

University of Louisville

ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

12-2021

A soft place to land: The importance of otherparenting at PWIs.

Stephanie Renae Mayberry
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/etd>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mayberry, Stephanie Renae, "A soft place to land: The importance of otherparenting at PWIs." (2021). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 3757.
<https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/3757>

This Doctoral Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. This title appears here courtesy of the author, who has retained all other copyrights. For more information, please contact thinkir@louisville.edu.

A SOFT PLACE TO LAND: THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHERPARENTING AT PWIs

By

Stephanie Renae Mayberry
B.S.W., University of Kentucky, 1998
M.S.W., University of Kentucky, 1999

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Education and Human Development of the University of Louisville
in Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in Counseling and Personnel Services

Department of Counseling and Human Development
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

December 2021

A SOFT PLACE TO LAND: THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHERPARENTING AT PWIs

By

Stephanie Renae Mayberry
B.A., University of Kentucky, 1998
M.S.W., University of Kentucky, 1999

A Dissertation Approved on

November 18, 2021

by the following Dissertation Committee:

Susan Longerbeam, Ph.D.
Dissertation Chair

Amy Hirschy, Ph.D.

Ishwanzya Rivers, Ph.D.

Ahmad Washington, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son and grandparents

Jonathan Walker Mayberry

and

Charles and Betty Walker

who have served as my guardian angels throughout this process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jackson and Kori, I can't thank you enough for giving me the grace to do this. You didn't have a regular mom. You sacrificed time and allowed me to miss events. I truly appreciate your understanding. Know that I will always support you in the same way.

To my family, especially my mom, Jaleesa, and Jay, this did not happen without your support. Thank you.

To my committee, Dr. Longerbeam, Dr. Hirschy, Dr. Rivers, and Dr. Washington, thank you for believing in me. You all never doubted me, even when I severely doubted myself.

To my girls, I finally get to travel without my laptop. Thank you all for putting up with my introverted behind. It's up all 2022!!!

Adonna (aka Oprah), thank you for being the absolute best friend I could ever ask for. We've been pushing each other to be the dopest since 1994. Let's keep rocking this thing out.

Travis, thank you for being my listening ear for all the stuff I've been through for the last seven years. You've been clutch and I'm forever grateful. I'm here today because of your sponsorship of my writing retreats at the beginning of the year.

To my extended family and friends, thank you all for all of the things. There are far too many to name, but know that I didn't forget the listening sessions, the spoken and unspoken support, watching my kids, getting me out of the house, picking up food, coming over for class, etc. Every little bit helped me get here today and I am grateful.

Finally, to #TeamMayberry, where would I be without you all? You all are the REASON. This entire dissertation is an homage to each one of you. I truly love you all like you are mine. I'm rocking with y'all until the wheels fall off.

ABSTRACT

A SOFT PLACE TO LAND: THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHERPARENTING AT PWIs

Stephanie R. Mayberry

November 18, 2021

This phenomenological study examined the importance of otherparenting performed by Black student affairs professionals at a predominantly White research-intensive institution in the mid-South. Otherparenting is a U.S. tradition that has West African roots in chattel slavery. Otherparenting is defined as those that assist blood mothers and fathers by sharing parenting responsibilities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants across various functional units at the institution. The examination illustrated the commitment Black staff have in assisting Black students through the college campus rife with structural barriers, while also accounting for the level of taxation the commitment to otherparenting places on Black student services professionals. The study concludes with recommendations to campus administrators, specifically Senior Student Affairs Officers, to acknowledge and support the work of otherparents on campus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| DEDICATION | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iv |
| ABSTRACT | v |
| | |
| CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| Statement of the Problem | 9 |
| Theoretical Framework | 10 |
| Purpose of the Study | 12 |
| Research Questions | 13 |
| Importance of Study | 14 |
| Delimitations and Assumptions | 16 |
| Definition of Terms | 16 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW | 18 |
| Sense of Belonging | 23 |
| Critical Race Theory as a Theoretical Framework | 29 |
| Permanence of Racism | 30 |
| Experiential Knowledge | 31 |
| Interest Convergence | 31 |
| Intersectionality | 32 |
| Whiteness as Property | 33 |
| Critique of Liberalism | 33 |
| Commitment to Social Justice | 34 |
| CRT in Education | 34 |
| Otherparenting | 39 |
| Chronological Overview of Otherparenting Research | 40 |
| Potential Negative Aspects of Otherparenting | 46 |
| The Convergence | 48 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY..... | 56 |
| Study Purpose and Research Questions | 57 |
| Qualitative Approaches | 58 |
| Researcher Positionality | 61 |
| Research Design | 64 |
| Procedure | 64 |
| Research Site | 65 |
| Participants | 65 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Data Collection | 68 |
| Data Analysis | 71 |
| Study Limitations | 73 |
| CHAPTER 4 RESULTS | 75 |
| Research Question 1 | 80 |
| Commitment to the Culture | 80 |
| Providing an Access Ramp | 86 |
| Research Question 2 | 89 |
| Beyond Academic Monitoring | 90 |
| Creating Counter Spaces | 92 |
| Research Question 3 | 95 |
| Mutually Beneficial Relationships | 96 |
| Cultural Taxation | 97 |
| Cultural Mistrust | 99 |
| Research Question 4 | 101 |
| One-Stop Shop | 101 |
| Understanding in the Face of Awareness | 104 |
| Encouraging an Off-Ramp | 105 |
| CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION | 108 |
| Study Summary | 108 |
| Findings | 110 |
| Unexpected Findings | 118 |
| Implications for Practice | 120 |
| Diversified Units/Offices | 121 |
| Equity Audit | 122 |
| Supportive White Staff | 123 |
| Increased Awareness and Understanding of Otherparenting | 124 |
| Future Research | 125 |
| Conclusion | 127 |
| REFERENCES | 129 |
| CURRICULUM VITA | 140 |

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the autobiography *Becoming*, Michelle Obama (2018) introduced the reader to her Princeton University mentor, Czerny Brasuell. The former first lady went on to describe the nurturing relationship that she developed with Ms. Brasuell. In a 2019 Mother's Day Instagram post, Mrs. Obama highlighted the ways in which Czerny "saw the potential in me and did her part to get me to step outside of my comfort zone—to be a little more bold, a little less cautious" (Obama, 2019). She ended the post by reminding her followers to make sure to show love to the women in their lives that may not be their mothers, but have nonetheless played an important role in nurturing them. The phenomenon that Mrs. Obama described is the essence of othermothering.

There is a Czerny Brasuell on every college campus. Ms. Brasuell is the rule, she is not the exception. There are many women and men subtly providing the support necessary for Black students to survive and thrive in college environments, especially in majority White ones. I have my own Ms. Brasuell. I intentionally chose a large institution because I grew up in a rural, small town. Everyone knew everybody. I wanted to be at a place where nobody knew my name. I thought I hit the jackpot by enrolling at school that was five times larger than my town population of 5,000. I was very comfortable in anonymity. Rather quickly that assumed reality came crashing down.

On move-in day, my dorm phone rung. It was Teri Smith. Teri was calling to encourage me to join other first-year students at the multicultural student orientation. How did she know I was there? How did she know where I lived? My phone number? I told her I was on my way with no real intention to do so. I had only visited campus once for summer registration, so I had no idea where the student center was in relationship to my residence hall. Although I did not attend the orientation, I still remember that call from nearly thirty years ago. It was the beginning of my othermothering journey—both as a recipient of othermothering and the foundation of the othermother I was to become.

Before delving into the function of otherparenting it is important to understand the educational experience of Black students in America. To do so, it is important to understand the work of Carter G. Woodson. Woodson's (1933) work through the Association for the Study of African American (ne'e Negro) Life and History (ASNLH) aimed to combat the effects of the American school on Black students. The American school was a principal site for reproducing the suffering of black people (Givens, 2021). The educational curriculum did not include Black people in a positive way. There were no references to positive contributions by Blacks in American history. More often than not, Black people were characterized as savages of inferior intelligence. Woodson and others believed the American school characterized Black life as subhuman and of no value to the history of the country (Givens, 2021). Woodson's efforts through his writings—*Mis-education of the Negro* (1933), *Negro History Week*, and the *Negro History Bulletin* provided Black teachers with the inspiration and resources to educate students about Black history.

The mis-education did not stop at the secondary level. Woodson found himself in countless battles with White benefactors of HBCUs. The model of education at Hampton, Tuskegee and the Carlisle Institute was desired as “an agricultural and industrial one” as higher education should not make Blacks unfitting for practical work. Despite the need to appease the benefactors, Black institutions were a vital line of defense for African American social and political life (Givens, 2021).

The “American school” remains very much intact today. Deficit-model thinking, curricular development and pedagogy are rooted in Whiteness and White supremacy (Valencia, 1997). Black students and other students of color on college campuses continue to be othered. Othering is a phenomenon in which some individuals or groups are defined and labeled as not fitting in within the norms of a social group (powell & Menendian, 2016). As a result of the structural racism that is embedded in higher education, particularly at predominantly White institutions, otherparenting is a necessary function for Black students navigating predominantly White institutions.

Otherparenting and other forms of educational activism are described by Givens (2021) as fugitive pedagogy. The theory of fugitive pedagogy accounts for the physical and intellectual acts of subversion engaged in by Black people over the course of their educational strivings (Givens, 2021). Signs of fugitive pedagogy are illustrated in enslaved people who snuck around to read books while the slave masters were asleep. Despite antiliteracy laws, enslaved people were adamant to learn to read. Even within the confines of the American school and White-sponsored Black schools, Black teachers were creative in the ways in which they shared Black history with students.

By definition, othermothers are “women who assist blood-mothers by sharing mothering responsibilities” (Collins, 2000; Guiffrida, 2005, p. 178). Collins (1987) researched othermothering in the United States in the late 1980s. She described othermothers as having a generalized ethic of care where Black women feel accountable to all the Black community’s children (Collins, 1987). In the early 90s, Foster (1993) researched othermothering within education and more specifically, the secondary education system. Foster found that many college-educated Black women that had matriculated through HBCUs learned of their responsibilities towards subsequent generations of Black children (Foster, 1993). Foster’s assertion of othermothering and the ways it assists Black students in learning the “hidden curriculum” at the secondary level aligns with both Carter G. Woodson’s (1933) philosophy of education as a communal endeavor and Givens’ fugitive pedagogy (Givens, 2021).

Otherparenting is an invisible thing that is ever-present on college campuses (Givens, 2021). Woodson focused his attention on teachers’ ability to reach Black students, which explains Foster’s findings of secondary school teachers performing othermothering. The evolution of education support roles beyond the classroom (i.e. school counselors, interventionists, school social workers) has allowed for otherparenting to advance in myriad ways. Specifically in higher education, the foundation of the student affairs profession developed from *in loco parentis* “in place of the parent”.

The responsibility for students shifted from faculty to staff (Schuh, Jones, & Harper, 2011). While *in loco parentis* is rooted in Whiteness and authority, it consequently diversified campus through student affairs Black professionals as faculty diversity has remained largely unchanged. Staff roles on college campuses have been

proven to be the most diverse (CUPA-HR, 2019). The staff diversity on college campuses combined with the civil rights and social justice efforts have created more, albeit limited, space for Black faculty and staff at PWIs. Although higher education transitioned from in loco parentis in the 60s, the student affairs profession has made significant gains as a model of representation. The CUPA-HR report illustrates the percentages of Black student affairs staff is similar to the percentages of Black students. On the other hand, underrepresented minorities comprise 32.6% of the U.S. population, but only 12.9% of full-time faculty (Elfman, 2021).

The beginning of higher education in the United States was very exclusive. The profile of the typical college student at the time is drastically different from the profile seen in recent years. In the beginning, the average college student was a wealthy, White male (Thelin, 2011). The consequence of this profile is still evident in modern times. As access to higher education expanded, it took quite some time for access to expand to students of color. Though historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were present in the mid-1800s as a result of the Morrill Act, wide disparities existed between predominantly white institutions (PWIs) and HBCUs (Thelin, 2011). It was clearly a case of “separate, and not equal”. Even as such, the focus of HBCUs from the perspective of benefactors was to limit the education to agricultural and mechanical experiences.

Prior to the major legislation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Black students fought for access to predominantly White institutions. This fight culminated in the 1954 Supreme Court of case of *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, KS* (Warren & Supreme Court of the United States, 1953). This legislation enforced desegregation.

Thelin (2011) references Peter Wallenstein to highlight the halfhearted, token compliance that took place at state universities following the Brown decision. Though Black students were able to gain admission and overcome the obstacles put in place to prevent their enrollment, the lack of integration into student life was difficult (if not non-existent).

Though the Brown decision called for equal educational access for Black students nationwide, many predominantly White institutions failed to admit students of color. The Civil Rights movement marked the true start of these institutions slowly opening their doors to Black students. In the south, the resistance to integration was strong. It was not uncommon for the integration of southern institutions to incite riots and violence. Even more startling was the decision by some state officials to close the doors of the institution rather than integrate them.

hooks (1994) highlighted this shift in *Teaching to Transgress*. Although speaking to secondary education, hooks (1994) posited:

“Within these segregated schools, black children who were deemed exceptional, gifted, were given special care. Teachers worked with and for us to ensure that we would fulfill our intellectual destiny and by so doing uplift the race. My teachers were on a mission. To fulfill that mission, my teachers made sure they “knew” us. They knew our parents, our economic status, where we worshipped, what our homes were like, and how we were treated in the family.” (hooks, 1994, pg. 2-3)

Her observations as a student post-segregation were drastically different:

“Bussed to white schools, we soon learned that obedience, and not a zealous will to learn, was what was expected of us. Too much eagerness to learn could easily

be seen as a threat to white authority. When we entered racist, desegregated, white schools we left a world where teachers believed that to educate black children rightly would require a political commitment. Now, we were mainly taught by white teachers whose lessons reinforced racist stereotypes. For black children, education was no longer about the practice of freedom.” (hooks, 1994, pg. 3)

Much like the shift described by hooks of secondary education, HBCUs have provided a safe and affirming space for Black students at the postsecondary level. The difference between HBCUs and PWIs can be likened to the dramatic difference hooks described.

Postsecondary education for Black students in Kentucky is very storied. In 1949, Lyman T. Johnson was granted admission to graduate school at the University of Kentucky after suing the institution for being denied admission to the doctoral program in history (Smith, 1999). Prior to the Johnson decision, the state of Kentucky had legislation that prevented the education of Blacks and Whites in the same school. The Day Law was passed in 1904 to prevent racial integration at Berea College and remained until the 1954 Brown decision allowed undergraduate enrollment for Black students (Hardin, 1997). Integration in Kentucky was slow and resistant, similar to national trends after the Brown decision. However in 1981, the Office for Civil Rights notified the Commonwealth of Kentucky that it was one of ten states operating a racially segregated system of higher education in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Kentucky desegregation plan, with oversight by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, has gone through many updates and iterations. Currently, Kentucky public institutions are required to submit annual diversity plans. Although no longer reported to the Office of Civil Rights, there is continued work to be done to eliminate the vestiges of

the formerly segregated system of higher education in the Commonwealth (KY Council on Postsecondary Education, 2000).

Prior to 1981, few Kentucky public institutions had offices focused on the acclimation and support of Black students. The Kentucky desegregation plan required all of the public institutions to provide robust and meaningful resources to Black students. The minority affairs departments added cultural centers, academic support units, and pre-college pipeline programs to increase the enrollment and retention of Black students (Smith, 1999). As a result of these changes, the University of Kentucky (UK) doubled Black student enrollment from 1989 to 1998. The most significant improvement for the UK was in the number of Black students receiving degrees. In the 1997-98 academic year, 172 degrees were conferred to Black students compared to fifty-two degrees in 1975 (Smith, 1999).

Despite the expansion of support services and resources for Black students and the implementation of the desegregation plan, Kentucky still has significant room to grow in the improvement of the college experience for Black students in the Commonwealth. One of the ways to improve the college experience is to recognize various kinds of support for students of color, such as otherparenting. It has been forty years since Kentucky was identified as one of ten states operating a racially segregated postsecondary education system, yet there has been little significant change to the experience of Black students on college campuses. Otherparenting as a form of fugitive pedagogy assists students' navigation in predominantly White environments.

A study by Flowers, Scott, Riley, and Palmer (2015) described othermothering as extra support that goes beyond students' basic academic needs. The researchers found

that Black students' experiences on college campuses have a significant impact on their academic longevity (a long duration in the academy). Mawhinney (2011) opined that there was an underlying, unspoken expectation to develop othermother relationships with students. Hirt (2006) described how staff at HBCUs view themselves as members of students' extended families. They see themselves as surrogate parents or siblings and assume those roles when working with students. Professionals recognize that they stand on the shoulders of those who came before them and feel obligated to "pay it forward" and prepare the next generation of Black students (Hirt, 2006).

Statement of Problem

Anecdotally, minority affairs offices were and continue to be largely staffed in the U.S. South and North by Black men and women. If prompted, many Black students can identify someone during their college career that acted as an othermother. Verschelden (2017) writes about the negative impact on mental bandwidth for Black students in predominantly White spaces battling the constant barrage of modern racism, stereotype threat and the like. Black staff act as a buffer for students against this negative experience. Bernard, Bernard, Ekpo, Enang, Joseph, and Wane (2000) defined the relationship between African American teachers and students as "othermothering in the academy". Othermothering in the academy is a sharing of self, an interactive and collective process, a spiritual connectedness that exemplifies the Afrocentric value of sharing, caring, and accountability (Bernard et al., 2000). Othermothers provide instruction on the temporary transformations necessary to survive and thrive until success is obtained (Edwards, 2003).

There is a significant amount of literature on otherparenting at HBCUs (Flowers, Scott, Riley, & Palmer, 2015; Mawhinney, 2011; Griffin, 2013; Walker, 2018).

However, the research on othermothering at PWIs (Guiffrida, 2005) is primarily focused on faculty. Hirt, Amelink, McFetters, and Strayhorn (2008) suggested an examination of the relationships between staff and administrators and minority students who are enrolled at PWIs. The exploration of the role that student affairs staff play for African-American students at PWIs would seem like the logical next step in othermothering research (Hirt, et al., 2008). The problem is two-fold: 1) Othermothering has been studied at HBCUs and minimally at PWIs despite the documented success of Black students attending HBCUs (despite any preparedness issues), 2) Student services staff have not been included in research on the impact of othermothering. This study will explore othermothering at a predominantly White institution among student services staff.

Theoretical Framework

The U.S. higher education system was never created for the participation of Black students. In fact, African slavery and the slave trade subsidized the early colleges. Those colleges are now the elite, Ivy League. Black students were not allowed to enroll in most institutions for nearly 300 years after the founding of higher education in the United States. Research centered on the Black student experience must consider the foundation of higher education and the structures in place that contribute to the systemic oppression of students of color. Study of systemic oppression is undergirded by critical race theory (CRT), which will serve as the theoretical framework of this study and will be further described in Chapter Two. CRT is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine, and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact social structures,

practices, and discourses (Yosso, 2005). CRT in education acknowledges the contradictory nature of education, wherein schools most often oppress and marginalize while maintaining the potential to emancipate and empower. Educators most often assume that schools work and that students, parents, and the community need to change to conform to an already effective and equitable system (Yosso, 2005). CRT challenges this notion.

Critical legal studies served as the foundation of CRT after significant legal advances for People of Color during the U.S. Civil Rights Era. The 1970s saw a reemergence of hostility toward legal policy, such as affirmative action. By the 1980s, a noted group of legal scholars began to question the role of law in maintaining and further constructing racially based social and economic oppression (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). As the theory evolved, many scholars in the field of education consider themselves critical race theorists who use CRT's ideas to understand the rise of biological racism in educational theory and practice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

CRT in education recognizes that PWIs were not created for Black students. Further, PWIs have done little to adjust and restructure for the entry, retention, and completion for Black students. Rather, Black students are expected to conform and assimilate to the campus environment. The results of these expectations are highlighted in the stagnant success outcomes (access, retention, completion) for Black students. The lackluster success outcomes continue to require states like Kentucky and institutions nationwide to develop diversity strategic plans. Despite the indications that the current system is failing Black students (and other students of color), there has been little (if any)

change. In response, this study will explore othermothering through the lens of navigating a system never created for Black students.

CRT is the theory that undergirds the sense of belonging conceptual framework. Sense of belonging connects CRT to othermothering. Considering the proposition of CRT, PWIs were not created for Black students and othermothering highlights the relationship-building that occurs on those campuses. Sense of belonging serves as the conduit between the concepts. Sense of belonging positively influences academic achievement, retention, and persistence. The need for a sense of belonging is heightened in contexts where students of color are likely to feel marginalized, unsupported, or unwelcomed (Strayhorn, 2019). There are three categories of belonging that align CRT and othermothering: 1) belongingness as a concept; 2) circumstances that engender (or thwart) belonging; 3) the relationship between belonging and other outcomes or behaviors (Strayhorn, 2019). The concepts sense of belonging and othermothering overlap, intersect, and collaborate to improve success outcomes for Black students as sense of belonging encompasses students' connection to an institution and othermothering fosters sense of belonging for Black students.

Purpose of the Study

The history and evolution of othermothering will be detailed in Chapter II. One of the ways in which the phenomenon has evolved is the introduction of otherfathering. Otherfathering is similar to othermothering as men perform the function, albeit in different ways. Otherfathers will be included in this study. For the purpose of this study, otherparenting will be used as a present-day descriptor of the phenomenon. Othermothering and otherfathering will be used in context of the history and previous

research. The purpose of this study is to explore the importance of otherparenting among Black student service staff at a PWI.

Research Questions

This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent have Black staff experienced and utilize otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs?
- 2) What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?
- 3) What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting at PWIs?
- 4) To what extent does the PWI understand and value these relationships?

While there may be ways in which to operationalize otherparenting that would be conducive to a quantitative study design, this study will be qualitative. Otherparenting is a broad concept with embedded principles. However, otherparenting is performed and received in myriad ways. The goal of this study will be to capture the intent and importance of otherparenting across several student services staff at a predominantly White institution. It is hoped that a qualitative study will provide deep, rich, and meaningful data to explore otherparenting for Black students at a PWI.

