students, faculty and staff, but needs to do more and put in place a lasting structure that will help to re-shape the norm that is prevalent in the institution for better results in terms of diversity and inclusion. The participants identified that the institution is interested in seeing that minorities feel accepted and appropriately involved in the school, but do not know what to do with it, and expect minorities to change themselves to be able to fit in, belong and be accepted in the institution.

One participant in focus group two identified the issue of preferential treatment rendered to some French students in the institution as one of the challenges to diversity and inclusion. French students, according to the participant, were allowed to smoke on the university property, and were provided with ash trays, contrary to the policy of the institution, while other students were not allowed to smoke.

There are many practices, strategies and programs in place to promote and address the issues of diversity and inclusion in the institution, but not all are effective. Some of the strategies were identified as dormant and needed to be re-evaluated and revised for effectiveness. Participants identified the method of approach to issues of diversity and inclusion as a quick-fix approach, whereby when problems relating to diversity happened, the administration makes efforts to settle the issue at that time, and wait until another incident occurs before acting again, with no lasting solution put in place.

Another institutionally based challenge that affected inclusive school experiences for minority students was the need to diversify the student, faculty and staff bodies. From statistical and historical points of views, the percentage of students of color in the institution for 2015-2016 academic year was 12.9%. According to the Census Bureau, in 2004, the United States minority population was 32.9%. In 2014, the population increased to 37.9%. States such as Hawaii, New Mexico, Texas, and Nevada are now Majority-Minority(Sanburn,2015). Concerted efforts should be engaged by the administration of the institution to intentionally invite and admit students, and recruit both staff and faculty members of minority roots.

Question Two Conclusions

The responses of minority students, faculty and staff to the second research question showed that there were some institutionally-based challenges that influenced the school environment and subsequently the experiences of minority students on campus. Many of the findings showed that the bulk of the issues lied deeply in the culture of the institution, and how it had operated over time. Research findings suggested that the institution had welcomed minority students and other minorities as guests in someone else's home, and are not considered as part of the whole. The founding fathers of every institution or organization lay the foundation and parameters of the organization. Once laid out, everyone joining the organization will have to deal with the original legacy of the founders.

There is a need to find ways to attract minority students . If the institution has all its administrators committed to diversity and rapid pursuit of inclusion, it may scare many constituent members, who send their children to the school (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Having the institution very diverse may mean to some Caucasian populace that the institution is lowering its standard, and some may think that their children may run the risk of getting into inter-racial

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marriages (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). For many schools, if they can comfortably survive without diversifying, unless their values or constituencies compel them to diversify or embark on projects of inclusion, they may prefer to continue as they are.

Question Three Findings

RQ3: How have the different stages in the historical evolution of the institution influenced the challenges of creating an inclusive environment and school experience? How did each of them influence inclusive environments and school experience?

The responses to interview questions, findings from research into historical documents, and responses generated in focus group discussions, showed that the institution have taken cautious and gradual steps toward making the school diverse and inclusive. A majority of the study participants agreed that dealing with students in the minority group, and having them abide by the rules of the majority group had always been an issue that continued to linger on. Historical records suggested that the lack of interest to involve minorities in quality participation and in decision-making remained an issue in the institution (University Newspaper, May 2, 1975). However, participant S3 applauded the institution for currently having the first woman campus pastor who is also a person of color.

Some of the interviewees claimed that individuals who are in the majority find it difficult to accept that they cannot accurately depict the feelings and situations of minorities, since they had not been in their shoes, and so find it difficult to relate to how minorities feel. Issues such as lack of acceptance continued, as minorities felt that they are barely given the chance to speak or defend themselves.

D H, in a response to an article in "University Newspaper" part 3 entitled "Current Blacks Facing Adjustments," stated, "If a task is once begun, never leave it till it's done, be the

labor great or small, do it well or not at all" (May 2, 1975). Individuals have openly shown appreciation for the efforts that are being made toward diversity and inclusion in the institution. S6 argued that sincere diversity and inclusion efforts are being harmed by the mistakes of some administrators, faculty, staff, and students. S6 noted that the administration and her immediate boss did not do anything to her colleague who yelled at her, and made her feel humiliated. Also,

Participants noted that minorities have long felt that being a student in a predominantly Caucasian school means dealing with naiveté and a subconscious racism that some Caucasian students express toward them. S5 pointed out that minorities believed that some individuals in the institution "give you that big institution grin, and say hi, but they wonder what they meant by it." When asked for clarification, the respondent stated, "It means that some individuals in the school community give you a false hope of acceptance." The tone of the student participants suggested that all Caucasian students, staff and faculty get along well within themselves, which is not the case.

