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What Keeps Us Here? Perceptions of Workplace Supervision among African American Men in Student Affairs

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What Keeps Us Here? Perceptions of Workplace Supervision among African American Men in
Student Affairs

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Higher Education

By

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ABSTRACT

African American male professionals continue to be lower in numbers in the workplace across the United States compared to their White counterparts. However, the division of student affairs and student services of higher education institutions continue to serve as a gate way for African American men to serve as administrators. Several higher education institutions and sectors continue to invest in the recruitment and retention for African American male professionals, and research has shown that supervision is the key to employee professional development, performance, and success. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of African American male professionals' experiences with their supervisors and job satisfaction utilizing the model of synergistic supervision (Winston & Cremer, 1997). The study also explored the extent to which these perceptions differed by supervisor demographics such as; gender, ethnicity, and career level.

106 participants who belong to a leading professional association who are currently early to mid-career professionals working in student affairs or student services from a variety of institutions participated in the study. Findings suggested that African American male professionals were moderately satisfied with the job and several challenges, successes, and strategies emerged that impacted their experience and perceptions of their supervisor. The participants provided insight and strategies for student affairs and student services supervisors, leaders, and managers.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, friends, and entire higher education family of students, colleagues, and faculty who continue to be a part of the light in the midst of the darkness. To encourage me to keep climbing and pulling others up as I go. To fully understand through exposure, best practices, and education is it not about *what* you want to be but *who* you want to be. This dissertation is dedicated to all my lost loved ones who left too soon, may you continue to smile upon me, and rest in paradise. Also, I dedicate this dissertation to current and future brother and sisters in the field, Frederick Douglass said it best, “without struggle there is no progress!”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	A. Context of the Study	1
	B. Statement of Purpose	1
	C. Research Questions	3
	D. Definition of Terms	3
	E. Assumptions of the Study	4
	F. Delimitations and Limitations	5
	G. Significance of the Study	5
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW	7
	A. The Student Affairs Profession	8
	B. African Americans in Higher Education	16
	1. In Student Affairs	17
III.	METHODOLOGY	21
	A. Research Design	21
	B. Instrument	22
	1. Demographic Information	22
	2. Synergistic Supervision Scale	22
	3. Ensuring Reliability and Validity	23
	C. Participants of the Study	23
	D. Ethical Issues	25
	E. Data Collection	25
	F. Data Analysis	26
	G. Chapter Summary	28
IV.	DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	29
	A. Introduction	29
	B. Summary of Study	29
	C. Data Collection Plan	31
	D. Data Analysis	31
	1. Research Question #1	26
	2. Research Question #2	32
	3. Research Question #3	35
	4. Research Question #4	40
	5. Research Question #5	43
	E. Chapter Summary	48

V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS	50
	A. Introduction	50
	B. Summary of the Study	50
	1. Research Question #1	51
	2. Research Question #2	51
	3. Research Question #3	51
	4. Research Question #4	51
	5. Research Question #5	52
	C. Conclusions	53
	D. Recommendations	53
	1. For Practice	53
	2. For Further Research	54
	E. Discussion	55
	F. Chapter Summary	58
VI.	REFERENCES	59
VII.	APPENDICES	68
	Appendix A: Participant Emails	68
	Appendix B: Program Survey Informed Consent	70
	Appendix C: Survey Permission Email	72
	Appendix D: Survey Instrument	73
	Appendix E: Institution Review Board Approval Form	76
	Appendix F: Figure 1 Synergistic Supervision Components	77

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1A	Participants Demographic Information	32
Table 1B	Participants Demographic Information	32
Table 2	Perceived Levels of Synergistic Supervision	34
Table 3	Male Supervisors	37
Table 4	Female Supervisors	39
Table 5	Challenges with Supervisor	41
Table 6	Past Successes with Supervisor	44
Table 7	Strategies for Areas of Improvement	46

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Context of the Study

One of the most critical issues facing today's workforce is effective supervision. Supervision is difficult to define depending on the organization's structure and culture; however supervision is important because it allows employees to develop their competence, skills, and knowledge. Additionally, supervision has been used to increase employee performance, motivation, and effectiveness, a process termed as Positive Supervision (Ugwudike, Raynor, & Vanstone, 2013). Positive Supervision leads to retaining good employees and creating a holistic opportunity for professional development and growth. This is especially true for African American men working in higher education.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 10% of African American men are employed in a managerial position and 14% work in a professional or related field compared to 22% of whites in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). The representation of African American men in many higher education professional positions is almost non-existent, particularly at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI). According to Shih (2002), African American men need the support of the individuals who hire and supervise them to ensure their success in the workplace. Supervision is more than a definition but a concept and practice that requires ongoing training and development for individuals within supervision positions (Hawkins, Shohet, Ryde, & Wilmot, 2012). As a division in higher education, the Division of Student Affairs has often served as a gateway for African American men to hold professional positions, and as such, is where the most progress has been made with efforts for employee recruitment and retention. African American male's professional development in regard to elements such as identity, economic status, and psychosocial dynamics are far-reaching and

complex. Supervision is the key for holistic development in the Division of Student Affairs in order for professionals to reach their potential to maximize performance and delivery. As such, it is critical to understand supervision and what it encompasses for African American men to contribute to the success in higher education as a profession.

Most literature addressing the concerns of African American college men is directed toward college student recruitment (Adams, 2011), engagement, and retention as opposed to higher education professionals such as those who work as full time professionals (Stanley, 2006). African American male professionals within higher education are a vital population that needs further examination (Kugler, 2014). Research has addressed the positive influence and value African American male professionals could have on minority students as role models, resources, and emotional support (Adams, 2011; Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012; Shaun, 2012; Wingfield & Wingfield, 2014). Further research on the African- American male working in higher education, especially in student affairs as a gateway profession can lead to the hiring, retention, and promotion of other African Americans. Specifically, research that targets enabling factors for success, such as supervision strategies and practices, is particularly critical.

Statement of Purpose

Over the last 10 years, colleges and universities have started to implement or re-evaluate recruitment and retention plans to enhance African American male professional development, experience, and success (Smith, Turner, Osei-Kofi, & Richards, 2004). The purpose for conducting the study was to explore employer supervision strategies among early career African American men in student affairs. Specifically, the study explored participant supervisor experience and job satisfaction. Additionally, the study explored the extent to which supervisor

perceptions differ by gender and career level. While there is significant research on recruitment of minorities, those of gender differences, and building a diverse environment for professionals, there is limited research in providing an understanding of the experiences of African American professional men in higher education. The experiences, support, and goals of retention are critical within the first year of a new professional, specifically with underrepresented populations such as African American men in student affairs (Tull, 2006).

Research Questions

1. What was the profile of African American male professionals working in the field of student affairs in higher education, who belong to a leading professional association?
2. What was the relationship between perceived levels of synergistic supervision received and job satisfaction of African American male professionals in student affairs?
3. Were there significant differences between African American male professionals perception of their supervisor based on supervisor gender?
4. What did African American male student affairs professionals identify as the challenges working with their supervisors?
5. How did African American male student affairs professionals describe their past success and items supervisors can improve upon in the future?

Definitions of Terms

Diversity: The variety of different inborn and acquired human qualities that affect how we are socialized, shaping our self-image, our world view and how others perceive us. This variety is differentiated in dimensions such as age, ethnicity, physical abilities/qualities, gender, race, sexual/affection orientation and others (Loden & Rosener, 1991).

Job Satisfaction : a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976, p. 1300).

Student Affairs: An administrative unit designed to work for the advancement and welfare of students, commonly consists of housing, campus life, academic services, etc. (Schuh, Jones, Harper, 2011, p. 388).

Student Affairs Professional: A person who work in the field of student affairs who provide services and support for students at institutions of higher education who are trained or have completed graduate work in higher education programs (Schuh, 2010, p. 10).

Supervision: a management function intended to promote the achievement of institutional goals and to enhance person and professional capabilities and performance of staff (Winston and Cremer, 1997, p. 186).

Synergistic Supervision: A model of supervision which encompass two-way social exchange between supervisor and supervisee examining nine components (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000).

Assumptions of the Study

Three assumptions were accepted as the study is conducted. The first assumption accepted is that there are unique characteristics, experiences, and cultures surrounding the African American male working in higher education and these are particularly unique for those working in student affairs. The culture of the African American man is framed by both a history of racial identity and a lack of historical precedence for employment and success in higher education. The second accepted assumption is all the participants would answer the survey questions honestly and accurately. Some of the information included on the survey could be considered difficult to answer or personally accept, making the survey both reflective and

important. The final assumption accepted for the study is that the instrument would generate participant responses and commentaries to aid in answering the research questions of the present study.

Delimitations and Limitations

The study was limited to African American men's perceptions of their supervisors and professional experiences. Because of the unique context of higher education, African American male professionals of different positions may experience different perceptions of their supervisors and professional development differently depending on their office cultures, structures, policies, and expectations. Although this may play an important role in supervision perceptions, it is not explored in this study and is only limited to synergistic supervision model.

Since African American male professional's perceptions was gathered with a survey, the study was limited by factors that influence survey research (e.g. non-response, a low response rate, the possibility that the survey did not allow subjects to express their true feelings, etc.). The study may also lack generalizability to all African American men in a university as participants will include only professionals from student affairs and student services.

Significance of the Study

With the increase of external pressure for accountability and diversity, higher education, institutions must be able to effectively enhance their cultural fabric (Brown & Globetti, 1991). This study focused on African American professional men experiences with their supervisors and job satisfaction in the division of student affairs. Study findings provide an opportunity for institutional learning to enhance recruiting and retention knowledge and strategies for African American males. Additionally, the study could help African American men who are currently

employed or are interested in working in the division of student affairs or campus student services.

Study findings are beneficial to student affairs leadership and management in developing understanding, intentional training, programming, and creating a supportive campus climate for this underrepresented population in the field. The study results help leaders and managers develop themselves as supervisors, retain good talent, and implement practices to understand and support African American professionals and college students.

