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## Perspectives of Power: Phenomenological inquiry Exploring the Manifestation of Power in Doctoral Programs

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## ABSTRACT

### PERSPECTIVES OF POWER: PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY EXPLORING THE MANIFESTATION OF POWER IN DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

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Northern Illinois University, 2022  
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The research questions guiding this study include: How do doctoral-level students or recent graduates of color within counselor education and supervision programs describe the manifestations of power in the context of their program and university? What experiences with power do counselor educators in training (CEITs) cite as memorable in their counseling program? A phenomenological-based approach was chosen to understand the experiences with power. Using purposive and criterion sampling methods, three participants were recruited and selected. Rich descriptions of participants' experiences with power were obtained by conducting semi-structured interviews composed of open-ended questions. Using the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method as described by Moustakas (1994) and the simplified version of Moustakas by Creswell and Poth, data from the verbatim transcriptions were examined and analyzed. Four themes and eight total subthemes emerged from the data of participants' experiences with power. The themes revealed that participants' power experiences included power being relational, power connected to position, participants' experiences with power created positive and negative feelings and states of being and power as detrimental or productive.

*Keywords:* doctoral students, counselor educators, power, race, critical race theory, transformative learning theory

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PERSPECTIVES OF POWER: PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY EXPLORING THE  
MANIFESTATION OF POWER IN DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

BY

SHARAZAZI DYSON  
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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
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Suzanne Degges-White

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Never to forget where we came from and always praise the bridges that carried us over. - Fannie

Lou Hamer

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this to the memory of Alberta Gipson and Ruth Dyson my maternal great grandmother and paternal grandmother, both who taught me the importance of integrity, compassion, and communal care. Their love ran deep, and perseverance was everlasting.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was to explore the use and manifestation of power in doctoral-level counselor education as experienced by doctoral students and recent graduates of color, using a framework informed by transformative learning theory (TLT) and critical race theory (CRT). The purpose of the study, the research problem, the need for this study, the definition of terms used, the conceptual framework, and the research questions will be introduced in this chapter.

### Background

The significance of this topic is embedded within its relevance to and alignment with equity and inclusion conversations and practices for higher education in the United States (Barabino, 2020; Kezar et al., 2018; O'Meara et al., 2021; Simmons, 2014). In the United States, statistics describing access to and enrollment in higher education are useful to begin to understand the rationale for this study to specifically address the experiences of students of color. In the United States, the common higher education types are institutions that could be described as predominantly White institutions (PWI). There are other types of higher education institutions in the United States which include those that are designated as minority-serving institutions (MSI). This designation allows for federal funding and support to increase equitable access to education for students minoritized by race. These institutions' missions are to directly serve

populations marginalized by race while also being either identity conscious and or identity centered. In terms of funding, Historically Black Colleges or Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges or Universities, Alaska Native-serving or Native Hawaiian-serving institutions, Predominantly Black Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions, and Native American-serving nontribal institutions (20 U.S. Code § 1067q, 2009) comprise 14% percent of all Title IV-eligible institutions of higher education within the United States (Espinosa et al., 2017).

Educational attainment data for college degrees in the United States for adults aged 18 to 24 highlight the differences among races, especially through the lens of parity. Parity is a measurement of sameness or difference in comparison to overall representation. For the following parity data, it is the percentage of the 18-24 years old of a certain race with degrees conferred, divided by the percentage of 18-24 years old in the total United States population. In 2018, White people aged 18 to 24 comprised 53% of the 18-24 age group in the total population, but they were overrepresented in degrees conferral as they received 60% of the degrees awarded (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2019), this would be a 113% parity. Black people continued to be underrepresented relative to their representation in the population. In 2018, Black people were 14% of the population and accounted for 9% of doctoral degrees which is 64% parity (NCES, 2019). Hispanic people were about 22% of the population age and received 8% of doctoral degrees at 36% parity (NCES, 2019). Asian people represented 6% of the population age and received 13% of doctoral degrees at 216% parity (NCES, 2019). Overall, in 2018, graduate students of color comprised a total of 37% of the post-baccalaureate enrollment across all fields in the United States (NCES, 2020). These Postbaccalaureate degree

programs include both master's and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Parity can be useful insight into disparities as a formal equality measure, in the above examples a goal could be 100% parity, but parity alone can be limited as it does not describe the processes of education or the ways there are unequal power relations (Subrahmanian, 2005). The educational attainment and enrollment data is useful to begin to understand how race-based disparities exist in higher education.

