A Narrative Inquiry into African American Female Faculty Research Mentorship Experiences in Counselor Education

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A Narrative Inquiry into African American Female Faculty Research Mentorship Experiences in Counselor Education

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Counselor Education

by

Chantrelle D. Varnado-Johnson

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2002
M.A. University of New Orleans, 2005
M.Ed. University of New Orleans, 2006

August, 2018
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the three confident, successful, and beautiful Black Counselor Educators that participated in my study. I want to thank you for sharing the stories of your research mentorship experiences. Also, thank you for allowing me to collect data in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, my own observations, your storytelling, and other supplemental materials, such as your vitas and paintings. Speaking to you uplifted and encouraged me to continue on the path to becoming a counselor educator.
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Throughout the dissertation process, I have encountered many people who were influential. To begin with, I thank God, who has been my light and my salvation. I would like to acknowledge my dissertation committee—Dr. Roxane L. Dufrene, Co-Chair/Methodologist and Dr. Zarus E.P. Watson, Co-Chair; and Dr. Kimberly Frazier and Dr. Barbara Herlihy for their time, expertise, and continuous support. Thank you, Dr. Dufrene for your guidance, personalized attention, and challenging me to embrace edits. As my methodologist, you strengthened me and encouraged me to adhere to my professional goals. Dr. Watson thank you for being a wonderful source of wisdom, providing academic advisement, and introducing me to cognitive maps. I am sending my heartfelt appreciation for your patience and influencing me to self-advocate. Dr. Frazier thank you for being a positive role model and encouraging me to think through issues. Dr. Herlihy thank you for your willingness to listen and assist. Dr. Walter Breaux thank you for being a peer debriefer and Dr. Karen Parker for being my external auditor. The dissertation process was life and career changing.

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative, narratological research was to gain a deeper understanding of the stories of three African American counselor educators who experienced research mentorship as counseling students and faculty members while working towards tenure. The three participants were employed as assistant professors in CACREP-accredited counselor education graduate programs provided their perspectives of research mentorship. The primary research question for my research was: How do pre-tenured African American female counselor educators perceive their research mentorship experiences? The foundation for my study was provided by the review of literature that focused on critical race theory, marginalized groups in academe, mentorship among specific populations, and research mentorship. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The transcribed interviews, vitas, and faculty profiles were analyzed by within-case and cross-case analysis. The findings indicated seven super-ordinate themes: 1) Benefits of Research Mentorship, 2) Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization, 3) Professional Networking/Support, 4) Perceptions of Institutional Climate and Culture, 5) Perceptions of Research Mentoring Experiences, 6) Barriers of Research Mentorship, and 7) Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring. Implications for students and counselor educators along with recommendations for future research are presented. Personal reflections of the researcher are provided.

Keywords: Research Mentorship; Mentoring in Education; Counselor Educators; Diversity; Mentor-Mentee Relationships
Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter includes an overview of the study, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and conceptual framework. Additionally, the problem statement, overview of the methods and research questions, limitations and delimitations, assumptions, and definition of terms that are pertinent to the study are provided.

Overview

As a faculty group, “African American[s] continue to face racial discrimination in higher education even when affirmative action programs have been implemented” (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004, p. 259). Within that faculty group, African American women are marginalized as females (Patton & Harper, 2003) and account for only .3% of all full professors in academe, in comparison to the rate of 58% for White males (National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, 2015). Although, African American women may choose academic employment, many eventually leave before they obtain tenure to pursue careers in business, industry, and other professions (Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Gregory, 2001). Frazier (2011) reported that many African Americans choose to leave academic settings because of academic bullying. Academic bullying is viewed as the systematic long-term interpersonal aggressive behavior as it occurs in the academic workplace setting in both covert and overt forms against faculty who are unable to defend themselves against the aggressive behavior committed by faulty in power in the workplace. … These aggressive behaviors can take the form of racial microaggressions, marginalization, and covert and overt forms of racism as it relates to the faculty of color’s
research, teaching, collegiality, and overall institutional climate in the workplace (Frazier, 2011, p. 2).

According to Patton and Harper (2003), “Mentoring relationships are vital to the facilitation of successful [academic career] experiences for African American women and necessary for them to break the glass ceiling” (p. 68). The broader term of mentorship is defined as a nurturing, complex, and long-term developmental process in which a more skilled and experienced person serves as a role model, teacher, sponsor, and coach that promotes another person’s professional and/or personal development (Black et al., 2004). Specific types or areas of focus in mentorship exist, such as mentoring faculty in how to conduct research. Research mentorship is a complex and dynamic relationship that occurs in academic settings. It provides relational and instructional support by affirming, and guiding protégés in learning how to collaborate in professional development and generate research that results in publications (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008).

Difficulties related to African American pre-tenured faculty departures from universities or the relationship of their lack of tenure to their research mentoring experiences have not been explained (Antonio, 2002; Frazier, 2011; Smith, Smith, & Markham., 2000; Turner, Myers, & Creswell, 1999). Specific to the counseling field, empirical research is not available on the unique challenges confronted by African American counseling faculty and their mentoring research experiences. Due to the lack of empirical data on research mentorship and research productivity, research with counselor educators is needed (Black et al., 2004; Cornelius, Moore, & Gray, 1997; Howard-Vital & Morgan, 1993; Moore, 1996).

To understand the unique experiences of African American women who are counselor educators, I sought to study the perceptions of pre-tenured African American females regarding
their research mentoring experiences when mentored by counselor educators or other professionals. I conducted a qualitative study of three African American female counselor educators employed as professors in counselor education programs. In the present research study, I focused on the context of research mentorship experiences within counselor education. The aim of my research was to increase awareness of African American females’ perspectives regarding their research mentorship experiences, which could assist in the development of research mentorship practices with African American females who are conducting and publishing research on their own and with colleagues in the counseling field. Also, I hoped my study would promote appreciation for culturally based topics.

**Purpose of the Study**

Oppositional counter-storytelling provides a context for understanding and interpreting an experience from another’s perspective, such as someone from a marginalized group. Hunn et al. (2006) described “counter-storytelling as a tool that Critical Race Theory (CRT) scholars employ to contradict racist characterizations of social life” (p. 244). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) defined counter-storytelling as a “method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences have often not told (i.e., those who are marginalized in society)” (p. 26). “Counter-stories can serve to facilitate social, political, and cultural cohesion, as well as survival and resistance among marginalized groups” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 24-25). For example, counter-stories of female African American counseling faculty can give voice to their historical and societal status as members of a peripheralized group (Boyle & Boice, 1998; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Padilla, 1994).

The purpose of my qualitative, narratological study was to give voice to the stories of three African American women who were mentored in research while counseling students and
faculty members working towards tenure in a counselor education program. The successes and hindrances faced by three minority African American pre-tenured counselor educators during their research mentoring experiences were the focus of my research. Using a self-reflective narrative research design, with the participants as the experts, faculty voices provided critical insight into actions that Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP)-accredited counselor education programs could take to enhance the quality of research mentorship of African American female faculty.

**Significance of the Study**

In general, lower rates of gaining tenure at universities exist for African American females than for male faculty. African American females’ pre-tenured departures from universities and the relationship of their lack of tenure to their mentoring experiences are not explained in the literature (Antonio, 2002; Smith et al., 2000; Turner et al., 1999). Although mentorship is common in higher education (Astramovich, Johnson, Hoskins, & Rubel, 2006; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Okech et al., 2006) and research mentorship is a valuable aspect of gaining tenure at a university (Padilla, 1994), a gap exists in the literature on research mentorship in counselor education (Clark & Watson, 1998). Less than 1% of the articles in counselor education explored mentoring of counseling faculty (Black, Suarez, & Medina, 2004). Similarly, Patton and Harper (2003) noted that few studies have been conducted that focus specifically on African American women and their mentoring experiences. African American faculty experience difficulty obtaining mentorship that supports and encourages their research productivity (Antonio, 2002; Frazier, 2011; Turner et al., 1999).

The lack of empirical research regarding the unique challenges that confront African American faculty in counseling programs has implications for counselor educators. Due to the
lack of empirical research on the relationship between mentorship and research productivity of
African Americans, a study on research mentorship for pre-tenured African American counselor
educators is needed (Black et al., 2004; Cornelius et al., 1997; Howard-Vital & Morgan, 1993;
Moore, 1996). An aim of my study was to give voice to the research mentorship experiences of
African American female counselor educators. My study drew attention to the role that
oppositional counter-storytelling plays in the African American females’ perspectives of their
research mentorship experiences. Research on mentorship could assist both junior and senior
African American counselor educators, faculty in counseling programs, and administrators in
universities in their mentorship practices to support and retain female African American
counselor educators.

**Conceptual Framework**

Critical race theory (CRT) was the conceptual framework used in my study to aid in
understanding the narratives of three African American female counselor educators and their
research mentorship experiences as counseling students and faculty during their tenure process.
The origins of CRT stem from the demise of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s
with extensive roots in legal, sociology, history, women, ethnicity, and education scholarship.
CRT “unapologetically challenges the scholarship that would dehumanize and depersonalize …”
people of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 272). CRT scholarship challenges the traditional
research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of people of color, and it
offers transformative solutions to racial, gender, and class subordination in our societal and
institutional structure. The CRT movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in
analyzing, deconstructing, and transforming the relationship of race, racism, and power (Delgado
& Stefancic, 2013).
Marable (1992) described a system found in the United States of ignorance, exploitation, and power used to oppress African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Americans, American Indians, and other marginalized groups based on their ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and color. Lynn, Yosso, Solórzano, and Parker (2002) noted that CRT is committed to helping understand how racial and ethnic inequities are prevalent in all societies. CRT scholars identified six basic perspectives regarding race. First, race is a social construct that categorizes people based on their physical appearance and has no connection to their biological or genetic abilities. Second, racism is often a very common, unseen, hidden, or overt part of American society. Historically, all Americans share the commonality of oppression and deeply embedded within the framework of American society is racism. Third, race-based ideology is throughout society. Due to America’s existing power structures are based in White patriarchy, Americans continue to exploit, oppress, ignore, and persecute outsiders. Fourth, CRT is interdisciplinary and eclectic. CRT draws from feminism, Marxism, law, and conventional civil right scholarship. CRT promotes the civil liberties of historically marginalized individuals and deconstructs conscious and unconscious microaggressions and macroaggressions directed towards people of color. CRT acknowledges multiple dimensions of identity from a race-based perspective. Fifth, CRT works towards eliminating all forms of oppression such as race, class, and gender and challenges historical inaccuracies. CRT scholars promote viewing race and racism as being at the center of their intersections with other forms of subordination as an oppression. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) stated that one must “name, define, and focus on racism” (p. 472). Last, a CRT framework recognizes the centrality of experiential knowledge. CRT asserts that offering alternative narratives can construct a new reality for people of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998).
Researchers also noted that CRT offers a way to “understand how ostensibly race-neutral structures in education knowledge, truth, merit, objectivity, and ‘good education’—are in fact ways of forming and policing the racial boundaries of white supremacy and racism” (Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999, p. 4). CRT encourages the writing of history to include the use of methods such as “naming one’s” own reality or a “voice” component as a way to “communicate the experiences and realities of the oppressed” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 14). CRT employs counter-storytelling or narratives as a “method of telling the story of those experiences that are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society and a tool for analyzing and challenging the stories of those in power and whose story is a natural part of the dominant discourse---the majoritarian story” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 475). Ladson-Billings (1998) further described the “use of parables, chronicles, stories, counter-stories, poetry, fiction, and revisionist histories to illustrate the false necessity and irony of much of the current civil rights discipline” (p. 13).

Counter-storytelling of experiential knowledge is used to “provide theoretical justification for taking seriously oppositional accounts of race… [to] challenge the conventional take on integration as a universalizing move to equalize education for all races” (Parker et al., 1999, p. 5). CRT scholars have pointed out that oppositional counter-storytelling provides the necessary context for understanding, feeling, and interpreting an experience or phenomenon from an outsider’s perspective. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) stated that counter-stories serve at least four functions to: “(a) build community among those at the margins of society by putting a human and familiar face to educational theory and practice; (b) challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society’s center by providing a context to understand and transform established belief systems; (c) open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing the possibilities beyond the ones they live and demonstrating that they are not alone in their position;
and (d) teach others by combining elements from both the story and the current reality, one can construct another world that is richer than the story or the reality alone” (p. 475). CRT scholars similarly noted that theorists “integrate their experiential knowledge, drawn from a shared history as other with their ongoing struggles to transform a world deteriorating under the albatross of racial hegemony” (Barnes, 1990, p. 1,864).

**Problem Statement**

One of the biggest concerns for women of color entering academia is attrition while pursuing tenure and promotion. Racial and ethnic minorities are being represented at disproportionately lower rates than junior members of the majority group in academy. And specifically, African American women have faced racial discrimination in higher education. For African American females mentoring relationships are vital to the facilitation of successful experiences and attrition in the academy. African American women need mentoring to aid in understanding the unwritten rules of a university’s culture and climate (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Casto, Caldwell, & Salazar, 2005; Patton & Harper, 2003,). In the dominant male culture, an important factor of mentoring is encouraging success (Blackwell, 1989; Howard-Vital & Morgan, 1993). Researchers have indicated that mentoring is a useful and powerful tool for understanding and advancing organizational culture (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000). Similarly, mentoring provides access to informal and formal networks of communication by offering professional stimulation to both junior and senior faculty members. Mentoring is important for advancement of minority groups in the faculty review and promotion process (Tillman, 2001). According to Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978), the mentor’s most crucial function is to support and facilitate the realizations of the protégé’s dream. The mentor inspires a protégé’s professional dreams and self-image by creating a safe and encouraging environment
for the protégé to thrive (Levinson et al., 1978). Clark and Watson (1998) placed emphasis on research mentorship as a valuable aspect of mentoring in higher education.

Overwhelmingly, the literature has highlighted the benefits of mentorship for those in academia, mentor, and protégé (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000; Blackwell, 1989; Johnson, 2002; Kram, 1985; Ragins, 1989; Wunsch, 1993). Despite the numerous articles written about mentoring (Allen & Eby, 2011; Borders et al., 2011; Bowman, Bowman, & DeLucia, 1990; Bradley, 2005; Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Bruce, 1995; Howard-Vital & Morgan, 1993; Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Walker, 2006), the literature review for the present study revealed that research on mentoring experiences of African American female educators is scant. A lack of literature exists that fully addresses the individual experiences, needs, and multiple systemic barriers of African American female counselor educators and their mentoring experiences, especially related to research and resulting publications. Not securing a mentor may be a significant barrier to African American women’s ability to thrive in faculty positions in counselor education. An aim of my study was to contribute to the counseling literature on the research mentorship experiences specific to African American female counselor educators.

**Overview of Methods and Research Questions**

Qualitative methodology involves an interpretive approach to explaining a phenomenon through an intensive collection of narrative data (Hays & Singh, 2011). In the present research study, I used a qualitative methodology to understand the stories of three female African Americans who have been pre-tenured for a minimum of two years, but no more than seven years, and their research mentorship experiences while counseling students and counselor educators working towards tenure. I used a narrative approach to conduct in-depth interviews with three participants, which allowed for a quick and thorough collection of data. Because my
focus was to describe and answer questions about a small group of three participants in a specific context, I chose a qualitative method using experienced-centered narratives to capture the chronology of their research mentorship experiences. I explored the three participants’ stories based on their feelings and perspectives by using the overarching research question: “How do pre-tenured African American female counselor educators perceive their research mentorship experiences?” Three sub-questions guided my study:

1. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of faculty demands?
2. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of the institutional climate?
3. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that their social racial membership had on their research mentorship experiences?

**Limitations and Delimitations**

A limitation reflects how the study can and cannot contribute to understanding of a research topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In my study, a potential limitation was the sampling size. I interviewed three participants who have received doctorates from a CACREP-accredited counselor education program who may not define mentoring in the same way, which could allow the interpretations of the findings to be broad. Another limitation is the participants were based in two of the four ACA regions; midwest and southern. Additionally, Marshall and Rossman (2011) noted that research designs have limitations. “One chooses a qualitative approach to understand phenomena from the participants’ perspectives and to explore and discover, in depth
and in context, what may have been missed when studies were done with predetermined assumptions” (p. 77). My study is limited to a qualitative design that is not generalizable. However, the qualitative findings may be transferable. Specifically related to the limitation of generalizability with qualitative methodology, the results of my study are not generalizable to other African American counselor educators.

Delimitations typically are determined at the beginning of a study before data are collected, which remind the reader of the study’s boundary (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The first delimitation of my study was that participants were limited to three African American female counselor educators who graduated with a doctorate from a CACREP-accredited counselor education program. Second, participants in my study were limited to three assistant professors at a highest, high, or moderate research activity universities for a minimum of two years, but no more than seven years. Lastly, I interviewed participants using Skype, a proprietary voice-over-Internet protocol (VoIP) service and software application or by telephone when Skype was not available. Thus, the data collection method required that participants be familiar with how to use Skype.

Assumptions of the Study

The present study had several assumptions. The first assumption was that the participants may have been impacted by several factors such as their race, gender, age, interpersonal relationships, and their experiences in teaching, service, and research. It was assumed that participants’ lived experiences may have influenced their thoughts, feelings and perceptions regarding their research mentorship; thus, their realities cannot be generalized to other faculty members. The second assumption was that participants interviewed during my study were willing participants. The third assumption was that participants were honest in their answers to
the interview questions. The fourth assumption was that the research design chosen was the most appropriate design to answer the research questions.

Definition of Terms

Counter-storytelling is a method of telling the stories of those who are marginalized in society whose experiences are not often told (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Cultural Identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a cultural group and the part of one's personality that is attributable to membership in that group (Lee & Zalkalne, 2017).

Critical Race Theory is defined as an interpretive lens that focuses attention on race and how deeply embedded racism is within the framework of American society (Creswell, 2012).

Institutional Climate includes individuals’ perceptions, attitudes, and experiences toward distinctive attributes of a university that influence their motivation, learning, and behavior (Bagheri et al., 2012).

Intersectionality means the examination of race, sex, class, national origin, and sexual orientation, and how their combinations play out in various settings (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Mentorship is a nurturing, complex, and long-term developmental process in which a more skilled and experienced person serves as a role model, teacher, sponsor, and coach who promotes another person’s professional and/or personal development (Black et al., 2004).

Outsider Within-locations are social locations or border spaces making the boundaries between groups of unequal power. Individuals acquire identities through “outsiders within” perspectives based on their placement in social locations (Collins, 2002, p.11).
**Patriarchy** is another way of naming the institutionalized sexism; an unjust ideological system that perpetuates the assumption that men are inherently dominant or superior to females and should rule over women (Hooks, 2000).

**Positionality** is an amount of power designated to a person in relation to his or her group membership such as gender, race, class, age, and sexual orientation (Cooks, 2003).

**Racial Microaggressions** are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Sue et al., 2008).

**Racism** is a system of ignorance, exploitation, and power used to oppress African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Americans, American Indians, and other marginalized groups based on ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and color (Marable, 1992).

**Research Mentorship** in academia is “a complex, dynamic relationship that occurs within an academic setting. The mentor, a more experienced researcher, offers both relational and instructional support to the protégé in research generation and collaboration and in professional development. The relationship is goal- and task-oriented, and primarily serves the protégé needs, with secondary benefits for the mentor, who gains a research collaborator” (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008, p. 103).

**Tenure** is a status granted to an instructor usually after a probationary period that protects him or her from dismissal except for reasons of incompetence, gross misconduct, or financial necessity (Merriam-Webster Online).

**White Privilege** is an institutionalized set of unearned benefits given to White people (Cornish, 2010).
Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a rationale for my research study pertaining to research mentorship of female African American counselor educators, present a summary of the conceptual framework (i.e., CRT), and provide an overview of the research design and methods. The qualitative methodology and the main research question were provided along with the three research sub-questions. Finally, included were the limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and definition of terms.
Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the current literature relevant to the research mentorship experiences of African American counselor educators. Six sections are included in this chapter. The first section includes an overview of the theoretical framework, critical race theory. In the second section, on marginalized groups in academe are discussed. The third section includes an overview of mentorship including research mentorship of African American females. The fourth section describes the literature related to mentoring of marginalized groups. The sixth section includes research mentorship and mentoring in counselor education.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) is a race-gendered collective perspective that addresses culturally centered traditions of positionality between race presuppositions and discourses of social and historical experience (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The theory of CRT challenges dominant liberal ideas, such as color blindness, showing how certain concepts can be used to disadvantage people of color. CRT further challenges Euro-American heteropatriarchy. From a CRT, theoretical standpoint, various positions of racial thinking operate to move toward a pursuit of social justice in both educational research and multicultural education.

CRT arose from the American Civil Rights Movement to explain the deeply embedded varieties of racism that occurred in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). Ideas from CRT are used to challenge racial oppression, analyze myths, test presuppositions, and contest the status quo that invariably hinders Blacks and other minorities in a one-down position (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013, xvii). Ideas that provide the basis for CRT are
from critical legal studies and borrowed concepts from legal cases that describe one line of authority over another, or interpret one fact differently from how an adversary would interpret a fact. Added to CRT are feminist insights regarding the relationship between power and construction of social roles as well as the unseen, largely invisible collections of patterns and habits that make up patriarchy and its forms of subordination, such as racism and social injustice.

**Tenets of Critical Race Theory**

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) described six tenets that are included in CRT: (a) race is a social construct that categorizes people based on their physical appearance, which has no connection to their biological or genetic abilities; (b) race permeates all aspects of society; (c) race-based ideology is throughout society; (d) CRT is interdisciplinary and eclectic; (e) CRT works towards eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression; and (f) CRT scholars recognize the centrality of experiential knowledge. The first tenet of CRT is that “racism is ordinary, not aberrational” (p. 7). Delgado and Stefancic (2012) stated that racism is the normal way that American society does business, which is difficult to address in the work environment. It is the common, unseen, hidden, and everyday experiences of most people of color in the United States. The invisible, deeply embedded aspects of racism are in all societies and perpetuates cultural, race, and gender inequities. The second tenet is that race and races are social constructs suggesting that American society categorizes people based on their physical appearance, which has no connection to their biological or genetic abilities, especially when it is convenient to continue oppression of certain groups of people. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), “interest convergence/ material determinism promotes racial advances for Blacks only when such advances also promote White interests” (p. 8). For example,
different structures (e.g., capitalism, heteropatriarchy, hegemony) converge with law and policy to exclude specific social identities. The third tenet is that in American society race-based ideology occurs. For instance, due to America’s existing power structures based in White supremacy and heteropatriarchy, certain majority groups of Americans continue to exploit, oppress, ignore, and persecute outsiders to their group.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth tenets include the framework and goals of CRT and the experiential knowledge of oppressed groups. In the fourth tenet, the framework of CRT is an interdisciplinary and eclectic approach. CRT draws from various perspectives including feminism, Marxism, law, and conventional civil rights scholarship. CRT acknowledges multiple dimensions of identity that explores race as a social construction. For example, President Barack Obama’s presidency was “dogged by the allegation that he was not born in the United States” (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 39). The fifth tenet is that CRT works towards eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression. CRT views race and racism at the center of intersections with other forms of subordination as an oppression. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) stated that people must “name, define, and focus on racism” (p. 472). The final, and sixth tenet, is how CRT scholars recognize the centrality of marginalized group members’ experiential knowledge and how they express their knowledge. CRT offers alternative narratives that can construct a new reality for people of color, which focuses on the expression of voices of colored people through counter-narratives or “naming one’s own reality” to expose false necessity and unintentional irony of much of the current scholarship (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 13). Counter-storytelling or a counter-narrative is “a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are often not told” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). A counter-narrative provides an alternative story that can be soothing and cathartic for those on
the margins of society. A counter-narrative challenges the stories of those in the majority or in positions of power.

