**Possibilities and Potential:**
**A Multilevel Analysis of Leader Identity Construction for Faculty of Color**

by

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**Dedication**


To my grandma, Doris Yukiko Bender (Sakoda), who always believed in me and provided me with unconditional love that allowed me to be myself, succeed, and earn a Ph.D. Mahalo, forever.

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# Abstract

Racial diversity in higher education leadership has been slow to cultivate and keep pace with demographic changes. Even though there are numerous ways to examine this elusive problem, higher education scholarship has not studied how faculty of Color construct a leader identity. Using an interpretative phenomenological analytical approach, this qualitative exploratory study examines how 31 newly tenured faculty of Color participants from three different research-intensive, Midwestern, public institutions construct a leader identity. Using DeRue and Ashford's (2010) leader identity theory as an analytical framework to view the everyday experiences of faculty of Color, results are presented through three different levels of social analysis: (a) intrapersonal reflections, (b) interpersonal interactions, and (c) organizational acknowledgments. Results indicate leader identity is catalyzed from: (a) racial community inspiration, (b) career aspiration, (c) explicit encouragement, (d) interdisciplinary organizational structures, and (e) diversity advocacy. On the other hand, leader identity is inhibited by: (a) researcher and leader identity conflict, (b) lack of preparation, (c) implicit signaling, (d) tokenization withdraw, (e) ambiguous collective endorsement, and (f) formal leader denial. Implications for theory, practice, and future research are discussed.

# Chapter 1 Introduction

*"Let me just say that I have always thought that I'm an accidental president. Contrary to many of my male counterparts, [who] would gladly tell you that they knew since fourth grade that they wanted to be a college president, that was not my case. In fact, I would place myself in the category of those provosts that say, 'I never want to be sitting in that chair,' or in the category of so many women who say, 'I'm not ready.' It was basically by accident."*

~ Waded Cruzado, President of Montana State University (ACE, 2018)

## Higher Education Leadership Diversity

According to the American Council on Education's (ACE; Gagliardi et al., 2017) latest president study, 8% of presidents identified as African American, 4% as Hispanic[1], 2% as Asian American, and about 1% identified as American Indian/Alaska Native, Middle Eastern, and Multiracial, respectively. Since the annual survey was administered in 1986, over the past 30 years, African American, Hispanic, and Asian American presidents have only increased by 2% each, while other demographic ratios have gone unchanged. The underrepresentation of college presidents of Color is significant compared to the larger population of the United States, undergraduate and graduate student populations, and faculty demographics (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009); Strathe & Wilson, 2006). Presidential diversity is but one example of how academic leadership continues to be differentially accessible to faculty of Color (FOC; Jackson & Daniels, 2007; Wolverton & Poch, 2000). To ensure that academic leadership is accessible to

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[1] The term "Hispanic" was used for the study, so in order to represent as most accurately the research, I use the same racial category term even though I will use the term "Latinx" through the rest of the dissertation.

all persons who desire or may aspire to formal leadership roles, more research is needed to identify the underlying reasons for the underrepresentation of leaders of Color in order to produce transformational interventions and change. The problem is twofold: (a) the persistent homogenous demographics of academic leadership in American higher education and (b) the underdeveloped empirical and theoretical approaches to understanding why people of Color are underrepresented in academic leadership.

The homogenous racial demographics of institutional leaders are problematic for many reasons. First, higher education has a social obligation and "compelling interest" to further democratic ideals of equality and inclusion (Lewis & Cantor, 2017), one of the many responsibilities and missions of the modern university (Kerr, 2001). Consequently, institutions must model the democratic ideals they envision in society. The external social charter higher education has with society (Kezar, 2005) must not rest solely on solving external issues and social inequalities without addressing the internal racial stratification of pathways to academic leadership.

Second, American racial demographics are rapidly changing, which is having a direct impact on the operation of higher education (Gawe, 2018). People of Color will continue to increase within the total population and have a rightful need to attend and reap the full benefits of higher education (Bransberger, 2017). Demographic changes should cause colleges and universities to think and function differently to create racially diverse executive leadership teams to represent a growing racially diverse society (Chin & Trimble, 2015). Representational diversity at executive levels signals to future faculty, staff, and students that the organization may be an inclusive place (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008).

Third, there are tangible benefits to increasing the racial diversity of organizational leaders (Cox & Blake, 1991; Richard, 2000; Richard et al., 2004; Roberson & Park, 2007). While higher education institutions should not just fixate on the "business case" of tackling social inequities, the reality of the neoliberal university (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Saunders, 2010) is there often needs to be multiple compelling motives to adopt equitable policies and practices. Diversity in itself is not the only factor for positive organizational outcomes. If racially diverse teams are not structured with appropriate inclusive conditions (e.g., identity-conscious managers, expectations of nondiscrimination, equitable decision-making, inclusive culture) they can underperform relative to their homogenous counterparts (Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Milliken & Martins, 1996). Those teams that are demographically diverse and have inclusive structures outperform on several measures, including financially (Hering, 2009; Smulowitz et al., 2018), productivity (Richard et al., 2021), creatively (Burt, 2010; Muira & Hida, 2004; Shin et al., 2012), and entrepreneurially (Lungeanu & Contractor, 2015; Taylor & Greve, 2006; Wuchty et al., 2007). Yet even with a strong business case for increasing leader diversity, there is limited understanding of how race impacts leadership development in organizational leadership (Roberts et al., 2019).

The underrepresentation of leaders of Color in higher education is not the only issue; there is also a lack of empirical understanding of the personal, social, organizational, and foundations of how racial stratification and how exclusion continues to persist in academic leadership. In general, scholarship about academic leadership and leadership development in higher education is theoretically weak (Dopson et al., 2016; Dopson et al., 2018). There is even less theorization and empirical research on the experiences of leaders with minoritized identities (Ospina & Fold, 2009). The lack of theoretical investment and research participant diversity has

led to leadership development programs created from anecdotal experience and social prototypical norms of leadership instead of from an inclusive, identity-conscious, and evidence-based foundation. Scholars of higher education and organizational diversity are left without fundamental theoretical and empirical foundations to understand the unique experiences of potential, current, and past leaders of Color.

There are various approaches to investigating the experiences and underrepresentation of academic leaders of Color. For example, people of Color may not be excluded from academic hiring processes because of vague and discriminatory definitions of "fit" (White-Lewis, 2020). While there are different approaches to understanding academic leaders of Color experiences and antecedents to leadership roles, there has been little empirical or theoretical investigation of leader identity construction for potential and current leaders of Color. Constructing a leader identity is an important antecedent to learning necessary skills to be a successful leader (Lord & Hall, 2005) and seeking formal leadership opportunities (Badura et al., 2021; Cox et al., 2022; Day & Sin, 2011). One of the ways to investigate why academic leadership is not as accessible is to understand how faculty of Color construct a leader identity. Like how an integrated science identity is vital for the success of women scientists (Settles et al., 2019) or a leader identity is necessary for women leaders in various sectors (Sims et al., 2020; Karelaia & Guillén, 2014), leader identity construction may provide unique insights and theoretical perspectives into how faculty of Color create and sustain interest and motivation to pursue an academic leadership career.

Not all analytical frameworks or theoretical foundations are inclusive of all experiences. Often frameworks and theory are created from aggregated experiences that exclude understanding of minoritized populations. It is for this reason "small n" research using qualitive

methodologies are important to build, shape, and rethink theory to include systemically minoritized populations like people of Color, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, etc. Research, like that which is needed, can allow scholars and practitioners to better understand how organizational contexts constrict and shape experiences for potential leaders of Color. Research on race and leadership has never been more important as the country and world face renewed calls for institutions of higher education to be anti-racist, equitable, and representative.

**Definitions**

There are a few definitions and assumptions that are necessary to understand to fully understand the aims of this study.

***Person (People) of Color***

I use terms "person of Color" and "people of Color" in the paper to represent individuals who are systemically minoritized and historically marginalized in United States context. People of Color is an encompassing term that represents individuals who identify as African American/Black, Asian American/Asian, Latinx American/Latinx, Native American/Indigenous, and/or Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed racial identities. The term is used throughout the dissertation along with being a conditional factor for participating in the study. While there are critiques of the term (see Kalunta-Crumpton, 2019), study participants were given agency to identify with their own racial term(s). In addition, I capitalize the "C" in "Color" to grammatically represent equality to individual races. I use multiple abbreviations to signify signify different professional communities: faculty of Color (FOC); leaders of Color (LOC); person/people of Color (POC); student of Color (SOC).

### *Academic Leader*

Evans (2018) defines academic leadership, as the "flow of influence (first- or second-hand, face to face or by proxy) from one person to another or others" (p. 57) through "academic activity or endeavor" (p. 64). Because faculty have a high level of work autonomy (Abbot, 1988), academic leaders must utilize the power of influence more than hierarchical supervision to manage individual and teams of faculty. Academic leadership can be conceptualized in two distinct ways: (a) leadership *of* academics (i.e., formal leadership roles that lead faculty and academic organizations) and (b) leadership *by* academics (i.e., informal leadership roles or actions that academic faculty do or take to lead faculty and academic organizations) (Harris, 2006; Macfarlane, 2012). For the purposes of this study, I am particularly interested in the formal academic leadership roles internal to institutions.

### *Leader Identity*

The definition of leader identity is defined as a social process whereby an individual is socially granted and personally claims an identity as a leader (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). DeRue and Ashford's theory of leader identity construction is particularly useful for studying experiences of FOC in higher education because it explicitly recognizes both the personal cognitive processes and the social/organizational contexts that influence identity construction. Because higher education institutions are racialized contexts with embedded tenants of racial inequality (Ray, 2019), gaining a deeper understanding of the influences of social context is imperative to understand leader identity construction for FOC. Leader identity construction is defined in greater depth in Chapter 2.

**Faculty Careers**

Academic careers have unique distinctions that shape the ways faculty develop professionally and create career pathways (Baldwin & Blackburn, 1981). Faculty career development can be viewed from two perspectives: (a) the socialization and development of an academic/scholar identity and (b) the preparation for an array of differing career pathways and roles including formal administrative leadership. While opportunities to explore academic leadership should be offered during all faculty career stages, associate professors are at a pivotal point in their career to learn and "do" academic leadership because having achieved tenure affords the ability to rethink their scholarly and professional workload (Baker et al., 2019). The study of faculty at the associate professor level is understudied and important period of time in academic careers and studies like this one can illuminate the unique and distinct developmental needs for newly tenured faculty.

*Academic Socialization and Identity*

Academic socialization and developing a scholar identity begin well before starting a formal faculty role. Most academic socialization scholars attribute doctoral education as the most formative years of scholar identity development, including the practice of being a faculty member (i.e., teaching, research, and service) along with the intellectual development and acculturation of contributing and joining a broader academic discipline/field (Hoang & Pretorius, 2019). Green (2005) goes as far as to indicate doctoral education is "as much about identity formation than it is knowledge production" (p. 153). Academic identity formation experiences, especially in research-intensive universities, are established by scholarly/disciplinary activities rather than institutional service activities which are less commonly referred to as part of the academic identity formation process (Emmioglu et al., 2017). Institutional service experiences

are foundational for faculty to both contribute to their organizational context and understand the range of potential career opportunities (Ward, 2010).

However, academic socialization is a more complex process for FOC (Guhin et al., 2021). For example, an early-career Mexican American biologist must carve out a niche for herself within her discipline, learn about the field-level norms, and navigate the many gendered and racial dynamics at the department, institution, and field levels. This experience of multiple socializations and resiliency has been described in the literature as biculturalism (Harris & Tanksley, 2021). Learning to navigate gendered and racialized organizational spaces is an additional burden and can impact career development and decisions for FOC (Kenny et al., 2011); Levin et al, 2013; Slay & Smith, 2011).

### *Service as Leader Development*

Most research and institutional resources related to faculty development focus on the success of early-career faculty, leading to a gap in both scholarship and support for mid-career faculty (Baker et al., 2019). This is especially concerning because mid-career faculty are the keystone of the academy (Baldwin & Chang, 2006) and report having a lower career satisfaction than both their early-career and senior colleagues (Mathews, 2014). Some faculty even report feeling "trapped" as an associate professor because expectations for advancement are less clear than the expectations for earning tenure (Rabinowitz, 2021). After receiving tenure faculty may feel a range of emotions including being relieved and also burnt out (Bensimon & Tierney, 1996; Mathews, 2014). On the other hand, some faculty also feel liberated to explore academic and other endeavors they were not able to engage in previously.

The period directly after receiving tenure is an understudied and precarious time for faculty because faculty are often asked and expected to contribute to academic communities in

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more meaningful and time-consuming ways because of their new professional status, yet most have only an understanding of the academic units with which they are affiliated with (Baker & Manning, 2021; Rabinowitz, 2021; Strathe & Wilson, 2006). Neumann and Terosky (2007) examined this unique career moment for faculty working at research universities. Like previous scholarship (Baldwin et al., 2005), service responsibilities increased for all participants but manifested differently. For example, some senior faculty grew resentful of newly tenured faculty's previously protected time, so they inundate them with service responsibilities. And faculty, previously insulated from a lot of service commitments, are overwhelmed with service responsibilities immediately after attaining tenure (Neumann & Terosky, 2007; Rabinowitz, 2021). While service can be seen by some faculty as obligatory or menial tasks, service can also be a unique opportunity for professional learning and development (Neumann & Terosky, 2007).

During all academic career stages, FOC are often disproportionately taxed with service of various forms (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020; Neimann et al., 2020; Schuster & Finklestein, 2006). For example, FOC and especially WOC, often have significantly more responsibilities of service, primarily related to advising and mentorship of students and younger scholars (Gonzales & Terosky, 2019; Mathews, 2014; O'Meara et al., 2017; Perna, 2001; Shockley & Holloway, 2019; Turner et al., 2011) and serving on diversity committees (Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011; Stanley, 2006). Often overlooked or ignored are the informal service roles of supporting students SOC that can be both meaningful and time-consuming (Griffin, 2012; Griffin, 2013; Monfroti & Michelson, 2020). Even as FOC take on a larger share of service responsibilities, they are not always rewarded with professional advancement (Croom, 2017; Croom & Patton, 2011) or seen as a potential leader (Fujiwara, 2020). Because of the increased service responsibilities of newly tenured faculty and their ability to shift career goals and work momentum, this unique

developmental moment in their careers is critical to understanding how FOC construct a leader identity that can have a significant impact on career decision-making.

It should also be acknowledged that academic leadership is not aspirational for all or even most faculty. This study does not have an underlying assumption that all faculty and especially FOC should aspire to be an academic leader; rather this study has an underlying assumption that all faculty should have an equal opportunity to construct a leader identity regardless of social identity(ies) or organizational contexts.

**Academic Leadership**

Formal academic leader roles are contextual to the institution, department, and even academic discipline/field (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). Often the department chair role is a starting point for academic leadership careers (Baker et al., 2019), but this is not universal. For example, some academic departments are large and complex enough to have formal roles like an associate chair, program coordinator, and undergraduate/graduate studies coordinator while others may only have a formal department chair role. At the school/college level, there are typically assistant/associate deans with responsibility of various aspects of unit operations including but not limited to, undergraduate/graduate affairs, diversity/equity/inclusion, research, and faculty affairs. And while faculty can hold appointments in their home academic units, there are also formal academic leader roles in the provost's office for curriculum, faculty development, undergraduate/graduate affairs, faculty governance, research administration, international affairs, diversity/equity/inclusion, academic services, enrollment management, etc. There are also opportunities to take formal leadership roles at the university level (e.g., managing special initiatives, chairing sustained and ad hoc committees, leading research centers).

### *Faculty Perceptions of Academic Leadership*

Even though "encouraging promising faculty to move into leadership roles is not only essential for the future health of higher education" (DeZure et al., 2014, p. 12), many faculty are deterred. In Henry's (2006) edited volume on academic leadership pathways, academic leaders were referred to as being on "the dark side" (Glick, 2006; Palm, 2006) and distally being from "another planet" (Foster, 2006) or across a "great divide" (Land, 2003) – none of which are positive portrayals. The perception of academic leadership among faculty is often negative or bewilderment. Faculty lack intimate, and sometimes even general, knowledge of what academic leaders do because their doctoral training and graduate education likely did not include knowledge of the enterprise in which their research and teaching occur (Del Fevaro, 2006; Land, 2003; McGinn, 2016). This organizational and role ignorance is among the reasons why faculty may not want to pursue formal academic leadership roles. Furthermore, the benefits of increased power and salary often do not outweigh the importance of academic autonomy in terms of research, advising, and teaching. (Davenport, 2001; Hoppe, 2003). And for others, the necessary learning required to be an academic leader is not worth the additional time and efforted needed to develop essential skills (Foster, 2006; Neumann, 2011)

Academic leadership could be unappealing to FOC due to their observations of current and past academic LOC. For example, many POC and especially WOC, are disproportionately hired and promoted into leadership roles that are "risky" and "involve the management of organizations in crisis" (Wooten & James, 2019, p. 323). Known as the *glass cliff,* this phenomenon occurs when a leader, particularly one that has a low-social status identity(ies), is hired into a seemingly impossible situation. POC may be more apt to accept a leadership role that may seem impossible because it may be one of the few opportunities to advance (Collins,

1997) even though there is potential to damage their career trajectory (Cook & Glass, 2013). Because of the considerable psychological depletion and career-damaging results that LOC suffer from glass cliffs, FOC can be deterred from pursuing formal academic leadership roles.

***Pathways to Academic Leadership***

With a range of potential opportunities, there are not always linear or direct paths to administrative leadership positions (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). One way to see the differences in academic leader pathways is to examine two popular WOC academic leaders: Dr. Condolezza Rice and Dr. Ruth Simmons. Dr. Rice started her academic career as an assistant professor of political science at Stanford in 1981. Shortly after earning tenure, she worked on national security issues in the federal government before returning to her faculty appointment at Stanford in 1991. From 1993 to 1999 she served as provost of Stanford University before going back to diplomacy and national security public service in the federal government (United States Department of State, n.d.). Unlike Dr. Rice, Dr. Ruth Simmons had a more linear academic leadership career. She started her career as an assistant professor of French at the University of New Orleans in 1973 and went on to serve in various roles like assistant/associate dean of graduate studies at the University of Southern California, assistant/associate dean of faculty at Princeton, provost at Spelman College, president at Smith College, president at Brown University in 2000, and finally president of Prairie View A&M University (Prairie View A&M University, n.d.). Even though both academic leaders started as assistant professors and advanced to senior levels of university leadership, their career paths were vastly different.

For POC, being promoted and given access to new professional opportunities and networks is often unevenly distributed if they are unable to assimilate and ascribe to the dominant cultural norms (Carbado & Gulati, 2004; McDonald & Westphal, 2013). The personal

networks and access to appropriate mentors are essential for career progression for POC in other sectors (Ibarra, 1993; Killian et al., 2005; Smith 2005) and higher education (Briscoe & Freeman, 2019).

***Interventions***

In place of transforming organizational structures and cultures, interventional programs were created to develop skills for faculty interested in an academic leadership career. Some of the more popular programs like the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows Program or the Aspen Institute Rising Presidents Fellowship, provide opportunities for aspiring academic leaders to develop mentoring relationships, gain exposure to various institutional and policy leaders, along with acquiring a deeper knowledge of higher education management.

Additional programs were created to provide more avenues for women academic leaders to overcome gender and sexist barriers. For example, the ACE Women's Network (Teague & Bobby, 2014) and the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS; White, 2014) professional development opportunities were created in the 1970s to increase the representation of women in executive leadership roles in higher education. While programs like these continue to play an integral role in providing access to academic leader roles, they too were not designed for emerging LOC. Relatively, there are few interventional programs with an explicit purpose of preparing academic LOC (Leon 2005) and unfortunately, "most of the leadership development programs in higher education reflect outdated perspectives and approaches to leadership development" (Kezar, 2009, p. xi) because they focus solely on management skills (e.g., budgeting, supervision, networking) and lack culturally-relevant programming necessary for understanding sociopolitical and organizational contexts needed for emerging LOC to be successful (McCurtis et al., 2009).

Most leadership development programs engage participants who have shown an active interest in pursuing formal academic leadership and provide them with skills and knowledge on a potpourri of management topics. What is missing from many academic leadership training programs is the complex investigation and reflection on the impact of constructing a leader identity within social context along with developing skills necessary to perform leadership tasks. The cultivation of a leader's identity increases the motivation to pursue a formal leadership role (Day & Harrison, 2007; Hall, 2004) which is essential, especially for FOC that may not receive social signals to be leaders (Chin & Trimble, 2015). To create better interventions, scholars and practitioners must understand how FOC construct a leader identity.

**Research Question & Epistemological Stance**

This is an exploratory study to understand the lived experiences of newly tenured faculty of Color and how leader identity, in relation to formal leadership roles, is constructed within the racialized organizational contexts of predominantly White research-intensive institutions of American higher education. Using DeRue and Ashford's framework (2010) social process of leader identity construction, I investigate:

1. RQ1: How do FOC at research-intensive PWIs claim a leader identity from intrapersonal reflection?

2. RQ2: How do social interactions from personal and professional networks contribute to leader identity construction for FOC at research-intensive PWIs?

3. RQ3: How do organizational acknowledgments contribute to leader identity construction for FOC at research-intensive PWIs?

This type of study lends itself to qualitative interpretative phenomenology analysis from a social constructivist epistemological perspective. Kezar et al. (2006) challenged scholars of leadership to think critically and acknowledge more openly the paradigmatic and epistemological foundations on which leadership research rests. Social constructionism acknowledges that

personal interpretation of experience is the individual reality one constructs in relation to others

through social experience, rather than a set of universal qualities of beliefs (Kezar et al., 2006).

Social constructionism requires researchers to pay particular attention to multiple realities and

perceptions, subjective experiences, and meaning-making as analytic artifacts (Grint, 1997). The

artifacts that I analyze are the participants' reflections on and interpretations of their social

experiences. From a social constructionist perspective, the artifacts are not meant to be

objectively "true," but provide the participant with the agency to be the "expert" of their own

reality (Dukes, 1984).

**Outline of Dissertation**

The dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the literature and

theoretical constructs related to the leader identity construction of newly tenured FOC. The

chapter begins with an overview of leader identity's personal and social theoretical perspectives

to provide a foundation for the social interactionalist framework of leader identity construction

(DeRue & Ashford, 2010). I next provide an overview of the limited empirical literature on

leader identity construction within higher education scholarship, and then the more robust, yet

less equity-oriented, literature within organizational studies. From my overview of theoretical

foundations of leader identity and existing empirical literature, I end with opportunities for new

research, especially understanding the particular social experiences of FOC that impact leader

identity construction.

In Chapter 3, I provide an overview of the epistemological and methodological

foundations for the study. In addition, using Milner's (2007) racial and cultural consciousness

framework, I reflect on how my social identity positionality has influenced my methodological

and analytical approach to the study. Next, I describe the research design and procedures for collecting and analyzing data.

Chapters Four and Five describe the study findings organized by social levels of analysis using DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT as an analytical framework to organize the resulting themes. Chapter 4 presents findings that catalyzed and Chapter 5 presents themes that inhibited leader identity construction. Lastly, Chapter 6 offers a summary of findings along with implications for theory, practice, and future research.

## Chapter 2 Leader Identity Theory and Research

**Introduction**

Leader identity construction is an area of inquiry that can be helpful to understand why FOC may want to pursue a formal leadership role in higher education because leader identity is an antecedent and predictor of motivation to pursue a formal leadership role (Day & Harrison, 2007; Hall, 2004). As an area of study, leader identity has become an increasingly studied topic partially because leadership scholarship has widened to allow more than positive and post-positivist epistemological viewpoints like social constructionist and critical perspectives along with divergent definitions of leadership that challenge prototypical top-down, formal leadership constructs (Bedeian & Hunt, 2006). "Understanding how leaders and followers see and define themselves, as well as understanding the complex ways in which these self-definitions develop, change, and are influenced by leader-follower interactions and contexts, is an important piece of the leadership puzzle that can offer unique insights on the drivers of leader and follower behaviors and actions" (Epitropaki et al., 2017, p. 104). Similarly, according to DeRue and colleagues (2009), the construction of a leader identity is conceptually and practically ambiguous because it (a) encompasses multiple attributes (e.g., visioning, financial accounting, organizational outcomes), (b) the importance of personal attributes is culturally bounded and socially constructed (e.g., authoritative communication is more valued in the military than in university settings), and (c) there is no consistency about how leader identity is enacted within distinct contexts (e.g, voluntary organizations vs. fortune 500 company).

In the scholarly field of higher education, research on leader identity construction has focused on undergraduate student leadership development. Even though leadership studies as a field is interdisciplinary by nature, higher education research on leadership and leader identity has generally not engaged with broader empirical or theoretical scholarship from other fields and disciplines (Youngs, 2009). In this chapter, I provide an interdisciplinary review of literature on leader identity in both organizational studies and higher education that guides the research design and data analysis for this study.

In this chapter I (a) situate leader identity amongst different theoretical traditions, (b) define leader identity theory, (c) review the empirical literature on leader identity within higher education and organizational studies, and (d) conclude with gaps in research.

