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PROMISE, POTENTIAL, OPPORTUNITY:
SUCCESSFUL HBCU PRESIDENTIAL FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
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ABSTRACT

PROMISE, POTENTIAL, OPPORTUNITY: SUCCESSFUL HBCU PRESIDENTIAL FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

Felicia D. Blow
Old Dominion University, 2021
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Felicia Commodore

With roots going back to the early 1830s and up to today, African-Americans continue to choose Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) for their post-secondary education needs. To understand the fundraising strategies utilized at HBCUs, this dissertation examines the efforts of a targeted group of HBCU presidents who have excelled in the philanthropic enterprise of fundraising for their institutions, achieving success in ways their fellow presidential peers have not. Due to a multitude of issues, HBCUs have historically been underfunded, and many are facing challenges from a resource development perspective. Because of this chronic issue, the area of fundraising strategies utilized at certain HBCUs is important to address.

To gain greater insights, my multiple case study examined seven HBCU presidents, their fundraising strategies and approaches. My findings point to very consistent practices among the HBCU presidents interviewed. They each established a clear vision for their institutions and their fundraising priorities and were focused on getting their key constituents behind the vision. A few of the key themes which emerged involved the importance of developing and executing strategic organizational plans, based on research, data and metrics, and the importance of building effective internal and external relationships to advance HBCU fundraising programs. Overall, the findings from my study provide a clearer understanding of fundraising at HBCUs from the point of view of seven HBCU presidents. HBCUs are staple institutions of the higher education landscape, educating nearly one-third of all African-Americans in the U.S. (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). Therefore, it is critical that these institutions continue to not only survive but thrive.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Rev. Alvin Blow, my daughter Victoria, my son Trevor, and my little fella Alvin Jr. (in heaven), who (in their own, individual and unique ways), encouraged me to pursue my dreams and complete my dissertation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

"HBCUs are among America's national treasures that must be preserved and protected for future generations." This quote is from a *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* magazine article, penned by Congressman James E. Clyburn (SC) and United Negro College Fund President Michael Lomax, entitled HBCUs are America's National Treasures [Clyburn & Lomax, 2016, para. 10]. The term "Historically Black Colleges and Universities" (HBCU) is a federal designation that describes any African-American college or university that was established before 1964, with a principal mission of educating African-Americans (Arroyo & Gasman, 2014).

Despite the "treasure" that HBCUs are believed to be, numerous contemporary and historical reports show that HBCUs have been disproportionately under-funded by local, state, and federal governments for many years (Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010). Researchers also assert that HBCUs have been negatively stereotyped – either by perceptions of fiscal mismanagement or that they are led by ill-equipped leaders (Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994). Relatedly, there is concern that these misperceptions have discouraged private funding of HBCUs (Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Gasman, 2011).

Despite the challenges, HBCUs are outperforming Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) in many respects (Simms, 2014; Tarrant et al., 2018). One example is cited in a study which described various institutions as "invisible colleges" due to their obscurity and the perceived lack of concern for their welfare by targeted entities (Tarrant et al., 2018). In Tarrant et al.'s study (2018), HBCUs were among the groups investigated as "invisible colleges." Interestingly, in terms of survival, 82% of the HBCUs that were open in the 1967-1968 period

were still open and thriving in the 2012-2013 period (Tarrant et al, 2018). Non-HBCU persistence was lower (72%). This study thereby demonstrated the sustainability and durability of HBCUs (Tarrant et al, 2018).

One study also shows that many HBCUs are using strategic and entrepreneurial tactics to grow funding for their institutions (Williams, 2010). Additionally, HBCU presidents are now more aggressively and strategically tackling the issue of disproportionate funding for their colleges and universities (Hawkins, 2004; Williams, 2010). This new posture includes seeking innovative initiatives to build business plans for their varied institutional functions (Speck, 2010; Williams, 2010).

As will be described in Chapter Two, there is much still to learn regarding fundraising and resource development at HBCUs, as well as the HBCU presidents charged with leading their fundraising programs. For my study, I explored how specific HBCU presidents have effectively addressed the growing fundraising needs for their institutions. This research reviews the factors that helped these leaders succeed in ways that other HBCU presidents have not. In this study, I described the role of a university president in the area of fundraising, and I described the history, challenges, and opportunities in the domain of fundraising and resource development, which exist specifically for HBCU presidents and their stakeholders.

History of HBCUs in America

HBCUs have played an important role in enhancing equal educational opportunities for African-American students for nearly 200 years (Bracey, 2017). Cheyney University located in Pennsylvania, was the first HBCU to open in 1837 (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Cheyney's opening was followed by two other HBCUs, Lincoln University, located in Pennsylvania (1854), and Wilberforce University, located in Ohio (1856) (U.S. Department of

Education, 1991). Since their openings, HBCUs have graduated countless leaders in their respective fields including notable African-American leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Morehouse College), Oprah Winfrey (attended Tennessee State University), Marian Wright Edelman (Spelman College), Thurgood Marshall (Lincoln University/Howard University Law School), Jerry Rice (Mississippi Valley State), Samuel L. Jackson (Morehouse College), Common (Florida A&M University), Booker T. Washington & Wanda Sykes (Hampton University), The Tuskegee Airmen (Tuskegee University), and U.S. Senator Kamala Harris and Toni Morrison (Howard University) (Ireland, 2018; Mhute, 2019; Washington, 1965).

As is well documented, before 1861, there was no structured higher education system for African-American students (Bracey, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Public policy and certain statutory provisions prohibited the education of African-Americans in various parts of the nation. However, following the Civil War, public support of higher education for African-American students was reflected in the enactment of the Second Morrill Act in 1890 (Act, 1890; U.S. Department of Education, 1991). The Second Morrill Act (Act, 1890) required states with racially segregated public higher education systems to provide a land-grant institution for African-American students, whenever a land-grant institution was established for White students (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). After the passage of the Second Morrill Act, public land-grant institutions, specifically for African-Americans were established in each of America's southern and border-states (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

However, things changed markedly in the late 1880s. Supreme Court rulings impacted HBCUs – both positively and negatively. For example, the 1896 landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896) upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation laws for public facilities as long as the segregated facilities were equal in quality. The *Plessy* Supreme

Court decision stipulated: (1) a state must offer schooling for African-Americans as soon as it was provided for Whites; (2) African-American students must receive the same treatment as White students; and 3) a state must provide facilities of comparable quality for African-American and White students (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). This decision established the "separate but equal" doctrine in public education (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896).

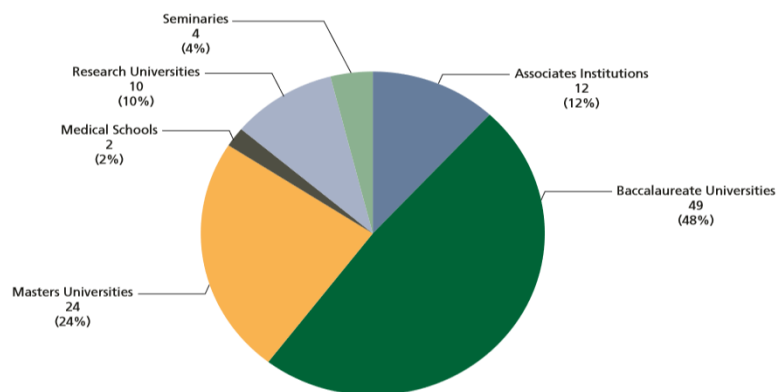
On a positive note, during the time following the Plessy decision (1896), African-American college enrollment grew markedly, and students were encouraged to focus on teacher training to provide a pool of instructors for segregated schools (Bracey, 2017). This decision, however, also represents the start of how education funding for HBCUs began to be fiscally lopsided as compared to PWIs (Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010). Some researchers feel that reduced investment into HBCUs continues to carry forward today (Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010).

Fast-forwarding ahead, by 1953, thousands of African-American students were enrolled in HBCUs such as Fisk University, Hampton University, Howard University, Meharry Medical College, Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Tuskegee Institute, as well as a host of other HBCUs located in southern states (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). These private and public institutions served the important mission of providing education for the African-American population in a racially segregated society (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). However, in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court *Brown* decision (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954), the court rejected the "separate but equal" doctrine and held that racially segregated public schools deprive African-American children of equal protection guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Therefore, the *Plessy* decision, which had governed public education policy for more than a half-century, was overturned.

Despite the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown*, most HBCUs remained segregated (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). The key outcome was that HBCUs were left with poorer facilities and lower budgets as compared to PWIs (Kujovich, 1994). Additionally, lack of adequate libraries and scientific and research equipment placed a serious handicap on many HBCUs and marked the beginning of a major shift for HBCU enrollment and funding (Kujovich, 1994). After the *Brown* decision, increased competition, and school integration changed the landscape for HBCUs dramatically (Kujovich, 1994). Additionally, many HBCUs began to face a variety of infrastructure, operational, and other challenges. Today, there are 101 accredited four-year HBCUs (NCES, 2019). The range of offerings that these institutions provide is wide and varies (Lee & Keys, 2013). Figure 1 provides a graphical overview of the many different types of HBCUs in the U.S.

Also, nearly one-third of all African-American students who pursue a college degree today attend an HBCU for their education (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). The importance of HBCUs for the education of African-American students is demonstrated with statistics on graduation rates. For example, in 2017–18, HBCUs conferred to African-American students 43 percent of the 5,500 associate's degrees awarded, 81 percent of the 32,600 bachelor's degrees awarded, 71 percent of the 7,700 master's degrees awarded, and 62 percent of the 2,500 doctoral degrees awarded (NCES, 2019). Comparatively, while there are more than 100 HBCUs in the U.S., there are over 4300 PWIs in the U.S. (NCES, 2019). The below figure describes the categories within which HBCUs fall.

Figure 1.

Range of HBCU Institutional Types in the U.S.

Note: This figures depicts the types of HBCUs represented within the higher education system; it shows that the majority of HBCUs (48%) are baccalaureate universities. By J. M. Lee & S. W. Keys, 2013, in the *Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities Office of Access and Success Discussion Paper*, retrieved from <https://www.aplu.org/library/repositioning-hbcus-for-the-future-access-success-research-and-innovation/file>.

Also, to connect the history of HBCUs to fundraising, an important measure of the success of a fundraising program is its institutional endowment (Burk, 2003). The bigger a school's endowment, the more it can spend on attracting highly qualified students, regardless of need, and on providing those students with the academic services essential to their success (Philanthropy News Digest, 2017). However, HBCUs have one-eighth the average size of endowments as historically White colleges and universities (Philanthropy News Digest, 2017; Toldson and Cooper, 2014). Despite the imbalance in endowment size, HBCUs historically have provided affordable educations to students of color, graduating the majority of America's African

American teachers, doctors, judges, engineers, and other scientific and technological professionals (NCES, 2019). Connecting this history of HBCUs to today, the single factor that was and continues to be predominant with HBCUs is funding and resource development (Gasman, 2010; Sav, 2010; Tindall, 2008; Williams, 2010).

Philanthropy in Higher Education, Overview

"Wealth begets wealth," is a quote in *Philanthropy News Digest* (2017) by minority-serving institution scholar Marybeth Gasman. This quote aptly describes the state of philanthropy in America. According to the CASE Voluntary Support of Education annual survey, in 2019, giving to higher education was just over \$49 billion, a more than 6.1% increase from 2018 (which also was a record setting year) (Kaplan, 2020). The bulk of dollars to higher education came from alumni and non-alumni individuals (Kaplan, 2020). Also, major forces such as economic change, demographic shifts, and technological innovation, undergird the key trends in philanthropy to higher education, driving a focus on large gifts of a million dollars or more from individuals (Osili, 2019).

Among the chief reasons for this growth in philanthropy to higher education is shrinking government support (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019). As is well documented, federal, and state government entities have been reducing financial support for higher education for more than two decades (Mitchell, Leachman, & Saenz, 2019). This reduced funding is forcing colleges and universities to seek funding from private individual donors, as well as from corporations and foundations (Nicholson, 2007).

Fundraising Challenges for HBCUs

In meeting the needs of their institutions, and the demands of their stakeholders, it is noted that presidents spend more than 50 percent of their time on fundraising (Bourgeois, 2016;

Hodson, 2010). But for an HBCU president to achieve the same level of dollars raised of a PWI president, the time demand can be even greater (Kujovich, 1993; Lee & Keys, 2013).

Additionally, the rate of HBCU alumni giving has been a consistent challenge for HBCU presidents and HBCU fundraising programs. Alumni giving is a cornerstone of most universities' fundraising programs (Cohen, 2006; Robinson, L., 2013; Tindall, 2008; Williams, 2010).

However, the capacity, interest, and engagement of alumni at PWIs appear to be more intensified than that of alumni from many HBCUs (Graves, 2017). Also, an analysis of HBCU alumni giving trends show that these alumni are less inclined to give regularly to their alma maters than PWI alumni (Graves, 2017; Robinson, L., 2013; U.S. News and World Report, 2019). In a U.S. News and World Report examination, the average giving rate for HBCU alumni was 22.8 percent (Friedman, 2017). This percentage for HBCUs still pales in comparison to PWI giving (Graves, 2017; HBCU Money Magazine, 2020; Robinson, L., 2013), with the highest giving rate for a PWI at 59 percent in 2018 (Kowarski, 2019).

However, among a handful HBCUs, this trend is changing (U.S. News and World Report, 2017.) See Figure 2 below of top alumni giving rates in 2017 among HBCUs. While there are outliers, such as Claflin and Spelman, which show very good engagement, the vast majority of other HBCUs fall below the average rate of alumni giving generally (Friedman, 2017). The area of alumni giving to HBCUs represents a significant gap in scholarly knowledge and understanding.

Figure 2.

Top HBCUs for Alumni Giving.

SCHOOL (STATE)	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF ALUMNI WHO DONATED	U.S. NEWS HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RANK
Clayton University (SC)	47.7	9
Spelman College (GA)	39.3	1
Bennett College (NC)	35	17
Lane College (TN)	32.9	RNP*
Fisk University (TN)	22.8	8
Tougaloo College (MS)	18.7	11
Tuskegee University (AL)	18.3	4 (tie)
Johnson C. Smith University (NC)	17.4	15
Xavier University of Louisiana	16.7	6
Hampton University (VA)	15.2	3

Note: This figures depicts the rate of alumni giving from the top 10 HBCUs. By J.

Friedman, 2017, in the *U.S. News and World Report*, retrieved from Historically Black Colleges Where Alumni Donate the Most <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/the-short-list-college/articles/2017-07-11/10-historically-black-colleges-where-alumni-donate-the-most>.

Another fundraising challenge is depicted by the level of endowments for HBCUs, as compared to PWIs (Walker, 2019). Research shows that the level of endowments for most PWIs is far larger than that of HBCUs (NCES, Table 333.90, 2019; Walker, 2019). To illustrate this point, there are three HBCUs that have endowments greater than \$250 million. However, there are more than 270 PWIs that have endowments of this level (National Association of College and University Business Officers, 2020). The importance of endowments is far-reaching. Well-financed endowments allow universities to award more scholarships and set lower tuition rates, among other things (Bradburd & Mann, 1993; Nicholson, 2007). Therefore, colleges with larger

endowments can often give students bigger financial award packages (Bradburd & Mann, 1993; Nicholson, 2007). Alternatively, the fewer endowment dollars available, the less funds available for student scholarships and other operational needs (Bradburd & Mann, 1993; Nicholson, 2007). With more than two-thirds of HBCU students needing some form of financial aid when they begin college (Hackett, 2016), this endowment gap can pose a major challenge for HBCUs and their students.

Also, additional research conducted on HBCU funding shows a pattern of funding disparities by targeted groups (federal, state and local governments, as well as corporations and foundations) in their financial support of HBCUs as compared to PWIs (Brown & Burnette, 2014; Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010). Generally, the key outcome is that HBCU Presidents must work harder, than their PWI peers, in raising funds for their institutions – particularly considering shrinking government investment and the competition for philanthropic dollars.

Purpose Statement

As a result of the history and challenges previously identified regarding HBCU fundraising, the purpose of my study is to examine how a select group of exemplary fundraising leaders among HBCU presidents used fundraising strategies to respond to declining state and federal funding, and also overcame challenges specific to HBCUs, including but not limited to issues such as negative leadership stereotyping and lower alumni financial support. My multiple case study scrutinizes HBCU presidents who are described as “exemplars” in order to understand their strategies for fundraising and resource development success. My emphasis was in understanding how these HBCU presidents were meeting their institutions' wide array of academic and infrastructure needs. The factor of race and culture also was addressed. I studied

how these particular presidents made decisions that produced the most efficient outcomes through fundraising to fulfill their institutional missions. I sought to identify if, and then how, the selected presidents collaborated with local, regional, and national corporations and foundations to generate funding. Further, I assessed if the practices shared by the participants are adaptable or transferrable to other HBCUs. Additional gaps that were addressed include those regarding specific fundraising strategies used by HBCU presidents and stakeholder engagement in fundraising for their HBCUs. This research has added to the body of knowledge and address gaps in the literature regarding how HBCU presidents navigate the prevalent challenges in HBCU fundraising.

This research also strengthens opportunities for other HBCUs to consider such practices and provides specific insights for other audiences, as to the efforts employed. My study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What have HBCU presidents, who have been leaders in their fundraising efforts, done to institute strategic fundraising programs at their institutions?
2. How have these HBCU presidents navigated challenges while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions?
 - a. What are some major events that have effected fundraising efforts?
 - b. What was most challenging about these events in terms of fundraising?
3. How did these HBCU presidents approach their decision-making processes and make choices regarding their fundraising practices?
 - a. In what ways did race come into decision-making processes?
 - b. In what ways did any other identities impact decision-making?

Significance

Professional Significance

The research questions addressed offer immediate relevance from a professional significance perspective because of my focus on fundraising within HBCUs and the critical importance of addressing long-term strategies in this regard. Further, because higher education institutions face complex challenges, and as enrollment numbers decline and traditional revenue sources are no longer predictable, having a clear institutional fundraising strategy is more important than ever (Hemelt & Marcotte, 2016; Speck, 2010). In addition, HBCUs educate nearly one-third of all African-American students who attend college; however, in the last three decades, there has been an acceleration of financial challenges for these inimitable institutions (Bracey, 2017; NCES, Fast Facts, 2019; Osei, 2019). As examples, over this period, several HBCUs have closed including, Morristown College, Tennessee; Lewis College of Business, Michigan; St. Paul's College, Virginia; and Concordia College, Alabama (Mhute, 2019).

Additionally, while they remain open, there are several HBCUs that have had accreditation issues and/or are no longer accredited, such as Morris Brown College and Paine College (Hawkins, 2013; Osei, 2019; Whitford, 2020). Loss of accreditation can be debilitating for an institution of higher education, largely due to the inability for it to receive federal financial aid (Eaton, 2012). The inability for students to use their aid at unaccredited institutions means those students will have to transfer to accredited institutions. The majority of all colleges rely on the federal financial aid revenue source (Eaton, 2012). Further, HBCUs graduate African-American students at significantly higher rates than PWIs, even though HBCU students generally have lower standardized test scores and have a greater financial need when they begin their academic careers (Nichols & Evans-Bell, 2017).

Finally, my study offers a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge regarding HBCUs, as it addresses gaps in the literature regarding HBCU leadership, fundraising, and the strategies needed to become excellent HBCU presidential fundraisers. My research identifies experiences and opportunities upon which to build effective fundraising programs at HBCUs. My research also may impact the practices of state and federal legislators and other key stakeholder groups as it provides information to inform future policy making decisions to better support HBCUs and their stakeholders, including students, parents, and faculty. In conclusion, this research has the capacity to influence the practices of existing HBCU leaders in their engagement with national and international private funding bodies.

Scholarly Significance

Education is the best means of creating jobs and a better quality of life for a nation's citizenry (Ozturk, 2001). Greater access to quality education for African-Americans, in particular, will not only close the educational achievement gap, but also the African-American American wealth gap (Ozturk, 2001). In addition, America's HBCUs are a key to closing the educational attainment gap in the African-American community (Clyburn & Lomax, 2016). Ensuring that HBCUs survive and thrive is important to society, starting with African-American students (Hawkins, 2014). The scholarly significance of my research is that it will be an extension of knowledge regarding public policy perspectives and considerations as they relate to HBCU fundraising. This study may extend the understanding and awareness of the historical funding challenges of HBCUs. Finally, this research also contributes to scholarly knowledge regarding leadership practices at HBCUs.

Methods Overview

I employed a case study approach for my research. I undertook an effort that involved understanding assumptions, values, and personal orientations of the HBCU presidents participating. This information would not otherwise be possible to secure in a quantitative examination (Dooley, 2002; Yin, 2014). I also identified variations in definitions, and captured perspectives on the issues that differed from president to president. Finally, my case study research combined both objective reports and subjective data to achieve an in-depth understanding of the processes of fundraising and resource development for the selected HBCU presidents (Stake, 1978). The objective data includes reports from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) on endowment levels for HBCUs. The subjective data includes individual participant interviews.

Participant Recruitment

I believe that a multiple-case study will yield results that are more expansive from which to consider future strategies. A group of four to six cases represent enough participants for appropriate research in qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). To that end, I had seven cases for my analysis. The cases each included the president and the chief development officer from each selected HBCU. Participant recruitment for the study occurred in stages. First, I reviewed an up-to-date list of open and accredited HBCUs. Currently, there are 101 HBCUs located in the U.S. (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). Next, I reviewed the endowment levels and the endowment growth rates for each of the HBCUs selected. After this step, I conducted a careful review of the tenure of the presidents of the top-performing HBCUs to ensure that each president had been with their current HBCU for the endowment analysis period; for those presidents not with their current HBCU for the entire period I utilized other means to validate their qualification

for participation in my study. I go into more detail on the other validation qualifications and other attributes sought in Chapter 3, Methodologies and Procedures.

Next, I sought to include participants from a minimum of two private HBCUs and two public HBCUs, as well as a mix of institutions distributed throughout the U.S. - as opposed to limited to a single geographic region. There are several key geographic regions where HBCUs are predominately located. They include the Northeast, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, and the Deep South (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). There also are HBCUs in California (Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science) and in the Virgin Islands (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). Not having all HBCUs from a homogenous region was an important consideration because the culture and geographic differences in stakeholder engagement was expected to provide an additional element of discovery. I also included participants from both large and small institutions based on enrollments, as well as diverse student populations (i.e. – not more than one single-sex institution) (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). After selecting the HBCUs that fit the boundaries reviewed, I conducted outreach via email with identified presidents to seek their participation in the study.

Data Collection

My study involved semi-structured interviews directed by interview protocols to answer my overall research questions (Creswell, 2014). I conducted the interviews in semi-formal settings, via the Zoom tool that is a cloud-based virtual video and audio communications application. The interviews were guided in a conversational style, allowing an expressive conversation to develop (Creswell, 2014). The interviews used predominantly open-ended questions.

Participant Criteria

Boundaries for my multiple case study included the following: (1) the presidents participating must be in a presidential leadership role, (2) the president participants must be from HBCUs, and (3) the presidents participating must have been effective, have had successful private fundraising campaigns, or are successful ("exemplary") in their fundraising efforts, through the means described earlier.

Data analysis

The primary coding technique used was descriptive. This approach answered the questions of who, what, where, and how the data were collected. I used descriptive coding in order to gain a greater understanding of the thoughts, perspectives, and attitudes related to the area of presidential leadership in HBCU fundraising (Saldana, 2012). The secondary coding technique utilized was thematic coding. According to Saldana (2012), thematic coding involves identifying passages of text that are linked by a common theme or idea.