**Communication and Critical Race Theory**

As described in CRT, communication regarding racism and other types of oppression, such as genderism, homophobia, and ableism are interlocking and mutually reinforced in a system of power. At times, marginalized group members solidarize (i.e., come together) based on racial identification to deconstruct oppressive structures by those in power positions in a culture or larger society. Although this reaction of solidarity seems significant, this reaction tends to silence the experiential knowledge of individuals with a shared history. CRT is framed in an “antiessentialism” perspective, meaning no singular experience explains one sub-group’s worldview (e.g., African American, women, or immigrants) (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 41). For instance, essentialism “is a belief that all people perceived to be in a single group think, act, and believe the same things in the same way” (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 41). CRT scholars recognize the amount of within-group differences that vary for any racial or ethnic group, which are greater than the between-group differences. However, CRT scholars guard against “essentializing” the perspectives and experiences of a category (e.g., gender or race) to the experience of a single group (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 41). Additionally, CRT challenges “the dominant discourse on race and racism as they relate to education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups” (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000, p. 40).

CRT asserts marginalized groups represent multiple identities such as race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and religion (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Within these marginalized groups, the concept of intersectionality is seen as the examination of how the multiple dimensions of cultural
identity as a whole (i.e., class, gender, nationality, affectional orientation, ability status) effect individuals’ personality and worldview (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Lee & Zalkalne, 2017). CRT embraces the unique voices of marginalized groups through their counter-stories using a narrative to describe their stories from a different vantage point (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Thus, CRT scholars use counter stories as a way of challenging stereotypical beliefs about marginalized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

**Marginalized Groups in Academe**

The race of ethnic minority faculty in United States’ colleges and universities includes 0.6% American Indian, 4.0% Latino, 6.7% Asian American, and 7.0% African Americans. Despite the increase in the number of doctoral degrees earned by women and members of marginal groups, advancement of minorities in higher education remains unchanged (Aguirre, 2000; Casto et al., 2005). For example, in the United States, women and ethnic minority faculty in university settings remain overrepresented at junior faculty ranks relative to their proportion in the U.S. population, including lecturer and assistant professor positions (Zambrana, et al., 2015). Ethnic minority men and women conduct much of the ethnic focused research in academe; however, they are least likely to be tenured in comparison to Caucasian women and men (Willoughby-Herard, 2014). Bowie (1995) noted that African American faculty were more likely to publish in journals that focus on ethnic minority issues that tend to be devalued as publications in mainstream journals as well as by non-ethnic minority department chairs and colleagues. Additionally, other majority faculty discount research conducted by marginalized faculty, who also face racial micro-aggressions such as brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Sue et al., 2008). Such
aggressions include negative perceptions by chairs and often result in African American faculty earning smaller or less recognizable rewards toward promotion and tenure.

**Female Marginalized Groups**

In 2006, 76% of men were full professors whereas only 24.4% of women were full professors in higher education (American Association of University Professors, 2006). Within 10 years, the number of women who were full professors in higher education institutions increased to 31% (Johnson, 2016). Although there has been a small increase in the number of women in higher education, women continue to be underrepresented and frozen in time (West (1995). In 2014, in comparison to female faculty, male faculty members held a higher percentage of tenure positions at every type of institution (Johnson, 2016). Due to perceived gender and salary inequity, women may be viewed as less competent researchers. Furthermore, although research productivity is a necessary component of promotion, female faculty members (especially members of underrepresented ethnic groups) tend to spend more time teaching and engaging in service activities, whereas male faculty allot more time for research endeavors (Hill et al., 2005).

**African American Female Marginalized Minority Group**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015) reported that 4% of African American women account for full-time professors in degree-granting postsecondary research institutions in the United States. A few scholars have focused their attention on exploring the unique barriers faced by African American women faculty, however, the specific barriers or disadvantages that African American faculty are faced with when attempting to meet the expectations in career advancement and tenure in academe have not been explored (Allen et al., 2000; Atwater, 1995; Bowie, 1995; Bradley, 2005; Frazier, 2011; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995). Thus, because the number and quality of publications impact promotion and
tenure, attention should be given to the unique factors of African American women’s scholarship.

In 2000, Turner and Myers reported that African American women are faced with multiple marginality issues based on an interlocking system of race and gender bias that is part of society’s structure in the United States. African American women experience similar gender-related issues as their Caucasian women colleagues as well as additional race-related barriers such as tokenism, professional isolation, decreased networking, lack of collaborative opportunities, criticism, and devaluation of research interests (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004; Bradley, 2005; Casto et al., 2005; Grant, 2012; Turner, 2002). According to Turner (2002), African American women faculty serve on more committees and mentor more students than their Caucasian colleagues. “African American female academics are viewed as a double minority and are frequently called upon to provide both sex and cultural representation for departmental and institutional events” (Evans & Cokley, 2008, p. 51). Additionally, marginalization of African American women occurs because of their chosen research interests in race-related research projects (Evans & Cokley, 2008). The knowledge base and authority of African American female faculty members were frequently perceived as less competent than that of White male faculty members (Johnson-Bailey & Lee, 2005). Molina (2008) conjectured that the same level of merit and praise given to White men is not given to ethnic minority female professors.

In a study of African American counselor educators who were faculty in CACREP programs, Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy (2004) found no data regarding faculty’s gender, rank, tenure status, age, range, degrees, and publications. Their findings indicated fewer than 3% of the 160,000 faculty who currently work at doctoral institutions identified themselves as African
American. Singh et al. (1995) collected data from African American women and men faculty and administrators regarding their professional characteristics, views on the promotion and tenure process, perceptions of their institutions’ retention and recruitment policies, and perceptions of academic professional life. They found that African American women were not attaining tenure at the same rate as African American men, who are also underrepresented in senior faculty positions. Further, African American women reported fewer opportunities existed for them to work collaboratively with colleagues. In addition, a lack of administrative support, scant funding, limited involvement, and dissatisfaction with institutional climate contributed to being unable to concentrate on their research productivity. 

Turner (2002) described additional barriers, such as being more visible and on display, feeling more pressure to conform, becoming socially invisible, finding it harder to get credibility, being more isolated and peripheral, being more likely to be excluded from informal peer networks, having fewer opportunities to be sponsored, facing misperceptions of their identity and role in the organization, being stereotyped, and facing more stress than African American women faculty face regarding racialization and sex-biases that exist in their academic environments. Padilla (1994) noted that ethnic minority faculty in the social and behavioral sciences felt devalued and marginalized due to the difficulties of finding other faculty who had clearly specified interests in ethnic-related scholarship. Thus, African American women faculty who chose to research topics such as ethnic, marginal, and gender issues had difficulty publishing in top-tier journals. For example, the rejection rate by mainstream journals of research conducted by ethnic minority women occurs more often or the research is published in special editions in non-first-tier journals, resulting in low ratings for promotion and tenure (Grahame, 2004). Regarding research topics, other faculty’s perceptions of marginalized women suggested
that female faculty encountered a “chilly climate” due to acting out of self-interest towards their choice of research topics and being perceived as less effective and intellectually weak regarding their research areas and abilities to publish (Grahame, 2004, p. 56).

**Mentorship**

Over the past 30 years, researchers have come to understand the concept of mentoring as an essential aspect of facilitating career development in such settings as universities (Levinson et al., 1978). Despite numerous articles written about mentoring in various disciplines, mentorship lacks a unified definition (Borders et al., 2011; Bowman et al., 1990; Bradley, 2005; Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Bruce, 1995; Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Walker, 2006). One definition is by Black et al. (2004), defined a mentoring relationship as a nurturing, complex, long-term, developmental process in which a more skilled and experienced person serves as a role model, teacher, sponsor, and coach who promotes a mentee’s professional and personal growth. A mentoring relationship is a closed and sustained relationship, used to facilitate a mentee’s academic career or aid in achievement of long-term goals, sound advice, and astute insight into the political processes of an organization or institution (Wunsch, 1993).

Eby, Rhodes, and Allen (2011) further contributed to the literature on mentoring by describing mentoring in academia as a reciprocal learning partnership that can increase the retention of minority students in colleges and universities. Mentoring is a unique relationship, defined by the types of support received during the mentoring process. Darling (1985) noted that mentoring is a process by which an individual receives guidance, instruction, and influence in one’s life work in important ways. Typically, a mentoring relationship exists between a mentee and a mentor, with the more experienced mentor in a superior rank nurturing, training,
socializing, sponsoring, and showing the ropes to a mentee (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000; Allen & Eby, 2011; Levinson et al., 1978).

Much of the research on mentoring indicated that a gap exists in the literature on the mentoring needs of pre-tenured faculty (Hill et al., 2005; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). For junior faculty who have not achieved tenure, mentoring is important because of its link to alleviating alienation and professional isolation from other faculty and professionals who could provide opportunities that are often inaccessible to women and minorities (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Marbley, Wong, Santos-Hatchett, Pratt & Jacob, 2011).

**The Role of the Mentor**

The term mentor refers to a more experienced individual who is in a developmental relationship with a younger, less experienced individual, with the expressed desire of acting as an advisor, guide, teacher, sponsor, role model, supervisor, collaborator who assists a younger person’s career development (Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Patton & Harper, 2003; Tentoni, 1995). A good mentor informs a mentee of his or her limitations and assists a mentee in finding resources (Black et al., 2004). As Cawyer, Simonds, and Davis (2002) noted, a mentor provides career advisement and instruction, advocates on behalf of the mentee, assists a mentee to adapt to the institutional climate, provides positive role modeling, collaborates on research projects, and offers overall assistance to propel a mentee to the next level of his or her career development. In Levinson et al.’s (1978) book, The Seasons of a Man’s Life, a mentor was described as having characteristics of a teacher, sponsor, host, guide, exemplar, and counselor who “supports and facilitates the realization of the dream” (p. 98).
The Role of the Mentee

The term mentee refers to a junior individual who is guided or assisted by a more experienced individual (Allen & Eby, 2011). Usually, the mentoring relationship benefits the mentee (Stokes, 2003). Mentees “need the perspectives, advice, guidance, support, and networking assistance that can be provided by more experienced women” (Casto et al., 2005, p. 333). Mentees possess several paired characteristics. First, the relationship initiation competencies include focusing on proactivity, developing respect and self-respect, willingness to listen, and communicating goals. Second, the mentee relationship management competencies include committing to learning-teaching, being willing and able to engage in challenging dialogue, and being honest and reflective. Finally, learning maturity and disengagement competencies involve acknowledgment of the debt and payment of it forward; self-awareness of the process to determine their own professional progress, recognition of extrinsic and intrinsic feedback, and able to be independent-interdependent.

Mentoring Relationships

To distinguish a mentor-mentee relationship from other types of developmental relationships, two primary behavioral domains exist: emotional or psychosocial (e.g., friendship, acceptance, confirmation, support) and instrumental or career (e.g., coaching, informational, advocacy, and sponsorship) (Kram, 1985). During the psychosocial relationship, the mentor provides a junior faculty member with emotional support, role modeling (attitudes and behavior), counseling (a place to vent and express concerns), and befriending a mentee in cultural, social, environmental, and personal adjustments relevant to his or her new position. During the instrumental or career relationship, the mentor provides support to a mentee by focusing on coaching (i.e., feedback and ideas for accomplishing work objectives), protecting (i.e., reducing
risks), challenging (i.e., providing challenging work environments), and preparing the mentee for hierarchical institutional advancement (Johnson, 2002; Kram, 1985). Career functions depend on the mentor’s status, influence, and achievement in a work setting, whereas psychosocial functions rely on the depth of the mentor-mentee relationship (Kram, 1985).

Borders et al. (2011) postulated that formal and informal mentoring relationships exist in academe to assist junior faculty in movement toward personal and professional goals. According to Ragins and Cotton (1999), for a formal mentoring relationship, a program coordinator matches a mentor and a mentee based on the application forms submitted by the potential mentor and mentee. Important benefits of formal mentorships are career support, role modeling, and various forms of informal support and encouragement. Formal mentorships increase productivity, improve recruitment efforts, motivate senior staff, and enhance services offered by an institution (Casto et al., 2005). However, in instances of formal cross-cultural mentorships, ineffective mentoring relationships can result because of less commonality between a Caucasian mentor and an African American mentee and because of a culture that has been predominantly male oriented, little interest in ethnic minority related scholarship, infrequent contact with faculty outside of the classroom, and minimal communication (Antonio, 2002; Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, & Hazler, 2005; Padilla, 2004; Smith et al., 2000; Turner, Myers, & Cresswell, 1999). In comparison, informal cross-cultural mentoring relationships that are spontaneously developed are based on interpersonal comfort, perceived competence, and fulfillment of long-term career needs (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). In informal mentor relationships, mentors often choose and assist mentees who are like them in race, ethnicity, and culture (Brinson & Kottler, 1993). Mentees in informal relationships receive more career and psychosocial support from mentors and report greater effect and satisfaction with mentorship relationships.
According to Cawyer et al. (2005), female faculty frequently lack access to within-profession mentors and more frequently to within-department mentors. Due to academia being a male dominated workplace, power differential in the mentoring relationship and lack of cultural sensitivity may influence the mentoring relationship (Casto, Caldwell, & Salazar, 2005). Allen et al. (2000) noted that female mentors often select mentees based on their perceptions of abilities, whereas males based their choices on perceptions of higher advancement aspirations. Often in academia, minority women are relegated to teaching and service, which hinders their opportunity to engage in research and publication with mentors, making them vulnerable for academic bullying during the tenure and promotion process (Antonio, 2002; Allen & Eby, 2011; Frazier, 2011; Turner & Meyers, 2000). Additionally, bullying behaviors in academia undermine mentees’ “professional standing, authority, and competence, or impede [their] access to key resources for their work (such as money, space, time, or access to strong students)” (Keashly & Neuman, 2010, p. 53). Academic bullying places the mentee in a vulnerable position because of tenure, which can persist given the long-term relationship between the mentor-mentee (Keashly & Neuman, 2010). Glazer-Raymo (1999) found that women who lack informal mentor networks are often blocked from academic career advancement where promotion and tenure is focused more on trust than performance. Subsequently, a negative relationship existed for female faculty’s life satisfaction with factors, such as “toxic faculty environment, office politics, and being over controlled by others” (Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, & Hazler, 2005, p. 379).

Additionally, women’s differences in power relations and gender politics from male mentors have negative implications, such as lower ranking positions, making less significant money for similar ranks, and intellectual and social isolation among female mentees (Hill et al., 2005).
Mentoring of Marginalized Group Members

Mentoring of women and members of other marginal groups can be advantageous in removing racial barriers to tenure and promotion, in the same way that mentoring is often provided to junior members of a majority group (Casto et al., 2005; Gay, 2004). For instance, a woman-to-woman mentoring relationship can bring together women of all ranks by supporting professional development (Cawyer et al., 2005; Wilson, 2003). According to Ragins and Cotton (1999), mentored women often report higher ratings of career and life satisfaction as well as more rapid promotion resulting in higher salaries for women when mentored by a female mentor. Women mentoring women can help counter possible feelings of psychological discomfort experienced by women while pursuing careers in higher education, especially in a male dominated field. Mentoring increases competence in research, research productivity, career growth, and satisfaction in careers and workplace settings (Allen et al., 2000: Grant & Ghee, 2015). Also, African American female faculty benefit from initiating informal mentoring relationships (Behar-Horenstein, West-Olatunji, Moore, Hourchen, & Roberts, 2012). Further, mentoring provides an understanding of professional identity and the mentee’s role in a profession as well as greater professional, personal, and social development (Magnuson et al., 2009).

Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy (2004) stated that developing and maintaining mentoring relationships on university campuses are important for marginalized groups like African American faculty. African American women need mentors to assist them in higher education positions to clarify and maneuver social norms and the unwritten rules of their institutional climate (Cawyer et al., 2002). In the mentoring relationships, African American female faculty prefer “someone who looks like them, who has similar personal, professional, and scholarly
interests, and is devoted to their holistic experiences and personal success” (Grant, 2012, p. 105). However, more often, cross-cultural mentoring relationships occur between White faculty mentors and mentees of color because of the underrepresentation of faculty of color (Casto et al., 2005). Thus, a greater emphasis should be placed on cultural competence and multicultural sensitivity in cross-cultural mentoring relationships (Casto et al., 2005). Particularly, few studies have explored the career experiences of African American female counselor educators and little research has addressed mentoring needs related to obtaining tenure.

Concerns for women when they are not mentored include psychological discomfort (i.e., feelings of not being heard or listened to), over visibility (i.e., feelings of being hired as a contribution to the façade of organizational diversity), devaluation (i.e., feelings of distancing and lack of respect), and work-related stress (Bryant et al., 2005; Cawyer et al., 2005; Shillingford, Trice-Black, & Butler, 2013). Other concerns reported by Howard-Vital and Morgan (1993) included awkwardness or discomfort that exists among Caucasian faculty when developing mentoring relationships with faculty of color, which perpetuates marginality and the lack of visibility of African American faculty. Additionally, Casto et al. (2005) reported that cross-cultural communication and differences in power dynamics in academia influence cross-gender mentoring relationships.

In response to the concerns involved in cross-cultural mentoring relationships by White mentors who mentor mentees of color, Cornelius et al. (1997) suggested that African American faculty seek and maintain opportunities to mentor other culturally diverse women. When mentoring culturally diverse women, mentors should be aware of their words, mannerisms, systemic oppression, and the institutional climate. Zachary (2000) described four factors essential to promoting cross-cultural mentoring relationships that include: (a) mentor’s cultural
competency, (b) flexible cultural lens, (c) good communication skills, and (d) authentic desire to understand how culture impacts the relationships of mentors and mentees. Also, Johnson, Bailey, and Cervero (2004) outlined six guidelines for a cross cultural mentorship. First, trust is needed between the mentor and mentee. The second guideline is to acknowledge that racism exists. Third, it is vital to monitor visibility and risk related to faculty of color. The fourth guideline is that both the mentor and mentee should recognize the institutional climate. Fifth, the mentor should describe his or her role in the mentoring relations. Finally, the sixth guideline is to discuss the racial dynamics that occur in mentoring relationships. However, little empirical research has been conducted on the specific kinds of cross-cultural mentoring activities that mentors provide to mentees or whether guidance from mentors could increase mentees’ chances of promotion to tenured positions. A contributing factor to the lack of research on cross-cultural mentoring is the one size fits all attitude toward mentoring (Barker, 2007; Benishek et al., 2004; Zafar et al., 2012).

Recently, researchers have begun to acknowledge the issues and concerns that arise from traditional mentorship paradigms, which do not meet the needs of all people, particularly the needs of African American women. Locke (1997) stated that “some African American women who fit easily into the isolating world of the Eurocentric academy and are comfortable with being the only one. Many more [African American women], however, find the experience less than rewarding” (p. 341). Locke (1997) advocated for mentoring that offers a resolution to the issue of too few African American female mentors on college and university campuses. He suggested developing a system to meet the mentoring needs of African American faculty. “While numbers of African American women in faculty and administrative roles are low, the role that these women can play in assisting future generations of women in academia is
essential” (Patton & Harper, 2003, p. 74). Similarly, Blackwell (1989) recommended increasing the visibility of mentors thereby eradicating the demeaning stereotypes about culturally diverse ethnic groups. Members of diverse groups should be visible in prestigious positions in large enough numbers to challenge stereotypical beliefs about marginalized groups, such as African American women.

**Research Mentorship**

Although recent literature has prompted many higher education disciplines, such as counseling, to consider mentorship as a valuable aspect for new faculty (Clark & Watson, 1998), much of the literature has focused on the overall professional development of pre-tenured faculty during mentorship, without a focus on research mentorship (Black et al., 2004; Borders et al., 2011; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Magnuson, Norem, & Lonneman-Doroff, 2009). Specific to research, Wester (2009) defined research mentoring as a “structured, formal or informal relationship that provides relational and instructional support which may focus on the education, understanding, and potential collaboration around research, research process, research idea development, designs, program evaluation, and data analysis” (p. 1). Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) defined research mentorship as “a complex, dynamic relationship that occurs within an academic setting. The mentor, a more experienced researcher, offers both relational and instructional support to the mentee in research generation and collaboration and in professional development. The relationship is goal- and task-oriented, and primarily serves mentee needs, with secondary benefit for the mentor, who gains a research collaborator” (p. 103).

Research mentorship consists of a junior faculty member participating in scholarly activities under the guidance of a senior faculty member, which can take one of several forms depending on the setting and purpose of the mentorship. Specific to academic and scientific
occupations, research mentorship includes emphasis on scholarly productivity (Clark & Watson, 1998; Paul, Stein, Ottenbacher, & Liu, 2002). In Briggs and Pehrsson’s (2008) study, assistance with writing was a primary function of research mentorship and senior faculty members who were in the best position to assist pre-tenured faculty noted they were less able or less likely to mentor. Their findings reflected current literature that identified publishing, promotion, and tenure as the most intimidating activities for counselor education junior faculty. The authors suggested future qualitative research to understand pre-tenured faculty members’ perspectives regarding unsatisfactory research mentorship experiences. Briggs and Pehrsson’s (2008) also noted that such research could provide information on factors necessary for faculty mentees’ success in conducting research that results in publications.

Although research mentorship may differ in relational factors, most research mentors share similar characteristics. According to Borders et al. (2012), characteristics of research mentors as well as guidelines to follow when mentoring include: (a) knowledge, skills, and abilities obtained through education, training, and experience as a researcher, (b) well-defined research agendas or lines of scholarship, (c) dissemination of empirical products (e.g., presentations, publications), (d) skills at educating and applying knowledge and behaviors applicable to research and mentorship, (e) commitment to the role of mentoring, (f) ethical research behaviors, (g) recognition of limitations as a mentor and a researcher, (h) personal characteristics and traits that enhance effective mentoring, and (i) knowledge and expertise in an area of research. The authors proposed that the guidelines for formal and informal mentorship relationship should include a focus on mentee development and a variety of mentor-mentee relationship configurations. Common instrumental and relational activities should guide mentors in all aspects of the research mentoring process.
Research Mentorship in Counselor Education

In counselor education, Hill et al. (2005), Trepal and Stinchfield (2012), and many other researchers (e.g., Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Casto et al., 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Addison-Bradley, 2005; Tentoni, 1995; Walker, 2006) described the specific mentoring needs of counselor education students and faculty at the doctoral and pre-tenure level. Specific to research mentorship, students need collaboration during the research process, opportunities to network, and exposure to various research methodologies. Pre-tenure faculty’s needs include being aware of limitations as both a researcher and a mentor, providing honest and critical feedback, and modeling ethical research behaviors (Black et al., 2004; Johnson, 2002).