In return, the retention of African American males who are professionals in the field of higher education adds diversity, multiculturalism, inclusivity, and role models for minority students particularly at Predominantly White Institutions. Higher education professionals who serve as role models, mentors, and “an example” of a successful minority professional aid to retention, development, and support of all college students (Hurd, 2000). For example, several studies have cited the presence of having African American male professionals allows African American male students to feel as if they could relate, support, and feel an emotional connection to support and success (Brown, & Globetti, 1991). The results of this study add literature to the field of higher education and student affairs best practices.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

The initial focus of this literature review was to investigate factors that impact the retention of African American male professionals in the discipline of student affairs in higher education. After the initial findings indicated the lack of research specifically on African American men working in higher education, the focus of the research was broadened to include pieces of professional success for African American men in the workplace and the relationship African American men have with their immediate supervisor and professional development. The change in focus allowed for the examination of African American men professionals who work in higher education experiences, opportunities, challenges, and successes along with the importance of great supervisory practices.

Sources reviewed in the review of the literature focused primarily on peer-reviewed research articles, dissertations, and books. Keywords utilized in the review included: *African American male professional retention, African American men in the workplace, higher education professionals, student affairs supervision and management, African American professional development and factors*. Databases searched included ProQuest Digital Dissertations, WorldCat, ProQuest, EBSCO Academic, PsychInfo, and University of Arkansas InfoLinks. These databases were hosted by the University of Arkansas Libraries, and literature was collected during the period of 2013-2015.

The literature review is organized into two parts. The first introduces the entry into Student Affairs and provides an overview of the key ideas of the student affairs profession, including early-career professional experiences and development. The second part includes an examination of African American male professionals who work in higher education.

The Student Affairs Profession

Student affairs professionals exist in some capacity in nearly every college and university, and they are common administrative educator roles on American college campuses. Dungy (2003) stated these professionals help shape student lives by engaging them in a multitude of student services and programs to enrich their academic success. The student affairs profession has several essential roles and functions which include: enrollment management, financial aid, health and wellness, student conduct, career services, student activities, civil engagement, academic advising, and multicultural affairs (Dungy, 2003). While each department has a specific focus or mission, all student affairs functions align to support student development and to enhance students' college experience. Over the last few decades, a greater emphasis and demand has been placed on the Student Affairs professionals due to the economy and major state budget cuts (Whitt, Nesheim, Guentzel, Kellogg, McDonald, & Wells, 2008). This has resulted in professionals being challenged to think critically and creatively to meet the needs of future generation of professionals; college students within in the undergraduate learning experience (Hoffman, 2010).

Most individuals working in the professional discipline of student affairs or services are trained by enrolling in and completing a master's degree program (Tull, 2006). As Hunter (1992) noted, many who enter this workforce have had undergraduate experiences in leadership positions or strong levels of involvement and mentoring that allow for a "discovering [of] the field by accident, or seeking to improve campus life" (p. 184).

An additional route to discovery of the student affairs profession is through role modeling behavior of student affairs administrators (Martinez, 2013). This relationship between administrators and undergraduate students allows for a two-way communication about individual

development and self-exploration, as well as the importance of leadership among peers. Administrators also use a variety of professional organizations and opportunities to expand understanding about what the student affairs profession entails. The month of October, for example, is heralded by several professional associations as ‘student affairs month,’ where offices that work in the field take the opportunity to educate students, faculty, and staff about the work they do and the profession.

Student affairs graduate degree programs prepare professionals to have an understanding of where students are developmentally in order to best meet individual and group needs (Rogers & Love, 2004). College student development theories and best practices are taught to provide the basic support and guidance to help facilitate growth and give insight to programming design and students’ development (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). The student affairs professionals “must be familiar with an extension of literature base focusing on student development and be able to use relevant concepts and ideas effectively in daily interactions with students” (Evan, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998, p.121). This comprehensive recognition of student development assists professionals in how to understand the issues college students face and how to address them.

During the past decade, numerous studies have explored the experiences of new professionals working in student affairs (Davidson, 2009; Shupp, 2007; Tull, 2006). Davidson (2009) studied five factors associated with job satisfaction of entry and mid-level professionals, including pay, coworkers, work itself, promotion, and supervision. Davidson found that more mid-level professionals were satisfied with their job than entry-level employees, and that men were more satisfied with the opportunity for promotion than women. He also found that younger professionals were less satisfied than more experienced student affairs professionals with supervisory experience.

Shupp (2007) studied the experiences of entry-level student affairs professionals. His participants identified as under the age of 30 years and non-minority resulted in the recommendations of the importance of ongoing professional development for the supervisor and the supervisee, putting higher education theories into practice, and the need for a university wide commitment to supervisory best practices.

The conclusion to be drawn from the nature of the student affairs profession and professionals is that knowledge of both the student experience and the functioning of the professional are important to a successful collegiate experience. This means that student affairs professionals must continue to learn throughout their career, and that this is equivalent to the need for professional development (Stone, 2014). Fey (1991) similarly supported the need for professional development, noting “one consideration for practitioners in the field of student affairs is the role of continued professional development” (p.54).

Professional Development in Student Affairs

Professional development has evolved in the workplace dramatically during the past 50 years, changing from lifelong learning in the medical fields of the 1960s to tools to improve productivity and certification in business in the 1970s, to the current need and process of continuous professional improvement (Pakala, Butler, Darlack, Day, Kroll, Armodeo, & Stewart, 2014). Knox (2008) argued that professional development programs within student affairs should emphasize individual and organizational goals, resources, the context of students, and learning activities. Winston and Creamer (1998) noted that all supervisors should be committed to having their staffs involved in professional development, and by doing such, employees will find positive benefits such as inspiration, direction, and commitment to the employing institution. Miller and Carpenter (1980), Cooper and Miller (1998), and Komives and Carpenter

(2009) all similarly noted that a consistent practice and commitment to professional development is good for student affairs employees as it makes the organization a better, more effective and efficient place in addition to helping employees grow into higher levels of leadership.

Zenger and Folkman (2009) reinforced the idea of leadership development through professional development, writing that “investing in their leadership and professional development will make these (organization) valuable people feel highly valued” (p.67).

Kirchner (2012) argued that providing professional development to staff members also demonstrates a respect for employees and helps to build creative new practices.

There are a wide variety of professional development approaches in the field of student affairs, and it is critical that these efforts be purposeful and coordinated, often benefiting from organizational needs assessments (Zenger & Folkman, 2009). Nuss (2003) included both formal and non-formal types of training in professional development. Formal training consists of certificate programs, departmental and campus programs participation, attending professional conferences, webinars, and becoming a member of professional organizations within student services focused areas. For example, fraternity and sorority campus life advisors become members and have the opportunity to attend Association of Fraternity and Sorority Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting. This meeting consists of many different speakers, presentations, and conversations to increase knowledge, awareness, and discussion about this particular area of Student Affairs. This is very typical for several professional organizations within Student Affairs such as National Association of Student Personnel Administration (NASPA), American College Personnel Association (ACPA), National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), and others. Non-formal training approaches may include department or campus group discussions, attending different campus activities, reading leadership books, and accountability groups.

Mentorship has been repeatedly known to be formal or informal within in Student Affairs, however is strongly encouraged as a best practice of professional development for new professionals, mid-level, and supervisors (Taub & McEwen, 2006).

Staff Supervision in Student Affairs

Staff supervision is considered “one of the most complex activities for which organizational leaders are responsible, and certain skills and knowledge about staff development are required for effective supervision” (Tull, 2006, p. 37). Winston and Creamer (1997) similarly noted the importance of supervision, writing that supervision in student affairs is “a management function intended to promote the achievement of institutional goals and to enhance person and professional capabilities and performance of staff” (p. 186).

Shupp (2007) suggested supervision in student affairs should be purposeful and support the model of synergistic supervision, that is, a holistic, integrated approach to looking a work and its entire impact. Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) examined supervisors’ perception of preparation from new professionals who are recent graduates of masters degree programs. Supervisors generally reported that new professionals have a level of training and preparation for student developmental issues and in a variety of competencies in student affairs related fields; however, new professionals tend to struggle most with budgeting and financial management (Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina, 2009). Cuyjet, et al, also found that new professionals had a much higher and better view of their own skills than their supervisors and that they often did not feel appreciated for their efforts. This disconnect between supervisors perceptions of new employee skills and those of the new employee was similarly identified by Waple (2000).

One of the leading approaches to supervision has been referred to as ‘synergistic supervision,’ and it has been proposed as a model of good practice within the field of student

affairs administration (Tull, 2006). Synergistic staff supervision is one component of the staffing model that encompasses a holistic approach to supervision and meeting the needs of the organization and supervisee. It is a “cooperative effort between the supervisor and staff members that allows the effect of their joint efforts to be greater than the sum of their individual contributions” with the formula described as “1+1=3” (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 196). Additionally, Winston and Creamer described the synergistic supervision approach as a social exchange that includes nine components: dual focus, joint effort, two-way communication, focus on competence, growth orientation, proactivity, goals based, systematic and on-going process, and holistic (see Figure 1 in Appendix A; Creamer & Winston, 2002). The dual function of this model supports the organization as well as the supervisee professional and personal goals. The synergistic model of supervision is intended to provide a benchmark for good practice in supervising employees, ultimately leading to better job satisfaction, retention, and job satisfaction (Tull, 2006).

Synergistic supervision is typically assessed through the Synergistic Supervision Scale (SSS), an instrument created to assess the employee’s perceptions of current supervisor performance, support, and development (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000). The instrument was developed in concert with nearly 400 staff members in a division of student affairs (Winston & Creamer, 1997), and was initially developed to provide a platform for “(a) discussion of exemplary performance, (b) discussion of long-term career goals, (d) frequency of informal performance appraisals, and (e) discussion of personal attitudes” (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000, p. 181).

Job Satisfaction in Student Affairs

An important element in the field of student affairs is the development of employees so that they feel personally and professionally satisfied in their work and strive to serve as educators for college students. For a variety of reasons, however, Lorden (1998) and Tull (2006) have found that 50-60% of all new student affairs professionals leave the field of work within their first five years. Borg (1991) found that nearly 20% of mid-level student affairs professionals leave the field due to the lack of job satisfaction and feelings of an inability to professionally move forward.

