

An Academic Administrator of Color's Career Development Narrative in Postsecondary Education



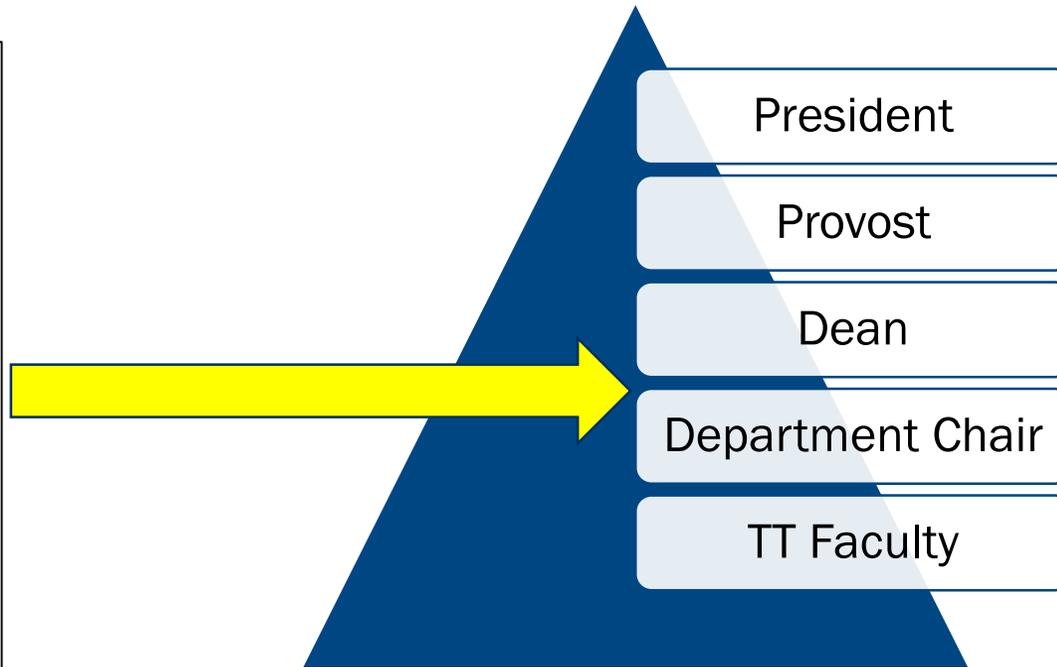
C. Dean Campbell, EdD
Assistant Dean for Academic Services
The Graduate College
cdcampbe@ncat.edu

A Middle Manager of Color

1. T-shaped scholar/practitioner
2. Learning by doing/Constructivism
3. Office is my petri dish
4. “I” as data collection instrument

Academic Middle Mangers in HE

- Titles:
 - > Directors
 - > Assistant Deans
 - > Associate Deans
 - > Assistant Vice Pres.
- Preparation
- T-Shaped Professionals
- Demographics



The Study of Career Paths

- Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994)
- Life Design (Savikas, 2012)
- Multi-frame leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2013)



Purpose of Study

To qualitatively explore career development in diversifying academic administration.