In counselor education, research mentorship has been recognized as an essential relationship that includes mentoring activities needed for junior faculty to achieve tenure in counseling programs. The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) (Borders et al., 2012) endorses specific guidelines for research mentorship in counselor education. According to ACES, the characteristics of a research mentor include: a) knowledge, skills, and abilities obtained through education, training, and experiences as a researcher; b) skills at educating and applying research knowledge and behaviors; c) commitment to the role of mentor; and d) knowledge of one’s expertise and limitations as a researcher and mentor. ACES’ guidelines on research mentorship include a list of mentee characteristics that include the following: a) application of knowledge in research practice; b) acknowledgement of needs in a mentoring relationship; c) desire to learn and gain knowledge; and d) skills in a particular area of research (Borders et al., 2012).
Challenges in Counselor Education Research Mentorship

Magnuson (2002) reported many new counselor educators enter professional roles unprepared to delve into scholarly endeavors. As discussed by Cornelius et al. (1997), faculty members are often not provided with the proper socialization and support needed to develop a successful application for tenure, partly due to the lack of mentoring. A lack of literature exists that focuses on the challenges of obtaining research mentorship in counselor education. Magnuson et al. (2003) found that personal qualities, doctoral preparation, environmental factors, idea generation, and time management contributed to entry-level assistant professors’ abilities to submit manuscripts for publication in counseling journals. Paul et al. (2002) noted that structuring time with the mentee is overwhelming because the mentor is still responsible for generating his or her own research. Also, issues with the balance of power within the mentor-mentee partnership and the lack of formal writing preparation are challenges. Lastly, Tentoni (1995) noted personality conflicts, difficulty establishing a research agenda, and different perspectives about what research mentorship involves can hinder the efficacy of research mentorship.

Challenges that pre-tenured faculty are faced with include adjustment to the role of a teacher, participation in service expectations in university settings (e.g., Borders et al., 2011; Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2003; Magnuson et al., 2009), and completion of research requirements as a faculty member. Also, challenges to research mentorship include academic bullying; devaluation of research focusing on women and ethnic minorities’ difficulty scheduling meetings; differences in research interests and competence; racial microaggressions, marginalization, stereotypes, and stigmatization; and issues related to power dynamics (Briggs &
Benefits to Counselor Education Research Mentorship

Magnuson et al. (2003) described the relational factors and instructional factors that are beneficial to research mentorships. According to Magnuson et al. (2003), mentors provide time for mentoring as well as coaching, encouragement, and feedback. Participants in Magnuson et al.’s study emphasized the benefits of support for scholarship and encouragement from mentors during doctoral training. Relational factors included support, partnership, role modeling, nurturance, advocacy, and socialization (Magnuson et al., 2003; Paul et al., 2002). For example, if a mentee does not feel supported, he or she may not complete a research study, thus not progress in research skills or publications. Instructional factors found include assistance in generating research questions, critical analysis of ideas, and multiple perspectives on ideas and issues (Magnuson et al., 2003). For example, a mentee may focus only on his or her research ideas, and not be able to hear or understand others’ critical analysis needed for a research study. Given the importance of research mentorship in counselor education, Levinson et al. (1978) found that mentoring rejuvenates mentors’ careers since it enables them to assist and shape the professional and personal development of mentees. For instance, Cawyer et al. (2005) found that the benefits of mentoring included a long-term relationship with the mentee, a greater chance for collaboration with other students and professionals, constructive and supportive feedback, and the opportunity to garner valuable assistance. Kram (1988) suggested that research mentorship promotes career advancement and psychosocial support. Positive outcomes of research mentorship include psychosocial support such as encouragement, friendship, advice, and
feedback on performance (Kram, 1985). Additionally, research mentorship emphasizes sharing of ideas and knowledge and professional development.

**Research Mentorship of African American Women Counselor Educators**

Female counselor educators face unique challenges in academia, including a lack of supportive research mentorship. Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) stated that a link exists between the quality of research endeavors and resulting publications in the tenure and promotion process of faculty at most universities. Often, challenges to African American female faculty working towards tenure include limited opportunities to participate in research, lack of familiarization with research methodology, isolation from university faculty, and inability of mentors to promote research efficacy. African American faculty may be unaware of various types of recruitment campaigns and the unspoken political environment that exist when addressing issues of recruitment and retention of faculty because they are usually underrepresented among faculty and not always a part of the informal network systems in university settings (Cornelius et al., 1997).

Brinson and Kottler (1993) published a study about the importance of cross-cultural mentoring in counselor education with specific attention to recruiting and retaining ethnic minorities as full-time faculty. According to the authors, marginalized faculty may not be receiving adequate supervision and guidance to help them capitalize on opportunities for success such as in research and publications. They emphasized a cross-cultural mentoring relationship model of cooperation that could help ethnic marginalized faculty to formulate realistic goals, achieve professional success, and expand knowledge and understanding about people of other backgrounds.
Summary

A review of literature was provided regarding an overview of CRT and the percentage of faculty in higher education. Also, included was literature on mentorship across professional disciplines and in counselor education. Mentorship types were described as well as definitions of mentorship, and the various roles of the mentor and mentee were provided specifically related to research mentorship. Factors were detailed that can contribute to the underrepresentation of African American female faculty in full professor positions and the marginality that has resulted.
Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

Organization of this chapter incorporates nine subsections that included the purpose of the study, research questions, research design, participant selection, data collection methods, role of the researcher, data analysis, validation procedures, and summary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study was to give voice to the stories of three African American female faculty’s research mentorship experiences while they were counseling students and as faculty members who are now working towards tenure as counselor educators.

Research Questions

I explored the three participants’ stories based on their feelings and perspectives by using the overarching research question; “How do pre-tenured African American female counselor educators perceive their research mentorship experiences?” Three sub-questions guided my study:

1. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of faculty demands?

2. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of the institutional climate?

3. What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that their social racial membership had on their research mentorship experiences?
Research Design

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative research is a multi-method type of research that involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the subject matter studied. It often “involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives” (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 2). Czarniawska (2004) defined qualitative research as an inductive process to explain a phenomenon that yields a theory about the phenomenon through an intensive collection of narrative data. The focus of qualitative research is to describe and answer questions about a group of participants in a specific context (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative researchers seek to view the social worlds of individuals as holistic and complex, engage in systematic reflection on how to conduct the research, remain reflexive and sensitive to their own biographical/social identities of how they shape research, and rely on complex reasoning that moves dialectically between deduction and induction (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Qualitative researchers can approach an investigation from several typologies including narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, or case study (Creswell, 2012). Regardless of the type of inquiry, an important focus is to determine if the research problem and research questions best fit the design. Often, researchers ask, Is it a good fit? Creswell (2012) pointed to narrative research as a qualitative approach to how humans experience the world around them, and how a narrative design allows people to tell the stories of their lives. Narrative research incorporates the context and place in participants’ stories and draws from traditions in literary theory, oral history, drama, psychology, folklore, and film. As a distinct form of qualitative research, narrative design typically focuses on studying a single person, gathering
data through the collection of stories, reporting individual experiences, and validating how the narrator constructs meaning (Creswell, 2012). Through a mutual and sincere collaboration, the researcher and participant construct the narrative together, allowing both voices to be heard by responding to the question, “And then what happened?” (Sandelowski, 2007, p. 162). Narrative research relies on re-storying of the narrative analysis, a process of reorganizing the stories of individual experiences through a variety of methods such as oral history, artifacts storytelling, autobiographical and biographical writings, email messages, and other data sources. The purpose of using narrative research is for researchers to understand the meaning individuals give to their detailed stories.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggested that narrative analysis seeks to describe the meaning of experiences of those who frequently are marginalized or oppressed socially, I selected a narrative approach to understand African American women who are marginalized in society and to assist them in constructing their life stories. An advantage that I saw to using a narrative design is the technique of “first person retelling;” my participants were the experts of their experiences (Squire, 2008, p. 41). I used a critical race theoretical framework as a lens to hear and understand participants’ stories. I depicted how participants interpreted their lives and experiences, how they find meaning through their experiences, and how their stories can be emancipatory. During the retelling process, I aimed for participants to be able to construct their stories with a beginning, middle, and an end, like a novel. I believed that the chronological sequencing of participants’ stories provided a causal link to participants’ ideas that they shared with me, which included their mentorship interactions, the continuity within each of their stories, and the situation where each of their stories occurred.
A few criticisms of narrative research exist. First, narrative research includes the researcher being the primary instrument of data collection with a focus on the participants, rather than the social context. A second criticism is that the “narrative may suffer from recalling selectively, focusing on subsets of experience, filling in memory gaps through inference, and reinterpreting the past” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 153). As Creswell (2012) stated, “It takes a keen eye to identify in the source material who gathered the particular stories that captures their experiences” (p. 57). The researcher must have a clear understanding of the meaning participants attained from their experiences by uncovering key source material that captures their experiences and by explaining the multi-layered context of their stories. A third criticism of narrative research is the complexity of authorship. Because the researcher actively collaborates with the participants on restorying their narratives, determining the authors and owners of the resulting stories is a challenge. Possible loss of participants’ voices can occur because the researcher alone describes the setting for the stories, the people included, and the events that occurred.

As a qualitative researcher, I believe it is vital to select a design that best captures the experience I researched. I used experience-centered narratives, defined by Squire (2008) as “texts which bring stories of personal experience into being by means of the first person oral narration of past, present, future or imaginary experience and which may be fragmented and contradictory” (p. 45). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), “oral history techniques allow exploration of the normality of Afro-Americans and their daily struggles to survive in oppressed environments” (p. 178). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) suggested a “generalizable qualitative method epistemology for people of color structured around verbal communication” (p. 185). Through the collection of oral narratives, people of color can articulate holistic explanations of how they construct their realities. Thus, I, as an African American female, collaboratively
captured the chronology of three African American female counselor educators’ research mentorship experiences, analyzed the resulting data for their stories, and wrote about their stories.

**Participants**

According to Creswell (2012), maximum variation is a popular approach in qualitative studies, which consists of determining in advance the criteria that differentiate the sites or participants in a study. “Selecting sites or participants that are quite different in criteria increases the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences or different perspectives” (Creswell, 2012, p. 126). I used an experience-centered narrative design for my study, thus my sample size was small, three participants, with special considerations given to the criteria of gender and race of the participants. In experience-centered narrative research, personal narratives involve interviewing several people about the same phenomenon (Squire, 2008). However, in narrative research, Squire stated that researchers are interested in “biographical accounts of at least parts of interviewees’ lives, [that] tend to use small numbers of interviewees, sampled theoretically, often on an opportunistic network basis …” (p. 49).

**Sample Size and Criteria**

With a small sample size of three, participants in my study met seven criteria: (a) African American, (b) female, (c) counselor educator, (d) doctorate from a CACREP-accredited counselor education program, (e) experienced some type of research mentorship, (f) pre-tenured for a minimum of two years but no more than seven years, and (g) employed as an assistant professor at one of three university rankings (i.e., highest, high, or moderate research activity). To obtain the desired narratives, recruitment of participants was a purposeful criterion sample, which involved the selection of participants who have experienced the phenomenon of research
mentorship while working towards tenure. I asked each of my dissertation committee members to identify one person who met the selection criteria. From that list, I used a snowball technique to access additional participants. Snowball sampling is a chain sampling technique that identifies participants based on referrals from previous participants or gatekeepers, stakeholders, or key informants (Hays & Singh, 2011). As Marshall and Rossman (2011) recommended, I continued with my sampling until saturation of data occurred. To protect participants’ anonymity, participants chose pseudonyms.

Demographics and Profiles

Three counselor educators who identified as African American were recruited using criterion sampling. All participants have a doctorate in counselor education and received research mentorship and they were mentored at various levels. To protect participants’ anonymity, participants chose pseudonyms and ages were approximated. The participants are described below in the order that their interviews were conducted.

Tanya

At the time of data collection, Tanya was a 40-something African American female in her second year, second semester as a counselor educator. I met Tanya through networking at a conference for the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES). Tanya was the first person to respond to my email inquiry and make herself available for the interview. She chose to complete the preliminary interview by telephone. We spoke by telephone on January 11, 2017. She received her doctorate at the highest level of ranking for a research institution in counselor education in 2015. While a student in her doctoral program, Tanya took an additional year of research and teaching. Since August 2015, she has been employed as an assistant professor tenure-track counselor educator. Tanya has never had tenure at another
university. Tanya is a co-author of several book chapters on cross-cultural counseling as well as peer-reviewed articles on community policy, integrative theory applications, and queer women of color at a women’s college in the southeast. Her clinical, research, and advocacy interests include queer college youth of color and empowerment, qualitative research, social justice, and multicultural training. Tanya hopes to be tenured in 2020.

Joan

Joan is a 30-something African American female in her fifth year as a counselor educator. I retrieved Joan’s contact information from a dissertation committee member. For the preliminary call, I spoke with Joan on January 13, 2017. Joan earned her doctorate in counselor education and a master’s in counseling. She has been employed as a counselor educator for 4.5 years and is a tenure-track assistant professor at her current institution for 2.5 years where she teaches graduate courses in the counseling program. Her institution is at a moderate level ranking for research. Previously, Joan worked at a moderate research activity institution for two years where she taught a variety of courses. Joan explained she tries to balance service and research. Her research agenda includes multicultural counseling and clinical supervision. She has authored peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters; and presents at international, national, state, and local conferences. Joan has not had tenure at another university. Joan hopes to be tenured 3.5 years from now.

Vanessa

Vanessa is a 30 something year old African American female who has been employed for five years as a counselor educator. I met Vanessa through networking at a conference for SACES. Vanessa's educational background consists of a master’s degree in counseling and a doctorate in counselor education and supervision. She has been employed at two universities for
five years as a counselor educator. Presently, she has been employed as a tenure-track assistant professor at a highest level ranking research institution for approximately two years. Prior to that, she was employed as a tenure-track assistant professor at a teaching institution where she taught masters and doctoral courses for three years. Her research agenda addresses the success of children from absent-father homes, offender and addiction counseling, and mentorship in counselor education. She has published numerous peer-reviewed publications, made international presentations/webinars, and has written a book chapter. Vanessa is hoping to be tenured by 2020.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years as a Counselor Educator</th>
<th>Years at Current Institution</th>
<th>Year Hope to Be Tenured By</th>
<th>Years Pre-tenured</th>
<th>University Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Age was indicated as a range to protect identity.*

**Data Collection Methods**

To obtain the desired participant stories, my semi-structured interviews were conducted by Skype video or by phone when Skype was not available. First, I obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of New Orleans (see Appendix A). To recruit possible participants, I contacted each person by phone (see Appendix B). Once participants agreed to be interviewed, I emailed the letter of interest and consent form one week before the scheduled interview session to each participant (see Appendix C). The form included: (a) notification that participants can withdraw from the study at any time; (b) purpose of the study;
(c) procedures for data collection, confidentiality, anonymity, risks, and benefits; (d) signatures of the participants and the researcher, and (e) contact information for myself, the (i.e., the researcher) and my dissertation co-chairs. Included in the email was an attachment of the interview protocol (see Appendix D). The protocol included demographic questions and a broad overview of the interview questions. Before each interview began, I explained the consent form and the purpose and nature of the study to the participants. During the interview, I used the protocol as a guide to collect the demographic information. I emphasized confidentiality. I informed each participant that if at any time, she did not feel comfortable to answer a question, she was not obligated to do so. If an interview caused a participant discomfort, she could choose to stop the interview. At the end of interview, I provided each participant a resource list of counseling services and hotlines. As suggested by Marshall and Rossman (2011), I conducted three interviews with all three participants.

**First Interview**

For the first interviews, I collected data via semi-structured face-to-face video-recorded interviews by Skype, a proprietary voice-over-internet protocol (VOIP) service and computer software application, or when not available I used a cellular phone. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. Participants chose the most convenient time for the interviews. In addition to recording of the interviews, I took individualized notes on the interviewees’ environment, comfort, and body language. As suggested by Creswell (2012), I wrote marginal notes and draft summaries of field notes to help further understand the meaning behind the narrations of the interviewees. I asked participants for any supplemental material related to their research mentorship experiences, such as participants’ vitas (both historical vitas and present
vitas), which included conference presentations, publications, and teaching history. Also, I collected faculty profiles from the university websites.

To gain understanding through stories of how African American female counselor educators experience research mentorship during the tenure process, it was important to allow participants to tell their stories, uninhibited and unconfined with structured questions. As suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), a narrative interview takes the form of a conversation where participants relate their experiences and discuss whatever they think is relevant to the research topic. To focus a participant when interviewing, I began the interviews by using a probing statement with the aim of producing a narrative about the role that research mentorship has played in the participants’ tenure process. For example, I stated, “I would like you to tell me about research mentorship and its role in your career path.” I followed Squire’s (2008) suggestions by simply asking participants to tell me their stories, and allow active listening to occur where I provided non-verbal responses at conventionally appropriate points. During the interviews, I posed open-ended questions to examine participant interpretations as outlined in the interview protocol (see Appendix D). Interview questions were related to topics of meaning made from participants’ research mentorship experiences, reasons why they sought mentorship, important lessons they learned from mentorship (e.g., what was helpful or not helpful about mentorship), resources relied on while being mentored, and where they currently see themselves in relation to their professional journey. After each interview, I wrote about each interview in terms of detailing information related to each participant, the story each participant told, my reactions to each participant story, and any interesting information that assisted me in reconstructing a participant’s story when preparing the results.
Second Interviews

Approximately two to three weeks after the first interviews, I conducted the second interviews for approximately a half hour each. For the second interviews, I generated a list of questions based upon the participants’ responses from their first interviews. Prior to the second interviews, I provided participants with a copy of their first transcripts to enhance their recollections of their reflections. The focus of the second interviews was to explore reflections they may have had about their first interviews by considering possible new reflections related to research mentorship that included any contradictions, silences, hesitations, and strong or unusual patterns of emotions (Squire, 2008). Participants were encouraged to write down any further information that they would like to share and to call or email me to set-up another meeting if needed so that they could share further stories.

Third Interviews

I conducted the third and last interviews within a three-week period after the first interviews to clarify accuracy of information in the first and second interviews; the third interviews took approximately one hour each. Interview transcriptions were member-checked by each participant to “check facts, examine interpretations, or explore highly emotional issues” (Squire, 2008, p. 49). For instance, Squire stated “re-interviews and other post-interview interactions can also be viewed as ways to give interviewees more power over the materials; to enable them to ‘look back’ historically, or to continue the conversation” (p. 49).

Role of the Researcher

According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), it is important to acknowledge the centrality of the researcher’s own living, telling, retelling, and reliving of his or her own story. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) introduced the concept of reflexivity to explore how the researcher’s
biases may tiptoe into the qualitative study. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) suggested that “researchers provide as much information as possible, in terms of both technical details of conduct and potential bias, so others can scrutinize the ‘importance of objectivity’ of the investigation” (p. 9). A qualitative researcher uses a “lens based on the views of people who conduct, participate in, or read and review a study” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 125).

In my study, it was extremely important that I was self-aware of my own personal assumptions and biases, which could affect the results of the research. Hence, I took researcher bias into account, which I reduced by bracketing my opinions and views of mentoring. As Creswell (2012) suggested, I bracketed my personal experiences of the phenomenon that I studied and facilitated the accurate representation of data and participant experiences. I used a reflective journal to document my own personal reactions and thoughts regarding my observations before and after each interview along with any thoughts, feelings, perceptions, predictions, and assumptions about the findings. I conducted a series of 1 hour meetings with my peer debriefer during a 12 month period for 1 hour every 2 to 3 weeks beginning in February, 2017 to February, 2018 where I shared my thoughts and feelings to clarify my interpretations, separate my experiences from those of the reflections of the study participants, and help prevent influencing the analytic outcome of my study.

I developed this research study based on my reflection of my personal experiences, review of the literature, and informal discussions and mentoring experiences with my professors and discussions with classmates. As a doctoral student enrolled in the University of New Orleans’ Counselor Education program, I became interested in developing a career in academe. At first, I was hesitant about talking to faculty about how to reach my career goal in academe. I did not want to overburden faculty or bother them with discussions related to me wanting to
learn how to develop a research proposal, write a qualitative article for a peer-reviewed journal, or pursue a tenure-track faculty position. After much deliberation, I finally scheduled an appointment with my faculty advisor for career guidance. During my advising appointment, my advisor initiated a discussion about research interest. I knew one of my research interests was mentoring, but I just did not know how to generate research questions or ideas. During our meeting, my advisor pulled out a white board and a dry erase marker and we began mapping my ideas on the white board. My meeting with him encouraged me in my career pursuits.

When I chose the committee members for my dissertation, the makeup of the UNO counseling faculty included two males, one African American and one Caucasian and three females, all Caucasian. I chose co-chairs, one African American male and one Caucasian female, with whom I have presented with and worked professionally. I based my choice of co-chairs on the male’s primary focus of research in the areas of systemic conditioning mechanisms and multicultural/diversity issues in an organization. For the female, I was drawn to her research interest in qualitative research and she mentored me to create scholarly presentations for national and regional counseling conferences. Both of my co-chairs fostered an open and empowering environment where they offered relational and instructional support in developing research and collaborated in my professional development. My co-chairs/mentors assisted me by critiquing my research ideas, assisting with my research methodology, and providing critical feedback on my writing and academic/career development.

As I struggled with creating an initial research proposal, I began to do an annotated bibliography on research mentorship. A lot of the literature focused on student-faculty mentoring experiences. I thought if I was struggling with conceptualizing and conducting research, a faculty member probably was struggling with manuscript submissions or navigating the tenure process.
Doing a defendable dissertation on research mentorship seemed like a barrier to obtaining my life dream of becoming a counselor educator. Thus, I sought out mentors to assist me with doing qualitative research.

I had several assumptions and biases about research mentorship in counselor education. I assumed tenured African American female counselor educators had a role model or mentor to offer support and to help them become involved in research activities early in their careers. My informal discussions further supported my ideas that African American counselor educators who receive research mentorship are more likely to achieve tenure. I also thought that African American female counselor educators are more likely to listen to other tenured counselor educators, which allowed tenured faculty to understand their emotions, beliefs, and struggles with their research pursuits. I am biased that male mentors would be less likely to offer support to African American female mentees because of genderism, patriarchy, and privilege. Another bias I had is that not all African American female counselor educators’ research mentorship experiences would be beneficial due to inadequate mentoring. Lastly, I believed not all the African American female participants in my study would have experienced some form of mentoring, but had to learn how to do research independently.

Through my own formal and informal mentoring experiences, I received career advisement and instruction, support, understanding, positive role modeling, and protection. While being a graduate assistant in the University of New Orleans’ CACREP-Accredited Counselor Education Program, I received awareness of the graduate program organizational structure. Through the American Counseling Association (ACA) mentoring program, I learned more about unwritten political and cultural rules. Reflecting on my own mentoring experience, I realized I felt alone and isolated in the beginning. As a result, I created a visible presence in the
counseling program by participating in classroom lectures, professional meetings, and social events. Also, I approached my program faculty about my desire in developing presentation and publications skills through joint research activities. On the other hand, I began to look outside my department for connections with other women. At times, I believed I wanted more coaching with writing time with my mentors. Through my process, I realized it is important to be clear in communicating my needs.