Frank (2013) studied a cohort of individuals who had earned their master's degree in student affairs and departed from the field within their first five years, utilizing the Daly and Dee (2006) model to investigate psychological, structural, and environment variables. The study reported several factors institutionally and personally contribute to an individual's decision to leave the field, including a poor work-life balance, not feeling valued, instable organizational environment, and lack of supportive supervisor, management, and professional development. The conclusion they drew, as did Winston and Creamer (1998), was that student affairs professionals have intense work environments, and if they feel dissatisfied, they leave the profession.

There has been a significant body of work on job satisfaction, spanning nearly a century (see Mayo & Roethlisberger, 1949 as an example). The initial human relations movement took place in the early-1920s with the now famous Mayo and Roethlisberger (Dickson & Roethlisberger, 1964) a study of employee productivity at the Western Electric Factory in relations to lighting levels. Follow up studies to this initial work included break periods, timing of the hours of work, pay rates and financial incentives, and all ultimately led to the conclusion

that the greater the employee satisfaction level, the greater the productivity, retention, accuracy, and fulfillment in the worker.

Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as “how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs... the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs” (p. 2). Many job satisfaction theories have expanded this concept and implied best practices that have been grouped into three categories: content, situational, and process orientations (Thompson, McNarmara, & Hoyle, 1997). The two dominant job satisfaction models repeated and cited in the field of student affairs have been Herzberg’s two factor theory of motivation and Locke’s Range of Affect theory (Davidson, 2009).

Herzberg’s (1968) two factor theory describes two factors that lead to employees being satisfied or dissatisfied in the workplace. The first factor is intrinsic motivational factors that encourage employees to increase work performance. The second factor is extrinsic hygiene factors that cause an employee job dissatisfaction.

Locke’s (1976) Range of Affect for job satisfaction reflects an employee results with the expectations that the employee has for the job and the actual outcomes the employee received in the job. This model also states how much a person emphasizes or prioritizes certain aspects of the job than others, which correlates with their satisfaction. For example, one employee may feel professional development is very important while another may feel pay rate is more important.

Both Renn and Hodges (2007) and Winston and Creamer (1997) have used these theories to explore student affairs employee job satisfaction, arriving at the conclusion that work place satisfaction, and hence productivity and retention, are linked to feeling valued and important, and ultimately, how well they are supervised. These studies strongly link professional supervision as

a critical element in determining the student affairs employee's job satisfaction and outlook on the profession.

African Americans in Higher Education

The current study explores the entry, development, work, and possible departure of African American men in higher education. As such, it is important to consider this population from a holistic manner, including African American men directly working in student affairs, as is the primary topic of this research, but also general African American college administrators and faculty. By doing such, a broader view of the context of the African American male can be provided and possibly lead to important conclusions about enhancing the underrepresented population experiences in the academy.

Kugler (2014) noted that African American men unemployment rates are higher than national averages and that there has been a persistent low employment rate in professional fields for decades. To explore the habits, traits, and characteristics of these men, an understanding and acknowledgment must be made containing the complex issues in the workplace due to societal perceptions and racial inequality (Royster, 2003). And although there has been a significant amount of research on African American men in the penal system or those who are unemployed, the professionally successful and active African American male has received little academic attention (Elliott & Smith, 2004).

Notably, Wingfield (2013) studied the experiences of African American male, middle class professionals classified as minorities working a predominantly White profession. She found that all of them had experiences in early childhood and college life that impacted their later career outlook and trajectory. Things like having high expectations, collegial relationship skills, and work ethic were all noted to be critical for them, and having someone support the

individual and hold them accountable. This theme of mentoring has been echoed throughout a significant portion of the literature on the African American man.

In Student Affairs

Research has consistently found a low percentage of African American men working in student affairs generally and higher education specifically, and the topic has been relatively common in the literature of student affairs (Gonet, 1997; Jackson, 2003). His interest in this led him to survey 475 graduate male students in a student affairs preparation program, and found that across races, mentoring and role models were key attributes of those wanting to enter the field. Calhoun (2010) similarly found mentoring to be critical for entry-level student affairs professionals, and that men in particular identified that it was critical to have a male mentor for them in the profession.

Jackson (2003) identified a broad number of supporting variables motivating individuals to enter and work in the field of student affairs, including culture and workplace, but again, came back to the need for African American men to see others like themselves working in the field. Oseguera (2013) studied the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) undergraduate minority fellowship program and reinforced previous literature: culture and work environment matter, but mentoring is a key motivator.

College Administrators

Frazier (2009) noted the low number of African American men working in higher education administration, particularly at Primarily White Institutions (PWI). Dozier (2005), using qualitative methods, African American men considered their career decision frequently based upon the experiences they have as an undergraduate, including who supports them and who encourages them in their work. These selected individuals provided data that Dozier used to

conclude that higher education does not train and prepare students intentionally for careers in higher education. Despite that, Surratt (2014) found high levels of workplace satisfaction for those administrators who did enter student affairs in higher education as a profession. They did identify certain challenges in the workplace, including stereotypes, performance pressures, isolation as a minority, and a lack of African American role models.

The lack of role models is also evidenced by a Chronicle of Higher Education (2005) report that indicated that of 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States, only 282 have presidents or senior leaders who are African American men (4.2%). Newell's (1994) study of senior level administrators in higher education found what had been reported consistently, that a role model, mentor, or advisor who encouraged them made a significant decision in their desire to move forward professionally and to take on challenges where others with similar characteristics had not tried before. Strozier-Newell (1994) also found the importance of refined workplace skills, professional networking and academic preparation, and professional guidance. Nearly two decades later, Stokes (2011) reported similar findings in a qualitative study of 19 senior college administrators: professional mentors make a significant difference in a professional's desire to move forward in a career.

African American Faculty

In a comparison study conducted by Jackson (2006), he examined African American males in academic leadership positions in American colleges and universities between 1993 and 1999. During 1993 and 1999, the number of African American males working at 2-year institutions increased 29.14%, an estimated 1,461 African American males hired in academic leadership positions compared to 12, 238 white males and decreased 13.60% at 4-year institutions (Jackson, 2006). The trends remain constant over the last five years of African

American men and women college administrators, faculty, and staff in Fall 2011 averaged 9% at public and private 4-year institution compared to 68% Whites; averaged 15% at public and private 2-year institution compared 65% Whites (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2011).

According to the Almanac of Higher Education (2014), African Americans and Hispanics were more highly represented on faculty at private and public 2-year institutions than 4-year institutions. Asians were most highly represented on the faculty at public 4-year institutions, Whites remain the largest group among any other race or ethnicity working in American college and universities (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2011).

Individuals enter different occupational career paths for a variety of reasons, and this is similar for those entering the professoriate. Although there is not a significant amount of research about why African Americans generally, and African American men specifically, enter college faculty ranks, some research has identified a giving back to a community as an important element (Hendricks, 1998). Although Reneau (2011) indicated that African American faculty in the study did not report being well prepared for teaching and research, they were prepared for research aspects of the faculty role.

McCoy (2006) explored African American faculty working in both PWI's and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). He found no difference in the socialization experiences between faculty teaching at PWIs or HBCUs, although he did find collegiality issues, isolation, and loneliness to be more common for African American faculty teaching at PWIs, although he did not claim causation for this difference, as the institutions may have different cultures that promote more collaboration, may be a function of size or scope, or may indeed be related to racial identity. Hendricks (1998) and Gothard (2009) had similar

findings about the importance of culture and professional socialization and workplace satisfaction, and the need to capitalize on campus resources to find engagement.

CHAPTER III METHODS

The synergistic supervision model has been used in the professional field of student affairs to explore best-practices in the supervision of employees. Although several studies have been conducted, little research has explored African American men working in student affairs and the perception of their supervisor as a new professional (Shupp, 2007; Tull, 2006). The synergistic supervision model has the potential to greatly enhance the work environment and professional trajectory of employees, and for this sample, these individuals have important role modeling positions for the advancement of not just African Americans, but all minorities working in higher education.

The study involved an exploration of African American male professionals' early in their career and the experiences they have with their supervisors as well as their job satisfaction utilizing the idea of synergistic supervision (Winston & Cremer, 1997). The study also explored the extent to which these perceptions differ by supervisor demographics such as; gender and career level. This chapter describes the research design, participants of the study, survey instrumentation, the procedures for data collection, and the analytical methods for data analysis that will be applied in this study.

Research Design

Due to the geographically diverse population and the need for the study to collect and compare perceptions of African American student affairs professionals, the current research involved the use of a quantitative, survey methods. Creswell (2009) described survey research as a numeric description of attitudes of a population through the examination of a sample of a given population. Survey research assumes that "examining the relationships between and among variables is central to answering questions and hypotheses" (Creswell, p. 145). Survey research

is advantageous because, as Creswell explains, it offers “rapid turnaround in data collection,” and allows a researcher to “identify attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals” (p. 146). Also, quantitative approach was selected to be cost-effective, especially with the use of an online survey instrument tool, Qualtrics.

Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of the Synergistic Supervision Model and included several additional items that allowed for a separation of data based on responses (see Appendix D). Prior to the implementation of the survey, the instrument was approved by the University of Arkansas’ Institutional Review Board (see Appendix E).

Demographic Information

Five questions were asked in the *Profile Demographics* section of the survey about the respondent and respondent’s current supervisor to obtain information including (a) sex, (b) ethnicity, (c) highest degree earned, (d) career level, and (f) current student affairs role or title. These questions were utilized for verification confirmation and if the respondent does not meet the profile criteria of current study, the participant survey was not reviewed. All data was collected in a forced-response style, where specific options are provided to the respondent.

Synergistic Supervision Scale

Based largely on the pioneering work of Winston and Creamer (1997), the Synergistic Supervision Scale (SSS) was created to illustrate and measure an integrated approach to supervising employees (Saunders, Cooper, Winston & Chernow, 2000). The SSS contains 22 items that describe “behaviors based on their perceptions of their current supervisory relationship” (Tull, 2006, p. 470). The SSS concepts evaluate employees perception of their supervisors based on the supervisor’s (a) concern about staff members’ personal and career

development, (b) equitable staff treatment, (c) management that encourages productivity, (d) cooperative problem solving with staff, (e) systematic goal-setting, and (f) two-way communication and mutual feedback (Saunders, Cooper, Winston & Chernow, 2000). Respondents rate each of the 22 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 = never or almost never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4= often, and 5 = always or almost always.