This study seeks to capture the collective essence of otherparenting rather than the individualistic or prescribed set of procedures and the importance, utilization, and value of otherparenting. Ultimately, the examination of otherparenting as a lived experience will be explored. A phenomenological study is the most fitting, as otherparenting is an inherent way of being for participants recruited to participate in this study. It may be

performed and experienced in a variety of ways based on many factors including personality type, pre-college experiences, income, and educational level. Phenomenology will permit a deep exploration of otherparenting and its usefulness to the Black student experience at PWIs.

The participants for this study will be Black student services professionals employed at a PWI. The PWI is a large, public, research intensive institution in the south. It is understood that otherparenting is occurring, regardless of gender. The participants will include both male and female, Black-identified student services professionals across functional units. In order to capture the essence of the phenomenon that is otherparenting, the loosely structured interview will give context and depth to the otherparenting concept. The interview will be the primary data collection method.

Importance of Study

There are several reasons why this study is important. Prior to 2020, many campuses created chief diversity officer positions to address equity. Further, 2020 was a year of reckoning along racial lines. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor put a renewed spotlight on racial injustice in America. Campuses scrambled to respond to the unrest and other acts of racism in the current political climate. As “traditional” student success outcomes for Black students continue to lag behind their White counterparts, institutions are looking to address racism. Black student success has been studied for many years, and there has not been one solution that works for all students. This study will look across several functional units with varying approaches to student support. The study will examine the existence

and significance of otherparenting in those spaces. Moreover, this study will focus on student services staff rather than faculty.

Despite having lower entrance credentials than their Black counterparts enrolled at PWIs, Black students at HBCUs graduate at 14 percentage points higher than Black students at non-HBCUs (Gasman, 2012; Richards & Awokoya, 2012). Institutions need to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to ensure success of all students irrespective of culture, race, gender, class, age, ability, and orientation or religion (Bernard, Issari, Moriah, Njiwii, Obgan, & Tolliver, 2012). Gaps in the literature exists as it pertains to othermothering within the student affairs profession, othermothering at PWIs, and the importance of othermothering for Black students at PWIs (specifically research universities). Gasman (2010) wrote about the things PWIs can learn from HBCUs. By virtue of the success of HBCU students compare to their Black counterparts at PWIs, HBCUs created positive campus climates for Black students. Gasman charged PWIs to create and maintain an adequate balance of academic and social integration. Considering the history of Kentucky as one of ten states operating a racially segregated higher education system merely forty years ago, the gaps are not surprising. If otherparenting serves as a support resource for Black college students, it is important to be explored.

On a macro-level, this study is important to the financial stability for Black people, especially in Kentucky. A report by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education illustrates the importance of college degrees in boosting median lifetime earnings. Students that have earned some college credit have the lifetime earning potential of \$1,688,075 compared to \$2,474,338 for students earning a bachelor's degree (KY Council on Postsecondary Education, 2020). Although not disaggregated by race,

the ramifications are still critical. Degree attainment influences the impact of societal issues on Black people.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially harmful for the Black community. Communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by the virus itself. The Black community, in particular, is more likely to suffer from co-morbidities that decrease the chances of survival for those stricken by the virus. The co-morbidities are directly related to the health disparities that exist in the state (Gupta, et al., 2021). Additionally, essential workers are more likely to be low-income and of color. Similar issues have arisen in the educational sector along color lines as it relates to internet access and other school-related issues. The importance of otherparenting may indirectly connect these areas as well.

The purpose of this study is to explore the importance of otherparenting among Black student service staff at a PWI. If otherparenting is found to be helpful, institutions can investigate ways staff can be recognized for the contribution as well as model the behavior that is relevant for Black student navigation through the institution, especially among non-Black staff.

Delimitations and Assumptions

This study will take place in 2021 at a predominantly White institution in the south, enrollment of 30,000 students. The study participants will be Black student services professionals employed in various functional units. An assumption of the study participants will be that all are actively performing otherparenting in the institutional space.

Definition of Terms

The historical and chronological context of this study includes the evolution of terms. As such, the terms are in context to honor the prior research of scholars. While the terms may be used interchangeably, the primary focus of this study is on Black staff that perform otherparenting with Black students at predominantly White institutions. The following definitions will assist the reader in understanding their use throughout this dissertation:

- *Othermothers/Othermothering*: Women who assist mothers by sharing mothering responsibilities
- *Otherfathers/Otherfathering*: Men who assist fathers by sharing fathering responsibilities
- *Otherparenting*: Gender inclusive term to describe those that assist parents and families in parenting responsibilities.
- *Student affairs/student services staff/professionals*: Staff members employed in student affairs and related units.
- *African-American/Black*: People that are members of the African diaspora, including those born outside of the U.S.
- *Minoritized*: Minoritized students are of Black/African-American, Native American, Multi-racial, Asian/Pacific Islander descent, as well as those Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity.
- *Persons/Students of Color*: Students identified as Black/African-American, Native American, Multi-racial, Asian American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, as well as those of Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study sought to explore the importance of otherparenting to the Black student college experience. Considering the systemic barriers and obstacles faced, the experience was examined wholly. Traditional measures of student success center on achievement. Achievement/achievement gaps speak to students of color from a deficit perspective. This literature review seeks to analyze influences on the Black student experience. To seek understanding of the complete college experience for Black students that have successfully navigated predominantly White spaces served as the starting point.

Achievement gaps exist in the retention and graduation rates of Black students compared to their White counterparts (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Banks & Dohy, 2019; Shapiro, Dundar, Huie, Wakhungu, Yuan, Nathan, Hwang, 2017). A brief review of data illustrates the gaps. Persistence is defined as students who return to college at any institution for their second year, while the retention rate is the percentage of students who return to the same institution for their second year. The overall persistence rate for White students at all higher education institutions was 78.1 percent (U.S. Department of Education; National Center of Educational Service, 2019). For Black students the persistence rate was 66.2 percent. The retention rate for White students was 62.2 percent, compared to a retention rate for Black students of 52.1 percent (U.S. Department of Education; National Center of Educational Service, 2019). Thus, only slightly more than

half of all Black students who entered college in the fall of 2017, returned to the same institution in the fall of 2018.

The persistence rates for Black and White students were higher at both state-operated and private four-year institutions. For White students, the persistence rate at four-year, public colleges and universities was 85.9 percent. The persistence rate for Black students was 78.4 percent. At public four-year institutions, the retention rate was 70.8 percent for Whites and 63.7 percent for Blacks (U.S. Department of Education; National Center of Educational Service, 2019). However, students at historically Black colleges/universities (HBCUs) are succeeding despite having lower entrance credentials than their Black counterparts enrolled at PWIs (Gasman, 2012). Richards and Awokoya (2012) disaggregated student level factors. The report found if HBCUs and non-HBCUs were to enroll students from the same socioeconomic status with the same level of academic preparedness, HBCUs are expected to retain students at a higher rate (by four percentage points) than non-HBCUs, and graduate them at a higher rate (by three percentage points). When we focus on the graduation of Blacks specifically, HBCUs would outperform non-HBCUs by 14 percentage points. Broken down by gender, HBCUs would graduate Black males at a rate 14 percentage points higher than non-HBCUs and would graduate Black females at a rate 15 percentage points higher. HBCUs are doing a superior job of retaining and graduating the students they enroll compared with non-HBCUs (Richards & Awokoya, 2012). What are HBCUs doing well to support student success that can be adopted and adapted for PWIs?

Institutional Type

Black students appear to thrive at HBCUs compared to PWIs despite having lower entrance scores and college preparation. Institutional type seems to influence the approach taken in student support. In *Where You Work Matters*, Hirt (2006) wrote about the work of the student affairs profession based on institutional type. She described student services professionals working at PWI liberal arts colleges as Standard Bearers, Interpreters at religiously affiliated institutions, Generalists at comprehensive colleges and universities, Producers at community colleges, Guardians at historically black colleges and universities, and Change Agents at Hispanic-Serving institutions. She described professionals at research universities as Specialists (Hirt, 2006).

The work of Specialists is relegated to functional unit (residence life, multicultural affairs, student activities, etc.); thus, creating silos and increased competition within student affairs units. The competition for student usage and volume between units is focused on unit necessity, especially in lean budget years. Student affairs work is inherently student-centered. However, student affairs work at research universities has failed to be interdisciplinary and cross-functional. In contrast, the specialization of student affairs is equally beneficial as students at large research universities are more likely to complete their degrees and attend graduate school (Hirt, 2006).

This study explored the importance of othermothering performed by Black student affairs professionals at PWIs. The increased likelihood of college completion and the attainment of an advanced degree is critically important for Black students in the global workforce. Creating a bridge allowing for Black students to thrive equally at

HBCUs and PWIs is ideal for several reasons including, but not limited to financial aid, geographic location, and institutional resources and reputation. Black students do not always have the financial ability to attend HBCUs. For example, there are only two small HBCUs in Kentucky. Geographical obstacles can prevent attendance beyond the home state. Beyond geography, the median household income in Kentucky is \$50,589. The median income for Black households in Kentucky is \$30,400 (census.gov). Considering the median income for Black households and the systemic barriers of redlining, predatory lending and countless other things, the pursuit of postsecondary education alone is the epitome of fugitive pedagogy.

Hirt (2006) described student affairs professionals at HBCUs as Guardians. Relationship-building drives much of the work at HBCUs. Hirt wrote that student service professionals, as well as faculty and administrators, are genuinely committed to helping students succeed. HBCUs view students as gems that need to be mined and polished. Hirt described how staff view themselves as members of students' extended families. They see themselves as surrogate parents or siblings and assume those roles when dealing with students. Finally, professionals recognize that they stand on the shoulders of those who came before them and feel obligated to "pay it forward" and prepare the next generation of Black students (Hirt, 2006).

The "Guardian" description resonated with me and fits in the premise of fugitive pedagogy, and it detailed my own interactions with students as a Black student affairs professional. I had a clear of understanding of the ways in which I was not accepted on a predominantly White campus. Therefore, I understood the importance of sharing the unwritten rules in the successful navigation of PWIs. believe that the "Guardians"

would be better defined to include all Black student affairs professionals, regardless of institutional type. Further, “Guardians” encompasses otherparenting, as highlighted in the text, who “see themselves as surrogate parents or siblings and assume those roles when dealing with students” (Hirt, 2006, p. 125). It is critical for PWIs to recognize the work of Guardians and the potential (and sometimes overlooked) importance in the success of students of color, especially Black students.

Guardians and otherparenting are related constructs connected to Black student success in the research. Critical Race Theory (CRT) guides and undergirds this research within education through the recognition of systemic barriers that shape the educational experience of Black students. As evidenced through CRT and Woodson (Givens, 2021), U.S. higher education was not designed for Black students to be the consumer. Despite integration, systemic barriers continue to create a less than welcoming campus climate for Black students. Sense of belonging is positioned as the lens in which to view Black student degree consumerism at PWIs. The sense of belonging and connection that Black students feel to an institution is strongly influenced. Otherparenting was examined as an influence and support mechanism that fosters sense of belonging at PWIs.

This literature review explores sense of belonging, critical race theory, and otherparenting and their importance in Black student success at PWIs. The purpose of this research is to explore otherparenting on PWI campuses and to what extent otherparenting has to the Black student experiences in college. The goal of this study was to explore otherparenting among Black student affairs professionals at a predominantly White research university, and its potential benefit.

Sense of Belonging

Terrell Strayhorn (2019) defined sense of belonging as students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by and important to the campus community and faculty and peers. Strayhorn (2019) described the core elements of belonging as 1) a basic human need; 2) a fundamental motive sufficient to drive human behavior; 3) takes on a heightened importance in certain contexts, at certain times, and among certain populations; 4) is related to mattering; 5) social identities intersect and affect belonging; 6) belonging engenders other positive outcomes; and 7) belonging must be satisfied on a continual basis. Belonging contributes to other outcomes or behaviors—academic achievement, engagement, enrollment in college and attrition (Strayhorn, 2019).

Vaccaro and Newman (2016) compared the ways students from minoritized and privileged social identity groups defined belonging as they made the first-year transition into a predominantly White, public university in the Northeast. Belonging was defined as “being comfortable” and “fitting in” for both groups of students. However, additional themes of safety and respect emerged with the minoritized students (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016). Students from privileged backgrounds focused on positive descriptors of belonging—fun, friendly, comfortable. Students from minoritized groups perceived a lack of diversity on campus and routinely felt like the “only one”. Students of color regularly felt judged and treated differently, and they felt the environment did not support them being “real” or their authentic selves. A desire for deeper, authentic relationships rooted in self-awareness was central to belonging in minoritized students. Students of

color felt an increased sense of belonging when they forged relationships that went beyond familiarity, friendliness, and functional task-related support (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016). Race mattered in the study, but the aspects mentioned prior transcended the desire for same-race relationships.

Sense of belonging influences achievement and retention and is especially important for students of color to combat expectations to assimilate to White-centered campus environments. Means and Pyne (2017) conducted a study asking, “What are the institutional support structures identified by first generation, first-year college students that increase sense of belonging and help them navigate their institutions?” The authors found that faculty members were one of the most important variables for students of color sense of belonging within academic life of college.

Participants described these variables important to their sense of belonging: the faculty having positive attitudes, student affairs educators willing to provide support, and institutional, need-based scholarship programs. The scholarship program went beyond offering financial aid by offering emotional and social support. Students in the scholarship program described it as a “large family” that allowed them to develop positive relationships with peers when they felt isolated or invisible in other places on campus (Means & Pyne, 2017). The implications for practice included professional development that improved cultural competence, functional strategies for building better relationships and demonstrating academic care for student progress, and support for hidden or unexpected learning needs. Moreover, student affairs personnel should consider how to integrate equity and social justice into curriculums and strategic plans in

order to develop programs, services, and policies that enhance sense of belonging for all students (Means & Pyne, 2017).

Museus and Jayakumar (2012) researched the impact of culturally engaging environments and their effect on sense of belonging, academic dispositions (including motivation), and academic performance. The authors addressed the considerable institutionally embedded obstacles practitioners face as they attempt to transform entrenched institutional cultures to meet the needs of diverse student bodies. Creating a culture of success for racially diverse and other underserved students requires a commitment to deep, pervasive, integrated institutional change (Museus & Jayakumar, 2012). Racial and ethnic minority students desire relationships, not only with institutional agents and faculty who share a common racial or educational background, but also with those who provide holistic support, humanize the college experience, and have proactive philosophies of student success (Roksa & Whitley, 2017). Building on the work of Museus, Roksa and Whitley (2017) hypothesized that African American students benefit less in achievement from being academically motivated. They sought to examine the differences between African American and White students, and whether faculty relationships moderated the relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement.

Roksa and Whitley (2017) found that faculty who employ more student-centered philosophies tend to facilitate student success, and the faculty members' educational philosophies shaped students' sense of belonging and fit within the institution. African American students were substantially less likely to convert academic motivation into academic achievement when faculty were not student-centered. Enhancing the quality of

student-faculty interactions is crucial for facilitating academic success (Roksa & Whitley, 2017).

Kimbrough via Strauss (2019) researched increased enrollment since the 2016 presidential election at HBCUs that he credited to the dog whistle of overt racism on predominantly white college campuses. He emphasized the importance of campus climate and culture for Black college-bound students. He implored PWIs to foster a climate of civility and inclusion, regardless of what is occurring in the wider society. The importance of a climate of civility and inclusion is highlighted by a study by Hussain and Jones on the impact of discrimination on sense of belonging. Hussain and Jones (2019) found that experiences and perceptions of discrimination have been linked to reduced rates of college persistence. The findings of the study indicate that students of color that have more positive perception of the institution's commitment to diversity can also buffer against the adverse effects of discrimination and bias on sense of belonging. Future research suggestions focused on faculty and staff validation and other forms of institutional support (Hussain & Jones, 2019).

In Strayhorn's (2019) study on Black males and sense of belonging, he highlighted Black males' experience at PWIs can be compounded by the view that predominantly White campuses tend to be less supportive, sympathetic, and welcoming. Black male undergraduates at PWIs tended to have less sense of belonging in college than their same-race male counterparts at HBCUs. Sense of belonging for Black males hinged upon interacting positively with faculty members and peers, experiencing a welcoming, supportive campus racial climate, and engaging in educationally purposeful activities (Strayhorn, 2019). Overall, sense of belonging aids in academic social

behaviors—academic achievement, engagement, enrollment in college and attrition. Black males who fared well in higher education reported a strong(er) sense of belonging in college and those who performed less well tended to feel invisible, isolated, or alienated on campus (Strayhorn, 2019). It is important for student affairs professionals to be aware of sense of belonging as an important tool when working with Black men.

Derrick Brooms (2018) conducted a multi-site study that utilized sense of belonging and community cultural wealth as theoretical frameworks in Black Male Initiative programs. Black Male Initiative programs are established in an effort to improve Black male students' retention and graduation rates. Semi-structured interviews were conducted across multiple campuses and institutional types to examine Black male experiences in Black Male Initiative programs (Brooms, 2018). The study found that BMI enhanced their college experience in three ways: (a) involvement on campus; (b) developing community with and among Black males; and, (c) staying focused on the goal. Students felt uplifted and expressed a heightened sense of belonging through engaging in BMI (Brooms, 2018). Sense of belonging can help Black males develop a community (“like a brotherhood”), as well as creating space to focus on Black male identities that can reduce feelings of isolation, provide an important space of support, and empower students. Several BMI programs were found to play a vital role in reducing attrition for Black males (Brooms, 2018).

In *Black Male Collegians: Increasing Access, Retention, and Persistence in Higher Education*, Palmer, Wood, Dancy, and Strayhorn (2014) highlight the importance of sense of belonging for Black males at PWIs. The monograph cited the ways in which sense of belonging is threatened for Black males at PWIs through reinforced stereotypes

that characterize them as unqualified admits, members of intercollegiate sports teams, or underprepared “at risk” students from low-income families and urban ghettos (Palmer et al., 2014). The psychological stress of the stereotypes and microaggressions resulted in limited engagement in on-campus leadership activities. Predominantly White institutions must continue to improve the campus climate to foster comfort and support to facilitate growth and development among Black males (Palmer et al, 2014).

Sense of belonging is an important factor in the success of Black students in college. The concepts sense of belonging and otherparenting overlap, intersect, and collaborate to improve success outcomes for Black students as sense of belonging encompasses students’ connection to an institution and othermothering fosters sense of belonging for Black students. It is evident in the work of Cuyjet, Strayhorn, Brooms, Harper, Palmer, Wood, and Dancy (those that study the Black male experience) that these concepts when utilized in meaningful ways can have a significant impact on Black male experiences, specifically on predominantly White research campuses. Black male students are not more important than Black females. However, retention and graduation rates for Black and Native American male students fall behind all student populations. The literature illustrates the importance of belonging for students of color. To improve the student success outcomes, student connectedness to the institution should be nurtured. HBCUs have been able to nurture student belonging. The entire premise of the HBCU campus was to provide a separate education for Black students. The fugitive pedagogy in the instance of HBCUs is operating in a larger society that was unwelcoming to Black people. It is possible this nurturing happens partly through otherparenting.

Critical Race Theory as a Theoretical Framework

The roots of critical race theory (CRT) emerged in response to perceived delays in civil rights advancements. Critical legal studies served as the foundation of CRT after significant legal advances for People of Color during the U.S. Civil Rights Era. The 1970s saw a reemergence of hostility toward legal policy, such as affirmative action. By the 1980s, a noted group of legal scholars, including Derrick A. Bell, Jr., Charles Lawrence, Richard Delgado, Lani Guinier, Mari Matsuda, Patricia Williams, and Kimberle Crenshaw, began to question the role of law in maintaining and further constructing racially based social and economic oppression (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Critical race theory questioned the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

The initial theory included five tenets, but has continued to evolve. The seven tenets include the permanence of racism, experiential knowledge (and counterstorytelling), interest convergence developed by Derrick Bell, intersectionality introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw, whiteness as property coined by Cheryl Harris, critique of liberalism, and commitment to social justice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). The seven tenets of CRT that should inform theory, research, pedagogy, curriculum and policy are the intercentricity of race and racism, the challenge to dominant ideology, the commitment to social justice, centrality to experiential knowledge, and utilization of interdisciplinary approaches.

Permanence of Racism

Permanence of racism is defined as an academic and permanent aspect of persons of color's (POC) experiences, influencing political, economic, and social aspects of U.S. society (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Castaneda and Zuniga (2013) define racism as the set of institutional, cultural, and interpersonal patterns and practices that create advantages for people legally defined and socially constructed as "White" and the corollary disadvantages for people defined as belonging to racial groups that were not considered White by the dominant power structure in the United States. This tenet highlights the existence or "permanence" of racism within the higher education system, especially at predominantly White institutions. Efforts to combat racism on campus must involve more than increasing the number of students, staff, and faculty from diverse populations. Moreover, campus climate surveys are less useful if the institution is unwilling to examine, deconstruct, and rebuild the policies and campus culture that contribute to the climate.

Kezar, Fries-Britt and Espinosa (2020) discussed the role of leaders in driving change in campus climate. The authors acknowledged the need for healing, community action and significant change by capable leaders who are informed allies and are willing to fight anti-Black narratives. Many colleges and universities have not meaningfully addressed their own histories of exclusion, which deepen racial tensions and hinder efforts to cultivate an inclusive campus climate. Given the current social and political context, campuses must work even harder to engage in racial healing (Kezar, Fries-Britt & Espinosa, 2020). Otherparenting is needed to foster belonging because of the permanence of racism.

