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"I Am that Family Member that No One Talks About!" Latino and LGBTQ Students' Perspectives on Institutional Discourse of Inclusion

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"I AM THAT FAMILY MEMBER THAT NO ONE TALKS ABOUT!"
LATINO AND LGBTQ STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON INSTITUTIONAL
DISCOURSE OF INCLUSION

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
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In Partial Fulfillment
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Master of Arts
Communication, Technology, and Society

by
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Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

There has been a vast amount of research that has focused on inclusion, diversity, and

multiculturalism within institutional settings (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper,

2012). Researchers such as Schedler, Glastra, and Kats (1998) have focused on the

positive benefits of having a diverse population of people in a particular setting. How to

best integrate these groups in a multicultural setting has been the focus of many

researchers (Milem, Clayton-Pederson, Hurtado, & Allen, 1998). Despite the prior

research dedicated toward inclusion, there are certain areas that remain neglected due to

the complexities of multicultural identities, as well as institutional reluctance to address

inclusionary practices in a timely fashion. One such area of neglect is research into the

lived experiences of *those targeted* for inclusion within an institutional setting (Carillo,

2016). Often, research of inclusion has been positioned from an external perspective that

looks in at institutional cultures, policies, and procedures (Milem, Clayton-Pederson,

Hurtado, & Allen, 1998). While research into this type of perspective is crucial for

understanding inclusion at an institutional setting, it does not take into account the

perspectives of individuals who, in many ways, are the subjects of these policies and

procedures.

　　　This thesis presents a critical-cultural research project that explores the

experiences of Latinos and LGBTQ individuals who are targeted with institutional

discourse of inclusion. Using the research method of a case study, these two identities can

be examined in how they are socially constructed and situated within a higher educational

setting. University emails containing messages of inclusion were used as stimuli during

in-depth interviewing of members of these two specific marginalized groups, who are often targeted for inclusion. This findings suggests that, although a predominantly white institution (PWI) may conduct discourse of inclusion on campus, others factors on campus and in the administration can prevent full inclusion of minority students from actually occurring. It is important to understand how these groups interpret discourses of inclusion within an institutional setting, as well as listen to their suggestions on how to improve inclusion on campus.

Keywords: discourse, inclusion, LGBTQ, Latinos, case study, PWI, social construction, identity, tempered radicals.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all those who have encouraged me in my pursuit of higher education. My parents Manuel Sr. and Sharon Rodriguez. My sisters Jessica, Angela, and Jennie, as well as my friends and my mentors. A special mention to my departed mentor and friend Diana L. Chandler, who gave me the strength to continue on at the age of seventeen, despite difficult circumstances. Her favorite slogan, "Keep trusting the process," and sympathetic ear were always there for me in difficult times. Thank you all for your emotional, financial, and spiritual support. I wouldn't be here without you.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Recently there has been a cultural war in the United States (U.S.) as to how we view the marginalized and minority members of our nation. Marginalized groups are comprised of identities that have historically experienced discrimination, in relation to services, housing, education, employment, ability to vote, been subjected to laws that deny them basic rights, as well as experiencing harassment, and violence (Harper & Schneider, 2003). The minority category label refers to the low numerical quantity status of a particular group residing in the U.S. in comparison to the White and heterosexual identities that also reside here (Harper & Schneider, 2003). This has occurred in the past few years through political discourse, which was disseminated through various media platforms. With rhetoric that sought to regulate who we see as deserving of being considered an American, to police gender status in relation to restrooms, and to control which identities were allowed to reside in the U. S. **(**Diamond & Almasy, 2017; Kopan, 2017; Peter et al., 2017). President Trump ran a presidential campaign that from the beginning played on the fear of the marginalized other. One example, immigrants, was presented as dangerous and a threat to society at large (Lee, 2015). Those that were deemed Un-American during the campaign were used in opposition to those who viewed themselves as true Americans, producing an us vs. them frame of mind (Aslan, 2016; Brown et al., 2016). This created a segment of American society that was openly hostile to those marginalized groups. The subjectivity of identities was an important factor in

how these identities were framed. These people's personal subjective opinions and beliefs along with the current Presidential administration framed and shaped how marginalized groups were communicated to the public (Aslan, 2016; Hall, 1985; Hall, 1996). Understanding the subjectivity of identities is important as to how people understand them, because this changes overtime and is influenced by multiple competing perspectives. This subjectivity of marginalized groups will guide this research as current political discourse is shaping how these identities are being communicated to the public (Aslan, 2016; Brown et al., 2016).

Since the election, hate crimes and other acts of intimidation, such as LGBT pride flag burning, racial slurs spray-painted on Jewish centers, and bomb threats, have been reported by a variety of marginalized groups (Burke, 2017; Steele, 2017; Yan et al., 2016). Communities across the U.S. have been dealing with these divisive incidences in their areas.

At the same time, conversations on diversity and inclusion have been taking place in university settings, as universities are almost always multicultural sites (Milem, Clayton-Pederson, Hurtado, & Allen, 1998). Diversity relates to the demographics of a multicultural site, which is having and striving for a culturally diverse site (Milem et al., 1998). The concept of inclusion pertains to being aware of, acknowledging, and implementing the perspectives and needs of marginalize/minority groups within the structure of a multicultural site (Schedler et al., 1998). This emphasis on diversity and inclusion is due in large part to address the concept of multiculturalism, that is, the emphasis on respecting differences of various cultures, while striving to demonstrate

equality of treatment of all cultural groups (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2012).

While there have been many different approaches at universities regarding

multiculturalism, it is important for each university to assess its own population of

faculty, staff, and students in order to best develop and incorporate diversity and

inclusion tactics.

Discourses of inclusion are important in a multiethnic society such as the U.S.,

which is made up of many diverse racial and ethnic populations. In regard to discourses

of inclusion within a society, Schedler, Glastra, and Kats (1998) argued that we must ask,

"Are the interests, opinions, and perspectives of marginalized members being

acknowledged?" Or, are marginalized groups being demonized and vilified due to their

differences? The discourses of inclusion produced by dominant groups within a society

act as validation of other groups' cultural and individual identities. However, inclusion is

a process that is negotiated within a particular setting, rather than a given. Discourses of

inclusion on the part of the dominant group set the tone of if, how, and what the dominant

group values from the contributions of marginalized groups.

Currently, we have a Presidential administration that, from the start, did not seem

to want to validate any groups deemed outsiders (Lee, 2015). Instead, the administration

and its supporters have supported the executive order *Protecting the Nation From*

Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States, commonly referred to as "the Muslim

ban." This was signed into effect on January 2017, and barred citizens of seven Muslim

countries from entering the U.S. for 90 days (Diamond & Almasy, 2017). This ban

caused chaos, uncertainty as to who could travel, and left people from these countries

stranded at airports across the globe. This ban was eventually blocked on February 3, 2017 by a federal judge in Seattle (Diamond & Almasy, 2017).

According to Diamond and Almasy (2017), this Muslim ban was a way of demonizing and excluding entire groups of people from the U.S., based on their perceived religion. These actions and rhetoric by the current administration on marginalized groups cannot be separated from what goes on within higher education systems at this present time. Universities across the U.S. depend on the research of international students, some of which were left stranded by the Muslim ban, and were denied reentry from their country of origin for several days for no other reason than coming from a particular country on a banned list (Kamenetz, 2017). Universities across the country responded in a variety of ways addressing, critiquing, and warning international students in response to the travel ban (Wieczner, 2017). This recent incident highlights how issues occurring outside of higher education impact universities and their members, and how universities cannot simply detach themselves from events and conversations taking place outside of higher education.

In the past few years, there have been protests at universities around the U.S. for greater diversity and inclusion of minority students, staff, and administration (Johnson, 2015; Schifrin, 2015). While these recent actions pushed for greater diversity and inclusion on campuses, they were simply extensions of conversations since the 1970s about diversity at universities and colleges (Tierney, 1999). Despite the continued conversations about increasing diversity within higher education, most colleges and universities across the U.S. remain primarily White in their student, faculty, and

administration body (Jayakumar, 2008; Johnson, 2015; Schifrin, 2015), with most colleges having a median of 50% of students identifying as White (Johnson, 2015; Schifrin, 2015). According to Schifrin (2015), rural universities in the Southeast in general tend to have a high percentage of White students, which is apparent at my site of study for this thesis.

As universities continue to strive for greater diversity at their institution, inclusion must first be situated as a belief system to which the administration adheres. Second, inclusion must be clearly communicated and implemented across various departments on campus before the process of systemic changes from inclusion can finally take place within multicultural environments such as universities. The importance of inclusion in higher education is directly linked to research that there are many positive benefits to having a diverse population on campus (Schedler, Glastra, & Kats, 1998). This is in part because exposure to different cultures is seen as important for preparing students to interact with others different from them, so that they may use cultural awareness in aspects of life after college, such as in their careers (Baxter, 2003).

Despite stressing the importance of multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion at universities, in addition to the previous research on these subjects, there are still certain universities that are struggling with inclusion on their multicultural campuses. These universities have failed to heed the advice of prior research, by not looking internally and addressing issues of racism in the structuring of departments, acknowledging the needs of minority students and faculty, altering campus climate to promote multiculturalism, and failing to create, implement, and promote inclusion practices and programs to assist

minority students (Turner, Gonzales, & Wood, 2008). These are just some of the many reasons for their difficulties in implementing inclusion practices.

One component that is often neglected by universities has been ignoring the perspectives and lived realities of minority students targeted for inclusion within an institutional setting (Carillo, 2016). This also extends to the research on inclusion, which has been positioned from an external perspective that often looks at administration, institutional cultures, policies, and procedures, instead of the groups targeted for inclusion (Milem, Clayton-Pederson, Hurtado, & Allen, 1998). More research is needed in looking at the perspectives of marginalized individuals who are targeted for inclusion. Such research is crucial for understanding inclusion at institutional settings, because it would take into account the perspectives of individuals who, in many ways, are the subjects of these policies and procedures. Only in doing so can truly effective inclusion take place at multicultural universities.

In this case study I focused on the perspectives of two marginalized groups targeted with discourses of inclusion within a university setting in the southeastern U.S. This project sought to answer the questions: *In what ways do institutional discourses at my PWI frame and enact inclusion?* and *How does a salient minority group, such as Latino students, compare to a private minority group, such as LGBTQ students, in their experiences of discourses of inclusion, as members of the same PWI?*

My research took place at a southeastern U.S. university that was established in 1889 as an all-white and all-male agricultural college and military school with 446 students. Over the years, "Southeast University" has evolved in a variety of ways,

including admittance of women in 1955 and integrating Black students in 1963. One of the specific reasons I chose this particular site for my research was that this university has a very clear history of addressing inclusion. In addition, this institution, in recent years, has been dealing with protests and pushback from racial incidents that have occurred on campus. While striving to be a more inclusive university, it also aims to meet its goals for university rankings. For these reasons, I believe situating my site of study at this particular university suits my own research interest in understanding the perspectives of minority students regarding institutional discourse of inclusion. While having the potential to add to scholarship on communication, higher education, and inclusion of marginalized groups.

As a member of both Latino and LGBTQ communities, I believe it is important to explore how Latino and LGBTQ students perceive and experience messages of inclusion on campus. This is because both groups are often under-represented at southeastern universities, and there is not a significant amount of research pertaining to their lived experiences in this region. This holds true at the university that I am attending in that it has both a relatively small population of Latinos and LGBTQ identified students. Having experienced my campus climate as a Latino and gay man, I have observed and come to the opinion that the campus climate needs to become much more inclusive towards these two marginalized groups in which I hold membership. Through my research, I hope to demonstrate how different approaches of inclusion on campus might better benefit these two groups in the future.

Using a critical-cultural research framework to guide my study, I explored the

experiences of these groups with small focus groups and in-depth interviewing of members of these two groups. By combining data from these groups and interviews, I explored how these groups interpreted discourses of inclusion within an institutional setting. Understanding how institutional messages of inclusion were understood is important, because it provides insights for the institution when constructing future messages of inclusion. That is, when constructing messages of inclusion, an administration needs to consider the perspectives of the minority populations that they are attempting to address in order to better reach them as they intended.

I seek to impart resonance and significant contribution through my research. Resonance is important as it makes research meaningful to people who may not have the experiences being shared. Qualitative narratives that are vivid, engaging, and structurally complex are important to impact people's minds and hearts (Bochner, 2000). My research is important to motivate people to take action, as it is necessary to improve the lives of marginalized Latinos and LGBTQ individuals, so it must be able to resonate with them. This research offers a significant contribution, as there are no other similar studies coming from primarily white institutions (PWIs) in the southeastern U.S. or from the perspectives of Latinos and LGBTQ persons on inclusion. My study is both theoretically significant and practically significant, in that it adds to the communication field as well as sheds light on a contemporary cultural problem (Tracy, 2010). I will also be sharing the results of my research through an executive summary at my university site, in hopes that it will encourage the current university administration to move forward in a positive direction with these two marginalized groups on campus. In completing this case study, I

have hoped to impact on how PWIs address effective inclusion with marginalized groups at their sites. I also have hoped to demonstrate the realities that take place when a PWI communicates inclusion with marginalized groups, such as Latinos and LGBTQ persons. This could possibly lead to the development of more affirming and effective practices and policies at PWIs.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND

Southeast University (SU) is in the process of both strengthening its image as a

Top 25 public university in the U.S. and also coming to terms with its legacy as a PWI. In

addition to more open discussion of the university's history of acquiring Native American

lands, using slave and convict labor, and virulently racist founders and supporters, the

university has also experienced and attempted to respond to a string of conflicts and racist

actions targeting minority groups on and off campus that have occurred over the past 10

years (Carey, 2015; Davis, 2016).

For example, themed parties promoting Black racial stereotypes were held off

campus in 2006 and 2014, at which attendees wore blackface and dressed in offensive

ways towards African Americans (Carey, 2015). Another element that has added to a

racially tense and insensitive campus climate is the use of social media as a way to

perpetuate microaggressions and harassment of minority students. Microaggressions are

common everyday slights directed at minorities that diminish their self-esteem and may

cause them to feel stressed (Tsui, 2000). Use of a mobile application (app) called Yik

Yak, which allows users to post anonymous messages that are geographically based so

that others in the area can see such messages, has a history of being used for hate speech

as well as being used to make threats of violence, all of which has occurred at my site of

study. In early 2016, a student was arrested for making threats of violence towards

peaceful protesters through the app (Davis, 2016). These recent incidents have led to a

tense campus climate that seems to be in opposition to the administration's striving for greater inclusion at this particular university.

On February 10, 2015, an email was circulated to all students at SU announcing a new Chief Diversity Officer. Within the email there were explicit messages pertaining to inclusion, using phrases such as, "Diversity is not about counting heads, it's about making heads count," "We have made strides to create an inclusive campus culture, and that work must continue," "Will help us provide a learning and workplace environment that is welcoming and supportive for all students, faculty and staff," and "The university is firmly committed to diversity and inclusive excellence." This language was not unique, as many universities have pushed and continue to push for a variety of levels of inclusion at their campuses (Chang, 2002; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Eckel, 2008).

Acknowledging their lack of diversity and need for inclusion is an important first step for universities (Kezar, 2007). SU has in the past few years acknowledged that it is lacking in diversity in relation to students, staff, and faculty. SU has smallest amount of African-American and other minority students of any public four-year college in South Carolina (Shain, 2015). As a result of their lacking diverse racial demographics, SU has made efforts to increase diversity and inclusion on campus. Communicating SU's desire to be more diverse and inclusive, acknowledging its history in relation to slavery, recruiting minority faculty and students, and denouncing racists incidences connected to the university are just a few of the ways it is striving to address its lack of diversity (Shain, 2015).

However, while the university has taken a public stand denouncing these racist incidents, the words and actions of the university's administration have been heavily scrutinized by local news stations, local bloggers, and popular websites, such as *BuzzFeed.com*, as well as active faculty and students on social media, such as Twitter.

Due to President Trump's travel ban in January 2017, some SU students were not allowed to return to the U.S. for the time in which it was in effect, while others were prevented and warned not to leave the U.S. (Anderson, 2017). SU was forced to make a statement warning its international students not to travel outside of the country while the ban was in effect. As political debates, protests at town halls, and marches, such as the Women's March in Washington in January 2017, continued to occur at this time, it was important to consider the responses of universities across the country, including SU, to these events (Hartocollis & Alcindor, 2017; Watkins, 2017). A university's response to outside events and conversations on what it means to be an American, reveals to what degree it is truly striving for a diverse and inclusive campus.

It is important to recognize that minority and marginalized individuals have agency to effect change at SU. These individuals know as tempered radicals who are both insiders and outsiders, who are able to bring different cultural perspectives that can affect organizational change (Meyerson, 2001). Groups such as LGBTQ and Latinos bring up issues occurring on campus that may not have perceived by the current administration (Kezar et al., 2011). Recently the LGBTQ student organization at SU sent an open letter through the university's newspaper, critiquing the President's and administration's dismissiveness of LGBTQ student's concerns and their lack of taking action to create a

more LGBTQ inclusive campus (Bailey & Price, 2017). This action by the LGBTQ student organization is an example of how tempered radicals can use their passion and commitment to their university in order to start conversations on campus that would not have happen otherwise (Kezar et al., 2011). Other tactics of tempered radicals at SU are creating student organizations such as Latinos Unidos or OSTEM, as places where marginalized minority identities can meet up and develop a sense of community through solidarity. These student organizations once formed can use their knowledge of campus culture (prominent norms, values, practices, and beliefs that shape individual's behaviors on campus) to pressure the administration to enact changes on campus that benefit not only minority students but also the university as a whole (Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007; Tsui, 2000). By organizing and taking charge of advocating for themselves groups such as Latinos and LGBTQ students at SU can enact systemic change through discourse that challenges campus culture that is not inclusive by providing examples to the administration of how to enact or improve inclusion policies (Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007).