There are implicit assumptions that there are no other forms of exclusion among minorities, but even if they exist, they can be ignored. The voice of some respondents also suggested that all White students get along well, and feel fully included in the institution. However, a student's humanity should not be contingent on what a Caucasian person says or does. A determined minority student, knowing that he or she is in the school legally must feel strongly that his or her humanity is not contingent of a White person's approval. Hence, there is the difference between being passive and having a victim mentality compared to having a sense of acceptance and inclusion. Some participants in this study suggested that many minority students would benefit by cultivating a sense of agency rather than a mentality of always feeling like a victim.

Question Three Conclusion

While these research findings showed that many minority students, staff and faculty feel the lack of inclusion and diversity in the institution, record showed that positive responses sometimes come out of negative reactions (University Newspaper, May 2, 1975). This was evident in D H's argument that Blacks should be given the opportunity to speak for themselves, and contribute to decision making. D H co-author the article on "Current Blacks Facing Adjustment." There were 1565 students in the institution in 1975, only seven of them were Blacks. In 2015–2016, students of color were 18.5% of the entire student body.

For the College of Arts and Science undergraduate students, the percentage for 2015–2016 was 12.9% (Institutional Research & Data). The historically smaller class sizes, the beautiful environment, equipment and helpful advisors have greatly influenced inclusion and diversity in the institution.as acknowledged by most of the research participants. The historical evolution of the institution has influenced the challenges of creating inclusive environment and experience for minorities on campus, and has brought about the implementation of practices such as, the CCC, CDO, Title IX Policy, the Shalom Seminar, Faculty Workshops and others.

Question Four Findings

RQ4: What do undergraduate minority students, faculty, and staff see as best strategies and practices that can help minority students experience an inclusive and caring environment?

Minority students, faculty and staff, who participated in the study, believed that the institution has policies, practices and strategies put in place that can help minorities to experience an inclusive and caring environment. These include the Act Six program, the United Culture of the Institution, the Cultural Connection Center, the creation and functions of the office of the Chief Diversity Officer, the Title IX Policy, the Shalom Seminar, the Peer Empowerment

Program, Institution Experience, Staff and Faculty Workshops, and others. Some of these strategies, programs and practices stem from the institution's interest to diversify, support, and encourage an environment that is welcoming and nurturing to all, including minorities. Some also stem from the institutional responses to incidents, both pleasant and unpleasant, relating to diversity and inclusion that happened on campus. However, some of these practices and strategies do not seem to be effective. Some participants insisted that some of the practices, policies and strategies required a systemic approach, more urgent attention, and the capability to hold everyone accountable for their actions, irrespective of who they are or the privileges they have. The participants were not specific in listing the ineffective practices and policies, but a few mentioned the Shalom seminar. These participants noted that some employees claim to attend the seminars just to fulfil the requirements of their employment, but do not practice the messages from the seminar, which included love for all, irrespective of difference.

Question Four Conclusion

In response to research question number four, various programs, policy matters and practices that are currently in place to help improve diversity and inclusion at the institution. These various programs, policies and practices included the Cultural Connection Center, the creation of the Chief Diversity Officer's Position, the University Experience, the United Cultures of the University, etc. It was uncovered that these practices and strategies required further studies, additional revision to continue to make them relevant and effective in achieving the aims and purposes for which they were put in place.

Limitations

Limitation of the study and data included:

Findings were specific to one school, hence the findings may only be applied to the school under study. To increase the viability of this research, a triangulation method of data collection was used through the review of historical documents, interviews with current faculty and staff of the institution, and interviews with alumni and current student focus group discussions.

It was difficult to get willing participants among alumni, since most are no longer using their institution's email address, or do not check their emails very often. On this note, over 100 email invitations were sent to give room for as many as may respond. Only two alumni responded and participated in the study. Furthermore, it took time to organize focus group meetings with current students, because they were busy with their academic assignments as they were just returning after a long summer holiday. To this effect, the researcher created enough time to hang out in the Cultural Connection Center (CCC) at the hours when students' came in to connect with other students. Being a student at the institution of study, this researcher was eager to spend time with students at the cultural space, through which some of them developed trust and willingly participated in the focus group sessions.