Experiential Knowledge (and Counterstorytelling)

Experiential knowledge mandates POC lived experiences (experiential knowledge) as valued, legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about subordination in education (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Alternative stories are lived and experienced counter to the master narrative and majoritarian story. The University of Kentucky touted receipt of the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award in 2019. The institution celebrated the ways in which they were making strides in diversity. In the spring semester of 2019, students of color staged a sit-in demonstration in the Main Building to challenge the University administration on the racial issues on campus. The example served as an illustration that the experience of students of color was counter to those in administration that were proud of the institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is always room for improvement, but the demonstration illustrated the disconnect in the campus climate between marginalized students and administrators. Further, otherparenting is necessary because Black students have distinctly different experiences at PWIs than White students.

Interest Convergence

Interest Convergence is grounded on the premise that POC's interests in achieving racial equality advance only when those interests converge with the interests of those in power. Interest convergence posits that Black people and other POC advance when their interests converge with powerful White people. It is alignment, rather than altruism (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). In the state of Kentucky, a performance funding budget model was adopted by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. The model is designed to award institutions additional funding dollars for meeting desired

performance measures. Institutions receive funding for meeting retention and graduation benchmarks for underrepresented minority students (URM). The success measures for URM students connected to state funding is an example of interest convergence because it rewards institutions financially for the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion for URM students. Moreover, this work is surface-level diversity work. Strategic diversity is embedded in the culture of the institution (Williams, 2013).

Intersectionality

Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) introduced intersectionality into CRT against the backdrop of black feminist thought. Crenshaw, while a feminist, recognized the intersections of race and gender as it related to the feminist movement. She felt there were instances in which Black women fought alongside White women for gender equality issues, but were not equally supported with issues that were more salient to Black women specifically. Racial identity and its oppression intersect with other subordinated identities (gender, class, religion, ability, sexual orientation) and other forms of oppression. Kumasi defined intersectionality as “the belief that individuals often have overlapping interests and traits based not only on racial identity, but also class position, gender and so forth” (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015, p. 10). In the larger society, there is significant privilege in being male. However in the education system, Black males are disproportionately underrepresented in higher education. Moreover, Black males that enter into higher education are less likely to be retained and/or graduate. The intersectionality of CRT is additionally highlighted by the lack of representation of Black women in STEM.

Whiteness as Property

Whiteness as Property is defined as the assumptions, privileges, and benefits associated with identifying as White as valuable assets that White people seek to protect. CRT is an important intellectual and social tool for the destruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power. The intersectionality of race and property have contributed to establishing and sustaining racial and economic subordination (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). For example, College Honors programs recruit the “best and brightest” students to participate. In many cases, honors programs are not racially diverse. The selection criteria include GPA and high school course selection and/or rigor (Mould & DeLoach, 2017). Whiteness as Property reinforces the lack of diversity in honors programs as long the selection criteria includes success measures that are systemically aligned against Black students and other students of color, especially when those success measures are based on systemic barriers related to redlining, property values, and the academic equality of schools

Critique of Liberalism

Color blindness (race does not matter) fails to consider the permanence of racism and ignores that inequity, inopportunity, and oppression are historical artifacts. CRT challenges the erroneous belief that color blindness is synonymous with the absence of racism (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Liberalism as considered in CRT is illustrated in the higher realm through the Fisher v. University of Texas case. The underpinnings of the case charged that Abigail Fisher was denied admission to the University of Texas as a result of her race. She felt that a Black student had taken her spot. Attacks on

affirmative action have been continuous since the 1970s (DeFunis Jr. v. Odegaard; Bakke v. Regents of the University of California; Grutter v. Bollinger). The claims in these cases dismiss the systemic and institutional barriers that Black students face as they pursue secondary and postsecondary education.

Commitment to Social Justice

A commitment to social justice calls for the full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of a society in which distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). When Black students and other marginalized groups feel as safe and included as White males (implied or expected), a commitment to social justice will be achieved on college campuses.

CRT in Education

Many scholars in the field of education consider themselves critical race theorists who use CRT's ideas to understand the rise of biological racism in educational theory and practice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT across fields is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine, and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact social structures, practices, and discourses (Yosso, 2005). More specifically, CRT in education serves as a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways race and racism impact educational structures, practices, and discourses (Yosso, 2005). Ladson-Billing and Tate (1995) applied CRT toward education under three central propositions:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States. Both class and gender can and do intersect race, as stand-alone variables they do not explain all of the educational achievement differences apparent between Whites and students of color. Even holding constant for class, middle-class Black students do not achieve at the same level as their White counterparts (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Despite the pronouncement that “Education is the great equalizer”, careful investigation of the experience of Black students in the education system prove otherwise.
2. U.S. society is based on property rights. Property relates to education in explicit and implicit ways. Those with “better” property are entitled to “better” schools. Curriculum also represents a form of “intellectual property”. The quality and quantity of the curriculum varies with the “property values” of the school. The absolute of property values and their influence on the education system flatly ignores the structural and systemic racism of redlining and predatory loan practices and their impact on the Black community.
3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool through which we can understand social inequity. School desegregation has meant increased White flight along with a loss of Black teaching and administrative positions. A model desegregation program is one that ensures that Whites are satisfied (and do not leave the system altogether) regardless of whether Black and other students of color achieve or remain (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

More recently, Patton (2015) examined the continued disenfranchisement of Black students in college. To counter the predominantly White spaces, Black students

rely on safe spaces (also referred to as counter spaces), such as cultural centers or multicultural affairs offices. Ultimately, racism influences every aspect of higher education. Higher education serves as a space for transformative knowledge production that challenges dominant discourses and ways of operating in and beyond the academy (Patton, 2015).

Further, the foundation of higher education in the United States was a direct result of profits from slave labor. African slavery and the slave trade subsidized the colleges and the colonies, as “the birth of slavery in New England was also the dawn of slavery at Harvard” (Wilder, 2013, p. 29). Several institutions were entangled with chattel slavery. Trustees bought and sold Black people as a part of their endowment and leased their surplus workers to raise additional funds. Human slavery was the pre-condition for the rise of higher education in the Americas. In the daily routine of a college there was much work to be done, and enslaved people often performed the most labor-intensive task (Wilder, 2013). Beyond the labor of the physical plant, some wealthy students had Black boys to wait on them. In one example in *Ebony and Ivy*, a White student spit on, kicked, and abused the cafeteria cooks. The student graduated and later became a trustee at the institution (Wilder, 2013). The inferiority of Black people was exacerbated in these instances. It became an embedded belief that continues to be the burden Black students carry at predominantly White campuses.

College students often used enslaved people for amusement, ranging from boxing to singing, dancing, and fiddling and yet did not see the enslaved people as their equals. This mirrors the current state of racism in the U.S. There are White people that feel that student-athletes should leave “politics” out of sports and other forms of entertainment.

The “politics” include calls for equal treatment and increased accountability for acts of racism. The preference is for student-athletes to “shut up and dribble” because their entertainment is more important than the students equitable and fair treatment. Shut up and dribble is the property proposition. Black bodies are to be in service to the dominant population. There are many ways that Black bodies have been exploited beyond entertainment at the institutional level. The rise of medical schools utilized Black bodies as practice for surgery. Graves were robbed for dissection to teach anatomy. The graves of slaves were targeted because they were viewed as less important (Wilder, 2013). The labor-intensive work still exists at modern colleges and universities. Careful examination of workplace diversity finds that many staff of color are employed at the lowest earning levels at the institution; typically in the auxiliary services (housekeeping and dining). A CUPA-HR interactive graphic (July 2020) showed that Black employees are more represented in staff positions than any other area (professional, faculty, and administrators) at the institution. Further, staff positions are the lowest paid positions at the institution and Black staff have the greatest pay inequity in higher education (CUPA-HR, 2020).

As slavery ended, intellectuals were largely striving toward a single goal: a science that proved the inferiority of the Negro and thereby quieted the moral speculations and political agitation of abolitionists, race agnostics, and foreign critics (Wilder, 2013). The desire to scientifically prove that Blacks were intellectually inept continued from the inception of slavery to the vestiges of racial bias that exists today, including in higher education.

Yosso (2005) believed that deficit thinking was one of the most prevalent forms of contemporary racism. Deficit thinking takes the position that minority students and families are at fault for poor academic performance because students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skills, and parents neither value nor support their child's education. In *The Evolution of Deficit Thinking*, Valencia (1997) highlighted the impact of deficit thinking in the United States since the early 1600s. In an effort to ensure that slaves were not granted land and economic power, deficit thinking emerged that Blacks were less than human, cognitively deficient, and unable to function at the same level as Whites. Although discredited across several centuries, deficit thinking continued to emerge in different ways. In 1994, *The Bell Curve* was published and placed minority students below the intellectual capability of White students (Valencia, 1997). Deficit thinking has been credited to a parental value of and involvement in education, cognitive socialization, and competence (described as an inability to move beyond current state), and the construct of the at-risk child. With the negative connotations serving as an underpinning for minority students in education, Valencia (1997) opined,

“Belonging is a vital human need. Humans hunger for companionship. They are terrified in isolation. If denied belonging in formal institutions, they will struggle frantically to fabricate informal systems. Failure to find a supportive group, in extreme instances, can mean mental breakdown and suicide.” pg. 231

The work of Valencia (1997) and Wilder (2013) illustrate how the foundation of higher education (and education in general) was established without the inclusion of Black people as its consumer. In that vein, critical race theory provides the framework in

which otherparenting is a necessary tool to successfully navigate a system that was not built with Black students in mind. Despite the desegregation efforts of PWIs; policies, practices, and campus cultures have yet to incorporate Black students into the daily campus life in ways that would make otherparenting and similar inclusionary practices unnecessary to foster a sense of belonging and student connectedness.

Otherparenting

There has been a significant body of literature dedicated to the impact of othermothering for students enrolled at HBCUs (Flowers, Scott, Riley, & Palmer, 2015; Mawhinney, 2011; Griffin, 2013; Walker, 2018; Brooms, 2017). The effect of faculty/student relationships has traditionally been centered at PWIs. For example, Astin (1999) posited students who interact frequently with faculty members are more likely than other students to express satisfaction with all aspects of their institutional experience, including student friendships, variety of courses, intellectual environment, and even the administration of the institution.

For context, othermothering at HBCUs is very similar to faculty/student relationships that have been shown to improve student satisfaction in college. To that end, it would behoove institutions to recognize the impact and importance of othermothering. While it is a concept applied to African American women, othermothering is a tradition that has Western African origins. Othermothers are defined as “women who assist blood-mothers by sharing mothering responsibilities” (Collins, 2000; Guiffrida, 2005). O’Reilly (2012) viewed othermothering as a survival mechanism to ensure that children receive the mothering that nurtured the psychological and physical

well-being to be empowered for success. Over time, othermothering literature has shown up in a variety of fields including sociology, psychology and education.

Chronological Overview of Othermothering Research

One of the earlier concepts of othermothering came from sociologist Stanlie James. James (1993) defined othermothers as those who assist bloodmothers in the responsibilities of childcare for short- to long-term periods, in informal and formal arrangements. James further explains how othermothering altered from the Ghana tradition to a nuanced form in the United States. She discussed chattel slavery and how enslaved African Americans were not entitled to the right to establish families in either the westernized or African sense. In addition to damage of the husband-wife relationships, enslaved children were regularly orphaned through the death or sale of their parents. In those times, other women within the quarters often assumed the additional responsibility for their care (James, 1993). Through time the role evolved to community othermothers, a role bestowed upon women who are often over forty years of age who exhibit the ethic of care critical to the survival and well-being of their communities (James, 1993).

Collins (1987) researched othermothering in the United States in the late 1980s. She described othermothers as having a generalized ethic of care where Black women feel accountable to all the Black community's children (Collins, 1987). Later, Collins centered othermothering within the sociological discipline of black feminist thought. In rebuttal to the Moynihan (1965) report, Collins highlighted the many ways in which black motherhood was of central importance to black families, and in many cases a thankless job.

She positioned othermothering as a role of necessity, particularly during the crack epidemic when some bloodmothers lacked the ability or desire to care for their children. The responsibility for the children was placed on grandmothers, aunts, and cousins. In the 1980s, the natural instinct to othermother came under assault with racial desegregation and the emergence of class-stratified Black neighborhoods. As more Blacks became middle class, it was more difficult to othermother with the migration from low-income neighborhoods. In many ways, transitioning to middle class income was socially isolating. Collins (1987) described the role of othermothering as Black women's feelings of responsibility for nurturing the children in their own extended family networks. As a final thought on othermothering, Collins (2000) stated:

The resiliency of women-centered family networks and their willingness to take responsibility for Black children illustrates how African-influenced understandings of family have been continually reworked to help African Americans as a collective cope with and resist oppression. Moreover, these understandings of women-centered kin networks become critical in understanding broader African-American understandings of community. At the same time, the erosion of such networks in the face of changing institutional fabric of Black civil society points to the need either to refashion these networks or develop some other way of supporting Black children, (p. 183)

In the early 90s, Foster (1993) researched othermothering within education and more specifically, the secondary education system. Foster's study revealed how Black teachers were immersed into the lives of the children they taught, whether by geography (living in the same neighborhood as the school) or expectation. Foster stated that while many applauded the gains of desegregation, there was a loss of community cohesiveness, consensus, and support that characterized segregated communities. Foster suggested that

many Northern college-educated women that had matriculated through HBCUs learned of their responsibilities towards subsequent generations of Black children (Foster, 1993). Further, Bernard, Bernard, Ekpo, Enang, Joseph, and Wane (2000) defined the relationship between African American teachers and students as “othermothering in the academy”. Othermothering in the academy is a sharing of self, an interactive and collective process, spiritual connectedness that exemplifies the Afrocentric value of sharing, caring, and accountability (Bernard et al., 2000).

Edwards (2003) named othermothering in the academy as academic mothering. Academic mothering took the form of informal advisement that can be academic or personal in nature. Academic mothering is practiced by Black women who were faculty, staff, and sometimes upper level students. The ultimate goal is assistance towards success and a “passing on” of what is known, and may also include the creation of support systems that provide students a safe space to “exhale” (Edwards, 2003). Academic mothers or othermothers provide instruction on the temporary transformations necessary to survive and thrive until success is obtained. Edwards tied this thought process of transforming to the similar sentiment expressed by James (1993) about the expected assimilation to a society and culture where the “White European represents the ideal and universal manifestation of civilization”. James (1993) and Edwards (2003) expression reinforces the CRT tenets of permanence of racism and whiteness as property.

Guiffrida (2005) gathered that Foster suggested that “an appropriate pedagogy for Black students cannot be limited only to academics, but must deal with political, social, and economic circumstances of children’s lives and communities” (p. 717) The study conducted by Guiffrida found that Black college students considered student-centered

faculty as those that provided comprehensive career, academic, and personal advising, support, and advocacy, and raised the bar (Guiffrida, 2005). Previous research suggested that it was important for Black students to be exposed to and connect with Black professionals who have been successful in higher education, he recommended further study into the ways in which all faculty can be more student-centered to support Black student achievement. Guiffrida (2005) connected the study to othermothering. He utilized othermothering as a framework for conceptualizing the unique needs, expectations, and experiences of some African American students who attend PWIs (Guiffrida, 2005).

A study by Flowers, Scott, Riley, and Palmer (2015) described othermothering as extra support that goes beyond students' basic academic needs. The researchers found that Black students' experiences on college campuses have a significant impact on their academic longevity (a long duration in the academy). Academic longevity is particularly important for Black males as their retention and graduation rates lag behind their White male counterparts. An example of othermothering illustrated in the study is provided by a Black male participant and a faculty member acting as a parental figure:

I had not been in class for a week. My professor called the dorm and came to my room and discussed the importance of attending class and brought chicken noodle soup because I had the flu. (p. 65)

The study credited faculty for advancing student success and personal development through othermothering (Flowers et al., 2015).

Mawhinney (2011) examined her personal experiences with othermothering at a HBCU versus a PWI. Mawhinney opined that there was an underlying, unspoken expectation to develop othermother relationships to students. She discussed the mission of HBCUs to 1) provide education to newly freed slaves enriched in Black history and tradition 2) deliver educational experiences that were consistent with the experiences and values of many Black families 3) provide a service to the Black community and country by aiding in the development of leadership, racial pride, and return service to the community (Mawhinney, 2011). In that tradition of “return service to the community,” othermothering is a natural way of being at HBCUs.

However, she found that she continued to have the same ethic of care with students of color once she transitioned to a PWI. The interactions were reduced simply because the number of Black and Puerto Rican students on campus were less than at the HBCU. Mawhinney concluded by sharing the impact of othermothering on the health and well-being of Black faculty, as some of her personal decisions around othermothering negatively affected her personal life. Mawhinney recounted a time during her second year at a HBCU where she used her personal credit card to cover the cost of programming once budgeted funds were depleted. Even in her transition to the PWI, she found herself driving over two hours to give her personal copy of a course textbook to a Black female student that was unable to cover the cost of the book. In an effort to “even the playing field” for Black students, she extended herself for students at the cost of sake of her own health and well-being (Mawhinney, 2011)

Griffin (2013) explored the phenomenon of the negative and positive benefits of othermothering on Black professors. The study was grounded in a social exchange

theoretical framework. Although there are tangible benefits for Black students and college satisfaction, social exchange theory examines those benefits from the faculty perspective. The core of othermothering is the commitment to Black student success. Professors in the study felt the need to provide support to Black students specifically because of the isolation that occurs at PWIs for both Black students, faculty, and staff and the shared experience of Blackness (Griffin, 2013). Griffin (2013) found the reported benefits of othermothering for Black faculty were fulfilling commitments, support, and research contributions. On the other hand, the costs were time, energy, and lack of reciprocity.

Walker (2018) attributed othermothering as an avenue to improve mental health outcomes among African American males at HBCUs. He opined that the stress from being separated from family members, acclimating to a new environment, or coping with prior or recent traumatic experience(s) can negatively impact student outcomes. For males that do not seek help, mental health problems can mount and affect academic performance, relationships with peers and faculty and contribute to a downward spiral (Walker, 2018). The relationships between administrators, faculty, and students create a sense of family away from home. HBCUs provide emotional scaffolding or othermothering that mediate the impact academic, familial, and interpersonal stressors have on student outcomes. The family first approach at HBCUs could mediate concerns among African American men regarding mental illness (Walker, 2018).

While the word “othermothering” is gendered, it is a concept that is applicable to both Black men and women. Brooms (2017) investigated Black otherfathering in a secondary school setting. He describes otherfathering as holistic care, support, parenting,

modeling, and life coaching. Black otherfathering is included here as another intervention that can be utilized through Black adult males on college campuses. In Brooms study, he found that otherfathers play a critical role in the holistic development of students' social, emotional, educational, and identity needs. Otherfathering is different than mentoring as it emphasizes extra support that goes beyond the classroom (Brooms, 2017).

The benefits of otherfathering create an institutional culture where Black male students are affirmed and valued, build a sense of belonging, and foster student communalism and school engagement (Brooms, 2017). The study benefits are critical in postsecondary settings interested in contributing to the success of Black males. The introduction of otherfathering to othermothering literature expands this critical concept. It may be necessary in the future remove gender from the concept and identify it as otherparenting. In succeeding chapters, the more inclusive term "otherparenting" will be used.

Potential Negative Aspects of Otherparenting

Otherparenting is not always considered a positive thing. Njoku, Butler, and Beatty (2017) highlighted the negative assessment of othermothering. The authors described HBCUs as place to foster supportive social environments that enhanced student development and experience. The parental, but lovingly, protective environments of HBCUs insulate students from the harsh and racist society, which is direct reflection of the history and social contract of the institutions (Njoku, Butler, & Beatty, 2017). Additionally, the authors centered African American women (mothers) as the first and most influential enforcers of respectability.

Students at HBCUs admitted that faculty and staff can be intrusive in and judgmental of their life choices. Njoku, et al. (2017) found that othermothering is a mechanism to enforce Black respectability politics. It created an environment in which students that did not align with these practices felt unsafe and detached. More specifically, othermothering sent a message that only respectable students are successful. Success meant students editing themselves to fit into heteronormative, cisgendered expectations. Under the principle of professional preparation, othermothering is a means to combat racialized stereotypes of African Americans. In theory, othermothering should equip students with the tools to reimagine and/or change the society that inherently marginalizes them. Othermothers should be a place for all students to grow, find their voices, and discover their true authentic selves (Njoku, Butler, & Beatty, 2017).

Similarly in exploring literature (Jencks & Reisman, 1967; Fryer & Greenstone, 2010) about the effectiveness and necessity of HBCUs, Arroyo, Palmer, Maramba and Louis (2017) explored the support of racially diverse students at the institutions. The study conducted interviews with student affairs professionals and found that staff felt non-Black students were not interested in social pursuits on campus. As a result, there was little effort to integrate non-Black students into campus life. While the study did not explore othermothering specifically, it is a glaring omission to the Guardian concept that Hirt (2006) introduced. Othermothering at PWIs should enhance the experience of Black students, but it should also include non-Black students.

It is apparent that otherparenting is an embedded way of being for many Black men and women utilizing fugitive pedagogy. It is critically important that otherparenting on college campuses be further explored to understand the navigation of predominantly

White spaces, specifically beyond faculty. The support of Black students through the ethic of care that is foundational to otherparenting may connect student success outcomes related to retention and graduation. Otherparenting is predicated on the relationship-building that occurs between students and faculty/staff. Prior research found promising impact of otherparenting for Black students at HBCUS. Otherparenting may not be a concept that is foreign to PWIs. However, it is covert due to campus culture. The campus culture at HBCUs expects othermothering, while the campus culture at PWIs is oblivious to othermothering.

The Convergence

Critical race theory, sense of belonging, and otherparenting are stand-alone constructs that impact Black college students. Moving beyond stand-alone constructs into a convergence of one concept is significantly impactful. A convergence is illustrated by the student experience at HBCUs. Black students report that HBCUs feel like home due to the individual attention students receive from faculty and staff by going out of their way to assist them and individually meet their needs (Hirt, Amelink, McFeters, & Strayhorn, 2008). Black students perceived the staff at HBCUs to be more committed to their success compared to staff at PWIs. Hirt, et al. (2008) believed that cultural advancement is a key component of othermothering. The intentional ethic of care is driven by the belief in a morality of shared responsibility and is illustrated through the individual actions that demonstrate a commitment to the improvement of the lives of Black young adults and the race as a whole via advice, mentoring, and sometimes parenting (Hirt, et al., 2008). The authors implored further research in the examination of relationships between administrators and minority students who are enrolled at PWIs.