It is when a PWI such as SU acknowledges its past, confronts a hostile campus climate towards minority students, focuses on retention of minority faculty and students, uses inclusive language in relation to minority students, and allows minority students to help guide them in inclusive efforts, that inclusion will begin to occur on campus. PWIs that do not take these steps will impede inclusion from occurring and prevent them from obtaining multiculturalism on campus. It would be advised that PWIs take these necessary steps to enact inclusion through systemic changes.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

I will now discuss the relevant scholarly literature in several fields that pertain to my research on inclusion discourses at a PWI. I will start by exploring the previous research of inclusion within higher education. Then I will cover the importance of addressing multiculturalism within a university setting, the discourses around identity within higher education, and inclusion discourses pertaining to Latinos and LGBTQ students. The next section of my literature review will cover my theoretical resources. These include the following: social construction, critical-cultural research, ideology, discourse, identities, and tempered radicals. Finally, I will cover the complexities of identities in previous research in the areas of race, sex, gender, intersectionality, and assimilation versus preservation.

Multiculturalism

The U.S. is a society that was formed from and still contains multiple distinct cultures. The U.S. is often thought of as a melting pot, but not everyone would like to think of it in that way. This is because, as nice of a concept as it is, the reality is that there is a racial hierarchy within the U.S., which does not offer equality to every racial/ethnic group. Everyone who resides here does not hold similar positions of power, thus, not everyone experiences being American in the same way (Johnson, 1997).

Multiculturalism is a perspective that acknowledges the differences of various cultures that reside in a particular place and how they should be addressed and

understood. According to Purdie-Vaughns and Walton, "Multiculturalism refers to the general notion that group differences should be the basis for mutual respect and that these differences should be valued" (2011, p. 159). According to Taylor (1994), multiculturalism became a popular perspective with the rise of identity politics, such as those of Latinos and LGBTQ persons, in which marginalized people advocated for recognition. It was argued that identity categories, such as race, were made valid through processes of recognition, and that, when these identities were not recognized or validated, actual harm and oppression could occur to the individual (Taylor, 1994). Both Latinos and LGBTQ people have not always experienced full acceptance or had their identities held in high regard within this multicultural society (Eisenbach, 2006; Johnson, 1997). It has been through the implementation of a multicultural philosophy that various societies, such as the U.S., have sought to address equality among its citizens. The stressing of equality has provided a challenge in relation to the acknowledgement of different identities/cultures. How can we acknowledge differences if we strive to seek equal treatment under multiculturalism? According to Parekh (2002), cultural differences should be taken into account when applying the principle of equality, and we must understand that, in doing so, there may be certain groups that get differential treatment or extra assistance so that they may obtain equal treatment. We have seen cultural differences acknowledged in policies such as affirmative action on college campuses, as well as policies of inclusion at PWIs. How multiculturalism has been communicated at a PWI is important with regard to institutional diversity programs, ethnic studies courses, diversity of faculty, events, and other areas, as well as how a PWI has communicated,

enforced, and penalized those who disrespect multiculturalism (Purdie-Vaughns & Walton, 2011). Observing if these examples were present at my site of study was a main focus of my research at a PWI in relation to exploring if Latino and LGBTQ identified students feel recognized, validated, and represented through multicultural practices.

Under the current U.S. administration there is a devaluing of cultural differences and an attack on multiculturalism in society. This has been expressed through new laws and public rhetoric on immigrants or othering groups as non-American, which has demeaned and demonized those who have come here to seek a better life for themselves and their loved ones by insinuating that they are dangerous, not to be trusted, and should be banned and or deported back to their country of origin (Diamond & Almasy, 2017; Lee, 2015). While racial and other forms of prejudice have always been apparent in the U.S. due to it being a multicultural nation, the fight for equality and appreciation of various cultural groups and their contributions to the country have also persisted.

The fight over how we value others naturally extends to university campuses as well, because they are multicultural sites. University campuses are not immune from harmful, divisive, and discriminatory rhetoric about minority students, which often manifest in daily microaggressions. According to Pierce (1995), "subtle, innocuous, preconscious, or unconscious degradations, and putdowns . . . [are] microaggression[s that] may seem harmless, but the cumulative burden of a lifetime of microaggressions can theoretically contribute to diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence" (p. 281). If unchecked and not chastised, microaggressions regarding race, gender/sex, sexual orientation, etc. can flourish on university campuses and create a

campus culture that does not feel safe or welcoming to minority students (Yosso et al.,

2009). PWIs are ripe settings for microagressions, especially stereotypes of minority

groups because Whites make up the majority and bring their own biases to campus

(McCabe, 2009). While microagressions may take place anywhere on university

campuses, they are especially harmful when they occur in a classroom setting. While

university classrooms should be places where ideologies and stereotypes are challenged

through critical thinking and discussions, often such discussions do not go well and lead

to polarization of views (Sue et al., 2009). Microagressions that occur in classrooms put

minority students on the defensive, cause them psychological stress, frustration, and leave

them feeling invalidated (Sue et al., 2009). It is clear that microagressions do not foster

an inclusive campus for minority students, but instead cause them unnecessary stress and

may lead to them withdrawing from higher education (McCabe, 2009; Yosso et al.,

2009). To prevent this from occurring, universities and, in particular, PWIs, must look at

the microagressions occurring on campus and in classrooms in order to address them, so

that inclusion within their higher education setting can take place effectively.

Inclusivity in Higher Education

In order for multiculturalism to be present in higher educational settings, there

must be a valuing of various cultures on campus and an emphasis on the importance of

inclusion on campus through communication, as well as structurally. There has been

extensive research regarding inclusion within a university setting, particularly as it

pertains to minority and marginalized groups on campus. Some scholars have focused

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specifically on addressing diversity on campus, campus climate, and structural inclusionary policies, while others addressed multiculturalism as it occured on a college campus (Baxter, 2003; Cuyjet et al., 2012; Milem, et al., 1998). Diversity within a university population is often the first step that scholars emphasize (Cuyjet et al., 2012; Milem et al., 1998). However, that is merely the starting point in producing an inclusive campus climate, which must also include structural changes, such as the implementation of policies that position diversity as an essential value to the daily operations of the university (Milem et al., 1998). Other scholars have focused on how valuing the cultural differences of others on college campuses through multiculturalism is an important skill set for students to learn while on college campuses before heading off into the workforce (Baxter, 2003). However, in order for this to take place at a university, the university itself must exhibit a structural valuing of multiculturalism throughout its various departments on campus (Baxter, 2003; Cuyjet et al., 2012).

Another issue that directly pertains to inclusion in higher education is retention of both minority faculty and students. The relationship between minority faculty and minority students who attend a particular university, or have interest in attending that university, is cyclical (Thompson, 2008). Simply put, diverse faculty at a university will attract greater numbers of minority students (Thompson, 2008; Turner et al., 2008). However, while this is a seemingly straightforward course of action, there are many barriers on university campuses that inhibit retention (Aguirre, 2000; Thompson, 2008; Turner et al., 2008).

These actual and perceived barriers affect both minority faculty and students. Often, minority faculty believe that racist attitudes create a hostile working environment (Aguirre, 2000; Thompson, 2008; Turner et al., 2008). According to Aguirre (2000), minority faculty are expected to take on extra work and serve multiple roles, such as mentoring and community building, which impacts their ability to focus and produce quality research, which then leads to them being critiqued as scholars. This cycle often prevents minority faculty from obtaining leadership positions and impacts their ability to become tenured, which are often from the actions of their own departments (Aguirre, 2000; Thompson, 2008; Turner et al., 2008). Due to unsupportive campus environments, perceived racial bias, and lack of community, minority faculty often feel isolated and forced to behave as a "model minority" representative for their racial/ethnic group in order to simply exist within their department, all the while being paid less than their White counterparts (Aguirre, 2000; Thompson, 2008; Turner et al., 2008). Due to these inhibiting factors, most minority faculty do not stay at their university and leave after a while, which negatively reflects on their university for their inability to retain minority faculty.

Universities with high attrition rates for minority faculty do not attract the desired amount of minority students. According to Sáenz and Ponjuán (2016), research has shown that male students of color want their universities to focus on recruitment and retainment of more faculty of color, so that these faculty members can satisfy their needs for mentors, role models, and instructors. However, minority students also need to have other issues addressed in order to address their own issues of retention at universities. It

has been shown that minority students must have specific needs met in order to retain them as students. These needs are assistance with financial aid, mentoring, programs for adjusting to life in higher education, and programs/opportunities for community building (Seidman, 2005; Swail, 2003). Universities also need to become aware of their campus culture. According to Tsui (2000),

> Campus culture is defined as the persistent patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the behavior of individuals and groups in a college or university and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off the campus. (pp. 421-422)

Campus culture needs to evolve into a culturally inclusive one, not just a culture that focuses primarily on White students and their needs (Holmes et al., 2000; Seidman, 2005). According to Tierney (1999), affirmation of cultural identity on campus is extremely important for minority students in retaining them as students. If these needs are not met at a particular university campus, then it will become difficult to retain minority students, who will be made to feel that they do not belong there due to lack of support.

Unfortunately, at many PWIs, there is lack of support for both minority faculty and students, who often express feelings of isolation, barriers, and discrimination, which leads to them leaving the PWI (Holmes, Ebbers et al., 2000). In order for a PWI to systematically address inclusion on its campus, it must look at the cycle and circumstances of minority faculty and students. Only in doing so can it start implementing programs and policies to address the needs of minority faculty and students.

However, most research that pertains to inclusion at universities focuses on policies, programs, administration, and demographics, but does not investigate the perspectives of the actual student groups being targeted for inclusion (Carillo, 2016). While previous research on inclusion has been important in addressing issues of exclusion by focusing on ways of implementing inclusionary practices on campuses, it is important to build off of previous inclusionary research by repositioning the focus onto marginalized groups targeted for inclusion (Milem et al., 1998). This project fills a portion of the gap that remains in studies of inclusion at universities by focusing on two marginalized groups, Latino and LGBTQ students.

Discourses of Identity in Higher Education

According to Baxter (2003), universities not only focus on students' intellectual growth and career preparation, but also challenge students to understand, appreciate, and respect other cultures to which they may be exposed on campus. Cultivating cultural awareness is a major push on college campuses in the U.S. The main reasoning for this is to prepare students to know how to communicate and interact within a potentially diverse workplace (Baxter, 2003). This is thought of as a tool for inclusion at universities, one that not only exposes students to diversity, but also makes them conscious of the positioning of their own identities in society in relation to others different from themselves.

Another way of addressing identities is by specifically looking at inclusion efforts, such as making quotas for accepting students from diverse backgrounds (Kezar & Eckel, 2008). This is simply the first step, however, and a campus climate of inclusion

will determine retention of diverse identities and success in continuing to attract diverse students to a particular university (Kezar & Eckel, 2008). According to Kezar (2007), the administration of a university holds a significant position for creating an inclusive campus environment. That is to say, the university's president and other faculty in positions of power should actively interact with minority students in order to understand their unique experiences and needs. In having a rapport with minority students, administrators can set up an inclusive campus, as well as policies that help support these students (Kezar, 2007). Communicating the importance of inclusion is done through the administration placing importance on inclusion through diversity quotas, rapport with minority students, cultural awareness, and inclusion policies and resources. These tactics, as well as others, are important in showing whether a PWI is proactive in creating an inclusive environment for minority students.

In my research, I focused on the inclusion efforts at my site university as they pertain to Latinos and LGBTQ individuals. Latinos are not a monolithic group, and their needs within higher education vary from person to person. However, as an ethnic group, there are certain barriers that need to be addressed when cultivating inclusionary policies. Once again, successful attempts of inclusion of Latino students begin with university leadership (Brown et al., 2003). Campuses that actively welcome Latino students and place value on their success as students is the first step. According to Brown, Santiago, and Lopez (2003), campuses that create programs that focus on the academic success of Latinos, particularly first year students, are important, as well as hiring Latino faculty for students to model themselves after. Building off of the latter, another way of addressing

inclusion of Latino students at universities is setting up mentoring programs with Latino staff as a way of retention and academic success (Santos & Reigadas, 2002). Another important component of inclusion for universities is understanding and validating the cultural experiences of Latino students and how these have shaped them as students. According to Nunez (2014), family tends to be an important component of Latino identities and, as such, should be recognized. Direct communication outreach should be fostered towards families regarding the specific benefits of their child attending the particular university as well as any additional information, such as financial aid. Universities that focus on communication regarding the preparation of potential Latino students for attendance, as well as programs and policies for currently enrolled Latino students, have successful retention rates and rapport with the Latino community. I looked at my PWI to see if it was communicating effectively on outreach policies that acknowledged the unique experiences previously described with its Latino student population.

Inclusion regarding LGBTQ students has varied from university to university. According to Zemsky (2004), the history of inclusion of LGBTQ students at universities has evolved from punishment/expulsion (1940s-1960s), psychological stigmatization/tolerance (1950s-1970s), LGBTQ student activism on campus (1960s-1980s), fight for LGBTQ student organization recognition (1990s), and, finally, the establishment of LGBTQ centers, nondiscrimination policies, and hiring openly LGBTQ staff (mid-1990s-present). Due to activism in the late 1980s by LGBTQ students and faculty for rights and representation, universities started implementing nondiscrimination

policies regarding sexual orientation (Sanlo, 2005). The universities that had these policies tended to have more faculty openly disclose their sexual orientation, as they no longer feared persecution. Universities that had multiple policies that pertained to gender expression and sexual orientation created not only more inclusive environments for LGBTQ students and faculty, but also tolerance and acceptance from its heterosexual population (Sanlo, 2005). After the 1990s, many universities strived to become more inclusive campuses for their LQBTQ students. The establishment of LGBTQ centers was essential in creating more inclusive campuses (Sanlo, 2005; Zemsky, 2004). According to Zemsky (2004), the first established LGBTQ center occurred at the University of Pennsylvania in 1982. These centers were implemented after LGBTQ student input and blatant incidences of homophobia occurred at various university campuses in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Zemsky (2004), the LGBTQ centers "have different missions, structures, activities, staffing patterns, and are lodged in different positions in their institution's administrative hierarchy" (p. 256). Where these centers are situated hierarchically is important, as it delineates how much power it has in creating or influencing a positive LGBTQ campus climate (Zemsky, 2004). Most LGBTQ centers are located within student affairs or multicultural departments. This placement limits who the LGBTQ center can serve (students or students and faculty), what services can be provided, to what degree it receives institutional support (funding), and if it is included in policy decisions (Zemsky, 2004). Universities that place their LGBTQ centers in academic affairs, do so as a way of acknowledging the importance of linking inclusion to academic missions, activities, policies, combating institutional oppression, and

integrating LGBTQ issues into the university's diversity agenda (Zemsky, 2004).

The notion of a "positive campus climate" for LGBTQ students became important during the 1990s. According to Rankin (2005), campus climate "is defined here as the cumulative attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential" (p. 17). Assessment of campus climate for LGBTQ students became important as the environment of a campus was correlated to having an impact on LGBTQ students' learning and well being (Rankin, 2005; Zemsky, 2004). Campus surveys have been a way that universities could assess their campus climate for LGBTQ students and faculty. Those that take the time to do this and make changes in policies are the universities that have improved relations and climate with LGBTQ individuals. As previously stated, such policies are crucial in fostering an inclusive campus for LGBTQ people. Overall, universities that effectively communicate that they are an LGBTQ inclusive campus often provide institutional support, LGBTQ curriculum, affirming housing, social outlets, importance of recruiting and retaining LGBT individuals, and safety measures (Rankin, 2005). The more of these items universities have listed, the higher they score on LGBTQ campus climate surveys. My site of study has had a particularly low LGBTQ campus climate score of 1.5 out of 5 (campusprideindex.com).

Critical-Cultural Perspectives

Critical theory focuses on unveiling the politics that establish cultural practices, that is to say, it examines the ways knowledge is political in nature (Conquergood, 1991). For Horkheimer (1972), the need for critical theory was important to combat various

forms of domination in society and, in utilizing such theory, one could explain what was wrong in society, identify agents of change, and provide practical goals for social transformation. This process is important in advocating for and alongside marginalized groups. Critical-cultural research combines critical theory with the methods of cultural studies to enhance the exploration of phenomenon occurring in societies. According to Sardar and Van Loon (2010), cultural studies should be thought of as an anti-discipline, one that borrows from multiple social-science disciplines, humanities, and the arts, while incorporating a variety of their methods to analyze phenomena. In communication, a critical-cultural approach can be used to examine how certain people communicate. According to Carey (2008), some communication scholars have used a critical-cultural approach to examine how communication in media is used, not just as a way to disseminate information, but also to represent cultural meanings and shared beliefs that bring certain people together. Many theorists have expanded on critical-cultural perspectives in order to address the various nuanced societal issues that are constraining groups within a society. This is because specific groups experience their culture in specific ways. As within a multicultural setting, not all members of a particular dominant culture will experience the culture in the same way (Johnson, 1997). We see this in critical race theory, feminist theory, and queer theory, which factor in the identities of groups of people whose freedoms in various ways are being inhibited by societal structures. Ultimately, critical-cultural research is important as it allows researchers to examine and critique phenomena occurring in society as a way of demonstrating ways in which people residing in a particular space can be freed from the constraints that their

society has placed upon them (Horkheimer, 1972). This begs the question of why are certain people residing in a particular space, unaware of the constraints placed upon them? In order to understand this phenomenon, it is important to understand how particular ideologies that reside in certain cultures are disguised to appear as innate common sense.