**Data Analysis**

I transcribed all interviews and took notes of participants’ reactions to the narrations of their interviewees. To promote reliability, I transcribed the interview verbatim of all responses as well as double-checked each transcript, coded each transcript, and read and checked each transcript for flawed coding to allow for reliable findings. Data storage was in a locked cabinet and encrypted Microsoft Word computer files accessible only by the researcher and doctoral dissertation committee members. Data will be stored for three years after the completion of the research.

Creswell (2012) described data analysis as a zigzag process in which a researcher gathers and analyzes data for participants’ stories, their chronology of unfolding events, and the turning points or epiphanies. When I analyzed my data, I considered Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) method of narrative analysis by considering “a three-dimensional space approach that involves analyzing the data for three elements: interaction (personal and social), continuity (past, present, and future), and situation (physical places or the storyteller’s places)” (p. 158). Additionally, I organized the data by hand, using Creswell’s (2012) common elements of narrative data analysis. I used the following steps: (1) created and organized my files for the data, (2) read through the transcripts and additional documents, (3) made margin notes in the transcripts and documents,
(4) formed initial codes for the data, (5) described participants’ stories or objective set of experiences, (6) placed them in a chronology, and (7) identified stories, located epiphanies, and identified themes.

Using memo writing, I kept my mini DVD camcorder handy to record my thoughts. I used open coding to analyze my data. I sorted through my observation notes, interview notes, memos, and documents. After reading, managing, and coding the data from each transcript, my additional personal documentation obtained from the interviews, and the documents collected from each participant when provided (i.e., vitas and faculty profiles), I described, classified, and interpreted the data into themes. Once I created themes for each transcription and additional documents, I winnowed my data, the concept of reducing the data into broader overarching themes across all three transcriptions and additional documents. I then condensed the overarching themes to super-ordinate themes to assist in composing my narrative. When I described participants’ stories, I created a chronology by making connections through the data description, analysis, and interpretation of the contextual material. Based on Marshall and Rossman’s (2011) recommendation that continuation of sampling occurs until saturation of data is complete, I analyzed my data until saturation occurred.

I used a picture to depict the structure of my data analysis (see Illustration 1). I structured the data analysis to resemble three oak trees to represent the participants’ commonality of being African American female junior faculty who experienced research mentorship and possessed great knowledge. The trunks represent the female silhouettes and their African American femininity and individual narratives from where the themes, and overarching and super-ordinate themes were derived. I provided the counter stories for the interconnectedness of the three participants’ research mentorship experiences. The background color of blue symbolizes the
participants’ wish to be tenured as counselor educators. Alternatively, blue represents the university climate that the participants described during their interviews. The green grass symbolizes any successes and hindrances they had experienced while being mentored. The three trees bearing ripe figs represent the participants holding out hope to obtain tenure and promotion to associate professor by 2020. The shade of the trees symbolizes the various dynamics that occurred during the participants’ research mentoring experiences.

Illustration 1. Painting depicting data analysis structure.

Validation Procedures

Validity, in qualitative research, refers to whether the study accurately reflects the research phenomenon and whether evidence supports the findings. I used four approaches to establishing validity, which included confirmability, trustworthiness, credibility, and audit.

According to Hays and Singh (2011), confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are genuine reflections of the participants rather than the researcher’s biases and assumptions. To achieve confirmability, I provided participants with an opportunity to review their transcripts and to clarify any misinterpretations of their stories using member checking. Participant member checking involved sharing of the data and interpretations with participants to
ensure that the findings accurately and representatively reflected the participants’ experiences. According to Creswell (2012), member checking allows participants (i.e., counselor educators) to review their transcripts or a preliminary report of the findings and is one of the most valuable forms of validation. Member checking occurred during the two follow-up interviews as these follow-ups allowed time for each participant to review the transcripts to make sure the representation of their ideas was accurate.

In evaluating the criteria of narrative research, Riessman (1993) emphasized that trustworthiness, rather than the truth, is critical when validating narrative interviews. The concept of truth assumes an objective reality, whereas trustworthiness is an interpretive process. Narrations, even of the same event, may differ between individuals and the same individual may recall an event differently or emphasize different aspects of a story on different occasions. In my study, the trustworthiness of the data is contingent on both the narrator and audience. Throughout my study, I kept stories about research mentorship in mind, and provided themes from each participant’s story required for readers to determine the trustworthiness of the study.

Third, for credibility, I used triangulation. Triangulation occurred by involving the use of multiple sources of the data, which in this study included semi-structured interviews as well as copies of participants’ vitas and faculty profiles. Triangulation of these sources allowed me to check for convergence or extend inferences to form themes of participants’ stories. As indicated by Creswell and Miller (2000), triangulation adds depth to data analysis via multiple interpretations of the narratives.

Finally, an aspect of creditability and validity is audit trails. I used audit trails to inspect my analyses. Using the approach of an external auditor to conduct audit trails provided me credibility as well as dependability, which allowed me to examine my data and compare my
conclusions with the external auditor. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), dependability of audit trails allows me to assess whether the results of my study hold up across the research and the methods. When considering dependability, Marshall and Rossman (2011) described external auditing as “reviewing the data, analyses, and reports, essentially ‘certifying’ that the research was conducted well, and the data support the analyses and findings” (p. 230). My external auditor reviewed accuracy of resulting data analysis and conclusions based on the descriptions from participants’ interviews and additional documentation. The external auditor was a counselor educator with expertise in narratology. As recommended by Creswell (2012), the auditor was not connected to my study. Throughout my dissertation research, I met with my external auditor every 2 weeks for 1 hour sessions beginning in February, 2017 and ending in February, 2018 to clarify and ensure my biases did not skew my results.

In addition to an external audit of my data analysis, I used a peer debriefer. According to Creswell (2012), peer debriefing diminishes researcher bias by encouraging the researcher to discuss and explore how his or her values may influence the study. For my peer debriefer, we met for 1 hour every 2 to 3 weeks beginning in February, 2017 after the data were collected and transcribed to discuss my initial reactions and analysis to serve as a tool for both credibility and dependability. We met for a final time in February, 2018 to discuss preliminary themes and super-ordinate themes. My analyses were made available to the debriefer for review, but the main emphasis in our meetings was to review my analysis process and challenge whether my personal biases interfered with my interpretations. To protect participants’ confidentiality, the external auditor and peer debriefer signed a confidentiality agreement (see Appendix E).
Summary

In this chapter, I provided the purpose of my study, the research questions and a
description of the narrative research design. Also provided were the participants’ profiles,
methodology, and role of the researcher. Finally, Creswell’s (2012) approach to narrative data
analysis was included. A description was provided for establishing validity, which included
confirmability, trustworthiness, credibility, and audit.


Chapter IV

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, narratological research study was to gain a deeper understanding of the stories of three female African American counselor educators who experienced research mentorship while they were counseling students and then tenure-tracked faculty members. Chapter IV is divided into six sections. First, the validation procedure results are presented. Second, the results are presented. Third, the within case analysis is described. Fourth, the cross-case analysis was presented. Fifth, the findings by research questions are presented. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided.

Validation Procedure Results

I used validation procedures throughout the research study to reflect the research phenomenon and support the findings. First, due to the possible effects of my own research mentorship experiences as well as being the principal researcher of this study, I used bracketing as a protective mechanism against subjective bias. For my biases, I bracketed my opinions and views of mentoring using a reflective journal to document my own personal reactions and thoughts regarding my observations before and after each interview along with any thoughts, feelings, ideas, perceptions, predictions, and assumptions I might possess regarding the findings. Second, member checking occurred during the three follow-up interviews. These follow-ups allowed time for each participant to review the transcripts to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Each participant gave voice to help guide the themes and interpretations of the interviews developed during the data analysis. Next, I used the strategy of triangulation by using multiple sources of the data, which included participants’ semi-structured interviews; an interview protocol; vitas where content included presentations, publications, and teaching, and; faculty
profiles from each of the participant’s counselor education program websites. Triangulation of these sources allowed me to check for convergence or extend inferences to form themes of participants’ stories. Fourth, for a validation strategy, I used an external auditor who is a Caucasian female counselor educator with expertise in narratology. Not connected to my study, the external auditor reviewed accuracy of resulting data analysis based on the descriptions from participants’ interviews, vitas, and additional documentation. Lastly, I disclosed my thoughts and feelings to my peer debriefer to assist in the clarification of my interpretations, separate my experiences from those of the reflections of the study participants, and to help prevent influencing the analytic outcome of the study. The peer debriefer was an African American male counselor educator with expertise in qualitative methodology.

**Results**

As Parker (2012) stated that narratives do not need to be told in chronological order, I relied heavily on re-authoring the analysis. I conducted the narrative data analysis after all the interviews were completed. Themes were typed in the participants’ summaries based on quotations from the narratives. A within-case display was created for each individual case and then a cross-case analysis was formed, which involved examining themes to reduce the themes to overarching themes. Overarching themes were then collapsed to create super-ordinate themes.

**Within Case Analysis**

In this section, the themes found in each interview; with quotes of participants’ narratives extracted from the interviews to support the overarching themes, are provided. Based on the order of the facilitation of interviews, the participants’ narratives relating to each overarching theme are presented.
Data analysis of Tanya’s transcriptions and supplemental sources of documents (i.e., vitas, conference presentations, publications, and tenure packets) resulted in 38 themes. The 38 themes were analyzed and reduced to nine overarching themes: 1) Characteristics of Self as a Mentee, 2) Mentee Reactions, 3) Research Activities, 4) Professional Collaboration with Others, 5) Self-engagement Characteristics, 6) Disappointments in the Profession, 7) Diverse Identity, 8) Coping Strategies, 9) Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring (see Table 2 and Figure 1).

**Characteristics of self as a mentee.** In Tanya’s narrative, the first overarching theme that emerged was Characteristics of Self as a Mentee, which was reflected in two themes. Tanya started the interview by describing how she first experienced research mentorship as an undergraduate student at a historically Black college and university. She discussed how she engaged in research immediately as a master’s student. Tanya shared how her initial mentor-mentee research experiences were developed in the classroom when she stated,

> My intro professor was a doctoral candidate doing a qualitative dissertation on African American women who are mandated to drug treatment. She invited a few of her African American students to be a part of her research team. I guess I’ve just had the bug for qualitative analysis ever since that experience. It’s life changing … I just asked questions and took advantage when doctoral students or professors or other professionals offered opportunities. … timing has been a major factor for me.

Tanya also indicated her mentoring relationships have “developed organically.” She added, “When you’re a doctoral student or even a master’s student, you have these 15-week love
affairs with a different topic.” Additionally, she spoke about having a consistent mentoring relationship. She stated, “… Today it feels solid.”

**Mentee reactions.** The second overarching theme that emerged was Tanya’s *Mentee Reactions*, which was reflected in eight themes. Tanya shared how she is currently designing research. She stated, “I continue to work very copiously with people who are ahead of me in the game, people who have been in the profession longer.” She referred to her research mentoring activities as “…what I’ve made it. It allowed me to be a collaborator…” and provided a “…sense of cultural spirit and narrative spirit.” She stated, “The idea that we were telling stories about our community … is kind of … who I’ve been. … I feel like it feeds the research agenda … It’s kind of like just I was meant to do this.” She shared how her research mentorship activities helped her career trajectory. “It has been the linchpin to my success. I don't know that I would be at a research-intensive institution as a tenure track professor if I didn't have that research mentorship.” She added, “I need mentorship as a first year or second year tenure track professor on ways to break down some of the discrimination in the publication of our work beyond just getting the mentorship to produce it. [But] to get it in publication.” Tanya described various forms of mentorship she received.

I feel that I've had some of the best mentorship that was available around the topic in our field. And, that continues to be the case through Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD). … My mentors have not only taught me how to do it, they tried to open ways that I could then get it in publications. I am in the process of being a witness to how successful that process will be. … I've also co-authored with mentors who are having some of the same difficulties that I've addressed at the beginning. We're having to submit in the *Journal of African American Studies* which is not a counseling
journal but it's the type of publication … that will accept some of the work that we are producing. I had an experience not so long ago with a top-tiered journal in our profession who made the comment that Black people don't go to counseling, so they couldn't accept our manuscript. This is the kind of stuff we face out here still, because there's still a White guard around publication and counseling.

**Research activities.** The third overarching theme that emerged was how Tanya described her *Research Activities*, which was reflected in four themes. The supplemental material provided by Tanya indicated numerous research sources are available at her past and present institutions. Additionally, her research agenda indicated she was interested in clinical, research, and advocacy, including queer college youth of color and empowerment, qualitative research, social justice, and multicultural training. Tanya reported she completed an additional year of research and training as a doctoral student including research workshops, which helped prepare her for faculty demands. She was also a graduate assistant and doctoral supervisor, which provided her with opportunities to be involved in research projects. She said,

I went to research intensive institutions for my master's, for my doctorate, and I am at a research intensive institution as a professor. That has certainly been expected of me as a student and now as a professor. The expectation has certainly driven the kind of time and attention that I could devote to it.

Tanya also described how institutional factors contributed to her level of experience and confidence with research. She stated,

I guess I stepped into a place where people were predisposed and subject to mentor and develop and so I arrived there and that was just beautiful to have been able to lean into that, which I did. So, the mentorship was right there. They were offering it up front, but
you needed to do something for them to continue to invest it in you beyond the classroom and that's what I did…. I'm a member of the Black African Staff Organization and so what I have tried to do is take what's there and then you know show that I'm willing to go beyond and then actually follow through with that.

**Professional collaboration.** The next overarching theme, *Professional Collaboration* related to how Tanya viewed collaboration and its contribution to her research mentorship experience and was reflected in three themes. Reflected in Tanya’s supplemental materials was that she was co-author for several book chapters as well as peer-reviewed articles. Also, she described how she collaborated in writing projects “…with a long time professional mentor… He’s been a professor for 13 years … I also write with one of my professors. I work with various members of the faculty here … and some of my colleagues that I met as a doctoral student.”

**Self-engagement characteristics.** Tanya spoke about the characteristics of receiving research mentoring in the fifth overarching theme, *Self-engagement Characteristics*, which was reflected in five themes. She described how being an English major in her undergraduate years boosted her level of confidence with research. She said,

> My English background has been invaluable because what I have found is those who studied mental health as undergraduates had a different kind of relationship than with frequent writers. But, as an English major … there is no conflict between me and writing experience, but I hear a lot of my colleagues don't "like to write". I love it. … the angle of looking at human relationships, the counseling piece has allowed me to be the kind of writer that I would have naturally might have been had I instead continue to do English. It's the human story that really intrigues me. … and counseling allowed me to do that professionally.
Tanya reflected on how her personal characteristics have benefited her in her research mentorship experiences. She said,

I've done a lot of studies looking at women of color in drug treatment centers. I mean it was just, it was an explosion, right? And so, I think I came into the profession at a time where multicultural, social justice, qualitative analysis had taken root and was starting to bloom, and the timing has been a major factor for me…

Tanya described how publishing or presenting scholarly work “comes naturally” and is a professional benefit for her. She said,

I've always been a writer. … research gives me a way to use those skills toward real ends, like I could make changes in a profession if I write. … I'm, right now, working on a NIH grant to support us … being able to use my research mentorship to then get a grant that will then help women in drug court… That is like a beautiful web of magicalness to me where everybody is advancing. And then, as a professor at a research institution, I'm doing my job by doing research but also getting a grant, which is bringing in money to the university and helping a student coming from a historically Black college and university who's about to get in the field, understand what she could do when she's out there. … once again, I am riding a unicorn … because that seems like all the things that are meaningful for me and meaningful for others, which is important to me, can happen in the context of my employment, that seems phenomenal to me.

**Disappointments in the profession.** Tanya discussed the sixth overarching theme, *Disappointments in the Profession*, which was reflected in two themes. She said that sometime “things increase and if they are increasing quickly … I feel like I'm flooded and … I'm in a hot
air balloon kind of sailing over … so it depends on what days you're getting me.” She also described the challenges in getting research mentorship when she stated,

While I may be producing, somebody still must publish it and that's where the rubber may hit the road for me when I come up for my third-year review. They're going to be looking at how many publications I have in print, not how many I have produced.

**Diverse identity.** The next overarching theme, I identified in Tanya’s narrative was *Diverse Identity*, which was reflected in six themes. Tanya considered that being an academic was an essential part of her identity. She expressed how research mentorship is a “critical issue for women of color or people of color” and how her research mentorship experiences differed from the faculty mentors in her program because of her racial identity.

I look at my colleagues I think we've had very similar research mentorship and in some cases I have had more because I identified myself as a researcher later in my doctoral career. Because as a doctoral student, I took so many additional research courses … because I invested in the research people took notice. They took me seriously and then they began to support that and so at that point I began to get financial support. Little, you know, internal grants… the more that I showed that I was serious and once again I don't want the message to be you know, show that you're serious and people are going to prop at your feet because I don't think that's true. I think that what happened to me was serendipitous and that I'm blessed. And, I always get so emotional because I know that it doesn't happen to so many of us. And, I know that it didn't happen for other brown girls. There's a range. So, maybe they clearly had that excellent mentorship. … I don't want to be representative like it was just great, but it works out because we had social justice researchers who were with us, the women of color, that they saw us and mentored us and
then other people around those women extended a hand … so many women and women of color who are researchers in our profession have been mentors to me and by extension a larger multicultural community. You know, men, women, Black, White, Hispanic, Latina, you know it's just growing exponentially.

Tanya relayed that she never allowed her racial identity to limit her research mentorship experiences. She stated,

I knew that there were racism and sexism and I understood those dynamics, but I never was taught that that was a place to trip. I was taught that that's a place you really use to gain strength and that's what I've done. And, in doing that it is true for me. So, you know I just feel like every door is not for me, but I don't spend a lot of time at closed doors.

Tanya also described her cultural identities when she stated,

I am African American; I am late middle adulthood, which is a real specific identity that we don't always talk about. I am able bodied but aging … I identify as queer, which for me is not so much about, you know, queer is kind of like it's none of your business what I do sexually because I'm empowered to do what I would like to do between my partner and I … So, to stand in that identity, I can think it's just a powerful piece of what makes me more effective. I'm a southern girl with a little bit of northern flare because I grew up in D.C. Um, I am spiritual, and I have a context of religion, I grew up Catholic and Christian and that's a big piece of my identity. … I'm a mom, I'm a stepmom. So, I'm a mother who has had the benefit of raising children but also have had the flexibility to do other things while I do it. … I'm a mom whose never experienced birth so that's a kind of reality to be a mom who can't say I made this child… So those are really the biggest things that come up for me, when I think about identities.
She reflected on her experiences as an African American woman, when she said,

I'm fully invested in Black girl magic … being very transparent about those identities. …

It is a constant blessing and it's a constant responsibility … blessings are like roses in a
way. … They're pretty flowers but there's lots of thorns. … it's both ends, like a comfort
and insecurity. It's kind of the best things that have ever happened to me and some of the
most painful things that have ever happened to me have happened. … But then others, I
mean Trump is president. … he's like … if all the cultures are under attack and here I am
trying to be the poster child, it's kind of like running into the fire but you know as a
woman of spirit, I know just because you're in the fire doesn't mean you're going to get
burned. And, that's what keeps me going. That the fire is cleansing. It's not meant to
destroy you. It's meant to refine you and purify you. And, that's the way I must continue
to look at it.

Tanya discussed how her identities impacted her current mentor-mentee relationships.

She said that

… with AMCD, I feel like my cultural identity is of being a Black woman, of being
middleclass … because African Americans tend to have a different kind of threshold
when we're talking about class, right? An upper-middle class connection with places like
AMCD, etc. It's like carte blanche but being a fourth-generation college graduate makes
me ‘Ooh all that!’ with the Black crowd but White folks just really aren’t always hearing
that or taking that into account, right? And so, no matter what I'm bringing when they see
my brown face, they make lots of assumptions about my identities and many times that
hinders the ability to play on a different kind of field with them.
Coping strategies. The eighth overarching theme that emerged from Tanya’s narrative was *Coping Strategies*, which was reflected in five themes. She shared how her involvement in professional counseling divisions provided networking and support from colleagues “… within AMCD. I have multi-ethnic mentorship and at my institution. I have support from many individuals, but it doesn't always translate into what I'm able to get into a journal.” Also, Tanya described the psychosocial aspects of research mentoring she received. Tanya explained,

I don’t want to trivialize that there are so many students who are not getting research mentorship. That’s one of the things that we’re talking about or trying to address at AMCD by having students who appreciate … not just the cherry picked at various students, then those students that help try to commit some levity in the playing field so that every graduate student has an opportunity to see their full potential impacted in education, but also documenting those experiences because what we’re hearing at so many of the counseling journals is that African Americans don’t read their publications and don’t go to counseling which is untrue. If that myth can exist and we don’t come at it with binding studies, then that becomes the truth versus what we know to be true. … it’s somewhat of an uphill battle right now.

She believed that the support from her spouse allowed her to engage in scholarship. She shared that she is married and that her husband has been her primary support but that she has also worked.

… I've never had to worry about it because I've been married to him … knowing your mortgage is going to be paid, your rent is going to be paid, you're going to eat and you're probably going to get to buy shoes … I don't have to worry as much about some of the things that might have distracted me from really focusing on what I wanted to do.
Tanya reflected on some influential experiences. One experience was when one of her mentors told her

‘You are the thing that you have been waiting for.’ I heard that, and I took it in … That's cool, right, but in this moment, I understand what she was saying because the fact there we’re women that I was able to emulate… my grandmother, my mother, like all of these women have allowed me to be yet another version. … Shonda Rhimes said it so much better in her book, that she didn't get to where she is because she's so phenomenal. She got to where she is because there were phenomenal women and people that lifted her up and I am no Shonda Rhimes. I'm not saying that, but what I'm saying is that the possibility is bigger than we imagine.

**Behaviors of effective mentoring.** The final overarching theme I identified in Tanya’s narrative was *Behaviors of Effective Mentoring*, which was reflected in three themes. She said that she,

... started to create a non-academic kind of mentoring process that's looking at professional development producing unprofessional, both palatable educators and practitioners. Not just based on their academic standing, but on the things that were talked about. The need to have individuals who look like and think like you, support you, and help you develop yourself professionally. My end tends to lead to research, because I'm a researcher, but getting a practitioner-based researcher and getting more students to writing as graduate students and not waiting until they become professors. …

Tanya also described how she would like her research assistant, who is a doctoral student and a woman of color, to “use the things that she supports me with” to have “opportunities to
grow herself.” When mentoring herself, Tanya described the kind of research mentorship she provided to her mentees.

I tell them to do what you must do to get that degree but bring your vision. My thing is bringing your creativity, bring your viewpoint. Don't feel like you need to be so scripted. I mean, know and honor the form that you're using so I'm so passionate about qualitative research forms if you're doing narrative. I want you to do it in a pure way. … I want us to be so excellent at what we do, to quote Langston Hughes that they will see us and think we're way too brilliant and beautiful to be sent to the back. I'm really focused on excellence, not necessarily perfection, but excellence.

Tanya described some desired skill sets needed for quality research mentor-mentee relationships.