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research embraces multiple standards of quality known as credibility, rigor, and trustworthiness (Morrow, 2016). To ensure trustworthiness, I conducted reviews of documentation, including news clippings and internal fundraising records, and archival records (i.e. statistical data from government). I ensured credibility through triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). Additionally, I utilized the peer debriefing technique that allowed qualified peer researchers to review and assess participant interview transcripts, and the final themes of my study (Morse, 2015). I also developed an audit trail (Creswell, 2014). The audit trail highlighted each step of my data collection and analysis processes and provided a rationale for the decisions I made. Finally, I integrated member checking into my research process to allow my results to be reviewed by participants so that they may check for accuracy and to ensure the

information presented was in alignment with their shared experiences (Birt, et al., 2016; Doyle, 2007).

Epistemological Stance

My research integrated the epistemological stance of constructivism. Constructivism is defined, as "the view of that all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality is contingent upon human practices, constructed in and out of an interaction between human beings and their world" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 42). The constructivist viewpoint is appropriate for my research design and questions as I focused on individuals to gain information and to help improve understanding from the view of the lived experiences of the selected HBCU presidents participating in my study. In addition, with the constructivist viewpoint, there is no single true or valid interpretation (Schwandt, 1994; Windschitl, 2002).

Conceptual Framework

My conceptual framework primarily used the transformational leadership model, considered through the lens of stakeholder theory and critical race theory. Transformational leadership is defined in terms of how the leader affects followers, who are intended to trust, admire and respect the leader (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). In his research, Bass noted that leaders transform followers by increasing their awareness of the importance and value of the task (Bass, et al., 2003).

Delimitations

There are several areas important to the area of fundraising, but they will not be addressed in my study. For example, an analysis of the internal planning and organizational structures/models of the institutions will not be addressed. While important, that review is of lesser importance to this study, which was predominantly focused on presidential leadership in

fundraising at select HBCUs, and not the organizational norms of the varied institutions, which the selected presidents led. Additionally, the chief financial officer (CFO) is a vital role in the area of fundraising (Burk, 2003; Hodson, 2010; Schiller, 2020). CFOs evaluate gifts for efficacy, are engaged in financial dealings that would be of interest to college presidents and can assist in expanding corporate relationships to include philanthropy (Burk, 2003; Hodson, 2010). However, because the integration of the added discipline could greatly expand the scope of my research, I did not include an in-depth analysis of this core group in my study.

Definition of Key Terms

Some terms I utilized throughout the study for which assurance of understanding will be beneficial. The terms include the below:

- **Advancement:** A discipline within education, like development and fundraising. It encompasses alumni relations, communications, development, and marketing, and is an integrated method of managing relationships to encourage philanthropy.
- **Annual fund:** Encompasses money raised on an ongoing basis throughout the year, and includes all fundraising efforts such as online solicitation, direct mail, email outreach, and more. It does not include money raised during capital campaigns or for endowment funds.
- **Capital Campaign:** An effort over a set period to raise a particular amount of money to acquire or improve a physical asset. Most common is a "bricks and mortar" capital campaign to purchase, build, or renovate a building.
- **Charitable gift/donor agreement:** A formal, written agreement that sets the conditions for a donation; it allows the donor control over the future use of their donation.
- **Contemporary fundraiser:** A presidential fundraiser who has been a leader in this discipline in the last 20 years.

- Development: The process of creating and enhancing relationships with donors and prospects to ensure current and future funding.
- Endowment fund: An investment fund established by an individual or entity that makes consistent withdrawals from the invested capital. The principal investment amount is generally kept intact and grows over time, while the investment income is used as a revenue stream to support programs and operations.
- Exemplar: A trusted example or an excellent fundraising model.
- Exemplary fundraising leader: An HBCU president who has had annual increases in their institutions' endowment fund levels, over a multi-year period.
- Feasibility Study: A tool to determine whether a fundraising campaign is viable for an organization. In a feasibility study, a third-party representative interviews key organizational and community leaders to determine their perceptions of an institution's reputation and need for the proposed project.
- Fundraising: the seeking of financial support for a charity or cause.
- Fundraising leader: For this analysis, exemplary fundraising leadership will be defined as having consecutive increases in an institutions' endowment fund levels, over a multi-year period. This leader has excelled in the raising of funding for their organization, consistently achieving year-over-year growth in their annual fund and endowment fund programs. In many respects, it is synonymous with an exemplar.
- Philanthropy: The concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good. Philanthropy also commonly refers to grants of money given by foundations to nonprofit organizations.

- **Planned (or Legacy) Gift:** A planned gift (or legacy gift) is a significant charitable gift that is arranged in the present and allocated at a future date, generally through a will or trust.
- **Principal Gift:** Commonly defined as being \$1 million or more and donated.
- **Prospect:** A person or organization regarded as a potential donor.
- **Restricted Gift:** A donation made with the stipulation that it be used for a particular purpose or program (Council of Foundations, 2020).
- **Vision:** The ability of a college or university president to tell the story of where their institution has been and provides direction for where the institution is headed (Nicholson, 2007).

Summary

Chapter One shares the history of HBCUs, a contextual overview of fundraising at HBCUs, and areas for examination throughout the remainder of my study. This chapter also provides a framework for the research on why the so-described HBCUs ("national treasures" [Clyburn & Lomax, 2016, para. 10] can be maintained and can thrive for years to come. My literature review within Chapter Two will address the scholarly writings, which undergird the many elements of presidential leadership in fundraising generally, and HBCU fundraising in particular.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As shared in Chapter One, the purpose of my study is to examine how specific HBCU presidents have effectively and strategically addressed the growing fundraising needs of their institutions and have become exemplary fundraising leaders among HBCUs. For my study, an exemplary fundraising leader is defined as an HBCU president who has had annual increases in their institutions' endowment fund levels, over a multi-year period.

Not just with HBCUs, but within the entire higher education landscape, philanthropy has played an increasingly important role. However, with more than \$49 billion contributed to higher education institutions in 2019 (Kaplan, 2020), generally, this wealth was not evenly distributed – particularly among minority-serving institutions. For example, the top ten endowments in higher education, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (Table 333.90) in its 2019 report, are identified in Table 1.

Table 1.

Endowment funds of the 10 U.S. colleges and universities with the largest endowments, by rank order, fiscal year 2016.

Rank	Institution	Endowment Amount
1	Harvard University (MA)	\$35,665,743,000
2	Yale University (CT)	\$25,413,149,000
3	University of Texas System Office	\$23,861,771,000
4	Stanford University (CA)	\$22,398,130,000
5	Princeton University (NJ)	\$21,703,488,000

6	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	\$13,181,515,000
7	University of Pennsylvania	\$10,715,364,000
8	Texas A & M University, College Station	\$9,858,672,000
9	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	\$9,600,640,000
10	Columbia University in the City of New York (NY)	\$9,041,027,000

Note: The above table describes the rank order and amounts of the top 10 institutions and the amounts of their endowments, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.in their latest report.

To compare, the three HBCUs with endowments in the top 500 endowments in America are Howard University, Spelman College, and Hampton University. Of these three institutions, the largest endowment fund was \$640 million (Walker, 2019). According to recent data, HBCU endowments represent one-eighth the size of endowments at similarly sized PWIs (Toldson & Cooper, 2014).

HBCU Money Magazine's (2020) report included statistics that note the total amount of all HBCU endowments combined is \$2.1 billion. This compares to 54 PWIs which each had endowments above \$2 billion, and 108 PWIs which each had endowments above \$1 billion (HBCU Money Magazine, 2020). I am emphasizing endowments because endowments are considered the lifeblood of a college or university and can ensure the institution's success generation after generation (American Council on Education, 2014). The interest from endowments can pay for scholarships, faculty salaries, and a host of other college expenses which general operating funds cannot (American Council on Education, 2014).

My literature review addressed gaps in the literature regarding research on exemplary fundraising practices at HBCUs, from the viewpoint of the HBCU presidents who led or are leading these institutions. This part of my study will contextualize and examine fundraising in higher education, and how a select group of exemplars among HBCU presidents has strategically responded to their institution's resource needs. Also, this literature review assessed three distinct areas: (1) elements of successful philanthropy operations in academic institutions; (2) the college president's role in fundraising; and (3) challenges, opportunities, and future trends for HBCU presidential leadership in fundraising. It demonstrates the need for further research around fundraising at HBCUs. Finally, the gaps in the literature addressed include limited or no research on HBCU presidential strategies in fundraising, HBCU alumni engagement strategies to entice them to give more, and HBCU board engagement to grow general fundraising as well as endowments at HBCUs.

Philanthropy in Higher Education

In demonstrating the need for HBCU fundraising research among college presidents, it is important to understand the broad view of fundraising and philanthropy in higher education overall. Three distinct problems highlight the need for higher education institutions' emphasis on fundraising (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Chan, 2016; Speck, 2010). First, state funding for higher education has been decreasing. Figure 2 shows this trend since 2000 (Pew Charitable Trust, 2019). Second, greater reliance has been placed on tuition funding to offset increased operational costs (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Speck, 2010). Third, operational costs have been rising at alarming rates for higher education institutions (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Speck, 2010).

Private philanthropy is the solution to the higher education funding challenge for many institutions. To that end, there continues to be an enormous amount of private wealth in higher

education. In 2018, Johns Hopkins University reported a single gift of \$1.2 billion from Michael Bloomberg (Kaplan, 2020). Bloomberg's donation was four times the amount of the next largest foundation grant reported in the CASE survey (Kaplan, 2020). Additionally, Harvard raised \$7 billion in its last capital campaign, representing just one of its fundraising initiatives (Rosenberg, 2014).

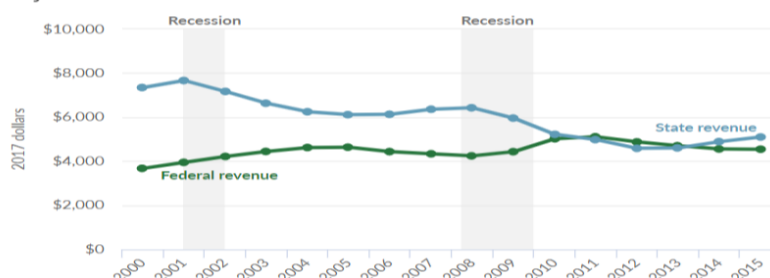
As introduced earlier, more than \$49 billion was donated to U.S. higher education institutions in 2019, according to a report from CASE (Kaplan, 2020). This report also showed that giving increased in 2019, by 6.1% over 2018; this amount is the highest level ever-reported in the report's 50-year history (Kaplan, 2020). This fact is important because funding to higher education by state and federal sources has plummeted over the years (Mitchell, Leachman, & Saenz, 2019). Historically, states have provided a far greater share of assistance to postsecondary institutions and students than the federal government (Pew Charitable Trust, 2019). However, over the past two decades, particularly since the Great Recession of 2008, spending across levels of government converged and the gap has narrowed considerably (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2020). Figure 3 visually depicts the convergence of giving by state and federal sources, and most importantly how funding has generally declined over the years.

Figure 3.

Relative levels of funding provided by states and the federal government to higher education from the period 2000 to 2015.

Federal and State Higher Education Funding Converged Shortly After the Recession

Revenue per full-time equivalent student flowing to colleges and universities, by level of government, state FY 2000-15, adjusted for inflation

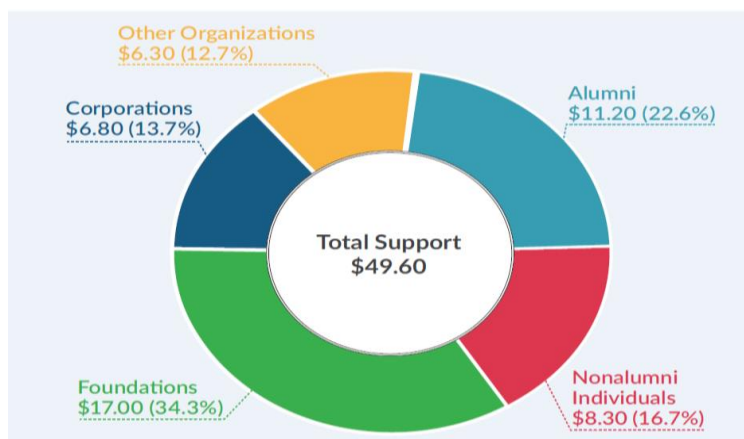


Note: The figure shows the relative levels of funding provided by states and the federal government over the past 15 years and demonstrates reduction shifts in funding by both sectors. From “Two Decades of Change in Federal and State Higher Education Funding: Recent trends across levels of government,” by *Pew Charitable Trust, Issue Brief*, 2019), retrieved from <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2019/10/two-decades-of-change-in-federal-and-state-higher-education-funding>.

This change in taxpayer funding of higher education has caused administrators to focus more on philanthropy to close the gap. Together, foundations and alumni supplied more than half the funds raised by U.S. colleges and universities in 2019 (Kaplan, 2020). Corporations and non-alumni donors make up the remainder of giving to higher education (Kaplan, 2020). Figure 4 shows the percentages of giving by varied stakeholders.

Figure 4.

Total support to U.S. higher education institutions by category.



Note: This figure displays the distribution of contributions to higher education during fiscal 2018/2019. By A. E. Kaplan (2020), from the *Council for the Advancement & Support of Education & Voluntary Support of Education survey*, retrieved from https://www.case.org/system/files/media/file/VSE%20Research%20Brief%231_1.30.20_WEB.pdf.

Also, while funding from federal and state governments as well as corporate and philanthropic foundation sources have been shrinking over the years, for HBCUs the rates are abysmal and likely foreshadows continued unequal funding of HBCUs leading to further challenges for these institutions (Kaplan, 2020; Kujovich, 1994; Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010).

Philanthropy in HBCUs from a Historical Perspective

Going back to one of the most famous HBCU Presidents, Booker T. Washington, fundraising appeals routinely were made to wealthy philanthropists in northern states by college and trade school leaders (Washington, 1965). When building Tuskegee Institute in the late 1800s (now University), Washington described his fundraising model for appealing to White

wealthy philanthropists in his book *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography of Booker T. Washington* (Washington, 1965). The model Washington used has persisted for HBCUs over time (Jones, 2020). This model - then and now - for HBCUs, relies on funds that are earmarked for minorities or funding just for minority faculty, and minority research (Jones, 2020).

Also, important to note in the history of funding for HBCUs is the establishment of the Second Morrill Act (*Second Morrill Act*, 1890). The Morrill Act of 1890 prohibited the distribution of money from the federal government to states that made distinctions of race in admissions unless at least one land-grant college for African Americans was established (Humphries, 1991). The act thus brought about the establishment of 19 public African-American colleges (Humphries, 1991). Also, the Second Morrill Act of 1890 (*Second Morrill Act*, 1890) established the matching requirement so that all land grant institutions would receive one-to-one matching funds from their respective state (Lee & Keys, 2013). Inequity in meeting this Act requirement by states has been well documented (Lee & Keys, 2013). Further, a 2013 report shows the following: (1) From 2010-2012, 61 percent of HBCU land-grant institutions did not receive 100 percent of the one-to-one-matching funds from their respective states for extension or research funding; (2) Between 2010-2012, HBCU land-grant universities did not receive more than \$31 million in extension funding due to states not meeting the one-to-one match requirement; and (3) From 2010-2012, HBCU land-grant universities did not receive more than \$25 million in research funding due to states not meeting the one-to-one match requirement (Lee, & Keys 2013).

Finally, unlike PWIs, historically, HBCUs have not heavily relied on gifts from their alumni (Graves, 2017; Walker, 2019). The factors of disproportionate funding, limited HBCU

alumni giving, and other stereotypes create challenges for HBCU presidents in fulfilling their role of “fundraiser in chief” for their institutions.

Role of President in Fundraising ("Fundraiser in Chief")

The college president's engagement in fundraising is critical, for both HBCUs and PWIs (Bourgeois, 2016, Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005). The responsibility for attracting resources for higher education institutions falls predominantly to the college president. However, this particular responsibility is very different from those responsibilities of the college president of yesteryear. In its earliest delineations, the role of the president did not include fundraising at all; rather the president was a teacher and disciplinarian, and was most likely was a member (or former member) of the clergy (Kohlbrener, 1962; Nelson, 2012; Rudolph, 1991). Today, the many roles for the president include academic program leader, advocate for cutting-edge research, motivator and encouraging voice to students, and builder of a campus infrastructure (Bourgeois, 2016; Hodson, 2010; Schmidt, 1930; Webb Farley, 2016; Williams, 2010). However, today, there is no more pressing role for the college president than fundraising (Bourgeois, 2016; Chan, 2016; Nicholson, 2007; Tindale 2008).

As earlier noted, due to shrinking governmental support and the need to continue to seek cutting-edge facilities and research, presidents are charged with seeking private dollars to build their institutions (Bourgeois, 2016; Nicholson, 2007). Today's university president is expected to be a compelling leader, and one who can attract seven-figure gifts regularly, and can enlist passionate, generous board members (Bourgeois, 2016). For example, one of the new monikers of today's college president is "fundraiser in chief" (Hodson 2010).

Also, due to this prominent need, many boards of trustees are seeking presidents who are not from traditional academic careers and are choosing candidates explicitly because of their

non-traditional/non-academic backgrounds (Harper, et al., 2017). Many college presidents are being chosen from outside academia or are from Advancement and Development fields specifically (Nicholson, 2007). This perspective is much different from the attributes sought for presidents in prior years, as most were from academic areas and previously served as full-time faculty (Bourgeois, 2016). From its earliest delineations of being a "learned academician," the expectation has evolved to the view that 50 percent or more of the president's time should be spent on fundraising (Nicholson, 2007). Further, to be an effective fundraiser, however, the qualities that the chosen presidents' exhibit are of critical importance (Nicholson, 2007).

Qualities of an Effective Presidential Fundraiser

Most notably, having "vision" is one of the chief qualities for a president who is to be successful in fundraising. Vision is consistently referenced in the literature as a criticality for higher education institution presidents (Freeman, et al., 2016; Nicholson, 2007). For this study, vision is defined as the ability of a college or university president to tell the story of where their institution has been and provides direction for where the institution is headed. Research shows that if a leader fails to identify, communicate, or strategically define a vision for their organization, it can result in institutional stagnation and confusion (Freeman, et al., 2016; Norton, 2019). In contrast, having a clearly defined vision can create educational opportunities that not only benefit students but also can give the college a leadership position among other institutions of higher education (Norton, 2019).

The following areas address the many ways presidents should utilize their institution's vision to support their fundraising goals: (1) bring focus to fundraising efforts; (2) provide overall guidance to campaigns to identify the most significant needs within the university for which private funds should be sought; (3) set realistic expectations as to what can be funded,

and; (4) ensure that all efforts support the overall mission of the university (Burk, 2003; Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedaja, 2005). Research shows that these qualities are not only important for donor engagement, but also for the leadership of other aspects of institution operation (Nicholson, 2007). Additionally, having effective listening skills and the ability to understand, empathize, and share feelings of another to build effective relationships were also highlighted as key qualities for a college president to have (Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Thelin, 2017).

Individual consideration of donor intent was another area of importance for a president when engaging with prospects and key stakeholders for fundraising purposes (Burk, 2003; Nicholson, 2007). It is the job of the president to know what a donor is interested in, and what they hope to achieve with their investments in the college or university (Nicholson, 2007). Fundraising is situation-specific, and therefore must be designed specifically in consideration of each donor or prospect (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Tindall, 2008). Ongoing reductions in state and federal resources have left institutions struggling for new sources of income, and so presidents' abilities as effective fundraisers is an imperative (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005).

Authors Webb Farley (2018) and Nicholson (2007) each conducted separate qualitative studies on presidential fundraising by conducting research on university presidents. They each studied the presidents of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI) and the University of Virginia (UVA). However, Nicholson's research also included the president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). Webb Farley's (2018) research focused on leadership globally and the handling of fundraising gifts at these institutions, while Nicholson (2007) examined the role of the president specifically in fundraising. The chief characteristics concluded in their research to describe the presidents' role as "fundraiser in chief" were: (1)

focused, (2) strategic, (3) competent, and (4) readily able to navigate the challenges of managing large institutions as well as expansive fundraising operations. Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, UMBC President, was the only president of a minority-serving institution among the exemplary fundraising presidential leaders interviewed between the two studies (Nicholson, 2007). While not a major flaw, the chief take-away is that the gaps in literature on fundraising at HBCUs is even more pronounced, when minority serving institution leaders are considered for analysis but not specifically HBCUs. HBCUs have differing missions and histories than do predominantly minority institutions (Arroyo & Gasman, 2014). Therefore, research that does not include an HBCU perspective does not capture the full array of perspectives which could be gained from such an analysis.

While the view on philanthropy in higher education is broad, on an institution by institution basis, the chief reason for the growth in fundraising for some schools and not others is the effectiveness of their fundraising teams and chief advancement officers in cultivating new donors (Burke, 2003; Chan, 2016; Gasman, 2010).

Importance of Effective Fundraising Staffs

Colleges and universities which have especially savvy fundraising programs are leveraging assets to secure the most consistent and the largest gifts (Burk, 2003; Gasman, 2010). As fundraising is a strategic discipline, attention should be paid to establishing effective data management systems, and in attracting and retaining staff who are capable of effectively cultivating and stewarding large donors and prospects (Thomas, 2010; Tindall, 2007; Tindall, 2008).

Specific staff critical to the operation of an effective fundraising department include the chief development (or advancement) officer (Burk, 2003; Carter, 2001). Literature reveal that the chief development officer's role is so important that without it, effective fundraising cannot be executed by either the president or the governing board (Burk, 2003; Carter, 2001). General expectations for this role include donor relations, marketing, planned giving, major gift solicitation, campaign planning, endowment management, as well as effective management skills for engagement with internal stakeholders (Burk, 2003; Carter, 2001; Hodson, 2010; Tindall, 2008). Other typical staff members of an advancement department are major gifts officers, alumni managers, communications professionals, as well as government and private grants writers, corporate giving specialists, planned giving officers, and administrative support (Bornstein, 2011; Burk, 2003; Hodson, 2010; Tindall, 2008). Donors have the right to withdraw their contributions should they feel that efforts are not executed in accordance with their wishes, so legal counsel and financial investment support are two roles in particular which help ensure that donor intent is managed properly (Bjerke, 2017; Burk, 2003). While these roles are generally not formal staff of the institution, because donors now expect to be more involved in the charitable giving process, institutions also are acquiring such services (Bjerke, 2017).

The priority that an institution places on the fundraising program can determine whether it will have the opportunity to do what it needs to do to achieve success (Tindall (2008). In addition to having the financial capacity to hire sufficient fundraising staff, additional issues plague HBCUs as per the literature.

Fundraising Challenges for Presidents of HBCUs

Disproportionate HBCU funding by governmental entities as well as negative stereotypes and perceptions of HBCUs and their leaders have been raised as just two challenges which

HBCU presidents must overcome to be successful in fundraising (Brown & Burnette, 2014; Sav, 1997, 2010; Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994). Also, as Tindall (2008) noted, HBCUs generally are not hiring sufficient staff to raise major gifts. This is due, in part, to the fact that many HBCUs (not all) have small fundraising infrastructures and insufficient funds to aggressively go after principal and major gifts (Robinson, 2013; Thelin, 2017; Tindall, 2008.)

However, my literature review has unearthed three primary challenges for HBCUs in fundraising. They are HBCU alumni engagement, HBCU governing board engagement, and lower endowment giving as the top challenges faced by HBCU presidents in the area of resource development (Graves, 2017; HBCU Money Magazine, 2020; Kelly et al., 2017; Tindall, 2008).