More specifically, authors explore the role that student affairs administrators play for Black students at PWIs (Hirt, et al., 2008).

Social capital can be achieved among college students who develop social networks involving student affairs staff, faculty, and students—agents who provide resources and support to students as they navigate their way through college (Soria & Stebleton, 2013). Many working-class students are first-generation, and likely lack the types of social capital that enable them to become successful in navigating the university. Sense of belonging and social capital are connected, as seen with students with higher levels of academic engagement are typically associated with educational environments that are seen by students as “inclusive and affirming” (Soria & Stebleton, 2013). Soria and Stebleton define academic engagement by 1) the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and 2) how institutions organize learning opportunities and services and enhance the benefits students gain from such activities. A one unit increase in working class students’ social capital is positively associated with a .29 increase in academic engagement, and a one unit increase in GPA is associated with a .37 increase in academic engagement. Additionally, underrepresented minority students were found to have .37 increase in academic engagement (Soria & Stebleton, 2013).

Soria and Stebleton (2013) found that middle/upper class students reported a higher sense of belonging and higher levels of social capital, while working class students reported greater difficulty in finding students in their classes with whom to study, finding a faculty member who is available to help them navigate their way through the university. The study highlighted the barriers that working class students encounter in gaining a sense of belonging, and the lack of support. College administrators and practitioners can

enhance sense of belonging and social capital for working class students by creating networks of belonging among students, connect students with faculty by encouraging engagement in high impact practices, and assist in finding mentors of similar backgrounds. Working class students are sometimes caught in the “middle”, as they are not considered low-income, nor middle class. Therefore, there is a need for support, but limited research on this demographic of students has not encouraged higher education institutions to pay attention. It is critically important to communicate the rules, norms, and cultural expectations about higher education, enabling working class students to develop the social capital and sense of belonging to excel academically (Soria & Stebleton, 2013).

Holland (2017) described the myriad ways that African American students and their families develop college knowledge. She encouraged institutional agents to be willing to attribute legitimate value to the ways that students acquire college knowledge to enroll and succeed in college. Similarly, students were asked to turn inward to themselves and members of their communities as sources of strength and insight as they develop additional strategies to navigate experiences and institutions that have been previously inaccessible and continue to be in many ways (Holland, 2017). Equity must move beyond access. It is not enough to say that Black students got in, we must talk about getting them through.

There has been an unbalanced focus on what is wrong with first-generation, low-income students rather than focusing on their strengths and persistence. Approximately three-quarters of first-generation students do succeed in college despite structural disadvantages (Garriott, 2020). Student affairs professionals can tailor interventions for

first-generation, low-income students around critical race theory and their experience within the education system. Although student affairs professionals are not typically in spaces to break down the barriers that exists for Black students in the traditional sense of CRT, it is important to leverage their understanding of the nuances that are ever-present for Black students. Student affairs professionals must analyze what is in their control that can serve as a positive impact on the Black student experience at PWIs in the higher education system.

In loco parentis serves as the foundation for student affairs work in the university system. In the early years of the U.S. higher education system, faculty were responsible for the supervision of students within the dormitories as a result of the antics of undergraduates. Faculty quickly discovered that it was difficult to be both the enforcer and teacher. This resistance to serving in multiple roles, or rather, recognizing the inability to do both birthed the field of student affairs (Thelin, 2011; Schuh, 2016). Initially, much of student affairs work was in housing/residence life and expanded exponentially over the years as student services areas. Despite the functional area, student affairs professionals' work is centered around students feeling engaged and supported at the institution. Thus, students are more likely to persist, be retained, and graduate.

In loco parentis and otherparenting are similar in that both concepts are connected to a parenting role. *In loco parentis* serves an authoritarian role, whereas otherparenting has an ethic of care that is essential for students to feel supported. The student affairs field abandoned *in loco parentis* in the 60s and placed the onus of responsibility onto the student (Zhang, 2011). *In loco parentis* highlights the individualistic nature of the dominant/majority culture. In contrast, otherparenting has a familial connection.

Otherparenting does not have an explicit connection to CRT. However, otherparenting is typically performed by Black people that have experienced the education system and successfully navigated the system and functions differently than *in loco parentis*.

Otherparenting has an underlying culture of passing on the tips and guidance necessary to survive and thrive in a system that was not created for Black people.

Rather than focus on lack of preparation for college, practitioners should leverage strengths and assets. It is important for student services to understand student positionality and its effect on the college experience. A focus on the familial, financial, and value factors help shape their self-authorship that may promote academic success, persistence, and career choice satisfaction (Garriott, 2020). Similar to the postmodern perspective of organizations, a CRT framework helps leaders identify conditions of oppression in organizations, challenge underlying assumptions, and reconstructing the organization (Bess & Dee, 2012).

In 1994, Amado Padilla coined the phrase “cultural taxation”. Cultural taxation describes the unique burden placed on ethnic minority faculty in carrying out their responsibility to service the university. In *A Theoretical Focus on Cultural Taxation*, Cleveland, Sailes, Gilliam, and White (2018) discussed the increased expectations on faculty of color as it related to: representation on committees, mentorship for students of color, and the “publish or perish” requirement for tenure track faculty. The expectation of serving as a voice and support for students of color can be detrimental for the career viability of professors of color (Cleveland, Sailes, Gilliam, & White, 2018). Mawhinney (2011) also argued the impact of othermothering on the health and well-being of Black faculty, as some of her personal decisions around othermothering negatively affected her

personal life. Edwards (2003) viewed othermothering as an extant component of Black women's work in academia that carries a double cost through the lack of recognition and the increased demand it places on their workload.

There are several ways in which student affairs professionals can relieve some of the burden on faculty during the early professional years and throughout the promotion and tenure process. Student affairs professionals' career longevity, mobility, and viability is not connected to achieving a tenure/promotion status. By virtue of title, the student affairs role is student-centered from the outset. It is a natural crosswalk for student affairs educators to become otherparents. Student success and college satisfaction can be served through the otherparenting framework via student affairs staff, specifically Black staff. The potential cost savings of longevity, lower turnover, and increased morale is ideal for faculty, administration, and students. Further exploration into the interventions and changes necessary to allow faculty to focus on tenure and promotion, while maintaining an institutional commitment to student success and belonging is needed and can be fulfilled via othermothering.

From the outset of the creation of the higher education system in the United States, Black students and other students of color were not considered. Postsecondary education has evolved and adapted to student needs over time, but there have been minimal changes in achieving the same level of belonging and connectedness for Black students compared to White students. In this literature review, I have highlighted the lack of inclusion of Black students in predominantly White spaces. The systemic and institutional barriers that existed for Black students prior to desegregation continue more than sixty years later. Allen (1992) discussed the factors impacting Black student

success. While recognizing the predetermined factors affecting success (preparedness, income,), he also stated that student academic performance can also be affected by quality of life at the institution, the level of academic competition, university rules/procedures/resources, racial relations on campus, relationships with faculty and friends, and the extent of social support networks on campus (Allen, 1992). Allen found that environments that provide Black students with positive feedback, support, and understanding, communicate care for students' welfare. Ultimately, Black student intellectual gains are higher on Black majority campuses than on White majority campuses (Allen, 1992).

The concepts sense of belonging and otherparenting overlap, intersect, and collaborate to improve success outcomes for Black students as sense of belonging encompasses students' connection to an institution and otherparenting fosters sense of belonging for Black students. Gaps in the literature exists as it pertains to otherparenting within the student affairs profession, otherparenting at PWIs, and the impact of otherparenting for Black students at PWIs (especially research universities). Gasman (2010) wrote about the things PWIs can learn from HBCUs. By virtue of the success of HBCU students compare to their Black counterparts at PWIs, HBCUs created positive campus climates for Black students. Gasman charged PWIs to create and maintain an adequate balance of academic and social integration. However, there are some students that fall outside the heteronormative, cisgender parameters and may feel alienated by otherparenting. As well, otherparenting for non-Black students has yet to be investigated thoroughly. There are a variety of benefits to exploring othermothers within the field of student affairs.

Black students are being accepted at PWIs, but retention and graduation rates remain stagnant. Until the nation's postsecondary institutions engage in a postmodern perspective to identify conditions of oppression, challenge the underlying assumptions, and reconstruct the organization, reliance on mechanisms that increase the likelihood of success are necessary (Birnbaum, 1988). As of now, critical race theory frames the experience of Black students at PWIs. To that end, race is salient throughout the college experience. Currently, the operational measures (i.e. sense of belonging, academic support, etc.) of Black student success do not include or consider otherparenting.

While there has been no magic bullet discovered to ensure the success of Black students on predominantly White campuses, the concept of otherparenting is not in the conversation. Despite having lower entrance credentials than their Black counterparts enrolled at PWIs, Black students at HBCUs graduate at 14 percentage points higher than students at non-HBCUs (Gasman, 2012; Richards & Awokoya, 2012). HBCUs highlight the ability of Black students to thrive in the higher education system. It is important to understand the structures that exist within and across institutional types that are conducive to Black student success. Institutional administrators need to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to ensure success of all students irrespective of culture, race, gender, class, age, ability, and orientation or religion (Bernard, Issari, Moriah, Njiwii, Obgan, & Tolliver, 2012). The goal of this study was to explore othermothering among Black student affairs professionals at a predominantly White research university, and its potential importance toward Black student retention, persistence, and completion.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The literature on otherparenting at the postsecondary level is focused on the othermother relationship developed at HBCUs, specifically with faculty members (Mawhinney, 2011; Griffin, 2013; Flowers, Scott, Riley & Palmer, 2015). To gain a better understanding of otherparenting, a goal of this study is to examine otherparenting in contexts not previously studied. The contexts to be explored will be otherparenting at predominantly White research institutions among Black student services staff. In this chapter, the study purpose, research questions, and research methodology are outlined.

Achievement gaps exist in the retention and graduation rates of Black students compared to their White counterparts (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Banks & Dohy, 2019; Shapiro, Dundar, Huie, Wakhungu, Yuan, Nathan, Hwang, 2017). Sense of belonging has been credited with having a significant impact on the persistence and academic success of college students. Sense of belonging includes the student's level of connectedness to the institution. For Black students at HBCUs, sense of belonging is supported and enhanced by otherparenting (Palmer, Wood, Dancy & Strayhorn, 2014). Black students report that HBCUs feel like home due to the individual attention students receive from faculty and staff by going out of their way to assist them and individually meet their needs. Black students perceived the staff at HBCUs to be more committed to their success compared to staff at PWIs (Hirt, Amelink, McFetters, & Strayhorn, 2008).

Hirt (2006) described student affairs professionals at HBCUs as Guardians. Relationship-building drives much of the work at HBCUs. Student service professionals, as well as faculty and administrators, are genuinely committed to helping students succeed. Staff view themselves as members of students' extended families. They see themselves as surrogate parents or siblings and assume those roles when working with students. Finally, professionals recognize that they stand on the shoulders of those who came before them and feel obligated to "pay it forward" and prepare the next generation of Black students (Hirt, 2006). The Guardian descriptor used by Hirt closely aligns with aspects of otherparenting.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

The goal of this study was to explore otherparenting among Black student affairs professionals at a predominantly White research university, and its potential importance in the Black student college experience. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent have Black staff experienced and utilize otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs?
2. What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?
3. What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting at PWIs?
4. To what extent does the PWI understand and value these relationships?

Qualitative Approaches

While there may be ways to operationalize otherparenting that would be conducive to a quantitative study design, this study used a qualitative approach. I believe otherparenting is a broad concept with embedded principles. Otherparenting is performed and received in myriad ways. I wanted to gain a full understanding of otherparenting before analyzing the quantitative impact of the concept. The goal of this study was to capture the intent and importance of otherparenting among several Black student services staff at a predominantly White institution. It is a qualitative study that provided deep, rich, and meaningful data to explore the influence of otherparenting for Black students at a PWI.

There are several qualitative approaches that would glean the necessary data for the study, including a case study or a participatory action research study. The methodologies do follow a qualitative logic. Action research involves those impacted by the research and an integration of the research with an explicit action agenda (Trainor & Graue, 2013). This method is ideal in providing a resulting action to an issue. The issue in the case of action research would be Black student achievement and/or sense of belonging.

Case studies tend to focus on a person, place, or other bounded case for the purpose of learning about a particular entity (Trainor & Graue, 2013). In this circumstance, a case study would explore the how and why of the experience of Black students with otherparenting at PWIs among student service staff. Case studies tend to be most productive when used in situations in which it is impossible to separate the phenomenon's variable from the context, and best for addressing "how" and "why"

questions (Trainor & Graue, 2013). This study explored the importance of otherparenting and did not exclusively encompass the how and why of the concept.

To that end, I decided this study followed the methodology of phenomenology. Edmund Husserl has been described as the founder of phenomenology (Vagle, 2018). Husserlian-oriented phenomenology tends to study “of-ness” of phenomena. In this philosophy, I was not studying the subjective lived experiences of those who have experienced the phenomenon (Vagle, 2018). I was not studying the subject or the object, but a particular intentional relationship between the subject and object. This relationship can also be described as how a particular phenomenon manifests and appears in the lifeworld. The lifeworld is described as the world of human experience; life is lived phenomenologically (Vagle, 2018). Phenomenology puts together the subjective and the objective.

Descriptive phenomenology aims to explore and describe the essential structure of an experience in terms of phenomena (Vagle, 2018). This phenomenological study included the careful process of transitioning from a focus on particulars or facts to the more general essence of experience. As mentioned previously, otherparenting is a broad concept that is experienced individually. This study sought to capture the collective essence of otherparenting rather than the individualistic or prescribed set of procedures and the impact, utilization, and value of otherparenting. Otherparenting is performed in myriad ways. There is not one “right” way to do it. Ultimately, I wanted the examination of otherparenting as a lived experience was explored. A phenomenological study allowed for the exploration of otherparenting as an inherent way of being for most Black people. It may be performed and experienced in a variety of ways based on many

factors including personality type, pre-college experiences, income, educational level, and personal philosophies. Phenomenology permitted a deep exploration of otherparenting and its usefulness in Black student success. To truly capture the essence of the concept, I chose to explore otherparenting as a phenomenon. Otherparenting was the primary focus of the study, thus providing the framework to examine its importance at PWIs.

In the Black community, the Tuskegee experiment is a prominent rebuttal to most research advice. The experiment began in 1932 with participants understanding that the study would last six months. The study went on for nearly 40 years. Participants were not given proper treatment of syphilis (despite the discovery of the effectiveness of penicillin), there was no evidence of informed consent, nor the opportunity to opt out of the study (CDC, www.cdc.gov). The literature review uncovers medical mistreatment centuries prior with the medical treatment and grave robbing associated with medical schools' anatomy courses. This medical mistrust is still prevalent as a vaccine to protect against COVID-19 is being rolled out. Although this study consisted of interviews and other documentation rather than medical research, special care and attention was paid to gaining the trust of study participants as the study centers Black students and professionals.

I have been a member of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for five years. CITI provides web-based educational courses in research, ethics, regulatory oversight, responsible conduct of research, research administration, and other topics pertinent to the interests of member organizations and individual learners. I completed the basic course for human research for social/behavioral investigators, as well

as two refresher courses. The researcher is certified and trained through January 2025. In the most recent refresher course, an elective course covered the impact of COVID-19 on human subject research. CITI offered an intensive COVID-19 and Human Research Protection Program webinar. The webinar identified considerations for effective communication, protection of human subjects, and management of an IRB. Depending on vaccine distribution and human subject safety, information and guidance from this webinar may be necessary for this study.

Researcher Positionality

I began a career in higher education working under the umbrella of Institutional Diversity within an academic support unit. The target population of the unit was Black students. My role of academic counselor was to assist the students in navigating the institution successfully. Success was defined as retention and completion. More specifically, my population was first-year students at a PWI. I felt a personal responsibility as the connection to the institution and their “success”, and felt it was necessary to ensure the freshman year was smooth. Adhering to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2020), I was committed to serving the whole student. In addition to academics, I asked students about roommate issues, homesickness, financial issues. I supported and challenged students.

The relationships built with the students remained close throughout the academic career at the institution, and I was personally credited for assisting them in completing their degree. My relationships with students went beyond my job responsibilities. I invited students over to my home for dinner. I covered the cost of books on occasion. I attended major events over the course of their academic career. Those relationships

continued after graduation as I am regularly invited to engagements, weddings, and baby showers. Over time, relationships developed not only with the students, but their parents and families. In some cases, parents and families reported sending siblings and extended family to the institution with the assurance that the same care would be provided.

However, when the institution measures the success of Black students, my work is not recognized as an important factor. There is a plethora of research on the importance of student-faculty relationships, as well as otherparenting among Black faculty. Research on otherparenting at PWIs is limited. Moreover, studies of otherparenting among student services professionals (non-faculty) is nearly non-existent. The focus of this study incorporated sense of belonging centered primarily on otherparenting. What is missing is the research on the importance of Black staff and their influence on the experience of Black students at predominantly White institutions.

Professionally, I am employed by the state's coordinating board. While not a governing body, the coordinating board has the authority to set tuition and approve institutional programs for state public institutions. This study explored the importance of otherparenting by interviewing student affairs professionals. By virtue of studying otherparenting at PWIs, the study highlighted potential deficiencies in the support of Black students at the institutional level. As a result, there may have been some apprehension from human subjects to participate in this study if it reflects negatively on the institution and its shortcomings toward Black students.

I feel a very strong and personal connection to otherparenting and its importance in the college success of Black students at predominantly White institutions. As a result, the following methods highlighted below were employed to mitigate researcher bias.

I may have indirectly trigger thoughts of paycheck vulnerability for the research participants. In order to mitigate the potential concerns of advantages and disadvantages of participation, I assured transparency throughout the study with participants. I shared my professional role responsibilities and assured participants of confidentiality and mutual exclusivity. Additionally, I followed steps to protect participant identity with pseudonyms and other protective descriptors. Special attention was made to ensure that survey questions did not focus on job performance or an evaluation of the institution for participant protection. Overall, I was explicit with study participants about the extent of confidentiality and its limits in the current digital age.

To assist in alleviating concerns around paycheck vulnerability, I employed anonymizing strategies beyond changing identifiable information including name, place names, and functional area. Saunders, Kitzinger, and Kitzinger (2015) suggest changing key (but nonessential) elements of an account. The authors further suggest presenting extracts from the same participant under multiple pseudonyms, as well as collaboration with interviewees to examine whether some of the material shared is more sensitive than others (Saunders, Kitzinger, & Kitzinger, 2015).

Despite the concerns and efforts to protect participants, there is “minimal risk” in study participation. Therefore, I sought an expedited Institutional Review Board (IRB) review. The IRB approval was sought at the home institution, followed by a

brief IRB notification and review at the research site. The invitation to participate and informed consent form will be submitted with the IRB proposal. The consent form followed human subjects research guidelines and ensure that study participants will have a clear understanding of the study purpose, benefits and risks, explanation of confidentiality and voluntary participation that can be discontinued at any time.

Research Design

Procedure

Vagle (2018) suggested that an open mindset to the gathering of phenomenological material is important and useful in carrying out phenomenological research. He suggests all interviews be treated as exciting opportunities to potentially learn something important about the phenomenon. While Vagle (2018) favors unstructured interviews for the tendency to be more dialogic, open, and conversational, the researcher prefers some structure. However, the interviews were not as structured as semi-structured interviews to allow for an organic and authentic interpretation of otherparenting from each participant. The interview questions were examined across multiple levels to ensure participants are not led to a particular response. The goal was to find out as much as possible about the phenomenon from each participant (Vagle, 2018).

Validity of Responses. To decrease researcher bias and increase validity of the findings, the researcher presented interview transcripts for clarity to the study participants. Additionally, the researcher analyzed the transcripts for opportunities to ask follow-up questions rather than making assumptions about the intended meaning of a response.

Unbiased Review. The researcher completed the interview coding and employed two unbiased peers to review the interview transcripts and subsequent coding for additional insights and agreement (or lack thereof) with researcher coding.

Openness. Overall, the researcher kept an open mind regarding the study. While there is a passion for otherparenting, the researcher was open to the possibility that study participants may not feel they are othermothers/otherfathers and/or the impact of otherparenting is minimal for students at predominantly White institutions.

Each of these methods were utilized throughout the study to ensure that the data analysis is accurate, valid, and honest.

Research Site

The research site is a PWI--a large, public, Carnegie-classified research-intensive institution in the mid-south. The total student enrollment is over 20,000 students. The Black, undergraduate student population is 6.9% and 10.9% when Multi-racial students are included. However, this is not a definitive representation of students that may identify as Black. Multi-racial is defined as two or more races and can include other races beyond Black/African American. Moreover, the representation of Black professional staff/administrators is 4.6% and 5.4% when Multi-racial staff are included.

Participants

The participants for this study were Black student services professionals employed at a PWI. In exploring the impact of otherparenting, it was critically important to gather data from those performing otherparenting. In the literature review, otherfathering was beginning to gain traction in the field at both the secondary and

postsecondary level. In order to maintain the integrity of previous research, othermothering and otherfathering was used throughout. It is understood that otherparenting is occurring, regardless of gender. The sample of the population included both male and female, Black-identified student services professionals across functional units. Participants were asked their identified gender to be inclusive beyond binary terms. A holistic approach to otherparenting examines if otherparenting is performed differently depending on the professional role.

This study used criterion, purposeful sampling to identify study participants. Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Palinkas et al., 2015). Due to my previous employment at the study site, I was familiar with Black student services professionals that were performing otherparenting. I recruited those individuals to the participate in the study. It was not necessary to employ other recruitment techniques. Additionally, criterion sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. In this case, participants were explicitly recruited for their experience with otherparenting. Therefore, the criterion, purposeful sampling strategies most closely aligns with the desire to gather authentic, robust data in a phenomenological study.