Social Construction

While identity categories such as Latino and LGBTQ may be treated by institutions and experienced by persons as stable, fixed, and even biological facts, a differing perspective foregrounds that categories of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and others are *socially constructed*. Knowledge of things within a particular society is often taken for granted, even within scholarly research. According to Berger, Luckmann, and Zifonun (2002), much common knowledge is taken for granted by individual people and they never really analyze or stop and question, in order to understand where that knowledge comes from. However, social knowledge must manifest from some point in time and by social agents in order for that knowledge to be disseminated for people to acquire (Berger, 2002). According to Littlejohn and Foss (2009), social construction is a theoretical perspective that focuses on how people construct their understandings of their environment together through social interactions that create meanings. This perspective was developed by combining aspects of sociology and philosophy as a way of understanding the knowledge that guides people in their everyday lives. Berger (2002) states that language is used to construct symbolic representations that become part of individuals' lived realities, and it is what allows them to make sense of their environment.

Identity, gender, and biological sex are examples of social constructs that encapsulate specific knowledge, are defined by multiple people, and are shared so that they become part of the common knowledge of a particular society. Burr (2015) stated that scholars must utilize social constructionism to challenge the knowledges that we take from observations, by developing a critical stance that questions our understanding of the world and ourselves. Over time, various communication scholars have expanded and refined social construction, because it is through communication that people construct their social environment using words, actions, and products. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2009), social construction in the communication field has two elements. The first is that people have a social model of how things work, into which they plug in their own experiences. The second is the emphasis on language, as it is how people construct and maintain reality through conversations. This communication process allows for people to understand the simple and complex social routines they and others perform, as well as how their position and its relation to other people's positions in society affect their perspectives and actions (Berger, 2002).

As a result of our understanding of ourselves, other identities, and our environment as being socially constructed, it is important to explore at who the social agents are in creating and maintaining our knowledge of these things in our everyday lives (Berger, 2002). It is also important to examine the reasoning and political motivations for maintaining specific understandings and knowledge in our society by these social agents.

Ideology

A defining characteristic of critical-cultural research is the examination of power relationships and inequities. Often, these asymmetrical relationships are supported by certain shared beliefs within a social group: *ideologies* that are taken for granted as conventional wisdom or unquestionable common sense. According to Sardar and Van Loon (2010), ideology is a system or framework of ideals and values that is shaped through instruments such as politics, that allow for people who are residing in a particular site to make sense of themselves and their lived experiences through the production of a particular culture. Marx viewed ideology as residing in the ruling class of society that punished those who objected to its rule and where the lower classes lived in a state of false consciousness, one that did not allow them to perceive or critique their class or economic status. Althusser (2006), in his essay "Ideological State Apparatus," focused on the ways social institutions, such as organized religion, law, education, and family, may not be controlled by the state (ruling class), but they nevertheless work to implement or disseminate ideologies of the state to people through practices and actions, where people submit to these ideologies out of fear of social ramifications. Through these apparatuses and the practices tied to them, citizens believe they have free will, when, in reality, they are merely making sense of dominant ideology that has produced their culture and who they are in relation to that culture (Sardar & Van Loon, 2010). This can also be applied to a public university, such as the one I have examined, by looking at its actions and the practices that occur there, to support and uphold the ideologies of those in power and how some students align themselves with these ideologies, while others may critique them.

Stuart Hall builds on Althusser's work by explaining that there are issues with Althusser's theorizing on ideology. According to Hall (1985), ideology does not only reside within a dominant class, nor is it singular. Rather, there may be many competing ideologies, and also subjectivity needs to be addressed as it relates to an understanding of identities, as people in a free society cannot be totally controlled by a dominant ideology. Hall notes that ideologies are not simply ideas, but also actions, which manifest themselves as practices. Hall critiqued certain strands of cultural studies in a negative light as he saw some within this anti-discipline as moving away from Marxism and its materialist focus. Marxism focused on ideologies of the state, societal structures, materialism, and economic determinism; new strains of cultural studies, in the U.S., for example, focused more on the power of language and discourse to shape social realities. Hall (1996) believed that scholars should build on Marxism by focusing on how a materialist theory might show how social ideas arise. Hall's (1996) writing suggested that there is a dualism or opposition between material and discourse, the latter being based in psychoanalytics and insufficiently material. Hall (1996) also believed that, although the state's power was not centralized, it should nevertheless be a main point in research, rather than subjectivity and internal psychological states.

Ideology is important in my study, as it exists within multiple sites, such as a university. Universities have a core set of values that help guide their campus climate and academic rigor (Baxter, 2003). At my university, there is an ideology of being "All in," and that the university should be thought of as an ideal extended family, where there is a genuine commitment to each other (McGee, 2016). This ideology is essential in relation

to my study, as previous research has shown that minority students have not felt welcomed at a particular university or have been treated as 'family' (Santos, 2002). As I have already touched upon, communication of inclusion is important at a PWI and related to the ideological values of universities. The process by which inclusion is communicated by those in power at a university is essential to how it is experienced by minority students, such as Latinos and LGBTQ individuals. If minority groups such as these do not feel included despite discourse of inclusion taking place, it is then important to examine and dissect this particular discourse to observe what might be prohibiting the valuing of inclusion as an ideology from being communicated.

Discourse

It is because people understand themselves and their surroundings through communication that it is important to understand discourse as it explores power relationships between groups of people in society through the use of language. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2009), *discourse* is communication of topics that are governed by often covert institutional rules that establish how the topic is understood as a concept. According to Fairclough (2003), there are many discourses that operate simultaneously and vary on perspectives of the world, as they depend on one's relationships, positions, identities, and social relationships to other people. These discourses are what allow people to understand and relate to one another. Foucault (2012) uniquely advances understanding on the use of discourses in research, because he focuses on, not just the contents of texts, but the rules that govern texts. According to Foucault (2012), knowledge is governed by rules that are subconscious and rarely acknowledged, but are

established by individuals and institutions to form a field of knowledge, or the limits of what can possibly be known, and therefore said, about a particular topic. These unspoken rules shape the use of language and how things in the world are understood. The way we might understand sexuality, for example, would be through authoritative discourses on sexuality that have established rules about what constitutes a particular sexuality (Foucault, 2012). Foucault argues that we can use discourse analysis to discover why particular "statements" in language are significant by analyzing what hidden rules are propping them up and connecting them to other subjects (Foucault, 2012). Using discourse theory is important to deconstruct various social constructions. It is necessary to understand that language and discourse are actively constructing a person's lived realities by the institutional rules that govern them (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Such Foucauldian perspectives have often been seen as contradicting or undermining Marxist studies of ideology. Scott (2017), however, critiques as a false dualism the material/discourse opposition supported by Hall. Scott (2017) offers clarification on Foucault, who focused on how institutions shape and limit things, such as knowledge, that allow us to understand others and ourselves. According to Foucault, scholars should move away from linguistics in regards to viewing discourses as groups of signs. The conflict of materialism/discourse debate can be seen with Hall, as he does not see connection between the two. Hall claims that some cultural scholars did not give proper credit to the significance of materialism, focusing on discourse and ignoring the importance of the State's role in society. According to Scott (2017), Hall's accusations are incorrect; first he states "Hall does acknowledge that Foucault's concept of discourse

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is not purely a linguistic concept, for it is about language and practice" (p. 9). Another conflict is when Hall agrees with Foucault regarding the rejection of Marxist notion of the state been central and singular (Scott, 2017). What is also pointed out is that Foucault is a materialist, in that he does focus his research on material evidence, such as architecture, which goes against Hall's claims. Foucault also does not ignore ideology, but rather refines it with his concept of knowledge-power (Scott, 2017). According to Scott (2017), Hall attempts to rationalize a binary between scholars of materialism and discourse as a sort of gendering of scholarly research. Despite the proliferation of scholars who adhere to the material/discourse binary, one does not have to choose between the two. Rather, as previously stated, much of Hall's and Foucault's prior research align with one another. According to Scott (2017), using Foucault to connect to the materialist focus of Hall's work can help expand the discourse to include bodies and their actions. Using Foucault highlights and connects to Hall's importance of practices by demonstrating how the body is used to communicate power relations of people (groups) within a particular time period. This, in turn, allows for greater breadth in regards to scholarly research on ideology and representation, as well as discourse on how certain identities are ascribed on particular bodies that position the bodies in relation to others inside a social hierarchy.

Identities

An example of social construction through discourse and often involving ideologies is *identities*. Identities are constructed within a particular society through interactions amongst people. As Foucault (2012) described, individuals are positioned by

and take up positions within discourses, or fields of knowledge, and about various social identities. In his writing, Berger (2002) states that language is very important, as it helps to construct what we know as reality as well as how we understand particular identities. This includes identity categories such as gender, class, race, and sexuality. Language gives structure to a particular concept, such as an identity, and allows for the concept to become transferable as a form of knowledge that can be transmitted throughout a society (Berger, 2002). Identities such as Latino or LGBTQ, of which I am included in and have focused on in this project, come to be known through their construction of criteria for identity in society through the language associated with them. As a man whose ancestors came from geographical Latin America and as one who enjoys sexual relationships with other men, I meet certain criteria that allow me to identify and be identified as Latino and gay. What is noted by many of the scholars in these identity-based disciplines is that identities are not fixed, but are fluid in that they change over time, as well as the fact that identities are influenced by outside factors, such as politics (Foucault, 2102; Hall, 1990). It is because identities have histories that it is important to look at how and when they are constructed.

Identities are important to my study, as they are the central discursive unit involved in discrepancies regarding representation and power of groups on campus, which, in turn, is the motivation behind diversity and inclusion efforts at PWIs. I have focused on the conception and understanding of identity as being is formed according to Foucauldian discourse theory. That is to say, identities are shaped in a particular time through discourses of power and knowledge (Foucault, 2012). Identities come to be

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through discourses of various social institutions, in regards to how various institutions used their power to determine the criteria of the "self" and how the particular self should be viewed in society. This is done through the process of disseminating knowledge of what constituted a particular identity and is reinforced through the interactions of various institutions as a way of maintaining knowledge of that identity.

There are many identity categories in the U.S., including the ones I am part of and will be focusing on, which are Latinos and LGBTQ people. These identities, including my own, have also been shaped over time by various discourses that have occurred in society as well as maintained by various medical and political institutions. Identity is often tied to a particular culture/community with shared values, customs, and interests (Gilroy, 1998). However, it is important to remember that the understanding of identity is a social construct that serves the purpose of categorizing individuals within a particular society (Clarke, 2008). Yet, simply acknowledging that identities are social constructs is not enough. It is important to think of ways in which identities have become pervasive in our society as ways of dividing people into categories. According to Gilroy (1998), an identity, such as race, is acknowledged as a social construct, yet as it is analyzed in various disciplines and in society, it comes to be reinforced by knowledge generated, and maintains its prominence in society. Therefore, individuals become trapped in racial identities as something natural, when they are not. Gilroy (1998) also pointed out that the problem with eliminating the concept of race is "what will be its substitute?" As a result of race being so deeply ingrained through various institutions within societies, it presents a challenge for how it can be replaced. For my research, ethnic and sexual identity

categories were important in analyzing inclusionary efforts by a PWI. While it is important to note that these identities are also social constructs, they were necessary in order to study the dynamics and representation of minority groups at a PWI.

Another way to view identities is as a performance of characteristics that help uphold the particular identity within a society. According to Goffman (1978), individual presentations of self to others is important in, not only how they want to be seen (understood), but also to those observing the "performance," as these people will interpret how they should respond to these performances and similar performances in the future. He states that there are many motivations behind a person wanting to be viewed in a particular way and that social situations help determine this. This is how identity performances attempt to control the interpretation of their identity.

A different perspective on identities is how they are tied to groups in society, as identities cannot exist in a single individual. Tajfel and Turner (2004) proposed that identities are tied to group affiliation. Social categories (groups) are ways for individuals to understand their place in society. Through these groups, a person seeks to enhance or maintain his or her self-esteem by adopting behavior similar to members of the group (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). One negative aspect to Tajfel and Turner's (2004) social identity theory is that groups will compare themselves to other groups and, as a way to maintain high self-esteem, will view other groups in a negative manner. An example of this is how one views people of a race category different than their own.

Racial Identities. Today, racial identities are largely recognized as forms of social constructs, and these categories are not rooted in biology, contrary to their original

conceptions. Language and institutional practices sustain discourses that denote criteria to uphold these categories, as well as communicate differences (knowledge) between groups. According to Bashi (1998):

> Race is a classification that is typically assigned or externally imposed. . . . Race is a product of the meeting of distinct peoples, prompting classifications comprehensive in the ways they divided Europeans from others. . . . Race is a power relation, and . . . racial designations imply physical, biological, aptitudinal, moral, and/or other kinds of inferiority. (p. 961)

Discourses of race allow groups of people to make sense of each other and other groups in opposition to themselves. This is especially significant in a multicultural society such as the U.S. Accordingly Bashi 1998, states in regards to race as a power relation, one that creates classification of peoples distinct and divided from Europeans, with hierarchies of inferiority and value factoring into these categories (Fields, 2003). She noted that people of color, particularly those labeled "Black," suffer from discrimination based on how they are labeled racially. These racial categories are restrictive and limit the understanding of groups of individuals. Also, it is often people atop the racial hierarchies that are able to ascribe the parameters for the other racial groups.

While it is important to understand that race is a social construct, there is a need for establishing race in research, as power structures that incorporate racial criteria do unfortunately exist in the real world. According to Hickman (1997), as long as we

acknowledge that race is historically constructed, we can still make use of its categories, not only in research, but in other areas as well. She stated that race also ties into culture, not that culture derives from a particular race, but that within racial categories exist the experiences of being identified as that particular race, which is a cultural experience unto itself. It is also important to note, just as Hall would argue, that people do have some degree of free will when it comes to choosing to identify with a particular race (Hickman, 1997). This is because identity performance, such as gender performance, is disseminated in society and policed to various degrees, although not everyone feels the need to align their identity or the performance of it to societal standards (Butler, 1990; Foucault, 2012; Goffman, 1978). It is in this vein of having choice where my own research comes into play. The Latino participants I interviewed have chosen to identify as this or a related racial/ethnic label.

Latinos are a unique grouping of people in the U.S. As an ethnic group, they actually consist of a multiple national backgrounds and cultures. According to Brown, Santiago, and Lopez (2003), Latinos in the U.S. come from a multitude of racial backgrounds, as well as national origins, and have varying generational ties to the U.S., with some being recent immigrants. It is important to note that "Latino" is an umbrella term meant to refer to people who share a biological and/or cultural link to Latin America (Masuoka, 2008). As an identity, Latinos represent a diverse group of individuals who are complex and fluid as an identity, and whose criteria may fluctuate according to ethnicity and geographic location (Masuoka, 2008).

Another aspect that is important when viewing the Latino identity is its political connotation. According to Tolti (1987), major adherence to a Latino identity occurred when it became beneficial in the groups interaction with the state. That is to say, under the umbrella term of Latino, a group could come together as activists and fight against discrimination and for representation in various institutional settings. I use the term *Latino*, instead of other terms, such as Hispanic, in my research, as Latino both relates to the Spanish language as well as geographical locations, such as Central and South America (Tolti, 1987). Use of this umbrella term will allow me to simplify my writing, as well as make it easier to identify a diverse population. Once again, it was important in my research to identify participants who freely identify as Latino, as it pertained to a sense of shared cultural experiences at a PWI and their lived experiences of/or lack of representation/inclusion at this site.

Sexed and Gendered Identities. Biological sex is understood by most people as a binary that is male/female. This distinction of biological sex was not always so, as history and cultures have shown different understandings of biological sex and how sexual organs functioned. According to Lorber (1993), biological sex was thought of being one sex by Western doctors and philosophers prior to the 18th century, where women's genitalia was viewed as the inverted form of male genitalia. After this period, biological sex (male/female) was seen as two separate, binary sexes that differed from one another by differences in their bodies, yet still focused on classification by genitalia. The simplification of biological sex in Western societies assisted with power relations and politics of the sexes, with those classified as being female being subordinate to the

male identity. Also, the process of the sexual reproduction in relation to the functions of male/female genitalia was vastly misunderstood throughout history, with the penis being used as a standard to describe the vagina (Laqueur, 1990). According to Ann Fausto-Sterling (1993), Western culture is heavily invested in the two-biological-sex binary as it permeates throughout culture, as in the development of language, politics, laws, legal documentation, and institutions such as the family. In so many ways, biological sex shapes our societies and conceptions of what it means to be a man or woman. However, what we attribute to men and women is not based on biological sex alone, but the gendered attributes and performances we assign to male and female identities.

Many people think of gender and biological sex as interchangeable, that is, male=masculine and female=feminine. However, gender is much more complex than that, as gender should be thought of as a set of characteristics that are influenced by culture. According to Butler (1990), gender is not derived from biological sex, but is rather culturally constructed and attributed to bodies. What is important to note about gender is that, while it is not fixed, it helps to structure and maintain the categories of biological sex (Butler, 1990). Gender performance also signals the identity of biological sex. That is, women perform certain actions different from men in their daily routines, such as wearing dresses and/or makeup (Butler, 1990). When gender is performed in line with societal norms, a person can be rewarded, but if they transgress societal gender norms, then there often will be punishments from others. Another important component of gender is its complexity in being able to clearly delineate maleness or femaleness, as there are many variations in gendered expression. Gender is not simply two mutually

exclusive categories that men and women can neatly fit into (Lorber, 1993). Yet, as stated previously regarding biological sex, gender is used to communicate who people are in relation to their identities as well as how those identities hold various positions of power within society.