HBCU Alumni Fundraising Engagement

The perception that alumni of HBCUs do not give to their alma maters is a strongly held view (Graves, 2017; Tindall, 2008). This view was particularly evident in research conducted by Tindall (2008). Her research included a compilation of views and perspectives from 27 different advancement officers from as many HBCUs. The interviewed HBCU advancement professionals' views ran the gamut, from graduates of HBCUs being predominantly "preachers and teachers" (Tindall, 2008, p. 10), to the fact that there are severe financial disparities with African-Americans (as compared to White Americans), which is perceived to be the reason that giving by African-Americans is more challenging. Also, the view of reduced financial capacity for HBCU alumni is a major cited barrier by HBCU presidents who decline to engage with their HBCU alumni (Kelly et al. , 2017; Tindall, 2008). In addition to Tindall, other research bears out this perception that some HBCU presidents are biased against reaching out to HBCU alumni due to perceived low capacity or willingness to give (Cohen, 2006; Drezner, 2009; Tindall, 2008).

Also, the literature indicates older alumni are reluctant to donate using technology methods because of their limited knowledge of the process and mistrust of security protocols (Kelly et al., 2017). This is important to note because the cost to raise money using direct mail is high, and HBCUs typically are turning to online methods for fundraising (Kelly et al., 2017). Research also shows that the more connected participants were with their alma mater, the more likely they were to donate, and HBCUs are not well executing engagement in this regard among their alumni (Kelly et al., 2017; Tindall, 2008).

More research should be done with HBCU alumni regarding their motivations for giving to their alma maters. Additionally, research must be conducted on ways to circumvent barriers to alumni giving at HBCUs, such as peer-to-peer fundraising, cultivating a spirit of philanthropy in undergraduate students, educating alumni on the importance of giving, and addressing the security concerns regarding online giving (Kelly et al., 2017). Further, due to philanthropy interests growing higher and higher in the African-American community, HBCUs should capitalize on this sentiment and begin engaging with their alumni to inspire them to give more and to be more involved in the fundraising process with their alma maters (Ashley & James, 2018). Consistent engagement with HBCU alumni has not been a staple of fundraising programs (Tindall, 2008). However, the major challenge with this paradigm is if HBCUs do not improve in the execution of development strategies to engage alumni in giving even small donations, it will be practically impossible to cultivate the relationships that, over time, yield transformational gifts (Jones, 2020). But while alumni are a very important constituent group, endowment growth is another area where HBCUs have challenges.

Low HBCU Endowment Levels

Research shows that the perceptions of inefficient and ineffective HBCU leadership have had a very negative effect on HBCUs' ability to fundraise for their endowment funds (Drezner & Gupta, 2012). The net effect of the misperceptions and stereotypes of HBCUs both as they relate to fundraising and HBCU leadership is that fewer investment dollars from corporations and foundations migrate to HBCUs as compared with PWIs (Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994; Sav, 1997; 2010). One study examined the issue of misperceptions surrounding HBCU management of endowments as compared to PWIs (Drezner & Gupta, 2012). The study ultimately found that there was no difference in the fiscal management of public HBCUs as compared to PWIs (Drezner & Gupta, 2012). This research is important as it affirms that there is no appreciable variance in the financial management practices of HBCUs as compared to PWIs.

Advantages of well-funded endowments are: (1) they provide significant financial aid support to enable those admitted to attend; (2) they allow a higher level of quality or service at a lower price than would otherwise be possible; (3) they allow greater support for faculty positions, innovative academic programs, medical research, libraries, and other innovative activities; (4) they enable faculty and students to conduct innovative research, explore new academic fields, apply new technologies, and develop new teaching methods; (5) they enable institutions to respond more effectively to changing economies and market issues, and allow important activities that cannot readily be started and stopped, and thus disallows the institutions from being subject to fluctuating levels of support; and (6) they allow longer planning horizons to strengthen and enhance the quality of their programs, even if many years will be required to achieve some of their goals (American Council on Education, 2014; Coupet & Barnum, 2010; Ehrenberg, 2009).

Therefore, the importance of well-funded endowments cannot be overlooked or understated as an area of significant concern for HBCUs, particularly when considering the fact that HBCUs serve a student population that is disproportionately low income, and therefore has an even greater need for scholarships and other support (Gasman, 2009; HBCU Money Magazine, 2020; Palmer, & Avery, 2017). In addition to alumni engagement and endowment level fundraising, governing board engagement at HBCUs is viewed as another key challenge that must be overcome for HBCUs to do a better job at fundraising for their respective institutions (Schnexider, 2019).

Limited Training for HBCU Governing Boards

The literature reveals that ineffective governing board engagement is a key impediment for the long-term success of HBCUs, principally in the area of fundraising (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Esters et al., 2016; Proper et al., 2009; Zeig, Baldwin & Wilbur, 2017). The President/Board relationship is an especially important one to grow and nurture for maximum fundraising success (Proper et al., 2009). Specifically, the literature points out issues of over-involvement, under-involvement, and lack of training in board governance, as well as several other issues as it relates to HBCU boards (Association of Governing Boards, 2014). The Association of Governing Board's report entitled "Top Strategic Issues Facing HBCUs, Now and into the Future" (2014), noted that these issues pose a significant challenge for HBCUs in their adaptation to a 21st century higher education business model (Association of Governing Boards, 2014). Also, there is a critical need for HBCU boards of trustees' professional development in understanding their roles and fiduciary responsibilities (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Schexnider, 2019; Zeig, Baldwin & Wilbur, 2017). Regarding governance in the area of fundraising at HBCUs, Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis, president of Florida Memorial University, said:

The president/board of trustees' relationship must be transparent, collaborative, and supportive. While most would agree that these are key descriptors, they are easy to say and harder to practice. Boards and presidents must be intentional about building and sustaining a shared vision for the institution... Engagement breeds commitment. This is a hallmark of good institutional leadership/governance (Association of Governing Boards, 2014, p. 12).

Based on the literature, and Dr. Artis' thoughts, the Board/President relationship represents another area of critical importance for excelling in institutional fundraising. Board members must be skilled in fundraising and prepared to assist the President in referring and soliciting donors (Proper et al., 2009). The chief factors that influence the effectiveness of Boards in this regard are (1) policy practices regarding fundraising; (2) consistency in making financial contributions; (3) consistency in referring donor prospects; and (4) Board members' willingness to solicit donors (Proper, et al., 2014). Presidents tend to feel more supported when Board members have received training in fundraising, there is a dedicated fundraising committee of the board, and board members are familiar with or have been involved in a capital campaign (Proper et al., 2014) Research suggest that presidents should encourage boards to receive training in fundraising and should encourage boards to have a development committee (Proper et al., 2009; Schexnider, 2019; Zeig, Baldwin & Wilbur, 2017.)

Of all members of the governing board, the chair is the role which is most important in the effective management of the fundraising enterprise (Carter, 2011; Scott, 2018; Walker, 2014). This role plays a vital part in developing the culture of the governing board and is responsible for not only setting meeting agendas, but also in serving as the champion to ensure that all board members support fundraising with personal financial contributions (Scott, 2018;

Walker, 2014). Finally, the chair should set a positive example and effectively motivate other board members (Walker, 2014).

In conclusion, there are gaps in the literature regarding governing board engagement in fundraising at HBCUs. Due to the importance of this stakeholder group to the management and oversight of HBCUs, there needs to be more study. For this and other reasons, my case study illuminated the need for more work in these areas by highlighting the exceptional work of participating HBCU presidential leaders. However, the literature also points out areas for optimism in fundraising at HBCUs, and these research areas were key in my interviews and data examinations of the participating HBCU presidents (Redd, 1998). For example, there is increasing research and there are more training tools being made specifically available for HBCU leaders.

Optimism for the Future of Fundraising at HBCUs

In addition to more tools being made available, there is a growing understanding that college leaders must act and operate differently as it relates to resource development (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Esters et al., 2016; Gasman, 2000). Although HBCUs have had an historic record of "persistence" (Tarrant, et al., 2018), they must now operate with a greater focus on identifying new revenue sources, connecting more aggressively with their donor base, and leveraging innovation to more effectively compete in the future (Commodore et al., 2016; Esters et al., 2016; Freeman et al., 2016).

To support this point of view, there are figures who already have employed such strategies in the past, such as Dr. Johnetta B. Cole and Dr. Audrey F. Manley, former presidents of Spelman College, and Dr. Charles S. Johnson, former president of Fisk University, who were exemplary fundraising leaders and fundraisers (Barrett, 2006; Gasman, 2000). These leaders

provided roadmaps for newer HBCU leaders through their modeling of entrepreneurial activities, building strategic partnerships, and investment in their development office infrastructure (Barrett, 2006; Gasman, 2000). My research will seek to highlight more modern HBCUs presidential fundraising leaders, as the work of historical fundraising figures, such as Dr. Cole, Dr. Manley, and Booker T. Washington, is more readily available (Barrett, 2006; Gasman, 2000; Washington, 1965).

Also, research shows that there is greater support and training available for HBCU administrative leaders to help grow their fundraising skills and expertise (Commodore et al., 2016; Esters et al., 2016; Freeman et al., 2016; Schexnider, 2019). Also, HBCU presidents are more actively considering the establishment of business models for their academic institutions (Williams, 2010). In analyzing research on HBCU fundraising opportunities, findings revealed that HBCU leaders who have raised significantly more money than their peers, have used specific entrepreneurial leadership traits in their fundraising endeavors (Williams, 2010). Also, 21st-century HBCU presidents must recognize the benefits of collaborative partnerships, especially those that shape research and discovery (Esters, et al., 2016; Freeman, et al., 2016).

Additionally, according to the literature, African-American donors give away 25 percent more of their incomes than do White donors (W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, 2012). An Urban Institute report notes that African-American families have been contributing the largest proportion of their wealth to charity since 2010 (Ashley & James, 2018; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2012). Also, nearly two-thirds of African-American households make charitable donations, worth a total of about \$11 billion a year, with most going to African-American churches (Kellogg Foundation, 2012). Based on this trend, HBCU alumni engagement is a potential bright spot for HBCU fundraising. Further, when African-American

colleges are afforded the tools to have proficient development officers and capable technical staff, they have been able to dramatically increase funds raised through alumni giving (Gasman, 2013). As an example, Claflin University in South Carolina increased its fundraising staff from 12 to 22 individuals with an external investment from the Kresge Foundation and the United Negro College Fund (Gasman, 2013). In subsequent years, following the Kresge Foundation's 2008 investment in Claflin, the institution saw its alumni giving rate rise from 35% to 45%; Claflin also was able to go on to raise nearly two-thirds of its capital campaign target of \$94 million in record time (Gasman, 2013). Also, according to Drezner's research (2009), a study of millennials revealed opportunities as they relate to social change and potential future engagement for fundraising. Further, due to the education they received at their respective HBCUs, many HBCU alumni now are major community, business, scientific, and military leaders who may have greater financial capacity to give to their alma maters (Cantey et al., 2013; Cohen, 2006; Drezner, 2009; Graves, 2017).

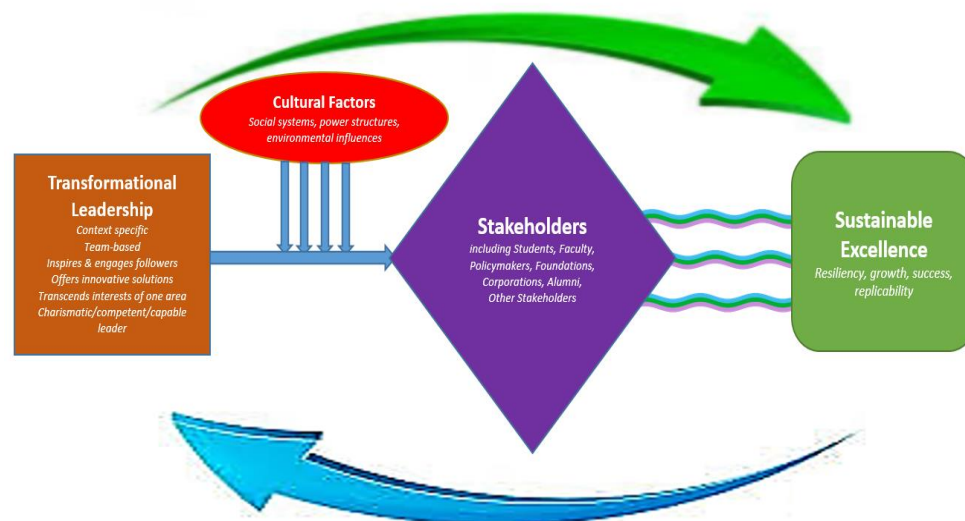
Advancing the mission of HBCUs is linked to advancing a culture of excellence in America (Clyburn & Lomax, 2016). Without the significant contributions made by HBCUs in awarding degrees to African-American students, America will not reach its goal of having 60 percent of its citizenry with a bachelor's degree or higher by 2025 (Lee & Keys, 2013). HBCUs have a culture of scholarly excellence and demonstrate a commitment to scholarship, collaboration, and academic productivity (Cantey et al., 2013). These attributes need to be sustained and helped to thrive (Cantey et al., 2013). Finally, understanding and sharing myriad elements germane to effectiveness by an HBCU president, as it relates to understanding their constituencies/stakeholders, will provide a foundation from which to assess HBCU presidents' overall performance in fundraising.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for my study on HBCU fundraising and presidential leadership (as described in the figure below) reviews my intention to utilize transformational leadership theory to undergird my research. However, I examined the transformational leadership theory, through the lens of both stakeholder theory and critical race theory (Figure 5). I will address each theory in turn as it relates to my conceptual framework.

Figure 5.

Conceptual framework undergirding theoretical approach for my case study research.



Note: This conceptual framework utilizes transformational theory, stakeholder theory, and critical race theory to show the connected-ness and importance of each theory to my research on HBCU presidents who are fundraising leaders.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The term "transformational leadership" was first coined by sociologist James V. Downton in 1973 (Spector, 2014). However, it was James McGregor Burns' research, in his Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Leadership* (1978) that catapulted the concept and term to greater prominence (Burns, 1978). Burns defined transformational leaders as those who seek to change existing

thoughts, techniques, and goals for better results and the greater good (Burns, 1978). Burns also noted that transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation (Burns, 1978). He defined transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership theory also focuses on the areas of values and meaning, and higher-order needs (Bass et al., 2003). Other researchers have defined transformational leadership in terms of how the leader affects followers, who are intended to trust, admire, and respect the leader (Bass et al., 2003; Humphreys & Einstein, 2003). Transformational leaders tend to be highly adaptable and are willing to adopt new practices, seeking creative ways to respond to changing situations, including learning new and different things (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

As it relates to presidential leadership in fundraising, research points to the necessity of transformational leadership, particularly in a climate of great change within higher education (Basham, 2012). As transformational leaders, college presidents must be able to set goals and positively influence and engage their stakeholders (Bass et al., 2003; Nichols, 2007). College presidents' performance is largely measured by their effectiveness as evidenced through their capabilities in performing their institutional functions with empowered teams (Nicholson, 2007). Regarding teams, transformational leadership asserts that the leader must work with their teams to identify needed change, and therefore manages through inspiration (Bass et al., 2003). In demonstrating transformational leadership in action, it is the job of the college president to create a compelling institutional vision, set institutional priorities, motivate faculty, staff, and others, while inspiring donor confidence, and articulating a clear case (or reason) for financially

supporting their institutions (Hobson, 2010). Other examples are within Nicholson's analysis (2007) of the presidents from VPI, UVA, and UMBC, who were interviewed as part of his case study. Each exhibited predominantly transformational leadership tendencies in that they were involved, engaged, and active with core stakeholder groups, and were effective in their organizational and fundraising leadership (Nicholson, 2007).

The underlying tenets of transformational leadership are organizational culture, knowledge management, and organizational performance (Bass et al., 2003). These tenets are embodied within my conceptual framework which shows that transformational leadership: (1) is context specific; (2) is team-based, inspires and engages followers; (3) offers innovative solutions; (4) transcends interests of one area; and (5) illustrates the charisma and capability/competence of such leaders (Bass et al., 2003; Humphreys & Einstein, 2003; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Research on transformational leadership consistently points to these characteristics as consistently appearing among such leaders. Therefore, it is important to point out that HBCUs and PWIs alike, require presidents who exhibit these attributes in this changing era of presidential leadership in higher education and fundraising (Bourgeois, 2016). Finally, another element of transformational leadership theory is the leader's engagement with varied constituencies (Bass et al., 2003). I have chosen to focus on this element, more intently, by using stakeholder theory as a lens within my conceptual framework.

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory was first described by University of Virginia professor Dr. R. Edward Freeman, in his book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* (1984). The core premise of stakeholder theory states that businesses can only be considered successful when they deliver value to the majority of their stakeholders (Crane & Ruebottom, 2011). Stakeholder theory is

mostly used in business contexts and stresses the interconnected relationships among groups and individuals (Crane & Ruebottom, 2011). However, due to the growing trends of entrepreneurship education and the understanding of the "business of college," higher education institutions are beginning to employ new practices that treat constituent groups like stakeholders (i.e. customers) (Chapleo & Simms, 2010; Bischoff, Volkmann, & Audretsch, 2018).

Considering the need for engagement with varied constituencies is a feature of my conceptual framework, because HBCU presidents must go beyond viewing their fundraising efforts as corporate altruism or diversity engagement (Chapleo & Simms, 2010; Williams, 2010). Much like how CEOs run businesses, HBCU presidents must rely on effective fundraising business plans for execution of their fundraising efforts. Relatedly, there is literature that shows how more and more higher education institutions are treating their stakeholder groups in line with the propositions of stakeholder theory (Bischoff et al., 2018; Chapleo & Simms, 2010; Crane & Ruebottom, 2011). This view is what makes usage of stakeholder theory important as a lens to assess transformational leadership for my study.

In my conceptual framework, I have highlighted a limited group of stakeholders with whom HBCU presidents must engage in their fundraising pursuits. They include legislative policymakers, philanthropic foundations, corporations, and alumni. How the identified presidents cultivate, solicit, and steward these stakeholders is important to understand. An effective fundraising program will not be built on involvement with one group (Burk, 2003; Chan, 2016). As HBCUs serve majority African-American student populations (NCES, 2019), how HBCU presidents manage the issue of race and culture in their outreach efforts to non- African-American audiences also was important to understand and is an added factor of investigation within my study.

Critical Race Theory

In my conceptual framework, I note culture and race as important elements, and I have chosen critical race theory (CRT) as a lens in my examination of HBCU presidents' work with stakeholders. Derek Bell, Jr., is credited as one of the originators of CRT (Bell, 1991). Other scholars involved in the origins of CRT are Richard Delgado, Charles Lawrence, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams (McCoy & Rodricks, 2009). CRT emerged in the early 1980s, is grounded in the civil rights movement, and focused on social justice, liberation and economic empowerment (Bell, 1991). Bell was both a civil rights activist and a lawyer and established how racists could use a system to forestall equality for minority audiences (Bell, 1991; McCoy & Rodricks, 2009). Bell asserts that racism will never go away, and that African-Americans must be vigilant and dedicated to confronting oppression (Bell, 1991). Bell and other scholars assert that movement to a "colorblindness in post-racialist" society is naïve at best, and non-existent at worst (Bell, 1991; Crenshaw, 2011). In the 1990s, CRT began to be applied in academic environments (McCoy & Rodricks, 2009; Munoz, 2009; Teranishi, et al., 2009). In particular, Bell first presented the theory of "interest convergence" which is grounded on the premise that people of colors' interests in achieving racial equity only advances when those interests converge with those in power (McCoy & Rodricks, 2009).

There are five major tenets of CRT: (1) the notion that racism is ordinary and not aberrational; (2) the idea of interest convergence; (3) the social construction of race; (4) the idea of storytelling and counter-storytelling; and (5) the notion that Whites have actually been recipients of civil rights legislation (Ladson-Billings, 1997). Of the five tenets, the three which I am using as part of my conceptual framework are the permanence of racism, importance of counter-storytelling, and interest convergence. These tenets are important to my study due to the

need for ensuring that stakeholders understand that there are underlying challenges for HBCUs in fundraising, simply because of race. Further, as HBCU leaders, the narrative needs to be challenged and the stories of the critical need for HBCUs must be expressed in a way that the tenet of interest convergence outlines. See table 2 for full definitions of each of the tenets of CRT.

Table 2.

Tenets of Critical Race Theory.

Tenets	Description
Tenet One: Counter-storytelling	The use of this tenet in higher education provides faculty, staff, and students of color a voice to tell their narratives with regards to marginalized experiences in college campus where an institution is becoming inclusive and not simply superficially diverse.
Tenet Two: The permanence of racism	This tenet asserts that racism controls the political, social, and economic realms of American society, where, from CRT perspective, racism is regarded as an inherent part of civilization, privileging White people over colored ones in higher education and where diversity action plans become ineffective when racism is ignored in this regard.
Tenet Three: Whiteness as property	This tenet originated from the embedded racism in American society, where the notion of whiteness operated on different levels, such as the right of possession, the right to use and enjoyment, the right to disposition, and the right of exclusion.
Tenet Four: Interest convergence	This tenet acknowledges White people as being the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation, which is exemplified in affirmative action and diversity initiatives.
Tenet Five: Critique of liberalism	This tenet comes from the notion of color-blindness, the neutrality of the law and equal opportunity for all. According to this tenet, colorblindness is a mechanism allowing people to ignore racist policies that perpetuate social inequity, which can be found in the lack of inclusivity in the academic curriculum, and student development theory used by student affairs professionals in higher education.

McCoy, D.L. & Rodricks, D.J. (2009). Critical race theory in higher education: 20

years of theoretical and research innovations. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 41(3), 1–17.

As noted previously, there are several studies which show how CRT has been applied in higher education (Teranishi, et al., 2009; Munoz, 2009; McCoy & Rodricks, 2009). There also are studies which have applied CRT specifically in HBCUs as well (Adams, et al., 2017; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). Using CRT as the conceptual framework, one study in particular describes the prominent role HBCUs play in creating needed African-American STEM scholars, due to the disparities found for students of color in this area of academic engagement (Adams et al., 2017). Their research shows HBCUs provide a level of support, academic challenge, and relationships not experienced by African-American students at PWIs (Adams, et al., 2017). The authors also asserted that African-American students at HBCUs have more positive relationships with caring professors than African American students at PWIs (Adams, et al., 2017). Considering the prior-noted study, the CRT lens can best be used because it informs the assessment of higher education policies and programs (McCoy & Rodricks, 2009).

Additionally, Bell's works speak to anti-Black racism, and they are evident in Tenet 2 of CRT (Bell, 1991; McCoy & Rodricks, 2009). This is a term that describes the specific kind of racial prejudice directed towards Black people, in part addresses the challenges faced by HBCUs (Dumas, 2016; Williams, et al., 2018). Anti-blackness goes beyond bad feelings, negative attitudes or stereotypes. Anti-Black racism is a combination of beliefs and address how people with power make decisions, how government policies are made, and how services are delivered to Blacks (Dumas, 2016; Williams, et al., 2018). Therefore, race cannot be removed in the analysis of how the selected HBCU presidents navigated the fundraising landscape before them

and achieved exemplary success (Williams, et al., 2018). Using CRT as a lens can help better address the issues prevalent with fundraising at HBCUs.