The inclusion criteria for study participants were as follows:

- Identify as Black (inclusive of the African diaspora)
- Non-faculty
- Employed at the study site

- Minimum of three years of full-time professional experience
- Regular interaction with Black students

This criterion is both broad and specific to be inclusive of differing backgrounds. The participants identified as Black but the study was inclusive of those that are Multi-racial. Since othermothering is a West African tradition that was brought to the United States, participants should have a cultural foundation in Blackness. Much of the existing literature includes faculty members at HBCUs and PWIs. This study did not include faculty members. While the impetus of this study was centered on Black student affairs professionals, the stratification of student affairs includes student services professionals in areas such as enrollment management, and athletics. Therefore, staff and administrators across student-focused units were invited to participate. It was vital for the participants to reflect on their interactions with Black students over time. For that reason, participants must have had a minimum of three years of professional experience. Otherparenting occurs in a variety of ways, environments, and individuals. For the purpose of this study, the focus was on individuals with a background in student affairs, higher education, and student services.

I identified seven participants for the study. I recruited participants by identifying units that have a high concentration of Black student interaction. More specifically, I recruited staff from diversity, equity, and inclusion, residence life, athletics, enrollment management, academic support, and colleges/schools with a high volume of students (e.g. College of Arts and Science). The number of participants in this study allowed for rich data collection. The number of participants provided the opportunity to understand

participant experiences across functional units, a potential capability to explore nuance within otherparenting performance.

My previous professional role at the study site provided an introductory foundation to recruit study participants. I made the additional assumption that Black student services professionals work collaboratively across functional units. Therefore, I had the additional snowball sampling recruiting strategy through referral and recommendation. Beyond these methods, I developed recruitment flyers that were deemed unnecessary to be disseminate across student services/success units.

Data Collection

The study consisted of loosely structured interviews with five to seven student services professionals across functional areas. Vagle (2018) suggests that very little structure in interviews to allow the process to be more dialogic. It provided the opportunity for authentic and organic data collection and provided an accurate analysis of the phenomenon. However, I felt that it is necessary to provide a guideline to ensure that the research questions are aligned and can be analyzed for the study on otherparenting. Roberts and Hyatt (2019) suggest creating a matrix questionnaire form to align the interview questions with the research questions for adequate coverage. I have included the matrix of interview questions in Table 1.

Table 1

Matrix of Interview Questions

| <u>Research Question</u> | <u>Corresponding Interview Question</u> |
|--|---|
| To what extent have Black staff experienced and utilized otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs? | To what extent are you familiar with the concept of otherparenting? |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>Is it a concept that you apply to your work?</p> <p>Please share examples of how you have used otherparenting in your work.</p> <p>Is there a difference in your approach to your work with Black students compared to all other students?</p> |
| <p>What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?</p> | <p>Please describe the importance you feel otherparenting has on the experience of Black students at your institution.</p> <p>Please share a story about how your otherparenting was influential with a student.</p> <p>To what extent has your otherparenting been viewed less than positive by a student?</p> <p>Otherparenting relies heavily on relationship-building. Please share any instances in which the relationship impacted the otherparenting.</p> <p>Do you feel that Black students would be successful without otherparenting at your institution?</p> |
| <p>What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting at PWIs?</p> | <p>Tell me about your experience with otherparenting during your undergraduate career.</p> <p>How would you describe the influence of that relationship on your college experience?</p> <p>How would you describe your otherparenting philosophy?</p> <p>Please describe the highs and lows that you have experienced as an otherparent.</p> |
| <p>To what extent do the PWI understand and value these relationships?</p> | <p>How is your performance toward student success measures evaluated?</p> <p>In what ways do you feel your immediate supervisor, unit, and institution recognizes and values your otherparenting?</p> <p>Please share a time when you felt that otherparenting was valued (or not valued) by a supervisor.</p> <p>Do you think non-Black staff perform otherparenting for students in your area?</p> |

In order to capture the essence of the phenomenon that is otherparenting, the loosely structured interview gave context and depth to the otherparenting concept. The interview was the primary data collection method. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and timing of the IRB approval prevented observation from serving as a contextual/environmental component of the study.

I performed two pilot tests with individuals that met the study guideline but not selected to participate. The pilot test served as validation that the interview questions garnered the responses to provide an answer to the research questions. I adjusted and revised one interview question as the responses from the pilot test did not align with the research questions.

Once study participants were recruited and identified, I gained consent. I stored the signed consent form in a secure, locked location. I asked the participants to create a pseudonym that will be used from the onset of the interview and throughout the remainder of the study. I scheduled sixty- to ninety-minute interviews with each participant. The interviews took place at the conclusion of the spring semester. This timeframe was important for a few reasons, 1) The participants reflected on the entire academic year and process the growth of students; 2) Study participants utilized quantitative measures of success (GPA, registration, and retention) when necessary. A potential obstacle to both interviews and observations was the COVID-19 pandemic. Student services was limited on some campuses and students are not meeting face-to-face as much of the work is online and remote. Although the COVID-19 vaccine rollout was underway, there were continuing mitigation measures in place.

All interviews with study participants were held via Zoom. Zoom allowed for interviews to be recorded, and premium service has a transcript function. The researcher purchased the premium service to have immediate access to interview transcripts.

Data Analysis

Throughout the data collection process, I managed and organized the data. I created folders for each participant. The folders included interview recordings, interview transcripts, notes from interview and observations. The folders were continuously updated through each phase of data analysis. While cloud drives are easily accessible and can serve as backup protection measure, it is not a fully secure medium. I stored folders on a hard drive, an external hard drive, and a flash drive to maintain participant protection and confidentiality.

Vagle (2018) suggested a specific data analysis method for phenomenological research. I utilized this process in my study.

Holistic reading of the entire text. The first read involved getting attuned with the material. As suggested, I did not take notes during the first read.

First line-by-line reading. The first line-by-line reading included careful notetaking and marking of excerpts that appear to contain initial meanings. There was an attempt to bridle chunks of texts with note clarifying questions for me to consider later. I began the memoing process to create an audit trail for each participant. This information was stored and updated alongside and within the participant folders throughout the analysis process.

Follow-up questions. The questions from the first line-by-line reading were crafted to gain clarification to discern intentional meanings or researcher prediction. This

served as another method to minimize researcher bias. Each transcript was sent to the participant for review and to clarify in questions in the notes.

Second line-by-line reading. The second line-by-line reading involved articulating the meanings, based on bridling, margin notes, and follow-up with participants. The meanings were transferred onto a new document for each participant (separate from original transcript) to begin to develop the phenomenological text.

Third line-by-line reading. I articulated my analytic thoughts about each part for each participant. I added keywords in the margins of each transcript.

Subsequent readings. The subsequent readings involved reading across individual participants' phenomenological material to establish themes. Additional readings looked to discover new meanings and/or deleting other themes.

The subsequent readings began the coding and theming process. I utilized a coding process that included detailed descriptions, application of codes, developing themes, and providing an interpretation in a spreadsheet (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I started the process with lean coding of five or six categories and follow the recommendation of Creswell and Poth (2018) with a final code list of no more than twenty-five to thirty categories. Once finalized, a codebook provided a detailed description of the boundaries for each code. The codebook served as a guide for consistency as a student services colleague reviews my interpretation of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The final step in the data analysis process was representing the data. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend a simplified version of Moustakas method for phenomenological research. The method includes describing personal experiences with

otherparenting (beginning with my own experience with otherparenting to direct focus on the participants in the study), developing a list of significant statements, grouping the significant statements into broader units of information, creating a description of the otherparenting the participants experienced, drafting a description of the “how” the experience happened, and writing a composite description of otherparenting. The composite description is the “of-ness” of otherparenting and the foundation of the phenomenological approach.

I personally analyzed the data to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. However, I wanted to minimize researcher bias. As a result, I utilized Dedoose software as an additional check on my interpretation and theming of the data. Dedoose is a qualitative analysis software tool allowing researchers to organize and analyze data. The software allows users to classify, sort and arrange information; examine relationships in the data; and combine analysis with linking, shaping, searching and modeling. I prefer to get close to the data and not strictly rely on computer-generated results. I believe Dedoose provided some supplementary credibility and dependability to the study.

Study Limitations

As with most qualitative studies, there is limited generalizability with this study. The limitations of this study include sample size, population, and race. The sample size is comparable to other qualitative studies. However, the sample size represents approximately three percent of the population. As well, the population represents only 5% of the staff/administrators at the institution. It is difficult to make any deductions about the culture and climate with the lack of representation. Finally, race is limitation of the study. Otherparenting originated in West African culture, yet otherparenting may be

performed by other races. Overall, the study provided a rich, authentic picture of otherparenting that can initiate discussion about the prevalence, importance, and impact of otherparenting.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

As stated in Chapter 1, this study examined the importance of otherparenting by Black staff with Black college students at PWIs using the theoretical lens of critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). This chapter is organized around the lived experience with otherparenting for each of the seven participants and for the four research questions. The study sought to understand the ways in which Black staff experience and utilize otherparenting, the importance of these familial relationships on the undergraduate experience, the lived experience of Black staff performing otherparenting, and the extent to which the PWI understands and values these relationships. Interviews were conducted with Black staff identified as otherparents. The participants were asked a series of questions that sought to answer the research questions and expound on their experience as Black staff performing otherparenting with Black students enrolled in a PWI. Utilizing the method suggested for phenomenological studies, analyzed through the lens of critical race theory, the data analysis uncovered rich, meaningful information about otherparenting.

Study participants at varied education levels represented the student services field. The gender breakdown of participants was binary; two male- and five female-identified participants with experience ranging from five to twenty years. The participants represent a diverse range of functional units, as illustrated below:

Table 2*Participant Demographics*

| Pseudonym | Gender | Functional Unit | First generation (Y/N) | Years of experience | Education level |
|-----------|--------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Africa | F | Enrollment Management | Y | 8 | Bachelor's |
| Benz | M | Residence Life | Y | 7 | Master's |
| Candy | F | Athletics | Y | 19 | Master's |
| Christina | F | Student Development and Support | Y | 20 | Doctorate |
| Jackie | F | DEI Academic Support | Y | 20 | Master's |
| Malcolm | M | DEI Programming | N | 5 | Master's |
| Marquise | F | Advising | Y | 19 | Master's |

Pseudonyms are used to protect participant identity.

Each participant experience with otherparenting was unique, both as a student being otherparented and as a staff member performing as an otherparent. However, there were emerging themes across the group. A brief overview of each participant's experience is provided followed by the emerging themes with illustrations and quotes.

Africa. Africa considers otherparenting as “looking out for students that look like you”. She feels that otherparenting was instrumental to her college completion and is not sure she would have made it through without the support. Her approach to otherparenting is very similar in that she wants students to feel that she is someone they can call on, although she finds herself specifically building relationships with Black female students because of the shared identities. Even though she had Black faculty members as instructors, she did not feel that any of them otherparented or were committed to relationships with students.

Benz. Benz found his otherparents after transferring from a community college. He was inspired by seeing educated Black people that were first-generation college students holding roles in upper administration. When he came out as gay in college, he found that his otherparents were affirming and did not treat him any different. As a result, he felt it was okay to hold that identity and not be ashamed. Benz feels it is his job to “make sure I play out the same role that I had”. Benz found that Black male students gravitated to him because he was one of very few Black men on campus.

Candy. Candy serves as an advisor for the academic arm of the athletics department. Candy is a former student-athlete and has a clear understanding of the student-athlete experience and how it differs from the general student population. Candy performs otherparenting, but never had a name for it. She feels that otherparenting is a “natural instinct to do what’s necessary” for students, especially Black students. Candy was otherparented in her undergraduate experience through an assistant coach. She did not have faculty members or advisors that looked like her and found her coach’s office to be her safe space. As an otherparent now, she feels it is her “responsibility to give that back to the kids coming through that system now.” She is cognizant of the experience of Black student-athletes and living under a microscope. She believes it is necessary to have the difficult conversations about societal expectations and the lack of luxury to have second and third chances if a mistake is made.

Christina. Christina began her college career as a student-athlete. Unlike Candy, she found her otherparents in the multicultural affairs office. This office shaped her undergraduate experience and beyond. Christina was otherparented by the director of the multicultural affairs office and the office assistant. She found solace in the office and felt

it was one of the few places where she encountered other Black people on campus. She experienced many firsts due to her interaction with her otherparents. She traveled outside of Kentucky for the first time, attended African-American-themed events, and learned the Black National Anthem. As a result of her experience, Christina is committed to providing a “safe place” for students when they feel they have no place else to go, as well as introducing and creating new opportunities that may not have otherwise had.

Jackie. Jackie entered college as an adult learner. She was a divorced mom of two young children when she began working as an administrative assistant at a HBCU. Her supervisor became her othermother encouraging her to pursue a degree. Her othermother supported her by reviewing her papers, connecting her to resources, and allowing her to take classes during the workday utilizing breaks. After successfully completing her undergraduate degree, her supervisor encouraged her to attend graduate school. Her current role as a mid-manager in an academic support unit is directly connected to the encouragement received from her othermother. Although she did not have a name for otherparenting before being introduced to it through the researcher, she felt that it came out in her care for the students she served and her desire for them to be successful and build a relationship with them.

Malcolm. Malcolm was the youngest study participant and the only participant that was a second-generation college student. As a second-generation student, Malcolm intentionally sought out otherparenting. His parents graduated from a HBCU and he felt they were not equipped to help him navigate a predominantly White institution. Although he feels that he performs the same “duties” as an otherparent, he found that his age proximity to the students makes his experience a bit unique. Malcolm does not yet

believe that he is an otherparent, but he does feel that he may be an other-cousin, other-uncle, or other-brother.

Marquise. Marquise has worked at a variety of institution types, including community colleges, private and public colleges, as well as comprehensive and research universities. Marquise recounted various scenarios of otherparents going above and beyond for her and that influence is reflected in her current work. She maintains relationships with students that she otherparented at all of the institutions that she has worked.

As illustrated, each study participant had their own unique experience with otherparenting, even in cases of sharing the same otherparent. Marquise and Christina shared the same otherparent, and Malcolm and Africa had one otherparent in common. In spite of having the same person as an otherparent, the experience was unique for each of them.

As the data from the interviews were analyzed several themes emerged across the four research questions designed to better understand the importance of otherparenting by Black staff with Black students at PWIs. The next section will highlight the themes within each research question. Table 3 summarizes the research question with 10 total emerging themes across the questions.

Table 3

Research Questions and Themes

| Research Question | Emerging Themes |
|---|---|
| To what extent have Black staff experienced for themselves and utilized otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs? | Commitment to the Culture Providing an Access Ramp |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?</p> | <p>Beyond Academic Monitoring</p> <p>Creating Counter Spaces</p> |
| <p>What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting?</p> | <p>Mutually Beneficial</p> <p>Cultural Taxation</p> <p>Cultural Mistrust</p> |
| <p>To what extent does the PWI understand and value these relationships?</p> | <p>One-Stop Shop</p> <p>Understanding in the Face of Awareness</p> <p>Encouraging an Off Ramp</p> |

Research Question 1: Black staff experience and utilize otherparenting

The first research question was, “To what extent have Black staff experienced for themselves and utilized otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs?” Several categories emerged under this question that were captured within two themes—commitment to the culture and providing an access ramp.

Commitment to the Culture. When asked about their experience with otherparenting as undergraduate students, each participant identified instances in which their otherparent went above and beyond the call of duty. Previous otherparenting literature (Foster, 1993; Mawhinney, 2011; Edwards, 2003; Griffin, 2013) alluded to the Commitment to the Culture felt by those that serve as otherparents. Black teachers felt there was an unspoken expectation to assist in the navigation of Black students. Mawhinney (2011) discussed the expectation while working at a HBCU, yet she felt the

same commitment to Black students once she transitioned to a PWI. Although the number of Black students was significantly smaller, she found the needs of Black students the same as well as her commitment to serve those students. When participants were asked about their otherparenting of Black students, they mentioned “give a safe space”, “responsibility to give back to the kids coming through that system now”, “looking out for students that look like you”, and “make sure I play out the same role that I had”. These quotes illustrate the ways in which the participants were committed to the culture.

Malcolm mentioned that he felt his otherparents’ commitment to him due to the experiences he had with them outside of the academic space. He strongly believed that they cared about him as a person beyond being a student. He recalled:

They took more of an investment in knowing who I am and understanding how I think so that they could provide me not only the support that I needed to be successful academically, but also the resources to feel socially and mentally affirmed in who I am in navigating this college experience—an investment of \$5, the occasional meals when you really weren't expecting to have a home cooked meal, the letters of recommendation.

Likewise, Marquise recalled an instance in which she wrote a Dear Jane letter to her othermother. She had not performed at the level academically necessary to maintain her scholarship. She knew that she could not continue her education without the scholarship funding. She slid the letter under the door of the multicultural office and returned to her residence hall to pack up her belongings with no intention of returning. Her othermother arrived to the office and discovered the letter before starting her day.

She came to my room, even though she didn't technically have access to the building beyond the lobby. She hugged me so tight and said we all make mistakes. She said we all have bumps, it really matters how we handle it and how that determines what kind of person we are. I didn't realize until then that she was the scholarship administrator. She gave me a second chance.

These experiences with otherparents as undergraduates influenced the way that each participant otherparents and interacts with students in their professional life.

Malcolm discussed his otherfather handing him \$5 when he jokingly asked if he could "hold" some money. That example came full circle when he found himself in a situation where he discovered a student he served had recently lost their mother and did not have money for books.

In that conversation I recognized they did not have the money to pay for books. I purchased the books with my own funds.

In a more frightening way, Candy had many experiences of going above and beyond. In a recent example from the spring semester, she found that one of her student-athletes had not attended a tutoring session. She reached out to the student and when she did not hear back, she contacted his twin brother. In the moment of the call, she heard a lot of commotion and found out the student had attempted suicide. Recalling the moment in the interview, she and I were both in tears from the emotion she described:

I literally jumped in the car. I leave [name redacted-daughter] in the house and lock the doors. I eventually called my neighbor and sent her over there to get my child. As I'm driving, I call the trainer and she makes plans to meet me at the hospital. I call the coach to let him know what is going on, and he heads to the

hospital. When I arrive, the brother and two other teammates are holding him to restrain him. He was having an out of body experience, and he is just uncontrollable and inconsolable. We get him in the car and the teammates have to go with me to keep him from trying to escape my car. I am balling the whole way to the hospital and his brother is holding his hand but he's looking out the window because he just doesn't know what to do. He's just crying, and so I reached back and grabbed the brother's hand and his whole body is shaking. I'm about to cry now telling this story.

The work of Fries-Britt and Turner (2002) and Flowers, et al. (2015) support the commitment to culture shared here. The 2002 study found that Black students reported HBCUs “feel like home” due to the individual attention students receive from faculty and staff going out of their way to assist them and meet their needs (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002). Participants in the Flowers, et al. (2015) study discussed a faculty member bringing food and supplies after calling the student about class absences and discovering the student was suffering from the flu. Otherparents generally operate as if caring for children or extended family members. The support is especially important for Black students at PWIs that feel less belonging and more isolation. The work of Walker (2018) is important in Candy's situation. His study found that otherparenting can play a role in countering the stigmas and misconceptions among Black males regarding anxiety disorders and mental illness (Walker, 2018).

Africa worked with a student majoring in education who became pregnant just before her last semester. She was unable to complete her student-teaching due to the baby's arrival date. The student's mother was out-of-state and the baby's father had

graduated and moved home for a job. As an othermother, Africa felt the need to support the student in countless ways to ensure that she did not feel alone. Ultimately, she wanted the student to know that she could still be successful, despite the change in plans. She shared:

Then, helping support her through buying onesies, buying him baby monitors, and throwing baby showers and whatever else that looked like, so that she knew that she was important and the baby was important but also finishing school.

Africa described the connection she felt which seemed to be a “latching on”.

When the relationship is built, it tends to remain throughout the college career and beyond. Africa described her connection to students that looked like her. She was more connected to Black female students. The support Africa offered to the pregnant student was well beyond her role as an enrollment management employee. She was committed to the success of the student as a person and a mother. The impact of Africa’s support is long-term.

There is another example of the long-term connection with most of the participants, but is highlighted with Jackie and Candy. Jackie mentioned that she had not worked with her othermother in over a decade. However, they keep in touch and have lunch regularly. Additionally, she shared that her othermother shows up for milestone achievements in the lives of her children. Candy was an exemplary athlete. As a result of her athletic achievements in college and professionally, she was honored as one of the institution’s Hall of Fame inductees. Her otherparent left the institution after her junior year of college. He returned two years ago to do her induction presentation.

Benz currently serves in residence life and is three years removed from his advising role, but finds that many of his Black students still come to him for advice and guidance. He described:

I'm still otherparenting students from my time there. I don't get judged on the fact that they still keep in touch with me once I left a position. They don't look at the fact they're coming up to me. [They are] sitting down with me in the dining facility for lunch or dinner, but no one sees that. It is not imperative for them to continue that relationship with a student after the purpose has been served. For us, we want to make sure we make that connection with them and they feel that connection with us during their time here and after.

In some form or fashion, each participant connected their otherparenting to paying it forward. While not every participant described the commitment as an inherent way of being for Black staff, their experience being otherparented and otherparenting students encompassed their belief to “pay it forward”. Benz pointed out:

I feel like it's my job as their otherparent here at the University to make sure I play out the same role that I had. I feel like I'm passing down the tradition, paying it forward for what was done for me.

Similarly, Africa shared:

I look at the balance of that relationship because that was what was given to me. When something goes great or something goes wrong, it is a place where you can run.

Candy approached the paying it forward from intersection of being an athlete and being Black:

My coach did that for me. It is my responsibility to give that back to the kids that are coming through that system now. I think it's important that I also pass that down to the students that are coming in behind me.

Six of seven study participants attended a PWI during their undergraduate career.

Though not explicitly stated, the participants alluded to the Commitment to the Culture because they recognized the permanence of racism on campus combined with the stressors as a Black student on campus. Participants are unable to change the climate on campus, but can create a safety for students through their commitment to the culture.