Significance

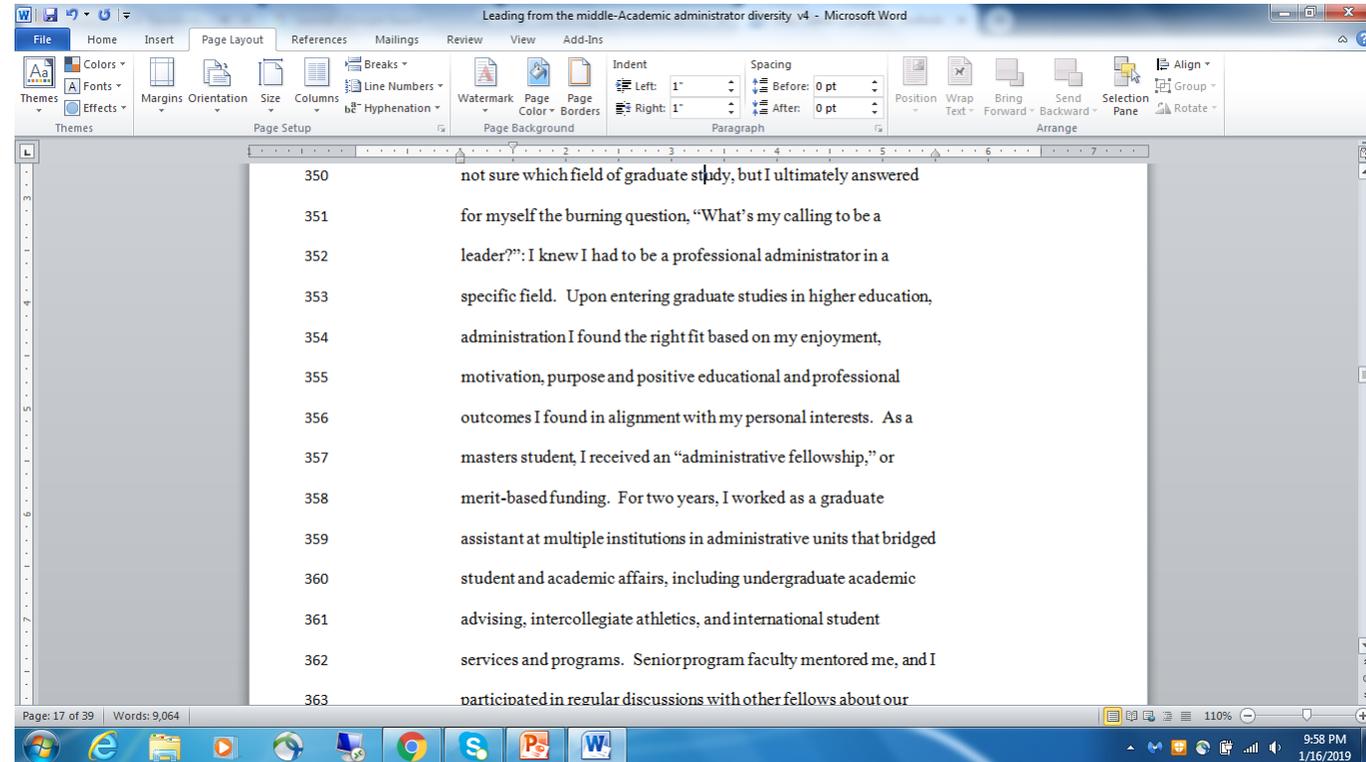
- Leadership succession
- Access/Equity



1. How do higher education experiences shape career decisions to enter and persist in the academic administration for one African American?
2. Sense-making how career transitions impact career development?
3. Increasing racial representation in academic administration leadership?

Methods

1. Career Journal
2. Life Design/Restorying
3. Coding
4. Categorizing Themes
5. Data representation
6. Data interpretation

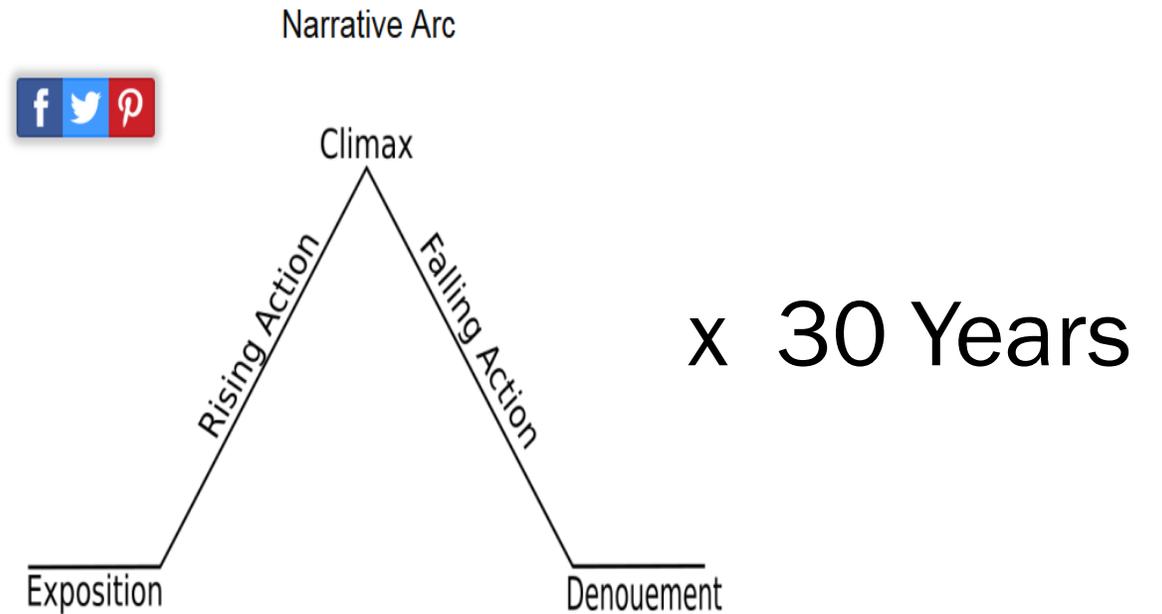


Methods

Life designing

Small stories as tools
for building careers out
of complex social
interactions

(Savikas, 2012)



Career Journal: Narrative Summary

I graduated an all-league, decorated **basketball player** from an **Ivy League** institution... I still felt like an “**imposter**” ... was I an affirmative-action student?... an **exhausting** seven-year career exploration... ultimately answered... “What’s my **calling** to be a leader?” ... As a doctoral student, I found the **study and practice** of the topic diversifying doctoral education. . . As a **second-career** academic administrator, I became active in multiple external organizations at both the state and national levels... I received a **promotion** into an assistant dean position...called “Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE)... to live out my “**scholar-practitioner**” identity. .. I got **laid-off** due to the great economic turndown of 2008-09... a decrease in pay and position level...I pursued professional development and leadership opportunities outside of the HBCU... at both the national and regional levels. ... to keep momentum in the **rebounding trajectory** in my career, I accepted a job at a larger HBCU graduate school... the “feel” of the racial climate in the classroom has been **less isolating**...I have engaged my own practice as both a teacher and an the PWI campus climate, academic affairs administrator more **critically**.