Like respect. This idea that I might be your mentor but I'm not your leader, I'm not creating or forming you into anything. I am sitting with you while you decide what you are becoming and then encouraging that and not necessarily trying to use that exclusively for my benefit. I mean, I'm going to benefit anyway, right? It's pretty much impossible for me not to have outcome and improvement for working on pubs with doc student etc. I'm going to get the credit anyway if I'm the mentor. I'm already in a position of power. Why do I need to take more of that from you? It really is about being secure enough in your own accomplishment. Not be afraid of somebody else. Also, enjoying that same stance. I do believe that if we weren't hoarding … we could be enjoying so much more.
### Table 2

**Nine Overarching Themes and 38 Themes for Tanya**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching Themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Characteristics of Self as a Mentee</td>
<td>1. Self-initiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Developed organically</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mentee Reactions</td>
<td>1. Designing research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Writing for publications</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Opportunities for close collaborative work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Find answers and share answers with the population you serve</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Varied</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Formed alliances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Continuous thread</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. Multiple Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Research Activities</td>
<td>1. Attended research institution for master’s degree and for doctorate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. At a research-intensive institution as a professor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Expect research to be an important institutional activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Opportunity for scholarly activities</td>
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<td>4. Professional Collaboration</td>
<td>1. Collegial relationships with faculty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Teaching assignments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Supportive relationship with administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Self-engagement Characteristics</td>
<td>1. Educational bias about being a graduate of a historically Black college</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Previous educational experiences contribute to ability to generate research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Comes naturally</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Member of several research consortions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Published five book chapters</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Disappointments in the Profession</td>
<td>1. Some articles are not accepted by counseling publications</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Critical issue with mentoring for the profession</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Gender: Woman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Marital status: Married</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Spiritual identity: Christian</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Affectional orientation: Queer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Educational status: 4th generation college student</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Coping Strategies</td>
<td>1. Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Married</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Participation in diverse professional organizations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Mentorship from multiple people</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Involvement in structured programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Behaviors of Effective Mentoring</td>
<td>1. Non-academic mentoring process that looks at professional development producing unprofessional, both palatable educators and practitioners</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Need to have individuals who look like you and think like you, support you and help you develop professionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Advocate for mentees at production level and publication level</td>
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Painting of Tanya’s story. I used a painting to represent what I heard Tanya describe in her interview to capture her unique voice and story. Tanya spoke candidly about being concerned about getting published. She also spoke about the admiration and support she has received within her university system. The colors represent Tanya’s research mentorship experiences. I depicted Tanya as a unicorn based on the mythical creature she selected to describe herself and to represent her “Black Girl Magic.” Tanya has a fruit-bearing tree. The tree provides the unicorn with shelter and security. The use of figs on tree branches symbolizes Tanya’s coping strategies. The spiral horn of the unicorn is symbolic of Tanya’s success as an early career faculty. Also, the unicorn is representative of Tanya shifting between the visible realm of being an assistant professor to the invisible realm of pursuing tenure for 2020. The sharp horn is also representative of Tanya attempting to break through the glass ceiling via her research agenda. Lastly, the background color purple was symbolic of her queer identity and upper-middle class connection making her “ooh all that” (see Illustration 2).
Illustration 2. Painting depicting Tanya’s story of her research mentorship experiences

**Joan**

Data analysis of Joan’s transcriptions resulted in 42 themes. The 42 themes were analyzed and reduced to nine overarching themes: 1) *Characteristics of a Mentee*, 2) *Mentoring Process*, 3) *Self as a Mentee*, 4) *Environmental Characteristics*, 5) *Positives of Being a Mentor*, 6) *Negative Aspects of Being a Mentor*, 7) *Collaboration with Others*, 8) *Self-Identity Roles*, and 9) *Mentor/Mentee Sharing* (see Table 3 and Figure 2).

**Characteristics of a mentor.** The first overarching theme that emerged in Joan’s narrative was the *Characteristics of a Mentor*, which included two themes. Joan received formal mentorship through her dissertation chair along with suggestions to become part of a writing group. She said,

I had more formal mentoring from my dissertation chair and so we worked on a couple manuscripts together and he really coached me through how to complete the first manuscript after I finished my dissertation. He taught me how to compile all the information and condense it. So instead of getting a 250-page document and now you know I have a 25-page manuscript. So that was more of a formal mentoring that took
place. … as I continued along I had some informal mentoring with colleagues I worked with. … Also, it helps to also be accountable to other people that I'm working with.

Mentoring process. The second overarching theme in Joan’s narrative was the *Mentoring Process*, which included six themes. Joan’s supplemental material reflected that she has peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, and presents at international, national, state, and local conferences. She was also a graduate assistant and doctoral supervisor, which provided her with opportunities to be involved in the mentoring process. Although Joan’s mentorship now is not as formal as when she was an early professional, she was satisfied.

I would say as a faculty member I received more mentorship earlier in my career. So, I've been a faculty member … It's been two and a half years where I currently am now and then two years where previously for a total of four point five years or a half year and I would say I received more mentorship earlier on in my career and I realize that mentorship looks different as you continue along because the needs that you have as a professional will look different. … I was satisfied with it. … I'll seek it out when I need it and it might be more so now around like specific things, like I was working on a grant. I would seek out somebody who I know is proficient with grant writing.

Joan discussed her mentoring partnerships throughout the interviews. She shared her experiences related to research mentoring with peers, tenured faculty, and researchers outside of counselor education in that,

… most relationships where I am being mentoring comes from informal relationships with colleagues I currently work with at my current institution or colleagues at different institutions… I wouldn’t say I have any formal mentorship going on right now with somebody who's mentoring me. But, I do have a lot of informal mentorships where I
mentored colleagues and we are coming together to work on projects or I meet with my department chair. I meet with my department chair on an annual basis to go over goals. It is more of a check-in. I would not consider that under the true definition of mentorship, because mentorship is more of an ongoing relationship. So, I have more informal networks with current colleagues … One, she’s not even in counselor education.

Joan also described her approach to mentoring as,

… to provide an environment where students can learn and learn according to their needs and there are different learning styles…it's a collaborative role… students are coming in and with knowledge coming in with lived experiences and my role is to add to what they already have. … that the mentor is coming in with a little bit more experience but does not discount the experience the mentee has. And, I believe that mentorship should go both ways … The mentor and mentee need to be available and proactive. It's not a one-sided type of relationship. So, it should be a reciprocal relationship.

Additionally, Joan reflected on what she would have done differently during the mentoring process.

One of the things that I would have done differently, and I can still do it and implement it, is increase the communication with my dissertation chair. … I was really closely engaged in communicating with my dissertation chair obviously when I was in the program. I don't really talk to him that much anymore. I guess one of the things that I would do differently is to keep those relationships going. … Because it's hard to keep those lines of communication open. … Not being so focused and so on tunnel vision that I forget to reach out to people who I have good working relationships in the past.

Joan shared how her research mentorship process with her dissertation chair helped her
career trajectory. She said, “I would say because my mentor was really organized, it helped me to be organized and to see that I can take a couple of areas. … I can write on those areas.” Joan shared the benefits of the research mentoring process for senior faculty.

I realize for senior level faculty … We all have a lot of responsibilities, but they may also be more involved in the national level. I would say one of the benefits would be them being energized by junior faculty and then learning about different research interests so expanding their own horizons. … I would say the energizing effect is one benefit. Just knowing that you're helping somebody move forward. The altruistic benefit that comes into play is another byproduct of mentoring a junior faculty member. Then, the self-serving benefit could be being added to a presentation or being a co-author on a manuscript is a benefit for a senior faculty member.

**Self as a mentee.** The next overarching theme in Joan’s narrative was the *Self as a Mentee*, which included two themes. “I came in with a couple of goals that I wanted to work on, research goals.” She described what she learned from her early experiences as a mentee.

I either have to have something in the early stages of research or having something in the middle stages and also having something you are ready to submit to a journal … There’s a formula to it…it really helped to demystify the process for me because it was intimidating. And, so because of that early experience, now it takes time to write articles and to do the research but once I got past that I realized okay let me go back to this formula that I know exists.

**Environmental characteristics.** Joan described the supportive *Environmental Characteristics*, the fourth overarching theme, which included five themes. As reflected in Joan’s supplemental material, Joan worked at a *moderate* research activity institution for two
years where she taught a variety of courses. Also, the supplemental material indicated that numerous research sources are available at her past and present institutions. She described the characteristics at her present institution.

The institutional climate talks about the importance of doing research and it also follows up with opportunities to talk to colleagues about doing research in having funding for research. There’s a good balance of encouragement plus providing resources. So, for example, there is the writing group … We had these research forums that go on throughout the semester. We have a teacher center for teaching and learning … So, there are many opportunities like that around campus. It's just really finding the time to participate in it. …there are opportunities through travel grants and research grants … I feel like the institution is not just talking the talk but they also walking the walk by backing it up with real resources that I can use.

**Positives of being a mentor.** Positives of Being a Mentor was the next overarching theme, which included five themes. Joan discussed her abilities to conduct scholarly projects and publish in referred journals because of her mentor. Joan described how her early mentoring experience with her dissertation chair positively impacted her view on research.

He really set the stage for everything in how I view research and how into research I say that I am. He was, and I still say he is a very strong researcher and he publishes a lot. He really helped me to understand the whole concept about always having something that you're working on. … I would say he was instrumental in helping me to understand the research process and to realize that it's neat. … it really helped to demystify the process. Joan spoke about how confidence aided her journey when she had a mentor who was confident in himself.
... it rubbed off on me. ... all you must do and follow this structure and you will be able to get published as well. In having the self-confidence ... [Also] I'll say having some validation by having some manuscripts accepted was a major boost to my ego realizing that okay my work is appreciated.

Joan benefitted from “bouncing ideas off” her mentor. He guided her in “what was realistic in my dissertation.”

I was encouraged to do a pilot study and to publish those results in a journal that he co-authored with me. ... Providing opportunities like that was pivotal in my early career. [And] providing concrete feedback on my writing was helpful. ... I would sit down and ... we would talk about the different institutions ... what the research looked like at certain institutions compared to others ...

**Negative aspects of being a mentor.** Meanwhile, Joan acknowledged *Negative Aspects of Being a Mentor*, the sixth overarching theme, which had four themes. She encountered several negatives with “... some of the other mentor relationships that I have ... it would be right now the lack of the formal mentorships.” Also, she said “I would say the informal networks that I made have been helpful. But sometimes when you're in an informal network with other peers you all are at the same point. ... So, the peer mentorship has its limitations.” Additionally, she described other negatives when she said, “I felt pressured to come up with a research agenda especially during interviews and you know you feel that pressure I really need to have an agenda here.” Another negative or challenge that Joan was concerned about was “that my mentor was not as familiar with my area of research. I mean, he was good at helping me in the general sense. ... but he wasn't an expert in the areas that I was researching.” And, “... he wasn't a Black
female and so his experience as a White male was a little different from mine. … I didn't really share with him more of my journey as a Black woman.”

**Collaboration with others.** The seventh overarching theme of Joan’s *Collaboration with Others*, included four themes that arose from her research focusing primarily on African Americans. Joan described her cross-cultural and cross-gender mentoring experiences.

My dissertation chair is a White male, heterosexual. I guess he would be spiritual not religious. So, he's the exact opposite of what my identity is. But we work together. It worked out well. So, in that case, that was an anomaly. We are so different on many different levels. Even his ideas of research and counseling and counselor education are a little bit different from mine. … It's seems that I work well with people who not necessarily are the same but value the aspects of my identity. … Or, they value the perspective of a woman and that lens might be a little bit desperate. So, I think it comes into play when not necessarily both me and my research mentor or mentors are the same, but they can see a different perspective.

Joan talked about the impact of the lack of support and microaggressions she noted when she said,

There are many factors that are in place in an institutional level that are not supportive to African American women faculty members and I've heard colleagues of mine who are African American and women say that they don't feel supported in their research topic … [and] in other areas in their jobs and they may experience microaggressions. … I have not experienced the extent they have had. [But] I have experienced some microaggressions from faculty [and] colleagues, but overall my experience has been positive. …my experience is a good one [although] it may not be represented of a lot of women in
counselor education.

Joan talked about various identities that were integrated in the mentor/mentee relationship.

Most of the people that I mentor, in some capacity, are from populations that I would say are marginalized in a way. Whether it's by their gender or their ethnicity or first-generation college student. We always have conversations about privilege and power and what that looks like. How does one use their power effectively? How does one use their privilege effectively? What it's like to not feel privilege.

**Self-identity characteristics.** The eighth overarching theme of *Self-identity Characteristics* that included eight themes emerged during Joan’s third interview. As reflected in the supplemental material that Joan provided, her research agenda is multicultural counseling and clinical supervision. She described her significant identities.

For my own personal identity, I would say gender, racial identity, religious background, being a Christian, my identity as a daughter, a sister, a wife, and then professional identity would be my identity as a counselor educator … counselor, those things but as far as demographics; gender, race, sexual orientation is not predominating. But, I guess marital, my marital status might and my identity as a wife being at the top of the list.

She reflected about what senior level faculty mentors should take into consideration when mentoring female African American counseling faculty. She said, “I think understanding the lens that the faculty member's coming from. The multiple lenses, whether it's regarding their race, their gender, sexual orientation.” Joan added that “providing opportunities for the faculty member to network and introducing the newer faculty member to people that have been in the profession several years. … Exposing … the junior faculty member to different opportunities…”
Joan provided her ideas for mentee advancement. She said “We are not on an island all by ourselves. We need … support from our colleagues and support from people that have already been where we're trying to go. It's an integral part … of being successful as a researcher.” She spoke about her current experiences as a mentor as being very informal. She also described how she wants to be more consistent in her relationships with mentees. “I meet with students on a consistent basis for working on a manuscript or working on a project or even working with students regarding their dissertation. … I started/co-started an association for Black counselors at my institution.” She said, “I also talk to … mentees about, the fact that one mentor is not going to be your go-to mentor for everything. … I have multiple people that I may go to for that.”

**Mentor/mentee sharing.** The ninth overarching theme of *Mentor/Mentee Sharing* included six themes that Joan offered guidance about research mentorship. She explained,

…sometimes it's difficult for mentees to assert themselves whether it's to speak up and share how difficult things are going for them or if … let's say, they should really be the first author on something and the mentor is the first author. Having those open lines of communication, I think are important … Talking about the importance of following through with what you're going to say because … it's not a job, per se, but it is a relationship that does need to be fostered and it's not a one-time thing.

For Joan, mentorship is an “ongoing process between somebody who's more advanced or knowledgeable and somebody who's not as advanced and knowledgeable. … both people must be committed to it.” Joan described some factors needed for effective research mentor/mentee relationships.

I would say commitment from both the mentor and the mentee. Openness to feedback on both ends. Having some knowledge of expertise of the research area is always helpful. I
don't think it's all the time necessary, but it's very helpful because a research mentor who's an expert in that area that the mentee is going into is going to have a wider breadth and depth of knowledge of that field than if they didn't so it would really add to their knowledge base. Another quality would be consistency. Like I was mentioning before, being consistent, having good follow through on both ends of the spectrum. Having realistic expectations on both ends and openly talking about what's working and what's not working. Checking in periodically and discussing whether this relationship is working for both people, I think would be helpful. Then, knowing that it's an ongoing process, so it's not a one-time thing. Some other qualities ... of the mentor, I would say ability to help to foster development of a mentee through research, providing them with opportunities to co-author, co-present and helping a mentee to conceptualize what their interests are and connecting it to doing research. Those would be some qualities that I would pinpoint.
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<th>Overarching Themes</th>
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<td>1. Characteristics of a Mentor</td>
<td>1. Initiated by dissertation chair</td>
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<td>2. Formal and informal</td>
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<td>3. Collaborative research productivity</td>
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<td>4. Presenting at conferences and at brown bag research symposiums</td>
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<td>5. Mentoring master’s students</td>
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<td>6. Grant writing</td>
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<td>3. Self as a Mentee</td>
<td>1. Proactive person</td>
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<td>2. Increase communication with dissertation chair</td>
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<td>4. Environmental Characteristics</td>
<td>1. Supportive</td>
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<td>3. Providing resources</td>
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<td>4. Various workshops</td>
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<td>5. Travel grants and research grants</td>
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<td>5. Positives of Being a Mentor</td>
<td>1. Chair instrumental</td>
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<td>2. Early experience with chair positively impacted her view on research</td>
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<td>3. Open and available dissertation chair</td>
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<td>4. Present research at her institution</td>
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<td>5. Staying motivated by talking to people at conferences</td>
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<td>6. Negatives Aspects of Being a Mentor</td>
<td>1. Lack of formal mentorships</td>
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<td>2. No identified research mentors</td>
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<td>3. Limitations of peer mentorship</td>
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<td>4. Took four years to establish research agenda</td>
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<td>7. Collaboration with Others</td>
<td>1. Collaborate with students</td>
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<td>2. Offer emotional support</td>
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<td>3. Daughter</td>
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<td>7. Cross-cultural mentoring</td>
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<td>8. Microaggressions</td>
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<td>9. Mentor/Mentee Sharing</td>
<td>1. Understanding multiple lenses</td>
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<td>2. Genuine interests in research topic</td>
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<td>3. Share meaning of mentorship</td>
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<td>4. Share role of mentors and mentees</td>
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<td>5. Provide a commitment</td>
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<td>6. Check in periodically with mentee</td>
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Figure 2. Within-case analysis of nine overarching themes for Joan

**Painting of Joan’s Story.** I used a painting to represent what I heard Joan describe in her interview to capture her unique voice and story. The left side of the painting is depicting the prosperity Joan will experience once she is tenured and the other half of the painting symbolizes the scarcity of formal mentorship experiences Joan received. The bridge represents Joan’s collaborations with peers and students. Also, the barren fig tree represents Joan holding out hope that she will be tenured in 2020 (see Illustration 3).
Vanessa

Data analysis of Vanessa’s transcriptions resulted in 34 themes. The 34 themes were reduced to seven overarching themes: 1) Negative Experiences, 2) Counselor Education Responsibility, 3) Connectedness with Others, 4) Work/Life Balance, 5) Self-Strengths, 6) Stumbling Blocks, and 7) Pursuit of Success (see Table 4 and Figure 3).

Negative experiences. Vanessa described the Negative Experiences she had regarding research mentorship. The first overarching theme reflected nine themes. Vanessa stated,

I've received some mentorship in my doctoral program, not a whole lot outside of just the research classes that I took. My first publication was a result of work that I did in one of my research classes, but no one really reached out to me to join the research teams. I didn't even know that those opportunities were available until I was almost done with my doctorate and I talked to some of my peers, and they had joined research teams … Then, becoming a junior faculty member, I am in my second year at a research one institution … This is the first time that I've received any research mentorship. … But other than that, that's pretty much it. I figured it out on my own.
Vanessa said, “… if I would have had mentorship early on, my scholarly record would be stronger than what it is now. I still average two to three publications a year, and so, I mean, that's okay.” She continued describing her experience.

I think about if I'm able to do two to three by myself, and I didn't really have mentorship until last semester, it would have been amazing to see the potential that could have taken place with sound research mentorship. So, on the one hand, I'm happy that I've could be successful on my own, but on the other hand, I'm also resentful that I feel like I have potential that hasn't really been tapped into yet.

In addition, Vanessa said that she “… sought out what I needed … I realized my colleagues were partnering with each other and that they were receiving mentorship that I never really knew was out there.” Vanessa described the research mentoring she received from others.

I was mentored by women, White women, who were not even in my program. I joined a state counselor education organization and one of them pulled me aside and she told me that she saw potential, and she asked me, ‘Are you applying for jobs?’ like, ‘What are you doing?’ … She helped me by doing mock interviews with me before I had a candidate job search or on-campus interview. She helped me with my vitae. She did all those things that faculty members at my university and in my program, should have done.

… My current mentoring relationships are with colleagues … The mentor that I have at my current institution … I wanted her to be my faculty mentor because she's a woman of color … even though she’s a woman of color she is international, and so it's not necessarily the same stigma I associated with being Black and from America.

Vanessa shared what she would have done differently. She said, “I would have picked another doctoral program that was research-focused, and I would have picked a program with
junior faculty who had strong research teams. I would have picked a program where I felt supported.” And that she wished that she “… was more informed about what [her] needs were so that [she] could ask for the things that [she] needed.” Additionally, she said she would not move forward “… by any means necessary, because she still feels like a part of [her] is kind.” She said “… if that means stomping over and trampling someone to get an article published, I'm not going to do that, but I work with people who will … but that's not me.” She said, “I want to be able to get the job done and be happy with who I am as a person at the end of the day, and not just have publications to show for it.”

Counselor education responsibility. The second overarching theme, Counselor Education Responsibility reflected two themes. She thinks that “the counselor education community in general is ignorant about the needs of women of color and people of color. We've been talking about this for so long, and I think that institutional oppression has this place in that …” She described her research mentorship experiences as being “pitiful.” She said,

I believe that the counselor education community should be ashamed of itself. … I know this through my own experience and through talking to other people, that my colleagues and my peers did not have the same experience that I've had, unless they were Black. So, I think there's this idea or this stereotype about Black or African American … doctoral students and Black assistant professors that we are not researchers. That we're not writers. That we're not scholars. And, counselor educators who are not from marginalized groups, counselor educators who have the means and the capacity to mentor Black counselor educators and faculty of color choose not to, because they see it as a risk instead of an opportunity. And so, it's just another way that we are marginalized, that the resource mentorship goes to White students, or goes to Asian students, or goes to Indian students.
We're looked at as being lower than, less than, and at the bottom of the totem pole. … at one point, I would say, ‘Oh, well, maybe this is just me’ but in meeting other women of color, meeting other Black women and talking about these experiences, I know that it's not isolated to just my experience, that this is pretty much the typical experience of Black women in counselor ed.

**Connectedness with others.** Vanessa shared her thoughts about her *Connectedness with Others*, which included five themes. Vanessa’s supplemental materials indicated she has several years of clinical experience as a licensed professional counselor and supervisor. She discussed not being familiar with what was expected of mentoring relationships due to her social position.

Being the only person in my family to ever pursue a doctorate, I didn't know what I needed. And so, having those critical conversations early in the doctoral program, and even in the master’s program with students about what the expectations are. And so, when I think back about my cohort in my doctoral program, a lot of them knew what they needed because members in their family had completed doctorates. So, they knew they needed to publish. They knew they needed to present and so it was unfortunate that they thought it was understood and they contributed to oppression in that way.

Meanwhile, Vanessa talked about her responsibilities and identities as a mother and that she is married. She said that

… out of all the identities that I hold, the one that is probably the most important to me is being a mom. I put that above almost anything, outside of my relationship to God … My hope is that through my interactions with people, whether it's just daily interactions or … professional interactions, that people can tell that I am kind-hearted and that I genuinely care about people.
Work/life balance. The fourth overarching theme, Work/Life Balance included two themes. Vanessa described her perceived stressors and stereotyping in the workplace and how she balances the stressors with spirituality. She shared that she works at “a research one institution, and for the most part, people are not worried about their colleagues. People are worried about themselves. It is competitive.” She said, “there's a sense of threat. … that's not how I operate. So, I feel like part of that, for me, is fitting in with the culture … and … how to be transparent, authentic about my own interpersonal process.”

Vanessa described her experiences with family, specifically her relationship with her husband.