**Theoretical Foundations**

***Personal Identity Theoretical Perspectives***

Questions of identity often focus solely on the individual and seek to answer the question "Who am I?" (Postmes & Jetten, 2006). This type of delineation between individuals is known as *personal identity* because it focuses on the psychological distinction of unique traits, skills, and abilities (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). One develops a personal identity through the collection of self-schemas[2] known as self-concept[3]. Self-schemas can be in flux as individuals form, repair, revise, and strengthen the knowledge structures that help make sense of a self-concept that is unique, coherent, and reaffirming (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003).

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[2] Self-schema defined as knowledge structures that shape behavioral and emotional responses (Markus & Wurf, 1987).

[3] Self-concept is defined as cognitive structures used for environmental sensemaking and protection of self-worth (Oyserman & Markus, 1998).

*Possible Selves*

Developing a self-concept is a lifelong process that begins in early stages of childhood and is shaped by the future selves that one can envision (Avolio & Lester, 2012). A component of an individual's self-concept is what Markus and Nurius (1986) call, *possible selves,* which refers to the envisioned personal portrayals individuals have about who they could become, would prefer to become, or who they would like to avoid becoming. Envisioning of possible selves is an integral component of personal identity because it shapes actions, behavior, and identity to align with an ideal future self.

The theory of possible selves has been most affiliated with developmental psychology, and the concept continues to find utility in different developmental stages of life and contexts. For example, adult development has used the theory of possible selves (Frazier & Hooker, 2006) to examine the influence of health on decision-making (Hooker, 1992), the impact of becoming a parent (Hooker et al., 1996), and how race and culture influence the formation of possible selves (Oyserman & Harrison, 1998). In higher education, the theory of possible selves has been used to understand how college students approach college choice (Barg et al., 2020; Harrison, 2018), career development (Rossiter, 2009), persistence (Ozaki, 2015), and identity development (Pizzolato, 2006). The theory of possible selves has also been used to examine leader identity development in different populations (Avolio & Lester, 2011; Jennings et al., 2021; Sessa et al., 2018; Sosik et al., 2013).

The construction of possible selves is influenced by sociocultural context (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). A future "self" is possible because of the contextual information one can access. For example, a Native Hawai'ian political scientist may find it more difficult to formulate a possible self as a department chair if her current social context and personal history have not

provided access to role models that share similar identities/characteristics as her. This does not mean she cannot construct a leader identity, but role modeling and identity representation is a common mechanism that provides access to a possible leader self. Similarly, it could be more difficult for a faculty member to sustain a leader identity if there are social and organizational norms that deem researcher and leader identities incompatible. For FOC, who may encounter multiple hurdles while achieving a researcher identity, compromising that for a potential leader identity may not be desirable.

*Provisional Selves*

Building from the theory of possible selves, Ibarra (1999) introduced the concept of *provisional selves,* as identities that individuals "try on" before they are fully integrated with other personal and professional identities. The concept of provisional selves captures how emerging and potential leaders "play" with a leader identity (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2010) through actions and roles before integrating a leader identity (Ibarra, 2015). In Ibarra's (1999) initial study, participants experimented with provisional identities through formal roles, tasks, and activities. The ability to experiment was either through imitated actions, where one was not fully confident or competent in the leadership task or through more authentic actions that provided congruence between competency and action. Once provisional identities were enacted, participants evaluated whether provisional identities should be integrated with other identities based on internal reflection and external feedback. Like possible selves, provisional selves construction guides individuals with determining which roles, behaviors, identities, and experiences are congruent with their existing personal and professional identities (Ibarra, 1999).

Provisional selves play an integral role in constructing a leader identity because it captures how faculty "try on" and experiment with leadership roles to evaluate whether being a

formal academic leader is an identity or career they want to consider in the future. Unfortunately, not all faculty have access to opportunities to "play" with provisional identities through developmental roles and tasks. FOC are not viewed as a prototypical academic leader because of racist structures that couple Whiteness with leadership (Ladkin & Patrick, 2022; Ospina & Fold, 2009) along with the lack of same-race role models in higher education leadership. Because of racist and sexist prototypes of who is and can be a leader, opportunities to "try on" leadership roles can be difficult for FOC to access. For example, Bridgeman (2020) and Fujiwara (2020), discussed the resistance they experienced as WOC from White and male colleagues as they sought developmental experiences to "try on" leadership roles based on their interests and emerging identity as a leader. The narratives of Bridgeman and Fujiwara exemplify how it is difficult for POC to construct a provisional leadership self because of a lack of developmental opportunities.

### Social Identity Theoretical Perspectives

By acknowledging the complex environmental contexts and social interactions that influence identity development, especially those that accompany seeing oneself as a leader, social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) provides appropriate theoretical grounding. From a social identity perspective, "leaders and followers are interdependent roles embedded within a social system bounded by common group or category membership" (Hogg, 2001, p. 186). Leaders are intricately connected through numerous types of social contexts such as groups, teams, and organizations (Haslam et al., 2011). Faculty are in evolving relationships with social structures and teams such as academic departments, research centers, schools/colleges, institutions, and disciplinary communities external to their current university. While faculty research tasks and roles are often seen as individualistic because of the significant autonomy that

is afforded, much of the "work" is enacted through social relationships with internal and external peers, peer reviewers, administrators, students, funders, and community/industry partners.

Organizational interactions are situated within social contexts that provide meaning and direction to how leaders and colleagues interact (Epitropaki et al., 2017; Mpungose, 2010). Fluid work identities that are embedded within organizational contexts are considered *situated identities* because the social context influences the saliency and enactment of certain identities that are not always stable between contexts or time. For example, an individual may identify as a "follower" at work and as an "activist" in their religious faith. Situated identities are important to understand and recognize because they can be instantiated with minor social priming and can fade as quickly, showing the importance of social interaction on identity formation (Ashforth et al., 2008).

*Social Prototypes*

From a social perspective of identity development, individuals determine ingroups and outgroups through a cognitive grouping process called *self-categorization theory* (Hogg, 2001; Turner, 1985). To determine who is considered a part of the ingroup, individuals and groups develop *prototypes* of ideal members and leaders of a group who represent and express explicit group values, behaviors, and norms (Epitropaki et al., 2017; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Implicit leadership theory (ILT) uses social prototyping to define an ideal leader that exhibits desired qualities necessary to lead a specific group.

Social prototyping is an integral social process of the academic socialization process. A core value of the professoriate is to define who is "in" or "part" of the professoriate which is often heavily influenced by the experiences, interactions, and relationships faculty have with their graduate advisor (Evans, 2018). This implicit prototype of a successful professor is shaped

by in-group social norms, actions, attitudes, and accompanying organizational structures. As with any prototyping, the cognitive processes that create "ideal" images can be rife with social bias against group members with low-status identities (e.g., POC, women, LGBT people; Saur, et al., 2010). For example, Monforti and Michelson (2020) explain, "even when tenured, women of color often confront situations that limit and/or question their authority, expertise, and sense of belonging" (p. 62). Castañeda et al. (2020) contend that women faculty are not viewed as having scholarly or leadership potential because they are categorized as "laborers" rather than potential leaders. When implicit ideas and social prototypes influence the definition of who can be a leader, it often favors those with majority identities (e.g., White, men, high SES) making it more difficult for those leaders with non-prototypical traits and identities to be granted a leader identity by followers (Rosette et al., 2008). Social prototyping promotes a lack of social desirability for POC in leadership roles that is a significant contributor to the White racial homogeneity amongst formal leaders.

*Race and Social/Organizational Context*

Since social identity is shaped by social context that determines ingroup and outgroup membership, it is imperative to understand how race and racism create inequality regimes or pervasive and consistent inequalities in organizations (Acker, 2006). Based on Jung's (2015) and Bonilla-Silva's (1997) racialized social systems framework, Ray's (2019) theory of racialized organizations (TRO) explicitly "connects cultural rules to social and material resources through organizational formation, hierarchy, and processes" (p. 27). The TRO highlights how organizations, at a meso-level of analysis, connect micro-individual racial schemas and actions to racial ideology macro-superstructures. The explicit attention to how organizations can constrain or reimagine racial discrimination and equality is explored through four tenets of how

organizations: (a) diminish or enhance racial group agency; (b) institutionalize unequal

distribution of resources; (c) utilize Whiteness as a credential, and (d) view practices, policies,

and structures as race-neutral (Ray, 2019). This framework is particularly helpful in

understanding how racial discrimination and racism are sustained through the systemic

connection of individual schemas to resource control and allocation (Ray, 2019; Sewell, 1992).

Social identity theoretical perspectives provide useful analytical tools to understand the

experiences of FOC in racialized organizational contexts due to the outgroup status negotiation

through formal role accumulation (Slay, 2003). For example, Padilla (2020) describes being in a

formal, high-status role (i.e., law school dean) yet still experiencing patronizing and

condescending interactions from faculty and peers because of her lower status gender and race

social identities. Padilla also explains how WOC academic leaders, unlike their majority-identity

counterparts, spend disproportionate amounts of time and energy negotiating social situations

and relationships with faculty colleagues and academic leader peers. The phenomenon of being

devalued because of a social identity (e.g., gender and/or race) is called, *social identity threat*

(Steele et al., 2002) and the psychological energy needed to combat racism is described as *racial*

*battle fatigue* (Hartlep & Bell, 2020; Smith, 2008). While some interactions and messages FOC

receive may be explicit and overtly hostile, social identity threat theory implies there are more

subtle and implicit messages people with low-social status identities receive from interactions

with majority peers in organizational contexts that have a significant impact on performance and

sense of belonging (Hall et al., 2018; Kunstman & Fitzpatrick, 2018; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Ahmed (2012) describes the undercurrent of microaggressions and bias that FOC face as

"institutional Whiteness" where Whiteness, White supremacy, and racial discrimination "recedes

into the background" (p. 39) of the organization, but are omnipresent in organizational policies,

practices, and habitus. Racialized organizations have pervasive explicit and implicit

discriminatory and biased cultural norms that impact the way FOC navigate systems and access

leadership roles.

Especially for FOC, who are underrepresented, easily identifiable, and often socially

marginalized, being compared with majority peers can lead to racial tokenism (Neimann &

Dovidio, 1998; Zambrana, 2018). While people desire belongingness in groups and at work, they

also desire the ability to be distinct (Brewer, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). The social interactions

that accompany the paradox of being both included and distinct create conditions of visibility

that vary from being invisible and ignored to being hypervisible and open to criticism

(McCluney & Rabelo, 2019). Social identity theory helps to understand leader identity as a social

phenomenon related to who is "in" and "out." Even though FOC hold a professional ingroup

status as a faculty member, it does not protect them from experiencing the social outgroup

marginalization and discrimination that has been systemically embedded in institutional cultures,

structures, and traditions (Carbado & Gulati, 2004; Turner & Thompson, 1993; Wolfe &

Dilworth, 2015). Because of these racial dynamics, role model representation and interpersonal

mentoring is even more important to ensure FOC have opportunities to construct a leader identity

(Murrell et al., 2021).

**Leader Identity Theory**

*Definition*

Leader identity construction is both an intrapersonal cognitive and a relational process

between individuals/leaders and groups/followers (Uhl-Bien, 2006). DeRue and Ashford (2010)

define LIT as a "process of claiming and granting whereby individuals co-create reciprocal and

mutually reinforcing identities as leaders and followers, and through this process, develop a

leader-follower relationship" (p. 628). This social interactionist process of claiming and granting helps define ambiguous identities, such as leader, that are particularly influenced and defined by social context (Bartel & Dutton, 2001). Also, leader identity construction is one of many multiple identities that are central to this study and are constructed and negotiated within social and organizational contexts (Yip et al., 2020).

The claiming and granting "dynamic dance" (Epitropaki et al., 2017) that occurs through interactions between organizational actors are embedded within social and organizational contexts. In DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT, leader identity construction is claimed by leaders through "individual internalization, relational recognition, and collective endorsement" (p. 629). Incorporating social interactions of claiming and granting within embedded social contexts, the generative and iterative LIT provides a rich, dynamic, relational, and social developmental model for understanding the complex psychological and sociological developmental processes FOC experience while constructing leader identities (See Figure 1).

*Figure 1: DeRue & Ashford (2010) Leadership Identity Construction Process*
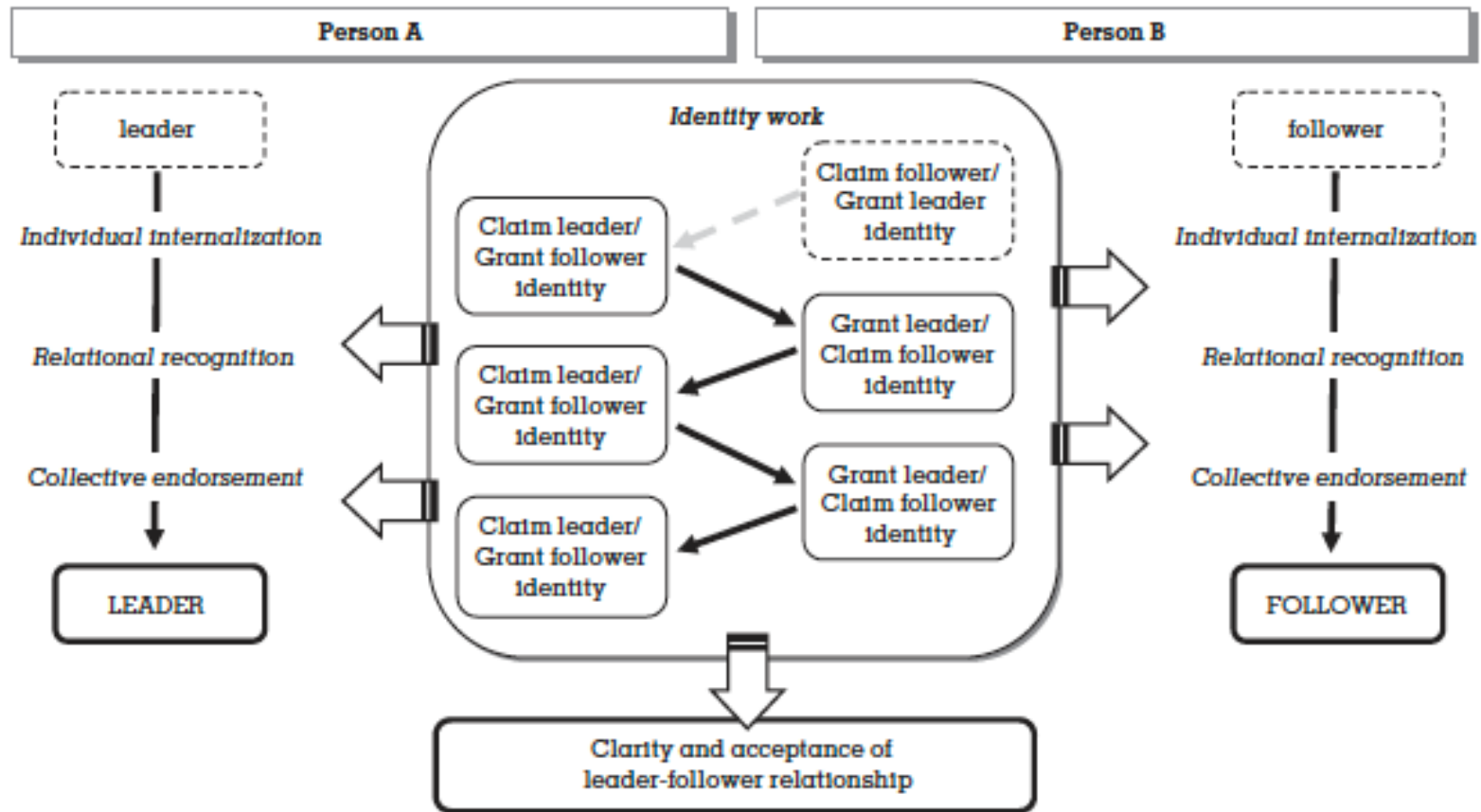
*Claiming*

The central social process related to DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT is the claiming and granting of a leader identity between individuals within organizations. In particular, "claiming refers to the actions people take to assert their identity" (DeRue & Ashford, 2010, p. 631). The act of claiming can be enacted differently depending on the person and context. For example, individuals may verbally (e.g., "I am the leader of this team.") or nonverbally (e.g., sitting at the head of the table during a meeting) claim a leader identity utilizing social cues. In addition, individuals could more indirectly claim a leader identity by developing relationships and ties with current leaders (e.g., interacting with the academic dean at a faculty event). The act of claiming can be a reciprocal process of managing current social impressions and influencing aspirant perceptions of followers (Kreiner et al., 2006). These types of verbal/nonverbal and direct/indirect tactics of claiming a leader identity can be either granted or refused by organizational actors to initiate or further leader identity construction processes.

While there are different tactics to "claim" a leader identity, there are also many factors influencing whether would-be leaders would *want* to claim being a leader. According to the LIT, claiming a leader identity can happen for various reasons including when an individual: (a)  has received a prior "grant" from peers (relational recognition), (b) currently holds a formal leadership role (collective endorsement), (c) fits with agreed upon, clear, and credible social schemas of what leadership "looks like" for a specific social context (social prototype of being: White, man, middle to high SES, etc.), and (d) believes they will be socially rewarded and not punished for being a leader (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Through various claiming actions, individuals can craft and recraft personal narratives of themselves (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) and social impressions (Kreiner et al., 2006).

Claiming behaviors can have differential impact on organizational actors depending on an individual's identity. For example, Marchiondo et al. (2015) found that women formulate an impression of someone as a leader through the integration of personal claiming and group granting. Men however tend to consider individual claiming of a leader identity more than group granting. The leader identity literature is void of further research that investigates the way social identity characteristics influence group dynamics related to leader identity construction processes and outcomes.

### *Granting*

In contrast to claiming behaviors for individuals, the social influence of leader identity construction is enacted when individuals and/or groups "grant" someone a leader identity. Granting is based on the opinions about an emerging leader's social interactions and engagement through verbal and nonverbal interactions (DeRue et al., 2009). Like claiming behaviors, granting can be verbal (e.g., "You are the leader") or nonverbal (e.g., following instructions from a leader), direct (e.g., asking for advice/direction for a specific activity) or indirect (e.g., referring to someone as a leader in a conversation amongst peers). When one is granted a leader identity from others, it can increase "both salience and valence of the personal leader identity" (DeRue et al., 2009, p. 229).

Being granted a leader identity is more likely to happen when: (a) prior claims have been endorsed and reinforced, (b) an individual holds a formal leadership role, (c) grants are clearly articulated and socially agreed upon, and (d) grantees see themselves as followers (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Granting behaviors are also heavily influenced by social context and norms. Followers will grant a leader identity to an individual after they "compare the focal person's attributes in terms of traits, skills, and behaviors" (DeRue et al., 2009, p. 27) to their definitions

and prototypes of leadership. If the individual claiming a leader identity matches definitional social schemas, the follower will be more likely to grant the claiming individual a leader identity through subsequent social interaction. A positive leader-follower schema fit is helpful to increase the likelihood of claims being granted back to the individual and greater agency and efficacy for continued leader identity development (Jackson & Johnson, 2012). Alternatively, if an individual accrues numerous ungranted claims, it will become more difficult for the individual to internalize a leader identity (DeRue et al., 2009).

Granting behaviors create a reciprocal acknowledgment of differential roles and a transference of influence and power to the leader. Marchiondo et al. (2015) found that the act of granting a leader identity to another was seen as a leadership action. But leader identity granting is not enacted the same for everyone. POC (Sauer et al., 2010) and women (Dwivedi et al., 2021) who had a formal leadership role (i.e., collectively endorsed by the organization), were not granted a leader identity by their majority peers because of the dissonance between their charecteristics and the leader social prototype (e.g., White, man) and social identity (e.g., POC, woman) assumed by peers. These findings confirm what DeRue and Ashford (2010) explain about granting behaviors based on social prototyping, but also help understand that leader identity granting may be significantly influenced by *who* is a leader, rather than *what* a leader does. With limited empirical evidence about how social status and social identities impact granting behavior, more empirical research is needed to understand the complex relationships and power dynamics within the social process of leader identity construction.

### *Levels of Analysis*

Since the DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT uses a social interactionalist approach to theorizing leader identity construction, it is necessary to map how different levels of self (i.e.,

individual, relational, and collective) influence leader identity construction (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). This multi-level conceptualization allows researchers to examine leader identity construction through three different levels of analysis, respectively: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and collective. It is important to note that while these levels of analyses are discrete, there is overlap and permeability among them. This section will review the leader identity literature by the level of analysis by which research was conducted.

*Intrapersonal*

Early leader identity research examined leader identity from only the personal identity perspective of the individual emerging leader (Postmes & Jetton, 2006). The intrapersonal level of analysis typically examines how a leader identity is integrated with other identities (Day et al., 2009; Hall, 2004). Ibarra (1999), examined the cognitive processes individuals utilize when transitioning into management (i.e., leader) roles. Using previous theoretical frameworks of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), Ibarra (1999, 2004) found that managers experimented with new identities she labeled, provisional selves. Through this intrapersonal process of experimentation, leaders can "play" (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2010) with new and different identities, while also avoiding potential identities that were not attractive (Petriglieri & Stein, 2012).

Intrapersonal leader identity is derived from comparing personal characteristics or traits with prototypical ideals or working peers (Brickson, 2000). Day et al. (2009) describe this process as "developmental spirals." Similar to Ibarra and Barbulescu's (2010) self-narratives, developmental spirals reinforce contextual experiences through cognitive processes. Developmental spirals represent the cognitive learning and integration processes individuals go through as they make meaning of the messages received from social context. Developmental spirals also can reinforce both positive and negative environmental interactions making it less

likely to integrate a leader identity. For example, if a Black medical faculty member positively compares himself to academic leaders he considers prototypical and aspirational, he will be more likely to construct a leader identity. In contrast, if one perceives being a leader as a risk to image and ego, they are less likely to construct a leader identity (Cunningham et al., 2022).

*Interpersonal*

Intrapersonal cognitive processes are influenced by social interactions embedded within social context (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). At the interpersonal or relational level of analysis, leader identity is less of an attained status, but more of a negotiated relationship between leaders, followers, and observers (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Epitropaki et al., 2017; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Swann et al., 2009). Often, role delineation is influenced by formal organizational positionality, such as when a department chair and faculty member interact to both formally and informally agree the department chair is the "leader" and the faculty member is the "follower." But informal and familial relationships and interactions can also be important to constructing or reinforcing a leader identity (Palanski et al., 2021). It is at the relational level where leaders are "granted" a leader identity (or not) by others.

It can be difficult to navigate leader identity construction for those with minoritized or stigmatized identities. Doldor and Atewologun (2021) found workers with a minoritized ethnic identity navigated stigma by denying, downplaying, embracing, or deflecting stigmatized identities at work. Individuals with stigmatized identities utilize personal agency in the ways they interact with leaders and colleagues at work to protect psychological energy and manage social image. For example, a Chinese American faculty member may downplay their racial identity by not bringing certain foods for lunch or may use an English name that is easier for colleagues to pronounce. Navigating the system by adhering to majority-identity norms can have positive

professional benefits but may also have significant negative psychological and emotional negative consequences (Carbado & Gulati, 2009). The ways FOC intentionally or unintentionally navigate racialized organizations influence interpersonal interactions.

*Collective*

Collective leader identity levels of analysis examine the ways in which group identification and social identity foundations of leadership are developed (Haslam et al., 2011). Social identity theory suggests that collective social group membership is influential in how individuals behave and personally identify (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When individuals identify with a social group, they are more likely to adopt shared norms and embody a shared identity (Turner & Haslam, 2001). Using social identity perspectives of leadership, leaders are largely endorsed because of cultural and collective norms related to prototypical attributes and behaviors (Hogg, 2001). Social prototypical archetypes are so influential, that individuals who are deemed prototypical can be perceived as a leader irrespective of their behavior (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2011), ability to treat others fairly (Ullrich et al., 2009), or successfully completing goals (Giesner et al., 2009).

For LOC, not being perceived as socially prototypical requires additional navigational capital and strategies to be successful (Rast et al., 2018). For example, Saur et al. (2010) found that a Black CEO who graduated from an elite university was predicted to be a less effective leader than a Black CEO who graduated from a less-prestigious university. Because Black leaders with elite degrees do not fit the social prototype of Black professional attainment, experimental observers were skeptical that such a leader rightfully earned the CEO role. The underlying mechanism of social prototyping and the social repercussions make it difficult for POC to both ascend to formal leadership roles and gain social granting from team members

necessary to construct a leader identity. Skepticism and bias exemplify the types of implicit leadership and social prototypes that prohibits followers from granting a leader identity to POC (Hogg et al., 2012).

*Time*

Along with social levels of analysis, time is another analytical plane within which leader identity construction operates. In the leadership development literature, leadership is fundamentally a longitudinal process of acquiring skills, experiences, and knowledge (Lord & Hall, 2005; Day & Thornton, 2018). Often leader development scholarship and practice do not acknowledge how identity construction processes occur over time (Day et al., 2009).