Since the 19th century, identities have also been based on sexual preferences, and, while they may be tied to biological sex and gender, they have been shaped by their own history. According to Foucault (2012), in the 19th century, discourses of sexuality in the medical and legal fields led to the constructed knowledge of these identity categories, in which what were formally types of sexual acts became types of persons. With an identity that encapsulated specific sex acts, people could now be medically categorized in similar ways to race. In doing this, people could now identify themselves or others as having a particular sexuality-based identity. This was the start of how people communicated sexuality as identities.

At this point, to be labeled as a homosexual was to be labeled as a deviant figure that needed to be identified, recognized, and treated through medical or legal intervention (Foucault, 2012). This identity was ostracized from others in society and used as a way of punishing those who enjoyed same-sex practices. However, over time, people who identified with these newly created sexuality identities found a sense of community by connecting with one another to find communities based on their experiences as persecuted people. After WWII, what today has grown to be known as the LGBTQ community began seeing their sexual orientation and gender expression as innate, and counterdiscourses were started by them to express this to others in society (Marotta,

2006; Meeker, 2006; Mumford, 2011). Through various practices, demonstrations, and organizations for civil rights within society, the LGBTQ community began to seek representation and respectability within society (Eisenbach, 2006; Hall, 2013; Meeker, 2006). It is from this time forward that people who identified as LGBTQ could connect with others and express an identity in which they felt communicated who they were as it pertained to their sexuality. Over time, sexuality and social understandings of it, and related identities, have continued to evolve. This includes the previously discussed concept of gender, the socially constructed expectations associated with biologically sexed (male/female) bodies (Butler, 1990; Lorber, 1993). According to Linstead and Pullen (2006), gender is fluid and should be thought of as being in a constant state of flux. That is to say, gender does not reside in one point in time, but is constantly being negotiated by individuals. There are people that pull from concepts of masculinity and femininity in a process that articulates their gender identity and expression (Linstead & Pullen, 2006). Reflecting this, more recently another identity that has come to be expressed is pansexuality. According to Drobac (1998), pansexuality is a way of showing that there are more ways of identifying sexually than heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. Moreover, through a pansexual identity, the connection between biological sex and sex acts can be deconstructed (Drobac, 1998). It is the freeing structure of pansexuality that allows sexual attraction to any sex or gender expression possible. These evolving conceptions of sexuality identities are still being understood, communicated, and represented in mainstream discourses.

Intersectional Identities. While persons have either chosen or had identity labels placed on them, it is important to understand how multiple identities reside within an individual. Crenshaw (1989) coined the term "intersectionality" to discuss the ways in which Black women were doubly discriminated against as both being Black and women. In this influential research, she explained that an individual may have multiple social identities, and these identities interact on many levels with each other. They are interconnected to form a singular identity of an individual. According to Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality shows how many factors, such as race, gender, and sexuality, not only shape an individual, but also influence their experiences in social hierarchies and representation within society. Many other scholars have since expanded on intersectionality. Some have sought to include markers such as social class status, religion, geographical/region, and others within intersectionality (Jones & McEwen, 2000). Others have focused on specific new markers such as "college students" shaping their identity along with other markers such as sex and race (Torres et al., 2009). According to Nunez (2014), Latino college students face unique situations in relation to higher education, as they are a very diverse group with multiple social identities, and these experiences affect them as college students. She uses intersectionality to show how Latino variations of social identities either support or inhibit academic success. Other scholars have sought to use intersectionality as a tool to show how institutions use policies in order to uphold systems of inequalities and that, in using intersectionality, scholars can advocate for social justice regarding changes within these institutions (Dill

& Zambrana, 2009). These are just some of the ways in which scholars have applied intersectionality in research.

Assimilation versus Cultural Preservation of Identities. As I have noted regarding the complexities of intersectionality, it is also important to note that individuals choose—not always freely— at various times in their lives to what degree they identify with particular identity categories or perform behaviors associated with them. Particularly this pertains to navigating the process of adopting or rejecting dominant identities, such as "American." The U.S. has been often thought of as a "melting pot" where multiple people of various races, cultures, and religions, come together to form a united identity of an American. In order for this to occur, the process of assimilation is often necessary. Assimilation is:

> a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups
>
> acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups,
>
> and by sharing their experiences and history, are incorporated with them in
>
> a common cultural life. (Gordon, 2005, p. 96)

However, assimilation is easier said than done, as there are varying degrees to which people surrender themselves to dominant identities. There are many barriers to assimilation, such as language, physical appearance, surnames, connections to countries of origin, and cultural practices, as well as the perceptions of others (Johnson, 1997). The desire to assimilate must reside in the individual, who also must navigate the costs and benefits of doing so. One route of assimilation is through marriage to a U.S.-born citizen, most likely one who is identified as White (Qian & Lichter, 2001). Age of immigration to

the U.S. and U.S. generational status (2nd, 3rd, etc.) also play a significant part in whether or not one decides to assimilate (Friedberg, 1992; Golash-Boza, 2006; Johnson, 1997). Another factor is the ability to pass as White, which usually leads to assimilation (Golash-Boza, 2006; Johnson, 1997). There are also reasons for resisting full or partial assimilation, which are often tied to experiences of racism and discrimination (Golash-Boza, 2006; Johnson, 1997). Others pick and choose how they choose to assimilate, such as hyphenating their identity, such as "Mexican-American."

Latinos are a diverse group of people, some of whom choose to assimilate while others hold close to cultural ties to their country of origin. As stated previously, generational association with the U.S. is important with Latinos, as each passing generation (2nd, 3rd, etc.) of U.S.-born Latinos has increased in its willingness to assimilate (Golash-Boza, 2006; Johnson, 1997). According to Johnson (1997), English proficiency, skin color, surnames, and being of mixed racial status can all affect whether or not a Latino will assimilate. Latinos who are proficient English speakers, light skinned with European facial features, mixed with a White parent, and/or have ambiguous surnames are more likely to assimilate due to having positive, welcoming experiences from U.S.-born/White Americans (Johnson, 1997). Latinos who do not meet these criteria face criticism, frequent discrimination, or pushback for maintaining strong cultural ties, such as native language use and other cultural practices, and are least likely to assimilate. The reasons behind assimilation are not always easy to discern, and the ways in which people assimilate vary.

Assimilation does not just pertain to racial or national categories but also to cultures and subcultures. LGBTQ persons have gone through various forms of assimilation into and also rejection from the dominant, heteronormative culture of the U.S. Once sexuality-based identities were established and taken up by those who identified with them, they sought to gain equality and representation in a variety of ways. Over the years after WWII, an LGBTQ movement began to form and take a shape that would lead to a current focus of assimilation (Ghaziani, 2011; Vitulli, 2010). The move towards assimilation contrasted the 1960s and 1970s focus on sexual liberation, evolving from 1980s demands for non-harassment in public life, public acceptance, and aggressive tactics for dealing with the AIDS crisis (Ghaziani, 2011). In the mid-1990s, assimilation become a focus of LGBTQ debate, as many LGBTQ organizations and leaders began to argue for abandoning sexual liberation and cultural change in favor of an assimilationist approach (Bailey, 2008; Ghaziani, 2011; Vitulli, 2010). According to Ghaziani (2011), the push from LGBTQ organizations during this time was to try the tactic of emphasizing that "gays are normal" and do all the normal, everyday things that heterosexuals do. These organizations sought to distance sex acts from sexual identities as a way of gaining greater acceptance. They saw the emphasis on sexuality and, in particular, sex acts as divisive in relation to heterosexuals, and by de-emphasizing sexuality, instead emphasizing similarities, such as desire for marriage and children, as ways to gain greater acceptance from heterosexuals (Ghaziani, 2011). LGBTQ people who aligned themselves with this tactic were able to gain mainstream acceptance over time.

However, the LGBTQ people that benefited most from this tactic were typically those who met strict gender roles, presented themselves as gender-normative, were monogamous, of at least a middle class background, and usually White. According to Vitulli (2010), this was the very definition of *homonormativity*, which sought to extend rights to "normative" gays and lesbians, who meet certain criteria and assimilated into the structures of heteronormative culture.

Homonormativity mimics heteronormativity and, by doing so, actually strengthens it. That is to say, homonormativity upholds white supremacy and dominant ideologies by aligning itself with and not challenging them. This is done through nonprofits that advocate on narrow definitions of equality, depoliticize their social movement, and construct single issue campaigns, such as marriage equality, as universal gay issues, all while largely ignoring LGBTQ people of color, poor LGBTQs, and trans/non-binary persons (Vitulli, 2010). While the mid-1990s saw a surge for assimilation tactics within LGBTQ organizations, not all LGBTQ people viewed it as desirable. There was resistance and pushback towards assimilation. Some argued that aligning with homonormativity would not save them from all forms of persecution (Cohen, 1997). Others pointed out that LGBTQ people who did not meet the criteria (mostly people of color), were left out of conversations and mainstream activism, and did not benefit from issues such as marriage equality, due to the hardships they faced from institutionalized racism (Bailey, 2008; Cohen, 1997; Vitulli, 2010). Race also often intersected with socioeconomic class, and those who were below middle class suffered from homonormative tactics of acceptance (Bailey, 2008; Cohen, 1997; Mattilda, 2004;

Vitulli, 2010). This lead to counter protests and activism against the mainstream LGBTQ

organizations, such as the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the corporatization of

Pride events (Cohen, 1997; Mattilda, 2004). Often these countercultural activists were

aligned under a "queer" label instead of the more mainstream LGBTQ moniker.

According to Cohen (1997), theorists and activists began to use the term queer in

the early 1990s to signify political criticism through social/cultural criticism theory, and

freeing sexual possibilities from the limiting social constructs of sexuality-based identity

categories. These queer identified individuals were in direct opposition to assimilationists

LGBTQs. They did not see assimilation as liberating but rather limiting the expressions

of LGBTQs, and conforming to dominant culture, rather than transforming it, only

reinforced the oppression of certain queer bodies (Bailey, 2008; Mattilda, 2004; Vitulli,

2010). Queer identified scholars and activists strove to bring awareness to their plights as

marginalized individuals who operate outside of homonormativity, which is more

sanctioned by the state, by showing that assimilation was not the answer to addressing the

interlocking institutions that negatively impact queers. Using various forms of

communication, queers have managed to express their frustrations, especially with the

advent of social media, to visually represent themselves outside of homonormative spaces

(Paradis, 2009). While I think it is important to acknowledge the accomplishments of the

homonormative LGBTQ community, I still believe in critiquing any social movements

that are not inclusive of people of color and other marginalized individuals. However, as

discussed previously with intersectionality and the complexity of identities residing at a

particular site, just because a person ascribes to a particular identity label does not mean

that they will behave or adhere to specific ideologies. They may, in fact, hold different

views from the dominant ideologies of the group, yet are willing to challenge such

ideologies in order to affect systemic change.

Tempered Radicals

Marginalized individuals within a multicultural institutional setting, such as a

PWI, may hold a favorable view of the institution while at the same time experiencing

exclusion through various practices and counterdiscourses. While inclusion policies may

be in place, they may not have the desired effect of transforming the campus climate to

one that is truly inclusive. As I have previously explained, much effort falls on the

shoulders of the administration at a PWI for addressing inclusion on campus. However,

they are not the only agents for creating change at a PWI (Chang, 2002; Kezar, 2007).

There are those minority groups, who are part of PWIs, yet remain outsiders due to

different ideologies, perspectives, and cultures. Participants who are already categorized

as minorities in a PWI, already must face the challenge of, if, and how they will

assimilate into the dominant culture, then they must determine how much of their own

cultural identity should be present/apparent, and how they seek to merge their

intersectional identities on campus (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). These minority

individuals may struggle and experience tension with identities at odds with each other as

they try to fit into a dominant culture (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). However, they can use

their power and knowledge of the campus culture of a PWI to affect change through

advocacy and discourse that is transformative. According to Meyerson (2001), tempered

radicals are individuals who are simultaneously insiders and outsiders of the same group

in which they reside. This is because they hold different and passionate views from the dominant ideologies of the group, which causes tension, yet they are willing to challenge such ideologies in order to affect organizational change within the group (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). Many scholars have since built upon Meyerson's (2001) notion of tempered radicals to explain how they seek to exact change within a group from the bottom up. According to Kezar, Gallant, and Lester (2011), tempered radicals are important at universities because they bring up ethical dilemmas occurring within the university that are not being addressed by the administration. As individuals, they can foster change in values beliefs, and practices of the university in ways that the administration cannot. These tempered radicals can use their passion and commitment to their university to enact changes in curriculum, diversity, hiring process, and campus climate (Kezar et al., 2011). When a PWI is already focusing on discourses of inclusion, tempered radicals can assist the PWI in its mission to enact this. Faculty and staff at a PWI can use their positions and knowledge of the site as scholars and activists to create systemic change. According to Meyerson and Tompkins (2007), tempered radicals have the agency to enact changes at universities because they understand the culture in which they are situated through an understanding of their intersectional identities. By taking charge and finding likeminded others at a PWI, tempered radicals can enact systemic change through discourse that challenges campus climate and culture that is not inclusive while providing examples and communication to the administration of how to enact or improve inclusion policies (Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007). I am interested as to which of my participants exhibit traits of tempered radicals and, how they have contributed to

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influencing discourses of inclusion at the PWI. Understanding that discourses of

inclusion cannot only reside within a PWI's administration, but also in tempered radicals,

is important in understanding how discourses of inclusion are communicated to minority

Latino and LGBTQ students.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research offers a deeper understanding into the complexities of a particular phenomenon, such as institutional discourses of inclusion. This is because qualitative research allows for the exploration of people's lives and everyday experiences, and the thought processes, emotions, and insights of phenomena occurring in societies that cannot be gained from quantitative research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Creswell (2013) argued that understanding and implementation of the four philosophical assumptions of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology leads to strong qualitative research. Qualitative research established an epistemological location where the researcher is located in a particular place and time, and they construct knowledge in relation to research findings and conclusions (Yin, 2016). Qualitative research also allows for subjective ontology. That is to say, the perspectives of the researcher and participants are just one of many in the world and exist through individuals' thought processes (Yin, 2016). I must acknowledge my positioning as a gay Latino in relation to my own experiences, perspectives, and opinions as it relates to the knowledge that I am constructing through my research. Qualitative research also takes into account that the axiology of research may be value-free or value-bound. According to Yin (2016), axiology is important in qualitative research, as value will come into play at various points in research in relation to topics, participants, or results. A benefit of qualitative research is that it allows more room for discovery and unanticipated events, although it

must have a solid research design (Yin, 2016). While some researchers may view qualitative research critically because of its subjective nature, the results gained from these studies are still reflective of a particular perspective of importance. Qualitative research allows me to gain insight into inclusion discourse by better understanding it from the subjective perspectives of those being sent messages of inclusion. My aim with using a qualitative case study has been to show, beyond simple statistics, how Latino and LGBTQ students at my PWI experience inclusion efforts. I was able to do this through qualitative research specifically because it allowed me to explore in-depth personal perspectives and the complexities of lived experiences of my participants at a particular site, which I would not have been able to do through quantitative experiments. This allowed me to construct knowledge of a lived reality that existed in relation to many other lived realties. Through the process of group and individual interviews, I was able to extract data that was revealed to me by participants that may not have appeared with quantitative research (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). Also, in using qualitative research, I was able to expand on the scholarly research of inclusion in higher education that is often lacking the perspectives of marginalized groups, as most research on inclusion is quantitative. There has been very little research that specifically focused on the perspectives and opinions of marginalized individuals at a PWI in relation to inclusion efforts.

A form of qualitative research is critical-cultural research, which focuses on the power dynamics groups experience within the culture in which they reside. In focusing on the narratives of minority participants at a PWI, I used the critical-cultural theoretical

concepts described previously to guide me in examining the campus culture where the minority students were situated. Critical-cultural researchers examine things such as how politics produce cultural practices, how these and other power relationships are known and maintained, and resistances to cultural dominance within a certain society (Conquergood, 1991; Horkheimer, 1972). According to Littlejohn and Foss (2009), a critical-cultural approach allows for unmasking discourse and the power relations constructed within it, so that scholars can subvert and resist practices of dominant ideologies in order to facilitate social change. Identities and their subjectivities are linked to discourse through their construction by language, and that can give power to certain individuals, while disenfranchising others (Fairclough, 2003; Foucault, 2012). By honing in on the discourse of identities through texts circulated at a PWI, I can examine the power inequalities that are created on campus as they relate to Latino and LGBTQ students. The university's efforts regarding inclusion practices with minority students must be analyzed to show how the PWI constructs identities in opposition to one another, as a way of understanding certain identities such as Latino and LGBTQ (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Therefore, a critical-cultural approach was essential in constructing my research design and the methods that I used to address the epistemology and subjectivities of identities through discourse, and in the ontological experiences of power inequities in relation to minority identities within a PWI.

My research was guided by the following questions:

RQ1: In what ways do institutional discourses at my PWI frame and enact inclusion?

RQ2: How does a salient minority group such as Latinos students compare to a private minority group such as LGBTQ students in their experiences of discourses of inclusion, as members of the same PWI?