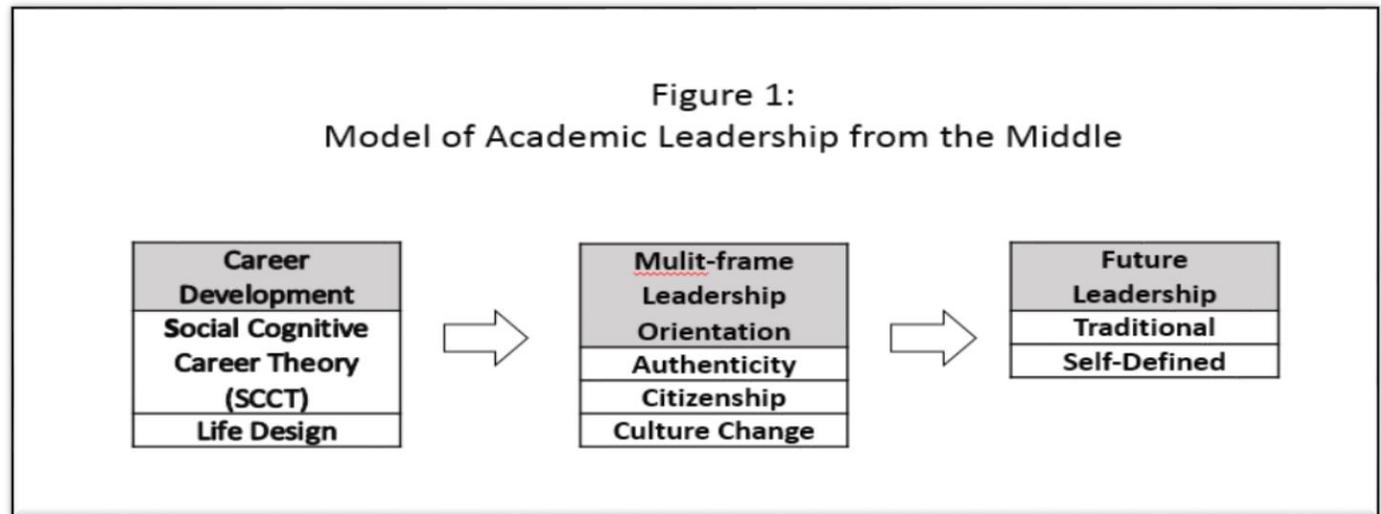
Methods

Coding

Parent codes

- authenticity
- citizenship
- information gathering
- academic norms

Use of established literature on the topic (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)



Methods

Categorizing and Themes

- Typological Analysis
- (Hatch, 2002)
- 3 RQs

General Sub-themes

- Undergraduate leadership at elite PWI
- Prolonged career search
- Career change to postsecondary administration
- Graduate fellowship experiences
- Academic administrator at PWI Middle manager success and lay-off
- Crossing PWI and HBCU boundaries as a manager
- Finding the right “professional fit” through administration, scholarship, and teaching

Methods

Data Representation

Themes

- Calling to academic administration through graduate education
- Citizenship in professional administrator communities
- Culture change and transformation in the administrator pipeline

Working my first job in student affairs administration. I ultimately answered the burning question, “What’s my calling to be a leader?”

I accepted a job at a larger HBCU graduate school—again taking a newly created assistant dean position.

It’s a lower position but having a job during a recession is a promotion!”:

Methods

Data Interpretation

- Culture
- Trustworthiness/Authenticity
- Theory development

Results: RQ1

How do higher education experiences shape an academic administrator's career?

Graduate education opens career doors and helps define the “leadership self”

1. URM imposter at PWI
2. Calling in life
3. scholar-practitioner

Results: RQ2

How do administrator and faculty career paths shape career development?

Citizenship within faculty and administrator communities fosters professional identity development.

1. Ambassador for the profession
2. Mentoring and/or role modeling others

Results: RQ3

What significance does “middle leadership” have for expanding the pool of persons of color in academic administration?

Subjective, non-traditional career pathways among scholar/practitioners of color close the skills alignment gap.

1. Protean career development
2. Study of race in higher education
3. Non-faculty careers in higher education

Acknowledgements

1. NCAT Graduate College
2. Colleagues: Drs. Edelma Huntley, Karri Holley, and Sweeney Windcheif
3. Editorial Staff at TQR

Thank you!

References

- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. SUNY Press.
- Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 45(1), 79-122.
- Savickas, M. L. (2012). Life design: A paradigm for career intervention in the 21st century. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 90(1), 13-19.