Some participants were reluctant and guarded with some of their responses to interview and focus group questions. This researcher acknowledged their feelings, and encouraged them to skip any question to which they felt uncomfortable giving an answer. Some individuals who were invited to participate in the study declined with no reasons given. Others participated in the study in place of those who declined the invitation. This study was limited, because some students were afraid of being implicated, and afraid of potential impact on their grades and relationships with the school authority, but joining them in the CCC space helped to explain the purpose of the research.

Implications for Research and Practice

A qualitative case study was conducted, and this study revealed some positive and negative experiences of minority undergraduate students. The study further explored the experiences of faculty and staff of the institution, effectiveness of some of the strategies and practices put in place to improve diversity and inclusion in the institution, and the weaknesses of some of the practices currently in place. Further, the study also explored how the different stages in the history of the institution impacted the struggle to create an inclusive environment and the experience for minority students. Implications of this study for the institution are that diversity and inclusive practices over time have slowly but progressively improved. The awareness of diversity has increased, resulting in the creation and implementation of strategies and practices to handle diversity issues. However, the institution still struggles with how to effectively deal with the issues of diversity and inclusion.

The practices and strategies put in place are essential and well-intended, but need to be revised to become more systemic and lasting. The research also revealed that the strategies and practices currently in place at the institution have improved diversity and the inclusive experience of minority individuals. The administration of the institution is sincerely eager and willing to dialogue on issues that arise. Students' experiences differ year-by-year, course-by-course, and situation-by-situation. The institution is making some progress regarding creating an inclusive school environment and experience, but findings of this research indicated that what is being done is done at a very slow pace, and is not enough to continue to maintain a culture of inclusion and a more welcoming environment. Diversity and inclusion appeared to be areas in education that required urgent attention to better support minorities and encourage them to succeed in their academic performances and professional pursuits.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Findings from this study revealed different levels of discomfort and struggles that individual minority students faced, as they pursue their higher education degree, especially in a faith-based higher education institution that is predominantly white. In this instance, recommendations for practitioners included:

First, minorities on campus do not only need material conditions, but also need genuine acceptance, and an environment void of stereotype. The institution needed to continue to provide a supportive and conducive environment that worked toward a comprehensive model that cared appropriately to include minorities in the life of the community. Administration and the community needed to continue in their support for inclusion and diversity. The institution needed to begin to celebrate Caucasian heritage because they too have a culture. Other cultures celebrate their heritages and enjoy the privileges of having a week or month set aside to recognize and celebrate themselves.

Second, there are very few Native American and Muslim students in the institution, therefore piecing together a concise strategy on how to include and encourage enrollment of these minorities is essential. These individuals tend to have a unique experience that shape their experiences and interactions with others (Montgomery, 2017).

Third, hiring a full-time staff person for the Cultural Connection Center (CCC) is necessary, as this will show that the institution is willing to invest in this center. The current part-time staff in this center made the space a temporary one that may easily be phased off due to lack of committed staff, and an inadequate fund allocation.

Fourth, to intensify efforts that will help to increase the admission and retention of qualified students, and the employment of faculty and staff of minority background in the

institution. Statistics showed that in 1975, out of the 1565, students in the institution, only seven students were Black. In June 1986, when the Multicultural Development Office was organized within the Student Life Office to provide support for American minorities and international students, 49 students of color were enrolled, representing 2.7 % of the student body (Nelson, 2001). In the 2015–2016 academic session, students of color were 18.5% of the entire student body. There is progress.

Fifth, the institution's environment needs to be re-assessed and made more conducive to accept and retain minorities. This is relevant, because the experience of Black male athletes recruited in the 1960s from Chicago suggested that the environment of an institution needs to be welcoming and conducive for minorities or students of color to thrive and succeed. There is a need to have in place a systemic approach to anticipate possible issues involving race and ethnicity, rather than the "quick-fix" reactionary approach that the institution currently uses. As diversity issues occur, the administration comes up with a one-time solution, and awaits another incident without a structured systemic, and lasting solution in place.

Sixth, the institution needs to update its website for easy access, especially for international students. Some of these students reported to one of their coordinators that when accessing the website from abroad, not much is available to navigate admission and other processes, and access is sometimes difficult. Some are unable to pay their tuition from abroad online. This issue should be investigated, because some international locations restrict and monitor their internet use.

Seventh, another recommendation is to diversify the school curriculum. These research findings uncovered that some students in some departments may complete their course work and graduate without reading any material written by Latin American, African or Asian writers.