Otherparents operating as a reliable resource shapes student connection to the institution. Thus, otherparents were creating a sense of belonging and connection to academic motivation and longevity.

Providing an Access Ramp. The second theme that emerged in the analysis connected to the first research question “To what extent have Black staff experienced and utilized otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs?” was the advocacy, investment, and intentional support that provided an access ramp to college success. Foster (1993) discussed the “hidden curriculum” that made othermothering necessary. Despite the access students have to predominantly White institutions, there remains a necessary critical navigation of the space for Black students.

Many of the participants described the advocacy they felt from their otherparents and the importance of being a voice for the students they otherparent. In many of the descriptions of advocacy, it came down to advocacy within a system that was not designed for Black student success and equity. The need for advocacy and intentional support is rooted in the dominant structures that are inherently racist. Marquise recalled a

time that she was facing expulsion as a result of a fight that she got into during the OJ Simpson verdict:

I didn't face it [racism] until I went to college. I got called the N word the first time in my life going through the OJ Simpson trial. I ended up fighting. Yes, it was inappropriate, but it was this fight or flight feeling. I was facing expulsion and [othermother] advocated for me.

Her experience shapes how she prepares her students for similar situations:

I try to teach them how to navigate, how to talk to White professors, but also to advocate for themselves if they feel mistreated.

Christina recalled working with a student-athlete that was determined to be a thorn in her side. The student placed pornography on the computer lab desktops, he harassed the tutor, and he would fall asleep during study hall session. Even through all of that, Christina chose not to report his behavior to the coach. She was intentional in the ways she crafted the reports to be truthful, yet vague:

I don't want to see these young black males who are student athletes be sent back home. I was still trying to be the support system because that's what I was there for...to ensure that the student had access to study hall, that he had access to help, access to the resources.

Benz held an advisor position in a STEM field before rejoining the residence life team.

STEM fields are traditionally less Black than other fields and he felt his advocacy was of utmost importance. The lack of diversity in STEM fields can be credited to many things and is tightly connected to the tenets of CRT. Whiteness as Property is a tenet that

succinctly describes the ways in which structural and systemic racism impact today's college students. Redlining and property taxes directly impact the resource allocation to neighborhood schools. Neighborhood schools in redline areas are underfunded as a result of undervalued property (Delgado & Stefanic, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In an effort to overcome the pre-entry issues associated with Black students, Benz works to counteract the negative impact with his institutional knowledge and "insider" position. He shared his experiences with helping students navigate the appeal process and his commitment to a student that had been suspended from another STEM college:

I see my role as an advocate on their behalf because I'm able to see the system and navigate it a little bit differently and that serves as an additional perk for them.

The investment and intentional support the study participants give and receive is paramount to the college experience. Malcolm described the intentional support:

Black staff are providing more than your traditional support to students outside of their nine to five role. They are providing care. They are giving them more of the empathetic and emotional support that they may not often get from faculty or other services that are provided.

Christina's connection to students is beyond the one-off support that students may visit her to gain. Once honed in and connected to the student, she stated:

...not only that support at that moment, but continued support--from that moment and the regular checking in. I think it was probably more of an intentional support role that I was playing to ensure that this particular student was okay and that she was in a good place or a better place than she was.

Jackie described the internal struggle she has to recognize students as adults, but also knowing they may need more support than they realize:

I do want to hold their hand because they are lacking that confidence of making decisions. I think they need a little more of that otherparenting to give them encouragement and to let them know that they can. I try to do that without making them feel like I'm babying in them or that I'm trying to take the place of their mom.

The participants provided insight into the first research question to illustrate the extent to which Black staff experience and utilize otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs is well beyond the scope of their professional roles. The Commitment to the Culture and Providing an Access Ramp aligns with the philosophy behind fugitive pedagogy and the physical and intellectual acts of subversion engaged in by Black people over the course of their educational strivings (Givens, 2021). The participants are intentional in their support for Black students and believe that it is critical to their navigation in historically White spaces. Each participant had an otherparent to assist in their navigation. In turn, the participants feel an obligation to pay that forward.

Research Question 2: Importance of Familial Relationships

Strayhorn (2019) defined sense of belonging as a student's perceived social support on campus—a feeling or sensation of connectedness. He posited belonging contributes to other outcomes or behaviors, including academic achievement, engagement, enrollment and college completion. Moreover, Museus and Jayakumar (2012) found racial and ethnic minority students desire relationships with institutional agents who share racial and educational backgrounds, as well as those who provide

holistic support. The second research question asks, “What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?” Study participants shared the importance for them as undergraduate students and as staff who otherparent. Two themes arose from this research question—Beyond Academic Monitoring and Creating Counter Spaces.

Beyond Academic Monitoring. Study participants described the otherparenting relationship and the ways in which the conversations went well beyond academics. It was through these informal, non-academic advising conversations where rich otherparenting happened organically. These critical conversations were life changing. Christina’s goal after completing her undergraduate degree was to pursue a graduate degree and start a career in athletics compliance. When asked about a time that she was least receptive to the advice of her otherparent, she talked about the time that her othermother asked her to consider a graduate assistantship in the multicultural affairs office:

I wasn't receptive to being a graduate assistant. She offered me a position. I didn't think I could do academic monitoring of grades, what was I going to say to these kids. I've come from athletics. I didn't know anything about the academic monitoring and all the stuff that I do now. I was really hesitant. I didn't want to listen to it. I didn't want to hear her compliment. I didn't trust in that belief that she saw in me that I didn't have in myself.

In a follow-up question, Christina was asked whether she felt this conversation changed her career trajectory. In that moment, she realized the conversation was the start of her twenty-year career in student services.

In his advising role, Benz added to the story he told about the suspended STEM student. He recalled the moment that he was committed to the student's success:

I took him in and I told him "I'm not gonna let you leave". I'm not saying the other advisors in the college did not do a good job of advising him on his options because he found his way to me. At the end of the day, it also shows that we have to be a little bit more in tune with different sort of personalities when they're struggling. We got him in. The following semester he did really well. He was trying to appeal some grades and used some repeat options to get the GPA back up. He graduated and went on to dental school.

Though the conversations were centered around academics, each conversation was deeper than the mechanics of an advising role. The conversations illustrate the deeper level of commitment to the student as a person. The level of commitment provides the student with the feeling of being seen and a sense of belonging and connection.

Otherparenting influences students in direct and indirect ways. Malcolm credits his student affairs career to the influence of his otherparents:

I would say they were major influences of my college experience because I think that they were able to see me as more than just a number. I owe me being in student affairs to the influence of those otherparents. I think about my life trajectory and where I found success in my undergraduate career was very heavily influenced by those otherparents.

He found that he has similar influence with the students that he otherparents:

All of my support from then came from holding that student accountable to be better (with care), and so I was able to notice when the student was struggling. I

wanted to make sure that if I can provide you with something, whether that's a bite to eat, whether that is just a space to talk. The student knows they can get that from me. The student consistently came to me for those things as well as for inspiration as a student affairs professional. They want to enter the field as well, and so now that person is now in graduate school pursuing student affairs because of I think the influence of how I showed up as the otherparent.

While there is no way to quantify the impact of otherparenting and college completion in this study, the influence is clear. Beyond the participant reflections shared, many of the participants identified a critical conversation that had a lasting impact on them as a person, student, or professional. The conveyance of the influence from otherparenting reiterates the finding from Vaccaro and Newman (2016) of minoritized students longing for deeper, authentic relationships rooted in self-awareness. Students of Color felt an increased sense of belonging when they forged relationships that went beyond familiarity, friendliness, and functional task-related support (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016).

Creating Counter Spaces. Patton's (2015) study on the disenfranchisement of Black students in college found that Black students rely on safe spaces (also referred to as counter spaces), such as cultural centers or multicultural affairs offices. The notion of safe spaces and simultaneous representation were present in this study and intersected with sense of belonging. Candy summarized the experience of Black students on predominantly White campuses:

It is difficult because you're always feeling like you're the only one. They feel like they have no place, they're not a part of the campus community. We've

always been in situations where we have to adjust to the environment that we're in. We've thrived even through all of that. We've been successful. So I think they will succeed, but it makes their experience a whole lot easier through that otherparenting and knowing that they can go to someone who has had similar experiences and understands what they're talking about.

Undergirding the sense of belonging that can be essential to survival, there must be safety and representation. Candy described the relief she felt to be able to go to her coach's office and vent as her authentic self:

I knew that I could go and sit down in my coach's office and I could say whatever I needed to say. I could have whatever experience. I could express whatever emotions I was feeling at that time, and I knew that I wasn't going to be judged based on what I was experiencing or someone wasn't going to try to diminish what I was feeling.

Christina was a student-athlete during her college career, but did not find that space within athletics. She posited that she found that space within the multicultural affairs office:

That was probably the only place that I did have as a student where I could go and actually see other Black students or other Black staff or programs and opportunities to engage with other Black students.

Christina made sure to provide that same space for a student-athlete during her professional career. The student-athlete was the only Person of Color in a team sport that is traditionally White. He was subjected to many microaggressions to the point the head coach participated. Christina shared:

I provided a safe place where he could come and be his authentic Black self. As I think, it is referred to providing a safe place, I want students to feel that they have a place to go if you have nowhere to go. If you don't know anyone else who you can talk to, turn to, or just have a space to sit and be still. That is what I think I found most valuable for me as a student.

Roksa and Whitley (2017) found that faculty who employ more student-centered philosophies tend to facilitate student success, and the faculty members' educational philosophies shaped students' sense of belonging and fit within the institution. While the study found that student-centered support can be more important to students than shared racial and ethnic identity, participants in this study found representation matters. Black males who fared well in higher education reported a strong(er) sense of belonging in college and those who performed less well tended to feel invisible, isolated, or alienated on campus (Strayhorn, 2019). Benz described this experience for the students he otherparented. It was particularly striking that Black males connected with Benz without any hesitancy to his LGBTQ+ identity:

Black male students gravitated to me because there were no others. They come back to me over and over because there aren't that many of us on this campus and they feel comfortable with me. They don't feel comfortable going into any of the additional campus services that are not for the Black people. At this university, they need to see people that look like them.

Jackie shared a similar thought on the importance of representation and shared identity:

I know that a lot of the Students of Color come from some of the same dynamics that we come from. You share your experiences with them. It gives them

encouragement. It allows them to know that it's possible for them to achieve the goals and the dreams that they have for themselves. The students of color feel like their White faculty and staff members don't relate to them. They don't understand where they come from, they don't understand where they're trying to go, that some of them don't even know how to help them.

The intersection of belonging, CRT—the significant factor race plays in education, and

PWI environments illustrates the non-academic obstacles Black college students have to navigate. Otherparenting provides the familial support combined with social and cultural capital to ease this process. The second research question asks, “What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?” The importance is critical and far-reaching. Otherparenting touches many areas, including accountability, belonging, critical conversations, representation and safe spaces.

Research Question 3: Lived Experience

Otherparenting in the higher education landscape has been referred to as othermothering, othermothering in the academy, academic mothering, and otherfathering. Each term is connected to a form of informal advisement that can be academic or personal in nature (Edwards, 2003). Academic mothers or othermothers [otherparents] provide instruction on the temporary transformations necessary to survive and thrive until success is achieved. Otherparenting at PWIs in the context of CRT tenet, Permanence of Racism, is both a rewarding and extremely taxing undertaking for Black staff. The third

research question asks, “What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting at PWIs?”

Foster (1993) centered her study of othermothering on Northern-educated women that matriculated through HBCUs. Foster found that those women felt a responsibility to future generations of Black students. Only one of the study participants matriculated through a HBCU, but all felt a responsibility to “give back” to the students coming through the system. The themes emerging from the lived experience of study participants were: Mutually Beneficial Relationships, Cultural Taxation, and Cultural Mistrust.

Mutually Beneficial Relationships. The otherparenting relationships described by the participants were not give and take situations. However, the success of the student appeared to be the “give” the participants most appreciated. When asked about the highs of otherparenting, Malcolm recalled:

The highs far exceed the potential lows that I've experienced. I think a high for me is when you help a student navigate a really stressful situation. A high is a thank you. When you get a thank you that does something different when you know that your investment, your labor, your energy is appreciated.

Similarly, Africa shared the academic highs as well as personal highs:

Success of graduation, good grades on tests, good semesters, acceptances to graduate school, writing letters of recommendation for graduate school, and students being accepted to graduate school...marriages, babies, all the goods in life.

Marquise summarized the otherparenting experience as:

The highs are when you see them graduate from law school and graduate with a Masters or see them getting married. The notes and cards, as far as the students that tell you thank you or let you know how much you mean to them. As much as I say that stuff doesn't matter to look back and know that you impacted lives in what you've done, the best feeling in the world is seeing them accomplish all the things they said they were going to accomplish.

Cultural Taxation. Participants were fiercely committed to the students they served. To be that committed requires a great deal of emotional investment and time commitment. The participants view of the toll of the investment aligns with Mawhinney's (2011) study. She discussed the impact of othermothering on the health and well-being of Black faculty, as some of her personal decisions around othermothering negatively affected her personal life. She extended herself for students at the cost of sake of her own health and well-being (Mawhinney, 2011). Marquise described feelings of guilt from a student she could not reach over a decade prior:

She wouldn't perform and it hurt me that I couldn't reach her. I saw the potential. I knew she could do wonderful things, but she would not let her guard down. She's struggling now in her adult life. I want to reach out to her. To this day, I feel like I never got through to her.

Benz shared the impact of otherparenting on his workload:

The lows are those long nights, those early mornings, those weekends that we are not getting paid for. The lows are when they come in crisis and having to explain to my employer that I can't do what you expect me to do today because my student is in crisis or the supervisor suggests referring them out because it is

outside of my job responsibilities. But they [the students] don't trust anyone else to help them with this, so that's a low for me. I have to stay late at work to get what I need to get done because I dealt with the crisis for three hours. I know it's a thankless job, but then the student says "I made it". No, "we" made it.

Malcolm's assessment of the toll of otherparenting highlighted the taxation many Black

staff and faculty experience at PWIs. His experience illustrates the taxation described by Cleveland, et al. (2018). Although Cleveland, et al. (2018) described the impact of taxation on Black faculty, Black staff are called on to participate in search committees, workgroups, and task forces at institutions as the representative of "diversity." Malcolm shared:

It can be very draining...some of the over taxation you're already experiencing.

As for me, as a staff of color at a predominantly white institution, you feel like you're giving your all 110% of the time. You don't get to shut off work when you leave the office, because you are concerned about a student's well-being and you're concerned about a student knowing that you are there for them, which means you want to show up to where they are...whether that's an event or a program or just the space. That taxation is definitely a huge weight that I feel like has led me to be emotionally drained.

Candy described the impact to her family, as well as her overall health and well-being:

I tell them, "I take your problems home with me every single night. I don't take it off my shoulders and sit it on the corner of my desk and say I'll resume this issue when I get back to the office tomorrow morning at eight o'clock". I am an

empath and it is extremely difficult for me at times to draw the line between my work and my personal life. I also feel like my own child is short-changed at times because I carry the weight of my students home. I am often emotionally and physically drained and as a result, I don't sleep or workout as I should.

Cultural Mistrust. An interesting and unanticipated result from this study was uncovered when participants were asked whether they had a different approach to their work with Black students than their approach with other students. Every participant described a different approach. However, many participants discussed the desire to have the same relationship with all students regardless of race and ethnicity. The participants described the obstacles they must overcome in order to have similar relationships with all students, especially White students.

Marquise recalled the lack of trust White students have for her advising ability:

I deal with White students questioning my judgement, getting their parents involved and all that. I have students that act like I don't know what I am doing.

I get that more from students that don't look like me.

I feel like the conversation and dialogue and the things I say, Black students are more receptive and receive it. That is not always the case with White students.

They've been catered to or they have this expectation that I'm supposed to do what they tell me to do.

Jackie shared a similar sentiment:

I feel like Caucasian students don't value the advice or the resources that we give.

They come in like they already know everything. If they want to know something, they don't want to hear from a person of color. They don't want to

hear it from us. If we tell them, then it's like we're nasty, we're rude because you tell them something that they didn't want to hear. Or you tell them something and they're like "Oh, they don't know what they're talking about". So I just don't feel like they're as receptive or accepting of the information and the advice that we give them.

Christina makes an intentional effort to gain respect from her White students and their families:

Whereas for my students who are not students of color, it's trying to establish a rapport, build trust, and earn their respect. I have to show them I'm educated. I have to impress them and their family because, oftentimes with our White students, it is not just them as an individual. Then I can also switch it and talk in a way that I can present to my White students where they feel comfortable to have a conversation with me or ensure that they are interested in wanting to continue to have a conversation with me.

I don't feel respected, often disrespected, in some of the conversations with White students and their family. A student can ask me and my White counterpart the same question and their reactions are completely different to the same answer.

This is another demonstration of respect. Whereas Black students will say Ms. Christina or Ms. Smith, White students say Christina.

Candy shared the level of aggression that she has felt from White students:

I can't tell you how many times I've been cussed out by the students and by the students' parents. I had one student even raise up at me coming over my desk. He was not receptive to some information that I was giving him about not being

eligible for upper division. It was very, very ugly and he had to be removed from the office.

The lived experience of study participants is rewarding, but also heavy. The results of the question about the lived experience shows the highs and lows of otherparenting. The findings reflect findings of previous studies exploring the commitment of Black faculty to Black students at HBCUs and PWIs. The additional finding of the cultural mistrust was surprising, but reinforces the CRT tenet of the permanence of racism and race as a determining factor of inequity in education, though not previously explored at the staff level.

Research Question 4: Understanding and Valuing Otherparenting

In the current national political climate, critical race theory is under attack. Much of this attack is grounded in misinformation and misinterpreting CRT anything remotely challenging to the status quo. Otherparenting on the surface is not under attack at PWIs. However, the White supremacist structures, systems, and policies that make the concept poised to endure go unchecked. Therefore, otherparenting will remain a necessity for many Black students looking to successfully navigate predominantly White campuses. The final research question asks, “To what extent does the PWI understand and value these relationships?” The results show that race, racism, and Whiteness are ever-present and they limit the understanding and value-added of otherparenting.

One-Stop Shop. The participants in the study shared how their students rely on them for many of the services provided on campus out of the scope of their job responsibilities, and in some cases their own reliance on their otherparents as One-Stop Shops. In theory, one-stop shops are ideal for students. However in this instance, they

highlight the disconnect that exists on predominantly White campuses for Black students. The One-Stop Shop phenomenon for Black students is indicative of the fact the students have created a racial microclimate (Serrano, 2021) within the institution and feel that other spaces on campuses are less welcoming and less safe. Africa shared:

Because I had built relationships [with otherparents], I never went to the Career Center. I had a resume reviewer. I had a coach to help me interview. I had all of those things without ever stepping foot in the Career Center at UK through my otherparents. I think those relationships are priceless.

Africa's reliance on her otherparents for all things also emphasizes her disconnect from faculty as well. She and Malcolm mentioned feeling less connected to faculty and that faculty members appeared to be juggling more and unable to assist students. Jackie shared a similar thought, but expanded to include the potential thought process of Black students:

The students of color feel like their Caucasian faculty and staff members don't relate to them. They don't understand where they come from, they don't understand where they're trying to go, that some of them don't even know how to help them. They don't know how to offer them resources. I hear from senior students, especially. For example, the Counseling Center. Faculty and staff of color will walk them over because we want to make sure that they get to the resource. We let them know that they are important and you're not an interruption of my day. You're the reason that I'm here. That's the difference, they just don't feel like our White counterparts care.

Likewise, Benz highlighted the negative impact on Black students if otherparenting was not a resource:

I have been told they don't feel comfortable going into the financial aid office.

They don't feel comfortable going into any of the additional campus services that are not for the black people. If the otherparenting was not here, those students of color would not feel empowered or comfortable enough to go into those spaces and ask for assistance.

For participants in the study, the lack of awareness and understanding of otherparenting contributed to the taxation mentioned earlier. Padilla (1994) coined the term “cultural taxation” to describe the dilemma of ethnic scholars to respond to tasks because the administration made the assumption minority staff are best suited for the task as a result of their race. While there is a deep sense of “cultural obligation”, there is little reward from the institution despite the accolades the institution may receive. Cleveland, et al (2018) reinforced this notion of added responsibility for Black faculty and staff. Padilla (1994) described the double-edged sword of such work. The “payback” for providing the support comes with a warning that too much time is being spent on ethnic matters (Padilla, 1994). The invisible labor of otherparenting created issues around job performance. Benz’s current role is less student-facing than previous roles. He has Black staff members that he supervises and shared the line he must navigate among his peer supervisors:

We have some staff members who can do it [otherparenting] really well, but it does tax them. The flip side is that they are very exhausted, and they may want to come in [to the office] a little late and that brings up work ethic questions.

Candy shared how initiative showed up in a performance evaluation with her supervisor:

As a matter of fact, one of my evaluations I remember my new supervisor gave me a two on initiative. Literally, the day before, I had to take a student to the doctor. I was probably with her for four hours. I said to my supervisor that we take initiative every single day and the academic piece takes care of itself. The initiative part goes beyond the minimum of what we're what we're required to do. Every single day I'm doing stuff outside of what was written on paper.

Understanding in the Face of Awareness. Overwhelmingly, the participants communicated that immediate supervisors, units, and the institution had limited understanding and value for otherparenting. However, a few participants shared an increased level of understanding once unit supervisors became aware of otherparenting scenarios. For example, Candy shared the episode of the suicide attempt to supervisors, there was some enlightenment:

For the first time, actually, I think he understood at that point because he is not doing otherparenting at all.

Marquise believes that her immediate supervisor recognizes otherparenting and does not attempt to limit her interaction with students:

I had one of my Black students on Zoom. I was having a very honest conversation with her. He was walking past my office door and he hears me on Zoom. He was just like as a White man, I can't say this stuff. The student is a challenge and the conversations have to be more direct and honest to get through. He understands that the conversation was grounded in love and respect.