Most of the limited studies examining time and leader identity construction use participants engaged in leadership development programs. For example, Miscenko et al. (2017) measured self-reported leader skill development and leader identity construction over a seven-week leadership development program. Through the leadership development program, participants identified with being a leader more strongly by the end of their program, but the nature of development was curvilinear where initial leader identity construction decreased as participants initially learned about leadership. This confirmed the complex relationship between mental structures, traits, and behaviors over time that is necessary for both leadership development and leader identity construction (Miscenko et al., 2017). Miscenko and colleagues postulate that while emerging leaders were learning new concepts and schemas related to leadership, they were more critical of their own identity as a leader than they initially were at the beginning of the program.

Alternatively, Middleton et al. (2018) measured leader identity development along with the goal-orientations of leaders and found a linear relationship between self-reported leadership

skill and leader identity development. The authors found a "dip" in self-reported leader identity development after participants received constructive feedback from peers, supervisors, and supervisees a quarter way through the program and they began to question their leader identity. This "dip" in identifying as a leader indicates that there are social, not just cognitive, mechanisms for leader identity construction. This study provides an empirical connection between cognitive development, social influence, and leader identity construction.

### *Leader Identity Catalysts and Inhibitors*

Even though there is empirical and theoretical work on the conceptualization of leader identity, there is less research on mechanisms that help and hurt the construction of a leader identity. Skinner (2014) first attempted to see how senior-level women in business industries utilized a formal executive coach to construct a leader identity from male-dominated organizational contexts. She found that women participants used their same-gender executive coach as a (a) role model to broaden their understanding of who a leader is and can be, (b) motivator to persist through sexist environments, and (c) to internalize an authentic definition of leadership that integrated their gender and leader identities. To further understand leader identity formation, especially which mechanisms "derailed" leader identity formation, Skinner (2020) surveyed over 1,000 working adults (of various genders) from different Western countries and found the following "enablers" of leader identity formation: (a) supportive of networks and role models, (b) purpose for leading, (c) ability to utilize strengths, (d) readiness for change, (e) internalization of a leader identity that was inclusive of gender, and (f) the validation and encouragement of others' leader identity. With a similar aim, Lanka et al. (2020) found that leader identity was constructed when participants had (a) positive *and* negative role models to draw from as leader prototypes, (b) mentors that were encouraging and motivating, (c) explicit

feedback from peers and supervisors, and (d) crystalizing events that signified that they had the skills and potential to be a formal leader.

On the other hand, and not discussed as much in the literature, there were inhibiting factors that created a "barrier" or "derailed" leader identity construction. For Skinner's (2020) participants they were: (a) strictly following gendered norms of leadership, (b) working in an organizational context that adheres to rigid hierarchy and leaves little room for emerging leadership, (c) not encouraging or validating others' leader identity, and (d) emphasizing negative self-talk and limitations. These matched similarly to Lanka et al.'s study that found rigid organizational structures that did not allow for emerging leadership behaviors, explicit rejection from formal leadership opportunities, and conflict between a leader identity and other identities (e.g., social identities, professional identities) were barriers to constructing a leader identity. While these three studies begin to unpack the mechanisms that catalyze or inhibit leader identity construction, none of the studies focused on the racialized experiences of POC. They do however provide an analytical road map to better understand leader identity construction concepts, experiences, and processes that both catalyze and inhibit leader identity construction.

**Review of Empirical Research in Higher Education**

With significant relationships between leader identity and positive outcomes (i.e., motivation to lead, leader effectiveness), leader identity development has received increasing empirical attention (Day & Harrison, 2007; Hall, 2004) within organizational behavior fields. However, there are very few empirical studies in higher education scholarship. In this section, I provide a review of scholarship related to leader identity in the scholarly field of higher education.

In higher education, the literature on leadership largely focuses on students, staff, and executive academic leaders. The student leadership development literature is the only area of scholarship that examines leader identity development. Since student leadership development is coupled with other aspects of human development, this body of research has limitations in its applicability and transferability to the experiences of FOC. Unlike management studies research that largely ignores racialized experiences, the student leadership development literature is helpful to understand the experiences of emerging leaders with marginalized social identities.

***Student Leader Identity***

The seminal literature on leader identity in the scholarly field of higher education is from Komives et al. (2005) and their grounded theory model of leadership identity among college students. Komives and colleagues investigated the leadership experiences and factors that influenced leader identity from a diverse sample of college student leaders. They considered how participants developed ideas about leadership and their own leader identity through a myriad of university engagement opportunities, highlighting the influence of faculty, staff, and peer mentorship (Priest et al., 2018). Komives et al. (2006) found that through intentional reflective activities, study participants developed a leader identity that was integrated with other social identities. From this original study that focused on contextual developmental factors that contributed to a leader identity, the researchers created a model that focused on the following temporal stages of development: (a) awareness, (b) exploration/engagement (c) leader identified, (d) leadership differentiated (e) generativity, and (f) Identity integration/synthesis. They found student leaders' developmental trajectories progressed from a simple "awareness" that starts in childhood and recognizes that there are societal "leaders," to a cognitively complex and

integrated personal identity that allowed participants to view themselves as leaders within any context whether holding a formal leadership role or not.

The leadership identity development (LID) model (Komives et al., 2006) continues to be the central framework for understanding college student leader identity development in the higher education literature (Priest & Middleton, 2016). Since there are multiple developmental identity processes being cultivated in college, student development researchers have sought to understand the relationships between social identity and leader identity developmental process. Researchers find that within different marginalized student group communities, the development of personal social identities (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation) can develop in parallel or be intertwined with a leader identity (Renn & Ozaki, 2010). For example, Onorato and Musoba (2015) found that Latina college students mostly adhered to the LID model in their leader identity development but exhibited more culturally relational ways of leading and viewing themselves as a leader. In this study, Latina students organized events for their community and participated in peer advisor roles, rather than seek a formal, hierarchical role. Arminio et al. (2000) found college student LOC were reluctant to identify directly as being a "leader" potentially because of the embedded racialized and gendered norms associated with the title. To illustrate, participants thought being labeled a "leader" created unnecessary in-group separation and hierarchy. One participant called leadership "a burden" while another mentioned that she was not a leader but was deeply involved. Poor and working-class students often have a similar hesitancy about engaging in leadership activities in college or identifying as a "leader" (Ardoin; 2018; Ardoin & Gurthrie, 2021; Stephens et al., 2014). From these findings by both race and class, the term leader has culturally embedded and/or social prototypical conceptions that may exclude emerging leaders from socially marginalized identities.

Additionally, Renn and Bilodeau (2005) utilized the LID model to examine ways lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) college student leaders constructed a leader identity. While the LID model (Komives et al., 2006) stood true for most LGBT students, there were unexplained differences in approach to leadership. For example, students' personal and public sexual identities were contextual and therefore constantly being negotiated between social contexts. In particular, activist-oriented leaders were more interested in disrupting organizational structure and hierarchy (Renn, 2007). Renn's (2007) deeper analysis of LGBT student leadership categorization, sorted students by their type of LGBT identity and their orientation towards formal leadership or activist orientations.

### *Academic Leader Identity*

While most of the scholarly work on leader identity in higher education examines undergraduate students, there is a body of literature that investigates identity *and* leadership for academic leaders (Kezar & Lester, 2010). For good reason, a significant portion of the literature related to identity and leadership focuses on the gendered experiences of women (see Bensimon, 1989; Gray et al., 2018; Kezar, 2014), but unfortunately there is little attention paid to the intersectional experiences of WOC (Fitzgerald, 2003; Garner, 2004; Waring, 2003). There is empirical research about LOC in higher education, but the areas of inquiry are focused on conceptions of academic leadership (see Waring, 2003), career paths (see Turner, 2007), barriers to academic leadership (see Freeman et al., 2019; Jackson, 2006; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009), and descriptions of leadership by institutional type (see Freeman & Gasman, 2014; Gasman et al., 2015). Higher education scholarship lacks empirical examination of how FOC or LOC construct a leader identity.

For FOC, the transition from faculty to academic leader often encompasses the complexities of navigating potentially hostile organizational climates while envisioning a leader identity (i.e., high status) amongst minoritized (i.e., low status) social identities (Arday, 2018; Freeman et al., 2019). Although a few studies specifically examine leader identity development in K-12 principals (e.g., Cruz-González et al., 2021; Young et al., 2011), counselors (e.g., Gibson, 2016), and department chairs in Sweden (Haake, 2009) there has been no examination of leader identity construction of academic LOC in American higher education. Because there is minimal literature in general, and no literature on leader identity construction for LOC in higher education, I review literature based on LOC experiences and draw upon findings related to leader identity construction concepts (i.e., claiming and granting behaviors) and the interactions between different levels of analysis (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, and collective).

Most literature about LOC in higher education is related to what Wolfe and Dilworth (2015) call the "normalcy of leadership"; how being White and being a man are considered the social prototype for being leaders in higher education, while leaders with socially marginalized identities like faculty and LOC are viewed as foreign, novel, exotic, or illegitimate. For example, Freeman et al. (2019) found that tenured FOC at research universities were constrained in their leadership aspirations due to the scarcity of LOC role models. When educational LOC change their behavior to match a White male prototype, it can lead to social and professional isolation from their racial communities and sometimes their majority followers (Nickens & Washington, 2016). The low representation of LOC in higher education also produced small networks for participants to draw from for mentorship, sponsorship, and other opportunities. In addition, negative social climates required cognitive energy and resilience, diminishing energy available for intentional career planning and skill-building.

Using qualitative narrative methodologies, Arady (2018) analyzed the stories of three LOC in the United Kingdom to understand how they navigated their executive leadership roles. While participants were learning their leadership roles, they also had to simultaneously deal with the racialized nature of organizations. Similarly, Turner (2007) conducted in-depth interviews of three "first"[4] WOC presidents and found similar themes regarding what led to their success. She found that: (a) inspiring others through early wins, (b) support from relationships, (c) community-building orientation, (d) responding to early challenges, (e) anticipating future challenges and creating a vision, (f) serendipitous role acquisition, and (g) institutional fit were necessary for WOC presidents to be successful. The narrative inquiry research captures the broader experiences of WOC presidents but does not directly address leader identity construction and integration.

The themes from the Turner study were similar to the report from the American Council on Education (2018) titled *Voices from the Field: Women of Color Presidents in Higher Education.* The report showcased a select group of WOC presidents and examined how race and gender shaped their career trajectories and experiences as chief executives of a diverse set of campuses. For example, Roslyn Clark Artis of Benedict College described how, "the challenge with shattering glass [referring to breaking through glass ceilings in order to be a leader] is that the shards come raining down on you" (p. 5), meaning there are unique challenges WOC face because of social prototypical ideals. In addition, Waded Cruzado, president of Montana State University (MSU), indicated she did not feel ready for a presidency as a sitting provost and had to be encouraged (i.e., interpersonal granting) to apply for the MSU job three times by an executive recruiter to feel comfortable "claiming" the identity. Alternatively, Judy Sakaki,

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[4] "First" meaning they were the first woman of color president at their institution

president of Sonoma State University described how she claims a leadership identity in rooms by standing and projecting her voice but must balance being too forceful for fear of being criticized as too aggressive since women are not expected to be assertive in group situations. A similar report focusing on higher education leaders in the United Kingdom (UK), found that LOC attributed their success to formal/informal mentorship (i.e., interpersonal claiming/granting) and extreme self-determination (i.e., intrapersonal claiming) rather than institutional support (i.e., collective endorsement; Bhopal & Brown, 2016).

Wolverton et al. (2002) however had one of the few quantitative studies that examined factors that contributed to self-identified "successful leader" mindsets amongst diverse academic deans and found there were intersectional race and gender differences. They found that White deans required confidence, competence, and credibility to self-identify as "successful;" however, men of Color only required confidence and competence, while WOC equated confidence with success. The authors' interpretation of the results included deficit perspectives focusing on the ways LOC need to "learn" how to be successful. However, interpreting the results differently, LOC may use an intrapersonal gauge of success (i.e., confidence) because social context measurements (i.e., social "granting" of leadership) may not be accurate or accessible. This was one of few studies that examined the differences of race and gender in intrapersonal understandings of cognitive leader conceptions.

The empirical literature on leader identity in higher education is generally focused on diverse undergraduate student development. Even though there are narrative accounts (e.g., autobiographies, biographies, reports) of diverse academic leadership experiences, there are no explicit studies that examine leader identity construction processes of academic leaders. Research on LOC in higher education has a stronger focus on positionality and social identities

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without understanding the interconnected and parallel processes of constructing a leader identity. Higher education research needs empirical studies that examine racial diversity in academic leadership, leader identity construction of diverse academic leaders, and more theoretical conceptualization of leader identity construction for diverse populations.

**Gaps in Research**

Methodological issues and theoretical limitations in higher education inquires into leader identity construction of racially diverse academic leaders in higher education open several avenues for future research. There is a need for research using different methodological approaches, sample populations, and theoretical perspectives. The present study fills these gaps by using a leader identity construction theory from organizational studies literature, examining within a racially diverse sample, the developmental interactions and processes of potential faculty leaders.

*Theory*

The predominant theory in the leader identity literature in higher education is the Komvies et al. (2006) model of leader identity development (LID), yet has some significant limitations. First, the LID model is linear, which does not capture the nuances and complexities of life stage changes, social context, and professional roles that may not fit neatly into linear developmental stages. Second, while the model acknowledges social context, it is undertheorized how social context, networks, and interactions influence leader identity development. Third, the model is specific to the collegiate context and is in relation to campus organizations and student leadership roles, which limits the utility to other populations in different career and life stages. Lastly, the study sample comes from a single institution and lacks attention to a variety of racial and social identities that could influence the way leadership is defined and leader identity is

constructed. Research with new theoretical perspectives and racially diverse study samples can begin to fill the research gap that exists to understand the experiences of prospective and new academic LOC and how they construct a leader identity (or not).

### Diverse Samples

In general, the literature on leader identity construction does not have a significant body of empirical research. In organizational behavior and leadership studies, there is a larger literature foundation for theorizing and conceptualization than empirical understanding of leader identity construction. In the scholarly field of higher education, the literature is sparse, not well-developed, and demonstrates significant gaps in sample diversity, theory, and methods. Furthermore the empirical research in higher education literature emphasizes college student leader identity development. While understanding leader identity development among college students is an important and necessary area of inquiry, this population has dominated and studies of how faculty develop a leader identity are lacking. Given the need to both diversify academic leadership and encourage faculty with academic leadership potential, understanding the leader identity construction processes of faculty, especially FOC, is needed to both contribute to empirical understanding and practical intervention.

Although the higher education literature is overly dependent on student samples it has empirically examined more diverse populations than those in organizational and leadership studies. For example, higher education scholarship has examined marginalized college students involved with student organizations (Renn & Ozaki, 2010), Latina college students (Onorato & Musoba, 2015) and LGBT college students (Renn, 2007; Renn & Bilodeau, 2005). Comparatively, in the organizational behavior literature, Machiondo et al.'s (2015) study did not have a racially diverse sample but was able to analyze for gender differences. There is a need for

more empirical research to understand the leader identity construction within faculty and academic leader populations with a particular focus on how minoritized people (e.g., POC, genders, sexual orientations, religions) construct a leader identity.

Research in both higher education and organizational studies has examined how current and former leaders make meaning by reflecting *back* on their experiences. While this is helpful to understand how leaders make meaning of their experiences through reflection, this does not capture the developmental processes that are antecedent to constructing a leader identity. For example, studies that examined leader experiences (e.g., Gray et al., 2018; Turner, 2007) contribute to the understanding of individuals who became a leader, but due to the methodological approach, the studies are not able to capture the developmental interactions and reflections of emerging leaders or even those who chose not to pursue a formal leader career. Since leader identity construction is a contextualized and longitudinal process, there is a need for more empirical understanding of how potential leaders like early-career faculty, construct a leader identity. This temporal difference can provide a broader conceptual and empirical understanding of how leader identity is constructed over contexts, time, and career.

### *Granting a Leader Identity in Higher Education*

The DeRue & Ashford (2010) LIT states that leader identity is constructed from a series of claiming and granting actions within social context. But social granting from followers may not be as clear of a concept as originally theorized. For example, Marchiondo et al. (2015) found the act of granting a leader identity (i.e., publicly recognizing another person as the leader of a group) was viewed by bystanders as a leadership attribute. This empirical finding indicates there is an uneven power dynamic between claiming and granting a leader identity. For example, if verbal granting behaviors are seen by observers as a leader attribute, then even the ability to

grant a leader identity may have the power equivalency of claiming a leader identity. Put simply, if one has the power to grant a leader identity to another, they can be viewed as a leader by observers. More research is needed to understand the ways different leader identity granting behaviors impact leader identity construction.

Another conceptual understanding left to unpack is, according to the LIT, if an individual is not granted a leader identity, it is more difficult to construct a leader identity. Yet, granting is completely reliant on interpersonal and group interactions. This however does not consider how social identities, especially identities that have lower social status, may not have access to receive social granting based on biased social prototypes of leadership. So, if faculty or departments are less likely to grant a leader identity to FOC because of social and leadership prototyping, how are FOC able to develop a leader identity *without being granted a leader identity from social context*? More empirical research is needed to gain a better understanding of the conceptual linkage between claiming and granting behaviors, especially for emerging LOC.

**Present Study**

To fill gaps in existing research, this study will use the DeRue and Ashford (2010) LIT and Lanka et al.'s (2020) concepts of catalysts and barriers of leader identity construction to understand how FOC construct a leader identity from intrapersonal reflection, interpersonal interactions, and organizational acknowledgment. Empirically, this research will incorporate the lived experiences of a racially diverse sample missing from much of the leader identity construction literature. Theoretically, this study will introduce new leader identity theoretical perspectives to the higher education literature, while conceptually interrogating the claiming and granting experiences of participants in racialized organizational contexts.

## Chapter 3 Methods

**Introduction**

This study seeks to understand how FOC construct a leader identity within racialized organizational contexts. I utilize methodological approaches from interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to examine how everyday experiences and reflections of FOC participants influence leader identity construction processes (Smith et al., 2012). IPA is an offspring approach of phenomenological qualitative methodology, adapted for use by applied psychological fields. The IPA approach is "especially interested in what happens when everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people" (Smith et al., 2012, p. 1). In this section, I provide an overview of interpretative phenomenological analysis methodology, critically reflect on my social positionality in relation to the research participants and describe data collection and analytical procedures used to conduct the study.

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

First introduced to scholarly literature by German philosopher, Edmund Husserl, phenomenology was conceptualized as an analytical approach to understanding the "essential elements" of how individuals experience phenomena through narrative and inductive data/analysis (Crowell, 2009).[5] The "essential elements" of Husserl's approach provide researchers with more generalizable findings for theory-building and conceptual causal links to

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[5] Vagle (2018) cites Moran and Mooney (2002) that acknowledge Buddhist and Hindu philosophers were examining states of consciousness which directly related to what Husserl calls *phenomenology*, much longer earlier than the early 1900s.

investigate further. Phenomenology, as a family of methodologies and philosophies, has an explicit goal to "provide descriptions of how we experience the world" (Brinkmann, 2018, p. 67) with the aims of descriptive clarification before attempting theoretical or empirical causal claims. Later phenomenologists, (e.g., Heidegger and Satre) recognized the limitations of essentialist perspectives in describing the human experience and draw attention to the contextualized social world that is interpreted through relationships, objects, culture, and reflection (Smith et al., 2012). This turn towards interpretivist epistemology is the foundation for the interpretative phenomenological methods.

IPA, similar to Van Manen's (1990) phenomenological approach, seeks to understand how individuals make meaning of their everyday life experiences in context. The process of understanding phenomena is called hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2012). Heidegger (1962) uses hermeneutic analysis to not just understand the surface or manifest phenomenon, but also to interpret data and gain an implicit or latent conceptual understanding of social experience. Latent results are not essentialist conclusions as Husserl suggests, but they can be used to build theory, explain phenomena, and test future hypotheses. In particular, Heidegger views interpretation as a process that requires (and allows) non-linear data analysis that is circular, fluid, and iterative. In IPA research, Smith & Osborn (2003) describe the interpretative approach as "double hermeneutic" because the goal of the researcher is to make meaning out of meaning-making reflections of participants.

The descriptive-analytic nature of phenomenological research lends itself to qualitative research methods, such as interviewing, ethnographic observation, and case studies. And the smallness of qualitative cases allows for a focus and precision that future research can more appropriately consider generalizable results. Unlike grounded theory methodology, IPA results

are presented as conceptual themes that capture the essence of the studied phenomenon (Larsen & Adu, 2021). While these concepts can be related and connected, the goal is not to create theory, but it is to better understand phenomena through thematic results. IPA has been particularly useful for applied fields of study such as health and education because participant reflections can be interpreted for larger thematic meanings that are helpful when creating applications for practitioners in the field.

**Positionality Reflection**

In all studies, especially those using qualitative methods, reflecting on social positionality in relation to the researcher, participants, and the historical and sociopolitical context is an essential part of the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). And I appreciate the perspectives of some who believe only in-group members of a social identity should engage in research about the identity (Pillow, 2003). As Naryan (1993) states, "to acknowledge particular and personal locations limits one's purview from these positions. It is also to undermine the notion of objectivity because from particular locations all understanding becomes subjectively based and forged through interactions with fields of power relations" (p. 679). Especially for this phenomenological study, investigating racialized experiences and critical reflection on social identities, unpacking prior experiences, preconceptions, and assumptions through positionality is integral to providing a trustworthy analysis (Heidegger, 1962; Smith et al., 2012). **"Despite the impossibility for reflexivity to provide a universal cure-all for the dilemmas of conducting research, the importance of discussing reflexivity lies within its ability to bring methodological dilemmas to the forefront in the first place"** (Day, 2012, p. 82). To work through the "methodological dilemmas" (Day, 2012) of the project, I frame my positionality statement utilizing Milner's (2007) racial and cultural consciousness framework that requires the

researcher to engage with critical reflection on: (a) Researching the self, (b) researching the self in relation to others, and (c) shifting from the self to system.

### *Self*

Racial identity, in general, is developmental, political, contextual, historical, social, and personal. My racial identity is complicated. For multiracial people, the level of complexity is compounded by an assortment of factors including family demography, physical complexion and features, social context, and how one is accepted by monoracial peers (Johnston-Guerrero & Tran, 2018). For me, as a multiracial person that is twenty-five percent Japanese yet White-presenting, identifying racially has never been an easy task. If I identify as Japanese or Asian, monoracial peers would rightfully question my lack of cultural knowledge and racialized experiences. If I identify as White, it negates my family history and relationship with my Japanese (culturally Hawai'ian) grandmother. If I express my identity as a "multiracial Japanese person with little cultural connection to Japanese culture and some remnants of Hawai'ian culture – yet White-presenting and certainly possessing accompanying privileges," it is an overly complex answer to a seemingly simple question. For this study, most participants will perceive me as only White because of my phenotypical appearance and presentation. Because this is how I have experienced most of my social interactions throughout my entire life, I focus this reflection on the didactic and more macro relationships between my Whiteness and my participant's minoritized racial identities.

Even though I have developed my own racial consciousness as a White person, certainly my upbringing in a multiracial family, coming to understand my own racial identity, and my minoritized sexual orientation identity has shaped my understanding of race and culture. Without recognizing it for decades, I grew up in a multiracial home. My Japanese grandmother and

biracial mother were my closest family members and had the most developmental influence on my personality and social understanding. A similar story to many Asian/White multiracial families of their time, my Japanese grandmother met my White grandfather when he was stationed on the island of Oahu, Hawai'i. When he finished his tour of duty, my grandparents moved to rural Maryland to start their newlywed life. They settled in a small town in Western Maryland, where my grandfather's family had lived for generations. Because of her homogenous surroundings, my grandmother had to forgo or lose many of her cultural norms like her foods, dialect, warm-weather clothing, and family. While my grandmother's cultural assimilation seemed imminent and complete, subversive actions would always creep into everyday life. For example, she figured out how to grow tropical Anthurium flowers in her mid-Atlantic climate and gave Hawai'ian middle names to each one of her three biracial children. She also made sure I knew my cultural heritage, could properly use chopsticks, and took me to her homeland of Hawai'i as a child to meet my many relatives. To my younger self, with not much to compare, this seemed "normal" for grandmothers. As I learned more about race, colonization, and Hawai'ian cultural history, my grandmother's subversive acts were her (consciously or unconsciously) small acts of opposition to completely "Whiten" her family. Not until later in my life did I realize my developmental years of understanding the social world were significantly impacted by my grandmother's cultural preservation and my own multiracial family upbringing in a White, rural context.

Stanley and Wise (1993) argue that "life" and "research" cannot be disentangled and are experienced simultaneously, and Butler (2004) describes identity as situationally and contextually performed. Butler reframes identity as something a person "does" rather than something a person "is." The dynamic nature of racial identity was exemplified during the

undertaking of this study. On September 3rd 2020, my Japanese grandmother and cultural bridge passed away two days after my grandfather, from the COVID-19 virus. Prior to this, as I mentioned, I grappled with identifying as White or multiracial or Asian – and depending on the context, the answer would change. Since her passing, my desire and need to recognize her immense contribution to my life and racial identity have to be acknowledged. Without the physical form of my cultural background and racial identity, I have become more confident about identifying as Asian/White on checkboxes and Multiracial/White-presenting in more complex explanations.