To answer these questions, I conducted a case study of inclusivity discourse at SU. I chose these two particular groups because I was a member of each group and had access to individuals who identified as members of both groups. I was also aware of the relatively small populations of each group on campus and assumed that their perspectives on inclusion were not being sought out. Latinos are an emerging population in the southeastern U.S. There is a large research gap in academia that is not looking into the experiences of Latinos in the southeastern U.S., particularly Latino students (Carrillo, 2016). This is because the southeast has been traditionally thought of as a binary system of Whites and Blacks and racial issues between these two groups, but since the 1990s and especially after the 2000s, there has been a significant boom in the Latino population in the south (Smith & Furuseth, 2006). There is also an extreme lack of research coming from the home state of my site university on the emerging Latino population pertaining to inclusion, higher education, etc., so I felt it was necessary to contribute to research on Latinos in the "South."

I also decided to focus on the LGBTQ population as I have come to understand that campus climate is not supportive of LGBTQ identities, which often remain hidden due to the unsupportive atmosphere. My site of study has a particularly low LGBTQ campus climate score of 1.5 out of 5 (campusprideindex.com). It also lacks policies that establish institutional support, LGBTQ curriculum, affirming housing, social outlets,

importance of recruiting and retaining LGBT individuals and safety measures, all of which are important in establishing a safe and affirming LGBTQ campus climate (Rankin, 2005). Having this type of campus environment is correlated to having an impact on LGBTQ students' learning and wellbeing (Rankin, 2005; Zemsky, 2004). My research aimed to shed light on the much neglected perspectives and needs of LGBTQ students in the South, particularly at my site of study, a university in the southeastern U.S. In my research design, I hoped to provide a platform for LGBTQ identities and voices that often remain hidden out of concern for their well being, which is unacceptable within a university setting that openly promotes inclusion.

As stated previously, I am aware of the relatively small populations of each group on campus and am aware of how each group is finding their own ways of advocating/representing their identities on campus, as well as how the administration is or is not reaching out to them regarding inclusion efforts. I felt it was important to compare and contrast both how these groups were similar and different in regards to advocating for themselves, how they understood inclusion efforts, and their opinions on the administration's inclusion tactics. I decided to keep both groups separate for the most part because of my desire to be able to compare and contrast these groups in relation to my research findings. However, as mentioned in chapter three, I understood that there would be overlapping identities with my participants who identified as both Latino and LGBTQ, in the same way I do. I also kept the groups separate due to the fact that Latino students had a more salient identity and representation on campus. In contrast, LGBTQ students were not always open with their sexual identities, due to an unsupportive campus

climate. As a result of this, I wanted to protect my LGBTQ participants from being outed, as well as respect their autonomy over who they are open with regarding their sexual orientation.

Due to the fact that one group of participants was public and the other was private because of factors such as campus climate and visible/physical identity markers, it was also important to see how the public vs. private identities also functioned within multiculturalism. I already had an idea from campus climate of how the groups would differ in relation to how they were valued on campus. I was interested in gaining insight into how both groups saw themselves situated within a multicultural setting that claims to value the inclusion of minority students. Through multiculturalism, these groups were related and bound within the same setting, yet may have experienced the "valuing" of their identities differently, as well as similarly for those intersectional participants, such as myself. The valuing of identities was important in my research to demonstrate who as well as what particular components of Latino and LGBTQ identities were valued at a multicultural site such as a university.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH DESIGN

My research design consisted of a multifaceted approach. First, I used convenience and snowball sampling to acquire participants. Once I had potential participants, they answered a simple questionnaire to assess their understanding of inclusion. From there, those selected met with me, either in small groups of 2-4 people or one-on-one for interviews. Initially, I was seeking to conduct focus groups of 6-8 people; however, due to availability, time constraints, and the general interest of participants, I was forced to revise my interviewing format. During these interviews, university emails containing messages of inclusion were used as stimuli during in-depth interviewing in order to set the tone and direction of the discussion from the perspectives of the participants. To understand the experiences of both LGBTQ and Latino participants who are the subjects of this inclusion discourse, I conducted interviews with Southern University students who identified as Latino and/or LGBTQ, using thematic analyses and practicing a "reflexivity of discomfort" (Pillow, 2003, p. 192). This was important, because, although I am part of both marginalized groups and desired to see them succeed in advocating for themselves through my research, I also needed to acknowledge my differences, being from California, and not lumping their perspectives in a monolithic fashion, nor claiming to fully understand their positions at the same university where I attend (Pillow, 2003). In doing so, I could provide findings and a discussion free from my own perspectives and influences as a member of both groups.

Case Study

In this proposed project, I used a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of inclusion discourses at a PWI and the ways in which members of two specific minority groups experienced this discourse. According to Creswell (2013), case study research is flexible in that it allows for an issue to be studied in reference to a specific bounded case or particular setting, drawing upon a variety of available sources of data for making sense of the holistic picture of the case. By attending to both the PWI's strategic messaging about inclusion and minority groups' experiences of these communications, my aim was to achieve an understanding of current university inclusion efforts that might highlight the nuances, subjectivities, and consequences embedded in efforts too often assumed to be inherently good and unobjectionable. Another benefit is that case studies can be layered, encapsulating many units of experiences within one site (Patton, 2002). This approach worked well with the nuances of my participants' perspectives and experiences on inclusion, which differed to varying degrees. I believe that in order to understand, assess, and potentially critique PWIs' efforts for inclusion, it was essential to prioritize the voices of those individuals who were targeted for inclusion. As Creswell (2013) proposes, achieving in-depth understandings of these common experiences as detailed by these individuals might enable us to identify key concerning issues and lead to the development of more affirming and effective practices and policies. Currently, universities that are PWIs are receiving scrutiny about their lack of diversity and inclusion, as well as making strides to create more inclusive environments on their campuses.

According to Stake (1995), a good case study approach exists when the researcher has a clearly identifiable bounded case that might provide in-depth understandings of a particular phenomenon. My site of study currently has a student and faculty body that is more than 80% White identified, making it an excellent site for examining these PWI inclusion efforts and the experiences of minorities. As previously stated, in recent years there have been a series of racist incidents that have occurred on campus or at student parties (Carey, 2015; Davis, 2016). This resulted in student-led protests about lack of inclusion at the PWI. Specifically, the "See the Stripes" campaign, which was about educating members of the PWI about the negative aspects of its past with exploited labor (e.g., slavery, convicts). This was a way of moving forward by acknowledging the past (Carson, 2014). At the same time, nationally, the U.S. had been dealing with public debates regarding racial profiling in law enforcement, which only heightened the push for dialogue of inclusion on campus by university leadership. I also chose my particular site of study due to the accessibility of Latino and LGBTQ students, both those I have developed relationships with and others I have connected with through my contacts on campus. For these reasons, I chose this particular PWI because of its history of addressing inclusion through admittance of women and minorities to its campus, and how its administration has dealt with minority inclusion recently in both effective and non-effective manners through discourse with students.

Furthermore, my PWI was a particularly rich site for research in that its geographical location is seeing a gradual expansion of the Latino population (Drever, 2006; Smith & Furuseth, 2006). While there is abundant research regarding Latinos in

higher education, I have not found any from this particular region of the U.S. Issues of inclusion specifically involving Latino and LGBTQ students, especially those located in the southeast, are important, as the voices of one of the least represented minority populations on campus are perhaps easy to disregard and, to date, no studies have been conducted in this region on how these particular populations interpret and experience university discourses of inclusion (Clayton & Musil, 2009; Hurtado, 2002). The southeastern U.S. is a geographical area that is in the process of changing demographics, and research is needed to address the minority student populations within higher education (Clayton & Musil, 2009; Drever, 2006; Smith & Furuseth, 2006).

Data Collection

One of the benefits of a case study approach is the flexibility in data collection procedures. A researcher can gather documents, archival records, interviews, observations, and other forms of data as best determined to fit the particular case of study (Yin, 2013).

For this case study of my PWI's inclusion discourses, my data collection included using emails expressing inclusion messages as stimuli during small groups and in-depth interviewing with Latino and LGBTQ students on campus. I used a variety of emails gathered from my PWI in this case study, all of which explicitly discussed or strongly inferred references to inclusion. Hodder (2000) wrote that texts are important to qualitative research because they are accessible, low cost, representative of a particular period of time, and enduring. In regard to written texts, a gap forms between the author and the reader regarding the interpretation of it; meaning resides in the writing *and*

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reading of the text, and its meaning changes over time by different people (Derrida, 1978; Hall, 2001). I chose particular emails that focused on inclusion, for the multiple possibilities of interpretation of these emails. This is important to my research, as it has become clear to me that I must demonstrate in my findings that, in official written texts from my PWI, inclusion is being interpreted in a multitude of ways. According to Hodder (2000), "What people say is often very different from what people do" (p. 705). Therefore, I paid particular attention to statements made about inclusion situated as an institutional priority, promises made to minority populations, and the ways in which inclusion is actually demonstrated through discourse. Using these emails expressing inclusion messages as stimuli during small groups and in-depth interviewing, I was able to understand how members of my two specific marginalized groups that are often targeted for inclusion interpreted messages of inclusion coming from the administration. The combination of these types of data enables me to gain a significant amount of data in order to understand the phenomenon I am studying (Creswell, 2013).

In order to connect with my target population of Latinos and LGBTQ students, I used convenience sampling in acquiring my participants, most of whom I had a casual relationship with. According to Kitchenham and Lawrence (2002), convenience sampling draws on those individuals who are available and willing to take part in a research study. The benefit of using this sampling method is that I had already established connections with potential participants who had expressed interest in my research. I acknowledge that these participants' narratives were not necessarily reflective of a consensus of how my target population at a PWI experiences inclusion discourses, as there may be internal bias

(Kitchenham & Lawrence, 2002). Despite the potential risk of bias, I believe that convenience sampling enhanced my research, as the participants who wished to be part of this study understood the importance of having their voices heard as minority students.

After starting with convenience sampling, I used snowball sampling when I required additional participants. Snowball sampling is when participants in a particular study are told to ask if anyone they know who fits the target population criteria would like to take part in the study (Kitchenham & Lawrence, 2002). The simple conditions for my participants asking others to participate were that the individual is an undergraduate student currently enrolled at the PWI who identifies as Latino or LGBTQ (Yin, 2016). Once identified, I invited participants to be a part of this research endeavor through face-to-face conversation or email contact based upon convenience. Upon invitation, I explained the purpose of the research, provided them a simple three-question questionnaire on inclusion to complete, and described the informed consent form at the start of the interviews, which required a verbal confirmation that they agreed to participate in the study.

Focus Group and Small Group Conversations

While there are many ways to understand if members of a particular group share similar experiences around a particular phenomenon, I felt that focus groups would help me visually explore these shared experiences. According to Markova, Linell, Grossen, and Orgive (2007), focus groups were initially used after WWII for marketing research in order to understand consumer motivational habits. Now, focus groups can be used as a method for open-ended group discussions that can be spontaneous, relaxed, and informal,

so as to address specific issues that the researcher brings up. Other advantages of focus groups are that they are efficient in gaining data from multiple participants at one time, are flexible, and the results obtained are user friendly and easy to understand (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007). Another benefit of focus groups is that they allow participants to "think and talk together," and they are stimulated by each other to think in new ways and recall prior memories that they may have forgotten (Bakhtin, 1993). This allowed me to understand themes that began to emerge from the focus group discussion and build upon previous discussions of inclusion that may have occurred elsewhere through the revealing of shared experiences (Markova et al., 2007).

As stated earlier, my plan for conducting focus groups fell through due to availability, time constraints, and the general interest of my participants in my study. I did advertise and offer beverages and light snacks in order to incentivize participation in my small group conversations, which may have increased interest in participating for certain participants (Wolff et al., 1993). I had planned to conduct 2-4 focus groups of 6-8 people each. However, I was forced to revise my interviewing format because of the issues that I mentioned. Instead, the participants that I selected for my study met with me in small groups of 2-4 people or for one-on-one interviews. Despite this setback, I was still able to incorporate certain aspects of focus groups, but on a smaller scale that allowed me to understand how various Latino and LGBTQ students interpreted inclusion and their shared experiences of these particular discourses. Using small group conversations I feel added to the willingness of my participants to increase engagement with the discussion, whereas in a focus group they might have held back from

contributing to the discussion if a particular participant dominated the conversation (Markova et al., 2007).

In total, I conducted and moderated five small group conversations, two of which focused on LGBTQ participants and ranged from 2-3 participants, and three Latino groups with 2-4 participants. I chose to moderate these focus groups as I identify as Latino and gay, and have an understanding as well as experience with institutional discourses of inclusion. I believe that because I personally moderated these small group conversations, this led to an ideal facilitation of these small group conversations. I believe that having 14 total participants in my study has allowed me to gain rich data and be manageable for me as a moderator.

I reviewed the IRB approved informed consent procedures as my participants settled into the meeting and then proceeded to ask a few open-ended questions about the emails selected that guided the conversation as it pertains to my research questions/topic. Prior to conducting the small group conversations and one-on-one interviews, I asked permission to record participants on a tape recording app on my phone as part of the informed consent procedures (Warren, 2002). I did not use any of my participants' actual names to insure their anonymity and privacy, as a way of gaining their trust, so that they would feel comfortable to speak freely (Josselson, 2013). I also was prepared to address any on- and off-the-record information shared with me by participants. My questions explored the experience of being a Latino or LGBTQ identified at a PWI where communication of inclusion by the administration is occurring. (See Appendix A for a list of interview questions as well as possible follow up questions.) When finished, I

uploaded my audio recordings to my password protected Google drive to ensure security.

Transcripts that were taken during the small group conversations had no identifying

information regarding my participants, but I had a code list kept separately to identify

participants with pseudonyms. This was how I conducted my small groups with Latino

and LGBTQ students.

Interviews

I believe that if my PWI and other institutions were serious about creating a

genuine climate of inclusion, then it was important to understand the realities of those

being targeted for inclusion. Interviews are important in qualitative research as they allow

for insight into the lived experiences of participants by letting them use their own words

to explain their positions in the particular phenomenon (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). Face to

face interviews have been one of the original ways to obtain information from

participants in qualitative research (Opdenakker, 2006). According to Kvale (1983),

qualitative interviews aim to gather descriptions of the world from the perspective of the

participants with respect to the interpretation of a phenomenon's meaning. Face to face

interviews are efficient for gathering data, as a researcher can observe the participants

verbal delivery (tone, rate, inflection, etc.) as well as non-verbal (body language, eye

contact, mannerisms, etc.) that can give them clues to how to interpret what a participant

is saying/feeling (Opdenakker, 2006). Face to face interviews can assist me in pulling

additional meanings and information from my participants by being able to observe them,

while asking questions. This was intended to be helpful incase my participants thought to

give me answers that they presumed that I wanted to hear or in the case that they wanted

to avoid revealing/expressing their true opinions on sensitive or personal topics.

As all of my participants were students whom I had access to at the PWI I attend, conducting face to face interviews on campus was convenient for both parties (Opdenakker, 2006). I reserved a room on campus for accessibility of my participants, one that was quiet and ideal for conducting my small group and one-on-one interviews. As stated previously, I made accommodations for my participants and ended up conducting two one-on-one interviews through a *narrative interview* process. The reason for choosing this type of interview is that it was both open-ended and semi-structured and guided by my research questions (Josselson, 2013). I also chose it because the narratives of Latinos and LGBTQ students targeted for inclusion at PWIs has been severely neglected in research, and, by using this type of interview, I intended to expand the breadth of inclusion research. As stated previously, my interviews were semi-structured, guided by a few questions in the beginning, but the discussion developed from the participants' responses. Follow-up questions were asked if more detail or clarification was needed in order to ensure an accurate description of the experiences of my participants. I also followed the same procedure of audio recording and transcribing the interviews as described previously with the small group conversations.

Data Analysis

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) stated that "analysis is the process of labeling and breaking down (or decontextualizing) raw data and reconstituting them into patterns, themes, and propositions" (p. 210). As Childers (2014) proposed, interpretation happens throughout the entirety of research processes, and trying to convince ourselves that it

does not produces simplified accounts of the complexities of qualitative research in practice. Specifically, I focused on recognizing emerging themes from data. While coding, categorizing, and writing memos, I was sure to maintain attention to the contexts in which the discourses exist so as to not remove contextual meanings during the coding and interpreting phases (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

I made sure to be guided by my theoretical concepts, so as to not try to find themes that supported my own desires (Goldstein, 2011). Rather, I formed chunks of narratives from my data that pulled from my participants' own specific vocabulary (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Interpreting meaning from data is a very consequential process, and researchers should be careful to not keep findings confined to preconceived ideas or personal assumptions (Goldstein, 2011). In order to keep an open mind throughout analysis and interpretation efforts and question my own understandings, I used member validation (Lindlof & Taylor 2002) and negative case analysis. Negative case analysis, the retrospective process of going through data to be sure there are no instances that conflict with my interpretations, held me accountable to ensuring that the findings I advanced spoke to the truths embedded in the data (Lindlof & Taylor 2002).