Ensuring Reliability and Validity

To test reliability of the Synergistic Supervision Scale, survey authors calculated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient using the items correlated to the total scale. An alpha coefficient of .94 was found for the total scale. A range of correlations between .44 to .75 was found for the item totals (Saunders, Cooper, Winston & Chernow, 2000). To establish validity, the survey authors administered a correlation of scores between the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), the Index of Organizational Reaction (IOR), and the SSS. "The Pearson product-moment correlation between the IOR and SSS was .91 ($n = 275$), $p < .001$) and between the OCQ and SSS was .64 ($n = 275$, $p < .001$)," (Saunders et al., 2000, p. 185).

Additionally, due to the added items on the survey, the researcher provided the survey instrument to peer educators, asking them to read the survey for face-validity. Minor changes in wording to create more specific prompts were made to the instrument.

Participants of the Study

Purposeful sampling was used in the selection of survey participants for this study. Participants were drawn from an African American male student affairs professional listserv maintained by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). NASPA is one of the largest national organizations dedicated to advancing the field of Higher Education and student affairs professionals by providing professional development, advocacy, networking,

continuing education, and research. NASPA is comprised of 14,000 dues paying, voluntary members throughout the United States of America and 25 countries, representing over 2,000 individual institutions (NASPA, 2015). Members can join by completing a brief membership application available on the NASPA website.

For the purpose of the study, NASPA provided a current listing of participants who meet the criteria of the study (male, African American, etc.). Participants were included based on self-reports of membership, have worked in the field 5 years or less, and have a useable email address. This listserv allowed a maximum number of responses with a variety of institutional sizes and backgrounds. Additional reinforcement for participation in the study was made through social media knowledge-based communities for African American men working in student affairs. The exact number of participants was not determined until the final request was approved by NASPA and the listserv contained a listing of email addresses. The number of potential participants that was anticipated to be several hundred, and a minimum number of participants was projected to be at least 100. Settle and Alreck (1986) noted that responses over 100 rarely have a significant difference in response tendency as compared to the costs of working to obtain over 100 subjects. Therefore, although several hundred responses were projected, a minimum number of 100 participants were included in the study.

A request for sample participants was made to NASPA using their Membership List Request Form. The list of characteristics was requested as following: membership class (all except undergraduate student affiliates), region (all), gender (male), race/ethnicity (African American), years in the field (1-3, 4-5), and highest education degree (All).

Participants were recruited via email through the NASPA provided listserv and additionally, a social media message was displayed asking for participation (see Appendix A).

Once participants respond, a letter of consent was provided outlining the purpose and intent of the research and prior to completing the survey. The participant agreed to consent via online survey tool (see Appendix B).

Ethical Issues

There were no incentives for participation. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed that they can discontinue participation at any time. In all written documentation and transcription, participants were referred to using pseudonyms if needed. When compiling the data and preparing the written report, participants' comments were used in the context of themes and referred using a pseudonym as well.

Data Collection

In early September 2015, an email message was sent to NASPA members appropriately identified and included in the requested listserv. The email provided the direct link to the survey and informed the participant that the survey was open for two weeks before being closed for data inspection and analysis.

When participants click on the hyperlink found in the email, they were directed to the Qualtrics website. The opening page introduced the survey, explained the nature of the research, and provided the researcher's contact information. In fulfillment of IRB requirements, it also explained the voluntary nature of the study and informed the participants that they can discontinue participation at any time with no penalty to them. Also they were made aware that they will not benefit in any way from taking the survey and that it would take them approximately 15 minutes to complete the 22-item survey and open ended questions. The webpage allowed participants to consent to participate in the survey by clicking on a button that directed them to the actual survey. The final pages thank the participants for their participation.

A reminder email was sent to the listserv asking for participation one-week after initial deployment of the survey.

One of the sub-organizations is known as knowledge communities, and they are clusters of individuals who have an interest or characteristic that they share in common. The African American NASPA Knowledge Community maintains a Facebook page that was contacted to encourage participation in the study. Many NASPA members also participated in the African Americans in Higher Education facebook group as well, and this group was contacted to post encouragement for participation in the study.

Data Analysis

For the current study, independent variables included the responses to survey question one through eleven (participant and participant's supervisor profile) and survey question seven (current job satisfaction). The dependent variables included the Synergistic Supervision Scale score. Research questions one through five were answered through data collected by the electronic survey distributed to all participants who completed the survey. After conducted descriptive analyses on the data (frequency, mean, median, mode, standard deviation), additional analyses were conducted to help answer the research questions in the study

1. *What was the profile of African American professionals working in the field of student affairs in higher education, who belong to a leading professional association?* This question was answered using descriptive statistics to summarize the data collected from the participants' using survey questions one through five. The following descriptive statistics were used: means, mode, and standard deviations to understand the data more clearly. Descriptive statistics methods allowed the study to describe the profile information in detail and inform the research of the participant profile who chose to complete the survey for the current study (Rea & Parker, 2005).

2. *What was the relationship between perceived levels of synergistic supervision received and job satisfaction of African American male professionals in Student Affairs?* Pearson's Product Moment (r^2) correlation was used to answer the research question and addressed the relationships between the scale variables. The independent variable was the survey question seven responses correlated with the SSS and the mean score. Pearson's correlation measures the strength of two variables on a linear relationship (Rea & Parker, 2005). Pearson's sample can range from -1 to 1, with the indication of -1 = a negative linear relationship, 0 = no relationship, and 1 = positive linear relationship between variables (Rea & Parker, 2005). Therefore, the closer r^2 is to +1, the stronger the correlation between job satisfaction and synergistic supervision.

3. *Were there significant differences between African American male professionals perception of their supervisor based on supervisor gender?* To answer this question, a two-tailed t-test was used .05 at the 95% confidence interval. Snedecor and Cochran (1989), designed the t-test to determine if two samples are equal. The study compared the mean scores of the supervisor gender with the mean scores of the Synergistic Supervision Scale to determine if they were any differences based on the supervisor gender.

4. *What did African American males student affairs professionals identify as the challenges working with their supervisors?*

5. *How did African American males' student affairs professionals describe their past success and items supervisors can improve upon in the future?*

For research questions four and five, data was formatted by the participants' comments with descriptive labels into themes and patterns within categories (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). The frequency of themes was used to show repetition of an answer to identify themes and the

percentage of total participants who provided the same answer (Taylor-Powell & Steele, 1996). The frequency data indicated how important a certain experience or activity are of the participants responses. The use of percentage data determined the participants' responses and themes relationship. Following the methods defined by Leahy (2004), a table displayed the participant comments and common words and phrases highlighted to represent different themes (Creswell, 1996). This showed themes and patterns that emerged into a visual representation. Using the constant comparison method (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007), patterns and themes were examined in relation to the research questions of the study and checked for relevance.

Chapter Summary

The study was conducted is to understand African American males' perception of their supervisor and job satisfaction during their early career as student affairs professionals. This chapter provides a description of the participants of the study, the survey instrument, and the analytical tools used to examine data and report responses to the research questions.

CHAPTER IV DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose for conducting this study was to explore employer supervision strategies among early career African American men in student affairs based on employee perception and experiences. The chapter reported the findings and presented data from the survey responses from the respondents. This chapter consisted of a summary of the study, data collection of the results, data analysis of the survey responses, and concluded with a chapter summary.

Summary of Study

Many college and universities are examining retention strategies for college students and employees, especially minorities. Specifically, African Americans men and women continue to be underrepresented populations in higher education as faculty members, and administrators, compared to their white counterparts (Stanley, 2006). This number is significantly lowered for African American male professionals in higher education (Shih, 2002). However, divisions of student affairs and positions within student services on colleges and universities continue to be one of the most welcoming for African American men as compared to other positions at predominately white institutions.

Recent studies have shown that today's colleges and universities are continuing conversations, recruitment, and professional development to aid in the retention of African American men who are working in higher education (Surratt, 2014). Additional studies have shown new employees tend to be retained by having an effective supervisor with a supportive work environments (Ugwudike, Raynor, & Vanstone, 2013). Effective supervision is one of the essential keys to success for developing and retaining good talent in the workplace including African American men (Tull, 2006). Synergistic supervision has been cited to be a best practice

model within student affairs and student services by providing success to professionals based on 13 key components. The supervision of employees continues to be critical in the workplace, as it ensures that both organizational and personal goals are met (Hawkins, Shohet, Ryde, & Wilmot, 2012).

A major concern remains with the population of African American male professionals and the pipelines used for their success in the workforce. Several studies have examined the need for African American men to work in higher education and the lack of current employment compared to their white counterparts (Adams, 2011; Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012; Shaun, 2012; Wingfield & Wingfield, 2014). Division of student affairs and student services offices continue to serve as a gateway for African American male professionals to serve in meaningful roles and impact today's college students. The purpose for conducting this study was to examine the experiences of African American men who work in student affairs roles and their perceptions of their supervisor as an early career professional. The implications of the study will benefit student affairs leadership and management, training programs, recruitment and retention of African American student affairs professionals.

The significance of the study provided an opportunity for institutional learning, support, and strategies to enhance African American male professionals' retention and professional development. This was accomplished by utilizing a purposeful sampling technique through National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and knowledge communities to identify current African American male professionals working in higher education student affairs and student services to volunteer to participate in the research. Data were collected using a survey that included the Synergistic Supervision Model.

Data Collection Plan

Initial emails (See Appendix A) were sent to over 450 names of all African American male professionals working in higher education, all identified through NASPA and their knowledge communities. The survey was distributed through email, and a request for participation was sent one week later. The study received a total of 219 responses; only 106 responses were valid based on current study demographic requirements (eg., men, early career). All non-valid responses were discarded and not included in analysis.

Data Analysis

Research Questions #1: What was the profile of African American professionals working in the field of student affairs in higher education, who belong to a leading professional association?

There were 106 valid participants who chose to participate in the study and belong to a leading professional association. Of these, 18.9 % held a bachelor's degree, 70.8% master's degree, and 10.4% held a doctoral degree. Over half (65.1%) identified themselves as entry level career status, and 34.9% identified themselves as mid-level career status. Utilizing a cross tab analysis, the participants who self-identified as entry level all had a range of bachelors and master's degrees with one participant currently holding a doctoral degree. All mid-level professionals currently held a master's degree and 10 participants held a doctoral degree. The profile of the survey respondents validated the data as appropriate to answer the research questions.