My racial background and history are integral to reflecting on my social location and history of Whiteness and socialized understanding of race. Because of my history, I understand race and racial identity as complex and have been interested in racialized experiences within and around organizations well before my scholarly interest. That said, I have also created personal and professional support networks that span multiple intersecting racial, gender, and sexual orientation identities. My history of support, peer network, and relationships have helped me grow in my understanding of race but also pushed me to think critically about how my complicated racial identity does, and does not, influence my interpersonal and scholarly racialized understanding. My racial identity and history help me to develop authentic rapport, ease potential apprehension, and secure genuine relationships with participants. As Dwyer and Buckle (2009) conceptualize, it is often in the "space between" being an "insider" and "outsider" that researchers often navigate; this researcher positionality is congruent with my own personal experiences with race and socialization.

### *Relation to Others*

The research interview is not an objective interaction, but an opportunity to negotiate and "perform" identity (Gunaratnam, 2003). Interracial interaction is contextualized by individual histories surrounding the sociopolitical conceptualization of race, power dynamics of privilege and oppression, and intercultural communication knowledge and strategies (Nayak, 2006). Especially in a research study, these interactions can be complicated or lubricated by researcher positionality, reciprocity, rapport, and ways of being (Morton, 2020). Since the project is sponsored by the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) and guided by Dr. Tabbye Chavous and Dr. Alford Young Jr., two prominent Black scholars, participants were likely more willing to contribute than if they were solicited by a graduate student without connections to organizations and people that have influence with POC communities.

While gaining access to participants is fundamental, the relationship between researcher and participant provides quality, meaningful, and authentic data that become important for the study (Seidman, 2019). Because of the nature of this study, all the participants I interact with will identify as a "person of Color" and will likely code me as White. When soliciting and communicating with participants about the study, participants were likely interpreting my authenticity and cultural knowledge as a White researcher coupled with the dual outcomes of informing NCID's leadership development work and my dissertation research. To highlight my understanding of both race and the academic profession, my ability to ask nuanced and knowledgeable probing questions during the interview contributed to rapport-building and comfort with participants. I showed my scholarly, practical, and cultural knowledge of FOC experiences through the informal and formal interactions to develop trust with participants who may be skeptical of my intentions and capability to collect and analyze data.

My Whiteness and other social identities, while important to my continual reflective research process, are only part of the research relationship. The ethnographic context of the interview experience for research participants provided a unique sociopolitical situation. In the interview process, FOC discussed, shared, and reflected on their experiences and ideas about leadership to a researcher that racially represents the prototypical leader they often must contend with. For some, this type of dissonance may generate apprehension that causes participants to self-monitor and present a filtered reflection and image. For others, this ethnographic context of sharing the types of discriminatory or racialized experiences with a White researcher could have been an empowering experience.

Racial identity is not the only social identity that defines the research relationship. As Espito & Evans-Winters (2022) contend, "qualitative inquiry from an intersectional perspective unashamedly and ardently concedes that individuals can be multiply situated in the world and, thus, the researcher must be prepared to accept complexity as part of the research process" (p. 4). My identity as a graduate student and early-career scholar played a significant role in my relationship and interactions with participants. Many of the participants agreed to participate in the study because they remembered their own graduate student data collecting experiences and desired to support an early-career scholar. Also, my lower professional status as a student likely catalyzed more honest and authentic reflections from participants since they did not have to negotiate social capital during the interview.

Much of the qualitative methods scholarship highlights rapport-building as the way to "unlock" data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), but building rapport is "only the beginning" of the research process when studying questions of race and racial identity (DeVault, 1995). It is the positionality of race in the research process that is "integral to the developing analysis in a

qualitative study" (DeVault, 1995, p. 613). As an "outsider" in my perceived racial identity, underlying or implied racial understandings of race were important for me to interpret during the analytical process. As a White-passing person having a racially diverse dissertation committee will challenge me to see data from different perspectives that will assist in analyzing and interpreting data as truthfully and trustworthy as possible. (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009)

### *Self to System*

Milner's (2007) framework concludes with understanding how the researcher and the research-participant relationship are situated along a "historic, political, social, economic, racial and cultural realities broader scale" (p. 397). I use this critical reflection to examine not only my micro-interactions with participants but how this study is situated in a larger macro-social context. In particular, White researchers have exploited people and communities of Color for scholarly and professional gain without reciprocal understanding, sharing, and value-added gain for centuries (Bhattacharya, 2009; Pillow, 2003).

My commitment to racial justice and social justice did not start with this project but has been a sustained aspect of my personal and professional identity and commitments since I was a college student. My individual advocacy can be traced to when I wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper admonishing local government officials for allowing a hate-driven organization to have a rally on my little league baseball field. In college, I became a vocal advocate for an increased institutional response for sexual assault survivors, diversity education, and intercultural dialogue. As a professional and early-career scholar, I have concentrated my research, scholarship, and deeper understanding of how organizations perpetuate systemic discrimination through policies, practices, and interactions.

My hope is that this dissertation is the beginning of my scholarly that examines inequitable experiences and outcomes in organizations for historically and systemically marginalized people. One of the ways I want to use these data for a good to be given back to communities of Color is to work in tandem with the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) and Center for Social Solutions at the University of Michigan to ensure this project is supporting and complementary to the practical leadership development initiatives that seek to advance academic leaders of Color.

As a scholar with significant practitioner experience, I have thought about how analytic conclusions and voices of participants can contribute to scholarship and practice in meaningful ways that push conceptions of leadership, leader identity, and faculty development within higher education and organizational studies. I want to communicate the results of this study to both scholarly (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles) and practical (e.g., program development, trade magazines, collaborations with leadership development programs) mediums. To avoid perpetuating a cycle of exploitation and voyeurism of communities of Color (Kvale, 2006), my goal is to ensure the project is rigorous enough to contribute to scholarly literature and useful enough to enhance and support the understanding of more racially diverse academic leaders through scholarship and practice.

Through critical intrapersonal, interpersonal, and macro-critical reflection of my positionality in relation to the research project and participants, I tried to illuminate my own inherent perspectives and biases that influenced the way I executed data collection and analysis. My personal history with race, my interactions with participants, and the social context in which the interactions happen contribute to my own sensemaking of participant's voice and implications for scholarship and practice.

**Data Collection**

*Institutional Site Selection*

To create a participate sample with  similar qualities beyond individual characteristics, I intentionally selected three institutional campuses (i.e., Beaverton University, Garden Groves University, and Parkland State University)[6] that share similar qualities. All of the site campuses: (a) are research-intensive, (b) have predominantly White student demographics, (c) have academic organizational structures, and (d) are located in the Midwest. The research-intensive nature of the sites increases the likelihood that faculty experience more rigid academic expectations of research production (Bentley & Blackburn, 1990; Hermanowicz, 2009) that can breed competitive environments (Braxton, 1993). Generally, the institutions have similar faculty demographics: ~25% of full-time FOC; ~45% full-time women faculty. For institutional demographics see Table 1 and Table 2. The institutions also have similar university-wide faculty leadership development offerings except for Garden Groves University which did not offer any formal programming for faculty leadership development (see Table 3). And lastly, the campus' location is important because geography can influence the way race is understood culturally and organizationally (Chan, 2017).  For more information regarding site institution characteristics, see Table 3.

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[6] The three institutional names are pseudonyms

*Table 1: Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Characteristics*

|  | Garden Groves University | Beaverton University | Parkland State University |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| **Faculty Rank** |  |  |  |
| % Full Professor | 40% | 30% | 35% |
| % Associate Professor | 25% | 30% | 30% |
| % Assistant Professor | 35% | 40% | 35% |
|  |  |  |  |
| % Women | 40% | 45% | 40% |
|  |  |  |  |
| % Asian | 15% | 15% | 15% |
| % Black | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| % Indigenous | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| % Latinx | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| % Multiracial | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| % White | 70% | 70% | 70% |

*Table 2: Faculty by Race and Rank*

|  | Garden Groves University | Beaverton University | Parkland State University |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| **Full Professor\*** |  |  |  |
| Asian | 20% | 15% | 15% |
| Black | 5% | 1% | 5% |
| Indigenous | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Latinix | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Multiracial | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| White | 75% | 70% | 80% |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Associate Professor** |  |  |  |
| Asian | 20% | 15% | 15% |
| Black | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Indigenous | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Latinix | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Multiracial | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| White | 65% | 70% | 70% |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Assistant Professor** |  |  |  |
| Asian | 15% | 15% | 15% |
| Black | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Indigenous | 1% | 1% | 1% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Latinix | 5% | 4% | 5% |
| Multiracial | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| White | 60% | 60% | 60% |
| | | | |

* Information gathered from Fall 2019 IPEDs data
** Statistics are approximate to not be identifiable

*Table 3: Institutional Leadership Development Programming*

| Academic Leadership Programming | Garden Groves University | Beaverton University | Parkland State University |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emerging Leaders | N/A | • Cohort-based program designed for underrepresented groups | • Cohort-based program<br>• Independent seminars |
| Current Leaders | • Cohort-based program | N/A | • Cohort-based programs<br>• Independent seminars |
| Association-Level Participation | • Participates in external cohort-based program | • Participates in external cohort-based programs | • Participates in external cohort-based program |

* Information gathered from institutional websites

### *Participant Selection*

Utilizing IPA requires the study sample to be "fairly homogenous" and "theoretically similar" (Smith et al., 2012). To understand leader identity sensemaking among similar faculty, there are a few characteristics that all participants must share. They must (a) be employed as a tenured faculty member at the time of the interview at a research-intensive university, (b) obtain promotion and tenure within 36 months of the interview, (c) identify as a "person of Color,"[7] and (d) must have lived experience in the United States prior to assuming their faculty role since

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[7] Participants can self-identify as a "person of Color" since the definition can be complex and interpreted differently

experiences of racial identity are socially constructed and contextually socialized (Winant, 2004)[8].

While leader identity construction is a lifelong process (Shamir & Eilam, 2005), this study captures the sensemaking of FOC at a specific developmental time in their academic career. The period shortly after earning tenure can be a unique developmental time where research faculty are able to think about different professional priorities and outcomes (Boelryk & Amundsen, 2018). Until earning tenure and promotion, faculty are often focused on research production and have less cognitive energy or time to take on extensive administrative roles or think about potential leadership trajectories (Laudel & Gläser, 2007).

The focus on race in this study is both intentional and central which requires definitional boundaries. Because race is constructed in context and influenced by a variety of social factors, including national context, participants must have earned at least one degree in the United States (U. S.) as a proxy for understanding the unique racial socialization of the U.S. POC experience. This distinction was designed to create a "fairly homogeneous" (Smith et al., 2012) participant sample. It is also important to note that since racialized experiences are central to the study, all FOC participants, even if they are not underrepresented in the professoriate (i.e., Asian/Asian American faculty) are included as potential participants. Even though Asian/Asian American faculty can be overrepresented in some academic disciplines (Lee, 2002), they are underrepresented in most academic fields, are significantly underrepresented in academic leadership roles (Davis et al., 2013; Lum, 2008; Ono, 2013), and encounter racialized experiences within the academy (Huang, 2013; Yeung, 2013). For an aggregate understanding of the participant sample see Table 4. For an individual focus on each participant see Table 5.

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[8] As a proxy, I will identify participants as those who have received a degree from an American institution.

*Table 4: Site Institution Demographic Information*

| Characteristic | Frequency | % of Sample |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **Institution** | | |
| Beaverton University | 8 | 26% |
| Garden Groves University | 17 | 55% |
| Parkland State University | 6 | 19% |
| | | |
| **Area of Study** | | |
| Arts & Humanities | 7 | 23% |
| Medical | 7 | 23% |
| Professional | 6 | 19% |
| Social Science | 4 | 13% |
| STEM | 7 | 23% |
| | | |
| **Race** | | |
| Black | 10 | 32% |
| East Asian | 6 | 19% |
| Latinx | 3 | 10% |
| Multiracial | 4 | 13% |
| Southeast Asian | 8 | 26% |
| | | |
| **Gender** | | |
| Man | 24 | 77% |
| Woman | 7 | 23% |
| | | |
| **Post-Tenure Years** | | |
| < 6 Months | 16 | 52% |
| ~1 Year | 6 | 19% |
| ~2 Years | 8 | 26% |
| ~3 years | 1 | 3% |

*Table 5: Individual Participant Characteristics*

| Pseudonym | Race | Gender | Area of Study | Years Post-Tenure | Interviewed During COVID |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amina | Black | Woman | Professional | <6 Months | |
| Cinque | Black | Man | Medical | <6 Months | |
| Dithu | SE Asian | Man | STEM | <6 Months | |
| Nadeem | SE Asian | Man | STEM | <6 Months | X |
| Nandan | SE Asian | Man | Arts & Humanities | <6 Months | X |
| Nathan | East Asian | Man | Arts & Humanities | <6 Months | X |
| Nicholas | Black | Man | Arts & Humanities | <6 Months | |
| Philip | Black | Man | Social Science | <6 Months | X |
| Richard | Multiracial | Man | Professional | <6 Months | X |
| Rishi | SE Asian | Man | STEM | <6 Months | X |
| Robert | Black | Man | Social Science | <6 Months | |
| Sathya | SE Asian | Man | Medical | <6 Months | |
| Turtle | Black | Man | Social Science | <6 Months | X |
| Winn | East Asian | Man | Arts & Humanities | <6 Months | X |
| Xiaoyang | East Asian | Man | Medical | <6 Months | |
| Yukiko | East Asian | Woman | Social Science | <6 Months | |
| Bill | Latinx | Man | Professional | 1 | |
| Jyotsna | SE Asian | Woman | Arts & Humanities | 1 | |
| Raúl | Latinx | Man | Medical | 1 | |
| Taman | SE Asian | Man | Professional | 1 | |
| Vanessa | SE Asian | Woman | Medical | 1 | |
| Youngjun | East Asian | Man | Arts & Humanities | 1 | |
| Ashley | East Asian/ Multiracial | Woman | Arts & Humanities | 2 | |
| David | East Asian | Man | Medical | 2 | |
| Gordon | Black | Man | STEM | 2 | |
| Harris | Black | Man | STEM | 2 | |
| Jerlando | Black | Man | STEM | 2 | |
| Ken | SE Asian/ Multiracial | Man | Professional | 2 | X |
| Lissa | Black | Man | Medical | 2 | |
| Tony | Multiracial/ POC | Man | STEM | 2 | |
| Aurora | Latinx | Woman | Professional | 3 | |

*Solicitation*

Within the boundaries of the selection criteria, I utilized multiple ways of soliciting

potential participants. For Garden Groves University (GGU) and Beaverton University (BU), I

utilized publicly available annual lists of faculty who earned tenure and promotion for each year. For Parkland State University, there was only one year's publicly available list of faculty who earned tenure. From the lists of faculty that earned tenure, I created a smaller list of potential FOC, by examining websites, biographies, and other publicly available material. For a sample solicitation email see Appendix I.

*Interview*

To capture participants' lived experiences, the interview protocol is semi-structured to adequately gain sensemaking and everyday stories of the social world, while flexible enough to veer on narrative paths that participants explore while reflecting on their lived experiences (For the interview protocol see Appendix II). The interview protocol can be thought of in two parts: (a) historical and contemporary faculty experiences and (b) leadership understanding and reflections. The interview protocol was designed to gain an in-depth understanding about faculty experiences with tenure, departmental culture, relationships with colleagues and mentors, general thoughts on academic leadership, and specific encounters with administrative responsibility.

Data collection with 31 participants began in May 2019 and ended in January 2021. All interviews prior to March 2020 were conducted in-person, while the interviews after March 2020 were conducted through Zoom video conferencing software. In March 2020 when the COVID-19 global pandemic began, in-person data collection was suspended. Participants were given the option of scheduling one two-hour interview or two one-hour interviews. Apart from Youngjun and Tony, who requested two one-hour times, all participants requested one interview time ranging between 32 minutes and 118 minutes with an average of 65 minutes. All interviews were recorded except for David who requested not to be recorded. Data for David's interview came

from extensive notetaking. The 32.5 hours of collected data resulted in 689 total pages of transcription data.

*Analysis*

Using IPA methodology requires a double hermeneutic analytic approach because the "researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith et al., 2012, p. 3). Analysis in a phenomenological study requires interpretive analytical processes or a "hermeneutic turn" to make ideographical conclusions related to broader theoretical concepts (Moustakas, 2011). To approach the analysis rigorously, I used analytic and reflective memoing, a peer reflection partner, and inductive and deductive coding techniques (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

*Analytic Memos*

During the interview process, I created analytical memos that serve multiple purposes (Groenewald, 2008; Maxwell, 2013). Since qualitative methods appropriate the researcher as both the data collector and analytical instrument (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), reflective memos allow for continuous reflection on how my personal social identities (specifically race and gender) are impacting, influencing, and infiltrating data collection and analysis. It was both personally and professionally imperative for me to ensure my research process is not taxing for POC participants, but a reciprocally beneficial experience for reflection and further understanding of lived experiences (Bhattacharya, 2009; Morton, 2020). I paid special attention to the intersectional experiences participants shared about gender, class, and sexual orientation identities (Esposito & Evans-Winter, 2022). Interview memos helped me elucidate feelings and nuanced interview experiences that could have otherwise gone unnoticed (Maxwell, 2013). For example, Yukiko was hesitant to view herself as a leader, even though she had interactions and

experiences that created leader identity dissonance. From my first reflection of the interview, I did not remember the ways she incorporated gender and the intersections of race and gender into her sense-making. After further analysis, it became clear that intersectional understandings of race and gender were integral to her experiences and reflections. Due to my study focus on race and my own privileged identity of being a cisgender man, I likely muted or underestimated the influence of gender from my initial analysis. Analytic memoing allowed me to elucidate the influence of gender and race to better understand and interpret Yukiko's experience.

*Use of Theory*

Multiple theoretical perspectives framed this study, but the study is generally based on the DeRue and Ashford (2010) LIT. Even though phenomenological research is largely inductive, I use a theoretical framework "to better understand and conceptualize participants' experiences" (Larsen & Adu, 2021, p. 129). In particular, I used the three social levels of analysis from DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT to get a more precise understanding of phenomena, while ensuring I did not "shoehorn questions, methods, and data into preconceived categories" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 53) to prevent me from being open to inductive and emergent concepts and themes. While DeRue and Ashford's (201010 LIT does not have a direct application to POC or FOC, it is one of the existing leader identity theories that recognizes the interplay between personal and social identity theoretical perspectives, which provided me a framework from which to analyze the racialized experiences within social and organizational contexts.

*Coding Partner*

I initially coded, line-by-line, three transcripts that represented different identities and experiences. From those transcripts, I created a preliminary codebook to share with a coding

partner[9]. I provided my coding partner with the codebook and she independently provided feedback on one coded transcript. She provided feedback regarding her agreement and disagreements with the codes I created through my initial analytic process. We also used this time to share how our positionalities influenced our understanding of data and coding. From the dialectic reconciliation process, I used our conversation to guide further edits of the codebook (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I used the codes developed from the initial reconciliation process, but I also continued to allow for codes to inductively emerge. I coded the remaining transcripts line-by-line deductively based on theoretically driven codes from the DeRue and Ashford LIT, from different levels of social analysis (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, and collective) and continued to allow codes to emerge inductively.

*Analytic Procedure*

Once all transcripts were coded, I examined initial inductive codes that were relevant to each level of social analysis (i.e., intrapersonal, relational, and collective). I then conducted a secondary analytical process to find patterns and themes within each level social analysis. Within each level of analysis, I differentiated themes by those that were catalyzing and inhibiting leader identity construction. During this process, I also created analytic memos that assisted in my continuous reflexive reflection on how my social identities and experiences influenced my analytic sensemaking.

**Limitations and Considerations**

As with any study, this inquiry had limitations that should be recognized to understand, interpret, and utilize the results. First, the definitions of *leader* and *leadership* are contested in both scholarship and applied understanding. Even though a leader does not have to be in a formal

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[9] My coding partner identifies as a Latina who studies and works with issues related to FOC recruitment and retention.

organizational role, the purpose of this study was to understand FOC leader identity construction in relation to formal academic leadership roles. Because the study has a specific focus on formal leadership roles, yet leadership can be enacted through both formal and informal roles, there could be different leader identity construction processes in relation to grassroots or informal leader roles.

One strength and limitation of the study was the racial heterogeneity of the participant sample. Because participants from a particular career stage were selected, this limited the number of participants that would qualify for the study. I recognize that there are differential experiences among participants based on racial identity, national identity, field of study, identity salience, and other multiple/intersecting identities and experiences. While the central focus of the study was on race, the intersectional experiences of participants were explicitly elicited and analyzed for emergent patterns. Considering WOC are significantly underrepresented in formal academic leadership roles, it would be necessary for future studies to have better representation of WOC or to center their experiences. I hope this study can be a catalyst for future studies that could examine more racially homogenous samples and analyze themes in more depth, perhaps revealing unique cultural nuances.

In addition, only seven of the 31 participants identified as women, and there were no participants that offered transgender or non-binary gender identities. The imbalance of genders represented in the sample could have been caused by numerous factors (e.g., being solicited to participate by a man, WOC being overtaxed with no additional time to be interviewed, the global pandemic impacted women disproportionately and they were unable to add additional commitments). I also believe a solicitation email about "academic leadership" could have primed implicit biases of who a "leadership research project" will benefit. Because there are gendered

assumptions about who can or should be a leader (e.g., Karelaia & Guillén, 2014; Zheng et al., 2020), the mere solicitation for a leadership study may have stopped potential WOC from participating in the study.

While all the participants identified as a "person of Color" and the interview protocol specifically included questions about how identity and race impacted interactions and experiences, I did not directly ask or gauge the racial identity salience. My results suggest salience varied, for example, an Asian STEM faculty member, Nadeem, shared that his racial identity did not impact how he viewed academic leadership representation because he felt there was an overrepresentation of men of his race in his field. He said,

> I don't know if I consider it [race and leadership] because I'm overrepresented, and you
>
> mentioned it [underrepresentation of people of Color in leadership roles]. I don't know if
>
> I've seen that. So, at [graduate institution], the previous chair before I left was of Asian
>
> descent, and the previous several were White. But for me, that doesn't have a huge effect.

Bill, a professional school faculty, shared that his racial/ethnic identity is becoming less salient for him than his disability identity. He shared, "Where my mind is though, in terms of identity, it's shifting away from my ethnic identity and kind of focused more on my disability or level of ability." Even though I solicited information about other important identities, future research should explicitly garner an understanding of how salient race and other identities are to understand better how race and leader identity construction are conceptually connected.

While there are limitations to the data set, there are also limitations to me as the researcher collecting data. It is possible that participants could have self-monitored their narratives and responses to a White-presenting researcher (Glesne, 2006). If participants did not feel as comfortable sharing information with a White-presenting interviewer, their answers could

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have been more muted or not as extensive as they would have been with a researcher of Color (DeVault, 1995). Alternatively, participants could have felt empowered to share their experiences with a White-presenting interviewer as an opportunity to share experiences that they may never have shared with White people before. Even during data analysis, I analyzed data from my own racial socialization as a White-presenting and acculturated person. As mentioned in my positionality statement, I have taken personal measures to reflect on my positionality as both data collection and analytical instrument, but the privilege of not experiencing racism directly influences the way I make sense of these qualitative data.

Lastly, the participant selection criteria (i.e., identify as a FOC, earned tenure within the last three years, have at least one degree from a U.S. institution, and employed at one of three Midwest research universities) limit results' transferability to other populations of faculty and potential leaders. There likely could be different results for institutional contexts like minority-serving institutions, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive institutions, etc. More research is needed to understand how institutional context shapes the relationships, interactions, and social dynamics of leader identity construction for faculty at different institutional types, with different identities, and at different career stages. Even though participant selection criteria created limitations for transferability to other populations of faculty, it also created more specificity for a population of faculty (i.e., FOC, mid-level faculty) that are understudied.

## Chapter 4 Leader Identity Catalysts

**Introduction**

The purpose of this exploratory study is to understand how newly tenured FOC construct a leader identity in relation to formal academic leadership roles. Using DeRue and Ashford's (2010) social process of leader identity construction theory, I analyzed the experiences of participants that informed the construction of their leader identities through three levels of social analysis: (a) individual internalization (intrapersonal reflection), (b) relational recognition (interpersonal interaction), and (c) collective endorsement (social acknowledgment). Much of how participants made sense of their own leader identity was through observation, role models, and their own conceptions of academic leadership. There was a lot of heterogeneity in how participants interacted with academic leaders throughout their career, their perception of academic leadership and leaders, and what conceived as "good" or "successful" academic leadership. For example, Vanessa an Asian medical field faculty member perceived many academic leaders as "just kind of handed these positions and they're swimming in it." She recognized the lack of preparation by executive academic leaders to prepare associate deans and department chairs. Like Vanessa, Taman an Asian professional school faculty member, also perceived academic leadership to be "some kind of burden on your shoulder."