In sum, I built my conceptual framework based on transformational leadership theory, viewed through lenses of stakeholder and critical race theory. My conceptual framework intends to demonstrate a “continuum” of ongoing success with effective deployment of transformational leadership by HBCU presidents’ in their fundraising efforts. Further, my conceptual framework depicts a consist flow which leads to ongoing HBCU sustainability, excellence, resiliency, growth, success, and replicability. Transformational leadership defines the characteristics and attributes of the HBCU presidential leaders, while stakeholder theory aims to bring into clear focus the varying strategies which must be used with each constituency group. Also, CRT aims to provide a foundational view on the influence of race in all efforts by these exemplary HBCU presidential fundraisers.

Summary

As the adage says, “it takes money to make money.” However, as has been shown, HBCUs are at a decided disadvantage from both governmental entities and private philanthropy and are far behind with basic measures of fundraising strength (i.e. endowment levels). There also are persistent challenges that include, but are not limited to, alumni investment in HBCUs, HBCU governance board challenges and training, and adequate fundraising staff and data resource management support. However, as per the literature review, there is growing evidence of additional opportunities, which if explored can potentially change the situation for HBCUs as it relates to fundraising. In addition, toolkits and training resources are being promulgated to assist HBCU presidents enhance their understanding and effectiveness in fundraising and there

appears to be greater awareness of the need to reengineer the current business model for HBCUs (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Esters et al., 2016.)

Finally, and most importantly, my multiple case study examined the HBCU presidents who have overcome their challenges and proven successful in the area of fundraising. Considering my literature review, I have reviewed the research design and methods for data collection and analysis in detail within Chapter Three. The elements of review include my epistemological stance, participant boundaries, my positionality, recruitment strategies, and other details.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES AND METHODS

The purpose of my study is to examine how a select group of exemplary fundraising leaders among HBCU presidents used fundraising strategies to respond to declining state and federal funding, and also overcame challenges specific to HBCUs, including but not limited to issues such as negative leadership stereotyping and lower alumni financial support. As has been noted previously, my study addressed a variety of gaps in the literature to include those regarding successful fundraising strategies used by HBCU presidents, challenges and opportunities for alumni fundraising at HBCUs, and how HBCU presidents are engaging with their institutions' stakeholders. My conceptual framework established the connection of HBCU presidential leadership practices to transformational leadership theory, considered through the lens of both stakeholder and critical race theory.

This chapter presents the research design employed and the methodology used in completing this study. The following research questions guided my study:

1. What have HBCU presidents, who have been leaders in their fundraising efforts, done to institute strategic fundraising programs at their institutions?
2. How have these HBCU presidents navigated challenges while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions?
 - a. What are some major events that have affected fundraising efforts?
 - b. What was most challenging about these events in terms of fundraising?
3. How did these HBCU presidents approach their decision-making processes and make choices regarding their fundraising practices?
 - a. In what ways did race come into decision-making processes?

I tied these three questions to my conceptual framework in that they addressed varied aspects of leadership, stakeholder engagement, and the impact of culture and race on fundraising for HBCU presidents. My multiple case study research method was intended to holistically unearth the answers to these questions. My research method relied on collecting all or most of available data, and cross verifying this information among varied sources of (Hays & Singh, 2012; Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Yin, 2014). My research plan involved understanding assumptions, values, and personal orientations that would not otherwise be possible to secure in a quantitative examination (Hays & Singh, 2012; Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Yin, 2014).

A multiple-case study produces more expansive results, from which to consider future strategies (Creswell, 2014 & Yin, 2014). A group of four to six cases represents enough participants for appropriate research in qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2014 & Yin, 2014). With my multiple case study approach, I investigated modern, real-life activities of the presidents selected through a detailed analysis of the views and events that shaped the selected individuals' perspectives on fundraising and leadership (Dooley, 2002; Hays & Singh, 2012; Rubin & Rubin 2011; Yin, 2014). I also identified variations in fundraising practices and strategies, and captured perspectives on the issues and challenges in fundraising; the expectation was that the perspectives offered would differ from president to president and that was the case. My intent was to include four cases for my research; however, I ultimately included seven HBCU presidents as part of the study.

Boundaries for my case study research included the following: (1) Participants must be in an HBCU presidential leadership role; (2) Participants must be from public or private HBCUs only, and (3) Participants must have been effective or are an "exemplar" in their fundraising

efforts as defined in Chapter One by their ability to achieve sustained growth in their endowment funds over a five to seven year period.

As defined within my conceptual framework, I also sought to gain a better understanding of these presidents' approaches and challenges in their dealings with multiple stakeholder groups as they worked to secure resources for their institutions. Also, the influence and impact of race and culture on their fundraising efforts was assessed in my research.

Epistemological Stance

The epistemological stance of constructivism frames my research. Constructivism is defined, as "the view of that all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality is contingent upon human practices, constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 42). With the constructivist viewpoint, there is no single true or valid interpretation because it is focused on how individuals make meaning based on their individual experiences and their ideas (Schwandt, 1994). Those who describe constructivism report that people construct their understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences (Schwandt, 1994). I chose this stance, in part, because through this study, I was attempting to answer my research questions through engaging with HBCU presidents, to gain insights on their fundraising styles, approaches and processes.

There are commonly discussed guiding principles about presidential leadership in fundraising (Burk, 2003; Nicholson, 2007). However, each HBCU is unique. Therefore, what is successful for one HBCU or HBCU president, may not work for another. Therefore, since there is no monolithic approach to the management of HBCUs, individual HBCU presidents' fundraising approaches must be viewed independently of each other. With my epistemological stance of constructivism, I am treating each case study participant as an individual expert, with

their own separate and unique experiences, stakeholder relationships, and issues or challenges as they relate to culture and race. Therefore, the individual experiences of each HBCU president participant are critically important to understand. I selected participants because of their expert level of fundraising. I probed the fullness of their perspectives, as well as their past and present actions. I relied on the viewpoints of the HBCU presidents' participating in the study to help make meaning of their collective experiences and address current gaps in the literature.

Data Collection

Participant Recruitment

It was vitally important to effectively recruit and select case study participants to address the defined gaps in the literature and achieve the desired learnings sought. Therefore, I created a logical, well-reasoned approach for HBCU presidents' recruitment by first examining the fundraising history of the select HBCUs.

More specifically, the first phase of the process was to examine HBCUs with overall successful fundraising programs. I conducted an analysis of each institution's endowment fund levels. This analysis provided a measure of the HBCU president's fundraising effectiveness, as demonstrated through endowment growth. This measure also provided a lens of the work of the institution president as well (Burk, 2003; Chan, 2016). Pursuant to this strategy, I examined the endowment fund levels of each of the 101 accredited four-year HBCUs located in the U.S. (NCES, 2020; NCES, 2019). My analysis highlighted and prioritized those HBCUs which have had an average three percent (or more) increase in their institutions' endowment fund levels over the last five to seven years. This extended period provided a view of continuity and consistency with fundraising, which was also a measure of fundraising effectiveness. Year-over-year growth is routinely used in fundraising planning and evaluation (Burk, 2003). I included six institutions

with endowments of \$25 million or more, and one with an endowment of less than \$25 million. The rationale for inclusion of the HBCU with an endowment of less than \$25 million was that this particular HBCU president met the other boundary variables and represented an opportunity to engage with a smaller HBCU as part of the study. Further, I felt that inclusion of this HBCU represented an opportunity to include additional considerations not seen with the other participants, i.e. region representation.

Next, I assessed the presidents leading these institutions to ensure that the fundraising success of the institutions was attached to their leadership tenures. I ascertained if the presidents led the high-performing HBCUs over the same five to seven-year review period of the endowment growth analysis. To do this review, I conducted targeted research on each president of the targeted HBCUs. My goal for each participant was that they all were with their respective institutions for the entire five to seven-year period of the endowment analysis. In two cases, the presidents led other HBCUs as presidents prior to joining the institution they currently lead. However, I conducted additional research on these individual presidents and ascertained that they also had significant fundraising success at their former institutions as well. (As context, I reviewed this process in my dissertation proposal as a means to ensure that all participants met the criteria and boundaries set forth for the analysis.)

To have a participant group with diverse perspectives and experiences, I sought to include presidents from at least two private HBCUs and two public HBCUs. The institutions were distributed throughout the U.S., as opposed to limited to a single geographic region. The most HBCUs are in Alabama (11 HBCUs), Texas (10 HBCUs), and North Carolina (12 HBCUs). However, HBCUs are in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, and South, as well as

in California and the Virgin Islands (NCES, 2019). I also sought to include HBCU presidents from both large and small colleges and universities, as measured by student enrollments.

My approach for selecting case study participants gives solid grounding for my use of a purposive sampling approach, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling (Etikan, Abubakar, & Alkassim, 2016; Harsh, 2011; Robinson, O., 2013; Yin, 2014). This technique relies on the judgement of the researcher in choosing whom to ask to participate (Harsh, 2011; Yin, 2014; Etikan, Abubakar, & Alkassim, 2016; Robinson, O., 2013). Further, this logic aligns well with my decision to select participants based on their characteristics of being a current HBCU president with a high degree of excellence in fundraising and leadership, as well as (if possible) the ideal conditions previously described. Finally, it is important to note that I also interviewed the chief development officers from the institutions of the selected HBCU Presidents. The chief development officer role is vitally important in the support of fundraising for HBCUs and their associated college presidents. The chief development officers' views provided important insights into the responses of the presidents participating in this study.

Therefore, having completed all the requisite steps set out, I concluded that all presidents who accepted my invitation to participate were eligible for participation in my study. This view is based on my review of fundraising initiatives or campaigns that they had been involved with, as well as other indicators of their fundraising performance and record of accomplishment. I conducted direct outreach and communication via email, and phone call. I either directly worked with the HBCU presidents selected and/or their administrative assistants to arrange for the necessary interviews.

Data Collection

I used the qualitative method of in-depth interviewing to develop a deeper understanding of my research problem, to address my research questions. The qualitative approach of interviewing is one that focuses on people's experiences from their perspective. This type of interview aims to accumulate a variety of uniform responses to a wide scope of predetermined specific questions (Gubrium et al., 2012; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Robinson, 2013; Yin, 2014). I also used this method because it focuses on HBCU presidents' experiences and their fundraising approaches and helps provide a view of who they are as leaders.

My study involved semi-structured interviews directed by two separate interview protocols to answer the overall research questions I developed. I conducted the interviews in semi-formal settings. I conducted the interviews using a conversational style, thus allowing an expressive conversation to develop. I used the tool Zoom for all interviews – both with the HBCU presidents as well as the chief development officers. This tool was extremely helpful as in addition to analysis of the transcripts, I also was able to review the video recordings, which showed body language, engagement, and was a much more expressive means for the interviews versus phone alone. For the interviews, I asked more open-ended questions, which allowed for a back/forth dialogue rather than a straightforward question and answer session. My intent was to draw out information that is more specific. I used an interview protocol for the interviews, but I did not address the questions in any given order.

In addition to the interviews, I conducted a review of documents to include, but not limited to, news clippings, fundraising records, annual reports, 990 tax information, reports of events, and other items (Yin, 2014). Additionally, I reviewed IPEDS data to determine the endowment levels of the HBCUs for consideration in this analysis. I reviewed the data at the outset of the analysis as it served as the basis for selecting the chosen presidents. The data within

the IPEDS endowment reports show the pattern of growth of the endowment funds of the varied institutions where the presidents have been employed.

Next, following the interviews with each selected HBCU president, I conducted interviews with the chief development (advancement) officers for the respective institutions of each HBCU president. The goal of these interviews is to uncover additional insights on the challenges and opportunities of HBCU presidents in their fundraising efforts. For this study, I believe that the more data points the better, in terms of credibility of the results. However, for practical reasons, literature proposes that less than 20 participants in a qualitative study helps a researcher build and maintain a close relationship and thus improve the open and frank exchange of information (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Also, sample sizes can be determined by the concept of “theoretical saturation,” or the point in data collection when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Therefore, according to the literature, the 13 interviews conducted for this research project represent sufficient engagement necessary for my study (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006).

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research embraces multiple standards of quality known as credibility, rigor, and trustworthiness (Morrow, 2016). To ensure trustworthiness, I used the triangulation technique. This will ensure the credibility of my study. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Yin, 2014). To that end, in addition to participant interviews, I reviewed numerous sources of documentation (i.e. news clippings, etc.), and archival records (i.e. statistical data from government and other records, etc.). To ensure transferability, I interviewed presidents from seven different HBCUs. In addition, "thick" descriptions of research findings demonstrate

transferability (Morrow, 2016). Thick descriptions provide enough context so that a person outside the culture can make meaning of the study (Morrow, 2016). Next, to ensure confirmability, and to avoid the potential for bias, I developed an audit trail that highlighted each step of my data collection and analysis process.

As a further means to ensure trustworthiness, I utilized the peer debriefing technique. In this regard, I used qualified peer researchers to review and assess my interview transcripts and the final themes I uncovered (Janesick, 2015; Morse, 2015). I worked with three 2020 graduates of Old Dominion University's higher education program. I shared three transcripts with each peer debriefer, with the themes that I uncovered. I also shared my codebook with each peer debriefer as well. I used this technique to ascertain if I have missed a key point, overemphasized a minor one, or other issues (Morse, 2015).

Finally, I integrated member checking into my research and data analysis process (Birt, et al., 2016). I shared the complete transcripts of their interviews with each HBCU president. I wanted each to review the transcripts to ensure that they felt the notes were in alignment with their thoughts shared. I also highlighted the core passages of text within the transcripts that I felt were most important in responding to my research questions. I received feedback from one HBCU president who adjusted content, however all others signed off on the information presented. Allowing participants to review data can increase credibility and trustworthiness (Birt, et al., 2016; Doyle, 2007).

Positionality

When engaging in qualitative research it is important to establish positionality concerning one's study (Bourke, 2014). My lived accounts can influence my level of comprehension and engagement with the subjects. This background is important because as a senior advancement

professional, I have been closely aligned with university presidents, and have been charged with carrying out their strategic fundraising plans. Therefore, having had prior personal engagement in this area strengthened the interpretation of information shared in the interviews, and played a role in my better understanding of the experiences, therefore assisting greatly in the thematization of findings.

Also, I am a fundraiser and have worked for a variety of fundraising leaders. I also have worked in both HBCUs and PWIs. Additionally, I am a graduate of an HBCU (Hampton University). Hampton is ranked in the top three of HBCUs as per the U.S. News and World Report rankings report (Morse & Brock, 2019). Its endowment is ranked as the third-largest endowment of all HBCUs. Additionally, my successes as a fundraiser provide me with a high degree of insight into best practices in the fundraising arena. My professional background, prior work experiences, and exposure to this area provided me with extensive context in the examination of the information presented during the data collection and analysis phases of my research. That stated I recognized that I would have to be cautious not to pre-judge or project my views and thoughts on those of the interview subjects. My maintenance of a strict audit trail, and my use of other measures, guarded against challenges in any analysis of findings (Cresswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). Also, this closeness to the area of study could possibly sway my interpretations because I have my own views on what makes for a strategically capable fundraising effort. To overcome, this I ensured the accuracy of the HBCU presidents' feedback by keeping detailed notes, and by verifying conclusions reached by reviewing carefully the transcripts of recorded interviews. I ensured validity by checking and mapping the consistency of my concepts, carefully considering counterevidence and approaches, and ensuring progressive and continued maintenance of my field notes (Cresswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). I also used strategies

and procedures that helped me extract meaning to enhance understanding of the data through the use of coding and pattern-seeking (Saldana, 2012). Research supports these approaches for assurance of trustworthiness of research (Baksh, 2018; Hopkins, Regehr, & Pratt, 2017).) Finally, bracketing will not be a true qualitative challenge as it relates to my positionality approach.

Data Analysis

The primary coding technique used was descriptive. A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns an essence-capturing attribute of the research (Saldana, 2012). Descriptive coding summarizes a word or phrase from interviews. My intent for use of descriptive coding is to gain a greater understanding of the thoughts, perspectives, and attitudes related to the area of presidential leadership in HBCU fundraising (Saldana, 2012). The secondary coding technique utilized is thematic coding. According to Saldana (2012), thematic coding involves identifying passages of text that are linked by a common theme or idea. This allowed me to index the text into categories and therefore establish a framework of thematic ideas. This approach also worked well in the summarization of data and theme development from interviews conducted (Saldana, 2012). Also, I have presented a synthesis of the findings through provision of cross case analysis and thematic findings among all the seven cases analyzed. I also have presented my findings in relation to my conceptual framework. As noted previously, I based my conceptual framework on transformational leadership theory, ungirded by stakeholder and critical race theory. Additionally, I incorporated the processes of inductive analysis for data interpretation. Inductive analysis is the process of comprehending, synthesizing, theorizing and re-contextualizing the data by discovering patterns,

themes and categories (Azungah, 2018). This approach allowed me to recognize and evaluate the relationships within the data that emerged.

For my study, I interviewed 13 individuals. The study participants included seven HBCU college presidents, and six HBCU CDOs. The participants were from the Southeast, Deep South, Central, and Mid-Atlantic regions of the U.S. The endowment range of the institutions represented as part of the study was \$10 million to more than \$400 million. Collectively, the HBCU presidents in my study have more than six decades of presidential leadership experience. Also, each president has served a minimum of five years at their current institutions or a combination of five years, based on service as president at another HBCU. The ages of the HBCU presidential leaders interviewed range from 42 to 73 years of age, which indicates (by virtue of the near 30-year span) differences in experiences, expectations, styles, and perspectives. The student populations of the respective institutions led by the HBCU presidents interviewed range from 1,100 to more than 8,000 students. The presidents interviewed were predominantly male, representing 70 percent of the sample, with two individuals identifying as female, reflecting approximately 30 percent of the HBCU president participants. In addition, there were four private institutions and three public institutions represented within my study. The table below succinctly presents the above-described participant descriptors.

Table 3.

HBCU President Participant & Institution Descriptors.

Participant	Gender	Age Range	Range of Student Enrollment	Private or Public	Range of Years as President	Endowment (rounded to \$10 million increments)
President Admon ¹	Male	40 - 45	2000 - 2500	Private	5 - 10	\$30,000,000

¹ All of the president participants names are pseudonyms. This process was part of my masking process to ensure the confidentiality of all participants.

President Bates	Male	55 - 60	3500 - 4000	Private	15 - 20	\$70,000,000
President Chatan	Female	60 - 65	1000 – 1500	Private	5 - 10	\$10,000,000
President Diza	Male	50 - 55	2000 – 2500	Public	5 - 10	\$45,000,000
President Elam	Male	65 - 70	8000 – 8500	Public	5 - 10	\$40,000,000
President Gian	Female	70 - 75	2000 - 2500	Private	5 - 10	\$400,000,000
President Haran	Male	50 - 55	5000 - 5500	Public	5 - 10	\$55,000,000

I interviewed six CDOs as part of the study. The CDOs provided important contextual background and insights into the actions, behaviors, and fundraising work of the HBCU presidents who were part of the study. There were three male and three female CDOs interviewed as part of my study. Their ages range were from 35 to 64 years of age.

Of the HBCU presidents interviewed, their experience and success in fundraising were key considerations for my study. Therefore, the below table is important in contextually assessing the presidents' abilities in this area. I gleaned information on the amounts of funds raised per HBCU president at the president's current institution. If the participant served less than five years at their current institution, I also captured funds raised from other HBCUs where they served as president during the last seven years. In several cases, I was able to secure this information directly from each president; otherwise, I relied on my document review of 990s and the financial reports of the respective institutions to uncover the fundraising levels noted in the below table.

Table 4.

Fundraising by HBCU Presidential Participants.

Participants	Comprehensive Campaigns	Presidential Fundraising Totals	Largest Single Gift
President Admon	1	\$24 million	\$20 million
President Bates	3	\$100 million	\$15 million
President Chatan	0	Undisclosed	\$2 million
President Diza	1	Undisclosed	Undisclosed
President Elam	2	\$254 million	\$40 million

President Gian	1	\$215 million	\$20 million
President Haran	1	\$20 million	\$30 million

After numerous requests, I was unable to secure this information from President Chatan. Also, President Diza declined to share the specific figures, but shared that during his presidency he has seen annual giving increase by over 400% and corporate giving has increased over 600% during his tenure.

Document Review

I conducted an extensive document review for my research study. Items examined for the study included numerous types of resources. Below, I describe each resource type in detail, in specific relation to the information gleaned within my findings.

990s

Form 990 is a U.S. Internal Revenue Service form that provides financial information about nonprofit organizations. Using the GuideStar database, which collects and presents this information, I retrieved the most recent financial/fundraising data available within the tool, which was 2017 for five HBCUs, and 2018 for two HBCUs. It is important to note that the public HBCUs each rely on their independent supporting foundations in the area of institutional fundraising. It is also important to annotate this data as it is a tool to further validate the fundraising information gleaned from other third-party sources.

Table 5.

Fundraising data from 990s on HBCUs in the research study.

Participants	Range for Single Year Data from 990
President Admon (Private)	\$10,000,000 – \$15,000,000
President Bates (Private)	\$20,000,000 – 25,000,000
President Chatan (Private)	\$5,000,000 – \$10,000,000
President Diza (Public)	\$750,000 – \$1,000,000
President Elam (Public)	\$10,000,000 – \$15,000,000

President Gian (Private)	\$50,000,000 – \$55,000,000
President Haran (Public)	\$2,000,000 – \$2,500,000

Note: Data 2017 & 2018 990s

Newspaper Articles and Press Releases

Articles reviewed included those within *Inside Higher Education* newsletter, *Progress Index* newspaper, *The Daily Record* newspaper, *Atlanta Journal Constitution* newspaper, and other regional publications. The information contained in the articles was useful in providing greater insight into the community engagement of the presidents as well as additional validation of the fundraising dollars they raised as the articles provided specific details on fundraising, community activity. Further, the quotes reported in the articles provided insight into the philosophies of the presidents interviewed within my research project. In addition, I reviewed several press releases from the seven institutions; the releases were not available for all institutions, so I relied on other data to augment analysis. Also, the releases included similar information as the articles in that they generally had quotes from the HBCU presidents, which cited their efforts and motivations for fundraising engagement.

Organizational Reports

I reviewed and examined the official institutional biographies of each HBCU president and CDO. Additionally, I reviewed the organizational charts of each participant's institution. The biographies were valuable for review as each provided detailed information on the HBCU presidents' prior work experience, and in some cases their upbringing and the historical events that shaped their philosophies as leaders. These biographies were also useful in validating information collected regarding the effectiveness of each president in their fundraising efforts. The organizational charts demonstrated the importance of the CDO role in the select HBCU presidents' organizations, thus affirming the significance and criticality of the role to the

presidents. Finally, I reviewed annual reports and/or other comparable reports from the HBCUs as they were available. For example, I reviewed the latest available official Annual Report from one institution, the Strategic Plan framework from another, as well as the case statement and fundraising brochures from another. Additionally, I scoured the websites of each institution to secure fundraising and other financial information.

Recorded Interview Transcripts

I conducted interviews with participants between September 2020 and November 2020. The length of the interviews ranged from 40 minutes to nearly 90 minutes each. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I conducted all interviews via Zoom. I used the transcription service “NoNotes, Inc.” to transcribe each of the recorded interviews. I recorded the interviews with the permission of each interview subject. I also shared the unedited transcripts for review with each HBCU president included in the study. Allowing participants to review data in this way increases the credibility and trustworthiness of my research (Birt, et al., 2016). Further, completion of this step was an important part of my requirement in the area of trustworthiness, which involved the member checking element of my analysis process. This step also fulfilled expectations of the participants for my commitment to provide information for their advanced review. I re-read each transcript multiple times to gain in-depth familiarity with the data. This act was critical to my securing the codes and being more confident of the themes identified in the materials.