Diversifying the curriculum will help broaden the knowledge of all students, and boost the reputation of the institution.

Eighth, the institution needs to hold people more accountable for their actions. Individuals need to be held accountable for what they do and say that negatively impact others. Some individuals feel they can do or say anything and not be punished, because they believe that they are the majority, and others are just sharing the space with them.

Nine, another important recommendation is for future research to identify the specific ineffective practices and strategies that this research participants referred to, because many of them were not specific.

Finally, the community needs to continue to emphasize the concept of cultural intelligence and cultural humility, and the need to have policies that are binding on everyone, with no exception irrespective of who they are. Cuyjet et al. (2011) re-affirmed the importance and impact of an academic environment in the lives of students. Paredes-Collins (2013) noted the role of educational leadership in shaping and providing a supportive and inclusive experience for students.

Summary

In summary, this study has been able to make some recommendations for practitioners. These recommendations are geared toward supporting the institution's effort in creating a meaningful, welcoming, and lasting diversity experience and environment on campus for all students.

Recommendations for Academics

From the findings of this study, this researcher suggested that further study is required to explore the role of family, and the type of high school that minority students attended, as well as

their experiences prior to entering university. Additional study is required to explore if there are other factors apart from race and ethnicity that contribute to the negative experiences of minority students in a predominantly White, faith-based higher education institution. Further study is required to explore if there are discriminations within students of the same race and ethnicity, which may be overlooked.

While encouraging diversity and inclusion in a faith-based higher education institution, this study only involved minority students in the undergraduate programs. This study recommended that future studies of the institution include the College of Arts and Professional Studies(CAPS), and the Graduate Schools(GS). Future study is required to understand what makes minorities choose a faith-based higher education institution that is predominantly White as a school of choice, despite the possible difficulties ensuing from discrimination and exclusion.

Further studies should explore the role of stakeholders in diversifying the student, faculty and staff bodies. There is the need to further understand the implications of a lack of diversity in the curriculum of a faith-based higher education institution that is predominantly White. It would therefore be necessary to explore how a predominantly White faith-based higher education institution would accept reading materials by other writers who are not European.

Concluding Comments

Diversity and inclusion have received attention in most higher education institutions in recent times. Individuals who are responsible for providing data need to continue to provide accurate data for leadership to use in their data driven decision-making. It is necessary to celebrate one another's cultures, as this has the tendency to reduce the problems associated with diversity and inclusion. The move toward diversity and creation of an inclusive environment and experience is in the right direction, although the pace is slow at the institution of this study.

One of the research questions explored how the different stages in the historical evolution of the institution influenced the issue of an inclusive environment and experience. In the past it had been noted that although the institution is interested in diversifying the student body, the climate was not conducive for minority students to thrive and flourish. Based on these findings, it is advised that the institution continue to work on durable, strong, lasting and sincere practices and strategies that will continue to positively impact the creation of an inclusive environment and experience for minority students, faculty and staff.

All in the body of Christ, particularly in faith-based colleges and universities, should have the ability to continue to advance diversity and inclusion. The work in this research may propel the institution of study forward, and give it a document to look at, and to say, where do we go from here? Some individuals who are not racial minorities still feel there is the need for improved interpersonal relationships, making it an urgent matter.

Relating these research findings to the literature reviewed in this study, most insights correlated well with the findings. Many insights from the literature dealt with the discussions that took place within the focus group meetings. Some interview participants responses affirmed conclusions in the literature reviewed. One insight that this study encountered that did not appear in the literature reviewed was the issue of diversifying the type of music played during chapel hours, and the idea of improving on the institution's website for easy access for international students. Creating an inclusive school environment and experience for minorities in faith-based colleges and universities remain an ongoing issue, as different individuals look at inclusion with diverse lens, and higher education institutions still struggle with how to cultivate a lasting and enduring solution.to the lingering inclusion issues.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study of diversity and inclusion. I hope to understand the positive experiences and challenges of minority students, how it impacts their academic outcomes and success, and what policies and practices the institution has in place to support inclusion. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you represent minority students in a faith-based undergraduate university, you are 18 years or over, you are either of Asian, Hispanic, Latino, Native American, African/African America, or considered non-Caucasian, and a current student or Alumni of the College of Arts and Sciences. This research is for a higher educational leadership program (Ed. D), and no funding agency is involved.