Christina communicated a similar understanding and an encouragement to continue otherparenting:

I think my direct supervisor recognizes it. He will give us permission to do otherparenting and not question why we may have some additional conversation or may further engage with Black and Brown students in our office.

Encouraging an Off-Ramp. Conversely, Malcolm and Jackie shared instances in which their Black supervisors encouraged a disconnect from otherparenting and the behaviors that facilitate relationship-building. Supervisors were Encouraging an Off-Ramp from otherparenting. Malcolm disclosed a conversation about transitioning from otherparenting to advocacy with his supervisor:

I also say that the supervisor would also challenge me in saying that my position and my forward movement in my career, otherparenting shows up less and less because your responsibilities are not always going to be one on one, day to day with the students and you may become more of an advocate in other ways, in administrative ways.

Jackie has daily student contact and communicated the angst she feels when students visit her office because of her supervisor's reprimand:

My unit supervisor...I'm not sure. I say that because there were times when some students would come in. It was brought up in a staff meeting that "students can't just come and hang out in your office". Because the othermothering relationship is established, they want to come in and they want to talk, they want to hang out when they don't have anything to do...that may be the time that they actually

really open up and tell you some issues that they're dealing with and so I don't think othermothering was taken into consideration.

The exchange Jackie describes crosses two tenets of CRT: critique of liberalism and commitment to social justice. Critique of liberalism is a notion of color blindness. In the case of Jackie and her supervisor, the supervisor has the expectation that Jackie and all offices within the unit will operate identically to all other units/offices on campus. The expectation ignores the structures and systems in place that put Black students at a less than advantageous position. Moreover, it highlights the need for all students to fully engage in campus life as suggested under the commitment to social justice tenet. Black students should be allowed to be loud and engage as their full authentic selves rather than bend to institutional expectations. The expectation by Jackie's supervisor suggests that she wants to avoid her office being "niggered" (Harper, 2013). Existing literature on assimilation focuses on international and immigrant students, yet the expectation of assimilation to dominant culture encompasses all non-White students. Kim, Oh, and Mumbauer (2019) discuss the significant difficulties international students experience as they adjust to the dominant culture in the United States. At PWIs, the dominant culture is grounded in Whiteness.

The results of the study reinforce the principle that Black staff are performing otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs. The study found significant commitment to otherparenting as a means to move the Black culture forward. Additionally, the results showed the importance of the familial relationships. The otherparenting relationships provided an avenue for critical conversations that were essential to the life trajectory for Black students. As well, otherparenting provided a

counter space for Black students on campus. There is existing literature on the benefits of counterspaces and microclimates.

Serrano (2020) and Garcia (2015) center counterspaces and racial microclimates at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). The studies found that counterspaces and microclimates can exist for students within an overall polarizing campus climate. In the cases where positive microclimates were identified, students and staff found the diversity of the office or unit reflective of the student body. Offices that did not reflect the student population were less likely to be identified as positive microclimates. Counter spaces and microclimates will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. While the relationships are rewarding and beneficial to study participants, the impact of cultural taxation and mistrust is striking. Finally, the understanding and value of otherparenting at the unit and institutional level is minimal and creates undue burden on Black staff performing otherparenting. The next chapter will explore and discuss the implications for practice and the direction of future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

On a recent podcast episode, Joan Morgan stated “It’s the work that counts” (Lucas, 2021, 65:05). Morgan’s quote was connected to her work as a hip-hop feminist and the template she laid out for other Black women writers to follow (Lucas, 2021). Otherparenting operates in a similar way. Otherparents serve as guide through the higher education landscape sharing the lessons learned, the unspoken rules, and facilitating belonging to move through the system successfully. Within the framework of critical race theory, the college experience for Black students is rife with systemic barriers and obstacles. This study found that otherparenting is the work that counts.

Study Summary

This study examined the importance of otherparenting on the Black college student experience. The results of this study illustrated the ways in which the predominantly White campus is less welcoming and accessible to Black students. Otherparenting appeared to be an important component to the successful navigation of PWIs for Black students. This chapter highlights the important findings and conclusions in the study and includes implications for practice. Additionally, the study provides direction for future research around otherparenting with Black staff and students.

A significant body of literature has explored the impact and importance of otherparenting among Black faculty at historically Black colleges and universities. There is also a limited amount of otherparenting research among Black faculty at PWIs. A study conducted by Hirt, et al. (2008) suggested further study of otherparenting among

student affairs staff upon finding benefits of otherparenting relationships with faculty among Black students. Otherparenting has not been studied among Black student services staff at PWIs. Student services staff are by training and education student-centered professionals focused on holistic development. The purpose of this study was to explore the importance of otherparenting among Black student services staff at a PWI. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent have Black staff experienced and utilized otherparenting with Black college students at PWIs?
- 2) What is the importance of these familial relationships in the undergraduate experience of Black students at PWIs?
- 3) What is the lived experience of Black staff who use otherparenting at PWIs?
- 4) To what extent does the PWI understand and value these relationships?

The qualitative methodology of this study was phenomenological. The phenomenon in the study was otherparenting. Phenomenology was the best method to examine the lived experience of Black staff performing otherparenting in a rich, meaningful way. Husserlian-oriented phenomenology tends to study “of-ness” of phenomena. In this philosophy, one is not studying the subjective lived experiences of those who have experienced the phenomenon (Vagle, 2018). The researcher is not studying the subject or the object, but a particular intentional relationship between the subject and object. This phenomenological study included the careful process of transitioning from a focus on particulars or facts to the more general essence of experience.

This study consisted of semi-structured interviews with study participants. There were seven participants interviewed for the study. The participants were Black student services staff at a predominantly White research university in the southern region of the United States. The participants were staff members identified and recruited as people performing otherparenting. The sixty- to ninety-minute semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom. Data analysis included multiple line-by-line readings to code data into meaningful, emerging themes. I also utilized data analysis and organization following the Dedoose template. This organization reinforced the theming performed manually.

Findings

Two themes appeared to show that otherparenting is centered around a commitment to the culture and providing an access ramp for Black students. These findings seem to support an understanding by staff performing otherparenting that the path to successful completion varies between Black students and the dominant population. To that end, participants were committed to providing the necessary care, guidance, and support to assist students during their time at the university and beyond. The participants in this study appear to reinforce previous study findings of the connection and kinship Black staff and faculty feel toward Black students. More specifically at PWIs, Black staff and faculty understand the need for an “underground railroad” to move students through an anti-Black system. The findings highlight the CRT tenet—Permanence of Racism—as study participants understand and have experienced the microaggressions, stereotype threat, and overt racism present on predominantly White

campuses. Participants wanted to be the bridge for Black students to navigate the campus successfully by any means necessary.

Hirt (2006) described the student affairs staff working at HBCUs as Guardians. Guardians are genuinely committed to helping students succeed. Students are viewed as gems that need to be mined and polished. Guardian staff see themselves as surrogate parents or siblings and assume those roles when dealing with students (Hirt, 2006). As suggested in the review of literature, the Guardian trope should be considered more generally to Black student services staff at all institution types rather than just at the HBCU. The findings of the study support Hirt's research through a commitment to the culture and providing an access ramp. Unlike the limitation of the Guardian descriptor for HBCU student services staff, this study supports the Guardian as a descriptor for many Black student affairs professionals. Study participants illustrated a genuine commitment to Black students at the PWI. The roles and relationships were familial and incorporated the "pay it forward" mentality described by Hirt (2006). Much like minoritized faculty members in a previous study, Black student affairs staff proactively establish relationships with Black students for a range of reasons including feeling a sense of responsibility for protecting students from racial injury in their academic programs and departments, elsewhere on campus, and in their future careers (Harper, 2013).

The study findings support the connection of sense of belonging and otherparenting. Strayhorn (2019) discussed the importance of belonging and the critical connection to Black student success. He connected belonging to the outcomes and behaviors that contributed to academic achievement, engagement and enrollment and

attrition in college (Strayhorn, 2019). Palmer, et al. (2014) discussed the psychological stress of stereotypes and microaggressions and the impact on Black male students; similarly, Candy's work with student-athletes highlighted the stereotypes and microaggressions Black students face. The athletics unit where Candy works has an increased ethic of care more so than other campus units. Student-athletes are catered to on the campus as a result of the investment the institution has made in the student as a revenue-generating source. Yet, Black students were subjected to stereotypical academic deficiencies that are tied to Students of Color. The story Candy shared about an advisor refusing to re-enroll a Black student-athlete into a course he had been mistakenly withdrawn from because "he was going to fail anyway" illustrates the ways in which an increased ethic of care is not always equal to a safe and affirming space. The advocacy, care, and commitment from otherparents seems to be a necessity for Black students at PWIs.

In addition to Commitment to Culture and Providing an Access Ramp, other themes included support Beyond Academic Monitoring and Creating Counter Spaces. Participants described the critical conversations they had with students as well as the conversations their otherparents had with them when they were undergraduates. These conversations, in some cases, appeared to shift the life and career trajectory of the recipients. Otherparents served as a counter space for students. Participants described providing a safe space for students to be their authentic, Black selves and be a place of comfort and support when students did not have that space anywhere else on campus.

Harper (2013) discussed the obstacles Black students face at PWIs. Students are subjected to onliness, "niggering", and other microaggressions. As a former student-

athlete and current advisor for student-athletes, Candy described much of what Black students encounter. She felt the need to provide the safe space in a sea of oneliness to pay it forward for what was provided to her. Harper (2013) highlighted the importance of representation. He found that students not seeing others like them in positions of influence and authority at PWIs could hamper Black students' motivation to excel, persist, and pursue post-graduate levels of education. Moreover, minoritized students need advocates who can validate their competence, belongingness, and racialized experiences (Harper, 2013). The validation mentioned by Harper was evident in Christina's recollection of a conversation with her othermother. Although resistant to the advice, the conversation was shown to be critical in determining Christina's career path in higher education. She recalled feeling less confident in her abilities, and unable to see in herself the potential seen by her othermother. Otherparenting is providing the support and affirmation necessary for Black students to survive and thrive in White spaces.

Study participants described providing and being a safe space for Black students on campus. The participants recognized the need for a safe space both as students themselves, and to provide safe space as a professional. The counter space created by study participants contributed to the sense of belonging and connection to the institution. The study found that students were able to find that belonging via the otherparenting relationship in spite of the institutional climate, not because of it. Ideally, otherparenting should not be necessary in 2021. Yet, the current climate shows the permanence of racism and race as a factor in determining inequity is ever-present and unwavering. Otherparenting may be more important currently than ever before.

As early as 2003, Edwards (2003) began researching the impact of othermothering in the academy as academic mothering. She found that othermothers provided the instruction on the temporary transformations necessary to survive and thrive until success is obtained (Edwards, 2003). The “temporary transformations” Edwards (2003) discussed can be described as assimilation. Otherparenting provides the road map for navigation of a system rooted in Whiteness and White supremacy. The results of this study support this understanding of navigating White spaces. This understanding was most prominent in the descriptions given by Candy and Benz. Benz shared how he helped guide students through the appeal process and ensured that students were familiar with the unwritten rules. Likewise, Candy shared the conversations that she has with student-athletes related to living under a microscope and not being afforded the opportunity to make a mistake.

The inability to make a mistake is particularly evident in a recent story about a group of student-athletes at the University of Kentucky. In March 2021, the players attended an unauthorized party sponsored by a campus fraternity. There was an altercation as the players were asked to leave. The altercation was investigated by the institution. The investigation found that the White? fraternity was placed on probation for multiple health and safety violations, and three of the student-athletes were charged with harm or threat of harm violation at the conclusion of the university conduct process. In September, the players were charged with first-degree burglary and one student-athlete had an additional charge of wanton endangerment through the local court system. The players were banned from participating in practices and games for six weeks (Hale, 2021).

As the investigation continued, it was discovered that the students were subject to racial slurs, which resulted in the altercation. Ultimately, the grand jury failed to indict the student-athletes (Hale, 2021). The potential impact of charges on the life trajectory of the student-athletes cannot be overstated. The harm of micro-aggressions and the reaction to the aggression as a young adult can be life-changing. The story is indicative of the daily experience of Black students at a PWI. At one point in the participant interviews, Benz's commented that the importance of otherparenting was "a matter of life and death". The experience these student-athletes had illustrates Benz's assertion in real time.

This study findings support the assertions from previous otherparenting literature (Brooms, 2017; Walker, 2018; Flowers, et al., 2015). Faculty performing othermothering were credited with advancing student success and personal development through othermothering (Flowers, et al., 2015). The myriad examples provided by study participants connected to the support provided by otherparenting that went beyond academic monitoring endorse these findings. Whether it is Malcolm purchasing books for a student with his own money or Africa hosting a baby shower for a student, participants in the study were fully committed to the students they serve.

Walker (2018) attributed otherparenting as an avenue to improved mental health outcomes among Black males at HBCUs. Mental health concerns for Black men showed up in this study as well. Christina shared the story of suggesting counseling for a Black male student struggling with anger management. Africa discussed missing a staff meeting to walk a student over to the counseling center. The mental health outcome most striking was Candy's recount of a Black male student attempting suicide and leaving

home to take him to the hospital. There is no proof of correlation to definitively state that otherparenting prevents these mental health crises from escalating, but it is hard to imagine the relationships being a hindrance.

Finally, Brooms (2017) found otherfathers play a critical role in the holistic development of students' social, emotional, educational, and identity needs and is different than mentoring as it emphasizes the extra support beyond the classroom. Brooms (2017) work is supported through this study as Benz described the number of Black males that sought him out as a result of the shared identity. When asked whether the kinship was more enhanced when students held intersecting identities (Black male and gay), he said no. His sexuality was less salient than race as they were looking to be affirmed and valued (Brooms, 2017). The shared identity of being a Black male in a predominantly White space was most salient for the students connected to Benz.

Mawhinney (2011) and Griffin (2013) explored the impact of otherparenting on the health and well-being of Black faculty. Both found the otherparenting relationships to be fulfilling and a simultaneous strain on their time and energy. This study confirms this finding as participants describe the drain of otherparenting. Study participants shared that their commitment to otherparenting resulted in evening and weekend hours, sacrificed time and energy, and an imbalanced work-life.

Overall, participants seemed to have a mutually beneficial connection to otherparenting. However, the experience appears to be mired by cultural taxation and cultural mistrust. Participants shared a joy and fulfillment in the otherparenting relationships they have with students. The joy and fulfillment are a result of the deep connection developed through otherparenting. The deep connection leads to an inability

to disconnect. The participants shared the emotional drain and imbalance between work and life.

The participants felt that at the unit and institution level there is very little understanding and value of otherparenting. Participants described becoming a one-stop shop for Black students. The comfort with otherparents combined with the discomfort in other campus spaces appeared to show that students are overly reliant on otherparents. Counter space and microclimate literature (Garcia, 2015; Serrano, 2020) illustrate the safe spaces that students create on campuses that can be viewed as hostile. Those spaces that fail to reflect the diversity of the student body cause students to create an ecosystem of sameness. Students are intentionally seeking safety in spaces in which students, staff, and administrators look like them (Garcia, 2015).

Despite an increased focus on diversity, predominantly White institutions continue to miss the mark when it comes to students of color. The “gaps” are not closing. Despite varied efforts and initiatives, the success measures for Black students at PWIs remain stagnant. Structural racism and systemic barriers rooted in Whiteness have yet to be dismantled that would create a climate of belonging and success for all students. Until this utopia of equity is achieved, otherparenting remains a necessary tool for Black students. The attacks on critical race theory have infiltrated the political divide. When considering the composition of university boards, it is difficult to imagine a revolutionary shift from the status quo. It is critical for PWIs that truly value diversity, equity, and inclusion to recognize, understand, and value otherparenting and the benefit for Black students on their campuses.

Guiffrida (2005) recognized that much of the othermothering literature focused on faculty at HBCUs. He found that student-centered faculty that provided career, academic, and personal advising and support were considered important to Black college students. As a result, he posited that student-centered faculty at PWIs could respond to the unique needs, expectations, and experiences of Black students attending predominantly White campuses. Hirt, et al. (2008) took Guiffrida's suggestion to another level by suggesting an examination of the relationships between staff and administrators and minority students who are enrolled at PWIs. This study answers Hirt et al.'s suggestion by focusing on otherparenting performed by Black student services staff at a PWI. Study participants were actively engaged in otherparenting as professionals and had been otherparented by Black staff when they were undergraduates.

Unexpected Findings

The results of this study confirmed the previous body of literature on otherparenting. This study attempted to center Black student affairs professionals that performed otherparenting. Previous research examined otherparenting within the HBCU and a limited expansion among Black faculty at PWIs. As a result of the narrow scope of existing literature, there were findings previously uncovered. For example, several study participants shared students supported by otherparents tended to rely on that person for all things related to campus navigation.

Africa recalled never utilizing the career center at her campus because her otherparents reviewed her resume, conducted mock interviews, and wrote recommendation letters. Benz and Jackie shared student concerns in visiting campus offices without Black staff. Many of the otherparents had to be cross-trained or

moderately well-versed in several campus functions to accommodate. Hirt (2006) mentioned that student affairs professionals at research universities have failed to be interdisciplinary and cross-functional and named those professionals “Specialists”. Black staff in this study had to be both interdisciplinary and cross-functional, contributing to the taxation of otherparenting. Moreover, Marquise had the additional burden of advising Black students not assigned to her because her advisees discussed her support with other students in the college, who then reached out to Marquise.

Many participants desire an otherparenting relationship with all students. Yet the findings of the study show the hostile relationship they can have with White students. There is a body of research related to the bias, prejudice, and racism Black faculty experience from White students. Merritt (2008) examined the bias associated with student evaluations of teaching. When asked about whether there was a differing approach in work with Black students, many of the study participants shared several instances of mistrust, lack of respect, and hostility from White students. Participants preferred to have the same student-centered approach regardless of race but found that White students were less receptive to even surface level work leading to the development of deeper and more meaningful relationships.

When I began my career in higher education, I worked in a pre-Michigan Supreme Court case environment—almost all of my students were Black. Post-Michigan case, the diversity unit included all students. This change meant that I was working with White students. My work with White students was very different. The students came into my office very aloof and the non-verbal cues let me know they felt I was wasting their time. I did my job to ensure their academic progress. I made the assumption that

the hostility was a result of the White students being in a Black space. The participant voices in this study helped me understand that it was not simply the Black space, it was the Black face.

Some participants shared a limited understanding and value of otherparenting from supervisors and the institution. In some cases, White supervisors encouraged participants and gave them autonomy to otherparent Black students . On the other hand, a few participants shared the resistance of their Black supervisors for them to facilitate otherparenting relationships with students. The differences between some Black supervisors and White supervisors were unexpected. The majority of supervisors seemed to share a lack of understanding of otherparenting and a resistance to the “overstepping” that is sometimes involved with otherparenting. However, there were some White supervisors able to recognize the benefits of otherparenting. In those cases, the supervisors encouraged and assisted participants in their otherparenting work. Conversely, two participants shared a resistance to otherparenting from their Black supervisors. Whether it was the “disruption” caused by the development of otherparenting relationships or a focus toward an indirect student contact career trajectory, the participants were encouraged to limit their engagement with Black students. The resistance could be speculated in many ways, self-hate, a desire to assimilate, or self-preservation in an anti-Black climate.

Implications for Practice

There are several implications for practice related to this study. The study has provided PWIs with the opportunity to maximize on a service that is being offered to many Black students through Black student services staff.

Diversified Units/Offices

Many predominantly White institutions have a designated unit/office committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The presence of DEI offices can cause other units on campus to feel the responsibility of equity work lies elsewhere. Moreover, many staff of color are relegated to DEI units resulting in a high concentration of Black student affairs professionals in one area. The diversity of the functional units represented in this study highlight the importance of representation outside of DEI offices. Study participants shared the hesitation of Black students to seek assistance in offices in which no one looks like them. Succinctly speaking, representation matters. Representation matters for several reasons. Most important, Black students need to see themselves represented outside of traditional “Black” offices. Their needs are beyond the scope of what is offered in one functional area. Second, representation beyond one office shows students are wholly supported and important beyond diversity, equity, and inclusion. Third, Black students are connecting to otherparents outside of DEI as illustrated in the results of this study.

Seeing themselves represented in residence life, student activities, advising, and athletics serves as endorsement for the unit to be viewed as trusted resource. I liken this to the way I travel. I often travel alone to different cities and states. I am intentional about my stops along my journey as a Black woman traveling alone. I ceased stopping at rest areas because I did not know what I may encounter. I only stop at truck stops now. There are Black over-the-road truck drivers. It is highly probable that I will see a Black person when I stop at truck stops. I rationalize their presence at the truck stop as an

endorsement of my safety. I believe Black students feel the same way when they visit campus offices and see a Black face.

CUPA-HR found that higher education is doing relatively well on the representation for Black professionals at the staff level, especially in comparison to the diversity of the faculty ranks. A CUPA-HR interactive graphic (July 2020) showed that Black employees are more represented in staff positions than any other area (faculty and administrators) at the institution. Therefore, the recruitment pool is there for institutions to diversify their units. It is important for the diversity to be reflected at all levels. It is not purposeful or intentional to simply diversify administrative assistant roles. Diversified offices are beneficial to students of color, even if DEI offices are present. Creating welcoming and inclusive environments throughout campus is critical to the belonging of Black students on predominantly White campus and can serve as a start to shift the campus climate. The study illustrates the need for microclimates and counter spaces for Black students (Serrano, 2021; Garcia; 2015). Otherparenting is one of the foundational pieces for Black students to create an ecosystem of safety within a hostile climate. Diversified offices lead to multiple microclimates across campus that could ultimately create a positive institutional climate for Black students. However the patterns and over sixty years since desegregation, this utopia is unlikely.

