

# EXCLUSION WITHIN INCLUSION:

ALIENATION AND RETENTION EFFECTS OF  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS ON  
CAMPUS

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# Overview

2

- I. Introduction
- II. Research Questions & Objectives
- III. Significance of Study
- IV. Definition of Terms
- V. Literature Review
- VI. Methodology
- VII. Findings
- VIII. Discussion
- IX. Ethical Considerations
- X. Future Research

# Introduction

“...a feeling that members have of belonging, a **feeling that members matter to one another and to the group**, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p. 9). —McMillan and Chavis (1986)

# Introduction (cont.)

“Students who feel lonely or isolated will **invest more energy in seeking a sense of community and support than in learning and if need be, they will move to another school** or educational delivery medium to satisfy their basic needs.”

□ – Fisher, Sonn, and Bishop (2002)

# Research Questions

5

- What efforts have been made to accommodate the socio-cultural needs of African-American students in higher education?
  - How do they affect AA students?
  - To what extent do they include/exclude AA values?
  
- At what expense are African-American students progressing within academia?
  - Are there adjustments made to conform values (ex./assimilation, acculturation)?

# Objectives

6

- To highlight the condition of African-American students on the spectrum of inclusive practices implemented by PWIs
  - To acknowledge the relationship between feelings of alienation and retention of AA students

# Significance of Study

7

- Access to higher education at an all-time high for African-American students
  - Growth from 39.7% to 60% since 2012
  
- Retention rates of African-American students in higher education are fluctuating
  - 43% graduation rate (2013)
  
- Implications towards culturally supportive environments for minority students

# Definition of Terms

- **The benefits of diversity are not automatic and do not simply occur from a diverse campus.**
  - Institutions become inclusive with *continuous* efforts in devising ways to increase educational benefits for students and for the institution (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005).
- **Equity in education is eliminating the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories.**
  - Narrowing the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students should/does *not* promote sameness in standards.
- — *From Courageous Conversations, Glenn Singleton and Curtis Linton*

# Definition of Terms (cont.)

9

- **Minority ≠ Underrepresented**
  - Depending on the circumstance, an individual can be one or the other
  
- **Access (ed.) is the ways in which institutional policies ensure students have equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education.**
  - This does not refer to equal advantage

# Literature Review

10

- (Love, 2006)
  - Implies that there is a gap between factors that affect persistence and organizational strategies developed to increase admission and retention of AA students
- (Smith, 2000)
  - Questions the extent to which black students feel close to other black students on campus and rely on one another for need satisfaction and social interaction, and share similar values, experiences, and attitudes
- (Rolison, 1986)
  - Explores rationale behind uneven distribution of minority students among PWIs

# Methodology

11

## □ Setting

- Large , accredited public institution located in the Midwest

## □ Participants

- Convenience sample
  - 78 participants and counting
- Undergraduates
  - No particular preference in which college enrolled
- Male and female
  - Transsexual and Cis included
- Ethnicities
  - African-American , Latino/a, White, Asian

# Methodology (cont.)

12

## □ Instrumentation

- Self-report, Interviews
- Examine alienation in a non-situational context
- 24 likert items following a five-point scale
- Scale of potential responses: *strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree*
- Subscales: social isolation, powerlessness, “normlessness” and academic satisfaction

## □ Procedure

- Student self-report executed via online survey
- Asked to identify gender and ethnicity
- Informed that participation was voluntary non-participation would not express negative effects

# Methodology (cont.)

13

- Design and Data Analysis
  - Canonical correlation analysis (CCA)
    - Two representative canonical variates: alienation and PWIE
    - Computed by applying weights to the scores on the five measured variables (social isolation, powerlessness, “normlessness”, social community, and academic satisfaction)
  - Interviews
    - Standardized, open-ended interviews
    - Transcribed