I, Caroline Abiaziem, have obtained approval from the Dissertation Committee, and Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you decide to participate, you will be involved in an interview. Current undergraduate students will participate in a 30 to 45minutes focus group meeting with other participants. I will conduct 45 to 60 minutes long face to face interviews with alumni, staff, and faculty individually. There is minimal risk associated with participating in this study, although there is risk that responding to questions about being a minority student at a faith-based institution may generate discomfort. You can choose not to respond to any question(s) you do not feel comfortable answering. Please note though that there is a risk to confidentiality in that the researcher cannot guarantee that no participants will share information beyond the focus group. I will however ask that each participant keep all information shared during the focus group confidential.

Your participation will not impact your enrollment or grade as a student in the institution. For faculty and staff, your participation will not negatively impact your promotion, or status in the institution. All information collected will be kept confidential, and in a secured place throughout the study. Your names and identifying information will be disguised to maintain confidentiality. A ten-dollar gift card will be given to participants who stayed to the end of the study as an incentive for their participation.

Any information obtained relating to this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and replaced with pseudonym. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identifiable and only aggregate data will be presented. The analyzed results will be made available to the institution to inform them of suggestions and recommendations. The purpose of the disclosure is to help the institution add, change, or modify strategies that will continue to help the institution remain viable in the market place, and to continue to improve their inclusive practices. Audio-tapes, and written responses collected during the focus group discussions will be kept in a secure safe place. These materials will be destroyed at the end of the study, and audio tape recordings will be erased.

Your decision whether to participate will not affect your future relations with the institution in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without affecting such relationships.

This research has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the institution's Levels of Review for Research with Humans. If you have any questions about the research and/or research participants' rights or wish to report a research related injury, please contact:

Student: Caroline Abiaziem, Email: stpaulcaroline@msn.com

Advisor: Samuel Zalanga, Email: szalanga@bethel.edu

You will be offered a copy of this form to keep, if you desire.

_____

_____ You are deciding whether to participate or not. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice after signing this form should you choose to discontinue participation in this study.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

Appendix B

Good evening sir, and thank you for giving me audience this afternoon on phone. As we discussed, I just want to introduce myself a little bit more.

My name is Caroline Abiaziem, and I am a doctoral student at Bethel University pursuing a doctor of education (higher education) degree in the EdD program.

I was born in Nigeria, west Africa to Mr. and Mrs. Kieran Abiaziem. Unfortunately, my dad is late, but my mom is still alive and well. I have two young daughters Ages 14 and 12 respectively. I work with a health care institution in the Metro area, and have been employed for a total of 15 years here in the United States.

I graduated from the bachelors of science in nursing program (BSN) from Bethel University in 2010. For the interest I had schooling in a faith-based university, the small class size, and the peaceful environment therefore, I decided to come back to school almost immediately. I enrolled, and graduated from the organizational leadership program (now known as strategic leadership) in the year 2012. Because of the Christian formation I derived, and the environment of the institution, I decided to come back again to pursue my doctoral education in the same institution in 2013. I am currently working on my dissertation, and hope to finish well toward the end of this year 2017.

The topic of my dissertation is: "Creating an inclusive school environment and experience for minority students in a faith-based university: A Case study of undergraduate programs.".

My interest for this topic stems from the fact that as a minority student who had returned to the same institution three times to pursue different degrees, I felt interested to better

understand the practices, policies, and procedures that the institution has in place that supports

inclusive practices for minority students in the institution. The world has become

interconnected, and people no longer live or work in insular places. Immigration and the market

economy is bringing a huge number of minority immigrants to the United states, and many are

seeking higher education certificates. Many are also interested in faith-based universities and

colleges because of the quality and environment of these institutions.

I plan to explore this interest by using a qualitative research approach. I am probably

doing a triangulation method, because I will be conducting interviews, focus group meetings, and

reviewing historical records. I plan on interviewing alumni to boost the historical aspect.

Alumni should include those who graduated from the college of arts and science programs 3 – 5

years ago. I will also be interviewing faculty and staff. I will conduct focus group meetings with

current college of arts and science students who identify as minorities (CAS).

What I need exactly from you is to approve my request to recruit alumni, and to assist me

in contacting them to participate.in the study. The institutional review board (IRB) is requesting

an approval from the office of alumni and family relations. I will need a note, letter, or email to

send to the IRB that indicates that your office did approve my recruiting alumni.