I am married. … One of the things that I think is interesting I think is my husband, he's in a different field. So, he is an accountant. And he has a master's degree… As far as socioeconomic status is concerned, with a PhD, I will never even make anywhere close to what my husband makes. … it's a little disheartening to me that I spent all this time in school and I have a PhD, and there's no way I will ever be able to make the money I think that he makes. But overall, I'm happy with my profession and I'm happy with my job, and there's really no dollar amount that can be assigned to that. … And, the other thing that I think is different about that is I had co-workers who make comments about the type of clothes that I wear or the purse that I carry or the shoes that I wear, and it's like, "How do you afford that on our salary?" And I'm like, "Really, that's none of your business. Why are you counting my coins?" So, I find it interesting that people that don't make comments, my co-workers who are White, and what they wear and how they chose to wear, why is it a big deal when I do it? So, I wonder if that's about my race. Where are the assumptions being made about me? And so, when I internalize that, and I think about
it, two things come up for me. One of the things is you're probably thinking that I'm being fiscally irresponsible, that I'm out spending all this money on things that I can't afford just to impress people. Because that is one of the stereotypes about Black people. And, then the second thing that comes up for me is feeling like I can't-- the things that I want to do because of fear [inaudible] what do people think of me. And, it makes me look irresponsible. That kind of stuff.

**Self-strengths.** The fifth overarching theme is *Self-strengths*, which included four themes. While Vanessa reported thinking she was not “strong” in research mentorship, she is “learning to find her voice… I feel like I'm confident enough to ask for what I need…. [if] I don't receive it, then I know how to get it …. I try to use [other mentors’] strengths to build my own.”

**Stumbling blocks.** The next overarching theme is *Stumbling Blocks*, which has nine themes. She believes being a junior faculty hindered her research mentorship process.

I think junior faculty in my institution, where I received my doctoral degree … understood the resources, I guess, at their disposal with the doctoral students. … I don't think they understood that we would pretty much do anything they asked us to do to be on a publication. … They didn't use their resources. So, I think that hindered me in some ways. The other thing that I think hindered me was feeling limited, and being limited, and not even knowing it. And, knowing that there were students who were receiving opportunities that I wasn't even offered, and trying to figure out why that was.

Vanessa addressed the issue of working in isolation when not being mentored. She felt “unsafe/discouraged” when discussing her experiences in counselor education. She also spoke of a faculty mentor’s implicit biases. She said that in her
... doctoral program there was a faculty member who told me that he thought I would never finish. ... if I was White, would that have been the assumption? Why is the assumption that I, the young Black female won't finish over anyone else? ... at the time I wasn't married, I didn't have a child, and so I was just curious about what factors led him to believe that I would be the one who wouldn't finish when everybody else had life and all those other things going on. ... the assumption that is often made about non-black ... and ... non-Latino. ... if there's Asian, people of [Indian?] descent, Middle Eastern, White, they're lumped into a category of academic excellence. And so, the assumptions about those people is that they can do the job and that they can do the job well. The assumptions about Latinos and Blacks is that we aren't as proficient with the writing and literacy and all those things, and I think that impacts mentorship experiences because mentors have those implicit biases too. And so, when it comes down to opportunities, to publish opportunities, to collaborate, in my opinion, Blacks and Latinos are overlooked just because of the implicit biases that people have about our race and ethnicity.

**Pursuit of success.** The final overarching theme that emerged from Vanessa’s narratives was *Pursuit of Success*, which included three themes. As indicated in Vanessa’s supplemental material, she has a research agenda that reflects her interest in the counseling field including success of children from absent-father homes, offender and addiction counseling issues, and mentorship in the counseling field. Also, her vita indicated she has published numerous peer-reviewed publications, made international presentations/webinars, and has written a book chapter. She discussed the importance of “having critical conversations early in the doctoral program, and even in the master’s programs, with students about what their expectations are.” Vanessa shared what motivated her to continue her pursuit of success. She stated, “I also want
other people to see that you can be a Black woman and get a PhD. You can be a young Black woman and present at ACA. … It's important to see people who look like you …” Vanessa explained how she speaks to her mentees about research.

I talk to them about what are your passions? … like how do you format and structure a well-rounded literature review? What methods do you like? Are you qualitative in nature? How do you process information? It's not figuring out what's good and what's bad, because both qualitative and quantitative or mixed methods, are strong all the way across. You just should know what you're doing. Trying to figure out how they process information and figuring out how they ask questions. … If I say that my mentees are not devoted and that they're not putting time in, it's like counseling for me. I'm not going to work harder on this than you are. If you're in a counseling session and you're not doing your part, it's not my job as your counselor to pull you through this, as your mentor it is not my job to drag you across the finish line. … Why? Because I'm dragging my own self across the finish line. … But, I am here to motivate, encourage, and to help. But, helping doesn't include putting you on my back and carrying you, because I can't do that. … Lastly, Vanessa offered desired skill sets for quality research mentee-mentor relationships.

I think the very first skill is being able to build a relationship. Feeling like that person cares about me and it's genuine, that it's not something they're just checking off their to-do list because they're my assigned mentor through the university. Being able to respect boundaries but also having their own boundaries. …I do think there is a level of competence that's needed with research. You can't mentor someone if you don't know
what you're doing. … The ability to connect and communicate. The ability to respect and maintain boundaries, and then the ability to teach and to show what you're doing.
Table 4

*Seven Overarching Themes and 34 Themes for Vanessa*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching Themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Negative Experiences</td>
<td>1. Doctoral research classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. No one really reached out to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Didn’t receive it until became junior faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Cold and competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Lack of sufficient support from colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Alienation and professional isolation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Low expectations from colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Very few faculty members of color represented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Sought out motherhood and spirituality to combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Counselor Education Responsibility</td>
<td>1. Counselor education should be shameful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Counselor education is ignorant about the needs of women of color and people of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Connectedness with Others</td>
<td>1. Interactions with faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Sexism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Family responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Historical Stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Men offered more institutional assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work/Life Balance</td>
<td>1. Interactions with minority faculty at professional conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Sought out motherhood and spirituality to combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-Strengths</td>
<td>1. Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Multiple mentors with various mentoring functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Self-awareness of strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Resources to get the job done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Stumbling Blocks</td>
<td>1. Lack of research mentorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Differences between support provided for white students and support provided to black students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Alienation and isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Contempt from White male faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Need to collaborate with other scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Lack of networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Stereotypes of Black people being lazy or incapable</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Discredited research/bias about their research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Workplace issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pursuit of Success</td>
<td>1. Selecting a mentor who has research rigor and a solid publication record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Evaluation and monitoring the mentoring relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Sought mentors outside of doctoral program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. Within-case analysis of seven overarching themes for Vanessa

**Painting of Vanessa’s Story.** I used a painting to represent what I heard Vanessa describe in her interview to capture her unique voice and story. I depicted Vanessa’s research mentorship experiences as a lone oak tree representative of the need for protection from the “cold” university climate of counselor education and supervision. The tree is rooted in the ground with its crown swaying in the sky. The oak tree symbolizes Vanessa standing powerful through the tenure process, enduring two universities. Vanessa has overcome “bitterness.” On the other hand, the tree is missing figs because Vanessa has provided mentoring to her own mentees. The butterfly in the painting symbolizes motherhood being of great importance to Vanessa. Vanessa’s work-life balance is imperishable. The fluttering wings of the butterfly represented the “bright light” (see Illustration 4).
Cross-Case Analysis

Subsequently, I identified the overarching themes for more than one participant and examined the level of emphasis placed on an overarching theme to group the overarching themes into super-ordinate themes, with the largest number provided first. As a result, seven super-ordinate themes emerged that created a cumulative narrative of the research mentorship experiences of African American female counselor educators: 1) Benefits of Research Mentoring, 2) Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization, 3) Professional Networking/Support, 4) Perceptions of Institutional Climate and Culture, 5) Perceptions of Research Mentoring Experiences, 6) Barriers of Research Mentorship, and 7) Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring (see Table 5).

Benefits of Research Mentoring

Across all three participants, the super-ordinate theme of Benefits of Research Mentoring had five overarching themes. For this super-ordinate theme only Tanya and Joan perceived several benefits to research mentoring; such as providing opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, improving skills and abilities needed for research, boosting productivity in research,
cultivating and accelerating their research development, and furthering their research agendas. The characteristics of the mentee and the mentor appeared to contribute the most to participants’ perceived benefits of research mentoring. Tanya reported research mentoring “has been the linchpin to my success.” She described her personal characteristics that were beneficial to her experiences as a doctoral student and now as a faculty member when she said, “I was brought in because of my research mentorship and my focus toward research.” Additionally, Tanya attributed her research mentorship experience to “lots and lots of presentations and lots and lots of book chapters.” Joan, like Tanya, described how collaboration provided “good practice in how to do research and what it looked like.” Joan reflected on the benefits of receiving “opportunities” to publish the results of a pilot in a study her dissertation chair co-authored with her and “receiving concrete feedback on writing was really helpful.” Joan also noted an additional benefit when she mentors doctoral students. “It energizes me to want to do more research because doctoral students are coming with various ideas of things that they want to explore and investigate, and it really prompts me to want to continue doing my own research.”

**Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization**

Four overarching themes were reflected in the super-ordinate theme of *Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization* for all three participants. Tanya and Joan discussed how their cultural identities influenced their research mentorship experiences, whereas Vanessa’s description was focused on the responsibility of counselor education and her connectedness with others. Tanya wanted to reauthor the narratives and stereotypes that African Americans are not reading counseling journals. She has sought research mentorship to learn how to address the concerns that publications by African Americans are being marginalized. For example, Tanya stated that what
… we're hearing at so many of the counseling journals is that African Americans don't read their publications and don't go to counseling, which is an untruth. If that myth can exist and if [we] don’t come at the myths with binding studies, then that becomes the truth versus what we know to be true. So, I'm excited to have our truth published in journals that value it. And, it's somewhat of an uphill battle right now.

Also, she said, “I need mentorship as a first year or second year tenure track professor on ways to break down some of the discrimination in the publication of our work beyond just getting the mentorship to produce it.” Joan shared how cultural marginalization impacts how she mentors others. She thought that the majority of people she has mentored … are from populations that I would say are marginalized in some kind of way. Whether it's by their gender or their ethnicity or first-generation college student. We always have conversations about privilege and power and what that looks like. How does one use their power effectively? How does one use their privilege effectively? What it's like to not feel privilege. … I openly talk about it because it's a way to not only give voice to the realities of what's going on, but then it models for them that when it's their turn to mentor somebody that they need to open up those lines of communication and to talk about issues related to race and gender and privilege.

Joan acknowledged the cultural marginalization she experienced with “… some microaggressions from faculty, colleagues.” She said that based on her racial identity her research experiences differed from her peers “… because my colleagues’ research focuses on other factors like maybe poverty but not necessarily related to ethnicity … Whereas my focus is on African Americans and grief and loss.” She also believed that her overall research mentorship experience “has been pretty positive.”
Vanessa mentioned that “the intersectionalities of my identity, or my identities rather, have impacted my research mentorship in a lot of ways. Some in good ways and some in not so good ways.” Some of the ways that were not helpful was when she said that

… men have not provided ... mentorship, not from one man. My dissertation chair is a man. He did not mentor me. I selected him to be my dissertation chair because he was a finisher. He got people done. … That's why I selected him. He is not someone who I selected for advice. He is not someone who I asked to write me recommendation letters …. He has a horrible reputation in the field. He wasn't a mentor in that sense of the word. I was like, I need somebody who's going to push me to get done. So, that's what he did. I say all that to say women, White women, some of them, and women of color have reached out to mentor me in different ways. Not one time has a man stepped in to say hey, da-da-da-da-da ... I wish I could say gender had nothing to do with it, but I'd be lying. I think gender has a lot to do with it and I think ethnicity has a lot to do with it as well. I think women are a lot more apt than men to mentor other women because there is a struggle with just being a woman. Then on top of that factor in being a woman of color. Vanessa also described a negative incident with a new male colleague receiving differential treatment. He was hired around the same time she was hired with a higher salary that she received. He

… had one publication out of his doctoral program… [He] got a course release. And, I came in with 3 years from a previous institution with 10 publications. How does that work? But, I think gender impacts me more than being Black. I think women can see gender. … White women don't see ethnicity a lot of times. But, they can see that you are a woman. But, I feel like to be recognized as a Black woman, it takes not just a Black
woman to do that but a female person number one, and then a person of color. My experience has been that White women are colorblind for the most part. And, White men don't see anything but other men.

**Professional Networking/Support**

All three participants had four overarching themes for the super-ordinate theme of *Professional Networking/Support.* All three perceived that collaboration was important in obtaining professional networks and support through various ways and from multiple mentors. Also, participants described how they developed career-enhancing relationships with individuals in and outside of their programs with similar research interests. Tanya described how she used coping strategies to collaborate and form a “mentoring team.” She stated,

I've had limited challenges in getting the mentorship. Once I decided on my committee as a doc candidate, I got lots of support in places I didn't expect it. And, as a second-year professor, I'm finding that my colleagues are more than willing to be supportive of the idea of me being published. As a matter of fact, I teach a 2-2 load based on the idea that I'm going to be publishing prolifically, right?

Joan said that networks and support were important for promotion and tenure, which could be done by “… providing opportunities for the [African American] faculty member to network and introducing … [them] … to people that have been in the profession a number of years to build those connections. … [and provide] different opportunities whether it's at the university or through national organizations.”

Vanessa shared that she has relied on spirituality as a support with the research mentorship experience. She stated,
I think it's been my spirituality, having a sense of purpose. I think it's just for me being confident and knowing where I am. I'm teaching the diversity class this semester and it could just be because I lectured about this last night, but it's fresh on my mind so maybe that's part of it. I just think about the racial identity development model and being comfortable and confident in who I am. One of the things that I think about is where I am as a Black woman in my own identity development. I feel like there are some parallels that can be made with counselor education. I think it's just coming in to my own and knowing that stuff, knowing how I feel about me.

Vanessa also shared that she has experienced warmth and support from networking with Black women at professional counseling conferences. For instance, Vanessa stated,

So, every time I've been to a conference I mean from the time I was a master’s student all the way up until now, every Black woman that I've met has been welcoming, has been inviting. And it's like, hey what are you teaching? I'll tell them and it's like whoa, well call me if you need me girl. … I see them, and they smile, and they wave. That's nice, and that's inviting, and that's welcoming. So, I feel like there's that unspoken language between us... I know that other women of color in counselor education know my struggle, because it's been their struggle as well. But, I also feel like because it's their struggle it's on a continuum, either you have achieved it, or you haven't. I feel like we're all navigating things and we're all at different places. I think that impacts the amount of mentorship we're able to give each other.

**Perceptions of the Institutional Climate and Culture**

The second super-ordinate theme was *Perceptions of the Institutional Climate and Culture*, which included three overarching themes from all three participants. For Tanya and
Joan, their research mentorship experiences within the institutional climate and culture were impacted by the characteristics of the environment (e.g., opportunities for scholarly activities), characteristics of the mentor (e.g., research productivity), and opportunities for research activities when they were students and at their present institutions. Tanya and Joan described a “supportive” and “encouraging” institutional climate. However, for Vanessa, her research mentoring experience was negative in her doctoral program. All three did agree that clear institutional messages of the importance of senior faculty providing research mentorship to junior faculty was lacking.

Tanya recalled when she was a graduate student at a research institution at the highest level, her perception was that she was a part of a “little satellite campus” at a “huge institution…. People were predisposed and subject to mentor and develop.” Similarly, Joan stated that at her current moderate research activity institution, “There’s a good balance of encouragement plus providing resources.” Joan further described participating in research forums and writing groups with colleagues in her department and across departments. Joan explained that “… it's difficult to make the time to go to those sessions, but … there are opportunities through travel grants and research grants … I feel like the institution is not just talking the talk but, they [are] also walking the walk.”

In contrast with Tanya and Joan, Vanessa recalled her research mentorship very negatively and that the counselor education profession as “pitiful” and the institutional climate as “cold.” She is at a highest level research institution where the climate has “people [who] are not worried about their colleagues” who are very competitive. She stated,

And, it's competitive with the doctoral students that you have on your research team. It's competitive with getting into community counseling agencies if that's where you want to
do your research. It can be shady at times. People don't want to share with resources. People don't want to discuss their topics. … There's a sense of threat. … And, that's not how I operate. So, I feel like part of that, for me, is fitting in with the culture here and trying to figure out how to be transparent, authentic about my own interpersonal process. And, that I don't want your piece of pie and my piece of pie, I just want mine. So, I'm not trying to take what you have, I just want what I need. And, I want what I've earned. … And, I don't necessarily need two pieces of pie, I just need one. … I'm not saying that this is everywhere, but people feel like when your light shines that it diminishes theirs, and we don't recognize that we can both have bright lights.

Perceptions of Research Mentorship Experiences

The third super-ordinate theme was Perceptions of Research Mentoring Experiences that included three overarching themes from all three participants. Participants described how their research mentorship experiences began. For instance, Tanya proactively sought out research mentorship in her classes; whereas Vanessa waited for help that never arrived. Joan described how her experiences allowed her “to be a collaborator” whereas for Tanya, she shared how her early research mentorship experiences helped her to navigate her career path. She stated that … research mentorship [led] me to pursue a graduate degree in counselor education. I started researching right away as a master’s student…. My intro professor was a doctoral candidate doing a qualitative dissertation on African American women who are mandated to drug treatment. She invited a few of her African American students to be a part of her research team. I guess I've just had the bug for qualitative analysis ever since that experience. It's life-changing.
Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa described the roles of their research mentors including being a sounding board, empathizer, and guide. Joan shared how she collaborated with her chair in her description of her chair’s purpose is to “… bounce ideas off again and help me to understand what the research looked like at certain institutions compared to others and help me to determine where I really wanted to be and where my strengths are …” Additionally, all three participants described establishing mentoring partnerships with peers, tenured faculty, dissertation chairs, and other students.

Vanessa described how she used her self-strengths to develop her early research mentorship experiences that consisted of needing “… someone to show me how to climb the mountain.” She stated,

… no one really reached out to me to join the research teams. I didn't even know that those opportunities were available until I was almost done with my doctorate and I talked to some of my peers, and they had joined research teams … Then, becoming a junior faculty member … this is the first time that I've received any research mentorship. …

But, other than that, that's pretty much it. I figured it out on my own.

She also described her collaborative research productivity that she has with various professionals in the field

… on book chapters, articles, presentations, so on … Most of the time it has been me reaching out. I am aware that at my institution collaboration is valued. I think it's changing and I'm building a reputation for myself. People have asked me ‘Hey, will you write a chapter for my book?’ Or, ‘hey, will you do this?’ … it wasn't like that [before], it was me seeking opportunities to market myself ….
Barriers of Research Mentorship

For the super-ordinate theme of Barriers of Research Mentorship, each participant had one overarching theme that was reflected in their narratives. Barriers included participants being marginalized based on their research interest, research being devalued, and difficulties publishing in top-tier journals due to their research focus on ethnic minorities. They perceived publishing in culturally focused journals may not be as valued by counselor education programs when considering African American junior faculty for promotion and tenure. When describing the barriers, Tanya focused on how her social justice research interest affected the number of her publications. She stated that “the challenge comes in as I am stating when those articles are not accepted by counseling publications. … somebody still must publish it and that's where the rubber may hit the road … they're going to be looking at how many publications I have in print, not how many I have produced.”

Tanya further explained that “There’s no way to really break through some of these glass walls and ceilings that are not really glass, they're Plexiglas. You know you hit your head and you bounce right back.” Joan identified a barrier in communicating certain experiences with her chair. He “came from a place of empathic understanding, but he wasn't a Black female … his experience as a White male was a little different from mine. … I didn't really share with him more of my journey as a Black woman.” She added, “I had another mentor that I would talk to about personal things going on.”

Joan thought that because of her diversified research interest it has taken her 4.5 years to create a research agenda, which has been a barrier for her. Vanessa believed a lack of early research mentoring experiences hindered her ability to conduct scholarly projects and publish in referee journals. She stated that
... if I would have had mentorship early on, my scholarly record would be stronger than what it is now. I still average two to three publications a year, and so, I mean, that's okay. Some people would say that that's great, but the expectation of my institution is three to four. So, I think about if I'm able to do two to three by myself, and I didn't really have mentorship until last semester, it would have been amazing to see the potential that could have taken place with sound research mentorship. So, on the one hand, I'm happy that I've been able to be successful on my own, but on the other hand, I'm also resentful that I feel like I have potential that hasn't really been tapped into yet.

She also believed that junior faculty at her doctoral institution which is at the highest research level hindered her research mentorship process because “they were so worried about getting tenure and trying to figure out how to do that on their own that they didn't use their resources” like mentoring doctoral students such as herself. Additionally, Vanessa believed she was hindered by “feeling limited, and being limited, and not even knowing it. And, knowing that there were students who were receiving opportunities that I wasn't even offered and trying to figure out why that was.”

**Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring**

Finally, the last super-ordinate theme was *Behaviors that Foster Effective Research.* *Mentoring.* All three participants each had an overarching theme. This super-ordinate theme included identifying clear goals; setting expectations for mentees; and establishing and maintaining good communication, mutuality, and values. Also, participants believed that a research mentor should outline criteria for the relationship, consider areas of expertise, identify and describe expectations for the mentee, and discuss the length and amount of time of the relationship. Other behaviors should include clear communication, support, and suggestions. For
example, Tanya believed a mentor must “be secure enough in their own accomplishments, and not be afraid of somebody else enjoying the stance.” And, mentees should be committed and willing to express when they need support.

Joan offered a suggestion that fosters effective research when she has mentored students. The mentor should clearly state the “purpose in mentorship and what their role is.” She included qualities of what is needed for an effective research mentoring relationship.

I would say commitment from both the mentor and the mentee. Openness to feedback on both ends. Having some knowledge of expertise of the research area is always helpful. I don't think it's all the time necessary … Another quality would be consistency. … having good follow through on both ends of the spectrum. Having realistic expectations on both ends and openly talking about what's working and what's not working. Checking in periodically and discussing whether this relationship is working for both people….

Vanessa shared how she believed research mentorship would aid mentees advancement with tenure and promotion or finding jobs in counselor education. She stated that when you are a mentor, “… mentor them the right way so they can take that and make it their own next time, and the next time … encouraging mentees to research what they’re passionate about, and use their voice…” She also identified some desired traits of a mentor like “… being able to build a relationship. Feeling like that person cares about me and it’s genuine, that it’s not something they’re just checking off their to-do list because they’re my assigned mentor through the university.” Also, the mentor should be able to “… respect boundaries but also having their own boundaries. … I do think there is a level of competence that's needed with research. …The ability to connect and communicate, the ability to respect and maintain boundaries, and then the ability to teach.”
Table 5

*Cross-case Analysis of the 25 Overarching Themes Resulting in Seven Super-ordinate Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Super-ordinate Themes</th>
<th>Total Overarching Themes</th>
<th>Tanya</th>
<th>Joan</th>
<th>Vanessa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Self-engagement Characteristics</td>
<td>2. Self as a Mentee</td>
<td>2. Connectedness with Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Coping Strategies</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of the Institutional Climate and Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1. Research Activities</td>
<td>1. Environmental Characteristics</td>
<td>1. Negative Experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1. Behaviors of Effective Mentoring</td>
<td>1. Mentor/Mentee Sharing</td>
<td>1. Pursuit of Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Participant Overarching Theme</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Painting Depicting the Cross-Case Analysis.**

In this painting, I depicted the super-ordinate themes of the participants’ research mentorship experiences. The blue background symbolizes the participants’ perceptions of the university climate and culture. The clenched fist in the upper left corner symbolizes the participants’ social racial membership with other forms of marginalized groups that influenced their research mentorship experiences and their beliefs about their research mentorship experiences. The cross depicts the theme of spirituality. The open hands symbolize the
networking and support from their research mentors. The rich soil symbolizes the successes and hindrances of their research mentorship experiences (see Illustration 5).