Interview and Focus Group Analyses

In regards to my audio recordings, I replayed these recordings and listened for explicit references to inclusion and content that pertained to inclusion that I felt were important to note. I also transcribed on a Google document any particular themes that started to emerge from various participants that may be of importance as they related to experiences around inclusion discourse. I again used thematic analysis to show the

similar themes that emerged across my entire data set. From this data set, I began the

coding in a Google Sheet and constructed categories of importance from the data. During

this process, I was mindful of the social, cultural, and historical components of my

participants' identities, and how these relate to their perspectives regarding inclusion

discourse (Childers, 2014). I also was aware that the words spoken by my participants

and transcribed by me can be decontextualized through coding (St. Pierre & Jackson,

2014). At this point of analysis, the emergence of new themes had to emerge in relation

to the theories used in my research in order for this new data to be significant (St. Pierre

& Jackson, 2014). These significant categories of data related to my theories was then

interpreted as pertaining to inclusion discourse, to further advance arguments made by

myself, in relation to my research questions. In order to ensure validity of my

interpretations, I used member validation throughout analysis and interpretation efforts,

and question my own understandings (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Member validation was

important in this case study because it built trust with participants and provided an

opportunity for participants to give me feedback as to whether or not my interpretations

resonated and described accurately their lived experiences. Negative case analysis, the

retrospective process of going through data to be sure there are no instances that conflict

with my interpretations, held me accountable to ensuring that the findings I advanced

speak to the truths embedded in the data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). That is, that nothing

explained in my research pertaining to my critical-cultural approach could be refuted by

new data in future research. This would allow me to advance a confident explanation of

my phenomenon.

Reflexivity, Representation, and Rigor

As a researcher who identifies as Latino and gay/queer, as well as a Southern University student, I had clear personal connections and motivations in this research. I was invested in participating in and contributing to systemic changes that might positively affect Latino and LGBTQ students. Therefore, it was of the upmost importance that my research accurately portrays both university inclusion discourses and the lived realities of Latino and LGBTQ students at SU. Due to my personal experience and investment in this topic, it was imperative that I engage in continual reflexivity. Specifically, I aimed to achieve "reflexivity of discomfort" (Pillow, 2003, p. 192) by questioning my own assumptions, positioning, and influence throughout the entirety of this project. Further, I relied upon reflexivity as a resource for ethical engagement in the field, using my preparation with procedural ethics and anticipations of ethics in practice to guide me as I responded to the ethical moments that arose throughout the course of inquiry (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). According to Altheide and Johnson (1998), who the researcher is and their lived experiences affect how data is collected, organized, interpreted, and what claims are made from this process. This is why it was important for me to be aware of my own subjectivity in relation to my participants. Being reflexive contributed to producing knowledge that gave insight to how things work in the social world as well as insight on how this knowledge is produced (Pillow, 2003).

In my research, I sought to explore how inclusion discourses affected Latino and LGBTQ students. I needed to be transparent about how I had come to this knowledge. Another component of reflexivity that I sought to address was the process of inclusion of

my participants in terms of representation and the research process. Specifically, I have rooted interpretations in the concrete evidence of their voices, their words, and their stories (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). These efforts, although not required, would be beneficial in situating my work as more credible and transparent, as opposed to not including reflexivity, representation, and rigor in the research process.

My research was ethically driven, as my participants are part of marginalized groups at this PWI, and information shared with me had the potential to be very sensitive and personal. I made sure to include procedural ethics from the start of my study through IRB protocols, including making sure data was secure and only accessible by me (Tracy, 2010). I was mindful of situational ethics, which should not be an issue as there has been no harm to my participants through my research. Lastly, I conducted my small group conversations and one-on-one interviews with relational ethics, making sure to show mutual respect and allowing participants to alter my research plans as need be (Gonzales, 2000).

I also sought to present a study that contained rich rigor as a way to authentically represent my participants' interpretations of inclusion through their experiences. My descriptions were deep and plentiful, pulled from a vast amount of quality data (Weick, 2007). I have also incorporated necessary care to how much time I spent in the field, how I handled the data I collected, and was transparent with the analysis portion of my research according to recommendations (Tracy, 2010). In doing this, I executed a well-done study that accurately represents my participants' perspectives.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS

After coding my audio-recorded small group conversations and one-on-one interviews, I reread the transcripts that I had typed up to start to compile distinct themes that emerged from the transcripts. It became apparent that the themes were language, campus culture, apprehension, and potential for inclusion. Language refers to how SU constructed messages of inclusion through their choice of words. Within this theme, there were sub-themes of insincerity and vagueness. Campus culture is defined as the norms, values, practices, and beliefs that shape behavior and interpretation on campus (Tsui, 2000). This theme also has sub-themes of microaggressions and segregation. Apprehension refers to the fear participants feel in relation to how their identity will be perceived by others in particular spaces on campus. Lastly, potential for inclusion is how participants understand that there are positive practices taking place on campus for promoting inclusion and that inclusion may potentially occur on campus in the near future based on current inclusion efforts. They also had many suggestions, which might increase and affect actual inclusion on campus.

It is important to note that all of the themes and sub-themes that emerged should not be thought of as being independent of one another. Instead they should be thought of as being relational and overlapping in relation to shared identities, intersectional identities, and the similarities experienced by marginalized groups at the same PWI. In organizing my research results, I acknowledge that there are no clear-cut boundaries on

the themes that have emerged, only that they may be situated in relation to each other to explain the complexity of how Latinos and LGBTQ students experience their identity within a institutional setting that is actively facilitating discourses of inclusion.

Language

When giving feedback on the emails used as stimuli for the small group conversations and one on one interviews, the biggest critique from both the Latino participants and LGBTQ participants was the language used in the emails, in that the emails seemed abstract in relation to the message of inclusion that was being communicated. Of the emails, one Latino participant, Diego, stated: "it's almost like a template kind of, like they just kind of copied and pasted on there." Another LGBTQ participant, Chad, pointed out how repetitive the emails were in their template format, "it's repetitive, inclusivity, we're committed to diversity and inclusive excellence, over and over and over." Maria, a Latina participant from another group, echoed Chad's observation by saying, "I feel like they throw around a lot of words, that, like I said before all mean the same thing."

These statements highlight how my participants understood formal messages regarding inclusion coming from the administration at SU. They felt that the emails represented a cookie-cutter style of format, used particular words, such as "diversity and inclusion," and didn't reveal much about what inclusion means to the university. Rather, they just repeated words that could be vague and interpreted in a variety of ways.

Vagueness

There was also a consensus between both minority groups that the emails about

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inclusion and popular campus slogan "Southern University Family" (SUF), which relates to inclusion, were both viewed as vague messages being communicated by the administration. With the emails, participants wanted more descriptive words used in relation to their identity and the identities of others on campus. Kayla, a bisexual participant, stated, "be more specific about the issues we're trying to solve because, it sounds very vague in a way. . . . It doesn't really say anything about like LGBT or race, or whatever this issue is about." Elena, an intersectional participant, stated, "They're saying, 'We love everyone,' because that's what people are supposed to say. They're not being specific. They're just kind of over-generalizing." The sentiment was that the administration's emails on inclusion were overgeneralizing messages of inclusion and that the need for inclusive language was shared across group interviews.

SUF is a popular slogan used to connote that all members of the university, such as faculty, staff, and students, are part of one big family and share common binding traits, such as values, that link them together. Participants also associated a sense of vagueness in relation to this popular campus slogan as it related to their identity. As a result of this vagueness associated with the slogan, participants had a variety of associations in relation to it. Some participants felt that there were unspoken criteria that needed to be met in order to be part of the SUF, such as being of a particular race, having the same interests, such as having interest in college football, or being from the southeast. Betty, a Latina lesbian, stated in regards to the SUF, "It's kind of reflective of a certain population of the university and that would be that you are a diehard football fan or the majority of the students, and you're White." Many of the other participants were in agreement with her

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assessment of who was part of the overall family. However, there were other participants who saw themselves as members of the SUF, but that they were members that were constantly having their relationship to SU challenged and critiqued by other members. Kayla said, "I feel like I am, but I feel like there are other members of the (SUF) who would like to say that I'm not." John, a gay participant, stated, "I am that family member no one talks about!" So, with these participants, it is clear that they do see themselves as members of SUF, but understand that they will have their membership critiqued or go unacknowledged. Still other participants had an understanding that the SUF is what they made it. Maria stated, "Family is what you make it," and the other participants in her particular group shared her same sentiment. That is, there were many families that made up the SUF. Their particular families that they created on campus were important to them. They felt their cultural families were even more important than the overarching SUF, which some felt excluded from. Pedro, a Latino participant, summarizes this by stating, "If you define the family (SUF), your experiences with the people within your area, then yeah, you can say, yeah of course I felt that way, but if I generalize (SUF) to be the entire student body then umm No."

There was not a common consensus of how minority students viewed themselves in relation to the SUF slogan, but rather, three distinct positionings of their identities: excluded, included but ostracized, and their own sub-family groupings, that left the SUF slogan up for interpretation in ways that the administration did not intend, due to the vagueness of it.

Insincerity

As a result of the messages of inclusion sent by the administration being interpreted as being vague, there was also an interpretation that the messages were also insincere, especially the emails due to their formatting. Participants expressed that the emails seemed like they were constructed out of necessity in order to address incidents on campus as a sort of public relations tactic, that their word choice communicated very little personal connection to minority identities, and did not offer solutions to discrimination on campus. Zizi, a Latina participant, stated, "The university is kind of just doing this to save themselves from a PR issue. I think the university has always particularly concerned on 'how are we going to look?' That's their biggest focus." Pedro connected this to the university "having to write these emails," in order to address intolerance incidences on campus. Daniel said that "there was no deep real meaning," behind the emails being sent pertaining to inclusion. In that the emails do not connect inclusion efforts to any particular identity categories such as race, gender, or sexual orientation. Anna, a pansexual identified participant, stated:

> They're trying to talk about inclusion based on, "integrity, honesty, and respect," and it's like, that's kind of what inclusion is, but it's not talking about how you can help to include people and how you can use respect to include people and things like that.

SU's core values integrity, honesty, and respect that Anna brought up are often cited on campus particularly through official communication from the administration. It is also the values that SUF members should adhere to. However, as Anna mentioned the administration at SU did not provide any sort of solutions or actions for students to take

in relation to these values in order to be more inclusive themselves. Participants interpreted this as being hypocritical of a university that claims to desire an inclusive campus and yet does not provide inclusive examples for students to model themselves after.

Campus Culture

Campus culture often sets the tone of how the majority group will interact with minority students, as well as how the minority students will be situated in the university hierarchy. The norms, values, practices, and beliefs that shape behavior and interpretation on university campuses are often covert, which may make them hard to identify by minority students, although this does not mean that they are non-existent (Tsui, 2000). This was apparent with my participants who expressed common experiences on campus but used different language to describe these incidences. They expressed a sense of division on campus by demographics, as White and heterosexual students isolated themselves from others who did not share these two identity markers. This self-segregation was noted by almost all of my participants as being a barrier to inclusion taking place on campus. Another common experience among my participants on campus was microaggressions by the majority White and heterosexual group on campus. These microaggressions left them feeling personally attacked, unwelcomed, and caused them anxiety in certain spaces on campus.

Segregation

My participants mentioned many incidences where White and heterosexual students distanced and segregated themselves from them. Often it was done in gradual,

covert, and unspoken ways. Chad alluded to other students in his engineering class not

wanting to do group work with him because he was perceived as gay. He stated,

"Without even anybody else talking to me basically, they can tell, 'Oh well we should get

in a group with this person other than him.'" Elena noticed that if she brought up her

partner in casual conversation, people would distance themselves from her and cease

interacting with her. She stated, "Then I mention something and they're like, you can tell,

they're kind of more reserved from that point on and then they never talk to you again."

Daniel expressed that White and heterosexual students tended to exclude others because

he perceived they simply felt more comfortable being among each other. He stated that,

"I've tried reaching out to my classmates but usually some of them tend to stick to their

own group." In these incidences, it was clear that minority students at SU have the

common experience of their White and heterosexual counterparts segregating themselves

from minority students. This act of segregation actually prevented inclusion from

occurring between groups on campus, through the physical distancing of the majority

group.

Microagressions

It was made apparent by participants that microagressions, slights made by White

heterosexuals to them, were rampant at SU. Nearly all of my participants experienced

some type of microagression on campus, in classrooms, or at events with other SU

students. These microagressions made my participants feel unsafe, unwelcome, and

caused them unnecessary stress on top of normal university course work. These

microagressions that they experienced often dismissed the feelings, beliefs, and

perspectives of minority students. They were also hostile and aggressive when directed at my participants. What was revealed in my data was that most of these microaggressions often took place in classrooms on campus. After the election of President Trump, there were political discussions that occurred in classrooms on campus and many microaggressions were uttered by White students. Betty noted that White students in her classes expressed disdain that certain minorities in the U.S. felt fear because of the election of President Trump. She responded to this by stating, "You can't talk on behalf of minorities. You're not a minority, you don't understand and there was me and there was one other minority student in the class and I couldn't even muster listening to everybody." She also experienced homophobic microaggressions via text message from a classmate, who she thought was a friend, which stated they could not hang outside of class due to her being a lesbian and a threat to this young lady's safety. Alex, a Latino participant, noticed that when he told people he was from Mexico, a common response was, "disbelief because I spoke English so well. . . . Then I noticed certain people . . . give me a suspicious, very subtle hint of instant suspicion, that arises from being, from being somewhere other than the East Coast." Sometimes it was not only other students who uttered microaggressions, but also faculty, as noted by Valerie, a Latina student from Colombia. After being introduced by a professor to the class, he made a rude joke about her being from Colombia. She stated, "He made a really rude comment about . . . 'Did you bring the drugs?' Something around those lines. Of course he was joking but it was just extremely disrespectful cause everybody in the class started laughing at it." Microaggressions that occured in classes by students or faculty did not lead to minority

students feeling welcome, validated, or included.

Microagressions that occurred elsewhere on campus also were harmful to minority students being targeted for inclusion. Participants heard microagressions casually being expressed, though not directed at them, when walking about campus. Once again in relation the recent presidential election, Betty overheard two White male students saying, "Yeah, I'm really glad Trump got elected because that means he'll get rid of the Mexicans. They're so useless; we don't need them here." Anna also referenced a similar recent incident, in which a student decided to wear a LGBTQ Pride flag around campus and was called homophobic names. Kayla also brought up another recent event in which a Christian campus organization kicked out a student once it was made known that she was bisexual. She stated, "Christian groups on campus that like kicked some girl out of it, because she came out as bi, I was like, Eww lets avoid those people now."

These microagressions were not limited to students, as staff on campus have also recently perpetuated Mexican stereotypes in the dining halls in an event coordinated by University Housing and Dining called the "Maximum Mexican" event (Howell, 2015). On October 7, 2015, the dining hall hosted what was touted as a "cultural dining event" for Hispanic Heritage Month (Howell, 2015). Valerie explained, "We're trying to break stereotypes and the university has this huge event. . . . They bring the stereotype, every stereotype that there was in the Mexican culture, they brought it to the dining hall. . . . The university showcased that as the authentic Mexican culture." While the university apologized for the culturally insensitive event, it was only after pushback from the Latino/Hispanic community on campus. This event left the Latino students that witnessed

and experienced it feeling like they were not welcome at SU. When the event was brought up a little while later in the student government senate, some students who were White dismissed it as being unimportant to discuss. Maria, who was part of this campus group, stated, "One guy stood up and was like, 'Why are we defending it? How do we all agree with it?' Basically he was very aggressive in his way, he thought it was stupid or he didn't care." This led to a disagreement in the student government senate.

All of these examples of microagressions occurring on campus have placed stress on minority students because they were made to question if they belonged, because they were made to feel insignificant by having their perspectives dismissed.

Apprehension

This particular theme that emerged in my data was unique to LGBTQ participants, as it did not appear with my Latino students. This was the only apparent difference between both groups. My LGBTQ participants felt apprehensive being in certain campus spaces and in certain situations on campus due to the fear that their particular sexual orientation would lead to them being ostracized in some way. As a defense mechanism, they purposely avoided being placed in certain situations or spaces on campus, which alienated them from certain college experiences. Many different terms and phrases were used to describe their apprehension without ever using this term. Although most could not confirm that they had experienced homophobia or transphobia directly on campus, their apprehension should not be diminished as paranoia, as their descriptions all point to a commonality shared through how they experienced their sexual orientation on campus.

My LGBTQ participants expressed that they had apprehension when interacting with new people on campus out of fear that the new person would be hostile to them because of their sexuality. John stated, "Well, freshman year . . . my biggest worry for the entire semester was, 'What will he do when he finds out I'm gay?' I was worried for the longest that he would just hate me." Anna also worried about revealing her sexual orientation to others on campus. She said, "If I told this person that I'm friends with that I'm gay, then they might be backing away from (her) and that's just kind of shitty to think about."

These initial apprehensions led my participants to avoid certain spaces, activities, organizations, and situations on campus. Chad generalized that there were things that he wanted to go to and experience on campus but, due to his apprehension surrounding his gay identity, he did not go. Chad stated, "There have been things that I've wanted to go and do but I haven't because I just figured I wouldn't know or . . . wouldn't get along with anyone there, because I'm gay." He explained that the fear of being verbally abused by people is what kept him from attending these functions on campus. Elena also mentioned that she also avoided functions on campus because she is uncomfortable with the possibility of being confronted over her lesbian identity. She was even warned about joining a sorority on campus by another female student. She stated, "One girl who deactivated [dropped out of the sorority] came up and told me, 'You're not all the way straight?' I'm like No, and she said good luck with that in this sorority!" This caused Elena to question if she should join the sorority after all. My participants also shared experiences that validated the apprehension that they felt on campus. Kayla stated, "For

National Coming Out Week I put up posters in my building [dorm], and they weren't up

for a full day before they were torn down." She asked her RAs to file a report; they said

they would but nothing came of it.