I am attaching a copy of the consent form in this communication. I will also include the

interview questions that I plan to use, for your information. Most of what the alumni students

may want to know are contained in the consent form. Any risks, and confidentiality issues are

contained in the consent form.

Please see attached documents. Also, please let me know any other information you need

from me.

Thank you very much for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Abiaziem

(651) 278 5369

Appendix C

Dissertation Research Interview Questions for Staff and Faculty

Demographic questions

1. How do you identify yourself? Male or Female?

2. With which ethnic group do you identify?

(1) African/ African American (2) Caucasian (3) Hispanic (4) Asian (5) American Indians/Alaskan Native (6) Others

3. How many years have you worked for this institution?

4. Is this institution your first place of work? Please explain.

5. In what department do you work, and what is your connection with the students? Please indicate.

6. What attracted you to take employment in this institution?

7. What do you understand by the terms (1) Diversity (2) Inclusion (3) Minority students?

8. Please, describe your experiences both positive and negative in respect to diversity and inclusion.

9. What areas do you feel this institution has done well, and what areas do they need to grow regarding diversity and inclusion practices?

10. What specific areas need improvement? Please elaborate

11. Based on the length of time you have served in your capacity in this institution,

a. What turning points have you experienced in terms of the culture of inclusion and diversity? Explain

b. What were the issues or events that brought about the turning points? Please explain

c. Who or what brought about the turning points or changes?

d. How did it impact inclusive school experience and diversity practices? Explain

12. What organizational or institutional challenges and issues were in place when you were hired? Discuss

13. Do you know of current policies and practices that this institution has in place that supports inclusive school experiences and an inclusive environment? If yes, name some of them?

14. Do you think that the institution has a solid staff and faculty development package? If yes, do you feel it includes diversity awareness and instructional strategies? Please, elaborate.

15. What, if any are some common diversity and inclusive concerns that your office entertains from faculty, staff and students?

16. If you were given the opportunity, how would you describe the diversity and inclusive practices of this institution?

17. What role could your department play in helping to support inclusive experiences and environment for minority students?

18. What do you have to add as a final thought?

Appendix D

Dissertation Research Interview Questions for Alumni Students of the College of Arts and Science Programs (CAS)

Demographic questions.

How do you identify yourself? Male or female, or others?

What racial background do you identify with?

(1) African/African American (2) Asian (3) Hispanic/ Latino

(4) American Indians/Alaskan Natives (5) Others

How old were you when you started in this institution?

      (1) 16 -19 (2) 20 – 22 (3) Above 22

- Did you graduate, and in what year?

- What type of high school did you attend?

 (1) Public (2) Private (3) Christian (4) Others (select all that apply)

- What motivated you to make this institution as a university of choice?

- How would you describe the terms (1) Diversity (2) Inclusion (3) Minority

student?

- Did you reside in the school dormitory? If yes, what would you say about your

experiences in the dormitory?

- How would you describe your experience at the school cafeteria?

- If you did use the school library for studying and or for other academic activities,

how would you describe your experiences, and your encounters with library staff?

- If asked to describe your classroom experiences what would be your responses?

- If asked about your interactions with faculty, what would be your responses?

- Did you participate in any extracurricular activity? If yes, which one? how is the climate, and what is your degree of comfort?

- What do you think about the culture of this community and what factors or forces do you think is shaping it?

- Given your time on this campus, has there been any moment your experience was difficult? Please explain.

- Given your time on this campus, have there been any great moments that have had positive impact and memory in your life? Please, explain.

- As a minority Alumni student in this institution, how did you feel the institution has changed from when you started until you graduated or left? Please, identify some of these changes. (This study understands that some events that have changed the culture may have happened long ago).

- While you were in this institution, did you observed any major changes, such policies or strategies that took place that influenced a move toward inclusiveness? Please, explain.

-If yes, what important events was it?

- Were there things that you wished the institution could have added to its policies and practices that could have helped create a more inclusive school experience for minority students?

- Were there specific places designed for minority students to seek for academic and other assistance when needed while you were a student? If yes, how would you describe your experience there?

- Would you recommend this institution to your friends, and to other minority students? If yes, why? If no, why?

- As an Alumni, did your experience as a minority student prepare you in any way on how to relate with others outside the campus?

- What do you have to add as a final thought?

Appendix E

Dissertation Research Questions for Focus Groups

How do you identify yourself?

Male or female, or others?

What racial background do you identify with?