Table 1A.
Participants Demographic Information

	n	%
Gender		
Male	106	100%
Ethnicity		
Black or African American	106	100
Degree		
Bachelor	20	18.9
Masters	75	70.8
Doctoral	11	10.4
Missing/not reported	0	0
Career Level		
Entry	69	65.1
Mid	37	34.9
Department/ Unit		
Residence Life	44	41.5
Campus Life (<i>Student Activities, Leadership Programs, Greek Life, etc.</i>)	23	21.6
Diversity and Multicultural Offices	21	19.8
Admission Student Services	10	9.4
Academic Student Success and Services	8	7.5
Other	0	0
Institutional Classification		
Predominately White Institution	99	93.3
Historically Black College and Universities	4	3.7
Hispanic Serving Institution	1	0.9
Other	2	1.8

Table 1B.
Characteristics of Supervisor

	n	%
Gender		
Male	42	39.6%
Female	62	58.4
Transgender	0	0
Other	0	0
Ethnicity		
Black or African American	21	19.8
White	82	77.3
Hispanic or Latino	1	0.9
Asian	1	0.9
American Indian	1	0.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific		
Other	0	0
Degree		
Bachelor	0	0
Masters	83	78.3
Doctoral	23	21.6
Missing/not reported	0	0
Caree Level		
Entry	2	1.8
Mid	63	59.4
Senior	41	38.6

Research Question #2: What was the relationship between perceived levels of synergistic supervision received and job satisfaction of African American male professionals in student affairs?

Mean scores on the Synergistic Supervisor scale were highest for the following items: “My supervisor makes certain that I am fully knowledgeable about the goals of

the division and institution" (3.86), "My supervisor shows that she/he cares about me as a person" (3.81), "My supervisor speaks up for my unit within the institution" (3.80), and "My supervisor includes me in a significant way when making decisions that affect my area of responsibilities" (3.77).

The lowest scored items were "My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake" (1.60), "My supervisor criticizes staff members in public" (1.64), "My supervisor breaks confidences" (1.91), and "In conflicts with staff members, my supervisor takes students' sides (even when they are wrong)" (1.93). These items showcase the levels of advocacy, interest, and inclusion from participant's supervisors based on supervisor synergistic scale. The lowest standard deviation was item "My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake". The highest standard deviation was item "My supervisor criticizes staff members in public" which has varying levels of responses based on data, meaning participants had different levels of perceptions of their supervisor for this item.

The overall score (mean) of the Synergistic Supervision Scale was 2.94 (SD = .47). Participants were also asked to rate the level of satisfaction they have with their jobs and had an overall group mean of 6.86 (SD=1.93). This satisfaction level was then correlated with the overall SSS score with the result being a significant, positive, although small, correlation at $r = .36$ ($p < .001$).

Table 2.
Perceived Levels of Synergistic Supervision

(Survey #) Items	Mean	SD
My supervisor willingly listens to whatever is on my mind, whether it is personal or professional.	3.86	1.072
My supervisor shows that she/he cares about me as a person.	3.81	1.101
My supervisor speaks up for my unit within the institution.	3.8	1.162
My supervisor includes me in a significant way when making decisions that affect my area of responsibilities.	3.77	1.047
My supervisor shows interests in promoting my professional or career advancement.	3.65	1.168
My supervisor works with me to gather the information needed to make decisions rather than simply providing me the information he/she feels is important.	3.57	1.022
My supervisor makes certain that I am fully knowledgeable about the goals of the division and institution.	3.45	1.099
My supervisor is open and honest with me about my strengths and weaknesses.	3.41	1.121
When problem solving, my supervisor expects staff to present and advocate differing points of view.	3.36	1.175
When the system gets in the way of accomplishing our goals, my supervisor helps me to devise ways to overcome barriers.	3.28	1.167
My supervisor rewards teamwork.	3.26	1.193
My supervisor takes negative evaluations of programs or staff and uses them to make improvements.	3.21	1.088
My supervisor and I develop yearly professional development plans that address my weaknesses or blind spots.	2.98	1.353
My supervisor has favorites on the staff.	2.76	1.441

(Table continues)

Table 2 cont.
Perceived Levels of Synergistic Supervision

(Survey #) Items	Mean	SD
My supervisor expects me to fit in with the accepted ways of doing things, in other words, "don't rock the boat."	2.75	1.196
My supervisor is personally offended if I question the wisdom of his/her decisions.	2.17	1.141
When faced with a conflict between an external constituent (e.g., parent or donor) and staff members, my supervisor supports external constituents even if they are wrong.	2.14	1.04
If I'm not careful, my supervisor may allow things that aren't my fault to be blamed on me.	1.94	1.146
In conflicts with staff members, my supervisor takes students' sides (even when they are wrong).	1.93	1.091
My supervisor breaks confidences.	1.91	1.187
My supervisor criticizes staff members in public.	1.64	3.45
My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake.	1.60	0.957

Research Question #3: Were there significant differences between African American male professionals perception of their supervisor based on supervisor gender?

The results of the independent t-test indicated that those professionals with male supervisors' SSS scores were slightly significantly lower than females' supervisors, $t(106) = -.172, p < 0.5$. There were 42 male and 63 females supervisors identified who currently supervise the participants at the time of the study. According to the data, the mean male supervisors score was high in following areas: caring about the employee as a person, willing to listen to employee personal and professional issues, interest in promoting career advancement, and advocacy for the department unit. However, the female supervisors highest scores were within the same items of

the scales as male supervisor, but slightly higher. The only exception was that the male supervisors scored higher within the item of promoting career advancement for their employees. The lowest mean scores reported for male supervisors were supervisor looking for employee to make a mistake, criticism of staff in public, and placing inappropriate blame on employees for uncompleted task. Female supervisors scored lowest in the following items, looking for employees to make a mistake, criticism of staff in public, and breaking confidence as a supervisor. The study reported an overall mean for female supervisors of 2.94, with a standard deviation of .355, and male supervisors had a mean of 2.93 with a standard deviation of .612.

The largest observed differences of the female and male supervisor means were within the following areas, staff problem solving, supervisor support goals and overcoming barriers, supportive relationships with external constituents, and lastly, open and honest communications about strengths and weaknesses (see Table 3).

Table 3.
Male Supervisors
 n=42

(Survey #) Items	Mean	SD
My supervisor shows that she/he cares about me as a person.	4.00	1.059
My supervisor willingly listens to whatever is on my mind, whether it is personal or professional.	3.90	1.185
My supervisor shows interests in promoting my professional or career advancement.	3.83	1.102
My supervisor speaks up for my unit within the institution.	3.83	1.267
My supervisor includes me in a significant way when making decisions that affect my area of responsibilities.	3.71	1.175
My supervisor works with me to gather the information needed to make decisions rather than simply providing me the information he/she feels is important.	3.71	1.066
My supervisor is open and honest with me about my strengths and weaknesses.	3.57	1.213
My supervisor makes certain that I am fully knowledgeable about the goals of the division and institution.	3.52	1.174
My supervisor takes negative evaluations of programs or staff and uses them to make improvements.	3.45	1.064
When problem solving, my supervisor expects staff to present and advocate differing points of view.	3.33	1.262
When the system gets in the way of accomplishing our goals, my supervisor helps me to devise ways to overcome barriers.	3.17	1.167
My supervisor rewards teamwork.	3.10	1.34
My supervisor and I develop yearly professional development plans that address my weaknesses or blind spots.	3.00	1.343

(table continues)

Table 3 cont.
Male Supervisors
 n=42

(Survey #) Items	Mean	SD
My supervisor expects me to fit in with the accepted ways of doing things, in other words, "don't rock the boat."	2.62	1.209
My supervisor has favorites on the staff.	2.57	1.516
When faced with a conflict between an external constituent (e.g., parent or donor) and staff members, my supervisor supports external constituents even if they are wrong.	2.29	1.111
My supervisor is personally offended if I question the wisdom of his/her decisions.	2.02	1.158
In conflicts with staff members, my supervisor takes students' sides (even when they are wrong).	1.90	1.1
My supervisor breaks confidences.	1.88	1.131
If I'm not careful, my supervisor may allow things that aren't my fault to be blamed on me.	1.76	1.078
My supervisor criticizes staff members in public.	1.71	1.154
My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake.	1.55	0.942

Table 4.
Female Supervisors
 n=63

(Survey #) Items	Mean	SD
My supervisor includes me in a significant way when making decisions that affect my area of responsibilities.	3.76	0.946
My supervisor shows that she/he cares about me as a person.	4.03	0.999
My supervisor willingly listens to whatever is on my mind, whether it is personal or professional.	4.00	1.078
My supervisor speaks up for my unit within the institution.	3.86	1.148
My supervisor shows interests in promoting my professional or career advancement.	3.71	1.211
My supervisor works with me to gather the information needed to make decisions rather than simply providing me the information he/she feels is important.	3.62	0.991
When problem solving, my supervisor expects staff to present and advocate differing points of view.	3.52	1.06
My supervisor makes certain that I am fully knowledgeable about the goals of the division and institution.	3.49	0.998
When the system gets in the way of accomplishing our goals, my supervisor helps me to devise ways to overcome barriers.	3.44	1.228
My supervisor rewards teamwork.	3.41	1.145
My supervisor is open and honest with me about my strengths and weaknesses.	3.40	1.056
My supervisor takes negative evaluations of programs or staff and uses them to make improvements.	3.32	1.09
My supervisor and I develop yearly professional development plans that address my weaknesses or blind spots.	3.03	1.282
My supervisor expects me to fit in with the accepted ways of doing things, in other words, "don't rock the boat."	2.76	1.146

My supervisor has favorites on the staff.	2.59	1.499
My supervisor is personally offended if I question the wisdom of his/her decisions.	2.11	1.138
When faced with a conflict between an external constituent (e.g., parent or donor) and staff members, my supervisor supports external constituents even if they are wrong.	1.95	0.941
If I'm not careful, my supervisor may allow things that aren't my fault to be blamed on me.	1.90	1.073
In conflicts with staff members, my supervisor takes students' sides (even when they are wrong).	1.87	1.008
My supervisor breaks confidences.	1.78	1.263
My supervisor criticizes staff members in public.	1.70	0.854
My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake.	1.54	0.895

Research Question #4: What did African American males student affairs professionals identify as their biggest challenges working with their supervisors?