Analysis of the data was an on-going, complex and rigorous process. I incorporated the process of inductive analysis into my review of the materials analyzed. As described in Chapter 3, this process allowed me to discover patterns and themes (Azungah, 2018). This approach also enabled the relationships within the data to emerge and be recognized and evaluated.

As noted earlier, for my first pass of coding, I utilized descriptive coding. I identified 131 separate codes for research question one. I uncovered 53 codes for research question two, and I uncovered 63 codes with research question three. After conducting thematic analysis with the codes, there were six refined themes uncovered. After identifying the codes and themes, I enlisted the support of three peer debriefers to affirm the themes I drew from my analysis. The peer debriefers conducted a review of a subset of the interview transcripts and my codes and themes (Janesick, 2015; Morse, 2015). They each indicated that they agreed with my interpretations and that my findings aligned with the data within the transcripts. One peer reviewer suggest that I strengthen a theme as it related to the engagement of students, but no other major adjustments were made to my uncovered themes.

Limitations

I examined the fundraising performance of seven HBCU presidents. My research does not aim to provide a comprehensive review of all HBCUs or their respective presidents. Also, I am not conducting this research to determine or uncover generalizable truths (Stake, 1978). Rather, the emphasis of this research is an exploration in an area not examined in large measure. My research will address gaps in the literature surrounding how HBCU presidents are successful in fundraising despite the unique challenges they have encountered. My multiple case study employed both quantitative (i.e. IPEDS data which will describe the institutional levels of fundraising) and qualitative data (i.e. personal interviews with the selected HBCU presidents and document review) to achieve an in-depth understanding (Stake, 1978). This was important because using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data can improve evaluation by ensuring that the limitations of one type of data are balanced by the strengths of another.

As it relates to analysis, another area for consideration involves the identities of participants. As per my informed consent documentation, my intention it to keep all participants' names and organizations confidential. I will use the approach of masking to maintain confidentiality (Armstrong, Gerard, & Zimmerman, 1999). This is in alignment with ethical practice of not sharing information that the participants may not ideally feel comfortable in sharing. It also will support my efforts to advance understanding of HBCU presidential approaches to fundraising, while not stymying engagement for future researchers.

Ethical Conduct Overview

Researchers at Old Dominion University conducting human subjects research are required to comply with the university's Procedures for Review of Human Subjects Research, Federal Legislation (*Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46 (45CFR46)*), and Virginia Legislation (*Virginia Code 32.1-162.16*) (Old Dominion University, 2020). Old Dominion University has established an Institutional Review Board (IRB), and five college committees to review all proposed research involving human subjects to ensure that the subjects' rights and welfare are adequately protected (Old Dominion University, 2020).

I managed my work in alignment with basic principles of research ethics involving human subjects, which include (1) minimizing risk or harm; (2) obtaining informed consent; (3) protecting anonymity and confidentiality; (4) not utilizing deceptive practices; and (5) providing the right to withdraw (Smith, 2003). I utilized a consent form designed to inform participants in writing of the purpose of the study and to ensure clarity of the consent process. I made participants aware that they were voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge of any relevant risks and benefits. I also provided participants with information about how their

data was to be used, what will be done with collected institution materials and Zoom recordings (Smith, 2003).

Finally, the only benefits to the subjects participating in this research are their contributions towards advancing prospects for other leaders of HBCUs in the practice of fundraising. However, in the interests of reciprocity, I will provide a copy of my final research product to the participating HBCU presidents and chief development officers for posting within the library of each of their institutions. I also will make myself available to present my findings to the departments of development for the institutions participating in the study. There are no risks to the subjects as the informed consent protects anonymity, confidentiality, and sets out the use of the information collected.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the qualitative methodological approach I used for my research. I have described in detail my research processes, methods, and procedures. Additionally, I reviewed the epistemology and theoretical perspectives that guided my research. I also provided detailed information on the HBCU presidents participating in my study, along with information on their fundraising results. Finally, the interview protocol and interview questions, along with the informed consent (and other documents to be used), are in the appendix of my dissertation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As described in Chapter Three, the purpose of my study was to examine how a select group of HBCU presidents used fundraising strategies to respond to funding challenges as a result of declining state and federal funding (Pew Charitable Trust, 2019; Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005; Speck, 2010) as well as challenges specific to HBCUs. These fundraising challenges included, but were not limited to, issues such as negative leadership stereotyping and lower alumni financial support. The methodological approach utilized for my qualitative multiple case study involved the collection and analysis of interview data with exemplary fundraising HBCU presidents and a document review. I developed the following three research questions to guide efforts:

1. What have HBCU presidents, who have been leaders in their fundraising efforts, done to institute strategic fundraising programs at their institutions?
2. How have these HBCU presidents navigated challenges while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions?
 - a. What are some major events that have affected fundraising efforts?
 - b. What was most challenging about these events in terms of fundraising?
3. How did these HBCU presidents approach their decision-making processes and make choices regarding their fundraising practices?
 - a. In what ways did race come into decision-making processes?
 - b. In what ways did any other identities impact decision-making?

In Chapter Four, I present findings of my data analysis.

Research Findings

I initially evaluated my findings in alignment with my three research questions to ensure that I had effectively answered each one. My first research question was designed to address the area of leadership, and in particular, the attributes of leadership that made each HBCU president so successful in their fundraising efforts. I designed my second research question to assess how top fundraising HBCU presidents have navigated challenges or crises while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions. The two sub-questions for this research question sought to understand some of the major events and/or crisis, as well as the associated challenges that effected their fundraising efforts. The presidents in my study often referenced the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in describing their most pressing issue. (The COVID-19 infectious disease represents one of these presidents' most pressing challenges, but was not the only challenge that had to be overcome to maintain financial stability.²) My final research question addressed key aspects of my conceptual framework that dealt with stakeholder theory and critical race theory. Seeking insights into how these exemplary leaders engaged with stakeholders, how they prioritized their engagement, and if they encountered challenges pertaining to race were central discovery areas. I sought to understand how these HBCU presidents approached their decision-making processes regarding fundraising, and in what ways did race or other identities affect their decision-making as it related to resource development matters.

The key themes that emerged from my research are as follows:

² The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Centers for Disease Control provide comprehensive reviews of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. and the world (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2021).

1. HBCU presidents who are successful as fundraisers exhibited the traits of transformational leadership.
2. HBCU presidents who are successful as fundraisers developed and implemented strategic organizational plans, based on research, data and metrics.
3. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers understood the discipline of fundraising and invested in the operations of their Advancement/Development functions.
4. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers built effective internal and external relationships that helped them progress and advance their fundraising programs, emphasizing alumni in advancing their fundraising goals.
5. HBCU presidents who are successful as fundraisers were cognizant of the historic unequal funding of HBCUs and engaged with stakeholders who did not typically fund their institutions.

I will expound on each theme in detail. In describing them, I have ensured that the participants' voices are heard through use of passages from participant interviews to support my analysis.

Theme 1: Transformational Leadership

Literature indicates that transformational leadership is centered on creating a vision, putting things in place to develop that vision, and then implementing that vision (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership theory also focuses on the areas of values and meaning, and higher-order needs (Bass, et al., 2003). The literature provides a clear roadmap as to how transformational leadership qualities in higher education presidents drive fundraising success (Norton, 2019). Organizations with transformational leaders tend to have greater faculty and staff satisfaction, which leads to higher performing organizations (Norton, 2019). Further, transformational leaders bring focus to fundraising efforts; provide overall guidance to

campaigns to identify the most significant needs within the university for which private funds should be sought; set realistic expectations as to what can be funded, and ensure that all efforts support the overall mission of the university (Burk, 2003; Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedaja, 2005).

Exhibiting Decisive, Courageous “Transformational” Leadership

None of the HBCU president participants used the words “importance of effective leadership,” but to a person, there was discussion of the key traits exhibited by transformational leaders (Burns, 1978). These attributes included but are not limited to being charismatic, visionary, adaptable, inspirational, and team-focused (Burns, 1978). The CDOs provided some of the greatest glimpses into the leadership styles and approaches of their presidents. Illustrative of this view, President Elam’s CDO stated that her leader “creates an environment and climate where every one’s voices are heard.” The CDO to President Diza recounted how her colleagues and the staff feel about the President, “I witnessed it and the people that we have on our team [do as well], I think that's why they respond in the way they do [to him]. When you have someone like that, it's not difficult or hard to be loyal.” Recalling his management style, the CDO to President Diza noted the following comments he made to her, “I’m not going to micromanage you. I’m going to set the goals and then you have to go out there and reach them. Now, keep me in the loop. Keep me involved so that I’m not caught off guard.”

The CDOs also provided important insights into their work relationships with their respective presidents. To a person, each CDO discussed how they and their presidents were mutually supportive of each other. Also, the close alignment they had in terms of goals, prospects, and fundraising engagement strategies was expressed. The interviews demonstrated

the support each provided to each other to ensure this alignment was maintained. The CDO to President Bates said:

“So we have to grow into each other's presence as it were so. But like I said, we have a similar characteristics. I anticipate a lot on his part, and I always have want to have him prepared...”

As this passage demonstrates, there was consistent and clear alignment and a near symbiotic relationship in terms of executing fundraising plans between the CDOs and their respective presidents. This alignment proved to be effective for fundraising as well. The CDOs discussed how working their plans and remaining in lock step with good effective engagement, led to greater fundraising success. The CDO to President Admon said:

We just happened to have [Company name], COO...on a call talking about how [they] can work with our faculty and students for internships... And so, I texted him during the meeting. I said, "Dude, you got the second in command of [Company name] on this call. Shoot your shot. Get her on the board." He reached out... Three weeks later, she's accepting to become part of [our] board of trustees. That changed the game. That changed the perception.

Among the top terms and phrases used by the CDO participants in describing their HBCU presidents were transparent, authentic, and empathetic and caring. The CDOs interviewed also expressed loyalty and admiration for their HBCU presidents. Being “firm, but fair” was a view shared by President Bates’ CDO. The CDO to President Gian described his president’s leadership style as one of “being strong with faculty, staff, students, alumni and her board, but one in which success was celebrated.”

Supporting their teams, prioritizing collaboration, trusting in their staffs, motivating and empowering their staffs, and being authentic were key factors as relative to team management as described by the HBCU presidents. In unambiguous language, the HBCU presidents each shared the view that their leadership ensured their teams understood the institutional vision, that the team members knew their roles, and then they all celebrated together the success of achieving their goals – both financial and non-financial. Related to the empowerment of their teams President Gian and President Elam said:

President Gian: I think that there are good ideas all over the institution. They don't reside just with the president or with the president's leadership team or just with the trustees....There has to be a way to harvest those ideas on a regular basis so that they become part of a leader's understanding of the institution and part of the way a leader evaluates the resources.

President Elam: I create an environment and climate where every one of those voices is heard because they're bringing something to the table that other people may not be bringing.

Effective, courageous and decisive leadership – even in the face of controversy – were key attributes (as they related to transformational leadership) revealed in ensuring the financial success of their institutions as well. President Elam said:

I used my authentic leadership style with a passion for the institution and an ability to show the governor and the elected officials how an investment in the institution is going to return to the state, the kind of dividends that will help the state be competitive.

President Elam provided explicit examples of how he forthrightly and effectively advocated for financial investment in his institution and was successful:

I have been successful in getting the state to invest more than \$850 million in building new buildings on campus. You come to our campus, and you'd be hard pressed to find a more impressive academic facility on any campus, and I'm breaking ground on another one in a few months, that's a \$140 million building. And then I got a commitment for another \$250 million for a new science complex. I never asked. I never asked for an expenditure on my institution. Always ask for an investment, and that's the difference.

For President Haran, embracing the LGBTQ+ movement in his first month as president marked an important act of leadership courage during the start of his administration. He was faced with an issue regarding the changing of signage to create gender-neutral bathrooms on campus.

President Haran noted that while the dollar investment was not high, prior to his arrival the matter had not been addressed. This was a defining leadership moment of his presidency.

Making the change was important to the LGBTQ+ community, and for him, it cemented the support of a key stakeholder group on his campus. President Haran said:

One, I learned a valuable lesson with that. I showed up on campus the first week. I met with the LGBTQ organization. I asked them what they wanted. They said they [wanted] gender-neutral bathrooms. I said, "What's that going to cost?" And, they said nothing. It's just changing the sign. I said, "Do we have to identify the bathroom?" They said, "We already did." I made a change the next week." But because I did it so early when I had the most political capital, I spent it in the right way. Because the board that just hired me and the alumni that just celebrated me, they wouldn't attack me for something I did in week two. So, I was able to put a stake in the ground for kids that I love and wanted to protect. To be honest, it's smart in hindsight. I can't even get myself that credit but I know now and I tell people what new presidents is that there's a strong initiative that you want to do, put

your flag really early, because two years later you're going to have a different reaction from the board and you have different level of politics.

In sum, this section provided insights on the decisiveness, clarity of vision, and decision-making skills of the HBCU presidents interviewed. Their teams knew where the presidents stood on key issues, and they were effective in communicating and inspiring support for their directives.

Selflessness in Leadership Service

Presidents being perceived as selfless and caring for their teams resonated in the findings. There were a number of examples presented as to how the presidents were careful first to consider their internal constituents in their decision-making processes. Examples include, President Haran's view of the weight of leadership at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic:

I thought I was going to be a regular president. I didn't plan on being a COVID president. None of us did. None of us planned on this one. So, I'm proud of the decisions that we made. They all have consequences....I went home and cried twice and not because I was upset, but because it's not every day that you have the whole school on the same page. I was so impressed and that's what made me go, "I need to think about them first."

To put an even finer point on the importance of leaders not focusing on themselves, President Elam specifically shared:

It is not about me, me, me, me, me. It's about the institution I care about it. And then they have to understand that whatever they invest in that institution, it is good for the state.

President Admon said:

...[Being], but also a servant leader, as well. And so, understanding the importance of people, supporting people, people development. But also understanding and being a

disrupter, being able to reimagine systems, reimagined structures, building on legacy, but also transforming into the future.

Continuing the view of selfless service, President Gian said the following:

It seems to me that anybody, any leader has a responsibility to the workforce. They are bearing the burden- not the burden of responsibility, keeping the lights on and air conditioning running, and the residence hall is clean. And the dining hall, keeping our students fed and the mail in the mail center, public safety. I mean, they are so fundamental. They're fundamental. So, you really do have accountability to your workforce. And of course, all around this at the hub of this are your students, that is why you have an institution. That's the mission.

The CDO to President Elam shared, “He really cares about our students and that comes across loud and clear. He genuinely is caring of our community.”

Finally, the sentiments shared by the CDOs and the Presidents themselves interviewed showed that the leaders were concerned more with the needs of their students, staff, faculty, and other stakeholders than their own interests. This factor resonated throughout this element of my findings.

Influences on Leadership

An element important to my review of transformational leadership attributes was their self-assessments. I found it interesting that several of the presidents interviewed reviewed how their backgrounds – predominantly humble upbringings – had significant influence on their leadership approaches. President Admon, President Chatan, President Diza, and President Elam each offered on their parents and/or their personal life stories and how these factors tied to how

they lead. This was of particular relevance in better understanding the management and leadership philosophies of these individuals.

President Elam described how being very poor contributed to his approach to governance and engagement. He said: “I don't run away from how I was shaped as a young person growing up in segregated Alabama, and a person who was extremely poor.” President Chatan said, “I'm first generation [college student]. I grew up in urban Cleveland. My dad had a sixth-grade education. He's the smartest man I ever knew. I believe in my soul, that's why I'm so committed to historically Black colleges, because my own parents could not go to school. My father, in particular, grew up in Mississippi, and my mother grew up in Cleveland.” President Admon also talked about a similar life challenge and how it has propelled his effectiveness as a leader. He said:

I was shot at 16. I did some time at 17. My mom was a single mom on welfare, raised five boys in the projects by herself. My dad went to penitentiary when I was two. My school was 100% Black in the projects. But that leads me to being student-centered, student-focused and driven, because I know if I went to this place that nurtured me, believed in me and challenged this urban kid that was lost, had no clue took a Greyhound bus for \$25, no resources, and believed in me and challenged me. Every student has the ability to learn. You just have to be an environment that nurtures and releases.

Overall, my analysis reveals that the transformational leadership characteristics displayed by the HBCU presidents within my study played an incredibly important role in their overall fundraising success.

Theme 2: Strategic and Crisis Planning

Each president discussed the importance of developing and implementing strategic plans. The consistent feedback revealed that plans should be based on research. Specific examples, supported in the literature, of how institutions' strategic plans are critical in fundraising are as follows:

- Plans sharpened the institutions' foci for targeted fundraising efforts
- Plans outline a clear path for institutional fundraising growth and success because it for the institutions
- Strategic plans serve as roadmaps for the institutions, defining the route for the organizations to take in the years ahead
- Plans provide all members of the institution a sense of purpose
- Plans include a definitive mission as well as clear goals and objectives, for faculty, staff and external constituencies (Basham, 2012, Bass, et al. 2003, Norton, 2019).

Strategic Planning to Fulfill Vision

As described above, transformational leadership, which I contend defines each of the leaders in my study, also is undergirded by the ability to create a vision and act on that vision with empowered teams for execution (Freeman, et al., 2016; Nicholson, 2007). Ensuring that there is a focus on the mission and vision of the organization weighed heavily in comments shared. The HBCU presidents interviewed described how strategic planning helped them properly focus on the fundraising priorities for their institutions. President Gian shared, "A leader has to galvanize all of the stakeholders with a very clear vision of where the institution is going." President Elam further elaborated saying:

We're coming to the end of our first 10-year strategic plan. We are now putting in place our strategic plan for the next 10 years. For the last 10 years, we have been focused on

five goals. All of our budget allocations have been around those five goals to enhance student success, to build on our status as a doctoral research university, to make sure we look internally and we address issues of infrastructure and systems that don't work or need upgrading. And then number four resources that we needed to bring to bring to the institution, more dollars from the private sector as well as more state dollars. We have done extraordinarily well in all of those areas.

Supporting this point of view that leaders must galvanize core constituents around a very clear vision of where their institutions are going, the CDO to President Gian described his president's efforts in this way:

She's been effective at really making sure that all of the groups who need to know are brought along and are on the same page and have all the information and understand what the problem is, what the solution is and what the resolution will be.

To do this, several of the interviewed presidents felt there has to be a process for working with internal and external stakeholders to develop a clear strategic vision and execute on the strategic plan. President Gian felt so strongly regarding strategic planning that she ensured that her Board of Trustees understood the strategic plan would be her commitment for execution – even before accepting the role of president. President Gian said:

One of the conversations I had with my board chair is I would find it very helpful if we could establish the strategic plan. And that [strategic plan] becomes the covenant between the president and the board of trustees, that becomes our agreement about ... the work... And I will commit to that. I will commit, I will throw my heart and soul into that, but I also would expect that that's how I'm going to be evaluated. That's going to be the focus of our time and attention.

President Gian expounded further by sharing:

So [the strategic plan] is kind of the legislative clarity or the constitutional clarity of an institution. With the faculty, there is shared governance. That is- again, it is a part of the covenant that the faculty has with leadership that there is- And that shared governance is going to be defined and it has certain processes and procedures that will be followed.

President Elam offered an even more long-term view on the importance of strategic planning for HBCUs. His view was that through the prism of leveraging what he described as

“transformational” investment by the federal government in HBCUs. President Elam said:

Coming out of the pandemic, we must begin initiatives to speak to the Black condition.

Coming out of this crisis by 2030 it would be a missed opportunity if we don't have as HBCUs three or four of the R2s as R1 flagships.

In sum, strategic planning is an important key to the success in fundraising for the HBCU presidents interviewed for my research study. The strategic and crisis planning efforts of the HBCU presidents interviewed helped them focus the fundraising priorities for pursuit.

Measuring Success

Measuring efforts – particularly as it relates to fundraising – also is critically important in management and leadership in the area of resource development. Development and Advancement Offices are rated based on pre-established benchmarks to evaluate success at reaching fundraising targets (Burk, 2003). Each president described in no uncertain terms that metrics, being data-driven, and consistent assessment of results govern their achievement of results – particularly those related to fundraising. The CDO to President Gian said:

We have metrics and we meet our goals quarterly in terms of the strategic plan. Our team is team is evaluated based on the principals of strategic plan.

The CDO to President Admon described his president's decisiveness in this way:

He's very data-driven, very data-driven. What does the data say? And I really appreciate that. Because it takes all the subjectivities out.

The CDO to President Bates said:

He is competitive, relies on his cabinet, and is data driven.

The CDO to President Haran described her institution's "year over year" progress and provided other specific examples of the key areas he measures in order to determine the effective of fundraising

We've seen an increase every year in our philanthropic support. We've also seen an increase in our donors every year. Right now, we are two times ahead where we were last year in our fundraising efforts. And so I think part of what you said making those tough decisions, but those tough decisions provide an opportunity for us to bring support to the institution, understanding the voice that we needed to fill with making that decision.

President Diza shared:

I'm a fiscal conservative. I look at the university's budget, quite frankly, a lot like I look at my own budget at home and we work very hard to save for a rainy day to not go out and spend, spend, spend.

In conclusion, the presidents were deliberate in their efforts to consistently assess the fundraising progress and achievement of goals. Metrics including but not limited to year-over-year fundraising growth rates were used for their assessments.

Effective Management of Crises for Fiscal Sustainability

Related to managing challenges, the topic of crisis planning also was explored at length during interviews with the HBCU presidents. Based on my analysis, building adaptable, flexible,

and forward leaning crisis management plans is an absolute necessity for fiscal sustainability, according to these HBCU presidents. President Diza went on to share that his institution is effectively weathering the financial aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic due to his crisis team planning. He stated:

I didn't expect COVID or pandemic to come, but a rainy day came, and so far, we've been able to sustain it. Meaning, no layoffs, no furloughs. A lot of institutions can't say though.

In analyzing the COVID-19 crisis' impact on funding and fundraising, President Bates indicated that his institution anticipated a \$20 to \$25 million budget shortfall. Participant Elam indicated that his institution had a near \$28 million gap due to discontinuing in-person classes, eliminating sporting events and other on-campus activities, and the lack of room/board charges. Further, the CDO to President Diza noted that her institution chose to suspend their comprehensive campaign due to the onslaught of COVID-19. She said: "We had to press pause. We had to press pause, because these things take time." The CDO to President Haran had a similar sentiment in that her institution also chose to delay their comprehensive campaign as well during the past year. She said:

He was sensitive to that when we first started, so he didn't want to immediately push that [fundraising] because people were losing jobs. I mean, people were really nervous in that space when it first kicked off. So, he did hold us off on fundraising at all. So, we kind of paused.

Several presidents interviewed noted that while the Federal Cares Act³ funding helped navigate the fiscal challenge COVID-19 presented, preparedness was another key reason for being able to weather the crisis events. The HBCU presidents interviewed recounted how they have implemented a variety of measures that made sure that their college or university's focus remained on the health and safety of the students, faculty and staff. Participant Chatan noted:

The other thing was their mental wellbeing. We partnered with [Company] -- this is back to philanthropy. [Company] is underwriting the cost of us to be able to roll out this very robust, mental health program with yoga and stretching, and things that young people, particularly young Black people don't really know about. [Like] Take the deep breaths in the mornings.