(1)   African/African American (2) Asian (3) Hispanic/ Latino

(4) American Indians/Alaskan Natives (5) Others

How old were you when you started in this institution?

    (1) 16 -19 (2) 20 – 22 (3) Above 22

- What level are you in your education?

- What type of high school did you attend?

(1)   Public (2) Private (3) Christian (4) Others (select all that apply)

- What motivated you to make this institution as a university of choice?

- How would you describe the terms (1) Diversity (2) Inclusion (3) Minority

student?

- Do you reside in the school dormitory? If yes, what would you say about your

experiences in the dormitory?

- How do you describe your experience at the school cafeteria?

- If you do use the school library for studying and or for other academic activities,

how would you describe your experiences, and your encounters with library staff?

- If asked to describe your classroom experiences what would be your responses?

- If asked about your interactions with faculty, what would be your responses?

- Do you participate in any extracurricular activity? If yes, which one? how is the climate, and what is your degree of comfort?

- What do you think about the culture of this community and what factors or forces do you think is shaping it?

- Given your time on this campus, has there been any moment your experience was difficult? Please explain.

- Given your time on this campus, have there been any great moments that have had positive impact and memory in your life? Please, explain.

- As a minority student in this institution, how do you feel the institution has changed since you started? Please, identify some of these changes. (This study understands that some events that have changed the culture may have happened long ago).

- Since you started your education in this institution, have you observed any major changes, such as policies or strategies that have taken place that influenced a move toward inclusiveness? Please, explain.

-If yes, what important events was it?

- Are there things that you wish the institution could add to its policies and practices that would help create a more inclusive school experience for minority students?

- Do you feel there is a specific place designed for minority students to seek for academic and other assistance when needed? If yes, how would you describe your experience there?

- Would you recommend this institution to your friends, and to other minority students? If yes, why? If no, why?

- What do you have to add as a final thought?

Letter from the Institutional Review Board

BETHEL UNIVERSITY
1871

May 16, 2017

Caroline Abiaziem
Bethel University
St. Paul, MN 55112

Re: Project SP-26-17   Creating an inclusive school experience and environment for minority students in a faith-based university: A case study of an undergraduate program

Dear Caroline,

On May 16, 2017, the Bethel University Institutional Review Board completed the review of your proposed study and approved the above referenced study.

Please note that this approval is limited to the project as described on the most recent Human Subjects Review Form, including email correspondence. Also, please be reminded that it is the responsibility of the investigator(s) to bring to the attention of the IRB any proposed changes in the project or activity plans, and to report to the IRB any unanticipated problems that may affect the welfare of human subjects. Last, the approval is valid until May 15, 2017.

Sincerely,

Peter Jankowski, Ph.D.

Chair, Bethel University IRB

Appendix G

Introduction / Request Letter for Help with Recruiting College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Students for Focus Group Meetings

Hi L,

My name is Caroline Abiaziem. I am a Doctoral candidate of this university, and working on my dissertation. My data collection methods includes focus group meeting with current college of arts and science minority students. My plan is to have about 12 students with a mix of race, culture, gender, age, major, and year in the university.

I was working with another staff person, and she informed me that you will be working with me as the students returns.

Please, I am humbly asking for your help in recruiting these students as soon as they return on campus. for this academic year. I was unable to get hold of them during the summer break.   Your sincere assistance and support will be greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Abiaziem
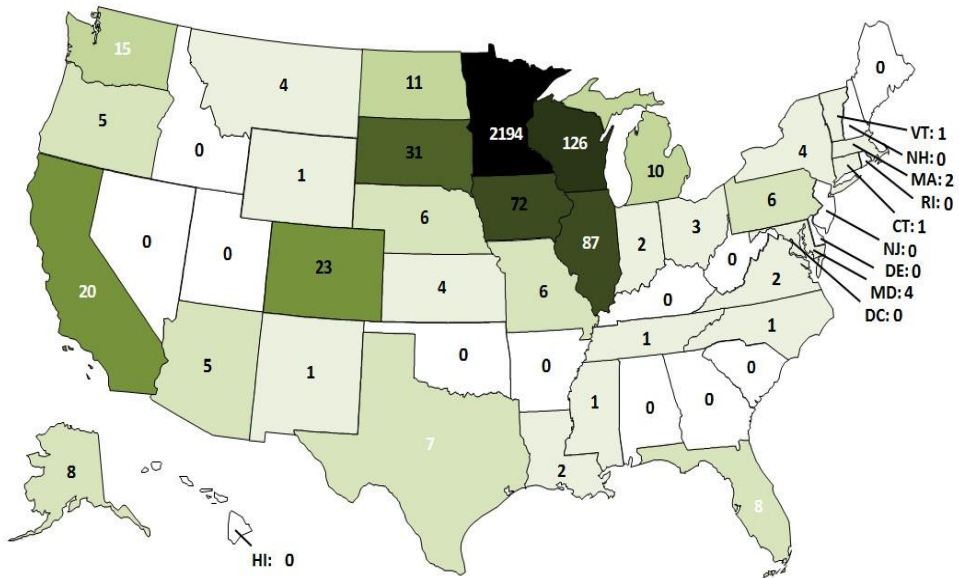
College of Arts and Sciences Students of Color Over Time

