Recruitment and Retention Through the Lens of Faculty and Staff of Color at Community Colleges in the Pacific Northwest

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January 2019

ABSTRACT
This work begins by examining the evolution of increased racial diversity in our student population in comparison to the disproportionate rate of racial diversity of faculty and staff across institutions of higher education within the United States. This specific research focuses on recruitment and retention through identifying key issues and concerns from faculty and staff of color and their experiences working within community colleges in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon & Washington). The research questions, “How does administrative leadership at community colleges within the Pacific Northwest recruit and retain faculty and staff of color?” and “What factors contribute to increased recruitment and retention as well as the loss of faculty and staff of color?” are addressed through three interconnected studies: (1) a phenomenological qualitative study based on interview data; (2) a combined descriptive and qualitative quantitative study examining archival data from climate surveys and institutional effectiveness data; and (3) a Participatory Narrative Inquiry (PNI) into 1-2 participants’ personal stories. The results will likely show themes and patterns of faculty and staff of color’s experiences that negatively impact recruitment and retention. Leadership within higher education will benefit from this research to improve racial diversity within their institutions, which in return benefits the success of students of color (Letcher, 2013; Levin, Haberler, & Jackson-Boothby, 2014; Nixon, 2009).

RESEARCH DESIGN (continued)
QUALITATIVE STUDY - #3
The purpose of this Participatory Narrative Inquiry (PNI) is to gain a deeper understanding of the significant elements that impact recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color at community colleges in the Pacific Northwest. A purposive sample of 1-2 participants will be invited to share their personal stories through multiple sources such as conversations, interviews, journals, memos, observations, organizational charts, resumes, performance reviews, professional goals, letters, stories from family members, and photographs. A transcribing service will be used for any recordings conducted. An analyzation of key elements of the individual’s stories (i.e. time, place, theme, and scene) will be rewritten within a chronological sequence and presented to tell the individual’s lived experience holistically and within their culture and context so an interpretation of meaning may be shared.

BACKGROUND, HISTORY, & SIGNIFICANCE (continued)
This means that institutions that have a significant number of white-identifying staff and students with increased non-white student populations suggest a need for a strong and more aggressive recruitment and retention strategy for staff and faculty of color. Institutions need to be strategic in attracting and retaining staff and faculty of color to support serving more diverse student populations (Morris, 2000).
This study will be substantial to community colleges in the Pacific Northwest. Leadership who have the privilege and influence to make change may see this research as beneficial in shaping recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies for faculty and staff of color. Upon recognition of the need for change, administrative leadership may move to action to demolish institutional obstacles by creating stronger inclusive policies, procedures, protocols, and culture climate that foster racial diversity within the campus community.

IMPACT & FUTURE WORK
This research is focused on diversity and inclusion within community colleges within the Pacific Northwest (Oregon and Washington). However, as these issues prevail nationwide, institutions of higher education throughout different regions of the U.S. may find the results insightful as they establish protocols, policies, and practices towards the development of sustainable strategic race and diversity initiatives. This mind is heart work at both the individual and institutional level. These efforts can be transformational for all faculty and staff, and in return, student’s lives will be richer.

REFERENCES
Letcher, A. (2013). Discrimination, harassment, and safety in higher education: a report to the American Council on Education. ProQuest LLC. (10667626)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
I would like to give warm appreciation to Dr. Anita Zijdemans Boudreau, Dr. Natalie DeWitt, and Dr. Kim Baker Flowers for their authentic encouragement, guidance, and support. I will be forever grateful. I also would like to thank my wife, Lisa, for all the love, care, and sacrifices you have given me through this journey. I love you.

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doi:10.1007/s11162-005-9391-3