Also, while the COVID-19 pandemic represents a severe hardship both financially and organizationally, myriad other crises also were difficult and required effective planning and leadership. These other crises included, but were not limited to, cyber-attacks, school shootings, and natural disasters. That stated it was clear that COVID-19 was a challenge unlike others in terms of its difficulties. These COVID-19 created difficulties included those from staff and student engagement as well as from a financial/resource point of view. President Chatan noted:

We had seniors who could not graduate because they couldn't work towards the end and they couldn't pay off their bills. So, we launched a 'Finishing the Last Mile' campaign, and our alumni really stepped up to the plate to help them pay their bill, because the University is struggling terribly. We would let you go, because we love you, we care about you. You don't have to pay that bill. "Here's your degree, here's your transcript. Go on about your

³ The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 (Federal Cares Act) and provide direct economic assistance for American workers, families, and small businesses, and preserve jobs for American industries (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).

life. We're not going to report it to the credit bureau.

Another consistent view shared was that adaptability in uncertain times is necessary for any presidential leader. President Elam stated:

I've never experienced any crisis that can even compare with COVID-19. And I don't think any other university president has either. Leading in a pandemic. One has to provide the type of leadership that you don't gain in graduate school.

Prior Strategic and Crisis Management Experience

Participants also noted that there is an expectation that crises are a mainstay of leadership, and being creative, adaptable, and resilient are the key means for success in fundraising for an HBCU leader. The general view of the HBCU presidents is that the next crisis is just around the corner. President Gian provided a clear strategy for effective planning and team cohesion. She said:

COVID is horrible and is worse than any of the things that I just described. But I feel as though I had the advantage...By the time we got to COVID, we were a close knit, high functioning team who understood, and who knew each other well enough and understood how to work with each other effectively, to manage our way through and lead our way through...

In describing her president and his leadership in managing through crisis, the CDO to President Diza said:

[School Name] University is no stranger to having to absorb budgetary cuts from the state. And in doing so, we're accustomed to being creative, to doing more with less, to having to think outside the box. You've got to figure out how to get it done.

In addition, President Admon shared how crisis management had been a major part of his presidential career and has served both he and institution well as a result. He described national incidences which occurred on his campuses when he was in leadership roles in two separate institutions:

The Black Lives Matter group was founded on my campus. I come here, and COVID-19 hits. And so, fortunately, I've had a lot of crisis management, crisis experience. So, it's allowed me to work through.

Other presidents in my study also felt that prior experience in crisis situations allowed them to more effectively address the challenges before them. In particular, President Admon discussed the need for HBCU presidents to “reimagine systems” to ensure that their institutions are responding in such a way that is most effective. Others interviewed had this thought as well. The re-imagination of systems included the effective utilization of technology and improved engagement with students and the community. Demonstrating these two factors explicitly, the CDO to President Diza noted:

[Our] team had already started [planning] in December [2019]. A support group came out with plans and protocols. [I] just stayed really on the forefront of every way that the university community will be impacted. [We developed a] microsite within our website...[We held] town halls and forums and webinars...keeping the lines of communication open with students, with parents, with faculty staff... rolling out these plans and making sure that everybody was in the loop on it as it pertains to staying safe

Finally, it is important to further emphasize the importance of strategic planning, especially in light of crises, but not just due to the inevitability of crises. The HBCU presidents interviewed felt that crises were a mainstay within higher education and were undaunted and not

intimidated or discouraged by difficulties brought on by crises. However, their focus on strategic planning was a critical element of their leadership approaches for long-term success. President Gian said:

One of the things that you want to do coming in is to understand what those competing priorities are and who holds them. What are the priorities for the trustees, for the faculty, for the students, for the staff, for parents, and alumni, right? Then there are the priorities for your community and the government leaders in your community, right? So, there has to be some process of information gathering, listening sessions, being able to hear the entire set of competing priorities. But then at a certain point, you identify a core community and a process for working with that defined set of the community priorities to develop a clear strategic vision.

In sum, strategic and crisis management planning are key to success in fundraising for higher education institutions. While there is no “one-size-fits-all” playbook, the literature and my findings in this area demonstrate the need for effective strategic and crisis management pre-planning. Being a prepared leader with a team ready to take action can mean the difference between success or failure of fundraising programs.

Theme 3: Understanding of Fundraising

The responsibility for attracting resources for higher education institutions falls predominantly to the college president (Bourgeois, 2016, Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005). Also, due to shrinking governmental support and the need to continue to seek cutting-edge facilities and research, presidents are charged with seeking private dollars to build their institutions (Bourgeois, 2016; Nicholson, 2007; Kaplan, 2020; Pew Charitable Trust, 2019). Today's university president is expected to be a compelling leader, and

one who can attract seven-figure gifts regularly, and can enlist passionate, generous board members (Bourgeois, 2016).

Appreciation for Fundraising as a Discipline

In analyzing the data collected, the HBCU presidents interviewed were clear that to raise more funds they had to understand the practice and properly invest in the fundraising function. Several CDOs concurred. The CDO for President Elam indicated that she was “joined at the hip with the president” and that they took monthly trips to New York (pre-COVID-19) for major foundation cultivation visits, as one example of how closely she and the president worked. Two other CDOs, who work in public institutions, described the positive impact of the support of their foundation boards, and how the president sits on the foundation board and works with external supporters routinely to seek additional funds for their respective institutions. The CDO to President Diza noted the following:

What I respect about him is, when I say the trenches, he's in the trenches. He will get in the day-to-day with us and there's not one thing that he wouldn't ask of us that he wouldn't do himself.

President Elam described his view and understanding of fundraising as follows:

So in my decade or so as president, here at [University], I have been a real, a strong advocate of turning the kind of private notion of how we do fundraising into a public model. And that public model for me is how do I get my state to invest the hundreds of millions of dollars in the institution that if I had to raise privately, I would have to raise \$50 billion in order to enable me to build a kind of facilities that I want to build.

The CDO to President Elam reiterated this by sharing the following about her president, “He understands fundraising and knows very well that fundraising does not happen without leadership.”

The CDO discussed President Gian’s understanding of fundraising in this way:

Everything that we do, there is really the thought of how will this impact fundraising, how can we enhance fundraising, how can we ensure that also the money that we’re receiving from fundraising, how they are impacting our faculty students and our staff and our programs. So, that’s always in front.

President Haran shared insights on advice he was given when he considered becoming a university president was as follows:

Figure out what [experience] you don't have. Come up with three things you need that you don't have experience in and then do those three things. So for me, it was fundraising, athletics and finance. And so, I partnered with the VP for development when I was at [University] and we went out to raise money to get a new airplane.

Demonstrating his knowledge of one key area of fundraising, prospect research, President Admon said:

Prospective donor research is so important, we miss that often. Understanding what their [donors] passion, what their commitment is to, trying to align that. And then going in and telling a true story, right. So, the storytelling is so important, and understanding what our mission

Representative of his nuanced and intimate view of fundraising, President Bates described how even the convention for naming the CDO role was critical to acknowledge and appreciate. In this regard, he delineated the reasons he felt that titles were important when engaging with prospects

and donors as well as fundraising peers. Reflecting back when he was in a Director of Development role, in another administration, he told his former leader:

It needs to be vice presidential title here because a director could be anywhere from managing one person to whatever. When I walk into these meetings with vice presidents who are listening to my solicitation, they are vice presidents.

Also, the specific fundraising skills needed were described by the HBCU presidents as understanding the importance of prospect research, understanding the need for properly staffing an Office of Development, and recognizing the long-term nature of fundraising. Demonstrating her view of the long-term nature of fundraising, President Gian noted it took more than two years to cultivate and nurture a prospect to a major financial investment in her institution. She noted the following:

My style is that I am selling belief, in this case, belief in a mission. When I come into a room with my belief I am trying to understand how your beliefs might find a home in the mission I represent. I have no shame in terms of asking people for money, but I do believe that you have to engage them where they are, inside their beliefs. You have to find out who they are, what they care about. And then you have to make an ask on the basis of what is important to them.

President Bates shared insights on how he sees the need for understanding the fundraising discipline as a growing and more critical leadership skill for future HBCU presidents. He said:

When I came into higher ed almost 25 years ago, you had the traditional route to the presidency through academe....Today, it's about not knowing all of the pedagogy, not knowing all of the political theories, not knowing all the educational theories, but can you walk into that room and make friends with someone that's going to support your institution?

That's the question. I can hire a provost to deal with my academicians. Got that. But my provost and my VP for Academic Affairs are usually not going to be able to walk into the room and influence people and make them like [them]. So some of the pathways to the presidency that have been challenged, that are being proven now, who can make friends, who can influence people to support our institution. So, it's not just the traditional PhD, academic affairs person, but it's the development person.

Finally, related to his strategic focus on fundraising, President Bates said: “Giving rates are already increasing exponentially because people know that I'm here, and I'm listening, and I care... My greatest joy. It was hearing the community and feeling their support after you do what you do with the money as being good stewards.”

Development Office Staffing

Another important element related to this theme was the need for developing advanced fundraising programs for more effective stakeholder interactions. President Elam recognized, as per his CDO, that “there weren't enough boots on the ground for all of the constituents that we had in terms of fundraising potential that was out there.” President Elam’s CDO added: “So, he did make an investment in the development department. There hadn't been one prior to him.”

President Admon shared:

So I think part of it is finding out how to properly staff those offices, how do we go through the right training to figure out how do we get some of these federal grants that can be institutional transformative, right? And so, there was recently I've been seeing a lot from UNCF, and Thurgood Marshall, regarding just this topic...and how to apply for X, Y and Z.

President Haran noted the following regarding the challenges for staffing his development team:

My graduate school [which is not an HBCU] calls me twice a week [for fundraising stewardship]. My graduate school has [hundreds of] people working in development. [Here the] Undergraduate school has eight people working in development. Figure 6.

Research Themes

In keeping with my literature review on HBCUs and staffing their development offices, this continues to be a challenge with which the presidents I interviewed are still wrestling with how to address.

Public and Private Giving

Finally, a key area of discussion reviewed by the public HBCU presidents was in broadening the view of fundraising. Participants noted how fundraising is much more expansive than private giving. They counted the ability to increase state investments in their institutions as a major factor of resource development. President Haran shared the following on his “revenue generation” concept:

Just to give you some ballpark as I think about revenue generation. Tuition and all fees are about \$50 million. State appropriation is about 50 million. Grants and contracts are about \$20 million. Pell Grant...we get about \$10, \$15 million. And then [private] fundraising, we do about \$4 million. We've increased rents from I've got about \$15 million to about \$20 million. We've increased the state appropriation when I've got here about \$40 million to about \$50 million and fundraising has been about flat. So, that's when I say revenue generation, I am not just talking fundraising. We've had a lot of success.

President Gian said:

So, we're not a public institution, right? So, we get- very little directly from the state.... We of course get considerable federal funding... We also have programs like our [Specific Program Name] supported by the Department of Defense. Many of our faculty have federal research grants from the national science foundation, from NIH, Department of Justice, National Endowment for the Arts, and from other federal agencies. So, we do have a significant pool of funds that we get, from the federal government. And of course, the CARES Act that provided stimulus funds during the crisis was critical and consequential. As for our private fundraising, when you looked at our fundraising, we had just finished a successful campaign... But if you did a pie chart and they did have a pie chart, you would see that well, over half of that money, maybe even two thirds came from corporate and foundation sources.

Despite the great success of her fundraising efforts, President Gian added her thinking on changing the sources of funding. She said: "I want to completely shift that pie chart, so that two thirds of our funding are individuals, families." Her rationale for adjusting the view on fundraising is that relying on corporations, foundations, and the federal government is not healthy because she described it as "episodic funding."

Related to this view of sources for fundraising, the public HBCU presidents interviewed for my study also have very evolved views on fundraising and the approaches used to seek funds. In fact, the HBCU presidents from public institutions discussed and reviewing how they were considering strategies used by private institutions, in that they are much more aggressive in going after individual private donors and reducing expectations on public state and federal dollars – which had been a mainstay of public HBCUs funding. President Elam said: "...I have been a real,

a strong advocate of turning the kind of private notion of how we do fundraising into a public model.”

The overall perspectives uncovered in this element of my research is that the definition of fundraising needs to be expanded to include more than private giving. As noted by the presidents interviewed, the opportunities available through adding state and federal grants to the fundraising program is much more effective than solely focusing on private giving to meet institutional resource needs. Also, when seeking private funding, CDOs and President should consider longer-term funders and funding opportunities.

Marketing and Communications

Many of the HBCU presidents interviewed expressed building a “narrative” for the fundraising priorities of their institutions through effective marketing and communication. The presidents articulated the need to be very deliberate in keeping key constituencies informed of the activities of their institutions. They did not choose one single messaging approach for stakeholders, but they did focus on consistent communication through messaging that was most relevant to the targeted stakeholder group. President Diza said:

When I arrived, we were putting zero dollars, virtually zero dollars into a marketing budget. [Now] we're building our brand and kind of doing it and so some of that is very deliberate. [We are] more sophisticated in how we interact with stakeholders.

An example of how communication tools are used, President Elam described a newsletter that is produced to serve his needs:

So I have a little publication here called [Publication Name]. It is just a little very, very, little pocket thing. And it has, like, 15 pages. It take 10 minutes leaf through that, and it is just rich with information.

President Gian noted:

We believe that you have to develop a narrative that appeals to what these organizations are about here in [City]. I think I'm doing better at figuring out what is the narrative that makes [individuals] feel more comfortable with investing in...predominantly Black students. We are all learning how to make the philanthropic community see that if you make us better, we can make the city better.

In sum, responding to the question of what have HBCU presidents done to institute strategic fundraising programs at their institutions involved a number of strategies, first, these presidents understand and are trained (formally or informally) in the discipline of fundraising. Next, they outwardly support the leaders of their fundraising operations. They also are actively involved in the practice of fundraising, taking a lead role in seeking investment in their institutions. Finally, they invested in the fundraising operations of their institutions to ensure that the proper level of staffing is maintained, and that the function has resources (technology, infrastructure, etc.) needed, including investment in effective marketing and communications.

Theme 4: Stakeholder Engagement

The next key theme, which emerged, was regarding the many and varied stakeholders with whom the presidents engaged. Stakeholder theory emerged in 1984 as it related to delivering value to organizational constituencies (Crane & Ruebottom, 2011; Freeman, 1984). Due to the growing trends of entrepreneurship education and the understanding of the "business of college," higher education institutions are beginning to employ new practices that treat constituent groups like stakeholders (Chapleo & Simms, 2010; Bischoff, Volkmann, & Audretsch, 2018). The strategies used by the presidents in my study to fulfill the goals of engaging with varied stakeholders, were many to include, small group meetings, and dedicated

touch points. The key stakeholders included students, faculty, staff, alumni, legislative/political leaders, community and civic leaders, and their governing boards. While the group presidents chose differed in terms of the first, second or third group priorities, these were common stakeholder groups identified across participants. Insights on each of the above noted stakeholder groups described by the HBCU presidents are provided below.

Legislative/Political Stakeholders

The legislative/political stakeholder group was addressed as an important stakeholder group for engagement. Several participants addressed their efforts at achieving greater engagement with legislators and local elected officials, and they offered insights on how this could be better managed. The sentiment shared constantly was that “working both sides of the aisle” (which refers to their efforts at cultivating relationships among both Democrat and Republican legislators) was important. President Bates stated, “You can't get anything done just on the Democratic nor the Republican side.”

The CDO to President Haran said: Since being [at University], he's had a number of letters [Her Institution President] to congressmen saying, ‘*We need your support*’.” She further stated: He has, of course, cultivated relationships with both Republicans and Democrats. I mean, that's not necessarily what we count on our books. But in bringing funds to the institution, he has definitely sealed the deal and provided funding for the institution in that space.

President Diza said:

I spent a lot more time in DC [building relationships with legislators] and on the phone with folks in DC. We're in a red state in [State] where we've had the largest cuts to higher education, largest four-year cuts.

The CDO to President Diza described her efforts in supporting outreach in support of local funding initiatives with her city council by sharing the following:

We're overseeing [Institution's] efforts there and [our Campus Center] wherein the citizens for (have a) self-imposed a tax to come up with all these different initiatives that will strengthen the city as it pertains to ... education and the arts and just all these different projects. And so, there is almost \$17 million [Center] that's going in [Community] where we exist where the [University] campus exists and we're the operators for that. We've been ... working with city council.

While politics was an area which was not dwelled on extensively, the stakeholder group of elected officials was definitely one included for consideration in executing proactive engagement strategies.

Governing Boards

Effective governing board engagement is a key need for the long-term success of HBCUs, principally in the area of fundraising (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Esters et al., 2016; Proper et al., 2009; Zeig, Baldwin & Wilbur, 2017). Also, the President/Board relationship is an especially important one to grow and nurture for maximum fundraising success (Proper et al., 2009). To expound on the view previously shared by President Gian, regarding her view on engagement with the HBCU governing board, President Haran shared similar sentiment stating, "I do really believe in roles and the board is my boss."

The key point of view expressed however lay in ensuring that there is clear understanding and alignment of the predominant policy role of the Board among the governing board members, the board chair and the HBCU President. President Elam shared that the board at his institution

has “understanding of the policy function of the board, understanding the vision piece.”

President Elam said:

I saw boards and presidents and these dysfunctional relationships. They boards did not really understand their role and presidents were too hierarchical and too militaristic in their styles and everything had to start in the president's office and in the president's office and that was just not my style of leadership.

President Gian said:

The board of trustees have the fiduciary responsibility, governance responsibility for the institution. And so...I would say the principal responsibility and accountability of a president is to the board.

When asked about the level of fundraising engagement his CEO has with the Board, the CDO to

President Gian said:

We have a very, very strong board and the president is very close and connected with our board. So, we have strong support from our board and that has been helpful in terms of her leadership. She has been able to effectively form relationships with our board chair and also other board members. So, they're plugged in to everything that we're doing and really on board with everything that we are doing too as well.

Illustrative of the importance of Boards and their engagement, President Haran said this about the largest gift he had received

We're getting three [million] from [Company]. That will be the largest gift and [Company] is on our board. They have been in our board. So [in building a strong board], you go to their rooms or you get them in your room.

President Haran also described how he leveraged his board member to secure other board talent.

He said:

We had [Influencer] who's executive of the [Company]. When he left, one of the things that I told him was, "Look. We have somebody in [Company] on the board" and he helped me find someone on the board, so I'm very excited about that.

In sum, to support their presidents, HBCU governing boards must engage in activities that are strategic and governance-oriented. These efforts are critical to building strong fundraising programs for HBCUs for the long-term.

Students, Faculty & Staff

Another set of key stakeholders specifically discussed by each president were faculty, staff, and students. According to the research on stakeholder theory, stakeholder relationship building includes leveraging internal constituencies, and involves building empowered teams (Bass et al., 2003; Burns, 1978). This is perceived as necessary before external engagement can be effective (Bass et al., 2003; Bischoff, Volkmann, & Audretsch, 2018; Chapleo & Simms, 2010; Nichols, 2007). President Bates recounted a story that put a fine point on this philosophy:

On my very first day on the campus, before finding my office, I went and found a classroom with students in it. I spoke to them; I let them know, I'm your new president. But I don't care about my office, what I care about is you. I met with them, listened to them. And then, two days later, the faculty assembly representative came and said, "I know you're going to be extremely busy. Sometime within the next two months, if you get time, the faculty would love to meet with you." I'm like, "Two months?" I said, "Today's Tuesday," I said, "Let's meet on Thursday." The Faculty representative said, "You really can do that." I said, "Pull the people together." I listened to their concerns,

and they knew I really cared. Not only that, listened to their concerns, but I took down the names of the people who had concerns. Then I developed subcommittees to deal with their concerns like health insurance that they've been complaining about for decades...

President Bates went further in describing how his key constituency groups for engagement were internally focused. He said:

Because I was informed when I came, my onboarding was going to be so extensive ... so extensive that I pushed back with the trustees....I said, No, I've got to start interior and go out. Because if I go to [corporations], they're going to ask the faculty, staff, and students after I finished my meeting, and if they say, "Well, we don't know, we really haven't seen him since he's been here, it's not going to bode well.

Demonstrating the direct engagement efforts of her President with students and parents, the CDO to President Diza stated:

I've never seen a president at freshman orientation give out his cell phone number and say, *'Students...you're away from home. This is your new home, but if you need me, you give me a call. If you need something, you call this office.'* He is very much one with the community. He's one with the students... When the cars are coming through, he's right there greeting the families as they come in. He's right there shaking hands, cracking jokes and making everybody feel comfortable.

President Admon said:

65 to 70% of our budget is from students, I need to make sure that I spend a significant amount of time recruiting as a president.

Finally, President Elam described student engagement as extremely important to fundraising:

What your current students can do for you is to either open doors to perspective donors or they can close them. And so, it is very important as we make opportunities available for our students to go to grab internships in corporations.

As part of this description, President Elam went into detail about how the involvement of his institution's students opened the door to multi-million-dollar investments in his institution from a Silicon Valley based company.

Community and Civic Leaders

Additionally, cultivating special and unique civic and/or community relationships was expressed. President Chatan discussed the level of engagement she had with the Mayor of the city where her HBCU is located. She described the fact that the Mayor's wife sits on her governing board and because both the Mayor and his wife are very popular, their support has been a major fundraising benefit to her institution. President Chatan said: She [Mayor's wife] did a fundraiser for her birthday and she brought in the most money of our goal, to date. I can tell you the aggregate amount is the largest amount we've gotten from any single entity.

President Haran noted that "being in the right places to be able to have the right conversations" was critically important. He shared: I've been asked to, and I've joined a bunch of boards here in [City] and so where money is..." The CDO to President Haran expanded on the need for her president to serve on community boards. She said:

...But through his relationships, having to have him be more conscious of the boards and the relationships he actually does have. I don't think he realizes it because he's like, I'm supposed to do this, I'm on the board. But you are six degrees, I mean, sometimes it is closer to six, you're like two degrees away from somebody we want to get to.

The CDO to President Bates said:

Has a great relationship with Washington, is on the number of boards

Finally, for this stakeholder group, engagement is key. Involvement on boards overall helps with fundraising at the institutions of the presidents' interviewed.

Alumni

The final stakeholder group addressed was one wherein the greatest urgency of engagement was noted. Several presidents addressed both challenge and opportunity for greater engagement with alumni and offered insights on how this could be better managed.

Several presidents expressed the fact that it is imperative to grow enthusiasm among alumni for their institutions, and then they will give. Several HBCU presidents interviewed either are relying on or wish to leverage their alumni networks even more to be door openers to increase HBCU presidents' access to wealthy donor prospects. President Elam said:

Because we have 50,000 [alumni] alone, that are everywhere. And it's imperative to get the alumni always excited about the institution and to make sure they are understanding with great clarity.

President Elam added:

My alumni are number one. I have town hall meetings with them. I have a great following on social media. I think it is really critical (alumni engagement) and I think for many HBCUs they get this wrong.

The perspective held by some presidents (predominantly at public institutions) was that governing board members may not always have the influence or affluence needed to grow fundraising at their HBCUs. Therefore, cultivating alumni to assist in this regard is crucial.

President Elam expounded on this view.

[With] HBCU [some] boards there's only so much that they can give. And there's only so much they can get...So you're bringing on individuals who they don't have wealth, and they don't have access to wealth.