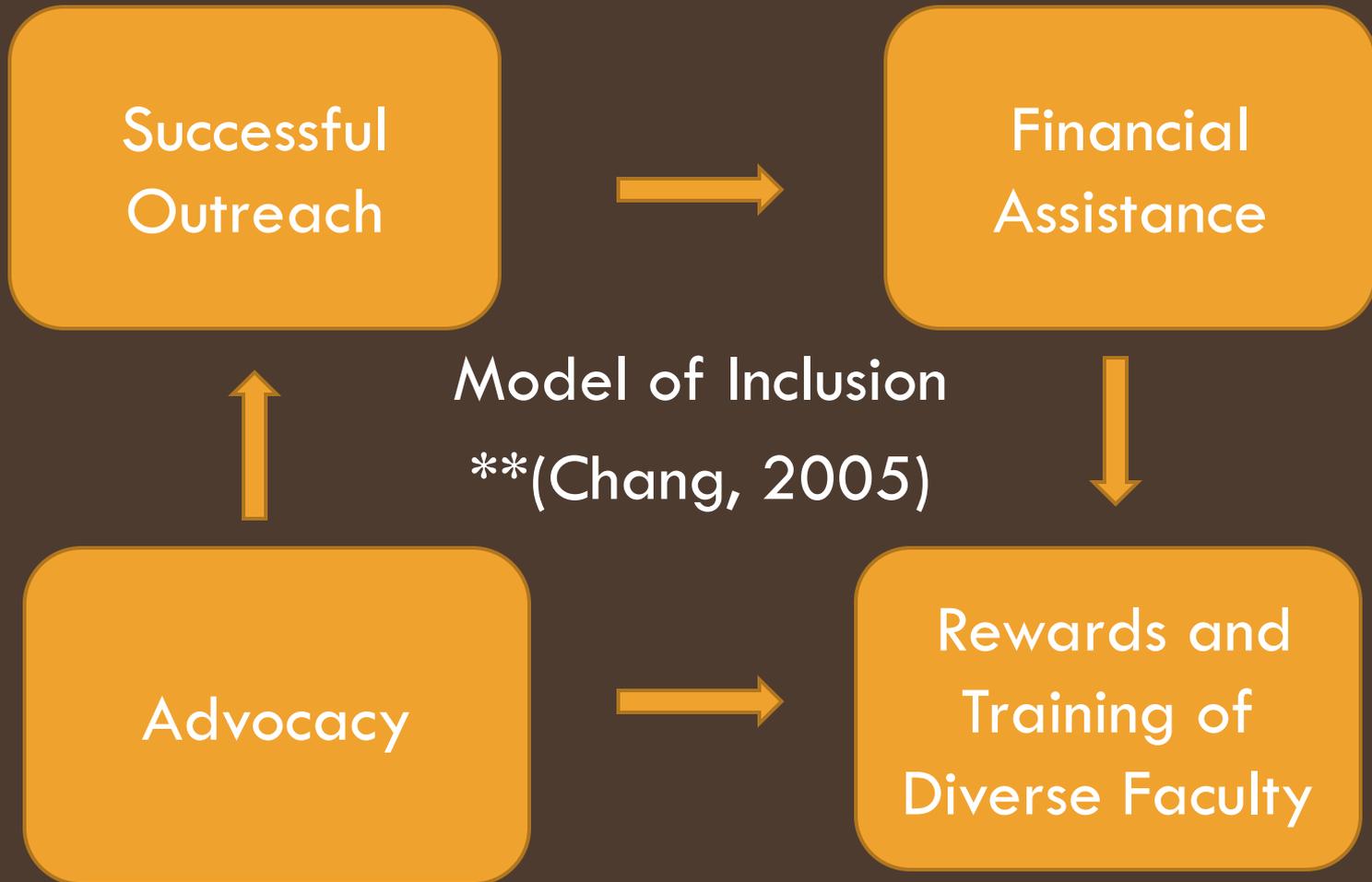
# Findings

14

- Factors that contribute to the gap between access and retention
  - Proportion of ethnic minority representation among students and faculty
  - Strength of student support services for AA students
  - Institutionalized racism and discrimination among administrators, faculty

# Findings (cont.)

15



# Discussion

16

"I mean, if you just look at the general population, then yeah, it's pretty diverse. But I think it's like a fake diversity. **Everyone's not as integrated**—especially the Black kids." —Student class of '15

"I've seen students being offered good (financial aid) packages, and still decline acceptance. So I think **it goes far beyond money**. There's definitely some social aspect involved." —  
Admissions representative

# Limitations

17

- Data Collection
  - Interviews vs. Anonymous Self-Reports
  - Population samples
  
- Ethical Considerations
  - Limits of confidentiality, such as data coding, disposal, sharing and archiving

# Future Research

18

- Emotional support for graduate students of color
  - Psychological health of underrepresented students pursuing master's/Ph.D
    - Challenging stereotypes of hyper-masculinity and SBW trope
      - Emphasizing importance of emotional health for students of color

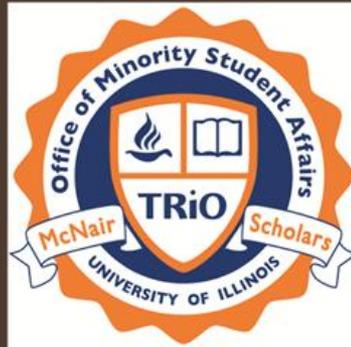
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20

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# Appendix

## □ Sociocultural Alienation:

1. "To what extent do the values at [this university] reflect your own values? A lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?" (If response is "little" or "not at all," ask, "Why is that?")
2. "How often do you feel socially isolated? Often, sometimes, rarely, or never?"
3. "To what extent do you feel integrated into the [university's name] community? Very integrated, somewhat integrated, or not integrated?"
4. "In terms of social and cultural needs, do you feel minority students on campus face more, less, or the same difficulties?" (If response is "more" or "less," ask, "Why is that?")

# Appendix (cont.)

- Academic Satisfaction:
  1. "In general, how often are you or your contributions acknowledged by the faculty? Often, sometimes, rarely, or never?"
  2. "How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel in raising questions when you don't understand the material? Do you feel very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, somewhat uncomfortable, or very uncomfortable?"
  3. "In general, how approachable or unapproachable do you feel that your professors are?"
  4. "Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you at [this university]? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? Why is that?"