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Hispanic/Latino	48	45	47	50	53	53	47	51	60	78	108
	1.7%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.5%	1.8%	2.2%	2.9%	4.2%
American Indian / Alaska Native	10	10	9	7	9	3	7	5	3	1	2
	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	84	90	84	81	72	60	71	78	74	83	86
	2.9%	3.1%	2.9%	2.8%	2.5%	2.0%	2.3%	2.7%	2.7%	3.1%	3.4%
Black / African-American	52	51	50	54	59	75	90	73	69	61	74
	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	2.2%	2.9%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander						1	3	1	1	1	2
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Two or More Races						62	75	71	61	64	58
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	2.5%	2.4%	2.2%	2.4%	2.3%
Sub-Total Students of Color	194	196	190	192	193	254	293	279	268	288	330
	6.7%	6.7%	6.6%	6.7%	6.7%	8.4%	9.6%	9.6%	9.8%	10.6%	12.9%
White	2700	2732	2680	2666	2706	2767	2750	2625	2462	2428	2227
	93.3%	93.3%	93.4%	93.3%	93.3%	91.6%	90.4%	90.4%	90.2%	89.4%	87.1%
TOTAL Known Ethnicity	2894	2928	2870	2858	2899	3021	3043	2904	2730	2716	2557
Non-Resident Alien (not included above)	1	0	7	11	15	11	12	6	9	9	13
Unknown	21	15	55	86	95	11	12	15	14	23	121
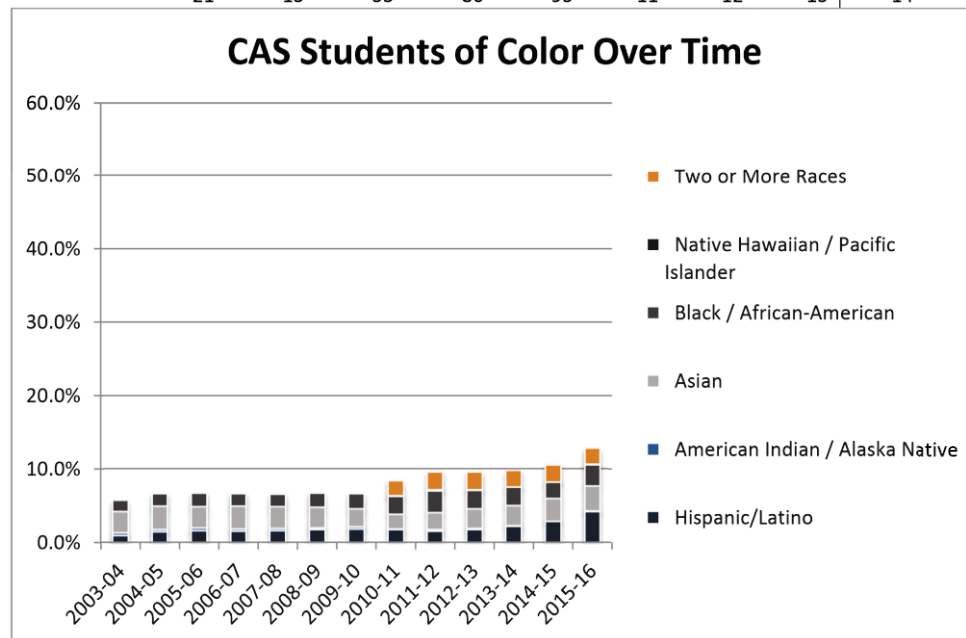
(Nelson, 2001)

Appendix I

College of Arts & Sciences Student Enrollment by State by School 2015-2016

(Holm, 2016)