Apprehension experienced by LGBTQ participants around how they will be

perceived due to their sexual orientation on campus was connected to their experiences of

SU's campus climate, which they interpreted as unsupportive of LGBTQ identities.

Potential For Inclusion

While all of my participants shared negative experiences and perspectives

pertaining to SU, both groups also saw the potential for inclusion to occur on campus in

the near future due to current inclusion efforts they were made aware of and through

suggestions they had for the administration. While there were many suggestions made by

my participants, I will mention those that came up across various small group

conversations and one-on-one interviews.

My LGBTQ participants desired inclusive language in official communication by

SU and in classrooms on campus. Anna stated, "They [the administration] should send

out emails that are more specific, like 'Hey we support the LGBT community,' or some

sort of message that strongly emphasizes their point, not vague." John echoed this

sentiment by expressing that the administration needs to state/type LGBTQ in

communication with the student body. He stated, "The administration is afraid to say the

word half the time. . . . I'd be fine with a social event where you verbally say it's about

LGBTQ, but everyone can come it's inclusive."

Another suggestion made by LGBTQ participants, in relation to language, was for

inclusive language that acknowledges LGBTQ people exist when providing examples

related to class content should be used. This was a suggestion that would disrupt

heteronormative language being used and assumptions that everyone in the class was

heterosexual identified. Chad and Betty both cited experiences in their classes where

students and faculty made statements or asked questions where the assumption was that

the students in the class were all heterosexual. Chad recommended instructors "basically

challenging the idea that only straight people exist." Betty stated that, "I was being

excluded. Especially in class discussions, when it was like, 'How many of you have a

boyfriend?' It was always talked about in heteronormative terms." The use of inclusive

language in the class was a big recommendation for LGBTQ participants.

Hiring more Latino and LGBTQ staff was also mentioned. Both groups

understood that it was important to have faculty and staff of their particular identity on

campus. Pedro, Alex, and Chad all expressed the need to hire diverse faculty at SU.

Pedro stated, "Just hire more Latinos, not just for the Languages (courses), for

engineering especially, for science, for math." Chad said, "Hire . . . workers or professors

that work in other areas that are LGBTQ or allies who would be there with open office

hours if people wanted to come and talk." My participants expressed not only hiring

faculty of their particular identity, but that, in doing so, it would allow them to connect in

a personal way through their identity.

Educating others on campus about their community and culture was also

important to both groups, although how to do this took various forms. Many participants

expressed the desire to personally educate others about their particular culture. Valerie

suggested educating others about her Colombian culture through food on campus. She stated, "I'm really proud of where I come from, so for me like sharing my culture and like food, or whatever, I like doing that stuff." Elena and Anna both suggested campus events that featured members with their particular identities or that focused on their culture that would expose White students to their identity and combat stereotypes associated with their identity. Elena suggested mandatory educational events that might combat LGBTQ stereotypes, such as LGBTQ people choose to identify that way. Anna suggested having a free campus concert that featured LGBTQ artists that would expose non-LGBTQ students to LGBTQ culture.

Another suggestion was to alter SU1000, a mandatory new-student orientation, in various ways that would expose others to their culture, because, as of right now, most students do not take the orientation seriously or are openly hostile to it. Part of SU1000 are dialogues about certain topics, and both Anna and Valerie suggested bringing people of their particular identity to facilitate these small group dialogues to make the material more personal to students who do not share their identity. That way, students could get a first-hand account about minority groups lives and the different barriers minority groups faced on and off campus. Many older participants could not recollect what they learned from SU1000 and did not view it as important, which they extended to how other students might feel about it. Pedro stated, "Honestly when you ask me what is SU1000, I couldn't answer that question. Cause I was like I know it's a freshman course but I forgot everything about it." Valerie bluntly stated, "When I took it, it was absolutely pointless! I didn't learn a single thing!" Zizi offered a suggestion to fix this by altering SU1000's

format to a semester course. Zizi stated, "I do like the idea of a SU1000 class, of like hey this is what to expect and all that stuff, also be aware that people are different than you." Through these suggestions on SU1000, provided by my participants, their hopes were to reduce the flippant and hostile attitude most student have towards the orientation.

The final solution my participants had was for the administration to hold students accountable for microagressions and other acts and speech of aggression or intolerance. They expressed the sentiment that if this were not done, then inclusion would not occur, because a hostile campus culture against minority students would pervail. Kayla and Anna were both in agreement for having some form of repercussions for students caught discriminating against others. Anna stated, "I think it would be good if they (administration) made some type of repercussion for discrimination against LGBT people." Betty, John, and Carl also expressed that students need to be held accountable for their actions by the administration. Betty stated, "I just think it's important to hold them accountable as students . . . on just treating other people like people. I dunno I think it's important, I always say silence is complacency." Both Pedro and Valerie had an additional suggestion regarding accountability for students being discriminatory, which was for the administration to communicate how they have addressed these discriminatory issues successfully on campus, instead of just proclaiming that SU is an inclusive campus, despite actions that say otherwise. Valerie provided the following example: "It shouldn't be necessary for us to know through an email, but rather through their actions. 'Ok there was an incident this day, we did this, this, and this.' Not just, 'Oh there was an incident, we're not going to tolerate this.' While most participants were in agreement of

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holding other students accountable for their actions, there was no consensus about how this could be done. Some participants expressed skepticism that students could be held accountable even if they personally thought they should be. Others worried about potential hostile pushback by the White and heterosexual students against their LGBTQ or Latino community if these students were held accountable. Nevertheless, participants seemed hopeful that in the near future SU would be able to slowly become more inclusive regarding its minority populations on campus.

The major themes of language, campus culture, apprehension, and potential for inclusion that emerged point to specific issues that need to be addressed by the administration of SU in order for minority students who are marginalized there to feel that they are included in the SUF. The use of inclusive language in relation to minority groups on campus needs to be implemented in official SU communication. A hostile campus culture needs to be acknowledged and dismantled by SU's administration in order for inclusion goals to be realized. In connection to this additional support through services, policies, and programs are needed for the LGBTQ community at SU. In order to eliminate the apprehension they feel while attending SU. Finally SU's administration should directly communicate with and listen to the recommendations of its marginalized minority populations about how increase inclusion on campus, so that it may occur. These findings if taken into account will not only improve inclusion efforts at SU, but create a strong foundation for SU to uphold its core values of integrity, honesty, and respect for all students, faculty, and staff.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

Language

As a Gay identified Latino man attending SU, I understand just how important

language is in relation to representation and inclusion; however, I was not sure if my

participants would express this sentiment as well. Language, particularly word choice, is

important in relation to constructing messages of inclusion, when attempting to conduct

discourse around this term. My participants mostly had negative responses to the email

stimuli used, labeling them as templates, generic, repetitive, unspecific, and containing

buzz/key words that did not explain anything. As minority students, they wanted

descriptive and specific language to be used in relation to their identities as well as other

identities. In not doing this, SU actually constructed messages that devalued minority

identities, which goes against the philosophy of multiculturalism it strives to implement

on campus. Through multiculturalism, different identities and their corresponding

cultures are acknowledged, respected, valued, and supported equally among other

identities and cultures. These emails failed to do this as participants labeled them vague

in terms of what they were trying to communicate about inclusion.

Vagueness was another issue connected to language used in emails and popular

SU slogans, as it made participants unsure of their place on campus. Identities are

political in nature as they are socially constructed to contain knowledge of a particular

person in relation to other identities. The placement of identities in relation to one another

at a multicultural site such as SU situates how others at this particular site understand and interact with identities such as Latino or LGBTQ. Both groups had trouble understanding how the administration valued them or if it valued them at all, because their identities were never mentioned, leaving them with a suspicion that they were not valued by the administration. SU's administrations practice of not including Latino and LGBTQ group identities in official discourse on inclusion rendered their identities invisible. As a result of this knowledge of these and other minority identities remain separate from discourse of inclusion occurring on campus.

The groups also understood that campus slogans such as SUF were meant to be inclusive as discourse of inclusion, but often felt that only White and heterosexual students were considered family. The concept of SUF was socially constructed by the majority (White and heterosexual), that holds positions of power that enables them to overtly and covertly police the definition/criteria of what constitutes a SU family member. There was a conflicting feeling expressed by participants that this discourse of SUF situated White and heterosexual student identities in positions of power because they met certain characteristics and criteria that were deserving of claiming to be "family members," while their own claim of family ties were up for debate, due to their identities and differences not being acknowledged or valued often by the administration through language. As a result of this, discourses of inclusion from SU were interpreted as being insincere and self-serving by participants. They also believed that SU was only concerned about their public relations image. Once again, by not acknowledging the identities that were discriminated against in these emails, SU positioned these minority identities of

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being of lesser value, and in doing so they positioned minority identities in subordinate

roles within their multicultural site. Through a critical-cultural lens, the majority group

will seek to dominate other groups by framing ideologies such as inclusiveness in their

own terms. In doing so, inclusion will be constructed in ways that suit the group and do

not challenge the social structure of the institution. This allows the majority group to

continue benefitting from its place within the institutional structure, while framing

inclusion discourse as important. The construction of discourse of inclusion at SU is

carefully crafted to include words that carry important ideals, without ever

acknowledging minority groups, or what structural changes must be made for inclusion to

flourish on campus. Whether intentional or unintentional, SU's discourse of inclusion

does not acknowledge, value, respect, or support minority identities on campus. SU's

discourse of inclusion is self-defeating in creating authentic multiculturalism on campus.

As such, minority students will continue to perceive discourse of inclusion from the

administration as generic, vague, and insincere.

Campus Culture

Like language, I suspected that my participants would not be satisfied with the

current campus culture of SU. My participants were able to articulate that the SU campus

culture was one that was divided. Like the theme of language discussed previously, there

is a disconnect between what the administration is saying in regards to ideal norms,

values, practices, and beliefs, and what is actually occurring on campus. As in the email

stimuli, the administration constantly states that SU is an inclusive campus or committed

to inclusion. Both of my groups pointed out this hypocrisy, by contradicting what the

administration was saying and their actual experiences on campus. Once again the philosophy of multiculturalism is not being put into practice on campus. Where as there should not be a cultural hierarchy in multiculturalism, one exists at SU. This hierarchy positions White and heterosexual students values, needs, and desires above others such as Latinos, LGBTQ, and other minorities on campus. In doing so SU perpetuates power dynamics seen elsewhere in the U.S.

My participants also pointed out that White and heterosexual students segregated themselves from others who did not fit into their particular demographics as a way of maintaining power dynamics on campus. The majority White and heterosexual student population physically segregating themselves from others creates a barrier to inclusion and disrupts the discourse of inclusion coming from the administration. This exclusionary physical act, once again, positions non-White or non-heterosexual identities in subordinate positions on campus. This communicates that minority identities are to be avoided and dismissed, which further devalues minority identities. This goes directly against SU's core values of integrity, honesty, and respect. There is no integrity because the campus is physically divided and there is a lack of respect towards identities other than White and heterosexual.

When minority identities are spoken about at SU, this is often done through microagressions. These slights were dismissive about minorities' perspectives, beliefs, and feelings, which made my participants feel unsafe, unwelcome, and caused them stress. Oftentimes, these microaggressions occurred in classrooms and the students who said them were often not engaged by instructors to critically unpack these beliefs. Even

instructors participated in saying microaggressions in the classroom. My participants felt

unsafe at times in their classes as their minority identity, culture, and perspectives were

up for debate and dismissal by White and heterosexual people. This further diminished

the value of Latino or LGBTQ identities on SU's campus by reinforcing to others in the

class that these identities were not worthy of respect. The knowledge constructed around

identities not only resides within the identity but also how the identity is communicated

to others. Communicating through unregulated discourse that certain identities such as

Latino or LGBTQ, are not to be respected or viewed as important, allows for them to

become politicized in relation to their value. The devaluing of these identities happens

through social construction within discourse of identities perpetuated by the majority

group on campus. This politicization allows the majority group on campus to speak about

Latinos and LGBTQ students as if they are a monolith, by making generalizations and

perpetuating stereotypes about them. An example of this was the "Maximum Mexican"

event coordinated by SU's University Housing and Dining in October 2015, that

perpetuated Mexican stereotypes, but was touted as a cultural event. While the

administration apologized, it was only after pushback from Latino students. SU never

took the opportunity to question if a cultural event such as the aforementioned would

respectfully honor Mexican culture, was an authentic representation of said culture, nor

did it contemplate if it would demonstrate integrity towards diversity. Instead the only

important thing this cultural event was concerned with was that Mexican culture could be

consumed on the terms of the White majority population.

      The politicization of both Latino and LGBTQ identities, allows for them to be

assigned a particular value in relation to their identity by the dominant group. This in turn

allows the dominant culture at SU to decide how they want to frame and communicate

minority identities on campus, which influences campus culture. A campus culture that

does not position minority identities as important, valued, and deserving of respect, will

not be able to incorporate inclusion throughout discourse of inclusion and their campus

structure.

Apprehension

It was interesting to see this theme emerge as being the unique theme that allowed

me to differentiate between my LGBTQ participants from my Latino ones. I was

surprised that my Latino participants did not have apprehension as a theme, with the

current Presidential administrations, constant anti-immigrant rhetoric, that often uses the

term illegal-immigrant as a term to represent Latinos. Nevertheless, they did not mention

anything that could be linked to apprehension as a theme. LGBTQ participants on the

other hand were apprehensive about being in particular situations and spaces on campus

out of fear that they would be verbally harassed. Certain anti-LGBTQ microagressions

and incidents on campus led them to interpret that campus climate was not supportive of

their identity. SU's administration's refusal to communicate the term LGBTQ in any

formal communication was a political transgression against their discourse of inclusion.

Lack of affirming discourse around LGBTQ identities from the administration and in

various spaces on campus, perpetuates that these identities are not important. It also

allows for homophobia and transphobia to flourish on campus, by framing LGBTQ as

being negative through social construction of these identities. Hateful examples of

microagressions against LGBTQ students on campus previously mentioned go unacknowledged by SU's administration, until LGBTQ students publicly advocate for themselves. The lack of action and discourse on behalf of the administration in relation to LGBTQ microagressions gives the impression that LGBTQ identities are not valued. This communicates that LGBTQ identities were not deserving of respect, are not part of the SUF, and that LGBTQ identities are morally questionable. The inaction by SU's administration perpetuates an anti-LGBTQ campus climate that allows for the disparaging of its LGBTQ members.

What was interesting about LGBTQ participants' apprehension was that it not only stemmed from SU's campus culture but also from other places such as their small hometowns. John stated, "Coming out as gay in a small town, where I'm from is kind of at first impossible to do because there isn't an inclusive atmosphere, in fact it's highly exclusive, so you kind of just stay to yourself." Chad echoed John's statement by explaining that growing up in his small hometown he was often left out by his peers from normal interactions because he was perceived as gay. Coming from unsupportive environments shaped my LGBTQ participants views that they should be wary of others before disclosing their sexual orientation, as well as instilled in them that they expected to be excluded and even harassed due to their sexual orientation. This leads to them avoiding spaces and people on campus. SU has done nothing to disrupt this LGBTQ apprehension through multiculturalism. SU has not gone out of its way to demonstrate through discourse of inclusion that LGBTQ are valued on campus as members of the SUF. It is important for the administration to understand that some LGBTQ student

identities are already not valued before coming to SU. This knowledge is important for the administration to take the necessary steps in order to create an inclusive LGBTQ environment on campus, by making sure that LGBTQ members know they have the support of the administration. Without positioning LGBTQ identities as important, valued, and deserving of respect on campus, LGBTQ students at SU will continue to be apprehensive during their time at SU out of fear that they are unwelcome.

Potential for Inclusion

It is important that my participants were able to see positive aspects of SU in relation to inclusion as well as provide practical solutions for increasing inclusion on campus. As previously stated, language used by the SU administration is an important first step to increase inclusion, by validating Latino and LGBTQ identities as worthy of being mentioned. However, in doing this, the administration would be taking a political stance by creating a positive association with these identities, while making them hyper-visible, especially LGBTQ identities. Also, language used in classrooms needs to be respectful of minorities. This could be done through training of instructors in how to combat microagressions, while leading critical thinking discussion around identities and providing a safe space for minority students to share their cultural perspectives, if they chose to. Training faculty and staff on cultural sensitivity is an important component of enacting inclusion at SU. It is self-defeating to have faculty and staff discuss identities other than their own with students if they do not have factual knowledge of these identities themselves.

The hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff was also brought up by some

of my participants. This would help expose students to other identities and allow them to interact with people different to themselves. Prior research has shown the benefits of having a diverse faculty and staff at universities. One of which is that a university with a diverse faculty and staff often has a more diverse student population. This is because minority students desire to attend a university where their demographic makeup is reflected in the faculty and staff. SU would be wise to focus on hiring more minority faculty and staff. However, SU must also provide a supportive working atmosphere for minority faculty and staff. Prior research has shown that non-supportive and hostile university departments do not foster retention of minority staff and faculty. This in turn negatively impacts the retention of minority students. SU could demonstrate through future hiring actions and cultural sensitivity training that it values minority faculty, staff, and students.