Later discussed in Chapter 5, leader and researcher identities were viewed as in conflict, but when thinking about academic leadership participants often thought of academic leaders as leading in two distinct ways: institutionally and disciplinarily. Youngjun, an Asian humanities faculty member, described his department chair as a rare example of a scholar who has

contributed to and developed their field of study along with being a successful administrator on campus. When asked about how common he thought this was he said, "No, not common at all. There are great scholars who are terrible administrators and vice versa." Yukiko, an Asian social scientist, describes how she recently applied and not appointed on the editorial board of her discipline's leading journal:

> And I think of opportunities like that as part of academic leadership in the sense of, you get to weigh in on what kinds of work is better than other kinds of work. And what gets prominent placement in front of everybody's eyeballs. So, I think things like that is another aspect of academic leadership. And in our little part of [social science discipline], sometimes there have been different kind of research networks created by originally a small number of faculty from different institutions… And I think of at some point in my career, I hope I'm working on something important enough, that I'm farsighted about, and early enough about, that I'm part of building out our community that way.

Yukiko went on elaborate on the ways leadership in scholarly associations and journal editorial boards can gatekeep or let flourish different types of research, scholarship, methodologies, epistemologies, and diverse researchers that have often been left out of conversations shaping the direction of a discipline or field. This type of academic leadership was not at the institutional level, but through scholarly associations that gatekeep and let flourish diverse researchers and scholarship.

The study centers on leader identity in relation to formal academic leadership and most participants created prototypes of who leaders were based on traits. The most common traits participants explained were community oriented through support and communication, could navigate the institution for the good of faculty, and were productive scholars with a proven

record of research and scholarship. A collectivist and community-orientation was explained by Jerlando, a professional school faculty as, "Like, we [academic leadership] want you [faculty] to succeed. What do you need to succeed? We're on your side right? And when you succeed, we succeed. Right? To me that's... anything you do, that's leadership." Jerlando viewed leadership as a collective enterprise and interdependent relationship where academic leaders empower faculty to be successful and when that happens – everyone is successful together. Even though Turtle, a mixed-race social scientist, also thought academic leadership should have a collective orientation, he also understand the importance of how to navigate complex university organizational structures and cultures. Turtle said, "you can have all the great ideas in the world, if you don't understand how the university works, then you can't enact those ideas and you're going to be wasting your time doing certain things." Participants viewed positive and negative academic role models as needing a variety of skills and experiences to be successful. These conceptions and prototypes often were a standard of measure of which they measured their own leadership potential and identity against.

Chapters 4 and 5 highlight the themes that emerged as to how FOC constructed a leader identity. As stated in Chapter 3, this study was designed to elucidate conceptual themes that were both prevalent amongst participants along with meaningful themes that were not as widely applicable but were significant for a specific subpopulation of participants. Similar to Lanka et al. (2020), the resulting themes for this study are divided into *identity catalysts* (Chapter 4) that encouraged leader identity construction and *identity inhibitors* (Chapter 5) that inhibited leader identity construction (See Table 6). In both chapters, themes and patterns of meaning-making are described through participant reflections.

*Table 6: Leader Identity Catalysts and Inhibitors*

| | Identity Catalysts | Identity Inhibitors |
|---|---|---|
| **Level of Analysis** | | |
| **Individual Internalization** *Intrapersonal* | **Community Inspiration** "I gained inspiration from Black surgeons whom I have never met before." <br><br> **Career Aspiration** "I'm interested in being a leader so I can change my career trajectory." | **Research & Leader Identity Conflict** "I don't want to be a leader because it would look like I am not a good researcher." <br><br> **Leadership Preparation** "I don't see myself as a leader because I don't feel prepared." |
| **Relational Recognition** *Interpersonal* | **Explicit Encouragement** "You'd be a good leader." | **Implicit Signaling** "My dean never approached me to be a leader, which means I don't have leader potential." <br><br> **Tokenization Withdraw** "I'm always put on the diversity committee, but not on the curriculum committee." |
| **Collective Endorsement** *Collective* | **Interdisciplinary Organizational Structures** "I'm the Vice-Chair for Neuropsychology." <br><br> **Diversity Advocate** "I'm the diversity officer for my college." | **Ambiguous Collective Endorsement** "I was nominated to be on my department's executive committee, but I don't know if that was because others just don't want to do it." <br><br> **Formal Leader Denial** "I do not want to be a formal leader because why would I give my time and energy to people who have only taken from me." |

## Identity Catalysts

This chapter explains the conceptual themes (i.e., community inspiration, career aspiration, explicit encouragement, interdisciplinary organizational structure, and diversity advocate) that catalyzed leader identity construction explained by level of social analysis (i.e., individual internationalization, relational recognition, and collective endorsement). At the

individual internalization level, participants drew inspiration from their racial community and constructed a leader identity that was congruent with their future career aspirations in academic administration. From social interactions with academic leaders and peer colleagues, participants received explicit encouragement that encouraged leadership efficacy. And lastly, leader identity construction was shaped by formal organizational acknowledgment, structures, and formal diversity advocacy roles and interdisciplinary opportunities.

### *Individual Internalization*

*Community Inspiration*

While many participants were often uneasy with identifying as a leader, one of the main reasons for reluctantly claiming a leader identity was a felt obligation to one's racial community. When participants drew inspiration from their community it was often not in relation to a specific person or group of people, it was an intrapersonal reflective obligation to their broader racial community. For example, many participants mentioned the responsibility to be successful as FOC so that White academics had less fuel for their discriminatory fire and future generations of FOC have the necessary representation and aspirational role models. Cinque, a Black medical professions faculty member, mentioned how beneficial it was for him to have role models of successful Black academic leaders, as he navigated his career:

> I think that we definitely need representation of people like me. And so, to the extent that I can do that, I think that that can actually be beneficial to a whole lot of people, too… I mean, I've had mentors who actually don't even know me, right? But I just watched their career from a distance, and I admire what they do, and I have seen them, I know it's possible too.

The role models Cinque drew career inspiration from were Black faculty in his field who excelled as both scholars and academic leaders. As he mentioned, there were individuals he considered mentors with whom he has never interacted. Because of the significant lack of role models and representation of Black academic medical faculty, Cinque felt committed to furthering the representation that he benefited from and inspiring future generations of Black medical scholars and leaders. And As Cinque mentioned, his commitment is not a formal external obligation, but instead, it was created through intrapersonal reflective processes that connect his observations of role models in his racial community to his own leader identity and career development.

Similarly, Nathan explained his reasoning for taking on formal academic leader roles both at his institution and within his scholarly field. As an Asian humanities scholar within an area studies field, Nathan explained that unlike American cultural studies or ethnic studies departments that are primarily comprised of scholars that share a similar identity as the academic topic of study, area studies fields are historically and contemporarily dominated by White scholars. White scholars lead institutional departments, edit major journals, and hold formal leadership roles within professional associations within many area studies fields. Because of the lack of representation of FOC, and especially scholars in leadership roles, Nathan felt compelled to be indisputably successful. Nathan accepted formal leadership roles, not for his own career advancement, but so he can support early-career FOC. When describing why he chose to seek a formal leadership role within his department he said:

> To put myself in positions and be taken seriously. And where I can set myself up in places so I can help other people, specifically other underrepresented groups in my field, to find success - whatever success means or to find positions of influence in the field.

Basically, just to not be quite so homogenous in our field. So, it was important to me, having been granted this opportunity, having been put in this position of power as it was, that it's a tenure track position. And as a person of a marginalized [racial] identity, or at least of an underrepresented minority within the field, it was important to me that I take advantage of that.

Through introspection about the marginalization he and his community face in the area studies field, Nathan sought a formal leadership role in his department. Nathan lacked a role model to which he could compare himself too, so he created a social prototype of an academic leader that he wanted to be: one that is successful in their research and helps members of their racial community succeed. Through his intrapersonal reflection, Nathan reluctantly began to construct a leader identity with the aim of increasing racial representation in both his department and scholarly field.

While Cinque gained inspiration from the elder role models in his field, Nathan was inspired to create representation that was not currently in his field. Ashley however felt she was in a unique position to create, build, and sustain community amongst FOC within her institution. Ashley, an Asian humanities professor, describes her commitment to community as:

When I'm in a leadership position, I've generally operated on the idea of community and sort of building that community. So, my leadership model [orientation] is not like the 'I do everything and sort of make orders,' but to try and facilitate people coming together, and taking equal parts responsibility, so that they also feel committed to whatever is happening and going on. And to build, I try as much as possible to build a social community as well.

A professional and social community for FOC was important to Ashley because she often felt isolated and marginalized as the only FOC in her department and one of few in her school. She compared herself to a social prototype of a leader she did not want to become; one that was not attune to community-building and just focused on accomplishing tasks. Ashley took on academic leadership roles and subsequently constructed a leader identity focused on developing inclusive and supportive academic communities that were not well-established.

Community inspiration was a conceptual theme that encouraged participants to construct a leader identity through intrapersonal reflection and internalization. While participants drew inspiration from their racial community, for some like Cinque, their dedication to academic leadership was focused on their local departments and contexts. Other participants like Nathan wanted to create and enhance field-level racial representation. FOC participants used a collectivist orientation that encouraged intrapersonal reflection and construction of a leader identity through an obligation and inspiration to advance racial communities.

*Career Aspiration*

As participants reflected and considered possible career paths, they constructed a leader identity to match their career aspirations. Both implicitly and explicitly, participants often describe how being a formal academic leader is in direct contradiction to being an exceptional researcher and scholar. For some participants, an administrative career option was intriguing as an alternative to a non-sustainable research career.

Both Ken and Jyostna were wrestling with constructing a leader identity because they could foresee a future in their professional career where they no longer wanted to be an active researcher and moving into a formal academic leadership role as a logical alternative. Jyostna, an Asian humanities faculty member envisioned herself as an academic leader after she no longer

would find a meaningful career as an active researcher. When asked about future career goals and why she may consider academic leadership, Jyostna responded with a precise outlook on her future:

> Let's assume that I retire at 71. I don't have 30 more years of writing books and going into classroom. I will get bored. I will need something else. I know myself and I know that I really am very excited about my current project. After this, I have one more book within me that I can write as a single-authored person and I think I can edit a couple of books. I am sure I'll have a lot of fun doing that. But I don't know if I can keep doing this thing, whatever, as far as in my professional life. I will need change. I also think that I have a good personality for it [leadership]. I am friendly. I am tactical (or at least I think). I feel my skill set matches and I feel I will get bored if I don't do something other than what I am currently doing.

Jyostna constructed a leader identity by evaluating a future career focus with the characteristics she already has that would make her an effective academic leader. For Jyostna, a possible self as an academic leader was not incongruent with her established identity as a researcher because she had role models and prototypes of women who were able to be successful as a leader while excelling in research and teaching. Her role models told her she could be an academic leader, but she needed to be a full professor and tolerate "giving up research" to do academic leadership.

Ken, a multiracial professional school faculty member explained why he is interested in academic leadership:

> I'm a little afraid about my scholarship, and so maybe some of the motivation is feeling like, 'Well, this is a different track,' you know? Like, maybe I don't have to be as productive research-wise if I go the more administrative track. Even though I thought

like, 'oh, the successful one [exemplar faculty] is able to still do it,' but in reality, that's

hard, I think.

Ken recognized the implicit expectation and difficulty in being a productive researcher and

successful academic leader even though he has a role model that has done just that. While he has

a role model that is a successful researcher and academic leader, the social prototype he has

created of an academic leader is one that is no longer an active researcher. The dichotomous

professional roles and identities are difficult to integrate, so Ken along with many other

participants, made sense of academic leadership as separate "tracks" that diverge into separate

careers. And as a FOC he had constantly prove he was a productive and excellent researcher

unlike his White peers and role model. Even though he recognized the internal struggle of

professional roles (i.e., researcher and leader), he decided to pursue academic leadership roles

and construct a leader identity even though that may result in relinquishing a researcher identity.

From these data, both Ken and Jyostna viewed being a leader as a future alternative to

their current unsustainable, aggressive research careers. Interestingly, they did not frame being a

leader as an advancement in their career; they saw being a leader as a different challenge, not an

advanced challenge. This exemplifies one of the major differences between being a leader in the

academy versus being a leader in other industries. In other organizations, many aspire to be a

formal leader with increased responsibility, benefits, and prestige. For faculty, being an academic

leader can be seen as an alternative or even a secondary role to that of researcher. However, for

FOC, relinquishing being a productive researcher to be an academic leader can add additional

negative stereotypes FOC do not have the luxury of accumulating. Both Ken and Jysostna,

through intrapersonal reflection about their potential career paths, seem to settle rather than

strive, to be an academic leader.

Through intrapersonal reflection, participants constructed a leader identity through inspiration from their collectivist-oriented racial communities and internalizing their aspiration of an academic leadership career as an alternative to their current researcher role. These two catalysts for a leader identity were not without challenge and as the next chapter will highlight, many were inhibited from constructing a leader identity because of the role conflict between leader and researcher identities.

### Relational Recognition

From a social identity perspective, identity is constructed through interdependent social systems by group membership (Hogg, 2001). In the relational recognition level of analysis, interpersonal and social interactions help catalyze leader identity construction through social granting that encourages potential leadership skills, qualities, and attributes. For faculty, social interactions related to their leader identity construction are usually with faculty colleagues both internal and external to the university along a continuum of career stages. The social interaction that emerged as catalyst for leader identity construction was through explicit encouragement. As mentioned in this section, even though explicit encouragement was given, some participants responded with a performative denial communication interaction that allowed them to protect their researcher identity and image, while accepting the explicit social grant of a leader identity.

#### Explicit Encouragement

Participants mentioned colleagues explicitly encouraging them to be a leader as the most straightforward way of granting a leader identity. For example, Rishi an Asian STEM faculty member mentioned how his White department chair would send him individual emails encouraging him to attend academic leadership trainings coordinated by their disciplinary association. Rishi said, "So he's [department chair] forwarded a few of those to me but I think, I

mean, so far, I have not taken them up on that offer." Rishi recognized that his department chair potentially sees skills or attributes in him that he may not see in himself. The explicit encouragement from his department chair did make Rishi reflect and question himself "why me?" It took time for Rishi to internalize the explicit encouragement from his department chair, but after numerous interactions, Rishi began to reluctantly construct a leader identity. As Rishi reflected on his future career goals, he did not believe he had the necessary skills to be an academic leader although he said the explicit encouragement from his department chair made him not as opposed to being an academic leader as he previously was.

As mentioned before, Jyotsna, an Asian humanities faculty member sought explicit feedback about her potential as an academic leader from a White woman faculty member because of her interest in an administrative career. Jyotsna approached her senior colleague role model (who is a senior colleague in her department and formal leader in the provost's office) about applying to be department chair as a newly tenured associate professor. She recounted their conversation:

> I talked to her and at one point, she was like 'No. If you want to become chair, that's totally fine. I think this is how you can do it and do it well.' There were some follow-up emails with my chair. I wrote to her again, and I also arrived at the conclusion that it was not the right time.

Jyotsna's senior colleague role model encouraged her to be a formal academic leader, granting her a leader identity, but only after she was further into her research agenda and associate professor role. Jyostna agreed and felt like this advice was coming from a place of care and knew that was appropriate feedback and being an academic leader so early her career would likely

harm her research and financial grant-receiving potential. After reflecting on the comment, Jyotsna said she was,

> …glad that I am not the chair. But one of the biggest points that was raised to me was it's not a good idea to become chair when you're an associate [professor]. I agree. Yet until about three years ago, we hired a chair, who was an associate professor, and he was a [White] dude. He was chair for three years and that was fine.

Even though Jyotsna agreed with her mentor's advice, she also recognized there were differing unofficial guidelines for White men than WOC regarding career progression and when to be an academic leader. The distinction between unofficial rules of what is appropriate for White faculty versus FOC made it more difficult to interpret professional advice as FOC had determine how racialized and racist faculty career norms were in relation to their own career goals and leader identity construction.

Often leadership opportunities beget leadership opportunities. Sathya, an Asian medical field faculty member experienced the power of being explicitly encouraged and granted a leader identity. He was asked to be the associate director of an interdisciplinary program even though he did not have intentions of being a formal academic leader. He describes the explicit encouragement as:

> I think people do promote you, they do push you to do more whether or not you like it. You feel an obligation to help. That's part of what got you tenured in the first place. You feel committed to the institution to make it better… People have promoted me. Honestly, they have, right? It happened.

Sathya recognized the snowball effect of leader identity construction and skill development that started when he was explicitly told he could and should be an academic leader. He also

recognized how White faculty seem to get these opportunities more often in his academic field. It was this explicit interpersonal interaction that led Sathya to recognize he was "doing" leadership and was potentially a leader to others from our interview, even though he originally denied wanting to be an academic leader.

Nathan thinks that there should be "a concerted effort to make sure that we [early-career FOC] know about these opportunities." He thinks formal and informal faculty mentors should be knowledgeable about the range of opportunities for early-career scholars to develop as researchers, instructors, and academic leaders. Having not received information about leadership development opportunities himself, Nathan recommended,

> Faculty mentors need to know about all these [leadership development] opportunities so
> that when new assistant professors come in, they can say, even to somebody who doesn't
> share racial/ethnic identities with them, that they can say, 'Do you know about this thing
> here?' And maybe it'd be helpful.

He recognized the importance of explicit invitation from academic leaders to early-career FOC that could help increase the likelihood FOC would be interested in academic leadership. While he did not know for sure, he postulated whether FOC received these messages less than their White counterparts. His both understanding of White prototypical norms of academic leadership would preclude senior faculty colleagues from encouraging early career FOC from thinking about academic leadership as an opportunity to construct a leader identity. Not all participants accepted and claimed the explicit encouragement they received from colleagues and academic leaders, but all appreciated the sentiment and it at least caused pause for them to reflect on their career aspirations, leadership potential, and identity as a potential academic leader.

**Performative Denial.** Those who experienced explicit encouragement often participated in an interaction I have labeled, performative denial. During a performative denial interaction, the potential leader denies being interested in being a leader by portraying humility and modesty. Participants discussed the unique performance because they did not feel comfortable directly showing interest in being a leader as it was not socially acceptable to faculty colleagues. Nathan shared the type of performance he has to do with his colleagues when they mention him being an academic leader. There are sometimes negative implications associated with being an academic leader that is particularly acute for FOC who do not fit the social prototype of an academic leader. Nathan recounted one of these interactions:

> I have had a lot of those conversations with some of my mentors where they will say kind of facetiously, but semi-seriously, 'You know you're going to be chair sometime, someday.' I have to have a laugh about it, and I would say, 'No, no, no, no.' And we have to do that whole performance.

Nathan describes individuals granting him a leader identity even though he did not want to show that he claimed a leader identity to preserve his researcher identity. These interactions and performances could be deterring for some, but for Nathan – they reinforced his leader identity. The tension between researcher and leader identities will be discussed in the following chapter, but it is that tension that causes the performative denial interaction to happen with participants who are interested in being a leader but want to protect their researcher identity and image. For FOC it was important to not seem too interested in a leadership role because they did not want to sacrifice an image and identity as a productive researcher in fear of not being able to earn a full professorship or academic leader role. The self and contextual expectations they adhered to were quite demanding and often not explicitly realized.

Nathan was not alone in performing this delicate dance of being granted a leader identity from his peers and having to humbly perform in such a way that he does not seem overly interested to jeopardize his socially fragile researcher identity. Nandan, another Asian humanities faculty member, mentioned how he was talking to a colleague and confidante who works at a peer institution about potentially being an academic leader for his department and she said, "Oh this is a long time coming." And he remembered, "I almost feel as though it's been expected that I would be the director once I became tenured." Instead of responding affirmatively, he had to deny that he would be even though he knew there was a strong possibility.

### Collective Endorsement

The last social level of analysis of leader identity construction is the collective endorsement of an individual's leader identity. Potential leaders construct a leader identity through formal organizational acknowledgments like being offered a formal leadership role or title. FOC participants held numerous informal and formal leadership roles within institutions, disciplinary associations, scholarly journals, and community organizations. Two formal, organizationally acknowledged roles that emerged as a theme were leadership in interdisciplinary organizational strictures like degree programs and research labs along with serving in formal advocacy roles focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

#### Interdisciplinary Structure

**Interdisciplinary Degree Programs.** Participants developed leadership experience and subsequent leader identity from interdisciplinary organizational units like degree programs or research centers. Amongst the wide range of activities participants were involved in from departmental service, institutional service, and engagement within disciplinary associations, it was interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary organizational structures where participants often had

access and opportunity to be formal leaders and "try on" a leader identity. For example, Sathya a medical field faculty member is the associate director of an interdisciplinary program that "straddles multiple departments, primarily housed in the [medical field school]." As soon as Sathya earned tenure he was asked by the director of the interdisciplinary program to become an associate director to coordinate doctoral student progression initiatives and help her continue diversifying the faculty affiliated with the program. While there were not many other FOC in his home department, he indicated the interdisciplinary program had a short history of gender and race representation:

> The administration of that program happens to be fantastic people. Again, there's definitely women there. A lot of these leadership positions… it's great we are trying to get more diversity, not only in terms of race but also gender. And we do have some of that there, a couple of associate directors are women there too. I think we get along very well… It's very relaxed. It's a nice program to be part of.

While Sathya did not at first identify as a leader or "doing leadership," throughout the interview, he recognized the roles and responsibilities he was collecting, especially after earning tenure, were substantial. And while some of the service he was doing was in his department, most involved his role as associate director of an interdisciplinary degree program.

Similarly, Ashley, an Asian woman humanities professor spent a significant part of her service and leadership time advocating for interdisciplinary ethnic studies resources and curriculum. Ethnic studies was a respite from her all-White department and an opportunity to be in community with colleagues of Color. Before earning tenure, she led the Asian American studies major and after earning tenure she became the lead for all of ethnic studies. Ethnic studies is interdisciplinary by nature and structured as such within the academic organization of

her university. As in many universities, ethnic studies is not designated as a department and lacks some of the structures and political capital that academic departments have.

For Ashley and other FOC, the ethnic studies organizational unit was where she found an opportunity to lead, born out of both interest and advocacy. One of the most beneficial aspects of being a leader in ethnic studies was the FOC community she now had access to. Ashely described the benefits of being affiliated with and leading ethnic studies by saying,

> To be honest, the thing that I've enjoyed the most is the opportunity to work with other faculty of color at [institution]. I'm the only non-White person in my department and sometimes that's a minor irritation. And sometimes, like recently, it's grown to be a huge problem. So having that interaction with other faculty of Color has been really gratifying and makes you feel like you have a bit of community.

While ethnic studies provided additional community, it also came with significant challenges. As a leader in ethnic studies, Ashley spent significant time advocating to a variety of academic leaders for appropriate resources. Even in 2020 as institutions around the country were responding to the racial reckoning of the murder of George Floyd, her institution began new initiatives and programs while simultaneously cutting funding for ethnic studies. Coupled with the frustrations of her home department, she discussed the personal impact of her advocacy as a leader in ethnic studies:

> Every time we've had our budget cut, and so it's been fighting with the university the whole time. And that is extremely frustrating. Between that and the fact that my department is so White and turns out really systemically White - it makes me want to leave.

While "trying on" a formal leadership role and gaining experience advocating for resources, Ashley experienced academic leadership in the interdisciplinary ethnic studies unit as difficult and emotionally draining. Not often understood in the literature or in practice, when FOC take on leadership roles it often comes with a psychological, emotional, and sometimes physical toll. Even though she was frustrated by her formal leadership roles, she also constructed a leader identity that she recognized as transferable to other leadership roles in different academic contexts.

Alternatively, Jerlando is a faculty member in a smaller interdisciplinary professional school that does not have academic departments and is mostly satisfied with his experiences. Jerlando came to his current interdisciplinary school from another institution and a different type of professional school that was organized by academic departments separated by disciplinary expertise. He describes his current colleagues as more "collaborative" and "nice" in contrast with his previous professional school environment which was less interdisciplinary and known for "hollering and screaming." Since earning tenure two years prior to the interview, Jerlando has taken an informal role of recruiting and mentoring many FOC, especially WOC. Because of the interdisciplinary organizational structure with less hierarchy, he has easier access to academic leaders and greater opportunities to mentor FOC through tenure and racialized organizational experiences. He has taken a formal leadership role in an interdisciplinary research unit that has allowed him to connect his scholarship to an even wider audience of practitioners and scholars outside of his school.

**Interdisciplinary Research.** The interdisciplinary orientation of his professional school also impacted Jerlando's research and scholarship. When Jerlando discussed the types of experiences that he values and sustain his motivation he said, "I think, one of the differences in

[professional schools] is that you can do research on a lot of different things, and so that has been also very rewarding." He found both his scholarship and leadership niches within his interdisciplinary professional school. At his current interdisciplinary professional school, he was able to work with graduate students with different skill sets and have a wider audience for his own research and scholarship that evolved in different directions than it likely would have in a more disciplinary-organized academic college.