*Illustration 5. Painting depicting cross-case analysis*

**Findings by Research Questions**

This section includes the findings in narrative form and presented as super-ordinate themes that address the primary research question for my study: How do pre-tenured African American female counselor educators perceive their research mentorship experiences? The primary research question was answered through the cross-case analysis of the seven superordinate themes reflected in the stories of the African American counselor educators who experienced research mentorship while working towards tenure.: 1) *Benefits of Research Mentorship*, 2) *Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization*, 3) *Professional
Networking/Support, 4) Perceptions of Institutional Climate and Culture, 5) Perceptions of Research Mentoring Experiences, 6) Barriers of Research Mentorship, and 7) Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring (see Table 5). In the following sections, a summary of the seven super-ordinate themes applicable to each research sub-question is provided along with textural and structural descriptions.

**Sub-question One**

The first sub-question was: What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences for faculty demands? Sub-question one was answered with three super-ordinate themes: 1) Benefits of Research Mentorship, 2) Perceptions of Research Mentoring Experiences, and 3) Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring (see Table 6).

**Benefits of research mentorship.** Two of the three participants, Tanya and Joan spoke of how they benefited from their research mentorship experiences, which impacted who they are as counselor educators, although the stories differed for each participant. Tanya explained some of the benefits of research mentorship that prepared her for faculty demands by describing “the bug for qualitative analysis” and having an “English background” which was “invaluable” to meeting the demands of a faculty member. She spoke about “loving” to write and “understanding the power of the written word” which has helped her in meeting the demand for publications as a faculty member. Tanya said, “I will always be a writer. Like, research gives me a way to use those skills toward real ends. Like, I could make changes in the profession if I write.” Tanya explained other benefits such as “getting a lot of support in places I didn’t expect it” and how research provides a way for her “to use those skills towards real ends” as a faculty member.
Joan believes that support is an “integral part of being successful as a researcher.” She said that as a student, research mentorship gave her “confidence” and it was a place to talk over ideas and get concrete feedback on how to conduct research. She shared that as a faculty member she now works with doctoral students, which has energized “her to do more research” and “…motivates [her] to continue to write and do research.” Joan said she benefits from being a faculty member at her current institution. “It’s nice that I am at an institution where there is a doctoral program where I’m talking to students on a consistent basis about either what they’re working on and/or what I am working on and helping those ideas to move forward.” Also, Joan shared that to meet the demands of being a faculty member, she continues to “keep the cycle going” and that she “constantly [has] manuscripts coming out.”

**Perceptions of research mentorship experiences.** Tanya provided examples of lessons she learned from her research mentorship experiences. She said that having gone to a historically Black college and university was pivotal to her success as a faculty member. For example, she stated,

I’m not going to assume anything. I don’t ever see myself as a deficit which sometimes is an advantage because when I find that I am, I must regroup. It takes me aback; you know it messes with my emotions and with my spirit. But, I can’t just think of myself as, you know, if I imagine it I can have it. … I also feel like that goes back to having gone to a historically Black college and university.

Joan shared how her early research experiences were formal and informal types of mentorship, which “helped to demystify the process” of being mentored and has helped her in meeting faculty demands. She said that her research mentorship has provided “…a number of
opportunities for me to present research within the university where I work at specifically the college that I work.”

Unlike Tanya and Joan, Vanessa believes she lacked many opportunities for research mentorship; however, she had and continues to have the confidence to ask for research mentorship from various mentors. Her lack of mentorship inspired her to “figure out the bumps in the road” and figure out approaches that are needed to be a faculty member. She said,

I think the thing that has enhanced my research mentorship, even though it’s not that strong, is me. I’m learning to find my voice and I feel like I’m confident enough to ask for what I need. And, if I ask for what I need, and I don’t receive it, then I know how to get it in different ways. So, I have mentors who help me with teaching. I have mentors who help me with service stuff. I have mentors who help me with research. And, those may be three or four different people. So, I recognize their strengths, and how their strengths may compliment my weaknesses. And so, knowing that I can have different mentors for different areas of my life, and different areas of professional needs. … So, I try to use those strengths to build my own.

Vanessa shared that despite receiving very little research mentorship in her doctoral program and having to “figure it out on her own,” she believes that her strength is what motivates her to do research and publish. She stated,

I would say that if I would have had mentorship early on, my scholarly record would be stronger than what it is now. I still average two to three publications a year, and so, I mean, that’s okay. Some people would say that that’s great, but the expectation of my institution is three to four. So I think about if I’m able to do two to three by myself, and I didn’t really have mentorship until last semester, it would have been amazing to see the
potential that could have taken place with sound research mentorship. So, on the one hand, I’m happy that I’ve been able to be successful on my own, but on the other hand, I’m also resentful that I feel like I have potential that hasn’t really been tapped into yet.

Vanessa also described some factors that impacted her as a counselor educator. She said, I think some personal factors is just being persistent, for me. I’m not one to give up on things. I’m very consistent. I’m very persistent. Slow and steady wins the race. And so, I know if I start something that I’m going to finish it, so that’s just something that was instilled in me with my mother and my family of origin stuff. It’s just you don’t quit. … But that’s a personal factor that I think impacts my confidence and my research. The other thing that I would say is knowing that the stigma about Black people … is that oftentimes we don’t finish, and that we’re incapable or lazy. Those kinds of things strike me as personal factors. Institutional factors, it’s that I am the only African American female in my program. Know that if I don’t get tenure, I will be the first one to not get tenure. Everybody who’s ever stayed here long enough to get tenure, gets tenure. Now people leave because they don’t feel like they’re going to be successful, and that’s one thing, but no one’s every gone up for tenure and didn’t get it. … I don’t want to be the first person to not get tenure, and I don’t want to be the first person to not get tenure and be Black on top of that.

Behaviors that foster effective research mentoring. Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa addressed how they managed and fostered effective behaviors in their research mentorship experiences. All three described mentoring as a place to have a sounding board, establish goals, set expectations, good boundaries, as well as clear communication and support with someone who is an empathizer, has expertise, and is a guide. Tanya said she continues to “work very
copiously with people who are ahead of me in the game, people who have been in the profession longer.” Tanya believes that displaying “mutuality and respect” promotes effective mentor-mentee relationships. Joan provided guidance about research mentorship for prospective mentees. She spoke about the importance of mentees needing to “assert themselves.” For Vanessa, she asks her mentees, “What are you passionate about?” and she provides additional guidance about research mentorship. She said she has conversations with her mentees about “… basic things like how do you format and structure a well-rounded literature review? What methods do you like? Are you qualitative in nature? How do you process information? …What type of support do you need?”

**Sub-question Two**

The second sub-question was: What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of the institutional climate? One super-ordinate theme, *Perceptions of Institutional Climate and Culture* was used to answer sub-question one (see Table 6).

**Perceptions of institutional climate and culture.** Both Tanya and Joan expressed several positive beliefs about their research mentoring experiences that shaped their perceptions of the institutional climate. Tanya said that her master’s and doctoral program were a research-intensive institution and at present she is at a research-intensive institution as an assistant professor. She reported that the climate at both institutions is to expect faculty to engage in research. Additionally, she shared how the climate “has certainly driven the kind of time and attention” that supports research mentorship. Tanya described “stepping into” an institutional climate “where people were predisposed and subject to mentor ….” And, that the climate
provides the resources she needs to “get the job” done to conduct research and publish that research. She said,

… if I need a computer program, if I need a new computer, if I need the money for programs or whatever that is, I feel like that’s easily accessible and easily attainable … I have the resources to do the job that I need to do. And, that’s a plus, because at my previous institution which was a teaching institution, those resources were not available. And so, it’s a pleasure being at a research one institution because the infrastructure is there to do the job that they’ve asked me to do. And, that makes a big difference.

Tanya further explained how attending a historically Black college provided a “sense [that] she was part of a community with a cultural spirit and a narrative spirit.” She believes that as a doctoral student her college’s climate fed the “research agenda.” She described the imagery of a unicorn and how that image

… is a powerful way to guide us through situations that are sometimes challenging … I unicorn is a horse of joy and love. I mean it’s something that is mythological, right, it doesn’t exist, so it can be whatever you need it to be. … [I] think that it’s the job of the researcher to create new forms, which in my way of thinking is actually magical. … I’m going to own it, becoming a researcher around some social justice and multicultural topics in counseling for education like addicted kids, it does feel like a unicorn because as a Black woman it has a double edge, right …. What is my purpose for doing this? And, I want to be very forthright so that women, like myself, have the opportunity to continue doing this. And, you need a bit of a sword, right, so, a unicorn has a horn, it’s not a sword but, I guess it could be used like one if you need it.
Joan discussed how her current institutional climate is a “supportive environment” that has abundant opportunities to engage in research activities. For example, she said that “there are opportunities through travel grants and research grants.” Thus, Joan perceived that her institution “… is not just talking the talk but, they [are] also walking the walk by backing it up with real resources that I can use.”

In contrast, Vanessa’s experience has been negative and competitive. She said this about her doctoral research mentorship experiences,

I will say one of the things that irritates me, though, is in my doctoral program. I don't feel like I received a whole lot of mentorship, or I know, I know I didn't receive a whole lot of mentorship. And, I feel like everything that I've done has pretty much been on my own or through seeking out mentors outside of my doctoral program. And so, it irritates the shit out of me that they consider me to be one of their bright and shining stars. It's like, "Oh, look at our alumni who now teaches at this awesome university in this awesome program, one of the top programs in the nation, and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And, I'm like, "But you didn't do anything to do that. You didn't help me. You didn't mentor me. In fact, one of the faculty members there, he told me to my face that he thought I would never finish. He was like, "Yeah, I didn't think you were going to finish. I thought you were going to be one of those people who never finish a dissertation." And now, when I see him at conferences, he's like, "Oh, hey! We're so proud of you and we knew you'd do a great job!" And I'm like, "Bullshit. No, you didn't." So that's one of the things that irritates me. I feel like they are taking credit for something that they really had no part in, because they didn't mentor me. And so, that irritates me.
Sub-question Three

The third sub-question was: What were pre-tenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that their social racial membership had on their research mentorship experiences? Sub-question three was answered with the three remaining super-ordinate themes: 1) *Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization*, 2) *Professional Networking/Support*, and 3) *Barriers of Research Mentorship* (see Table 6).

**Social racial membership with other forms of marginalization.** Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa shared how their research mentoring experiences were impacted by their social racial membership with other forms of marginalization. For example, Tanya reflected on her being an African American woman and how “fully invested [she is] in Black girl magic” which impacted her research mentorship experience. She said,

… it is a constant blessing and it's a constant responsibility and blessings come with, blessings are like roses in a way. You know? They're pretty flowers but there's lots of thorns. So just to be mindful that it's both ends, like a comfort and insecurity. It's kind of the best things that have ever happened to me and some of the most painful things that have ever happened to me have happened. You know, right through this identity I am now. But then others, I mean Trump is president. I mean like right now he's like the, … if all the cultures are under attack and here I am trying to be the poster child, it's kind of like running into the fire but you know as a woman of spirit, I know just because you're in the fire doesn't mean you're going to get burned. And, that's what keeps me going. That the fire is actually cleansing. It's not meant to destroy you. It's meant to refine you and purify you. And, that's the way I have to continue to look at it.
Also, Tanya found that understanding how the dynamics of racism and sexism allowed her to “gain strength” and that she feels “… like every door is not for me, but I don’t spend a lot of time at closed doors.” She did feel that African Americans were not supported in their research topics. She shared how her professional journey differed from her faculty mentors in her program because of her racial identity.

I understand that it is different for a large group of us and I say us because I have been very transparent about how I identify myself. … I mean nobody, you know, even invested in my research but because I invested in the research, people took notice. They took me seriously and then they began to support that and so at that point I began to get financial support. …and the more that I showed that I was serious and once again I don’t want the message to be you know … Girl, show that you’re serious and people are going to prop at your feet because I don’t think that’s true. I think that what happened to me was serendipitous and that I’m blessed. And, I always get so emotional because I know that it doesn’t happen to so many of us. And, I know that it didn’t happen for other brown girls who went to get research mentorship. There’s a range. So, maybe they clearly had that excellent mentorship. Maybe they were created with average things that they wanted for and you are all in that same space. So, I don’t want to be representative like it was just great, but it works out because we had social justice researchers who were with us. The women of color, that they saw us and mentored us and then other people around those women extended a hand. And so, that’s a piece of where I come from, right, so many women and women of color who are researchers in our professions have been mentors to me and by extension a larger multicultural community. You know, men, women, Black, White, Hispanic, Latina; you know it’s just growing exponentially.
Joan spoke about the need for more “mentorship in subpopulations, for example, mentorship for women, with ethnic minorities, because the needs are so different.” Joan shared most of her mentees are from marginalized communities “whether it’s by their gender or their ethnicity or first-generation college student.” As a result, she always has “conversations about privilege and power and what that looks like. How does one use their power effectively? How does one use their privilege effectively? What’s it’s like to not feel privilege?” Joan provided her rationale for having those conversations with mentees to model how to “open up those lines of communication and to talk about issues related to race, gender, and privilege.”

Of the three participants, Vanessa shared the strongest ideas about her social racial membership and its impact on her research mentorship. She felt that in general Black and Latino students are “overlooked” and “stereotyped” because they are not seen as scholars, researchers or writers. She believes that overall the general population of counselor educators marginalize African Americans which has contributed to the oppression of African Americans in counselor education. For herself, she said,

I feel like the intersections of my identity, or my identities rather, have impacted my research mentorship in a lot of ways. Some in good ways and some in not so good ways. Some of the good ways have been that some of the people who have reached out for whatever type of mentorship that it is whether it’s research mentorship, tenure and promotion, whatever it may be, they’ve reached out because of my identities. Because they assume that I’m not getting the mentorship that I need, which is correct. They don't mind being that person or those people to help me and to provide information about their experience. That’s been helpful.
Professional networking/support. All three participants said that their social racial membership could be improved, expressed in the super-ordinate theme of Professional Networking/Support. Tanya described how the support she received in her marriage has aided her research mentorship experiences. For example, she stated, “…I don’t have to worry as much about some of the things that might have distracted me from really focusing on what I wanted to do.” Tanya expounded on how her professional networks and supports were further enhanced. She stated,

The fact [that] there were women that I was able to emulate … that got me here; my grandmother, my mother, like all of these women have allowed me to be yet another version… what I’m saying is that the possibility is bigger than we imagine. And, I think Oprah says the same thing. God has a bigger vision for you than you can imagine and dream … And, maybe I’m in the moment of realizing that and we’ll see what happens.

Joan shared that she has been mentored by other professionals in the community and that she valued “interdisciplinary collaboration.” She said that she works “…well with people who not necessarily are the same but value the aspects of [her] identity.” Vanessa, when discussing professional networking and support, noted that

… it hasn't just been women in counselor education. It's been women in academia period. From across the university, from different colleges, different departments who have provided mentorship and quite frankly a lot of the mentorship and political stuff that I've learned has not been from women in counselor education at all. It's been from other university departments and colleges. I just think going where you need to go for the information… whatever that stuff may be, knowing who you can talk to, who your point person can be for any different thing that comes up. Or, knowing someone who can point you in the right direction.
**Barriers of research mentorship.** Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa expressed concerns about the barriers they faced in getting research mentorship as African American females. Although Tanya reported she had “limited challenges in getting the mentorship” she felt that “the challenge comes in … when those articles are not accepted by counseling publications.” As a new professor, Tanya felt she has to focus on her own research leaving her “hesitant to answer some of the calls to serve as a reviewer for publications” which could promote the negative myths about African American women do not read journals or publish Joan shared that “it’s just really finding the time to participate in …” research opportunities at the campus she is at presently.

Joan shared her desire to maintain professional mentoring relationships with past professionals but “it’s hard to keep those lines of communication open.” Also, Joan described how her dissertation chair did not “really have any expertise” in the areas she was researching when she pursued her doctorate. Vanessa spoke about not receiving research mentorship “until the last semester” of her doctoral journey. She felt this lack of research mentorship was a barrier and hindered her from focusing on her current scholastic work. She said, “it would have been amazing to see the potential [for her] that could have taken place with sound research mentorship.” She was “resentful” that her “potential” had not “really been tapped into yet.”
Table 6

*Three Research Sub-questions and Seven Super-ordinate Themes*

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<tr>
<th>Research Sub-questions</th>
<th>Super-ordinate Themes</th>
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<td>1. What were pretenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences for faculty demands</td>
<td>1. Benefits of Research Mentorship</td>
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<td>3. Behaviors that Foster Effective Research Mentoring</td>
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<td>2. What were pretenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that research mentorship had on their experiences of the institutional climate?</td>
<td>1. Perceptions of Institutional Climate and Culture</td>
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<td>3. What were pretenured African American female counselor educators’ perceptions of the impact that their social racial membership had on their research mentorship experiences?</td>
<td>1. Social Racial Membership with Other Forms of Marginalization</td>
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<td>2. Professional Networking/Support</td>
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<td>3. Barriers of Research Mentorship</td>
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**Summary**

This chapter provided an analysis of each participant profile, which included themes and overarching themes supported by the narratives, and a summary of each case. The overarching themes were cross-analyzed, and results of the cross-analysis yielded seven super-ordinate themes. Six paintings were provided based on the data analysis for each participant. Finally, the primary research question and the three sub-questions were addressed through the analysis of the seven super-ordinate themes.
Chapter V

Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter, the philosophical foundation is described and the findings related to the literature. Implications of the research findings for the current study are discussed as they are related to marginalized groups in academe, mentorship, and research mentorship. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are outlined. The chapter concludes with my personal reflections on facilitating this study.

Philosophical Foundation

This research study was framed in the philosophical foundation of critical race theory (CRT). CRT is defined as an interpretive lens that focuses attention on race and how deeply embedded racism is within the framework of American society (Creswell, 2012). Previous researchers found that African American women are faced with multiple marginality issues based on an interlocking system of race and gender bias, which is part of the structure in America’s society (Turner & Myers, 2000). The marginalization of African American women continues to occur in academia and is an area of focus in counselor education (Allen et al., 2000; Atwater, 1995; Bowie, 1995; Bradley, 2005; Frazier, 2011; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995).

In my research study, I wanted to analyze the experiences of three African American female counselor educators and their research mentorship experiences as counseling students and as faculty who are working towards tenure. I aimed to use CRT as the theoretical framework to consider how historically oppressed forces can contribute to African American females’ mentoring experiences and the underrepresentation of African American female faculty in
counselor education tenure-track positions. Due to the cultural marginalization of junior African American female faculty, my study explored how early career faculty were prepared for the professoriate through research mentorship.

Research Findings Related to Literature

My research study sought to bring awareness of female African American counseling faculty in counselor education who may have been silenced and marginalized because of their historical and societal status as members of a peripheralized group (Boyle & Boice, 1998; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Padilla, 1994). My analysis of the findings addressed three main areas; counselor education, institutional climate, and social racial membership.

Counselor Education

Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) defined research mentorship as “a complex, dynamic relationship that occurs within an academic setting. The mentor, a more experienced researcher, offers both relational and instructional support to the mentee in research generation and collaboration and in professional development. The relationship is goal- and task-oriented, and primarily serves mentee needs, with secondary benefit for the mentor, who gains a research collaborator” (p. 103). Although, the three African American females in the present study did not give a formal definition of research mentorship, they did say that it is a balance of formal and informal mentoring experiences, which include a plethora of activities. The descriptions of research mentoring from the perspectives of Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa aligned with formal and informal mentorship relationships as described by Borders et al (2012); such as focusing on mentee development and providing a variety of mentor-mentee relationship configurations that include various activities. Although Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa reported varied research
mentoring experiences, they all described how their experiences impacted their preparation for faculty demands and that they are satisfied with their current faculty jobs. Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa attributed collaborating, supporting, encouraging, and role modeling as methods that taught them how to keep open lines of communication with other professionals, which were beneficial to their research mentoring experiences.

Magnuson (2002) reported many new counselor educators enter professional academic environments unprepared to delve into scholarly endeavors. Also, faculty members are often not provided the support needed for tenure, partly due to the lack of mentoring (Cornelius et al., 1997). In the present study, all three African American women described how engaging in research mentoring activities is a factor that they believe supports and retains female African American counselor educators. Tanya and Joan strongly believed that the research mentorship they received early in their career impacted their research productivity as students and as counselor educators, which they are hoping will gain them tenure. According to Borders et al. (2012), behaviors that research mentors possess include acting on their knowledge, skills as expertise researchers, and having a well-defined research agenda that includes presenting and publishing. Other qualities of a mentor that participants believe is important that was also described in the literature include someone being able to connect and communicate with the mentee and help prepare the mentee for the university climate and culture (Magnuson et al. 2003). Additional factors that participants described for fostering effective research mentorship that were cited in the literature were providing clear goals (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), conveying mutuality and respect (Walker, J.A. (2006), being a teacher (Black et al., 2004), establishing and maintaining good communication (Zachary, 2000), possessing similar values, and creating research and networking opportunities (Allen & Eby, 2011). In particular, Joan indicated that
mentors should respect and maintain boundaries. According to Borders et al. (2012), mentors should be committed and invested in the role of mentoring, behave ethically, and recognize their limitations as mentors.

In general, the literature purported that mentor-mentee relationships benefit faculty (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000; Blackwell, 1989; Johnson, 2002; Kram, 1985; Ragins, 1989; Wunsch, 1993). According to Briggs and Pehrsson (2008), the research mentoring relationship primarily serves a mentee’s needs, with secondary benefits for the mentor, who gains a research collaborator. Joan believes that while she benefited in several ways through mentorship she also believes that a mentor benefits from the mentoring relationship. She shared how having an open and available dissertation chair who publishes prolifically allowed her to get publications. All three participants described the benefits of research mentoring that included collaboration, feedback, guidance, and visibility. Johnson (2002) and Kram (1985) proposed that during the mentoring relationship, the mentor provides support to a mentee by coaching and challenging (i.e., feedback and brainstorming ideas for accomplishing work objectives), protecting and guiding (i.e., reducing risks), and providing networking opportunities where the mentee begins to understand the various professionals involved in hierarchical institutional advancement.