Survey participants were asked in an open-ended question what they perceived to be challenges with their supervisors. There were a total of 49 comments written, and seven themes emerged as challenges respondents' identified with working with their supervisor. They were: 1) Supervisor Individual Attention, Time, and Visual Commitment to Individual and Departmental Success, 2) Lack of Awareness of Personal Bias and Cultural Incompetence, 3) Political Climate Enlightenment and Navigation within the Workplace, 4) Open Environment for Cultural Understanding and Societal Issues impacting African Americans, 5) Supervisor Lack of Skills (knowledge area, communication, trust, delegation, and leadership), 6) Power Struggle and Lack of Transparency, and 7) Lack of Attention to Professional Development (see Table 5). The most common words identified within challenges with supervisor were lack of cultural background training, time for supervisee attention, and open mindedness. Additionally, no attention or

conversation concerning professional development, growth, and goals were commonly repeated most frequent by participants as a challenge.

Table 5.
Challenges with Supervisor

Themes	Frequency of identification
Supervisor Individual Attention/ Time & Visual commitment to individual and departmental success	
Lack of time for attention	10
Forgetful of items	8
No bi-weekly meetings	5
No clear direction	5
No audio or visual feedback	5
Not concern for personal growth	4
Lack of time management	4
Lack of understanding of professional needs	3
Lack of Awareness of Personal Bias and Cultural Incompetence	
No cultural background training	16
Lack of open mindedness	13
Resistant to change or challenge thinking	12
Uncomfortable with my “blackness”	10
Lack of understanding of subcultures other than their own	10
Not current with today’s student	8
Appears to be losing motivation due to years in the field	5
Political Climate Enlightenment and Navigation within the Workplace	
Inability to navigate political climate	6
Can’t talk to higher ups	5
Political culture fear and implementation	3
Not politically savvy	3
Lack of cross departmental training	2
Retaliation if insert self in political culture w/o approval	2
(table continues)	

Table 5 cont.
Challenges with Supervisor

Themes	Frequency of identification
Open Environment for Cultural Understanding and Societal Issues impacting African Americans	
Does not know how to relate	9
Lack of my development as African American male	8
Struggle to understand society impacts as AA male	6
Doesn't know how to have a conversation	5
Inappropriate labeling of students	2
Two different races	1
Supervisor Lack of Skills	
Supervisory Knowledge	
Lack of Experience	8
Communication	
Lack of effective communication with team	6
Not consistent	5
“Hearing” feedback, versus listening	4
Lack of delegation	1
Trouble to communicate conflicts	1
Trust	
Overshares information about colleagues	3
Visually uncomfortable when I speak publically about the office	1
Lack of Leadership	
Management of staff	3
Organizational skills	2
Conflict management	2
No confidences	2
Difficult with confrontation	2
Emotional reactions	1
Power Struggle and Lack of Transparency	
“It always been done that way”	6
Make it known to everyone that <i>he/she is</i> the boss	6
Lack of transparency	4
Close in age and experience	2

(table continues)

Table 5 cont.
Challenges with Supervisor

Themes	Frequency of identification
Lack of Attention to Professional Development	
No attention to my professional development & job growth	16
No conversations about my professional goals	14
Lack of advocacy & professional exposure	11
Verbally encouraging but not same assistance	3

Research Question #5: How did African American males’ student affairs professionals describe their past success and items supervisors can improve upon in the future?

Survey participants were asked in an open-ended question to describe their past successes with their supervisors. A total of 36 comments were written, and six themes emerged as successes respondents identified working with their supervisor: 1) Working and Collaborative Professional Relationships, 2) Supervisor Trust in employee skills, value input, autonomy, and give candid feedback, 3) Personal and Professional goals discussion and understanding, 4) Advocacy and Champions of employee valuable work and progress, 5) Support of Professional / Personal Developmental opportunity and colleagues relationships), and 6) Implementing new ideas and seeing tangible outcomes. The most common words identified within successes with supervisor were trust, autonomous nature of work, open communication, able to make changes to existing programs and policies, and lastly allows and encourage rapport with students, colleagues, and mentors (see Table 6).

Table 6.
Past Successes with Supervisor

Themes	Frequency of identification
Working/ Collaborative Professional Relationships	
Utilizing team strengths	6
Department communications	6
Respectful	4
Supportive	3
Comfortable to have open conversations	2
Friendly, caring, approachable	2
Decision making involvement	2
Bonding with similar experiences	1
Supervisor Trust in Employee Skills, Value Input, Autonomy, and Give Candid Feedback	
Autonomous nature/does not micromanage	15
Trust and confidence in my work	13
Value my thoughts and actively listen on various topics	10
Apart of decision-making	8
Honest feedback	6
Direct feedback	4
Allow me to take on new tasks	3
Personal and Professional Goals Discussion and Understanding	
Open communication	11
Professional development plan	7
Listening and following up	6
Support and challenge	3
Advocacy and Champions of Employee work and progress	
Visual Recognition and Praises	9
Visual support at programs	7
Stand up for staff members	3
Support and challenge	2

(table continues)

Table 6 cont.
Past Successes with Supervisor

Themes	Frequency of identification
Support of Professional and Personal Development opportunities'	
Professional conferences attendance	9
Professional webinars	6
Encouragement to meet with other colleagues on campus	5
Provide professional learning opportunities	5
Encourage work- life balance and interests	4
Workplace advocacy for professional connections	2
Implementing New ideas and Seeing Tangible Outcomes	
Able to make changes to policies and procedures	10
Open to new ideas and implementation	8
Created a new program	8
Improve existing programs or processes	5
Other	
Allows rapport with students, colleagues, and mentors	11
Supervisor is from an underrepresented population	4
Supervisor trust employee	2

Items Supervisor can improve upon to enhance the African American male professional experiences

Survey participants were asked in an open-ended question to describe ways supervisors can improve or enhance professional experiences. There were a total of 33 comments written with seven strategies emerging as areas of improvement: 1) Professional Development plan, opportunities and resources, 2) Advocacy, support, and trust, 3) Open and Honest Communication and Feedback, 4) Cultural and Personal Bias Understanding and Training, 5)

Awareness of AA identity development, challenges, conflicts and current issues, 6) Mentorship , campus and community connections, and 7) Effective Supervisory Training on skill sets (see Table 7). The most common words identified within strategies for areas of improvement with a supervisor were collaborating to create professional development plan with supervisee, work harder to understand personal and cultural bias; seek training and development within this area. Additionally, provide safe space for communication of African American cultural issues in the workplace and society, more support groups on campus and professional mentorship programs. Several participants responded to this question as their supervisor won't be able or they simply can't help enhance the African American male professional experience.

Table 7 .
Strategies for Areas of Improvement

Themes	Frequency of identification
Professional Development Plan, Opportunities and Resources	
Make a plan	9
More professional/ career development opportunities	8
More professional training	5
Supervisor should share individual professional goals	3
Understanding role professionally as a black man	1
Advocacy, Support, and Trust	
Support for cross training and learning new skills	4
Opinion need to be heard and value	4
Have my back	3
Seek to understand my talents	1
Understanding role professionally as a black man	1

(table continues)

Table 7 cont.
Strategies for Areas of Improvement

Themes	Frequency of identification
Open and Honest Communication and Feedback	
Open and honest feedback	5
Navigating political climate	3
Be more direct	3
Cultural and Personal Bias Understanding and Training	
Work harder to understand	8
Recognize own power and privileges personally/professionally	8
Aware of individual biases	4
Become more culturally aware of others	3
Awareness of AA Identity Development, Challenges, Conflicts, and Current Issues	
Provide a safe space for open/ honest dialogue	9
Impact of societal issues of AA in the workplace	8
Seek to understand experiences of AA males internal/external	2
Create an inclusive office environment	2
Mentorship, Campus, and Community Connections	
Professional Mentors	12
Support groups on campus for AA males	11
AA male mentors	9
Exposure to other AA male professionals in higher ed	5
Connecting me to other colleagues in various departments	2
Provide more outlets for self-care	2

(table continues)

Table 7 cont.
Strategies for Areas of Improvement

Themes	Frequency of identification
Effective Supervisory Training On Skills	
Communication	8
Constructive and Timely Feedback	6
Communicating Effectively	5
Open and Supportive of New Ideas	5
Valuing employee work and talents	4
Trust and not micromanaging	3
Other	
They Can't	9
My supervisor does not care	5
We are both minorities, she can't	1

Chapter Summary

The data collected for the study identified that the respondents were satisfied with their current supervisory experience; however several themes emerged from the self-identified challenges, successes, and areas for improvement with working with their supervisors. Data showed a significant lower number of the synergistic supervision given by male supervisors compared to women.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose for conducting the study was to gain an understanding of early-career African American male professionals' perceptions of their supervisors in the field of student affairs in higher education. This chapter began with a summary of the study followed by conclusions of the study and recommendations for future research and practice. Finally, the chapter concluded with a research discussion and chapter summary.

Summary of the Study

The study was designed to explore early-career African American male professionals' perceptions and experiences with their supervisors. Additionally, the study examined job satisfaction and supervisory perception differences based on supervisor gender. The data provided research and institutional learning to enhance recruitment, retention, and strategies to increase African American male professionals' development and retain these individuals. The study is beneficial to student affairs and student services professionals who are leaders, supervisors, and managers within higher education. In return African American male professionals learned more about shared challenges, successes, and strategies while working with their supervisor in the workplace. The significance of the study allowed African American male professionals to self-reflect and assess their experiences with their supervisors. Additionally, the research allowed the field of student affairs and student services to examine current supervision models, training, and processes African American men professional development and support. This was accomplished by utilizing a purposeful sampling technique to identify African American male professionals who belong to a leading professional organization (NASPA) or an

affiliated knowledge community. Participants completed a survey based on synergistic supervision scale and three open-ended questions.