Unlike Jerlando, Philip, a biracial (Black/White) social scientist has a dual appointment between two departments at his institution that he had to navigate to earn tenure. He has a primary appointment in one department, but both of his departments independently expect that he is producing high-impact research in each field. Even though Philip's scholarship is interdisciplinary, he straddled a dual organizational appointment where publication impact was valued much more than interdisciplinary reach. When asked if he thought his interdisciplinary approach to research was valued, he said,

> I think it's respected in terms of what the [home] department is looking for from me to the extent that the types of journals that I'm publishing in hit impact factors that they appreciate. I think that is what is respected. I don't know that they [department leaders] would prioritize interdisciplinary work being in other fields that are impacting other fields if it didn't also come with the impact they recognized.

While he was navigating tenure as a dual-appointed social scientist, Philip also recognized he was being asked to serve on dissertation committees or review grant proposals that were not congruent with his research agenda. Like many FOC, he was pulled in numerous directions that could derail his scholarly focus. He created clear boundaries around his area of research so "it is easy to identify what's mine and what's not." To focus his research and

doctoral student advising, he created a research incubator specifically designed to attract students from different disciplines and fields to focus on research related to a specific social phenomenon. As much as this was created for efficiency, Philip also wanted to signal to his faculty colleagues that additional advising and service would have to fall within a clearly bounded area of research. Philip describes his research incubator as, "I'm trying to create this as a group of people that are intentionally brought together around this question of [social phenomenon], but where each person in it is pulling it in a different direction." With the creation of his interdisciplinary research team, he began to construct a leader identity that was grounded in interdisciplinarity and mentoring early-career students and scholars of Color.

### *Diversity Advocate*

Being a diversity advocate, both formally and informally, was a catalyst to constructing a leader identity for many participants. For others diversity advocacy served as the opposite; a tokenizing request from White leaders that were coopting the expertise and experiences from FOC. That said, those faculty that felt strongly about diversity advocacy as being a catalyst or inhibitor to leader identity construction often identified as Black.

Jerlando explained how being one of few POC in the school and the most senior as a newly tenured faculty made him a go-to for staff of Color that encountered racialized issues. But unlike FOC, of which he was versed and could speak with the dean about, he was less sure of how to handle staff issues. He said,

> So being the senior person of Color, on one hand from a faculty standpoint, I welcome
> that. I mentor, I give a lot of advice, I go to the dean if I see a faulty member having
> trouble - I go to the dean if that helps out. So yeah, I see that role in there. On the other
> hand, some points of that when it comes to the staff issues - several times I just had to

just disengage with that, even though they feel like they have nowhere to go because there's no senior person of Color of staff here.

As an informal "DEI person" he was approached by many faculty and staff of Color, but to preserve his time and not try to accomplish tasks he is not prepared for, he had to create boundaries to only support the FOC. Being an informal leader and role model to early-career scholars allowed Jerlando to mentor early-career FOC, especially a few WOC he was particularly proud to support in their faculty success. Jerlando was seen by his earlier career colleagues, along with academic leaders in his school, as a mentor and role for FOC. Because he was seen by faculty colleagues and academic leaders as a mentor for early-career scholars, he constructed a leader identity focused on his advocacy for FOC and his racial community. This informal, yet organizationally acknowledged role, is one of the experiences he mentioned that made him think he could be a successful formal academic leader in the future.

Lissa, on the contrary, attests to being appointed as a formal DEI leader in her medical field department as the reason she earned tenure. As the only Black woman in her large department and one of few in her field, she mentioned her struggle to be promoted to associate professor with tenure because of the lack of mentorship and guidance. As in most medical professions, obtaining research grants is one of the main promotion criteria. When she started as an assistant professor, she did not get placed in a lab that had established grant success or mentorship on how to succeed. Recognizing her disadvantage as an early-career researcher, she assisted in the formation of DEI-related initiatives that evolved into official programming and leadership roles within her department, with a particular focus on FOC success. When discussing her successful tenure process, Lissa said,

I ended up getting promoted. I think because of this [faculty support program] and because of my leadership role and sort of my vision of what I think American [medical field] should look like. I think that that was important to the [medical field school] and to the university. I was very fortunate to be promoted.

Unlike Jerlando, Lissa viewed her promotion to associate professor and associate department chair role could be attributed to her formal DEI role. Even though she was not explicitly asked to create DEI programming, her department chair, a White man, saw the benefit in the work she was doing and formalized it through new organizational structures and funding streams. Even though Lissa recognized her success was in large part due to her clinical excellence and her innovative DEI programming, she also recognized her success is atypical compared to many other WOC faculty members.

Similarly, Harris advocated and created an official advisory board that advised his dean on issues pertinent to FOC. The advisory board is a formally recognized structure that Harris can count for his service obligations. When talking about his service experience, especially with the advisory board, Harris said,

I do like to be part of the community, helping, these different roles, especially when I get the chance to do things like some of the service roles that I'm volunteering. They got formalized in a way, right? Like the [Diversity Advisory board]. We [Harris and colleagues of Color] came and said, 'We need this thing,' and then the dean formalized it in a way that actually structured it and makes it a good formal service role that I get credit for doing. So, I think that's really good.

Through this internal advocacy, he constructed a leader identity because he was able to regularly interact with academic leaders to create organizational change that recognized the unique

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contributions of FOC and sought to rectify discriminatory policies and experiences that were inhibiting FOC from being successful. While the formalized diversity role was meaningful to him personally and provided functional oversight to the school, it also provided Harris a formal organizational endorsement that contributed to his leader identity construction. When talking about his experience on the advisory board he described the new networks with academic leaders he was able to build:

> As chair of [Diversity Advisory Board], I have had to basically meet with all department chairs. So, because of that… I feel like I know them and whenever I reach out, if they see me on their way, they definitely try to reach out. And some of them even actually reach out to me and discuss and so on. So, I definitely feel like there's a cordial relationship [with academic leadership].

By initiating organizational change, being recognized as a diversity leader, and having access to academic leaders as peers, Harris constructed a leader identity through organizational acknowledgment. His diversity leader role allowed him to "try on" a leadership role and catalyzed his desire to pursue academic leadership roles in the future.

**Conclusion**

Participants mentioned many reflections, interactions, and organizational structures that helped catalyze leader identity construction. They described how their racial community inspired them to be a leader so they could ensure future generations of scholars had academic leaders to view as role models. In addition, a subset of participants mentioned they constructed a leader identity because they anticipated needing an alternative career to a researcher role as they progressed in their own careers. Even though faculty were internalizing a leader identity through their intrapersonal reflections, they gained positive reinforcement about their leader identity

through relational interactions with social networks of colleagues and academic leaders. Many of the participants were able to share ways colleagues or current academic leaders explicitly encouraged them to be a leader. Some of these interactions were explicit and direct while others were informal and indirect. The latter led to performative denial enactment that functioned to protect established researcher identities while claiming a leader identity granted by colleagues. And lastly, participants were able to "try on" leadership roles through interdisciplinary academic structures and through organizationally recognized DEI roles. Through these two distinct service roles, FOC constructed a leader identity and acknowledged for their skills and expertise. Even though participants experienced identity catalyst reflections, interactions, and experiences, they also were inhibited from constructing a leader identity which is explored in the following chapter.

## Chapter 5 Leader Identity Inhibitors

**Identity Inhibitors**

Most participants were able to share reflections or interactions that helped catalyze a leader identity. But participants also shared reflections and interactions that inhibited or stunted their leader identity construction. From an individual internalization level participants felt like there was an incompatible identity conflict between researcher and leader identities and many did not feel prepared with the appropriate skills, qualities, and personality to be an academic leader. And when participants did not receive explicit encouragement, they often interpreted a lack of explicit messaging about being a leader as negative. For others, when they were labeled as "the diversity person" or were asked to participate in diversity roles they felt tokenized for their racial identity which led to a social withdraw. Lastly, participants found organizational endorsements confusing because collective granting messages were often ambiguous and unclear. And for a subpopulation of participants, they actively did not want to be a formal leader in the organization that they felt would not reciprocate the respect for their service.

### *Individual Internalization*

*Research and Leader Identity Conflict*

Each participant in the study felt that in the messages they received from others, there was an inherent tension between being a prolific researcher and an academic leader. Beyond the logistical concerns of time management or task performance, there were social-psychological conflicts in constructing both researcher and leader identities influenced by whom and what

participants consider a social prototype. Winn, an Asian man arts/humanities faculty member described the researcher/leader conflict as: "I feel these two things are almost incompatible." Winn described his intense training in his discipline, his perseverance in navigating hostile racial social climates, and his determination in earning tenure as too much invested time to "give up" and pursue an academic leadership role. In particular, Winn held a social prototype of an academic leader as a "politician" that is "not scared of upsetting people." But Winn was "just not interested in politics." Winn's social prototypical leader was not an excellent scholar; therefore, Winn did not have an interest in pursuing academic leadership. As a FOC, Winn did not want to expend political capital on academic leadership work, when he often felt like he was expending political capital to be a successful faculty member. In general, participants felt as they could only identify either researcher or leader, but not both simultaneously.

Richard, a Multiracial professional school faculty member was not interested in being a formal academic leader even though he received encouragement from colleagues. Irrespective of the social granting of a leader identity Richard received, he was skeptical of formal academic leadership roles because they seemed to be more restrained in their capacity to make meaningful change. He describes this bifurcated way of understanding professional identities by saying, "the theme for my own sense of identity is feeling like I'm making a difference. That role [department chair] strikes me as one where it would be very difficult to feel like I was making a difference." Richard's social prototypical role as an academic leader was an institutional bureaucratic accomplice more than a leader of researchers or for equality. Richard went on to describe how he received gratification from working with communities of Color he engaged with for his research along with supporting graduate students in their scholarly development. Being an academic leader would not provide the same gratification. While these are professorial tasks, it was his role

as a researcher that was more congruent with his personal and professional values. He explains, "I feel it would be very difficult for me to feel fulfilled in a role and that is part of why I don't really have any desire. Maybe someday along the line I'll convince myself."

Leadership roles and identities were not desired by other participants because they kept them from doing work that was meaningful or enjoyable. For example, Youngjun, an Asian humanities faculty member expressed this sentiment, "I think more people would prefer not to take administrative roles because their true passion is their research, and for some, also their teaching." Youngjun went on to describe the stereotype-turned-prototype he has heard and experienced that a "good academic leader is, unfortunately, a not-so-good researcher." Similarly, Jyostna, an Asian humanities faculty member described what she hears from her colleagues "the idea of becoming an academic or getting into academic leadership is not something that is celebrated." And Turtle overtly critiqued many current academic leaders as forgetting that they are *academic* leaders and not just administrative leaders. From Turtle's perspective, "the problem with academic leadership is a lot of times we forget the academic part." Youngjun, Jyostna, and Turtle all shared experiences with academic leaders that they did not trust or respect because of the lack of support for them as early career FOC.

Participants had an internalized negative association with academic leadership roles and activities due to the social prototype they created from personal experience or stories from colleagues. Despite internal negative associations being formed as a result of social encounters, participants used intrapersonal psychological processes and reflection to give meaning to social interaction, resulting in a negative association. Gordon, a Black STEM faculty member described how he made meaning of negative messaging about academic leadership,

I generally was told to stay away from administration. All of the advice I got from some

of the most productive people in my field, and in the fields, I guess that I'm involved

with, they say, 'stay as far away from administration as possible because it will interfere

with your ability to be productive to be able to keep doing your research.'

If constructing a leader identity is incompatible with a researcher identity, FOC are at

greater risk of not having access to academic leadership. Harris, a Black STEM faculty member

helped develop a FOC advisory board in his school because he saw that FOC were not well-

represented in leadership roles and often did not have access to school leadership. He created the

advisory board out of necessity, but also recognized that it took time from his research and some

faculty colleagues may have viewed him more as an advocate than a "serious scholar." He

explains his reasoning,

I've stepped up to that leadership [faculty advisory board], but that's partly because there

is a problem and certainly, I'm spending quite a bit of my time trying to solve that. I'm

happy to do that, but then the thing is, that you only have so much time. So, there might

be sacrifice in that process. It's not necessarily a bad thing but in the big scope of things,

it might also mean that faculty of Color might be drawn out of research to be a leader.

And that also might have its downsides.

Harris grappled with the challenge it is for FOC to both be a leader and advocate for one another,

but also the need for FOC to be successful researchers, especially in STEM contexts where

Black, Latinx, and Native scholars are severely underrepresented. Harris went on to discuss the

dual and complex pressure of not only needing more LOC but ensuring FOC are producing high-

quality scholarship and earning research grants because the academy is in dire need of both

successful FOC and LOC.

Faculty interest in academic leadership was overshadowed by the general social prototype that academic leadership and a leader identity are not aspirational. The internalization of messages, that came from multiple sources across organizational contexts and periods were powerful enough to deter some participants from being interested in academic leadership. The conflict between research and leader identities was exacerbated by the difficulty FOC had in constructing a leader identity, especially from social contexts, because of stereotyping and social prototyping.

*Leadership Preparation*

Many participants, especially Asian and Asian-American participants were hesitant to claim a leader identity because they did not feel prepared to integrate a leader identity with their numerous professional and personal identities, or because they perceived themselves to lack the skills and knowledge required to be an academic leader. The term "leader" was not a congruent term or identity for some participants. For example, Sathya, an Asian medical field faculty member, adamantly denied being a leader or having the ability to be a successful leader at the beginning of the interview. When asked if he thought of himself as a leader Sathya said,

> I'm very much in the part of my career where I do what I'm told. I haven't really been put
> in a leadership position. I'm not super comfortable with being a leader. I'm a leader for
> my lab, I suppose. Even in that role, I've talked about here, it's taken a while to grow into.
> It comes more naturally to some than it does to others.

Sathya denied being a leader because he was not currently in a formal leadership position and he did not perceive his "natural" leadership qualities to be satisfactory. Sathya did however describe his lab where he developed an inclusive and diverse research community that learned about science, grew intellectually, and most earned successful careers as scientists.

After earning tenure, Sathya was appointed as associate director of an interdisciplinary program between the health sciences and liberal arts schools along with being elected by his colleagues to the executive committee of his home department. Even though he was leading a lab and serving in formal academic leadership roles, he did not internalize a leader identity because the term "leader" seemed incongruent with how he viewed himself and the preparation he had for a formal leadership role. He even mentioned not knowing the tasks or expectations leaders were held to and even though he indeed recruited, supervised, and mentored many scholars in his lab and interdisciplinary program, he viewed himself as not prepared for other formal academic leadership roles:

> I'm good at taking care of myself. I don't know if department leaders are supposed to take care of others or not. I'm not sure I'm good at managing people and managing other people's responsibilities. I feel, in fact, very uncomfortable doing that. I'm not sure I'm leadership material to be honest with you.

It was the interview for this study that prompted him to reflect on how his uncomfortableness with a leader identity may not reflect his current experiences. Towards the end of the interview after he was presented with contradictory information about his perceived lack of preparation and his leadership experiences he said,

> The longer we have this conversation, the more I realize that 'Yeah, I'm doing these leadership things.' I'm the associate director of [interdisciplinary academic program]. All of this happened in the department executive committee, all right after I got tenure.

> Sathya was not the only participant who had not internalized a leader identity because of their self-perceptions. Yukiko, an Asian social scientist, reflected on her perception of herself as a leader by explaining,

So, this is going to sound bizarre in some way. But I have always thought of myself as 'little old me. Little old me.' And as I've gotten more prominent or older or other things, people wait for me to say things. Or in a seminar, when they're making a comment, they're checking to see whether I'm nodding or thinking that makes no sense. They're checking my face in ways. Or, these kinds of things that are different from, 'Oh, the meeting can start because she arrived because she's running the meeting.' And these kinds of very small things, I was like, 'Oh - What is happening here?'

Yukiko recognized that others were treating her as a knowledgeable leader and even granting her a leader identity, but because she had not perceived herself as a leader prior to these interactions, she was not able to claim a leader identity even with social granting. Intrapersonal reflection prompted her to think about the types of internal scripts she had about herself as a leader. She also held social prototypes of academic leaders as having more experience and insight than her. Neither Sathya or Yukiko was able to readily name same-race academic leader role models. It was her feeling of not being prepared to integrate a leader identity that inhibited her from constructing a leader identity even with conflicting information.

Intrapersonal histories and concepts of leadership provided a foundation for how participants understood leadership and made meaning of their own experiences related to an identity as a leader. For example, Nicholas a Black humanities faculty member identified as a leader now, but it was not an easy process. Nicholas explained this by saying "it's something that is kind of uncomfortable. Less so than it used to be, just because part of the way I was raised…" He mentioned his K-12 education being influential in his conceptualizing of leadership. Because of his academic potential and achievements, he went to public magnet schools in wealthier, Whiter neighborhoods instead of the local public schools in his surrounding mostly-Black

district. As a result of being one of few Black students in middle and secondary education, he developed persistence mechanisms of being discreet and unassuming when navigating White educational spaces. He uses the following analogy from American slavery to illustrate how he learned to navigate White educational spaces, while still being successful:

> I've gotten by and thrived actually by kind of laying in the cotton: Just keep your head down, keep quiet, be as inconspicuous as possible. Get the work done and try not to offend anybody. Don't ever gloat because they will come, and they will try to destroy you.

As Nicholas describes, thinking about himself as a leader is "uncomfortable" because he persisted by not disrupting White social norms or "sticking out" in his predominantly White schooling. Since Nicholas developed persistence and coping strategies that shaped him into "keeping his head down" he still had to battle the internalization of not feeling ready, equipped, or prepared to be a leader. Yet as he had to defend himself and his scholarship as an early-career scholar, he began to challenge how his personal history shaped his current orientation towards conflict and leadership. As will be described later, it was the negative experience applying for tenure that both catalyzed his identity as an informal leader, while inhibiting his desire to be a formal academic leader.

*Summary*

In general, most participants recognized that there were inherent conflicts between researcher and leader identities because of the perceptions and realities that the roles were not compatible. Because FOC battle social prototypes, stereotypes, and systemic racism to earn tenure, it was difficult for many to consider potentially relinquishing their newly established researcher identity with tenure for a leader identity. While there were inherent tensions in

constructing a leader identity, many participants did not feel prepared to construct a leader identity because they felt they lacked the personality, skills, or qualities to be a formal academic leader.

### Relational Recognition

*Implicit Signaling*

Participants mentioned how implicit signaling or lack of relational recognition acknowledgment was interpreted as inhibiting rather than neutral. With a void of social interaction regarding leader identity, participants created a narrative about how others perceived them as a leader. For example, Ronald an Asian medical faculty member went to his department chair to share his interest in taking on more responsibility and being a leader. He was met with the following response "He just nods his head or mumbles a little bit. I didn't get a lot of like back and forth." Ronald interpreted the lackluster response from his department chair as not being granted a leader identity and lacking potential. To Ronald's surprise:

A year later he [department. Chair] called me about [coordinating procedure education], and I'm just like, 'Really?' Of all the 60 some faculty here? He could have picked anybody else to do it. Then he's like, 'Well, we need someone who might stay. We didn't want like a revolving door. You had mentioned that you were interested in doing a little bit more administrative stuff.' I was like 'Okay, I guess I did.' From hindsight, I'd say…I guess he listened.

Even though Ronald's department chair both selected him for a formal leadership role and granted him a leader identity, Ronald spent a year assuming he did not have the potential to be a leader when it is plausible his department chair thought he had leadership potential, but because of his lack of response, it deterred Ronald's leadership identity construction for an entire year.

When asked if anyone had ever talked with him about being an academic leader, Taman an Asian professional school faculty member, recalled never receiving any formal or informal feedback about being a leader. But the lack of social interaction regarding his leadership potential implicitly signaled to Taman that he was not recognized as a leader by his faculty colleagues. Taman explained the void in leadership recognition from his graduate advisor of Color:

> My advisor, he's now the provost at [elite private institution]….But during our time interacting with each other when I was still a grad student, back then he was - I think - associate dean of research or something like that… But no, I mean even then he never directly told me that you should do this.

Taman's recount of never discussing his leadership potential with his graduate advisor that was an academic leader during his graduate career allowed him to craft a narrative that he likely did not have leadership potential, or his advisor would have explicitly mentioned it. Because Taman's advisor was an academic leader and has continued his administrative career and because Taman shared racial identities, he had an expectation that if his advisor saw leadership potential in him, he would have initiated explicit encouragement. The lack of relational recognition and his perceived implicit signaling inhibited leader identity construction.

*Tokenization Withdraw*

Participants mentioned having access and opportunity to informal and formal DEI leadership roles. For some participants being a DEI advocate was a catalyst for their leader identity construction. It allowed them to utilize their talents and experiences to create meaningful change. For others, being informally labeled or formally asked to be the "DEI person" was not empowering or catalyzing, it was tokenizing. Participants who felt tokenized did not feel they

were given meaningful roles but were instead used as symbolic racial diversity for White leader optics.

Richard, a Multiracial professional school faculty member, found himself on a politically charged search committee for a senior university administrator as a pre-tenure scholar. As one of the few POC on the committee and one of few vocal advocates for candidates of Color, he was informally labeled as the "diversity person" on the committee. He describes his informal role as:

I ultimately got perceived as the one who was going to be advocating for diversity, equity, inclusion, and particularly for Black and Brown folks who are leaders. I also would make comments about not wanting to hire someone internal to [institution]. I was seen as someone who really was trying to bring that DEI lens to the search, but who was also a junior faculty it's hard to not feel like you're carrying that around with you too.

Being an early-career scholar on an executive-level search committee, Richard was hesitant to share his opinions. While he said, "some, would say, 'I really appreciated that you said that" other search committee members were more skeptical of his informal diversity advocacy role on the search committee. When reflecting about the interpersonal dynamics on the committee he said,

You can't tell because no one's actually going to say something. No one's really going to say, 'What you said was wrong when it comes to race.' I felt it [DEI advocacy] was received well by the folks who agreed with me. The folks who didn't, I could probably guess who they were.

Richard was frustrated that his informal role on the search committee made him feel tokenized and even had potential threats to his advancement and tenure since there is a university-side committee that adjudicates tenure cases as part of the official process. It was

equally as frustrating that he was informally framed as the "diversity person" whereas his White colleagues on the committee agreed with him, but only through private communication. As one of few POC on the committee he had to vocalize his diversity advocacy with the retribution of being tokenized as "the diversity person" whereas his White counterparts did not have to worry about such retribution. He recounted how frustrating his experience was on this search committee and perceived "administrative work" and academic leadership as not meaningful or productive. Richard's resulting feeling of being racially tokenized made him withdraw from academic leadership interests along with wanting to participate in other service opportunities that would require him to be seen as the "diversity person."

Ashley, a Multiracial humanities faculty member, faced similar reactions when her all White departmental colleagues would give her private praise for speaking up for racial justice causes but not share their agreement in public. After a particular incident where Ashley raised racial insensitivity concerns to a guest speaker, Ashley was publicly admonished by her department chair for "silencing academic freedom and discourse," while her White peers texted her private support. Her supportive colleagues never spoke up in person or through a departmental email thread that began circulating after the incident. Ashley said, "a couple of my [White] friends again, had texted me off the thread. And I wished sometimes they would just say something on the thread." Despite the purposeful tokenization of FOC into informal DEI roles through interpersonal interactions, White colleagues' active silence cements the "diversity person" role for FOC. From this incident, Ashley went on to be a formal leader in interdisciplinary spaces and in her community but withdrew from non-required service within her department.

Richard and Ashley were seen as the "diversity" person in different organizational contexts. Gordon, a Black man STEM faculty member, intentionally avoided formal roles where he would be the "diversity person" because he perceived formal diversity roles as tokenizing and career-stunting for FOC. He shared his thoughts on FOC in DEI roles:

> I think that a lot of faculty of Color just don't get invited to serve in leadership roles. And if they do, they get invited to serve in these like, DEI roles and things like that. Those are fine, but I think for most of us who have any self-worth, we realize if there isn't a budget, or if you don't have the power to hire and fire, it's kind of just ceremonial. It's sort of a slap in the face with like, 'Hey, would you be the diversity chair or something like that?' And it's like, do I get to - can I fire somebody? Do I have a budget? Do I have some money? When neither of those things shows up, it's like, 'no.'

Roles like department chair or associate dean of academic affairs often come with resources and responsibility that give leaders an opportunity to shape and change organizations, whereas Gordon observed DEI roles were often created out of symbolic reaction rather and did not have the accompanying structure and resources to be successful. As Gordon notes, tracking FOC into DEI roles rather than providing access to all academic leadership roles is tokenizing and caused him to be skeptical of ways White academic leaders promote FOC.

Similarly, Vanessa, an Asian medical field faculty member was not interested in serving on the school-wide diversity committee even though she had expertise and interest in justice issues. She already felt labeled as the informal "diversity person" and did not want to formalize her tokenization through a formal service role. She explains her decision-making process about being on the diversity committee:

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I think people expected me to be on the Diversity Committee. Because I was, I'm always talking about diversity in the college or, expressing, my concerns or whatever. And they probably wanted me to be on the Diversity Committee, but I didn't want to be put into that position to be on that committee…I didn't want to be the token person to committee.