Participants also highlighted personal development benefits of research mentoring. Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa indicated that having a mentor who acknowledges professional attributes possessed by the mentee is beneficial. Tanya appreciated being an English major, having a specialization in qualitative research, and having previous writing experience which she believes contributed to her success as a faculty member. Although the mentoring experiences of Tanya and Joan seem to be overall positive experiences, Vanessa had more negative experiences. In agreement with Tillman’s (2001) belief that mentoring is essential for advancement of faculty
from minority groups, all three participants believed that it is important for minority faculty to be proactive and initiate informal research mentoring relationships as students and faculty. Joan emphasized how being a proactive person contributed to her positive mentoring experiences. Vanessa said having her voice as a student and a counselor educator was important. However, participants also believed that African American females often face challenges as students and while working towards tenure, including limited opportunities to participate in research, lack of familiarization with research methodology, and limited opportunities for research mentoring. The participants also reflected on how a research mentoring relationship promotes self-awareness of strengths and how to increase those attributes, thus promoting success in their goals for publishing and being a counselor educator.

Research activities in which the three African American female participants in the present study engaged were collaborating in research projects, coauthoring publications, and presenting with mentors. The literature supported participants’ findings that disseminating empirical products (e.g., presentations, publications) with research mentors should occur during mentoring relationships (Borders et. al, 2012). Additionally, all three participants shared how they benefitted from receiving additional training in research methodology. Both Tanya and Joan described how doctoral students and early career faculty can be role models for master’s students by guiding research mentees through various parts of the research process and assisting them in publications. Vanessa described how research teams allowed her to receive concrete feedback from various individuals to assist in monitoring progression of her research projects.

**Institutional Climate**

Although participants’ perceptions of their institutional climate and culture was not discussed about as much as the descriptions of mentors and mentees, participants did have strong
opinions about their institutional climate as well as the counselor education climate. Awareness by mentors and mentees of the impact that an institutional climate has on faculty is important (Johnson, Bailey, & Cervero, 2004). Faculty members are often not provided with the proper socialization within institutions that is needed to successfully develop an application for tenure, partly due to the lack of mentoring (Cornelius et al. (1997). All three of the participants; Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa realized that the expectations to publish existed in their institutional and professional climates; however, they also realized that the climate and politics within an institution can work against faculty publishing. They recognized how important it was to find mentors who are aware of their university’s climate and politics that occur at all levels within institutions. Two participants, Tanya and Joan, felt that their institutional climate as both a student and faculty member had a positive impact on their research mentorship experiences. As a student, Tanya attended a research-intensive institution where the climate contributed to her research experiences in positive ways. As a faculty member, Joan’s present institutional climate has opportunities for her to present at the university and provides her with financial assistance for research. In contrast, Vanessa noted her academic culture is competitive and still is a male-driven system where males receive preferential treatment. Vanessa’s perceptions affirmed Hooks’ (2000) assertion that males are patriarchal within institutional settings with expectations that female mentees conform to male mentors’ approach.

Additionally, isolation in institutional settings and a closed academic culture are significant barriers to African American female faculty who are working towards tenure (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004; Bradley, 2005; Casto et al., 2005; Grant, 2012; Turner, 2002). All three participants reported experiencing isolation in their programs and Vanessa was very disappointed in the lack of support specifically from the counselor education
climate. Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa discussed being research mentors for other African American female counseling students in order to combat the isolation that African American females experience. The participants believed that by reaching out to students, they are fostering the development of future counselor educators and researchers and a counseling climate that encourages female researchers. Additionally, Joan and Vanessa shared how they work at promoting an inclusive climate for all minorities by collaborating as students and faculty with individuals with similar research agendas who are not always faculty within their programs.

**Social Racial Membership**

Just as the institutional climate in comparison to mentoring relationships was not discussed as much by participants, their accounts of the impact of the social racial membership on students as well as faculty were significant. Collins (2002) stated that race and other forms of marginalization such as class, gender, religion, nationality, affectional orientation, and ability status intersect to create a system of oppression. Various types of recruitment campaigns and unspoken political environments exist regarding recruitment and retention. Often, African Americans are unaware of these efforts because they are usually underrepresented among faculty and are not always a part of the informal network systems within university settings (Cornelius et al., 1997). Thus, research mentorship of African American female counselor educators who may not be a part of the networking within an institution is important because of the link to alleviating alienation and isolation from other faculty who could provide research opportunities (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Marbly, Wong, Santos-Hatchett, Pratt & Jacob, 2011). Vanessa was one participant who described encountering professional isolation when she was not included in research projects or offered research mentoring opportunities because she is a Black female. Tanya believed that her understanding of racism and sexism allowed her to gain strength from
that understanding and to build successful professional pathways based on her strengths. She did stress that not all African American females have had the same path as she and that their paths were more challenging and less supported. Of all three participants Vanessa expressed the strongest remarks with statements that Black and Latino students are disregarded or typecast as not having the abilities to be scholars, researchers, and writers.

Several researchers have indicated that research mentorship promotes social connections and relationships with mentors who offer support to a mentee by protecting, challenging, and preparing the mentee for faculty advancement (Johnson, 2016; Johnson, 2002; Kram, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Although the literature emphasized that mentors should be committed, act ethically, and recognize their knowledge of one’s expertise and limitations as a researcher and mentor (Borders et al., 2012), participants in the present study said that they felt that at times their research and competence were devalued and they felt marginalized, stigmatized, and stereotyped. Vanessa described negative experiences when mentees were stigmatized because they are Black and she described how she experienced contempt from White faculty which is in agreement with findings of other researchers (Antonio, 2002; Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, & Hazler, 2005; Padilla, 2004; Smith et al., 2000; Turner, Myers, & Cresswell, 1999.

Factors essential to promoting cross-cultural and competent mentoring relationships that seem to be missing in Vanessa’s experience include mentors with a flexible cultural lens and an authentic desire to understand how culture impacts the relationships of mentors and mentees (Zachary, 2000). Vanessa shared how she felt that in general Black and Latino students are “overlooked” and “stereotyped.” Tanya’s reaction was to reauthor the narratives and stereotypes about African Americans who are perceived as not reading counseling journals. Also, she was concerned with some of her articles not being accepted by counseling publications because she
feels the content that in her manuscripts are about ethnic minority topics. Similarly, Joan shared that she lacked formal mentorship and did not have identified research mentors that resulted in four years during which she did not have an established research agenda. She attributed her experiences to incidents of marginalization, stigmatization and stereotypes. Vanessa said she experienced alienation and isolation, which she attributed to possible stereotypes of Black people being lazy or incapable. She said she observed as a student differences in support provided for White students in comparison to Black students.

As indicated in the literature and the participants in the present research, concerns do exist especially for Black women and these concerns contribute to their experiences when they are not mentored (i.e., feelings of not being heard or listened), or are chosen for the sole purpose of organizational diversity (i.e., feelings of being the façade of organizational diversity), or devalued (i.e., feelings of distancing and lack of respect), or have work-related stress (Bryant et al., 2005; Cawyer et al., 2005; Shillingford, Trice-Black, & Butler, 2013). Additionally, women’s differences in power relations and gender politics with male mentors have a negative impact on minority groups, such as lower ranking positions and making less money for similar ranks (Hill et al., 2005). Vanessa believes that even in counselor education, males are treated differently than females. She described a situation where she had a colleague who was hired with a higher salary than herself and who had only one publication. She believes that gender has a major impact on the intersectionality of what occurs in higher education. She also believes that “gender impacts [her] more than being Black.” Similar to what Briggs and Pehrsson (2008); Frazier (2011); Shillingford, Trice-Black, and Butler (2013); Sue et al. (2008); Tentoni, (2005); and Turner and Myers (2000) described, Tanya and Vanessa described other challenges to conducting research that they believe occurs in counselor education including academic bullying,
devaluation of research that focuses on ethnic minorities, differences in research interests and competence, and racial stereotypes and stigmatizations that are related to power dynamics. Participants in this study also expressed concerns about microaggressions and macroaggressions that are impacting the research mentorship experiences of graduate students and early career professionals.

**Implications**

The findings of the present qualitative, narratological study of the research mentorship experiences of three minority African American women as counseling students and faculty members working towards tenure in a counselor education program have implications for counseling students and counselor education. The results of my study implied that the lack of research mentoring and the mentoring activities provided by counselor education faculty and other counseling professionals significantly impacted the three African American females who participated in the study.

**Implications for Counseling Students**

Given that African American female faculty are silenced and marginalized because of their historical and societal status as members of a peripheralized group (Boyle & Boice, 1998; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Padilla, 1994) and because empirical data are lacking describing the difficulties female African Americans experience when obtaining tenure, participants’ counter-stories were used to derive implications from the findings. Because participants were students themselves at one point who wanted to collaborate or were not aware that collaboration was possible with faculty, an implication derived from the findings was that counseling students need mentee opportunities that offer support through informal and formal mentoring both at the master’s and doctoral level. The three African American females implied
that the mentors they would like to work with would look like them and think like them, and support and help them develop professionally. Also, implications derived from participants’ perspectives included a variety of ways that mentors could reach out to students and incorporate mentoring activities, such as creating research teams, being visible and accessible to students, providing a space to give guidance and feedback from a culturally focused perspective, conducting classroom lectures about research mentoring, and being a role model. Implications also included the importance of enhancing counseling students’ research activities through the use of group research assignments or classes that would involve how to write for professional journals. Based on mentees’ own needs and goals, mentors could incorporate research activities that help mentees learn how to develop and submit manuscripts and to understand the expectations to publish.

Implications derived also included that both master’s and doctoral students should proactively seek research mentoring relationships with faculty as well as amongst their peers. For example, a doctoral student could include a master’s level student in presentations, creating mentee visibility and collaboration experiences for both students. Additionally, counseling classes could include topics on mentoring and how students can be assertive and initiate research mentoring relationships with faculty or individuals who are outside their program but with similar research interests. Specifically, for counselor education faculty who chair dissertations of marginalized students, a culturally focused perspective should be taken when mentoring mentees from a peripheralized group. If a doctoral student’s dissertation topic is not a topic a faculty member has experience or is interested in, the faculty member can still offer other areas of mentoring; such as psychosocial support, career-related guidance, opportunities for networking, and feedback on writing.
Implications for Counselor Educators

For counselor education, an overall implication that was consistent in the literature in the findings of this study is that counselor educators need to provide support and resources that promote research for students and African American female faculty. Counselor education program coordinators could reduce African American female faculty’s course load as well as provide grant opportunities and faculty could reach out and offer to collaborate on research projects and provide professional networking opportunities at conferences and within the community to minority students and faculty, thereby possibly addressing the isolation felt by African American females. Similarly, senior level African American female counselor educators can serve as role models for women of color, which can be crucial to creating positive experiences for African American females. An additional implication derived for counselor educators is that they could assist early-career African American female faculty in how to navigate the culture and hidden norms of academe and the expectations for being a faculty member, thus possibly increasing their retention in counseling programs. Also, counseling programs should clearly communicate to all faculty that academic bullying, microaggressions, and racial bias in higher education are unacceptable.

Other implications for counselor education program is that research mentoring guidelines could be developed and used to mentor faculty from historically marginalized groups, especially African American women. The counselor education profession could formalize a culturally centered research mentoring model to better serve the needs of African American students and faculty and other marginalized groups. A last implication is that counselor educators should have a more cognizant cultural viewpoint when working with African American females who are considering the professoriate or with faculty working toward tenure.
Limitations and Delimitations

The results of this study were limited to the unique research mentoring experiences of three African American female counselor educators thus, the findings are not transferable to other African American female counselor educators, nor are they transferable to African American male counselor educators. A second limitation was that the three faculty members were based within two ACA regions; midwest and southern. The results may not be transferable to African American female counselor educators in other regions of the United States. Researcher bias is a third possible limitation. As an African American female, I was connected to the research, as I enjoy engaging in research mentoring activities, which may have impacted my interpretation of the data. However, to overcome this limitation, I used bracketing, member checking, reflexive journaling, peer review, and external auditing to reduce personal biases that may have influenced the data analysis. Lastly, I conducted the interviews using Skype thus, the participants must have had access and be able to use Skype.

Recommendations for Future Research

My study provided insight into the research mentorship experiences of African American female counselor educators. A review of the literature and the findings indicated the multiple factors that African American females are faced with as students and as faculty when working towards tenure in counselor education. Future research using a mixed methodology could be used to investigate the productivity of the African American female faculty who received research mentoring activities experienced at various faculty levels. Also, a mixed method could be used for triangulating qualitative and quantitative data of African Americans’ research experiences. Third, future research could focus on the benefits of research mentorship experiences with other racial and ethnic minorities. A fourth recommendation would be to
explore in-depth longitudinal case studies of doctoral students’ mentoring experiences while they were enrolled in counselor education programs. Also, a follow-up study could be conducted to determine the long-term benefits of doctoral students’ research mentorship experiences. Finally, researchers could examine the differences in African American males’ and females’ research mentorship experiences.

**Personal Reflections**

As I began to compose my personal reflections, memories of multiple stumbling blocks ran through my mind. I reminisced about wallowing in my comfort zone as a doctoral student because of isolation, confusion, and anxiety regarding how to be a successful counselor educator. Although I climbed a few mountains and faced plateaus, I as an African American female developed a strong desire to increase my scholarly productivity and to improve my research skills for life in academia. In conducting the present research, I believed I was privileged by being a graduate research assistant, collaborating with my dissertation committee members and others in a counselor education program as well as being immersed in the rich, thick data extracted from my participants’ narratives. With those experiences, I realized I needed to compose a narrative about my own research mentorship experiences.

Initially, my study was a very personal venture for me. I developed the idea of investigating research mentorship to satisfy my own curiosity about African American female faculty who experienced research mentoring relationships in counselor education. Prior to conducting my research study, I naively believed everyone had positive research mentorship experiences in the counseling field. Initially, I had visions of an idealized university climate and culture which afforded plentiful opportunities for publishing in top tier journals for members of peripheralized groups. Since completing my study, I have learned a lot about being an African
American woman in a counselor education program. For example, I learned at least one of the participants had to address stereotypes of African American women not being able to produce or generate research. Personally, I faced the realization that some peers in my own counseling program did not see me as being capable of completing a dissertation or pursuing the professoriate.

Also, as a graduate assistant, I thought I had the insider view to the university culture in a counselor education program. Eventually, I realized not everything was transparent within a university climate. I witnessed the hindrances faced by counselor educators in a CACREP-accredited counselor education program. For instance, I have seen counseling students demonstrate resistance and challenge professors about syllabi content, submit assultive evaluations, and/or question senior faculty’s knowledge or expertise to teach a topic in the counseling field. I have seen inappropriate discussions and conversations about professionals in the university setting. For example, I have watched students reject female faculty because of their preconceived biases that female faculty are not able to successfully conduct research or chair a dissertation. Also, I have observed professors being stressed due to serving on multiple university committees, chairing multiple dissertations, and collaborating with students resulting in diminished time for furthering their own research agenda. In today’s higher education settings where there is reduced funding, professors are not able to attend professional conferences or purchase material necessary to do research. I have received micro/macroaggressions in various settings, such as in university individual supervision, in the classroom, or while attending a professional conference from my fellow peers, colleagues, and supervisees. For example, I was recently told I was not expected to finish my dissertation research because I was in my program for so long. These individuals assumed my struggles were based on me not possessing the
knowledge or skills need to do research, instead of the personal factors and challenges I have faced as a doctoral student.

In my journey as a counseling doctoral student and an African American female, one of my goals was to contribute to the literature and counseling field about research mentorship experiences in counselor education. I also participated in many mentoring experiences within my counseling program and the available mentoring programs within SACES and ACA. As I listened to the participants in my study, I admired their dedication to the tenure and promotion process as well as their contributions to scholarship and mentoring of other counseling students.

As an African American female mentee with a deep desire to act as a mentor to neophytes, I have gained a lot of respect for how other African American female counselor educators have experienced their research mentorship. While engaging with the participants, I was challenged to withhold my own biases about research mentorship. I felt invigorated and empowered after hearing and sharing their counter-storytelling. I believe the participants are courageous and resilient in committing to counselor education and mentoring the next wave of counselor educators, researchers, and scholars. I believe that their perspectives of research mentorship have supported and facilitated their paths toward tenure as well as enhancing the quality of research mentorship of African Americans and minority students and faculty. I was grateful to hear of the successes Tanya, Joan, and Vanessa experienced, which motivated me to continue my pursuit of higher education. I am hoping my study will be able to raise attention to research mentorship practices with African American counselor educators and other minority groups.

**Conclusions**

This narratological study allowed three African American female counselor educators to create their counter-stories as a way of raising awareness of the unique factors culturally
marginalized individuals face in the professoriate within counselor education. The findings suggest research mentorship experiences play crucial roles in propelling pre-tenured African American female counselor educators in their counselor education pursuits. Through effective research mentorship, the three females developed strategies for conducting research and navigating towards their promotion and tenure. The results of the present study can serve as a starting point to foster diversity and career promotion in counselor education programs by promoting research mentorship.
References


mentoring to increase research productivity. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 2(1), 50.


Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research
University of New Orleans

Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: Zarus E. Watson
Co-Investigator: Roxane L. Dufrene
Date: December 13, 2016

Protocol Title: A Narrative Inquiry into African American Female Faculty Research Mentorship Experiences in Counselor Education

IRB#: 02Dec16

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures described in this protocol application are exempt from federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101category 2, due to the fact that any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Exempt protocols do not have an expiration date; however, if there are any changes made to this protocol that may cause it to be no longer exempt from CFR 46, the IRB requires another standard application from the investigator(s) which should provide the same information that is in this application with changes that may have changed the exempt status.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project.
Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Ph.D., Chair
Appendix B

UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research Initial Phone Call

Request for Participation

Hello is this (Participant’s Name)?

My name is Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of New Orleans in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Foundations. I am calling because I am incredibly interested in your research mentorship experiences while working towards tenure in a counselor education program. Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences?

(Wait for Response)

Great, well the reason I am calling is because I am writing my dissertation of African American female faculty research mentorship experiences in counselor education. I would be interested in conducting an interview with you if you might be interested in contributing to this research study. Your participation will involve being interviewed in an initial interview via Skype™ for approximately one hour and one follow up interview for approximately a half hour. The follow up interview will be within a two to three-week period after the initial interview to check and confirm with your preliminary findings. Both the initial and follow up interviews will be (video) recorded with your permission to make sure that what you say can be typed. Your help would be a fantastic contribution to the results of this study, which will be used for my dissertation, publications, and conferences. This is an opportunity to provide your valuable knowledge to contribute to the research literature. Do you think you might be interested in interviewing with me?

(Wait for Response)

Thank you so much. I am hoping to complete my research within the months of January 2017 and February 2017. Upon verbal and/or written agreement from you, we can set up the interviews based on your convenience. I will be sending an email with a little bit more information about the project as well the risks and benefits of the study for you as a participant. You can either provide verbal or written consent to participate in this study.

(Answer questions possible participants might have about the interview)

Thank you so much, and again I will send you a follow up email explaining the study. I so look forward to our interview. I’ll speak with you soon. Goodbye.
Appendix C

Letter of Interest and Consent Form

Dear (Participant’s Name),

I am a doctoral student conducting a research study under the direction of Dr. Roxane L. Dufrene and Dr. Zarus Watson in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Foundations in the College of Liberal Arts, Education, and Human Development at the University of New Orleans. The purpose of my study is to learn from female African American tenured counselor educators their research mentorship experiences while working towards tenure. The title of my qualitative dissertation study is *A Narrative Inquiry into African American Female Faculty Research Mentorship Experiences in Counselor Education*. I am requesting your participation because your name was provided through a snowball sampling technique as a potential participant currently working in the field of counselor education, employed as a full-time, tenured tracked assistant professor for at least two years but not more than seven years, and who might be willing to share their research mentorship experiences.

Your participation in this study has the potential to increase awareness of research mentorship, which could lead to the development of research mentorship programs. Your participation will involve one initial interview for approximately one hour and one follow up interview for approximately a half hour, conducted by myself as the researcher. The follow up interview will be within a two to three-week period after the initial interview to check and confirm with your preliminary findings.

Both the initial and follow up interviews will be (video) recorded with your permission. For confidentiality, you will select a pseudonym of your choice before I start recording the interview. If I ensure adequate funds, I will hire a transcriptionist to transcribe the interviews and a peer reviewer for feedback. Both will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement. At the beginning of the initial interview, I will ask you to read and sign the informed consent form and to complete a demographic questionnaire. After the first interview, you will be able to provide feedback to me and share your reflections. The results of this study maybe published and presented at different conferences, but all efforts will be made to protect your identity.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. If you have questions about this research or your rights as a research participant please contact Dr. Roxane L. Dufrene, *rdufren1@uno.edu* (504-280-7434) and Dr. Zarus Watson, *zwatson@uno.edu* (504.280.6434) at the University of New Orleans. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact me at *edvarnad@uno.edu*. This research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of New Orleans (IRB#: 2Dec 2016). For more information regarding the approval of the project, please contact UNO IRB - Human Subjects at 504-280-5454.

Thank you for your consideration and participation.

Sincerely,

Chantrelle D. Varnado-Johnson, M.Ed., MA, LPC-S, NCC
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Foundations
University of New Orleans
Appendix D

Interview Protocol

Participant #________________________   Date: ______________________

Demographic Questions:

1. How long have you been a counselor educator?
2. How long have you been employed at your current institution?
3. How many universities have you been employed as counselor educator?
4. Have you had tenure at another university?
5. When do you hope to be tenured?
6. Gender:
7. Age:
8. Ethnic Identity:
9. What is your educational background?

Overview of Interview Questions:

10. In regard to your research process, how have you been mentored?
11. How was your mentoring relationship(s) initiated?
12. Tell me about your mentoring relationship(s)?
13. What are your thoughts about your mentoring experience?
14. How has your institutional climate contributed to your mentoring experience?
15. Is there a rationale that influences your beliefs or experiences about being mentored?
16. How does your research mentorship experience influence your ability to conduct scholarly projects and publish in referred journals?
17. In your experience, what were some of the elements that hindered and enhanced your research mentoring process?
18. Considering your experiences, what would you have done differently?
19. Tell me about your engagement in research mentorship now.
20. Are you aware of mentoring programs? If so, can you please elaborate?
Appendix E

External Auditor and Peer Debriefee Confidentiality Agreement

I, _________________, external auditor/transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality for all audiotapes and documents received from Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson for her doctoral study entitled: A Narrative Inquiry into African American Female Faculty Research Mentorship Experiences in Counselor Education. I agree to the following:

1. To hold in strictest confidence, the identification of any individual that may inadvertently be revealed during the transcription of audiotaped interviews, or in any associated documents.
2. To not copy audiotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts and documents unless specifically requested to do so by Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson.
3. To store all study related audiotapes and documents in a safe, locked, and secure location as long as the materials are in my possession.
4. To retain all audiotapes and study related documents to Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson in a complete and timely manner.
5. To delete all electronic files containing study related documents from my computer hard drives and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclosed identifiable information contained in the videotapes, files, and documents I will have related to the study.

____________________________________
External Auditor/Transcriber’s name (printed)    Date

____________________________________
External Auditor/Transcriber’s Signature

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Vita

Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson was born in Marrero, Louisiana. She obtained a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the University of New Orleans in 2002. She obtained her first master’s degree in sociology from the University of New Orleans in 2005 and her second master’s degree in counselor education from the University of New Orleans in 2006. In 2010, she joined the University of New Orleans graduate program to pursue a doctoral degree in counselor education. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Board-approved Counselor Supervisor (LPC-S) in Louisiana, as well as a National Certified Counselor (NCC). She is also certified as a School Guidance Counselor and has Louisiana Appraisal Privilege in Louisiana.