Some of my participants shared that they have taken it upon themselves to speak up in defense of their identities on campus with varying results. Still, this demonstrates that some of my participants are tempered radicals. That is because they are marginalized individuals within a multicultural setting, who understand that they are part of SUF, but also know that the current campus climate should be challenged and improved to increase inclusion of their group on campus. It is because they are often excluded by their White and heterosexual peers that they have both insider and outsider perspectives of what it means to be part of SUF. They also may be more aware of inclusion policies, such as the hiring of diverse staff members my Latino participants mentioned, while at the same time being able to critique inclusion practices at SU as not being successful. Through their

knowledge of groups on campus and campus culture they can provide solutions to enact transformation on campus culture. Some of my participants recognized that their identities were being diminished or sequestered, and in response, became more vocal in sharing their identities with others. Betty made a point of bringing up that she was a lesbian every time she had a casual conversation with a new person, so that they would have to acknowledge her private lesbian identity. In relation to Hispanic Heritage Month at SU, Zizi constantly brought up an event with an organization she was part of that was primarily White men. Zizi stated, "I'm y'alls brother, you're going to listen to me regardless… I know some brothers were kind of annoyed, but I didn't care. They needed to realize how important it (the event) was. They got it eventually, most of them." In forcing their identities into conversations, through communication they constructed, they were able to make their identities visible to fight the false notion they do not exist and presented their identities in ways that were culturally authentic. These actions disrupted and positively altered discourse around their identities. In doing so these tempered radicals pushed back against how their identities were socially constructed on campus, by making their identities salient. Then advocating for their own definitions of their identity(s) on a personal level.

Tempered radicals are important at universities because they bring up ethical dilemmas occurring within the university that are not being addressed by the administration. Once again, the example of the "Maximum Mexican" event coordinated by SU's University Housing and Dining in October 2015 that perpetuated Mexican stereotypes was framed as problematic only when there was pushback from Latino

students at SU. Some of my participants acknowledged that they would need to help the administration with cultural events if they wanted them to be respectful and authentic. Valerie mentioned that cultural events needed to be educational, in that events explain to those outside of the particular culture being showcased, significant aspects of the culture. Freddie, a Latino student, explained that in order to do this the administration would need help from minority students in promoting any cultural event to make sure it was done respectively. He stated, "it no longer became what can the college do for us as students, but what can we do together…(events) created by these individuals that understand the culture or the identity and are willing and wanting to share it." Forming this partnership would not only help minority students make their identities and culture visible but also educate others outside of their groups in ways that are authentic and respectful. SU's administration should be willing to partner with minority groups on campus in ways that uphold its core values. Through challenging power relations on campus and listening to minority students input, SU can demonstrate that it values minority identities.

Tempered radicals can use their cultural passion and commitment to their university to enact changes in curriculum as well. Most of my participants had a negative view of SU1000, yet still expressed the importance of it in educating students about other cultures. Through their critique of SU1000, it was clear that discourse of minority identities was very important, yet the current discourse coming from SU1000 was lacking in its effectiveness. They suggested adding their identities to the discourse content and altering the format so that it would make minority identities relatable and connect to students through similarities between cultures. Their hope is that by creating these

personal connections between cultures, their own identities will be empowered while challenging campus culture to become more inclusive.

Lastly, my participants stressed the importance of holding other students accountable for their microaggressions and intolerant actions by the administration. This was something that SU's administration needed to communicate clearly through official discourse on inclusion. They expressed that if this were not done, then inclusion would not occur, because a hostile campus culture against minority students would pervade. Multiculturalism stresses equal valuing of distinct cultures at a particular site. The fact that Latino and LGBTQ identities are not valued the same as their White and heterosexual counterparts perpetuates discourse of inequality. However, there was no consensus about what forms of repercussions should be meted out for acts of intolerance. Nevertheless, if done, the administration would send a strong message to students that intolerance is not a value of the SUF and that they truly valued their minority students. This may set a precedent to other PWIs struggling with inclusion efforts, that accountability and repercussions for microagressions must be part of inclusion efforts. It would also demonstrate that SU was adhering to its core values through its actions to foster an inclusive campus. This would once again position minority identities as being important, valued, and respected, while lifting them from their current subordinate positioning within the multicultural site. It was also recommended by the Latino and LGBTQ participants that transparency on behalf of the administration was important in relation to repercussions. That is to say, the administration needs to communicate explicitly how it addressed the incident of intolerance, instead of distributing vague

statements that claim SU is an inclusive campus. This might also prompt other PWIs to follow suit in acknowledging the actions they have taken against acts of intolerance. Doing so would communicate that PWIs are committed to inclusion and will take the necessary actions to stop those in opposition to inclusion efforts. Through following these suggestions from Latinos and LGBTQ students, SU would be able to foster an environment that is more inclusive than it currently is. It first must be willing to alter the language it uses within discourse of inclusion, by stressing the value of specific minority groups on campus. Hiring and retention of minority faculty and staff should be promoted as something to strive and implement. Partnerships between minority groups on campus and administration must be encourage, that allow the minority groups to lead discourse in how they are to be represented. Creation of educational material that covers cultures and identities tied to these cultures must also be guided by members of these groups, when attempting to educate others on cultural sensitivity. Finally there must be measures put in place by the SU administration to hold members of the SUF accountable when they commit microagressions on campus, as a way of showing that SU values its minority members, and as a way of dissuading others from committing microagressions on campus.

<div align="center">**Limitations and Future Research**</div>

While this research provides insight into the lived experiences and perspectives of Latino and LGBTQ students at a PWI, it is important to understand that there were limitations. One major limitation was the sample size, which should not be construed to

be representative of all Latino or LGBTQ students at SU, in how they experience institutional discourse of inclusion here. To avoid generalizing my data, the study should be replicated with greater amount of students from each group, along with other minority groups at SU and in subsequent years. This sample also represents those Latinos and LGBTQ participants interested in this particular research, but do not include those students, who may hold apathetic or mild interest in institutional discourse of inclusion on campus. It might also be beneficial to research Latino and LGBTQ students who have had entirely, or mostly positive experiences at SU regarding inclusion and see how their perspectives and experiences compare and contrast with my participants' responses. Although this research has limitations, it highlights the complexities of PWIs framing discourse of inclusion for their minority students as well as how minority students such as Latinos and LGBTQ students experience PWIs.

Conclusion: Executive Summary

Universities across the U.S. desire to be known as inclusive environments that equally value the cultural differences of all its members. In striving for this, they need to implement inclusion on their campuses by taking into account the needs of their diverse population. In order to remain competitive with other universities in attracting diverse populations to their institutions, many types of inclusive actions must occur on their campuses. Those universities that succeed in their inclusion efforts will attract and retain a diverse population on campus.

The administration of a university must be willing to actively engage with their minority populations in order to better understand their needs and how they relate to

inclusion efforts on campus. In doing so they will gain insight into the lived experiences and perspectives of minority students, which in turn can be used to implement policies, procedures, and programs that foster inclusion of these minority groups.

Minority members of a university often feel undervalued, ignored, and cite a lack of administrative support. This leads to them feeling that they do not belong and has the possibility of causing them to leave their university. As a way to prevent this from occurring and improving retention of minority members, a university's administration can take some suggestions from minority members on how to increase inclusion efforts on their campuses.

Through dialogue with minority populations it was shown that the following were important themes to address on campus. Language, campus climate, apprehension, and their suggestions for potential for inclusion are important for universities to take into account. These are some of the ways to address inclusion from minority member's perspectives. Universities often overlook the importance of holding frequent dialogues with minority groups on campus. Minority groups hold valuable information in relation to what inclusion efforts are working on campus and what might be added or altered to improve inclusion on campus. Universities should create regularly held dialogues with minority members as a way to steadily address inclusion on campus. This will allow universities to set practical timeframes to meet inclusion goals based on information pulled from these dialogues.

Communication in relation to inclusion on campus should use language that identifies and acknowledges specific minority groups. It should also use affirming

language in relation to minority groups that demonstrates how these groups are essential in promoting the values of the university. This may take the form of emails, signage on campus, or events on campus. Affirming language can also be used to construct discourse in relation to the history of minority groups on campus. This would explain the contributions minority groups have made to campus culture over the university's history.

Campus climate should be assessed as to how minority groups are perceived and spoken about. If the campus climate is hostile or wary of minority groups, this should be addressed by the administration immediately. This can be done through educational events and trainings where minority groups are uplifted by the administration as being an important component of the university. This would ideally be done through culturally accurate training assisted by minority group members. The hiring of diverse minority staff and faculty is also important in exposing students to other cultures and leads to attracting minority students to the university.

If minority members feel apprehensive while being on campus, it is important to directly ask what needs could be met to alleviate this sense of anxiety. Specific policies and services on campuses such as anti-discrimination policies, LGBTQ dorms, and multicultural centers would help minority students gain a sense of comfort, knowing they are protected and provided safe spaces. Multicultural centers and LGBTQ centers demonstrate that the administration values minority students and desires to see them succeed while at their institution.

When minority groups offer suggestions to increase inclusion on campus the administration should actively listen and implement structural changes that will include

the perspectives of minority groups. Examples would be an increase of campus cultural events, showcasing the diversity of groups on campus. Altering orientation seminars so that minority groups are accurately represented in ways that are relatable to other students. Additionally, the administration needs to develop policies and procedures addressing discrimination that occurs on campus or committed by members of the university. In creating these policies and procedures, the university will communicate to its members that acts of intolerance will not be permitted on campus without repercussions.

These are just some of the ways universities can assist in implementing inclusion on their campuses. These suggestions are practical and efficient when applied effectively at university campuses. As universities compete with one another in attracting diverse populations, they will be required to address ways in which they can become more structurally inclusive of their minority members. It would be wise of them to directly communicate with their minority populations in order to understand what structural changes need to occur on campus to show that they truly value minorities. In doing so they will attract and retain diverse populations on their campuses.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Script

To begin: *Debriefing and informed consent.*

General Introduction questions

What academic year are you (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior).

What race or ethnicity do you identify with (Black, Latino, Native American, White, etc.)?

 What is your Sexual Identify Category (L, G, B, T, Q, other)?

 If you were to describe "home", the town/city, state, or country which you identify with, what would it be?

Let's begin by discussing in brief, what does the term inclusion mean to everyone?

Responding to University Communications

I will be passing around some printed out emails from Clemson regarding inclusion from the 2015-2016 school year. Please take the next 10 minutes to look them over, paying particular attention to highlighted sections of these emails. Then I will ask some questions regarding what you have read.

What are your initial feelings/responses regarding these emails?

What are your opinions about the messages of inclusion within these emails?

What do you think the university is trying to say about inclusion?

In your opinion are they doing a good job at communicating inclusion through these emails?

Questions on Inclusion and Identity

Let's begin by discussing in brief, what does the term inclusion mean to everyone?

Have you ever thought about inclusion as it pertains to your particular identity labels? If so, how?

Tell me about how your identity labels might have affected your experiences at Clemson? If they have not that is fine as well.

Inclusion as a student

Tell me about times when you might have thought of inclusion before attending this university?

How does inclusion play a role in your life as a student at this moment?

Why might inclusion be important to you personally? Describe this.

Are you aware of efforts of inclusion pertaining to your ethnic culture or sexual identity group on campus? If so, in what sense (examples)?

Tell me about the ways you think inclusion should be addressed on campus?

What type of inclusion practices or policies might improve the campus environment?

Latino-specific questions for Latino Group only

Tell me about your experiences as a Latino student at Clemson, as it relates to this ethnic identity.

As a Latino, how have you been included in the Clemson "Family?"

Have there been times when you felt excluded, ignored, or dismissed because you are Latino at Clemson?

LGBTQ-specific questions for LGBTQ Group only

Tell me about your experiences as a LGBTQ student at Clemson, as it relates to your sexual identity.

As a LGBTQ identified individual, how have you been included in the Clemson "Family?"

Have there been times when you felt excluded, ignored, or dismissed because you are LGBTQ identified at Clemson?

What else you would like to share about your experiences or this discussion?

Thank for participation and dismiss.

Special Inside ██████: Chief diversity officer named

2 messages

██████████████████████████ Wed, Feb 10, 2016 at 12:43 PM
██████████████████████████

Diversity is not about counting heads, it's about making heads count.

That is the philosophy of ████████, J.D, who has been named ████████ University's chief diversity officer (CDO) and special assistant to the president for inclusive excellence.

"Lee is a successful leader who will make a positive difference for our university, said President James ████████. "We have made strides to create an inclusive campus culture, and that work must continue. I'm confident that L██'s philosophy and experience will help us provide a learning and workplace environment that is welcoming and supportive for all students, faculty and staff."

"████████ is firmly committed to diversity and inclusive excellence, and we welcome Lee to the team to provide leadership for this effort," said interim Chief Diversity Officer ████████, who also serves as chief of staff. "He has the experience, knowledge and skills to enhance the campus climate for everyone."

Learn more about the new CDO.

Important Message from Interim Dean of Students

2 messages

██████████████████████████ Mon, Apr 11, 2016 at 7:07 PM
██████████████████████████

Dear Students,

A banner related to the history of African-Americans was defaced on campus this morning in an act that runs counter to the values of the ████████ Family.

The act of intolerance is equal parts disappointing and infuriating and has no place in the ████████ community. To misuse one's right to free speech in such a way is irresponsible and violates everything that ████████ stands for as a place of learning, personal growth and respect.

██████ University does not tolerate racist or intolerant activities and behavior of any kind. We will respond accordingly when those boundaries are violated and will use the full force of our adjudication process to sanction all who may be involved.

All ████████ students deserve the opportunity to learn in an environment that supports and respects them and does not discriminate against them based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, nationality or any other difference.

My time as your Dean, although short, has been extremely welcoming and completely supportive of our collective student communities. This despicable act does not reflect the true spirit of this great University.

I want to encourage you to continue in your efforts to build a wonderful tapestry of diversity and know that the University supports you in every way. My office has scheduled an informational meeting for Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 5:00pm in ████████ Student Center – Ballrooms. The purpose of this meeting is to answer any questions with respect to the current incident.

Students who would like to speak with someone about how this incident affects them can contact Counseling and Psychological Services at ████████ or the Office of Advocacy and Success in the Dean of Students' office at ████████

████████████ J.D., Ph.D.

Interim Associate Vice President

And Dean of Students

Conversation Space for Inclusive Excellence
1 message

████████████████████	Tue, Oct 11, 2016 at 11:43 AM

██
██

Sent on Behalf of Inclusive Excellence Committee. . .

The Division of Student Affairs is committed to encouraging an inclusive campus community. We desire to provide open space for conversation that has been prompted by both recent campus events, as outlined in ████████, as well as our commitment to inclusion. We hope these conversations will provide opportunities for us to come together to share thoughts and feelings

about how we can strengthen our community.

We believe that inclusive communities allow us to engage with each other in ways that further our core values: integrity, honesty, and respect. We welcome all voices and active listeners and want to provide ongoing space for conversation and open reflection on topics of concern. We expect community members who join these conversations will openly and civilly engage with each other about their thoughts, experiences, feelings, and questions and that we will engage with each other in a respectful manner.

The following dates have been scheduled, and we welcome your participation.

Questionnaire for Participation in Focus groups

You have been invited to take part in a research study conducted by Dr. ███████ a

professor at Clemson University and Manuel Rodriguez a graduate student at ██████

University. Please respond to the following questions regarding inclusion in a short

answer format (no more than six sentences responses per question). All responses will be

kept confidential.

1. What does the word "inclusion" mean to you?

2. Have you ever thought about how the word "inclusion" affects you personally? If
   yes, then explain how it has affected you at any point in your life?

3. How important is inclusion to you as a student? How important is "inclusion" at
   your current university?

<div align="center">

Consent Form

Information about being a research participant

████████ University

</div>

**Understanding Discourses of Inclusion From Latino and LGBTQ Students'
Perspectives**

Description of Study

Dr. ████████ and Manuel Rodriguez, would like to invite you to take part in a
research study. Dr. ████ is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication
at ████████ University. Manuel is a graduate student in the MA in Communication,
Technology, and Society program at ████████ University, running this study with the
help of Dr. ████. The purpose of the study is to understand how Latino and/or LGBTQ
undergraduate students at ████████ University understand inclusion as a term and their
perspectives on messages of inclusion coming from the university's administration.

As a participant, your personal experiences and understanding of inclusion will help the
researchers in their study of minority populations' interpretations of inclusion. With your
permission, we would like to audio record your responses to questions during focus group
sessions.

The focus group interview should take 1-2hrs of your time with a possibility of follow-up
questions.

Risks and Discomfort

The conversation may at times involve personal subject matter. You may also hear
opinions from others with which you disagree. The moderator will make sure that all
participants and their perspectives will be treated equally and with respect. You will not
be pressured to say anything you are uncomfortable with and may leave the discussion at
any time. We ask that you respect the privacy of others in the group and keep the
information shared private.

Possible Benefits

Participating in this study may introduce you to new people facing similar issues at
████████. You may also gain new insight and understanding into your experiences around
identity and attending this university. In addition, your perspectives on inclusion and
communication of it within a university setting may be beneficial to research on the
subject and future university efforts at communicating and practicing inclusion.

Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality

Your identity will remain private throughout the research process, and will not be
disclosed in any presentation or publication that may result from the focus group. Names
will be replaced with pseudonyms.

All audio recordings will be kept on the computer of Manuel Rodriguez, which is
password protected, and will be destroyed at the completion of the study. All hard copies
of documents will be kept in locked drawers, in Manuel's office, to which only he has the
key.

Choosing to be in the Study

You do not have to take part in the study. You may choose not to take part in this study, as well as deciding to stop participating at any point in the study. You will not be punished in any way if you decide not to participate or stopping during the study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Dr. ██████████ at ████████████████████████████████████

If you have questions or concerns about your rights in this research study, please contact the ███████ University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at ██████████ or at ██████████████

A copy of this form will be provided to you.

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