Vanessa was often asked to share her thoughts and opinions on racial justice and how to improve the climate for SOC in the majority-White medical field school. This happened, however, only after national incidences like the murder of George Floyd in the summer of 2020. Academic leaders in Vanessa's school were requesting FOC join diversity committees and anti-racism panels, yet Vanessa did not perceive them to be engaging authentically in racial justice work that could lead to sustainable change. Because she felt like her time was not being valued and she was being tokenized for her race, she withdrew from engaging with her faculty colleagues about DEI issues. She explains how she turned down service opportunities and speaking engagements by saying,

You know and since the whole racial reckoning in the past eight months here. It's been… I don't even know how to say this, but people are being tokenized. They expect for folks, people of Color, to really speak on these things. And I've been into positions where I'm like, 'No, it's not my job to educate you on this you know.' So that was one thing I did not want to do.

When faculty withdrew from service and further interactions with colleagues, this inhibited their leader identity construction and likelihood of engaging in academic leadership opportunities. As Gordon shared, formal DEI roles could not only stifle leader identity construction through racial tokenization but also academic leadership career advancement. DEI roles could pigeonhole FOC to being perceived as only having leadership potential and

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competence related to DEI rather than in addition to other competencies that are essential to academic administration like student enrollment, research administration, faculty success, and budgetary oversight. Gordon went on to explain how being the formal "diversity person" can provide leadership opportunities, but access to other academic leadership roles are still not accessible to many FOC:

> I mean, that's not to say you can't do great things, and you can't make some money, and you can't use it as a steppingstone. I think plenty of faculty of Color get into it because they have a mission, and they feel inspired to do that - and God bless them. But I think, yeah, a lot of Black folks just don't get invited to do some of those [jobs other than DEI-related] jobs, and I think also don't know that they're out there. They don't know what is the range of positions that are available to them. So, they don't know to compete for them.

*Summary*

While some participants' leader identity was catalyzed by doing service related to DEI, others felt racially tokenized. Social disengagement from being tokenized inhibited leader identity construction. Additionally, participants who did not receive messages from their social networks about their leader potential typically viewed this as negative. With a void in leader encouragement, participants did not construct a leader identity. Both of these themes are important to note because academic leaders, faculty colleagues, and social context did not necessarily provide explicit messages or intentionally try to dissuade FOC from being a leader, but their leader identity construction was inhibited, nonetheless.

**Collective Endorsement**

*Ambiguous Collective Endorsement*

Collective endorsement of a leader identity is often shaped by how organizations formally acknowledge individuals as leaders (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Collective granting can happen through verbal commitments (e.g., voting a faculty member into the departmental executive committee) or nonverbal commitments (e.g., waiting for a leader to speak first). Faculty work however is different from other types of roles because it is generally guided by principles of shared governance where faculty provide opinions, advice, and input to academic leaders as they make organizational decisions. For example, embedded within organizational structures of departments are often democratic votes for formal leader positions like department chair and committee appointments. In most organizational contexts, voting an individual into a committee leadership role would be viewed as a collective endorsement. For faculty, a collective vote into a formal leader role may represent collective confidence in leader potential *or* group avoidance of unappealing service responsibilities. This lack of clarity in collective granting behavior; along with not aligning with prototypical attributes of a leader, makes it difficult for FOC to determine the sincerity of collective granting behaviors from their peers.

For example, Yukiko an Asian-American social scientist describes how she did not know how to interpret being asked to do different service or leadership roles. She earned tenure at her second institution which she viewed as being more diverse in race, gender, and career levels. It was important to note that she was asked to take on more advising and service at her first institution and felt compelled to oblige because of her multiple minority statuses and her social and career-level identities. Even in her current department and institution, when she was asked to take on a leadership or service role, she did not know whether the ask was a collective grant from her colleagues about her ability or a shirking of responsibility to a pre-tenure WOC. She describes her thought process when she was asked to take on a leadership role:

I just felt like, well, 'Nobody else is doing this work and somebody has to do it. It probably has to be me.' And I felt like, both helpful but resentful. Am I really on this thing because they just need somebody who looks like me? No. Could I make a difference if I were actually there? Probably. Is it worth my time? There's just a lot of this sort of thing. It took a while to figure out what my attitude about it should be or understand what the academy is like and therefore what positions are more useful to be in and what things you can pass on and it's not going to be a disaster. So, learning all of those things was part of it.

Yukiko describes the ambiguous request to take on a leadership role, yet constantly wonder if her expertise and experience or social identity were the main contributors to being asked to be a leader. Beyond deciphering if she was being exploited for her social identity diversity, she also felt an obligation to take on service and leader roles because others would not. As a pre-tenure faculty member, she had to worry about being exploited or tokenized. For Yukiko, being nominated by her departmental colleagues to serve in a formal leadership role was not a collective endorsement of leadership potential it was the exploitation of labor from an early-career WOC. Because of the ambiguity of collective granting to formal leadership roles, it is difficult to claim a leader identity from departmental collectives, when the authenticity of collective leader identity granting is unknown.

Similarly, Aurora, a Latina professional program faculty member did not feel empowered by her colleagues after being granted a formal leadership role. After showing interest in coordinating a program in her department, Aurora was enthusiastically voted in by her faculty colleagues. She offered to coordinate the program because she was confident in her ability to lead the program into a new and better iteration. As she began her formal leadership role she

thought, "I can do that [coordinate the program]! I have a skill set for doing that. I can manage a program and I can build systems processes and I can do this!" She claimed an intrapersonal leader identity, was recognized by individual peers as a good leader for the role, and then collectively endorsed by her department into a formal leadership role. When she first started in the role she thought, "We're gonna go! We're gonna make change! We're gonna talk about curriculum! We're gonna redo everything! We're gonna just do great things!" Unfortunately, that did not happen. While her faculty colleagues were supportive of Aurora taking on a formal leadership role to coordinate the program, they were unwilling to expend energy to improve the program under her guidance. While she initially felt empowered by the collective granting of a leader identity from her colleagues, she quickly felt defeated and frustrated by the lack of engagement from her colleagues as followers.

In general, Aurora found herself taking on service opportunities and leadership roles in order to contribute to the collective success of her department, but after accepting the program coordinator role she began to question the intentions of her colleagues for their collective endorsement of her leadership. When reflecting on her leadership experiences she said,

> So, I feel I think I'm more inclined to step up and step into things that I don't really want to do. And that's largely because I don't want my pre-tenure colleagues to do it, I don't want that to fall on [non-tenure track faculty]'s lap. Or it shouldn't fall on [department chair]'s lap. But there is a big gap in terms of people who are willing to step up and do stuff.

Because of the obligation Aurora felt to her non-tenured colleagues, she took on service and leadership roles so they would not have to. Being a WOC taking on additional service roles, while her White colleagues spent more time on their research did not sit well with Aurora. It

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seemed that her tenured, mostly-White colleagues endorsed her to coordinate the program

because they did not want to. For these reasons, serving in formal leadership roles in her

department became less appealing and she recently began to view herself as a leader not in her

department, but within professional associations and the broader university.

*Formal Leader Denial*

There were some participants who did not want to be a formal leader or even desire the

collective granting of a leader identity from their peers. While this is not an indicative theme for

most participants, this specific type of leadership enactment and leader identity construction

theme is significant because it often had direct correlations to the discriminatory and racialized

experiences of FOC. It should be noted that those participants in the sample that actively did not

want to be a formal leader because of their negative racialized experiences were Black.

Participants recognized that they could not legitimately fit into a social prototype of

leadership within their professional contexts, therefore they consciously chose to push for change

outside of formal organizational roles. As Bill, a Latino professional school faculty member

describes,

> I think of myself also as a leader. But I tend to lead by example or productivity, drive, or
>
> things like that. Rather than just being out there or public speaking or things like that. So,
>
> I think there are different types of leadership.

Like Bill, some other FOC constructed a leader identity not from, but in spite of, the lack

of collective granting of a leader identity from their majority White peers. For example, Tony a

multiracial STEM faculty member felt marginalized by the way he was treated by colleagues, his

lack of interaction with academic leaders in his small school, and how his community-engaged

research was underappreciated. He tied these experiences explicitly to his racial identity and the

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racialized organizational culture of his predominantly White colleagues. For example, when he was the coordinator of a degree program, Tony was more frustrated than empowered for similar reasons as Aurora; his faculty colleagues were resistant to the modernization of the curriculum and new approaches to enrollment processes. Even though they collectively endorsed him for the formal leadership role, Tony faced resistance when arbitrating student and faculty concerns, often due to power relationships of identity.

Tony described his colleagues as, "collegial, just in a very basic way. Like surface level. Like people say 'hi' to each other…for the most part, people are just kind of doing their own thing." Tony was officially endorsed as a formal leader in his school, but his colleagues did not psychologically grant him a leader identity. Tony continued to be solicited for service opportunities like chairing a search committee or being a member of the DEI committee, but he recognized he was never approached to take on more prestigious leadership opportunities within the school like his White colleagues.

When asked if he would consider a collectively endorsed formal leader role again, he said, "No, I just don't think I'd be comfortable with it. I think like I've had enough of that. I could spend my time on other things." For Tony, "trying on" formal leader roles did not actually come with collective endorsement from his peers. It did however encourage him to spend more time cultivating relationships and gaining leadership experiences in the communities of Color he works with outside of his academic school. When reflecting on why he denies wanting to be a formal academic leader he said, "given the sort of lack of respect I've seen throughout this process, I have no incentive then to become a leader here and I feel I can do a better job sort of pushing leadership rather than being lead."

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Even though she found herself in a formal leadership role after earning tenure, Amina a professional school Black faculty member similarly does not want to be a formal leader because of the "negative energy" she has gained from formal leadership experiences in the past. She did however recognize the need to understand the political dynamics of her colleagues to earn tenure. When speaking about her service involvement she said,

> I use my time on committees to really get to know the college and get to know the people that run the college and the politics behind the decisions that are made in the college. I have been on every imaginable - I have sat on every imaginable committee there is.

While she used committees and service opportunities to contribute to her academic community and learn the political dynamics of her college, she drew boundaries about leading committees or being in a more formal leadership role. When asked if she has taken a formal leadership role leading committees or further administrative responsibility Amina said, "It actually brings me negative joy. As long as I can stay away from the negative side of being on committees, life is good. That I really enjoy." She used service opportunities to develop positive relationships with colleagues and understand organizational decision-making but was not interested in being collectively endorsed as a formal leader. She used service as a way to navigate racialized organizations.

Even though Amina did not want to be a formal academic leader, she was nominated, reluctantly applied, and was hired as the diversity officer for her professional school. She was encouraged by the dean and nominated by senior colleagues (especially a senior WOC), but she was hesitant and did not want to serve in the role because of the personal cost. Amina agreed to a short, multi-year commitment and already had a countdown of how many months she had left in

her obligation. While she was granted a leader identity by her dean and some of her colleagues, she knew it came at a cost to her and other LOC:

> We will continue to elevate people of Color. But it's exhausting. Because we are playing by two rules. Can you imagine playing a soccer game on two different pitches? You run and play on this one. Then you have to run and play goalie on the other one. That's our life and it is exhausting. We can celebrate as many people of Color as we want in these positions, but they're exhausted. It makes White people feel good, but we're exhausted.

Amina knew the toll collectively endorsed formal leadership roles take on FOC, especially WOC, and how they can be exploited and tokenized for their representation rather than given responsibilities, compensation, and identities as a leader.

It should also be noted that this interview took place a few months after the murder of George Floyd and the significant sociopolitical activism that took place around the country and world. Amina, who studies race, immigration, and systemic inequality connected her experiences and the experiences she observes from others and their relation to systemic inequality for POC in in higher education. As many workplaces and institutions were seemingly awakened to racial injustice in the summer of 2020, Amina found the moment unsatisfying. While she mentioned some positive and symbolic actions her White male dean took to create racial justice initiatives, she remained skeptical that the appropriate systemic remedies would be used to solve the systemic problems. She was skeptical because of how higher education leaders generally acknowledge one instance or create one program but were unwilling to initiate systemic and meaningful change. She describes this tax this has on WOC leaders:

> My thoughts are with the current awakening that we have - it makes sense that we have few women of Color in administration. To me, this makes perfect sense. I do not see a

contradiction… We are now cobbling together these rules and these policies and creating spaces for women of Color. Hodgepodge, cobble, cobble, cobble, 'change this,' 'do this,' 'hire this person,' 'push this person.' But Jeffrey, if we haven't decoded, honestly decoded, what this institution is and honestly faced up to the fact that it is an institution that agendas support and celebrates White supremacy… If we are not honest with ourselves that the perfect professor is a White male professor because of the patriarch - the little cobbling we're doing is not going to fix it. And one day it might topple because it's the Weasley house [reference to a family's house in Harry Potter that was built tall in a piecemeal fashion and was unstable].

To protect her own energy and be successful in a racialized organization, Amina learned to "bifurcate" herself or code-switch to "play by their rules. Again, with institutions, you have to figure out what those rules are and how to game them….and this game that was not created for you [people of Color]." Even though Amina was socially granted a leader identity and accepted a collectively endorsed formal leadership role for a few years, she was not comfortable claiming a leader identity from her colleagues because she was suspicious of intentions, fearful of being tokenized, and resented the systemic inequalities in which she was asked to lead within. She felt she could create more equitable change as a future full professor and informal leader than as a collectively endorsed, formal leader.

**Conclusion**

This chapter described the reflections and experiences participants had that inhibited their ability to construct a leader identity. FOC must navigate racialized organizations and battle social prototypes to construct a leader identity from social context. Participants faced various challenges such as navigating the inherent tensions between researcher and leader identities and

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not feeling prepared both psychologically to be a leader. In addition, participants mentioned important people in their careers that did not engage them in conversations about their leadership potential which were mostly interpreted as negative. In addition, even though some participants constructed a leader identity from having formal and informal DEI roles, other participants found being the "diversity person" to be tokenizing and compelled them to withdraw from social interaction and inhibiting leader identity construction. Furthermore, many participants found the nature of shared governance and faculty work to create ambiguous collective granting conditions to where participants were unsure if they were being granted a leader identity or taking advantage of performing service roles others did not want to do. And lastly, there were a few participants who explicitly did not want to construct a leader identity within the academy and pursue academic leadership because they did not want to contribute to an organization and institution where contributions were not reciprocal. The next chapter will discuss implications for theory, practice, and future directions of research.

**Chapter 6 Discussion**

This exploratory study sought to understand how newly tenured FOC, a pivotal moment in their careers, at research institutions construct a leader identity with specific attention to individual reflection and social interaction viewed through the lens of the DeRue and Ashford (2010) LIT. The findings (see Table 6) summarize themes on how leader identity construction was catalyzed (Chapter 4) and inhibited (Chapter 5). The chapter is organized by summarizing the themes from Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 as well as provides a summary of unique race and gender differences between themes. The chapter ends with implications for both theory and practice.

This study fills numerous empirical, theoretical, and practical gaps existing in the understanding of FOC leader identity construction. The resulting themes are organized both by level of analysis and catalyzing and inhibiting factors. Some of the themes are on a continuum of experiences, for example, when participants received explicit encouragement to be a leader they constructed a leader identity, but when they were not given any indication of whether they had leadership potential, they interpreted the lack of encouragement as discouragement which inhibited a leader identity. Alternatively, some themes are more independent from other themes. For example, interdisciplinary organizational structures were organizational contexts that often catalyzed a leader identity by providing experiential opportunities for participants to "try on" leadership roles. There were not however particular organizational structures that inhibited a leader identity. Along with the resulting themes that contribute to the understanding of leader

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identity construction for FOC, the study focuses on a unique moment in an academic career where faculty recently earned tenure and are formulating and crafting future occupational goals. The distinct career stage of participants provides empirical insight into the complex career development of faculty. The study also draws from theoretical influences from psychology and organizational studies which have not been used in higher education scholarship. More importantly, the study uses a theoretical focus that highlights the importance of social contexts and interactions with leader identity construction processes for FOC that must navigate racialized organizational environments.

**Summary of Results**

*Identity Catalysts*

Chapter 4 examined how leader identity construction was catalyzed for participants within the three levels of analysis from the DeRue and Ashford (2010) LIT: individual internalization, relational recognition, and collective endorsement. Through intrapersonal reflection, participants constructed a leader identity from community inspiration by observing successful LOC. Some participants mentioned they wanted to mimic those same-race academic leaders that were inspirational in their identity construction process. Similarly, Lanka et al., (2020) found "role models" and "mentors" were influential in catalyzing leader identity construction. In contrast, other participants desired to be the representation for early-career scholars that did not have access to same-race representation in leadership roles. This is similar to what Dawson (1994) framed as *linked fate,* where individuals have a cognitive and emotional connection to same-race groups in the belief that their life changes and opportunities are interconnected. The connection between individual and community, regardless of the actual interaction was strongest for those that were most underrepresented in their fields. In addition to

drawing inspiration from their racial community, a portion of participants constructed a leader identity because they wanted to pivot from a researcher career to an administrative career. For participants like Jystona and Ken, they were constructing a leader identity through their reflection on their career development. Through intrapersonal reflection and individual internalization, participants constructed a leader identity from racial community inspiration and potential career aspirations.

DeRue and Ashford conceptualized leader identity construction as not just intrapersonal reflection from a personal identity theory perspective but influenced by social interaction and context. Through interpersonal interactions, participants mentioned explicit encouragement from colleagues, leaders, and mentors. One of the most powerful catalysts for participants was to be explicitly encouraged by others, especially those in authority, like senior faculty colleagues and department chairs. Explicit encouragement of being a formal leader assisted participants in envisioning themselves as a leader while beginning processes of integrating identities (e.g., researcher, race, gender) as compatible with being a leader. As is the case among college students, peers and formal leaders were important catalysts in constructing a leader identity (Komives et al., 2005; Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010). However, unlike students, faculty must negotiate the tension between viewing researcher and leader identities as incompatible (as discussed in Chapter 5). Because for some individuals there is an inherent tension between researcher and leader identities, study participants mentioned a specific type of social interaction in which they had to delicately deny interest in being a formal leader and maintain a researcher image, while accepting leader identity grants from colleagues. The performative denial interaction provided participants with social granting of a leader identity but did not always invoke an outward leader identity claim from participants. Being an academic leader is not

widely viewed as being aspirational by faculty colleagues, so participants had to preserve their ego and manage their image through a performative denial communication strategy (Cunningham et al., 2022).

Lastly, there were themes of collective endorsements or organizational acknowledgments that assisted in leader identity construction for FOC. Through inductive analysis, one of the most popular institutional locations where participants could construct a leader identity and "try" on leadership as a provisional self (Ibarra, 1999) was in interdisciplinary organizational structures. Lanka et al. (2020) calls these opportunities "crystallizing events" or experiences that provide unique opportunities to construct a leader identity through application. Even though participants mentioned service activities and chairing committees within their department, the most significant leadership experiences participants mentioned were in interdisciplinary research academic programs or research institutes. While not related to leader identity construction, Posselt and colleagues (2017) found that an interdisciplinary Physics program was able to recruit and graduate an overrepresentation of all Black Ph.D.-level Physicists because it did not adhere to monodisciplinary insular, inflexible, and impractical cultural norms. It is possible that interdisciplinary organizational structures can serve as similar spaces for FOC to develop leadership skills and identity without adhering to insular and inflexible definitions of leadership.

In addition to interdisciplinary organizational structures, some participants were able to construct a leader identity by being a diversity advocate. Even though some participants felt tokenized by a diversity advocate label, other participants were able to see how their informal and formal roles advocating for diversity initiatives within their academic contexts facilitated construction of a leader identity from the collective endorsement of their efforts which is similar to what Renn and Ozaki (2010) labeled as a "merged path" of leadership within psychosocial

developmental contexts. For the participants in this study, FOC constructed a leader identity advocating for and influencing equitable organizational change.

### *Identity Inhibitors*

Similar to Lanka et al.'s (2020) "barriers of leader identity construction," there is little empirical research about reflections and interactions that inhibit leader identity construction. Chapter 5 highlights the resulting themes created from analyzed participant experiences that inhibited their ability to construct a leader identity. A central tension explored by each participant is the incongruence of researcher and leader identities amongst faculty at research intensive institutions. Every participant was able to articulate either their reflections or external messaging of how constructing a leader identity created a conflict with their researcher identity. Beyond a strong perception that formal leadership opportunities can be challenging to manage with an active research agenda, participants perceived formal leaders must forfeit a researcher identity, a threat many FOC were unwilling to confront. Similarly, Cunningham and colleagues (2022) found the anticipation of ego depletion and image risk was a significant inhibitor to leader identity construction.

In addition to managing researcher and leader identity conflicts, participants felt unprepared for a formal leadership role because of their general discomfort with being labeled a leader (Arminio et al., 2000; Onorato & Musoba, 2015) or a deficit-oriented perception of their leadership skills and qualifications (Lanka et al., 2020). This could be an internalization of social prototypes that POC do not fit the ideal prototype of a leader or a reluctance to apply for leadership roles. Research indicates women are 20% less likely to apply for a job than men (Tockey & Ignatova, 2018) and will only do so when they have 100% of qualifications requested, unlike men who will apply with only 60% of desire qualifications (Mohr, 2014).

Either way, faculty like Vanessa had budget, research, and management experience that was more than required by  potential leadership roles, yet she still felt unprepared to claim a leader identity.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, some participants constructed a leader identity by engaging in diversity committees and championing organizational equity efforts. Other participants however withdrew from social interaction and organizational engagement after feeling racially tokenized through interactions and experiences which inhibited their ability and desire to construct a leader identity. While there is a research base on the tokenization of POC (e.g., McCluney & Robelo, 2019) and FOC (e.g., Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015), there are fewer empirical connections established between racial tokenization and leader identity construction. Participants in the study felt tokenized by being informally labeled as "the diversity person" and were expected to represent voices for all POC or because they felt like they were being used for their representative diversity rather than their broad range of expertise and skills. Yet for other participants, when they were not directly encouraged to be a leader, they assumed that meant they should not be one. A select group of Asian faculty participants assumed they did not have leadership potential because they were not given explicit messages or needed communication from senior faculty or academic leaders. Participants who mentioned no one approached them about their leadership potential interpreted the implicit signaling as they lacked leadership potential. This finding has similar implications for the power of messaging from both implicit and explicit role models to construct a leader identity as Sealy and Singh (2010) found was important for senior-level women to construct a positive leader identity.

Academic organizations and faculty life constitute a unique work context due to the mix of hyper-individualistic and autonomous teaching and research roles and significant collective

decision-making due to shared governance organizational structures. Because of the unique work context, it was difficult for many FOC to interpret collective endorsements as social granting of a leader identity. When participants were elected to the executive committee for their department or asked to chair a faculty selection committee, they were unsure if this organizational acknowledgment of leadership skills was a collective endorsement of a leader identity or shirking of service work by their peers. The ambiguous collective granting of formal leadership roles was often not followed by explicit messages from academic leaders or peers that explain the intention of collective endorsements.

Lastly, there was a sub-set of participants who actively rejected leader identity construction within the context of the academy because of the systemic inequality they experienced. Lanka et al.'s (2020) study also had participants who explicitly rejected a leader identity, but it was because of organizational rejection rather than systemic discrimination. For participants that shared their discontent with the systemic inequality of the academy, the personal cost (Arminio et al., 2010) was too high to be interested in serving as an academic leader. This did not mean, however, that participants were opposed to constructing a leader identity for a different organizational context, but those that actively denied a leader identity from their institutions did so because of the inequality of rewards and incongruence of values.

### *Identity Differences*

In qualitative research it is difficult to discern sub-sample differences because of the small participant samples and because qualitative research should be cautioned from being generalizable to larger populations (Ayres et al., 2003) although they could be transferable to other contexts (Firestone, 1993). However, through further intersectional and cross-participant analysis, there were some distinct and differences between racial and gender identities.

*Race*

   While the themes were representative of experiences from FOC, lacking preparation to be a leader inhibited leader identity construction more strongly for Asian participants than any other racial group. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Sathya had formal academic leadership roles and was granted a leader identity by colleagues and senior faculty, yet it was only by the end of the interview that he felt like he was an academic leader. Similarly, Yukiko recognized others seemed to look to her for advice and wisdom yet questioned why. Asian participants were more likely than other races to not feel adequately prepared with skills and experiences that are necessary to be an academic leader. This is important to note since Asian/Asian American faculty are the most represented race among faculty, yet among some of the least represented in academic leadership roles. This could be attributed to collectivist orientations of Asian cultures and the reluctance to be in a formal leadership role (Akutagawa, 2013; Kawhara et al., 2013), but it could also be attributed to the perception that academic leaders must be more charismatic and assertive which can be counterintuitive for Asian (Kawahara, 2007; Chin, 2013). More research is needed to understand why Asian participants felt they were less prepared for academic leadership along with appropriate interventions of how to instill confidence in preparation for academic leadership.