Challenges with Alumni Engagement

The perception that alumni of HBCUs are not consistent in their contributions to their alma maters is a strongly held view in the literature (Graves, 2017; Kelly et al., 2017; Tindall, 2008). The literature also reveal that perceived limited financial capacity of HBCU alumni is a cited barrier by HBCU presidents who declined to engage with their HBCU alumni (Kelly et al., 2017; Tindall, 2008). Related to these views in the literature, one of the challenges expressed by my study participants was the need for less transactional – giving to get – investment by their alumni in their HBCU alma maters. President Diza elaborated by sharing:

If 80% of alumni gave and gave a \$100 a month, we could almost pay for tuition for every student. I will tell you, it probably took me three or four years to get very comfortable with making statements like that once I truly understood that the lay of the land. But at this point, I have no problem giving, in fact, no problem asking them to give.

The CDO to President Haran amplified this view by sharing:

Alumni can be challenging. And you can't be successful because you're bogged down with the \$5 and \$10. I didn't get a ticket to the president's game. You know, all this other stuff.

Additionally, President Diza's perspective, which was shared by other presidents interviewed, was that many alumni do not fully understand the importance of having a high percentage of contributions from alumni on a year to year basis. President Diza said:

The reality is alumni have a stronger responsibility to give to the institution and we can't blame other people if we are not giving. If we value it, we have to value it beyond homecoming, beyond a football game. We have to give holistically.

President Admon said:

Every institution is different with strategy. My current institution has about a [percentage] alumni giving. But the thing has to be celebrated when I can convert the participation to [increased] dollars.

Opportunities for Increased Alumni Engagement

To combat the challenges with alumni engagement and to reinforce the imperative for their investment, alumni communication was consistently expressed as a need. Methods expressed for greater engagement with alumni used by the HBCU presidents in my study included use of newsletters, face-to-face visits, direct contact, open door access to the president, and events (i.e. Homecomings). Of the HBCU presidents participating in my study, several boast among the highest levels of alumni giving among HBCUs. Two have participation rates above 38 percent. However, each shared that there is opportunity in intentionally and consistently communicating with their alumni.

President Haran described the importance of ongoing and direct communication with alumni through more effective communication:

Let's go back and talk about our alumni, which are I think our most engaged instruments. So, all of our HBCU alumnus love their school. They love it. And, what they want is that love to be reciprocated. They want to know that the school loves them and when you don't contact, when you don't reach back out you, you're sending a message that you don't love them.

Also, due to the education received, alumni are among the greatest spokespersons to drive investment in their institutions. President Elam said:

So, when you bring them in and you really are opening the door saying here and give them things to shout about, to bellow about. Right? They open doors for you, to constituent groups to the corporate groups, the foundation groups in ways that if you're just relying upon your development staff, those doors may not have to be open. So, I place the cultivation of alumni, developing an unbelievable relationship with alumni, overboard or anything else.

Not all of the HBCU presidents displayed their passion and love for their institutions in such outward and effusive ways, but each uniquely expressed how relationship building is a center priority in fundraising. Their ability to build effective relationships with both internal stakeholders and external stakeholders by positioning their institutions as progressive and forward-thinking was key in their ability to fundraise effectively.

Theme 5: Race - A Barrier and Opportunity

The final theme to emerge from my findings involves race and its complexities as it relates to fundraising at and for an HBCU. The originating scholars of critical race theory, as described in Chapter Three, assert that racism will never go away, and that African-Americans must be vigilant and dedicated to confronting oppression (Bell, 1991). Bell and other scholars also maintain that movement to a “colorblindness in post-racialist” society is naïve at best, and non-existent at worst (Bell, 1991; Crenshaw, 2011). In particular, Bell’s theory of “interest convergence” which is grounded on the premise that people of colors’ interests in achieving racial equity only advances when those interests converge with those in power (McCoy & Rodricks, 2009), is one that most aptly aligns with findings in the area of race with fundraising at

HBCUs. From the HBCU presidents interviewed, a view uniformly expressed by participants, was that giving is not equal to HBCUs as compared to PWIs, and race is a central contributing factor in this paradigm. This theme of race is structured in terms of the issues and challenges with associated with fundraising for an HBCU and the opportunities and strategies which the HBCU presidents interviewed use to address the issue.

Issues and Challenges

Participants described challenges with race as an impediment to fundraising. President Haran said:

It's still the idea that Black folks have to prove themselves. And so, you've got somebody who will turn around and give VCU or University of Richmond \$10 million. And, they'll make you write a proposal for \$15,000 and they'll send you up and down the woods to do it, you read 100 pages to get \$15,000. They'll put so many restrictions and it's going to cost you \$50,000 to spend \$15,000. And then, they go put out a press release saying how they saved [HBCU] by giving you \$15,000.

President Diza magnified this view by sharing:

The truth of the matter is it's still difficult to get into some of those doors. There are some corporate entities we just can't get in the door. I can't get a meeting with them no matter what we do.

President Gian offered the following view regarding how this racial element plays out in local and regional interactions stating, "...A [Community] that has ... institutions that serve as HBCUs ... has a responsibility to do what it can to improve the opportunities for its community. And you can't involve the city by shaming people." President Chatan noted the following:

[Organizations and individuals] are more apt to give to white people serving Black people

than they are directly to Black led organizations. It's almost like a missionary perspective where you're going to save the hungry children in Africa, but then you're not going to do something right in your backyard. I think that's it's deep seated.

Also, there was a view expressed that overcoming the issue of HBCUs being perceived as inferior impacted fundraising. Several presidents reviewed how they are working to overcome these pre-judgments about their institutions by focusing on fact. President Gian stated:

I mean, the facts are facts are facts, right? So, people will recite the facts of our primacy in STEM or whatever. Our graduation rates, which are higher, not only even the national average for Black people, but the national average for all folks, our six-year graduation rate, right? Better than [University], I should say too.

President Elam described his experiences as follows:

So, I do think that the background of the president at an HBCU...I do think that people look at that background and then they make some judgments about whether that person really can cut muster someplace. So now I'm not saying that that that's an accurate judgment. I think it's exactly stupid. I think it's foolish. That's the way unfortunately... And so therefore, I don't have to prove to them that I am here because, oh, you weren't good enough to be over there. Not only am I not good enough but I could get over there and basically turned that place into a model national institution. I could lead any institution in the country from the Ivy League to no league, right? Indeed, I've had two institutions in the Big 10 to come after me aggressively, but they know that I've been there. I've done that.

Race also was considered a factor in how HBCUs are portrayed in the media. This fact was perceived to inhibit fundraising success. The CDO to President Diza expressed, "I think that we've had struggles here within the state that ... because we've had to deal with some issues with the

media and the press, always wanting to paint a negative story as it pertains to an institution that serves predominately Black individuals.” President Diza himself shares his view of how HBCU leaders can counter this stating, “...It’s about telling your story and being consistently branding and marketing your institution in a way to where we’re telling the story.”

So part of the HBCU presidents’ decision-making involved trying to control the media narrative through use of their own communications offices, as described in earlier passages. Further, building the narrative and telling their story to as many differing audiences as possible was a challenge that had to be overcome. In helping to create a brand for her institution, and to overcome negative perceptions of being an HBCU in a philanthropic class that was mostly White, President Chatan described her efforts in this way, “I joined every, predominantly White organization that I could.”

The CDO to President Gian described his institution’s efforts in this way:

Our communications team has done a phenomenal job in terms of pushing messages for [institution name] but creating (awareness) so that our constituents, our donors in the community really understand the importance of who we are and why we’re relevant and why the community needs to be interested in not only [institution name] but also in HBCUs as well.

Opportunities and Strategies for Navigating

The stellar HBCU presidents interviewed are overcoming negative portrayals and reluctance in financial support due to race. They are building unique and progressive strategies to overcome this very real and pervasive challenge. President Gian said, [I use a] collaborative style. Seek feedback from all constituents.

This work involved being realistic about the challenges created by race and negative perceptions of HBCUs. Also, the presidents interviewed made pragmatic decisions regarding how they engage with donors and prospects - whether the prospects supported or did not support the mission of the HBCU. President Bates shared,

You can't ask a business or a corporation about their giving levels if you don't have a relationship.

The HBCU presidents in my study also are seeking new fundraising approaches. For example, President Diza shared that his HBCU hired White "door openers" to help navigate meetings with organizations whom he could not get an entrée. President Diza noted that the chief role of these hired individuals is "to get us meetings that we couldn't get." Another strategy he shared was in building partnerships and alliances. He said:

We bought into a deal with major [PWI] where we hired a joint grant writer that helps our faculty write right grants and started paying attention to the federal side. We now ranked third in the state in research [revenue] generation.

Presidents also described how they have to figure out a narrative that makes the White prospects and donors feel more comfortable with investing in HBCUs. President Gian said:

I think I'm doing better at figuring out what is the narrative that makes philanthropy in [local community] feel more comfortable with investing in the HBCUs that have been here for over a hundred years and educate over [number] of predominantly Black students....that have been here for over a hundred years and among us..... When this is made clear, these entities don't have any other barrier [than race] to also invest in HBCUs in the same way they invested in PWI...it's the narrative.

The HBCU presidents interviewed also worked to understand White stakeholder motivations for giving or not giving to their institutions specifically around the issue of race. Despite the fact that organizations have not given to their local HBCUs or their giving is disproportionate in comparison to other local PWIs, shaming, or “going in with handout just begging for something” as noted earlier by President Bates is an unsuccessful approach.

President Gian said:

I'm learning better about how the philanthropic community here in [city] might see us as a contribution and an asset. We are all learning how to make the philanthropic community see that if you make us better, we can make the [community] better.

These presidents also made strategic choices that best met the institutional demands of their universities, avoided “deficit thinking,” and focused their engagement efforts on presenting the positive investment opportunities available for prospects. In essence, these highly effective presidents determined the narrative that worked best with the stakeholders who would not otherwise engage with them or their institutions. Participants roundly expressed the fact that guilt does not motivate investment in their institutions. Finally, being very deliberate about the organizations that they joined also was important. Demonstrating the intersectionality of politics and race as an example, President Bates said:

Can [an] HBCU raise money in [Community]? It's a difficult proposition. So given the climate, the circumstance, but we were able to turn it around. The race, class, wealth, politics, the politics, the political climate, of being a very clear red state initially, it just didn't lend itself to promoting HBCUs. So, what I had to do was take a different strategy, which was to become really deeply ingrained in the majority culture of leadership there.

President Haran described his communication on the issue of race as very deliberate and careful. He shared, as did others, that guilt or shame in the fact that organizations have not given to their HBCUs does not help in overcoming the paradigm. President Haran reiterated this view as follows:

I didn't say reparations in 400 years. I didn't say that our schools aren't treated well enough. I didn't say that. Because for some people when you say that it puts the guilt on them and then they can't move from that guilt.

President Admon said:

What I found sometimes, HBCU, we're approaching from a deficit perspective, versus approaching it from a value perspective. And so, we're quick to sell benefits. And that's what truly allowed me to be successful.

Finally, the current COVID-19 pandemic and its disproportionately negative impacts on African-American communities is perceived as an opportunity that should be acted upon. The CDO to President Gian said:

During the COVID era, race has been a key component of fundraising. I think that all groups, whether it [is] African-American, Black have a heightened sense of that they should be doing more to ensure racial equity and racial equality.

Overall, the HBCU presidents who overcame race as a barrier to meeting their fundraising and resource development needs of their institutions were pragmatic, strategic, and were undaunted in their efforts to raise funds by proudly positioning the positives of their organizations. This involved effectively and consistently engaging with wide variety of constituents, ensuring ongoing communications through a team-based approach, and positioning their institutions as investments not “charities.”

Summary

In Chapter Four, I have re-stated the research questions that guided my efforts, have amplified how I designed the questions to seek answers to my research questions, and have presented my research findings. I provided extensive analysis through the voice of the study participants on the five themes uncovered. To recap, the principal themes of my research project are below.

1. HBCU presidents who were successful as fundraisers exhibited the traits of transformational leadership.
2. HBCU presidents who were successful as fundraisers developed and implemented strategic organizational, based on research, data and metrics.
3. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers understood the discipline of fundraising and invested in the operations of their Advancement/Development functions.
4. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers built effective internal and external relationships that helped them progress and advance their fundraising programs, emphasizing alumni in advancing their fundraising goals.
5. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers were be cognizant of the historic unequal funding of HBCUs, and engaged with stakeholders who did not typically fund their institutions.

In Chapter Five, I will discuss the practical and scholarly implications of my research, as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of my multiple case study was to examine how a select group of exemplary fundraising leaders among HBCU presidents used strategies to respond to their HBCU fundraising and institutional needs. My study also examined how these exemplars overcame challenges specific to HBCUs, including but not limited to issues such as negative leadership stereotyping and lower alumni financial support. The conceptual framework for my study was undergirded by transformational leadership theory, as considered through the lens of both stakeholder theory and critical race theory. In Chapter Five, I will provide a summary of my findings, engage in a discussion of them in relation to existing research literature, and express existing limitations. I will conclude by providing the implications of my study and recommendations for future research.

Within the discussion section of Chapter Five, I will present a brief summary of my literature review. The information shared will be important to having contextual background on the importance and relevance of my findings. I then present the implications of my research, and recommendations for future research.

Literature Review Summary

Changes in taxpayer funding of higher education has caused colleges and universities to focus more on philanthropy (Kaplan, 2020; Pew Charitable Trust, 2019). Likewise, historical funding from federal and state governments as well as corporate and philanthropic foundation sources have been shrinking over the years, particularly for HBCUs (Kaplan, 2020; Kujovich, 1994; Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010). Further, disproportionate HBCU funding by governmental entities as well as negative stereotypes and perceptions of HBCUs and

their leaders is causing HBCU presidents to work harder in the raising of funds for their institutions (Brown & Burnette, 2014; Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994; Sav, 1997, 2010). Today's university president is expected to be a top fundraiser for their institutions (Bourgeois, 2016; Hodson, 2010; Nicholson, 2007; Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005). The priority that an institution places on the fundraising program can determine whether it will have the opportunity to do what it needs to do to achieve success (Tindall, 2008). Additionally, alumni giving is a critically important component of a fundraising program. However, the perception is that HBCU alumni do not give as frequently and consistently as those from PWIs (Graves, 2017; Walker, 2019). Specific challenges for HBCUs in fundraising are HBCU governing board engagement, and lower endowment levels (Graves, 2017; Kelly et al., 2017; Tindall, 2008).

Another attribute referenced in the literature as a criticality for higher education institution presidents is the ability to build, develop and communicate institutional vision (Freeman et al., 2016; Nicholson, 2007). As it relates to vision and presidential leadership in fundraising, research points to the necessity of transformational leadership, particularly in a climate of great change within higher education (Basham, 2012). As transformational leaders, college presidents must be able to set goals and positively influence and engage their stakeholders (Bass et al., 2003; Nichols, 2007). The course setting by the president and the qualities of the “transformational leader” set the stage for high-performing organizations. However, as has been described in my literature review, HBCUs continue to lag behind PWIs, in the areas of HBCU fundraising advancement prospect research, leadership training, planned giving engagement, and general alumni engagement as well as research (Brown & Burnette, 2014; Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Kujovich, 1994; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010 Walker, 2019).

Considering these factors, for my study, I sought to address specific gaps which existed in the literature concerning HBCU presidents and fundraising. The gaps included the college president's role in fundraising challenges and specific HBCU presidential strategies in fundraising.

Summary of Findings

I designed my research questions to explore the strategies that made each HBCU president so successful in their fundraising efforts. I utilized three research questions to guide my research and help better understand how these top fundraising HBCU presidents navigated challenges while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions. I designed my interview protocols to ensure that my research questions were addressed. In ensuring that I fully addressed each research question, I have summarized my specific findings as per my three research questions and their sub-questions in the following information presented.

Figure 6. Research Themes



Summary of Findings: Research Question One

My first research question was: *What have HBCU presidents, who have been leaders in their fundraising efforts, done to institute strategic fundraising programs at their institutions?*

My findings point to very consistent practices among the HBCU president interviewed. First, they established a clear vision for their institutions and their fundraising priorities and were focused on getting their key constituents behind the vision. Second, they developed and implemented strategic fundraising plans, based on research, data and metrics. Next, they followed their plans meticulously and methodically and were results oriented. Also, the HBCU presidents in my study also exhibited many of the leadership traits of transformational leaders. These traits include the following: collaboration, trustworthiness, reliance on teams, empowering leadership styles, transparency, and relatability. Additionally, the HBCU president participants were extremely adept at building effective internal and external relationships that helped them progress and advance their fundraising programs. Finally, they each took time and interest in understanding fundraising, and invested in the Advancement/Development functions to ensure effective internal fundraising operations.

Summary of Findings: Research Question Two

My second research question was: *How have these HBCU presidents navigated challenges while managing the fundraising/resource development needs for their institutions?*

The two sub-questions were: *What are some major events that have affected fundraising efforts, and what was most challenging about these events in terms of fundraising?* The findings for this research question revealed that HBCU presidents who effectively navigated challenges -- while meeting the fundraising and resource development needs of their institutions -- executed well in three key areas. The first was that effective presidents were adaptable and ready for change. The

second is these presidents had prior crisis management experience that prepared them for leadership. The third was that they were effective at communicating their vision, mission, and institutional goals in order to create awareness of high-priority matters at hand. I addressed each of these above-noted areas in great detail within Chapter Four.

From the perspectives of fiscal impact scale and scope of problems, managing through the COVID-19 pandemic was felt to be the most challenging crisis that all of these HBCU presidents have faced in their careers. Other crises faced included student matters, such as shootings, natural disasters such as hurricanes and major storms, and technological incidents such as cyber security challenges and ransomware attacks. Beyond specific crises, from a resource development perspective, the most challenging events experienced by the HBCU presidents was the financial losses faced due to COVID-19, and issues with effectively managing a variety of constituents needs, such as alumni and community leaders, and government officials.

Summary of Findings: Research Question Three

My final research question involved getting insights into how these exemplary HBCU presidents engaged with stakeholders, how they prioritized engagement, and if they had challenges in overcoming perceptions due to race. My third research question was: *How did these HBCU presidents approach their decision-making processes and make choices regarding their fundraising practices?* The two sub-questions were: *In what ways did race come into decision-making processes, and in what ways did any other identities impact decision-making?* The findings for this research question were many.

Decision-making as it related to fundraising predominantly involved effectively and strategically navigating relationships. Their work entailed seeking to understand stakeholder motivations for giving or not giving to their HBCUs. These efforts also involved being realistic

about the challenges created as a result of race and/or negative perceptions of HBCUs due to HBCUs' support of predominantly Black student bodies. The HBCU presidents made strategic choices that best met the institutional demands of their universities, and avoided deficit thinking, which was framed by focusing on the positive investment opportunities for HBCUs with prospects. These presidents also made pragmatic decisions regarding engagement with donors and prospects--whether the prospects supported or did not support the mission of the HBCU. They also acknowledged the issues of race, and in some cases politics, which resulted in lower rates of giving to their HBCUs as compared to PWIs. They decided to directly confront the issue. It was clear in the research that if they had not pragmatically been cognizant of the barriers presented due to race, they would not have been as successful in approaching stakeholders in their fundraising pursuits.

Finally, the five themes uncovered are:

1. HBCU presidents who were successful as fundraisers exhibited the traits of transformational leadership.
2. HBCU presidents who were successful as fundraisers developed and implemented strategic organizational plans, based on research, data and metrics.
3. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers understood the discipline of fundraising, and invested in the operations of their Advancement/Development functions.
4. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers built effective internal and external relationships that helped them progress and advance their fundraising programs, emphasizing alumni in advancing their fundraising goals.

5. HBCU presidents successful as fundraisers were cognizant of the historic unequal funding of HBCUs, and engaged with stakeholders who did not typically fund their institutions.

Limitations

There were three chief limitations with my research. First, as noted in Chapter One, there are 101 HBCUs. HBCUs also are not monolithic; they are each different. Therefore, the findings addressed cannot be perceived to represent all HBCUs. My research is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all HBCUs in the area of fundraising. That stated, the findings uncovered may well serve to support efforts by other HBCUs if utilized. Secondly, two of the most important individuals to fundraising efforts of HBCU presidents are CDOs and the governing board chairs (Association of Governing Boards, 2014; Burke, 2003; Esters et al., 2016; Proper et al., 2009; Tindale, 2008; Zeig, Baldwin & Wilbur, 2017). I was able to interview nearly all of the CDOs who support the HBCU presidents represented within my study. However, I was unable to interview one CDO. While this represents a limitation, I do not believe it changes the key findings of my research. Further, I was not able to include the voice of the governing board chair in my study.

Another limitation is that I was unable to secure individual fundraising results from all of the HBCU presidents interviewed. That stated, the endowment levels and historical success parameters used to determine participants, I believe, supports the involvement of the individuals included in my study. However, not being able to secure the results of two presidents specifically was a limitation I was not able to overcome.

Implications

There are both scholarly and practical implications of my research. These implications are important for policy and practice.

Scholarly Implications

One of the first scholarly implications is the need for creation of a robust body of knowledge in the area of HBCU fundraising. One of my findings points to the critically important need for HBCU presidents to have the proper skills, sophistication, and understanding of fundraising as a specialized field of work. The more comprehensive the research available to HBCU presidents and CDOs, the more information that will be accessible to these entities. Doing so would allow for further insight into HBCU leadership and offer best practices on things that are working for successful HBCUs. As shown in my research and the literature, the need for external funding support has put tremendous pressure on HBCU presidents to raise funds to advance the missions of their institutions (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2005). There is significant competition among PWIs and other HBCUs for public and private fundraising dollars as federal and state government funding has been shrinking for all higher education institutions (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019). Therefore, the need to ensure that HBCU presidents and aspiring HBCU presidents are prepared as effective fundraisers is great.

Another scholarly implication of my findings centers on the scattered involvement of HBCU alumni in fundraising efforts. Based on my findings, there is the potential for much greater value and contribution to be secured from HBCU alumni, and on a more consistent basis. However, in my study, there was a perceived frustration by some of the HBCU presidents interviewed in not being able to properly engage or influence alumni more effectively. In some cases, it was perceived that HBCU presidents are not doing all that they can to involve alumni, and in other instances, the perception is that the “transactional” – give to get – relationships are

the key fundraising relationships desired by HBCU alumni. This area should be explored in much greater detail in my recommendations for future research as this implication alone, if studied and addressed properly, can make significant changes in HBCU fundraising levels overall.

Another scholarly implication is the alignment between high-performing governing boards and transformational presidential leaders in increasing funds raised for their respective institutions. My research pointed out how important the stakeholder group of governing boards is to presidential success in running their institutions. However, the nexus between how these relationships help institutions overall can be explored and enhanced for HBCUs.

Practical Implications

My research has practical implications for interactions between HBCU presidents, CDOs and their alumni. In my study, it was revealed that presidents are indeed prioritizing the HBCU alumni stakeholder group. The presidents interviewed expressed the need for engagement and involvement in fundraising from this group. In most respects, HBCU alumni were perceived to be the number one, number two, or number three stakeholders for presidential engagement. Therefore, greater alumni engagement by both college presidents and CDOs can increase the level of giving by this important stakeholder group, thus driving achievement of overall institution fundraising objectives.

As noted within my literature review, as well as data from my research study, those presidents who have supported and invested in their fundraising operations with necessary staff, technological tools, and prospect research have seen greater yields in fundraising outcomes (Burk, 2003; Thomas, 2010; Tindall, 2007; Tindall, 2008). This implication from my research further shows that when these successful fundraising HBCU presidents identified sophisticated

and dedicated fundraising operations they were able to achieve much greater fundraising success. Therefore, HBCUs leaders who seek to enhance their fundraising capacity should consider examining their fundraising operations and how they can strengthen them and increase their capabilities.