RQ1: What was the profile of African American professionals working in the field of student affairs in higher education, who belong to a leading professional association? The study reported 106 valid participants who identified as entry or mid-level African American male professionals who belonged to a leading professional association and currently work in the field of student affairs or student services within higher education. All entry-level career individuals held either a bachelor or master's degree exception of one entry-level participant with a doctoral degree. All mid-level career individuals held a master's degree with the exception of 10 with doctoral degrees.

RQ2: What was the relationship between perceived levels of synergistic supervision received and job satisfaction of African American male professionals in Student Affairs? The participants were overall reasonably satisfied with their job (6.86 mean on a scale of 1-10) with a significant correlation between levels of synergistic supervision received and job satisfaction.

RQ3: Were there significant differences between African American male professionals perception of their supervisor based on supervisor gender? There was a significant difference identified between supervisors based on gender. Those with female supervisors scored higher on the Synergistic Supervision Scale than male supervisors.

RQ4: What did African American male student affairs professionals identify as the challenges working with their supervisors? The survey provided open ended questions to African American professional to identify challenges with their supervisors. Seven themes emerged: 1) Supervisor Individual Attention, Time, and Visual Commitment to Individual and Departmental Success, 2) Lack of Awareness of Personal Bias and Cultural Incompetence, 3)

Political Climate Enlightenment and Navigation within the Workplace, 4) Open Environment for Cultural Understanding and Societal Issues impacting African Americans, 5) Supervisor Lack of Skills (knowledge area, communication, trust, delegation, and leadership), 6) Power Struggle and Lack of Transparency, and 7) Lack of Attention to Professional Development

RQ5: How did African American males' student affairs professionals describe their past success and items supervisors can improve upon in the future? The survey provided open ended questions to African American professional to identify challenges and items supervisors can improve to enhance the participant professional experience as an African American male. Six themes emerged as past successes with supervisor: 1) Working and Collaborative Professional Relationships, 2) Supervisor Trust in employee skills, value input, autonomy, and give candid feedback, 3) Personal and Professional goals discussion and understanding, 4) Advocacy and Champions of employee valuable work and progress, 5) Support of Professional / Personal Developmental opportunity and colleagues relationships), and 6) Implementing new ideas and seeing tangible outcomes.

Seven themes emerged as strategies for supervisors' areas of improvement: 1) Professional Development plan, opportunities and resources, 2) Advocacy, support, and trust, 3) Open and Honest Communication and Feedback, 4) Cultural and Personal Bias Understanding and Training, 5) Awareness of AA identity development, challenges, conflicts and current issues, 6) Mentorship, campus and community connections, 7) Effective Supervisory Training on skill sets.

Conclusions

1. African American male professionals are generally positively satisfied working in higher education in student affairs or student services; however, the study reported there are many areas for improvement, changes, and strategies to enhance how they are supervised.
2. African American male professionals' synergistic supervision score was moderately high and positively correlated with job satisfaction.
3. African American male professionals are a well-educated population with 81% who participated in the study earned a master's degree or higher.
4. The survey received a high response rate that shows that the community of professionals is willing to reflect and discuss professional experiences specifically related to their supervisor.

Recommendations

For Practice

1. Student affairs leaders should create and work to strengthen training for supervisors and use the process for developmental purposes.
2. Student affairs leaders should create and work to strengthen supervisor's diversity training to include cultural sensitivity and understanding of African American male identity and professional development.
3. All supervisors should create a collaborative and action oriented professional developmental plan with supervisees. This plan should be assessed multiple times throughout the year.
4. Student affairs leaders should create a safe, open, and honest space for dialogue related to African American male professional's development in the workplace.

5. Student affairs leaders should encourage or help to identify professional and social support groups for African American male professionals.
6. Student affairs leaders should encourage and/or help to identify professional African American men mentors in the workplace.
7. Student affairs leaders and direct supervisors should continue conversations with African American professional men on workplace development, expectations, and support to aid cultural understanding and professional needs.
8. Student affairs leaders and supervisors should utilize the Synergistic Supervision Model as a guide for supervision development and success.

For Further Research

1. Student affairs and university human resources leaders should examine supervision training models of higher education.
2. Student affairs and university human resources leaders should examine cultural sensitivity and personal bias understanding training for supervisors within higher education.
3. A researcher should replicate this study in other demographics of professionals in higher education.
4. A researcher should explore African American faculty members and senior administrator's levels of perceived synergistic supervision and job satisfaction with supervisor areas of improvement, challenges, and successes.
5. A researcher should replicate this study to compare and contrast different institutional types (i.e. 2-year colleges, community colleges, HBCU vs PWI, etc.).

6. A researcher should replicate this study to compare data to African American male professionals in the workplace outside of higher education.
7. A researcher should replicate this study by allowing supervisors who supervise African American male professionals to rate themselves and compare scores according to this study results.
8. A researcher should replicate this study by exploring African American men para professionals by utilizing the SSS model.
9. A researcher should replicate this study by conducting a long term study of African American male professionals experience with their supervisors over the course of 10 years.

Discussion

The study provided an understanding of early career African American male professionals' perception and experiences with their supervisor. According to Winston and Creamer (1997), supervision in the workplace of professionals is critical to development, experience, job satisfaction, and success. The synergistic supervision model which is commonly cited for best practice for supervision of professionals in Student Affairs served as a valid scale to assess participant's current perceptions (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000; Tull, 2006). These perceptions assessed levels of synergistic supervision given based on a social exchange that includes nine components: dual focus, joint effort, two-way communication, focus on competence, growth orientation, proactivity, goals based, systematic and on-going process, and holistic (see Figure 1 in Appendix E; Creamer & Winston, 2002). The African American male professionals indicated overall that they are satisfied with their jobs.

Several studies have indicated that African American male professionals serve as role models and examples for African American students and aid in the overall “coloring the pipeline” for minority students success (Oseguera, 2013, p. 78). The research and data from this study is important to be able to fully examine what higher education institutions are doing to retain African American male professionals. Several studies continue to examine African American undergraduate student’s development and have found that similar issues are present in the workplace of student affairs for African American professional men, such as social connection, mentorship, inclusive environment, and network of professional support (Adams, 2011; Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012; Shaun, 2012; Wingfield & Wingfield, 2014).

Study findings suggested that the basics of training supervisors how to be effective and equipping all leaders, managers, and supervisors with skills modeled by synergistic supervision scale is needed. Additional to the items of the Synergistic Supervision Scale, themes strongly recommended that training should strengthen or include cultural sensitivity, understanding, and identity development of racial minorities along with other sub groups. According to Wingfield (2013), African American male identity development in the workplace could be perplex and carry multiple layers depending on the individual, just as other minority groups, it is not a one size fits all; however the foundation of commitment to exploration, learning, and seeking new resources is needed by direct supervisors. Another area to include in training and development programs for student affair leaders is effective communication skills. Specifically, tools on how to have conversations about race, personal biases, and any lack of understanding when it comes to supporting African American professional men. It is critical that student affairs leaders and supervisors create a safe, honest, open and inclusive environment within their office for African

American male professionals and others to thrive. In most instances, professionals during their early-career look towards their supervisor for guidance, communication, professional growth, and support (Tull, 2006). It was very unfortunate in the study several African American professional men stated their current supervisor could not help them improve their professional experience as an African American man in higher education.

Although data showed a positive correlation with participants and their workplace job satisfaction, some did write in comments that would suggest otherwise. Some of the comments were directed at specific actions of their supervisors, such as how they could mentor them or understand their personal life situations. These seemingly incongruent data reinforce the notion that workplace job satisfaction is comprised of many different variables, ranging from benefit packages and coworkers all the way to the supervisors included in this study. Further research should look to explore the interrelationships of these variables to create an overall model of workplace satisfaction.

The division of student affairs prides itself on creating holistic models, remaining student centered, and maintaining professional development opportunities and support for its employees (Hoffman, 2010). The field of higher education should continue to examine the strategies, policies, and development for employee recruitment and retention to ensure the professional development, opportunities for success, and networks of support. Additionally, it should continue to share with other departments and sectors outside of higher education to learn from each other the best practices to retain needed and talented African American professional men. This will ensure cultural fabrics continue to be enhanced in the workplace, diverse ideas are implemented, and lastly African American professional men will be able to succeed, perform

well, and continue to contribute to the overall success of higher education across the United States.

Chapter Summary

The study was conducted to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of supervisors by early career African American male professionals who work in the field of student affairs in higher education. This chapter provided a summary of the study and discussed conclusions of the data presented in chapter four. The conclusions of the study were supported by the study data and the research discussed in the review of literature in chapter two.

The data of the study was used in this chapter to suggest recommendations for future research and practices for student affairs leaders, supervisors, and practitioners. Lastly, this chapter allowed the researcher to articulate research observations and discussions of this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Emails

Initial email to participants:

Good Afternoon Mr. _____,

I am a doctoral graduate student under the direction of Dr. Michael Miller in the College of Education and Health Professions at University of Arkansas. I am conducting a research study exploring early career African American male professionals in student affairs. Specifically, the current study will examine the relationship between participant supervisor experience and job satisfaction. Survey participation will be conducted with African American male professionals who volunteer to participate in this study and the meet the criteria. The results gathered in this study will be used to determine the African American male professionals experience with their supervisor, challenges, and successes. Also the results could be used as suggestions to higher education supervisors and administrators for creating strategies in African American male professionals' retention, development, and support.

I am requesting your participation in this research, which will involve you responding to an anonymous online short survey consisting of about 40 questions. This should take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Questions are designed to determine your relationship with your current supervisor.

I plan to distribute the survey on Monday September 14, 2015 with an Informed Consent Form as the first question. Your participation for my dissertation research will be much appreciated.

Thank you,

Todd Jenkins
University of Arkansas
TC1005@uark.edu

(Appendix A cont.) Participant Emails

Survey Distribution email:

Mr. _____,

Please find below the link to the Qualtrics survey for my dissertation research to form an understanding of the relationship between participant and supervisor related to supervisory practices, challenges, and support.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your participation in my dissertation research.

Thank you,

Todd Jenkins
University of Arkansas
TCJ005@uark.edu

Continued request email:

Mr. _____,

Please remember to complete the attached Qualtrics survey for my dissertation research. Your perspective is important to forming an understanding of African American men experiences with their supervisor.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your participation in my dissertation research.