*Gender*

   The study sample only included seven women, so it is difficult to make inferences about the role of gender within leader identity construction, but when it came to a lack of clarity of collective endorsement of a leader identity, more women shared not necessarily receiving a "collective grant" of a leader identity for their service and leadership. It is well-documented that women and WOC take on a larger share of service (e.g., O'Meara et al., 2017), but unfortunately

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an increase in service opportunities does not always catalyze leader identity construction. As mentioned before both Yukiko and Aurora took on a service and leadership roles because they had to get done and their mostly White male colleagues were not stepping up to the task. Other women like Vanessa and Amina also mentioned taking formal leadership roles because they wanted to ensure the work was done well and they were not convinced their colleagues would take the service role seriously. Even though it was more common for women FOC to take a leadership role, yet receive an ambiguous collective leader identity endorsement, Lissa was a counterfactual example. Lissa created diversity programming within her department and attributed part of her tenure success to her distinctive service contributions. Lissa also acknowledged that it was unique that her department chair recognized diversity work and programming as significant contributions towards her tenure application. WOC share a large brunt of visible and invisible service work in the academy and should be rewarded and acknowledge as such.

**Theoretical Implications**

This study adds to a growing body of literature that empirically examines leader identity construction from social context (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Unlike most of the current literature, this study explores leader identity construction within a higher education context. In addition, it is one of few studies that examines how potential LOC construct a leader identity within racialized organizations (Ray, 2019). This section will introduce numerous ways this study provides implications for future theorizing and understanding of leader identity construction, especially for racially diverse faculty.

First, DeRue and Ashford (2010) challenged researchers to empirically examine the dynamic interactions between levels of analysis within leader identity construction. In particular,

they posit, "what happens when the three levels of identity construction do not converge?" (p. 641). The findings from this study demonstrate the nonlinear nature of claiming and granting between levels of analysis. For example, a participant like Cinque drew inspiration from a community or linked fate (Dawson, 1994) of Black scholars and leaders in his medical field without any direct social interaction. He identified as a leader and had leader aspirations because of his individual internalization without social interaction and collective endorsement. There were also participants like Nicholas that experienced racial discrimination in formal and informal ways from his faculty colleagues. Nicholas constructed a leader identity despite, rather than in congruence with, social interaction or collective endorsement from his immediate social context (i.e., academic department). Examples like Cinque and Nicholas demonstrate that a leader identity can be constructed with intrapersonal reflection without, or despite, relational recognition or collective endorsement from social context. Understanding that developmental spirals (Day et al., 2009) are *not* always socially or contextually reinforced has theoretical implications for FOC. The theory does not recognize the strength and influence of linked fate and community inspiration for FOC. This unique theoretical implication provides an alternative explanation to why Black women deans in Wolverton et al.'s (2002) study only required "confidence" to be successful; because unlike their White and/or male peers, they do not expect to be relationally or collectively granted a leader identity, so they have learned to construct a leader identity through their intrapersonal reflection.

Second, most studies on leader identity construction are race neutral. This study was specifically designed to understand how FOC construct a leader identity within the racialized organizational nature of predominantly White institutions in American higher education. One of the appealing aspects of the DeRue and Ashford (2010) LIT is the integration of both personal

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and social identity theoretical perspectives that explicitly incorporate social interactions and contexts into the leader identity construction process. Using intrapersonal reflections, social interaction, and organizational acknowledgments as analytical levels of analysis to understand ways FOC were granted and claimed a leader identity through battling with social prototyping, discrimination, racial battle fatigue, and tokenism. The LIT pays special attention to how hierarchy in organizational status impacts leader identity construction but underexplores how social status based on non-organizational social identities (e.g., race, gender, age) impacts leader identity construction. This study suggests that social identities like race can alter organizational experiences and create differential access to opportunities that shape the construction of a leader identity. To better understand the ways social identities impact leader identity construction, future studies could combine DeRue and Ashford's (2010) LIT and critical social theory that centers and critiques power structures (Denzin et al., 2017). Exploiting intersectional racial power dynamics influence on \the social construction of leader identity could lead to a more robust conceptual understanding of racialized social and organizational power dynamics embedded in seemingly identity-blind concepts like organizational structure, promotion, and definitions of leadership. In particular, critical race theory could illuminate how social interactions and context are conceptually linked to broader societal systems of power and privilege (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Using critical social theory would also take up leadership theorists' aims that have encouraged new ontological and epistemological analytical examinations of the White, masculine, and exploitive nature of leadership scholarship and practice (Collinson, 2014; Learmonth & Morrell, 2019).

To further theorize leader identity construction, this study along with a few others (Lanka et al., 2020; Skinner 2014; 2020) begin to understand the mechanisms of reflections, interactions,

and experiences that catalyze or inhibit leader identity construction. Amongst the few studies on leader identity construction, there were many overlapping themes (i.e., the importance of role models, encouragement from others; professional identity conflict, and intrapersonal purpose). Even though there were overlapping themes, there were also distinct differences in mechanisms due to this study examining the experiences of POC, not previously studied. For example, racial tokenization caused participants to withdraw from the social contexts and inhibited leader identity construction. Or for FOC in this study, being inspired by and advancing racial communities were a motivation and catalyst to develop a leader identity. Examining collectivist-oriented cultural norms and perspectives along with social identity perspectives of leader identity provide new avenues for future theorizing and empirical work. While DeRue and Ashford (2010) provide a unique combination of personal and social identity perspectives, the theory does not completely capture the experiences of POC in organizations by not acknowledging power dynamics and inherent social prototype contradictions.

**Implications for Practice**

There are numerous ways this study can be used to increase access to leader identity construction in higher education.

***From Paradox to Duality of Academic Leadership***

First, deliberate efforts must be made to create a new organizational narrative that transforms a paradoxical orientation of academic leadership in which researcher and leader identities are incompatible into one of duality, making it attractive and possible to be both a researcher and formal academic leader. The paradox of academic leadership that creates an incompatible binary between researcher and leader identities makes it difficult for all faculty to be interested in constructing a leader identity or being a formal academic leader. Because FOC

are not the social prototype of a researcher or leader, the psychological and social costs of potentially giving up a hard-earned researcher identity to be a leader are additionally less attractive.

Higher education institutions, disciplinary associations, and current academic leaders must begin to intentionally craft an organizational narrative that showcases academic leadership's positive and generative benefits. Since most participants, even those who wanted to be academic leaders felt an inherent conflict between researcher and leader identities. Many felt unprepared to consider academic leadership; more intentional educational opportunities to understand academic leadership are needed. And while understanding the drawbacks of leadership is essential and should not be dismissed or hidden, so often those interested in academic leadership and even current academic leaders must performatively deny leader interests to preserve a hard-earned researcher identity. In addition, some faculty mentioned how they appreciated being "protected" from service as an early career scholar, yet that gave them less opportunity to be exposed to service opportunities and created a stronger division between service and research work. This is not to say early career FOC should not be protected from service, especially since they often are tasked with unaccounted for service of mentoring SOC and engaging in communities, but this common and intentional policy does come with unintended consequences of limiting exposure to service and leadership opportunities that can lead to leader identity construction. There must be the explicit promotion of the generative and transformational aspects of academic leadership to create a more positive perception that would attract racially diverse faculty to show interest.

Promoting academic leadership is a developmental process that should be introduced and supported from graduate education socialization throughout an academic career. Because many participants were not introduced to academic leaders or academic leadership until they joined the

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professoriate, there should be a more proactive effort of ensuring researchers of Color, at all stages of their careers, have access to racial (and other social identities) representation that showcases the range of academic careers available, including being a formal academic leader. As the results of this study suggest, participants drew inspiration from their racial community and those leaders who achieved and provided inspiration and representational aspiration for early-career and future researchers. This also amplifies the need for affinity spaces at the institutional and disciplinary/field levels where FOC can observe and interact with role models, senior faculty, and academic leaders from whom they can potentially aspire and learn.

While this study focused on FOC, they observed the experiences of past and current academic leaders, many of whom lamented their lack of time and energy to continue an active research agenda. This narrative exists for good reason. If higher education institutions want to cultivate leaders, especially those that want to maintain a vibrant research agenda and researcher identity, there must be organizational interventions to expand the scope of responsibilities of scholar-leaders. For example, department chair and associate dean roles can be crafted with intentional postdoctoral staff and financial support so research can continue even with limited time from a new academic leader. While most formal academic leaders are relieved of research and teaching responsibilities, they could also be given more staff support to execute the operational function of academic units while also being given more research support to supplement time spent on grant-writing and research. If being a formal academic leader meant additional research resources, the perceptual loss of a researcher identity to a formal academic leadership role would likely decrease.

### *Service Work as Identity Work*

Structurally, one of the ways researcher and leader identity incompatibility exists is through tenure and promotion processes at research-intensive universities. Since an essential aspect of the leader identity construction process was crafting a provisional leader identity through "trying on" informal and formal leadership roles, there must be more alignment and encouragement during tenure and promotion processes to encourage service work and leader identity exploration. While absent of encouragement, many participants shared how they were actively discouraged from doing tasks regarded as "administrative" in fear of diminishing their researcher identity. Academic leaders and those who safeguard the peer review process of tenure and promotion must recognize the importance of service to ensure shared governance is a central force in organizational decision-making, while also recognizing the developmental role service plays in leader identity construction. It should also be noted that service obligations and responsibilities are unique to faculty roles. In this study, all of the participants earned tenure, but part-time faculty and non-tenure track faculty have a unique relationship with institutional service where they often are required to take on more responsibility with less resources.

As part of the developmental process, graduate socialization should play a larger role in exposing future faculty and emerging LOC to opportunities, experiences, role models, and a deeper understanding of academic careers so graduate SOC are able to construct a leader identity in tandem with an academic/scholar identity. Gaining formal socialization within academic disciplines and fields is important to develop independent researchers, but for graduate SOC in particular, gaining exposure to the "unwritten rules" or "encoded systems of behavior" is equally as important to navigate racialized organizational contexts (Felder et al., 2014; Hawley, 2010). Socializing graduate SOC to institutional service as an integral, not ancillary, aspect of faculty

work can more equally create opportunities for exposure to service and shared governance work that can lead to constructing a leader identity (Ward, 2010). Institutions, graduate schools, and doctoral advisors have an obligation to provide the full range of opportunities of academic careers and opportunities so graduate SOC are not being exposed to service, academic leadership opportunities, and academic leaders for the first time in their faculty career.

In order to change narratives, new ones must be shared. For example, many research institutions have websites, magazines, and symposia dedicated to faculty research output and success. These communication outlets and programs convey that rigorous and innovative research is valued and encouraged. Rightfully so. What is less recognized are the outcomes from faculty leadership. And even if a faculty member wins the "service award" rather than the "research award," such a prize may signal negative messaging for the faculty member's research identity. University leaders could reward emerging faculty leaders with research resources and course releases to show the importance of service and academic leadership. If time and financial resources were given to compensate for the time and energy of exemplary service work, exploring provisional selves and leader identities may be more attractive and attainable.

Institutions could catalyze leader identity construction with minimal additional costs or resources through direct and intentional feedback. Whether a participant internalized a leader identity completely, whenever they were given explicit feedback that they had leadership potential or performed well as a leader, they were more likely to construct a leader identity. Unfortunately, explicit encouragement through feedback was not as common as it could be. Many participants like Taman were not given any feedback about their leadership potential or skill level and thus interpreted that as inhibiting. And other participants like Bill were collectively endorsed by being elected to an executive committee but still unsure if this was a

social granting of a leader identity or a shirking of service work by faculty colleagues. Department chairs and deans whom all have formal or informal academic leadership roles should ensure faculty are explicitly given feedback about their future leadership potential through an evaluation of service work. Even though peer review processes are a central organizational structure of academic life for grant acquisition, research, publication, and even hiring processes, service work often goes unacknowledged or examined. More explicit feedback through performance reviews, annual reviews, and regular faculty-academic leader meetings should encourage faculty to understand collective endorsements more clearly as social granting.

Lastly, FOC are implicitly and often explicitly asked to do a broad range of service that their White counterparts are not requested or equipped to do. For example, many faculty mentioned being asked to serve on a range of DEI-related committees, recruit SOC, and engage with surrounding communities. For some, this catalyzed their leader identity as they were able to take a formal role in creating equitable change. But for others, empty requests and initiatives inhibited leader identity construction because they felt exploited and tokenized for their racial identity. And a few participants like Gordon and Jerlando perceived being in a formal DEI role or doing DEI work as a barrier to career advancement into other academic leadership roles. DEI service work must be seen as essential and central to the functioning of an academic unit as other esteemed committees that coordinate curriculum or promotion and tenure. Leading DEI initiatives should not be pigeonholing or limiting to academic leadership advancement. Instead, it should be recognized for the complex functional and political work that has implications for every facet of the function of an academic unit.

*Unbounding Academic Leadership*

As racialized organizations are structured to perpetuate implicit and explicit racial understandings through symbols, actions, and outcomes (Ray, 2019). those who lead them are socialized and constructed similarly. And through social prototyping, there are racial scripts that can identify people, processes, and structures as "normal" and others as irregular. To encourage leader identity construction for FOC, academic leadership in American higher education must reconsider the implicit boundaries that define being an academic leader. First, higher education leaders must appreciate interdisciplinary organizational structures, programs, and units that, from this study, provide a unique space for leadership training and provisional leader identity construction. Most participants who held formal academic leadership roles did so in interdisciplinary organizational structures within all types of academic disciplines (i.e., arts and humanities, medical fields, professional fields, social or sciences, science, technology, engineering, and math). More research is determined to know why interdisciplinary organizational units were overrepresented in providing formal leadership roles for FOC. Still, they should be recognized and celebrated for producing such a crucial latent function. This also means that when hiring for formal academic leadership roles, deans, provosts, and presidents should recognize the importance of leadership in interdisciplinary units like formal leadership roles in traditional academic departments that may be less accessible to FOC.

In general, this study highlights the ways social contexts shape opportunity and access to leader identity construction and academic leadership roles for FOC. Whether potential LOC directed an interdisciplinary program, internalized a lack of leadership preparation even though they had the appropriate skills, or withdrew from social engagement because they felt tokenized – FOC can have unique pathways and challenges to constructing a leader identity than their

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White peer colleagues. Executive leaders hiring academic leaders must recognize that not everyone has equal access to leader identity construction interactions, experiences, and opportunities. And for FOC, their leadership pathway may include informal or less recognized leadership experiences like Harris, who created an ad-hoc-turned-official FOC advisory board for his academic dean or Dithu, who had positive career outcomes for his affirmatively racially diverse STEM lab, or Amina and Robert, who were critical leaders in the communities they engaged with for their research. Boundaries of who has the potential to be an academic leader or even who is a "successful" academic leader should be critically re-examined to include a broad array of experiences that encompass those often unseen and underappreciated skills and experiences that FOC often have.

**Moving Forward**

American higher education is at a crossroads with politically polarizing attacks on academic freedom, science, and public discourse. Beyond the business case that diverse teams produce better results, higher education also has a responsibility to provide equal access to opportunity for students, staff, faculty, and academic leaders. To create more racially diverse academic leaders and inclusive leadership teams, scholars and practitioners must approach the complex problem with nuanced frameworks, understanding, and interventions. This dissertation introduces both psychological and sociological theoretical frameworks of leader identity construction and pushes research on academic leadership research to center the experiences of those underrepresented in formal academic leadership roles.

Even though this study introduces leader identity construction theory into higher education scholarship, it has broader implications of understanding how racialized organizational contexts shapes the aspirations, experiences, and outcomes for systemically marginalized people.

While this study paid special attention to intersectional experiences during analysis, future work is needed to understand the unique intersectional and overlapping multiple identity experiences of FOC based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, class, immigrant status, religious affiliation, etc. Both intersectional identity experiences and organizational contexts influence the access to organizational and social resources like social networks, community, professional opportunities, and same-identity role models that were important for FOC to construct a leader identity.

Unlike leader identity construction, research on academic careers has been explored in higher education research, but largely focusing on graduate socialization and early-career scholar experiences. Left behind are the needs, experiences, and necessary interventions to create a successful academic career post-tenure. From this study, this unique academic career moment is a pivotal time for faculty to rethink career aspirations, gain administrative experience, participate in shared governance, and "try on" new academic and leader identities. Navigating racialized organizational contexts and earning tenure provides a distinct empirical time period to capture faculty reflections and attitudes about the potential for academic leadership. There is a dire need to understand the evolving academic profession and experiences among multiple career stages, fields/disciplines, and institutional types for FOC and the catalyzing contexts, experiences, and interactions contribute to constructing a leader identity.

Academic leadership in higher education is seen as an individual activity and solo journey, yet for participants in this study they saw drew inspiration from role models in their racial community and aspired to empower and elevate future underrepresented leaders. Interventional programming and leadership development initiatives need to not only recognize the need for focused programming on FOC but center the ways in which communities of Color

value leadership and leaders not as individualistic endeavors but an empowerment of a future for the collective. Because FOC have a linked fate (Dawson, 1994) with their racial communities, interventional programming and future research should focus on leadership as a collective activity that empowers individuals to connect with collectives for empowerment and justice.

This dissertation contributes to further theoretical development and empirical work of leader identity construction within academic leadership by centering the experiences of FOC. While this study explicitly implicates organizations with a responsibility to provide social contexts conducive to FOC leader identity construction, it also provides roadmaps and consultation for FOC interested in becoming a leader on what relationships, interactions, organizational contexts can be both catalyzing and inhibiting to constructing a leader identity. The study also directly makes the responsibility of leader identity construction of current executive leaders that have the power and influence to ensure organizational systems and structures are intentionally designed to provide equitable access to academic leadership to FOC who have been underrepresented for too long. There has been no greater need for higher education to develop, recruit, hire, and support the very best and diverse academic leaders. From graduate student to president, American higher education will only achieve aims of equality and excellence by providing equitable interventions and inclusive contexts for all faculty, staff, and students to have the opportunity lead and advance American higher education.

**Appendix A: Sample Recruitment Email**

Dear ___,

My name is Jeff Grim and I am current doctoral fellow at the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) and doctoral student in Higher Education at the University of Michigan. I am requesting your participation for a study titled, *Understanding Associate Professors of Color Perceptions of Academic Leadership.*

This project is designed to understand the experiences of newly tenured faculty of color at research universities. In particular, the project seeks to understand the perceptions of academic leadership pathways and roles for underrepresented faculty. I am interviewing newly tenured faculty members (i.e., received tenure within ~ 36 months) that also identify as a "person of color." We hope this research will contribute to both scholarship and practice designed to enhance access and interventions for more diverse higher education leaders and faculty success.

I would like to schedule a confidential, recorded conversation with you to learn more about your background, context, experiences, and perceptions of leadership. I anticipate the interview lasting between 1-2 hours. Depending on interviewee availability and preference, the interview could be over 1 or 2 time periods. If you are willing to participate in the research study, please email me to set up an in-person, video, or telephone interview.

This project is being supervised by faculty advisors, Dr. Alford Young (Professor of Sociology and Public Policy) and Dr. Tabbye Chavous (Professor of Education and Psychology & Director of NCID) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. If you have any questions she can be reached at, ayoun@umich.edu or tchavous@umich.edu, respectively.

If you would like to participate in this research study, please let me know of your availability and convenient (confidential) location. I am happy to meet you in your office, meeting room, or I'm happy to reserve a space in NCID or the School of Education.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration.

Take care,

Jeffrey K. Grim
Doctoral Fellow – National Center for Institutional Diversity
Doctoral Candidate – Higher Education
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

jgrim@umich.edu

**Appendix B: Interview Protocol**

**Name:**

**Date/Time:**

**Statement**

Thanks for agreeing to interview with me. This project, Experiences of Newly Tenured Faculty of Color, is a part of a larger set of projects at the National Center for Institutional Diversity to examine how universities are creating mechanisms to diversify academic leadership and understand the unique experiences of faculty of color.

As we go through the interview, I want you to know that I recognize discussing topics around identity, especially race, can be sensitive and I want you to feel as comfortable as possible sharing as much as you would like.

I appreciate your time to chat today. This interview will be recorded for research purposes and often takes about an hour and a half. If for any reason during the interview you would like to stop the recording or interview, please let me know. All information will be confidential and will only be accessible by the research team. Any information used for publication will be de-identified so it cannot be affiliated with a specific participant.

I will begin by asking questions about your current faculty role and previous experiences. We will then talk about your thoughts about leadership.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

**Introduction**

The first set of questions are about your current role and your time as a graduate student.

1. To start off, how long have you been at the institution?
    - Did you have any previous roles (postdoc, faculty positions, etc.)?

2. Please describe your current activities and responsibilities as a faculty member.
    - Any additional responsibilities? (advising student organizations, committee chairs, etc.)
        - How did you come into these service roles?

3. Thinking outside of the institution, are you involved in any professional associations/societies or community organizations?
   - If so, what types of involvement or formal leadership roles have you taken?
   - Why did you get involved?
   - Has it been a meaningful experience?
   - Have you gained any skills or knowledge from your involvement?
   - Do you plan to continue your involvement?

4. Now that you have received tenure, has your role changed? For example, how do you spend time? Volunteer or told to take on service responsibilities?
   - When exactly was tenure received?
   - Or how do you foresee and/or plan your role changing, if at all?

5. How did you become interested in your research area and how has that evolved over your career?
   - Doctoral student? Pre-Tenure? Post-Tenure?
   - Did you receive external influence/advice on the direction of your research?
   - How do you feel about your current research agenda?
   - People who mentored or shaped career: mentors, family, etc.

**Faculty Experiences**
The next set of questions will be in reference to your experiences as a faculty member.

6. How would you describe your current feelings about your role as a faculty member?

7. What have been your most meaningful experiences as a faculty member?

8. What have been your most disappointing or frustrating experiences as a faculty member?

9. When you were applying for tenure were there any interactions or experiences with your colleagues that stand out?
   - What were you feeling during this time?

10. Talk about your style of both advising and teaching students.
    - What students do you work with?
    - Are there specific student experiences that stand out for you?

11. You previously mentioned some responsibilities you have in your current role, are there other service roles/responsibilities that you are currently doing?
    - How have they changed over your career?
    - How did you decide, for those that you have agency with, what service roles to do?

12. What are your relationships like with your faculty colleagues in your department? School?
    - Who would you consider your closest faculty colleagues? Why?

- How have these changed over time?
- Types of faculty (senior, in sub-field, etc.)


13. What types of relationships do you have with academic leaders (i.e., department chair, dean, etc.)?

**Leadership Potential**
Now the next few questions are related to your personal understandings and thoughts about leadership.

14. How would you define "leadership?"
    a. What do you think are the differences between "leadership" and "academic leadership" if any?

15. Who would you consider a successful academic leader and why?

16. What about an unsuccessful academic leader and why?

17. Do you have regular contact with any leaders of color?
    - Context(s)
    - Types of interactions
    - Meaningfulness

18. Has anyone ever encouraged you to take be an academic leader?
    - Who?
    - What was their reasoning?
    - What was your reaction?

19. Have you taken on any leadership/administrative/managerial roles on campus since being a faculty member?
    - How were you perceived by others?
    - What types of interactions did you have with other leaders or peers?
    - What were your feelings towards this experience?

20. If your dean approached you today and asked you to be department chair or associate dean – how would you react?
    - Emotions?
    - Thoughts?
    - Future?

21. Do you see yourself as an academic leader in the future?

**Interest in Being an Academic Leader**
Since you indicated you were interested in potentially being an academic leader, I have a few questions related to your interest.

22. What are your main motivations for wanting to be an academic leader?

23. What concerns do you have about being an academic leader?

24. What advice have mentors and colleagues given you about being an academic leader?

25. What strengths or assets do you currently have that would help you to be a successful leader? Why?

26. What areas do you think you would need to improve in order to become an academic leader?

27. How do you think your perspectives on leadership are formed?
    - Examples/experiences
    - Mentors
    - Identities

**Not Interested in Being a Leader**
Since you indicated you were not interested in being an academic leader, I have a few questions about that.

25. Why are you not interested in becoming an academic leader?

26. Is there anything that would make you change your mind about becoming an academic leader?

27. What advice have mentors and colleagues given you about being an academic leader?

28. Even though you do not have an interest in being an academic leader, do you think you could be a successful academic leader if you needed to be?

29. If for some reason you had to take on a leadership role like department chair, what strengths do you think you would possess?

30. And what areas of improvement do you think would need in order to be an academic leader?

28. How do you think your perspectives on leadership are formed?
    - Examples/experiences
    - Mentors
    - Identities

**Etc.**
There are just a few more questions to conclude the interview.

29. What are your long-term professional goals?

30. There are many different leadership development programs designed to provide training for potential academic leaders – are you aware of any? What do you know about them? What are your impressions or thoughts about them?

31. Why do you think there are not more academic leaders of color?

32. What can UM [or insert institution] do to develop more diverse leaders?

33. This concludes the interview, is there anything I should know about your experience or thoughts on leadership?


**Conclusion**
Thank you for your time today. Again, your answers are confidential and will only be shared with members of the research team and will anonymized if used for publication. I hope this research will contribute to the scholarship on leadership in higher education along with influencing leadership development programs designed to diversify those in leadership positions.

**Next Steps**
If something comes to you later that you would like to add – feel free to email me at any point.

Thank you!

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