Another practical implication from my study has to do with strategic planning. With effective and focused strategic plans that provide clear organizational direction, HBCU presidents can direct (and their CDOs can execute) strategic fundraising programs that can positively address organizational needs. The presidents interviewed in my study all talked about strategy. They each had close involvement with fundraising and had an appreciation for how their fundraising programs contributed to the ultimate resource development outcomes sought for their institutions. Therefore, having consistently updated strategic plans that are routinely followed can ensure that institutions' fundraising operations can be focused on those areas most important to colleges and universities in fulfilling their mission and academic mandates.

A final practical implication from my research involves planned giving and the need for CDOs to focus more on this area of fundraising. One CDO in my study noted that many HBCUs are more than 100 years old. She felt that the nature of this history means that there is a large number of alumni who may be well positioned to execute planned gifts for their HBCUs. Therefore, with a focused strategy in the area of planned giving, the volume of fundraising can increase exponentially due to the general difference in the size and scale of planned gifts as compared to major or annual gifts.

Recommendations

My study addressed gaps regarding leadership and management styles and approaches, used by the HBCU presidents interviewed in my study, to enhance fundraising success at their

institutions. My study also addressed specific fundraising strategies used by HBCU presidents to grow giving to their institutions. Additionally, my study addressed the opportunities and challenges as described by the presidents and their CDOs interviewed regarding how they may better engage with alumni to grow their excitement, enthusiasm, and actions in greater giving to their alma maters. More research however can be done in several areas. I describe those recommendations in the following sections.

Research Recommendations

Strategies to grow endowments at HBCUs should be studied. As per the literature, there are distinct advantages to having larger endowments (American Council on Education, 2014; Coupet & Barnum, 2010; Ehrenberg, 2009). However, the top three HBCUs' endowment funds are among the lowest when looking across all institutions (NCES, 2019). One effort to address this could be through assessment of the HBCU planned giving strategies. As described in Chapter One, planned or legacy giving is generally considered to be gifts made at death. They tend to be part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning (Council of Foundations, 2020). These types of gifts tend to be larger in nature than major gifts and can undergird transformational shifts in endowment levels for HBCUs (Burk, 2003; (Council of Foundations, 2020).

Also, while there is a growing amount of research regarding the role of presidential leadership in fundraising for colleges and universities, and while my study seeks to address this issue as it relates to HBCUs, additional contemporary research is needed on the myriad opportunities for enhancing fundraising programs and challenges for HBCUs. This research could help governing boards in decision-making regarding investments in fundraising operations. Additionally, this research could help policy makers through potential legislative support

developed specifically for HBCUs which can assist in enhancing resource development. This research also can shine light on the skills needed to ensure pipeline creation of future HBCU leaders that come to the role ready to lead in the critical areas of fundraising and resource development.

Extensive research around HBCU alumni giving should be conducted. Also, the identification of additional factors that drive fundraising engagement by HBCU alumni should be addressed. While challenges in engagement were noted, the exemplary HBCU presidents in my study revealed the critical importance for changing the current paradigm existent with alumni giving to many HBCUs. There is some research on barriers to HBCU alumni engagement and these data are reinforced in my research (Ashley & James, 2018; Kelly et al., 2017). However, much more research should be conducted on ways to circumvent barriers to alumni giving at HBCUs. My research pointed to the perception of alumni giving being more “transactional” in that the giving was to get, versus to undergird long-term priorities. One participant in my study discussed how alumni giving should go beyond giving for homecoming. Examining how greater engagement can be seeded and ascertaining the best means to engage with this important stakeholder group can be addressed in such future research. Areas of research may include peer-to-peer fundraising, cultivating a spirit of philanthropy in undergraduate students, educating alumni on the importance of giving, and addressing the security concerns regarding online giving (Kelly et al., 2017). Finally, philanthropy interests are growing higher and higher in the African-American community due to recent societal events (i.e. the murder of George Floyd). Therefore, HBCUs should capitalize on this sentiment and begin engaging with their alumni to inspire them to give more and to be more involved in the fundraising process with their alma maters. If this

matter is not effectively addressed, it will be practically impossible to cultivate the relationships that, over time, yield transformational gifts (Jones, 2020).

In addition, there should be additional research on HBCU governing boards' efforts and strategies for assessing the top skills needed for HBCU leaders to not only reach the presidency, but to perform well in the area of fundraising. Literature shows that governing board chair is one of the most important constituents for HBCU president engagement in fundraising (Burk, 2003; Carter, 2001; Scott, 2018; Walker, 2014). Many of the presidents I interviewed discussed their governing boards, how they routinely engage directly with the board chair, and the ongoing/critical need for alignment in expectations of governing board's role in leadership of the HBCUs (Commodore, 2018). The presidents relied on their board for either fundraising "door-opening" support and/or engagement in the policy and procedure development for the effective running of the HBCUs – which includes fundraising administration. Unfortunately, for my research, no board chair was interviewed. However, the data show that there needs to be a near "symbiotic" relationship between the president and the board chair – especially in the area of fundraising (Burk, 2003; Carter, 2001; Scott, 2018; Walker, 2014). More research in this area can provide unique benefits to not only future HBCU presidents but also to HBCU governing boards in their leader selection processes.

Finally, the issue of race and fundraising was uncovered in my research. Doing additional research on the extent to which race impacts fundraising at HBCUs should be explored. The issue of race and negative stereotypes as a result of anti-Black racism, and the impact it has on HBCU fundraising, is borne out through several longitudinal and historical reports and research in this area (Drezner & Gupta, 2012; Sav, 1997; Sav, 2010). Recommendations for future research lay in fully analyzing how issues of race and systemic racism can be more effectively overcome and dismantled in the area of HBCU fundraising. As HBCUs serve predominantly

minority audiences, addressing this matter can lead to more long-term, sustained and successful fundraising activities at these institutions. As was expressed by the HBCU presidents interviewed for my study, guilt will not lead to long-term investment in HBCUs. Therefore, while the presidents each felt the COVID-19 crisis and the Black Lives Matter movement in the years 2020 and 2021 period created greater awareness of HBCUs, the general view is that the moment will pass. “White guilt” will not lead to longer term investment in HBCUs and increased donations to their institutions. That point of view in particular is the basis for the continued and critical need for strategic fundraising engagement. Structural racism and barriers that reduce or even eliminate opportunities for HBCUs to be privy to the funds and donations that PWIs are necessary for exploration and should be explored, highlighted in particular with leaders of foundations as well as state and federal government leaders so as to effectuate change.

Practical Recommendations

One key practical area of discussion borne from this study is in identifying and cultivating nontraditional donors to HBCUs. I discussed this area at great length in Chapter Four. The intersectionality of varied factors including race, politics, and geography creates opportunities for the convergence of differing interests as set forth in critical race theory. This convergence has created opportunities for successful HBCU presidents in their fundraising for their institutions. Also as demonstrated through my study, effective stakeholder engagement helped the presidents in my study be more successful in their fundraising efforts. HBCU presidents, CDOs and governing boards can actively develop methods and strategies for greater engagement and better understanding of new corporate and non-alumni financial prospects of HBCUs. In so doing, the donor pool for fundraising outreach can be expanded, thus increasing funding opportunities. This is an especially important consideration for public HBCU presidents

to embody as state and federal investments in higher education will likely continue to decrease. The HBCU presidents in my study representing public institutions already are positioning their schools for differing donor engagement approaches. This area will be important for additional study, and is highly recommended for greater review by HBCU presidents.

Next, while there was understanding of the need for fierce engagement with alumni, the very clear belief is that HBCU alumni generally are not doing all that they can in helping to fund the many and varied needs of their alma maters. Because of the urgency for engagement of HBCU alumni in fundraising programs, this area needs to be studied, examined and highlighted for HBCU presidents and their respective alumni associations. There is a critical need for joint and focused engagement between HBCUs and their alumni if these iconic institutions are to be positioned for long-term success. The HBCU presidents interviewed for my study were all optimistic that if this engagement is begun, it will lead to transformational change in the fundraising trajectories of HBCUs.

Also, another practical recommendation involves work with foundations and federal agencies. One of the participants in my study explicitly discussed how the majority of HBCUs would have been left out of a major foundation solicitation as very few HBCUs met the conditions set by a national entity. Through practical means such as developing innovative proposals, working with HBCU liaisons at major foundations and federal agencies, and by regularly taking advantage of these funding opportunities, HBCUs can increase the dollars invested into their institutions by these particular groups.

Next, as crises were considered by all participants in my study to be something all HBCU presidents had to know how to navigate, there needs to be more information on how aspiring HBCU presidents can be better prepared to lead in the area of crisis management (Shaw, 2016;

Shaw, 2018; Shaw & Meaney, 2015). Research conducted in this area demonstrate the need for leaders to have more than basic understanding of threat assessments, crises audits, and building effective internal response teams are examples of contemporary strategies that must be elevated as consistent higher education business practices (Shaw, 2016; Shaw, 2018; Shaw & Meaney, 2015). The crises identified in my study include natural disasters, student issues, cyber security, and now a pandemic. As shown in the findings of my study, while COVID-19 is a crisis unlike all others, other types of crises also can impact the operations and fundraising efforts of HBCUs. Being capable and ready to manage the myriad challenges faced can have a significant impact on the bottom lines of higher education institutions. My data show that in order to thrive and remain relevant, HBCU leaders must be effective at navigating crises with a focus on maintaining fundraising progress and continuing to meet the resource needs of their institutions.

Finally, the embrace of more sophisticated strategies in fundraising and donor engagement for HBCUs general was expressed in my research. More research specifically with HBCU CDOs can help long-term fulfillment of organizational objectives. Research with a focus on how advanced practitioners can utilize organizational analysis in areas such as gift management, endowment management, and institutional mission should be done. Related to enhancing the sophistication of the HBCU fundraising operations, this knowledge can be expanded to help HBCU presidents and CDOs better address donor intent through use of fundraising software and prospect engagement tools. Ensuring that fundraising engagement aligns with the desires of donors was consistently discussed in my interviews. Making sure that the needs of the institution are matched with donor intent should be explored to make sure that fundraisers are not foisting concepts onto prospects that are out of alignment with giving interests, or that gifts received are out of alignment with institutional strategy. An examination of

this area could be helpful not only to HBCUs Development Offices, but its impact could be especially helpful to HBCUs overall, due to provision of guidance, detail, and strategies to help in communicating the importance of strategic fundraising operations.

Conclusions

This final chapter included a summary of findings and major themes from my study. I also have included a summary of literature, presented a discussion of my research findings, and presented implications and recommendations based on said findings. The HBCU presidents participating in my study provided points of view and perspectives of HBCU fundraising challenges and opportunities. They also shared specific feedback on the specific strategies they have utilized in their successful fundraising practices.

Overall, findings from this study provided a clearer understanding of fundraising at HBCUs from the point of view of seven exemplar HBCU presidents. My study enhances the body of knowledge as it provides a contemporary focus on fundraising leadership and strategies of the HBCUs who are exceedingly effective in their fundraising efforts. HBCUs are staple institutions of the higher education landscape, educating nearly one-third of all African-Americans in the U.S. (NCES, Fast Facts, 2019). Therefore, it is critical that these institutions continue to not only survive but thrive. My research addresses one clear area of challenge for HBCUs through its focus on the contemporary fundraising practices by leadership at select HBCUs, and in so doing provides additional information that will prove useful to all HBCUs.

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APPENDIX A**Demographic Fact Sheet HBCU President**

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Length/Duration of Interview: _____

Place/Location of Interview: _____

Name of Participant _____

Participant's Gender: Male Female Transgender Prefer not to say (Circle one)

Name of College or University _____

Location of College or University _____

Is the college or university publicly or privately funded? Public Private (Circle one)

What is the current student population? _____

Number of years served as president of this college or university _____

Number of years served as president in higher education _____

Number of years of experience in fundraising _____

Number of fundraising campaigns you have led _____

What other positions have you held that contributed to your fundraising experience?

APPENDIX B**Demographic Fact Sheet – HBCU Chief Development (Advancement) Officer**

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Length/Duration of Interview: _____

Place/Location of Interview: _____

Name of Participant _____

Participant's Gender: Male Female Transgender Prefer not to say (Circle one)

Name of College or University _____

Location of College or University _____

Is the college or university publicly or privately funded? Public Private (Circle one)

What is the current student population? _____

Number of years served as CDO for this college or university _____

Number of years served as CDO in higher education _____

Number of years of experience in fundraising _____

Number of fundraising campaigns you have led _____

What other positions have you held that contributed to your fundraising experience?

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions – HBCU President

It is well documented that institutions of higher education face complex challenges. As overall enrollment numbers decline, student retention is stagnant, and traditional revenue sources are no longer predictable, having a clear institutional fundraising strategy is more important than ever. Fundraising and resource development are critical in ensuring financial stability and long-term growth for academic institutions.

Our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are a critical part of the American higher education network. However, many HBCUs have faced or are facing financial challenges. It is with this backdrop, that the below research questions are posed. The questions center on uncovering learnings on how your HBCU has “thrived” in the fundraising arena, with you at its helm.

1. How would you describe your leadership style?
2. Please share your fundraising successes. Describe the campaign or campaigns which you felt were most successful and why.
 - a. What is the approximate total dollar amount you have raised for this institution?
 - i. (If they do not get to...) Why do you feel you were so successful?
3. As you reflect on that fundraising success, what aspects of your leadership made you so successful?
4. What has been your experience in fundraising for your HBCU around resource development and fundraising?
 - a. What challenges existed?
 - b. How are you addressing?

- c. How do you engage with your key stakeholders such as your Board of Trustees members, corporate leaders, foundation leaders, alumni, etc.?
 - i. What is the one thing that you have done that you feel has made the most difference with the stakeholder group most important to fundraising for your HBCU?
- 5. Speaking of challenges, we are in a moment of crisis in the U.S. with the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you share other major challenges you experienced in your presidency?
 - a. How did you navigate those major events?
 - b. How are you faring under the current COVID-19 pandemic?
- 6. I want to get your thoughts on state and federal government grantsmanship. How successful have you been in securing funding from state and federal government sources?
 - a. What is the situation with state government funding of HBCUs in your area? And what have you done to change this paradigm, for the better, for your own institution?
 - b. What is the situation with federal government funding of HBCUs in your area? And what have you done to change this paradigm, for the better, for your own institution?
- 7. What has been your experience as a fundraiser for an HBCU as compared to your PWI peers?
 - a. Do you predominantly work with majority or minority prospects in your fundraising efforts?
 - b. What have been your experiences?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to share or comment on that was not covered during this interview?

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions – HBCU Chief Development (Advancement) Officer

It is well documented that institutions of higher education face complex challenges. As overall enrollment numbers decline, student retention is stagnant, and traditional revenue sources are no longer predictable, having a clear institutional fundraising strategy is more important than ever. Fundraising and resource development are critical in ensuring financial stability and long-term growth for academic institutions.

Our nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are a critical part of the American higher education network. However, many HBCUs have faced or are facing financial challenges. It is with this backdrop, that the below research questions are posed. The questions center on uncovering learnings on how your HBCU has “thrived” in the fundraising arena, with your president at its helm.

1. How would you describe your president’s leadership style?
2. Please share your president’s most prominent fundraising successes.
 - a. Describe the campaign or campaigns which you felt were most successful and why.
3. As you reflect on that fundraising success, what aspects of your president’s leadership made him/her so successful?
4. How has your president engaged you as Chief Development Officer in fundraising?
 - a. What is the one thing that you feel has been done by your president that you feel has made the most difference in fundraising for your HBCU?
5. I want to get your thoughts on state and federal government grantsmanship. How successful has your president been in securing funding from state and federal government sources?

6. What on your thoughts on your president's success as a fundraiser for your HBCU as compared to his/her fellow PWI peers?
7. We are in a moment of crisis in the U.S. with the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you share other major challenges you recall which have been experienced in your president's term?
 - a. How did he/she navigate those major events?
 - b. How is your president faring under the current COVID-19 pandemic?
8. Is there anything else that you would like to share or comment on that was not covered during this interview?

APPENDIX E

President Participant Interview Engagement Letter

Month, Day, Year
 «Title» «First_Name» «Last_Name»
 «Job_Title»
 «Institution»
 «Address_Line_1»
 «City» «State» «ZIP_Code»

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Felecia Commodore, Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership, within the **Darden College of Education & Professional Studies** at Old Dominion University. I am conducting a research study with a select group of fundraising “exemplars” among HBCU Presidents to examine how this group used fundraising strategies to overcome HBCU-specific funding challenges, to fulfill the needs of their institutions. For the purpose of this analysis, exemplar leadership is defined as having 3 percent or more increases in your institutions’ endowment fund levels over a consecutive multi-year period.

As an identified “exemplar”, I am requesting your participation in this research project. This will entail me meet with you via the Zoom video tool, for a maximum of one hour in order to conduct an interview with you on your fundraising approaches and strategies. In addition to interviewing you, I also would like to interview your chief development officer and board chair. The interview protocols to be used for your and their interviews are attached for your advanced review.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the research study may be published, all

identifying markers will be removed from the data and write-up. Interviews, data and other documentation will be confidential.

Your participation in this study will be beneficial for HBCUs. Please find enclosed an abstract of the study and the consent form, which further outlines the stipulations regarding this research project. I will call you within the next few days to follow-up on this correspondence. If you are amenable to participation when I contact you, we can then make specific arrangements to schedule the interview to be conducted via Zoom.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to call or email me. Thank you in advance for your feedback interview.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Felicia Blow, PhD Candidate

Old Dominion University

Fblow001@odu.edu

757.408.0057

APPENDIX F

Chief Development Officer President Participant Interview Engagement Letter

Month, Day, Year

«Title» «First_Name» «Last_Name»

«Job_Title»

«Institution»

«Address_Line_1»

«City» «State» «ZIP_Code»

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Felecia Commodore, Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership, within the **Darden College of Education & Professional Studies** at Old Dominion University. I am conducting a research study with a select group of fundraising “exemplars” among HBCU Presidents to examine how this group used fundraising strategies to overcome HBCU-specific funding challenges, to fulfill the needs of their institutions. For the purpose of this analysis, exemplar leadership is defined as having 3 percent or more increases in your institutions’ endowment fund levels over a consecutive multi-year period.

As your president is an identified “exemplar,” I am have secured their participation in this research project. This will entail me meet with you via the Zoom video tool, for a maximum of one hour in order to conduct an interview with you on your fundraising approaches and strategies. However, in addition to interviewing your president, I also would like to interview you as you serve in the Chief Development Officer role for this HBCU. The interview protocols to be used for your interview is attached for your advanced review.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the research study may be published, all

identifying markers will be removed from the data and write-up. Interviews, data and other documentation will be confidential.

Your participation in this study will be beneficial for HBCUs. Please find enclosed an abstract of the study and the consent form, which further outlines the stipulations regarding this research project. I will call you within the next few days to follow-up on this correspondence. If you are amenable to participation when I contact you, we can then make specific arrangements to schedule the interview to be conducted via Zoom.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to call or email me. Thank you in advance for your feedback interview.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Felicia Blow, PhD Candidate

Old Dominion University

Fblow001@odu.edu

757.408.0057

APPENDIX G

Informed Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research Project at Old Dominion University

Title of Research: Promise, Potential Opportunity: Successful HBCU Presidential Fundraising Strategies

Investigator: Felicia Blow

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read the following explanation of this study. This statement describes the purpose, procedures, benefits, risks, and precautions of the program. Also described are the alternative procedures available to you, as well as your right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine college presidents' approaches to fundraising at selected Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) in the United States. This study will examine the strategies employed by the selected HBCU presidents. It also will examine the philosophies, experiences, and fundraising strategies that have been employed by the selected HBCU presidents. To add insights, and because these roles are intricately supportive of the president in their role, the board chair and chief development officer also will be interviewed as part of the study.

If you choose to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a short demographic data collection form and to participate in a single, one-on-one interview. The interview will be audiotaped and videotaped, and handwritten notes will be taken by the researcher to ensure that all accounts of the interview, including participant expressions and gestures are reflected. All accounts of the interview will later be reviewed by the researcher for

the purpose of data analysis. The interviews will be conducted in a setting that is mutually agreed upon by the participant and the researcher.

Benefits of the Study

The anticipated benefit of participation in this study is the opportunity to discuss your experiences, feelings, and perceptions related to your fundraising experiences. However, in the interests of reciprocity, I will provide a copy of my final research product to the president for posting within the library of each of their institutions. I also will make myself available to present my findings to the departments of development for the institutions participating in the study.

Risks of the Study

There are no risks that are anticipated from your participation in this study.

Alternative Procedures

Interviews will take place via face-to-face, one-on-one interviews or via Zoom video technology (if an in-person interview cannot be scheduled).

Confidentiality

The information gathered during this study will remain confidential. Only authorized personnel will have access to the study data and information. Participants' names will only be available to authorized personnel. Data will be secured on a password-protected computer, and recordings will be destroyed 5 years after the study. Only authorized personnel will have access to the data. The results of the research will be published in the form of a dissertation and may be published in a professional journal or presented at professional meetings.

Withdrawal

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study. You may discontinue participation at any time as well.

Costs and Compensation

The only cost to you is your valued time and knowledge. There will be no monetary cost or compensation for participation in this study, but your valued time is very much appreciated.

Questions

For questions concerning this study, participants should contact Dr. Felecia Commodore at fcommodo@odu.edu or call 757-683-4417. For questions concerning Human Subjects Research, please contact Danielle Faulkner at dcfaulkn@odu.edu or call 757-683-4636.

Consent to Participate

This agreement states that you have received a copy of this informed consent. Your signature below indicates that you agree to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Name of Participant (printed)

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

VITA

Felicia Blow Old Dominion University Darden College of Education & Professional Studies	Educational Foundations & Leadership 120 Education Building 4301 Hampton Boulevard, Suite 2300 Norfolk, VA 23529
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EDUCATION

2015 – present	Doctorate of Philosophy in Community College Leadership, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
2010	Master's in Business Administration, Strayer University, Virginia Beach, VA
1988	Bachelor of Arts, in Mass Media Arts, Hampton University, Hampton, VA

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

2017 – present	Associate Vice President for Development & Director of \$150 Million Dream No Small Dreams II Campaign, Hampton University, Hampton, VA. Responsibilities include designing and implementing development programs focused on increasing constituent engagement and fundraising outcomes.
2016 – 2017	Statewide Community College Liaison Virginia Community College System, Richmond, VA. Responsibilities included developing, implementing and updating short- and long- range plans that advance the mission of Virginia Foundation for Community College Education, nurturing a culture of philanthropy.
2015 – 2017	Vice President, Institutional Advancement, Tidewater Community College & Foundation Executive Director Norfolk, VA. Responsibilities included in leading all development and grants activities; and other functions
2012 – 2015	Vice President, Institutional Advancement & Foundation Executive Director and Board Secretary, Paul D. Camp Community College, Franklin, VA Responsibilities included leading all development and grants activities; marketing; public relations; media relations; and other functions.
2008 – 2012	Director of Public Affairs Cox Communications, Chesapeake, VA Responsibilities included oversight of all public relations, communications, philanthropy, and community outreach functions.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2018 – 2019	Member, National PRSA Board of Directors (Senior Counsel)
2017 – present	Vice Chair, Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
2005 – present	Secretary, Franklin-Southampton Economic Development Inc.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & HONORS

2018	Featured in Book Entitled “Diverse Voices” Published by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Foundation
2012	Named Outstanding Alumna of the year by Strayer University
1999	Speaker, International Institute of Wastes Management's 101 st Annual Conference, England
1995	Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Certification, PRSA