Thank you,

Todd Jenkins
University of Arkansas
TCJ005@uark.edu

Appendix B: Program Survey Informed Consent

Introduction

I am conducting a research study exploring early career African American male professionals in student affairs. Specifically, the current study will examine the relationship between participant supervisor experience and job satisfaction. Survey participation will be conducted with African American male professionals who volunteer to participate in this study and the meet the criteria. The results gathered in this study will be used to determine the African American male professionals experience with their supervisor, challenges, and successes. Also the results could be used as suggestions to higher education supervisors and administrators for creating strategies in African American male professionals' retention, development, and support.

Procedures

I am requesting your participation in this research, which will involve you responding to an anonymous online short survey consisting of about 40 questions. This should take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire will be conducted with an online Qualtrics-created survey.

Risks/Comfort

Risks are minimal for involvement in this study. Although we do not expect any harm to come upon any participants due to electronic malfunction of the computer, it is possible though extremely rare and uncommon.

Confidentiality

While I am searching for honest thoughts regarding your current supervisor experience, I do not expect you to divulge any information that is sensitive in any manner. I want you to be comfortable with the open ended questions at the end of the survey. Your input will be used in a written report regarding this research topic, but your name will not be used. Any reference to you will be done using a pseudonym that will completely non-identifiable to you in any manner.

Benefits/ Compensation

Your benefits in this study lie in the knowledge of knowing you have used your opinions and practices to help identify positive supervisor development practices and suggestions for student affairs supervisors and practitioners to aid to successful retention and development plans for African American males professionals; there will be no other direct benefits to you as a result of participation in this study. Additionally, you will receive no compensation for participating in this research, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. If you would like to be a participant in this research study, please click on the hyperlink below to be taken to the survey website.

(Appendix B cont.) Program Survey Informed Consent

Participation

Please note that your participation in this interview is absolutely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If you desire to withdraw, please close your internet browser.

Questions about the Research

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Todd Jenkins, at 479-██████████, TCJ005@uark.edu.

Questions about your rights as Research Participants

If you have questions you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Dr. Michael Miller, 479-575-3582, mtmille@uark.edu. Or contact the Office of the University of Arkansas' Institutional Review Board. 479-575-4572.

Q1 I have read, understood, and printed a copy of, the above consent form and desire of my own free will to participate in this study. (yes/ no)

If no is selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

Appendix C: Survey Permission Email

Permission email:

From: Saunders, Sue [mailto:sue.saunders@uconn.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, August 06, 2014 2:46 PM

To: Todd C. Jenkins Jr.

Subject: use of Synergistic Supervision Scale

You certainly have my permission to use the Synergistic Supervision scale for your research. We simply ask that you acknowledge the work with appropriate citations and share the results of your very interesting study with us.

If I can be of further assistance or if you need for my permission letter to include more information (e.g., your name and title, the title of your study), please let me know.

Take care and good luck,

Sue

Sue A. Saunders, Ph.D.

Extension Professor & Coordinator

Higher Education and Student Affairs Masters Program

Neag School of Education

Department of Educational Leadership

249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 3093

Storrs, CT 06260-3093

Appendix D: Survey Instrument

Perceptions of Your Supervisor

This questionnaire measures the relationships between perceived levels of synergistic supervision received, job satisfaction, and experience of early career African American male professionals in student affairs administration. Your responses should be indicative of your experiences in institutions of higher education. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers, please express your opinion in the response to each item to the best of your ability. This questionnaire is anonymous, so do indicate your name.

Profile Demographics

ABOUT YOU

1) The Highest degree that I hold is:

Bachelors Masters Doctoral Other Professional Degree Other

2) Career Level: Entry (1-5 years) Mid (6-10 years) Senior (10+ years)

3) Current Student Affairs Title:

4) Ethnicity:

American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Is	White	Other
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5) Gender: Male Female Transgender Other (please select one)

6) How satisfied are you with your current job? Very Little 1 -10 Very Much

YOUR SUPERVISOR

7) The Highest degree that your supervisor hold is:

Bachelors Masters Doctoral Other Professional Degree Other

8) Career Level: Entry (1-5 years) Mid (6-10 years) Senior (10+ years)

9) Current Student Affairs Role/Title:

10) Ethnicity:

American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Is	White	Other
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11) Gender: Male Female Transgender Other (please select one)

(Appendix D cont.) Survey Instrument

Directions: For each item circle the one response that most closely reflects your experience with your current supervisor. Respond using the following scale:

1 = *never (almost never)*

2 = *seldom*

3 = *sometimes*

4 = *often*

5 = *always (almost always)*

- 1 2 3 4 5 1. My supervisor includes me in a significant way when making decisions that affect my area of responsibilities.
- 1 2 3 4 5 2. My supervisor works with me to gather the information needed to make decisions rather than simply providing me the information he/she feels is important.
- 1 2 3 4 5 3. My supervisor criticizes staff members in public.
- 1 2 3 4 5 4. My supervisor makes certain that I am fully knowledgeable about the goals of the division and institution.
- 1 2 3 4 5 5. My supervisor willingly listens to whatever is on my mind, whether it is personal or professional.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6. My supervisor shows interests in promoting my professional or career advancement.
- 1 2 3 4 5 7. My supervisor is personally offended if I question the wisdom of his/her decisions.
- 1 2 3 4 5 8. My supervisor shows that she/he cares about me as a person.
- 1 2 3 4 5 9. My supervisor speaks up for my unit within the institution.
- 1 2 3 4 5 10. My supervisor expects me to fit in with the accepted ways of doing things, in other words, "don't rock the boat."
- 1 2 3 4 5 11. My supervisor has favorites on the staff.
- 1 2 3 4 5 12. My supervisor breaks confidences.
- 1 2 3 4 5 13. My supervisor takes negative evaluations of programs or staff and uses them to make improvements.
- 1 2 3 4 5 14. When faced with a conflict between an external constituent(e.g., parent or donor) and staff members, my supervisor supports external constituents even if they are wrong.
- 1 2 3 4 5 15. My supervisor is open and honest with me about my strengths and weaknesses.
- 1 2 3 4 5 16. If I'm not careful, my supervisor may allow things that aren't my fault to be blamed on me.
- 1 2 3 4 5 17. My supervisor rewards teamwork.

(Appendix D cont.) Survey Instrument

- 1 2 3 4 5 18. When the system gets in the way of accomplishing our goals, my supervisor helps me to devise ways to overcome barriers.
- 1 2 3 4 5 19. My supervisor looks for me to make a mistake.
- 1 2 3 4 5 20. My supervisor and I develop yearly professional development plans that address my weaknesses or blind spots.
- 1 2 3 4 5 21. When problem solving, my supervisor expects staff to present and advocate differing points of view.
- 1 2 3 4 5 22. In conflicts with staff members, my supervisor takes students' sides (even when they are wrong).

Open Ended Questions:

What are the challenges within your role with your supervisor?

What are successes within your role with your supervisor?

How can your supervisor help you improve your experience as an African American male professional?

Appendix E: Institution Review Board Approval Form



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board

October 19, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Todd Jenkins
Michael Miller

FROM: Ro Windwalker
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 15-08-054

Protocol Title: *Perceptions of Workplace Supervision among African American Men in Student Affairs*

Review Type: EXEMPT EXPEDITED FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 10/16/2015 Expiration Date: 09/02/2016

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (<https://vpred.uark.edu/units/rscp/index.php>). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 200 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior* to implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

Appendix F: Figure 1 Synergistic Supervision Components

Figure 1.

Synergistic Supervision Components (*Petroc, J. A., & Piercy, J., 2013*).

Dual Focus

- The starting point of synergistic supervision is that it focuses both on working toward the goals of the institution and department and on promoting the personal and professional growth of the staff members.
- With this dual focus, it is fundamental to engage staff in the process of approaching institutional and departmental goals.
- It is vital that supervisors show concern for their staff members growth and development, which begins by establishing a relationship based upon trust, respect, openness, and mutuality.

Joint Effort

- The relationship between supervisors and staff members should be mutual and equal.
- Both parties must create clearly defined goals together and work toward meeting those goals through supervision.
- When supervisors and staff members contribute equally, supervision can become infinitely successful.

Two-Way Communication

- The essence of developing a healthy and effective supervisory relationship is open and honest communication.
 - In order to create the most successful
-

(Cont.) Figure 1. Synergistic Supervision Components (Petroc, J. A., & Piercy, J., 2013).

use of supervision, both supervisors and staff members must be willing to know one another on a personal level and to learn about the daily (*continue*) functions of each other's positions.

- Supervisors and staff members should create

Focus on Competence

- Build knowledge and information
- Teach work-related skills
- Guide on personal and professional development skills
- Address effective professional attitudes

Growth Orientation

- Focusing on personal and professional growth is a hallmark of the synergistic process. Think of "student development" as it applies to supervision.
- It is necessary to perform assessment through supervisions of current abilities, skills or knowledge and to explore career aspirations, current stage of development and expectation of work.
- Staff members should feel that they are more proficient at their jobs and should have a sense of accomplishment with their positions through this process.

Proactivity

- Identify potential performance problems early
 - Pro-act to concerns rather than react
 - Rule of Thumb: Nip it in the Bud
 - Both participants raise concerns early (not a sign of weakness)
-

Goal-Based

(Cont.) Figure 1. Synergistic Supervision Components (Petroc, J. A., & Piercy, J., 2013).

- Participants need to have clear understanding about the expectations each has of the other. (*continue*)
- The starting point for building expectations is through goal setting and creating statements of expectations both of which should be reviewed and evaluated frequently.
- Individual goal setting should include both short and long term personal and professional goals, which the staff member should discuss with the supervisor.
- This goal setting and goal review process should be completed outside of the performance appraisal process.

Systematic, Ongoing Process

- In order for synergistic supervision to work, it must be approached methodically.
- Regular time must be set aside for one-on-one meetings
- One-on-one meetings: Examine the progress of meeting goals, discuss emerging issues, discuss priorities, exchange views, provide and receive feedback, and solicit advice.

Holism

- “Who one is determines to a large extent the kind of job one is able to do.” (Winston & Creamer)
 - Help staff be effective in both their jobs and personal lives while assisting with career advancement.
-