Equity Audit

Williams (2013) found many PWIs operating on surface-level diversity efforts focused primarily on increasing the number of students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color. To increase effectiveness, diversity efforts must be embedded across the institution. Olson (2020) identified equity audits as a comprehensive evaluation of

inequities to serve as a benchmarking tool to identify and address disparities in educational systems. Equity audits can be utilized as an analysis of inequities at the unit, department, and institutional level. This work will focus on increasing numbers. But It is not enough to hire Black staff to attract Black students if the infrastructure is inherently racist.

Units can use the audit as a means to examine policy, procedures, unit/office climate to identify gaps and explore ways to improve. Units might ask themselves: Are students of color visiting the office? Are Black students returning or are the interactions typically one-off? How do Black students perceive their treatment by non-Black staff? An equity audit can answer these questions and move the unit forward. Units moving forward moves departments forward that move the institution forward and has the ability to shift the climate on campus for Black students and other Students of Color.

Supportive White Staff

The reaction to study participants by White students varied from nuisances to overtly hostile situations. When Black staff are faced with prejudice, bias, and/or racism at the hands of White students, it is critically important for staff to have the support of White co-workers and supervisors. The support must be active. Passive support is not helpful. Marquise had a student request a White advisor. Her supervisor refused the request. There may be advantages and disadvantages to the stance. White students should not get to dictate whether they are assigned to an advisor of color or judge “incompetence” based on skin color. If the refusal was decided with Marquise’s input, then there is an advantage. On the other hand, if Marquise is faced with constant stress of

dealing with students that openly question her capabilities, then it is not worth her mental health to force the student's hand.

Some participants described the authenticity of Blackness and its tie to otherparenting in their interviews. Participants shared the safe space provided by otherparents to discuss incidents of racial bias and not being concerned with the possibility of trying to be convinced they misinterpreted the situation. It is important for supportive White staff, including Deans, Directors, and Vice Presidents, to hear and listen to the concerns voiced by Black staff and support them in the face of racial bias. As Candy recounted the White student that attempted to become physically violent with her, it was shocking to find the student suffered no reprimand beyond his removal from the office. This was a safety issue. Black staff must feel confident they will be protected by White colleagues in all incidences of bias whether physical or not. The privilege of Whiteness does not have to be relinquished for allyship, but the recognition and awareness is critical.

Increased Awareness and Understanding of Otherparenting

The results of this study show otherparenting happening across the study site. It is not limited to one functional unit, length of experience, or gender. Otherparenting is described as an "invisible labor" of Black staff. In the current political climate, campuses are not post-racial. In fact, "progress" is moving backwards. In this case, otherparenting is going to become more important not less. What can change is the response to the work. An understanding of otherparenting is necessary. It is necessary to understand the natural gravitation of Black students to staff/faculty/administrators that look like them.

The connection should be nurtured and given the space to develop for the benefit of Black students.

Black staff performing otherparenting should not be faced with making a decision about a potential corrective action against them in the workspace over the immediate needs of the student in front of them. Awareness, familiarity, and understanding of the otherparenting concept by White staff and supervisors can reduce taxation on Black staff (Padilla, 1994; Cleveland, et al., 2018). The autonomy and space to otherparent Black students is ideal. At the very least, the sharing of the demands of otherparenting work should not be stress-inducing. An institutional understanding of otherparenting may lead to Black supervisors being more accepting of the informal ways otherparenting relationships are developed. It is my belief that the resistance by Black supervisors to otherparenting is rooted in Whiteness and White supremacy. There are generations of Black supervisors fearful of the “White gaze” making assimilation the path of least resistance.

The findings of this study highlight the importance and effectiveness of otherparenting. While not widely recognized by the formal term, otherparenting has existed for generations among the Black community in multiple forms. Institutions, and more specifically student services units, should “latch on” to otherparenting and support Black staff performing the function to move Black students at the institution forward.

Future Research

This study uncovered new directions for research related to otherparenting. Future research should focus on gathering the student voice and examining the experience of Black students being otherparented. It is important to also capture the

experience of Black students resistant to otherparenting. The exploration of the student experience can be impactful for Black staff and others looking to support and assist in the navigation of Black students in a predominantly White space. In addition to the Black student voice, otherparenting should be explored for other marginalized populations. Malcolm mentioned the colleague of Latinx descent in his unit performing otherparenting for Latinx students.

Participants in the study were asked whether non-Black staff were performing otherparenting. Most participants were unaware of any non-Black staff practicing otherparenting at the level of Black staff. However, two participants identified the same person by name. The named person is a White woman that works with a large percentage of Black males. I am familiar with this person and agree that she practices otherparenting. A future study could examine whether there are intrinsic motivators influencing the work of White staff who otherparent or if otherparenting behaviors were developed due to the immersion into the lives of Black students.

Finally, it was interesting to discover the experiences of Black staff with White students. A future study could explore the racism and bias experienced by Black staff to expand the body of research currently centering Black faculty. Briscoe (2021) wrote about the experience of student affairs professionals with racial climate and incidents at PWIs. While useful, it is equally important to understand the experience of student affairs professionals of color and the direct experience of racism versus the indirect experience. The current political and societal climate would suggest that Black staff are experiencing bias at a more pronounced level than ever before. Understanding the

experience of Black staff can allow institutions to be proactive to improve cultural competence and review and enforce unit/institutional expectations of college students.

Conclusion

I was late to class on the first day as a doctoral student. I underestimated the time it would take to travel from Lexington to Louisville. I emailed my instructor from the road to let her know I was running late. As I rushed across campus to make it to the classroom, I ran into one of my former students. The student transferred from the institution where I worked due to financial issues. We had a brief exchange, but I let him know how proud I was of him for persisting even if it was not with me. He tagged me in a social media post later that evening. In his status update, he described me as the “epitome of othermothering”. It was the very first time I heard the term. I knew the work I was doing and I knew the impact that I was having with my students. I knew it and my students knew it, but I was not sure if the institution knew it. Black staff that otherparent are intentionally proactive, rather than reactive. As a result, Black students feel safe and feel connected to the institution, even if it is only to one person.

Otherparenting raised me. My first semester of college was rough. If it could happen, it happened to me. I was so defeated when I returned for the second semester. It was my last shot to prove myself worthy of being a college student. Ms. Jackson told me that I belonged and she was going to show me that I did. I never forgot those words or how much her belief in me created the person I am now. I started my career working for a college prep program. When I considered a transition to higher education, I knew I wanted to be for other Black students what Ms. Jackson was for me. I hope I have provided a soft place to land.

Many times, the work of my unit was critiqued for not doing enough to retain and graduate Black students and other Students of Color. Anecdotally, I knew the retention and completion rates for Black students would be worse had I and others like me not been there to do the work. This study was deeply personal for me. I recognized that and worked very hard to be content if the results of the study did not align with my personal thoughts about otherparenting. Fortunately, the study supported my initial thoughts about otherparenting and expanded the concept well beyond my own understanding. This is the work that counts. Black students enrolled at PWIs face systemic barriers from the onset of their college experience. Otherparenting serves as a pathway to belonging and connection that is important to a successful college experience.

REFERENCES

- Allen, W. (1992). The color of success: African-American college student outcomes at predominantly White and historically Black public colleges and universities. *Harvard Educational Review, 62*(1), 26-44.
- Arroyo, A.T., Palmer, R.T., Maramba, D.C. & Louis, D.A. (2017). Supporting racially diverse students at HBCUs: A student affairs perspective. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 54* (2), 150-162.
- Astin, A.W. (1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development, 40* (5), 518-529.
- Banks, T. & Dohy, J. (2019). Mitigating barriers to persistence: A review of efforts to improve retention and graduation rates for students of color in higher education. *Higher Education Studies; Vol. 9, No. 1* (Online Published: January 19, 2019).
- Bess, J.L. & Dee, J.R. (2012). Understanding college and university organization: Theories for Effective policy and practice.
- Bernard, C., Bernard, W., Epko, C., Enang, J., Joseph, B., & Wane, N. (2000). "She who learns teaches": Othermothering in the academy. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement, 2*.
- Bernard, W., Issari, S., Moriah, J., Njiwaji, M., Oboan, P., & Tolliver, A. (2012). Othermothering in the academy: Using maternal advocacy for institutional change. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement, 3*.

- Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Briscoe, K.L. (2021). Student affairs professionals experiences with campus racial climate at predominantly White institutions. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. Advance online publication.
- Brooms, D.R. (2017). Black otherfathering in the educational experiences of Black males in a single-sex urban high school. *Teachers College Record*, 119, 1-46.
- Brooms, D.R. (2018). Exploring Black male initiative programs: Potential and possibilities for supporting Black male success in college. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 87 (1), 59-72.
- Center for Disease Control (2020). *The Tuskegee timeline*. U.S. Public Health Service Syphilis Study at Tuskegee. [cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm).
- Cleveland, R., Sailes, J., Gilliam, E., & Watts, J. (2018). A theoretical focus on cultural taxation: Who pays for it in higher education. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 5(10), 95-98.
- Collins, P.H. (1987). The meaning of motherhood in black culture and black mother/daughter relationships. *SAGE IV* (2), 3-10.
- Collins, P.H. (2000). Black women and motherhood. In Collins, P.H. *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (173-199). London: Routledge.
- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. (2020). *The Black and White higher education workforce: An interactive graphic*. <https://www.cupahr.org/knowledge-center/diversity-resources/black-and-white-higher-education-workforce/>.

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. (2019). *ACE Report provides perspective on diversity in higher education.*

<https://www.cupahr.org/blog/ace-report-provides-perspective-on-diversity-in-higher-education/>

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43 (6), 1241-1299.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York University Press: New York, NY.

Edwards, A.E. (2003). Mothering the mind: Women of colour creating supportive Communities to increase the academic success rates of minority students. *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*, 5(2), 144-153.

Elfman, L. (2021). Institutions adjust faculty diversity strategies amid COVID-19 pandemic. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*.

<https://www.diverseeducation.com/covid-19/article/15279536/institutions-adjust-faculty-diversity-strategies-amid-covid19-pandemic>.

Flowers, A.M., Scott, J.A, Riley, J.R. & Palmer, R.T. (2015). Beyond the call of duty: Building on othermothering for improving outcomes at historically Black colleges and universities. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 6(1), 59-73.

Foster, M. (1993). Othermothers: Exploring the educational philosophy of black American women teachers. In Arnot, M. & Weiler, K. *Feminism and social justice in education: International perspectives* (101-117). Routledge: London.

- Fries-Britt, S. & Turner, B. (2002). Uneven stories. Successful Black collegians at a Black and a White campus. *The Review of Higher Education*, 25 (3), 315-330.
- Fryer, R.G. & Greenstone, M. (2010). The changing consequences of attending historically Black colleges and universities. *American Economic Journal*, 2(1), 116-148.
- Garcia, G.A. (2015). Exploring student affairs professionals' experiences with the campus racial climate at a Hispanic serving institution (HSI). *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 9(1), 20-33.
- Gasman, M. (2010). What can HBCUs teach all colleges and universities? *Diverse Education*. diverseeducation.com/article/31314/.
- Gasman, M. (2012). *The changing face of historically black colleges and university*. Philadelphia, PA: Center for MSIs, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania.
- Garriott, P.O. (2020). A critical cultural wealth model of first-generation and Economically marginalized College students' academic and career development. *Journal of Career Development*, 47(1), 80-95.
- Givens, J.R. (2021). *Fugitive pedagogy: Carter G. Woodson and the art of black teaching*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Griffin, K.A. (2013). Voices of the "othermothers": Reconsidering Black professors' Relationships with Black students as a form of social exchange. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 82 (2), 169-183.
- Guiffrida, D. (2005). Othermothering as a framework for understanding African American students' definitions of student-centered study. *The Journal of Higher*

Education, 76 (6), 701-723.

- Gupta, R., Agrawal, R., Bukhari, Z., Jabbar, A., Wang, D., Diks, J, Alshal, M., Emechebe, D.Y., Brunicardi, F.C., Lazar, J.M., Chamberlain, R., Burza, A. & Haseeb, M.A. (2021). Higher comorbidities and early death in hospitalized African-American patients with Covid-19. *BMC Infectious Diseases*, 21, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12879-021-05782-9>.
- Hale, J. (2021, September 28). *Grand jury declines to indict Kentucky football players Charged after frat party fight*. Louisville Courier-Journal. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/ncaaf/sec/2021/09/28/kentucky-football-burglary-case-grand-jury-declines-indict-players/5907737001/>
- Hardin, J.A. (1997). *Fifty years of segregation : Black higher education in Kentucky, 1904-1954*. University Press of Kentucky: Lexington.
- Harper, S.R. (2013). Am I my brother's teacher? Black undergraduates, racial socialization, and peer pedagogies in predominantly White postsecondary contexts. *Review of Research in Education*, 37, 183-211.
- Harper, S. R., Patton, L. D., & Wooden, O. S. (2009). Access and equity for African American students in higher education: A critical race historical analysis of policy efforts. *Journal of Higher Education*, 80(4), 389-414.
- Hirt, J.B., Amelink, C.T, McFeeters, B.B. & Strayhorn, T.L. (2008). A system of othermothering: Student affairs administrators' perceptions of relationships with students at historically black colleges. *NASPA Journal*, 45(2). 210-236.
- Hirt, J.B. (2006). *Where you work matters: Student affairs administration at different types of institutions*. University Press of America: Lanham, Maryland.

- Holland, N.E. (2017). Beyond conventional wisdom: Community cultural wealth and the college knowledge of African American youth in the United States. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 20*(6), 796-810.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. Routledge: NY.
- Hussain, M. & Jones, J.M. (2019). Discrimination, diversity, & sense of belonging: Experiences of students of color. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, Advanced online publication.
- James, S. M. (1993). Mothering: A possible black feminist link to social transformation. In James, S.M. & Busia, A.P.A *Theorizing Black Feminisms: The visionary Pragmatism of black women* (44-54). London: Routledge.
- Jencks, C. & Reisman, D. (1967). The American Negro college. *Harvard Educational Review, 37*(1), 3-60.
- Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. Interactive Data Center. reports.ky.gov.
- Kezar, A., Fries-Britt, S., & Espinosa, L. (2020). Are campus leaders prepared for the impact of the racial crisis? <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/06/15/many-colleges-must-work-harder-engage-racial-healing-opinion>
- Kim, N., Oh, S., & Mumbauer, J. (2019). Supporting international students: Enhancing College counselors' multiracial counseling competence. *Journal of College Counseling, 22* (2), 179-192.
- Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W.F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education.

- Teachers College Record*, 97 (1), 47-68.
- Lucas, D.L. (2021, October 5). 360. In *Ratchet and Respectable*. Studio 71.
- Mawhinney, L. (2011). Othermothering: A personal narrative exploring relationships between Black female faculty and students. *The Negro Educational Review*, 62 & 63 (1-4), 213-232.
- McLeod, S. A. (2020). *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*. Simply Psychology.
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>
- McCoy, D.L., Rodricks, D.J. (2015). Critical race theory in higher education: 20 years theoretical and research innovations. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 41(3), 1-117.
- Means, D.R. & Pyne, K.B. (2017). Finding my way: Perceptions of institutional support And belonging in low-income, first generation, first-year college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(6), 907-924.
- Merritt, D.J. (2008). Bias, the brain, and student evaluations of teaching. *St. John's Law Review*, 82(1), 235-287.
- Mould, T. & DeLoach, S.B. (2017). Moving beyond GPA: Alternative measures of Success and predictive factors in honors programs. *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council --Online Archive*.
- Museus, S.D. & Jayakuma, U.M. (2012). *Creating campus cultures: Fostering success among racially diverse student populations*. New York: Routledge.
- Njoku, N., Butler, M., & Beatty, C.C. (2017). Reimagining the historically Black college and university (HBCU) environment: Exposing race secrets and the binding

- chains of respectability and othermothering. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 30(8), 783-799.
- Obama, M. (2018). *Becoming*. Crown.
- Obama, M. (2019, [michelleobama]). (2019, May 9). *As we prepare for #MothersDay on Sunday, I wanted to take a moment to shine a light on those women*. Instagram.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/BxP7KorBGA-/?igshid=1us9a4p65b3j>
- O'Reilly, A. (2012). *From Motherhood to Mothering: The Legacy of Adrienne Rich's Of Woman Born*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Padilla, A.M. (1994). Ethnic minority scholars, research, and mentoring: Current and future issues. *Educational Researcher*, 23(4), 24-27.
- Palmer, R. T., Wood, J. L., Dancy, T. E., & Strayhorn, T. L. (2014). *Black Male Collegians: ASHE Higher Education Report 40:3*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Patton, L.D. (2015). Disrupting postsecondary prose: Toward a critical race theory of Higher education. *Urban Education*, 51(3), 315-342.
- Powell, J.A. & Menedian, S. (2016). The problem of othering: Towards inclusiveness and belonging. *Othering and Belonging: Expanding the Circle of Human Concern*, 1(1), 14-39.
- Richards, D.A.R. & Awokoya, J.T. (2012). *Understanding HBCU retention and completion*. Fairfax, VA: Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, UNCF.
- Roksa, J. & Whitley, S.E. (2017). Fostering academic success of first-year students: Exploring the roles of motivation, race, and faculty. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(3), 333-348.
- Saunders, B., Kitzinger, J. & Kitzinger, C. (2015). Participant anonymity in the internet

- age: From theory to practice, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12 (2), 125-137.
- Schuh, J.H., Jones, S.R. & Harper, S.R. (2011). *Student services: A handbook for the profession*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.
- Serrano, U. (2020). 'Finding home': campus racial microclimates and academic homeplaces at a Hispanic-serving institution. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, DOI: 10.1080/13613324.1718086.
- Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., Nathan, A & Hwang, Y., A. (2017). A national view of student attainment rates by race and ethnicity: Fall 2010 cohort (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: *National Student Clearinghouse Research Center*.
- Smith, G.L. (1999). *50 years of the African-American legacy: Fifty years of the University of Kentucky African-American legacy 1949-1999*. Published by the University of Kentucky.
- Soria, K.M. & Stebleton, M.J. (2013). Social capital, academic engagement, and sense of belonging among working-class college students. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 31(2), 139-153.
- Strauss, V. (2016, September). Enrollments surge at historically black colleges amid rise in racial tensions. *The Washington Post*.
- Strayhorn, T.L. (2019). *College students' sense of belonging*. New York: Routledge.
- Thelin, J. R. (2011). *A history of American higher education* (2nd ed.). The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, Maryland.

- Trainor, A. & Graue, E. (2013). *Reviewing qualitative research in social sciences*.
Routledge: New York.
- United States & Moynihan, D. P. (1965). *The Negro family. The case for national action*.
Washington.
- United States Census. (2019). Median income in Kentucky. Retrieved from census.gov.
- United States Department of Education. (2015). Title III Part A-Strengthening
Institutions. Retrieved from www2.ed.gov/programs/idedtitle3a/index.html.
- United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *The
condition of education 2020*. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020144.pdf>.
- Vaccaro, A. & Newman, B.M (2016). Development of a sense of belonging for
privileged and minoritized students: An emergent model. *Journal of College
Student Development*, 57 (8), 925-942.
- Vagle, M. D. (2018). *Crafting Phenomenological Research*. Routledge.
- Valencia, R. R. (1997). *The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and
practice*. The Falmer Press: Washington, DC.
- Verschelden, C. (2017). *Bandwidth recovery: Helping students reclaim cognitive
Resources lost to poverty, racism, and social marginalization*. Stylus: Sterling,
VA.
- Walker, L.J. (2018). We are family: How othermothering and support systems can
improve mental health outcomes among African American males at HBCUs.
Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men, 7(1), 1-16.
- Warren, E. & Supreme Court of the United States. (1953). U.S. Reports: *Brown v. Board
of Education*, 347 U.S. 483. Retrieved from the Library of Congress,

<https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep347483/>.

Wilder, C.S. (2013). *Ebony & ivy: Race, slavery, and the troubled history of America's universities*. Bloomsbury Press: New York.

Williams, D.A. (2013). *Strategic diversity leadership: Activating change and transformation in higher education*. Stylus: Sterling, VA.

Woodson, C.G. (1933). *The mis-education of the Negro*. Africa World Press: Trenton, NJ.

Yosso, T.J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 8(1), 69-91.

Zhang, N. (2011). *Rentz's student affairs: Practice in higher education*. Charles C. Thomas: Springfield, IL.

CURRICULUM VITA

NAME: Stephanie Renae Mayberry

EDUCATION & TRAINING:

B.A., Social Work
University of Kentucky
1994-98

Master of Social Work
University of Kentucky
1998-99

Ph.D., Counseling and Personnel Services
University of Louisville
2014-2021

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

UK Martin Luther King Center Women's History Month Honoree (2015, 2017)
Kentucky Association of Blacks in Higher Education President's Award (April 2013)
Dr. Evelyn J. Black Award (April 2012)
YMCA Black Achievers-Adult Achiever (2005)

PRESENTATIONS

Mayberry, S.R. et al. (March 2020). A Soft Place to Land: An Analysis of Sense of Belonging in Off-Campus/Commuter Students, *NASPA Annual Conference*. [Conference cancelled due to COVID-19]

Mayberry, S.R. et al. (November 2019). Exploring the Impact of Othermothering, *Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Higher EDquity Symposium*.

Mayberry, S.R. et al. (March 2019). Restructure: A shift to academic support for off-campus and commuter students, *NASPA Annual Conference*.

Mayberry, S.R. (February 2019). Leaning in? Having it all? How to make it work, *Sister Circle Forum: The Future is Female*.

Mayberry, S.R., et al. (February 2017). Women of Color Mentoring Panel, *Inaugural Sister Circle Forum: The Power of Your Reach*.

Mayberry, S.R., et al. (April 2016). Paying the Toll of Cultural Taxation, *Dialogue on Race and Education in the 21st Century Conference*.

Mayberry, S.R., et al. (April 2015). The “Do’s and Don’ts” of Having it All, *KABHE Annual Conference*.

Mayberry, S.R. (February 2015). The Freshman Summer Program: A Summer Bridge Initiative, *National Resource Center-First Year Experience Conference*.

Mayberry, S.R., et al. (February 2009). The Freshman Summer Program: A Summer Bridge Initiative, *National Resource Center-First Year Experience Conference*.