### Colorblindness, Color Evasiveness and Intersectionality

Color-blind racial ideology in the United States has been understood as race is irrelevant and as such can be ignored or dismissed (Gotanda, 1991). I and other researchers argue that race cannot be evaded as it plays a significant role in the way that individuals interact with others within the larger society. Even further, that the salience of race and racism are evidenced in their negative effect on the educational experience of students of color (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004).

Color-evasiveness is an expansion of racial ideology which attempts to deepen the framing of color-blindness, seeking to find space between blindness and consciousness. Color-evasiveness insists that it is not merely an inability to see race, rather race is relevant and seen but that there is an intentional evasion of acknowledging and accounting for race. Color-evasiveness highlights the framing of color-blindness as limiting because it does not expand the ways the ideology can be disrupted (Annamma et al., 2017). Color evasiveness also flattens the specificity of anti-blackness and victimization under White supremacy (Sexton, 2010). Blackness and the Black existence does not represent the total reality of the construction of race in the United States but it does highlight the functions of the political and economic systems (Sexton, 2010).



Intersectionality, as a concept was first developed for understanding the experiences of Black women within the legal field and later other diverse individuals can be useful to explore how color-blind ideologies can overlook and perpetuate harm. Initially, the concept grew out of trying to conceptualize the way the law responded to issues where both race and gender discrimination were involved (Crenshaw, 1989, 2004). The major insight of Crenshaw is that intersectionality explores the major axes of social division in a given society at a given time, for example, race, gender, sexuality, which operate mutually and build on each other and work together to shape individual experience (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). As Crenshaw (2020) has stated it is a way of “seeing how various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other... how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts” (Crenshaw, para. 2, 2020). Though the experiences of being raced as a certain identity are real, race in this study will be considered as a social construct and not a biological attribute as all populations or population clusters overlap, and in almost all populations, all genes are present but in different frequencies. No single gene is therefore sufficient for classifying human populations into systemic categories (Cavalli-Sforza et al., 2018).

The function of racism and the political and economic systems that benefit from it is to serve as a distraction from liberation (Morrison, 1975) and can encourage or exacerbate silence. Castagno (2008) describes silence around race as a teacher practice that participates in a larger inequitable education culture where the status quo and Whiteness is maintained. Castagno (2008) described instances where students were being taught through interactions with teachers to be “colormute” and not discuss race or nationality, with teachers upholding the social etiquette of

the dominant cultures, such as Whiteness in the United States (p. 325). Martinez (2007) conceptualizes Whiteness as racist behavior predicated on White supremacy, even where no overt discrimination can be found. Racist behavior and racism as a concept can be understood in sociological and educational lens as privilege and power, and this power plus prejudice transform universal psychological processes into hierarchical societal processes (Operario & Fiske, 1998). The intersection of power and these hierarchical societal processes with race, higher education and counselor education will be explored in this study.

### Purpose Statement

In counseling literature there is a lack of literature assessing which learning experiences are important to counselor development (Clarke et al., 2017; Haskins & Singh, 2015). With an exploration into counselor development, Buckley and Foldy (2010) developed a pedagogical model for increased race-related multicultural counseling competency, which focuses on the specific dynamics related to race, racism, and racial identity. This pedagogical model centers on psychological safety positing that psychological safety can be fostered only by attention to both the content of the material that is taught and the pedagogical processes that affect classroom dynamics (Buckley & Foldy, 2010). The ACA Code of Ethics references power in the context of dual relationships but does not detail what power means (ACA, 2014). Still to be researched is how specific uses of power in a doctoral-level counseling program manifest. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore how doctoral students and recent graduates of color experience and describe the uses of power by their institution, faculty, and peers in their program. I aim to bridge the gap in understanding of doctoral students of color experiences in their program, by exploring how power manifests as described by the participants and how this may impact engagement.

## Problem Statement

Research shows that multiple roles and relationships can offer doctoral students positive and negative experiences. These experiences can shape their development and faculty and student-peer support has been found to uniquely explain difference in ratings of program satisfaction (Dickens et al., 2016; Tompkins et al., 2016). The relationships and nature of those relationships give insight into this satisfaction. Racial and ethnic group membership was also found to influence levels of stress for graduate students, and racially marginalized students were more likely than White peers to report discrimination as a stressor (El-Ghoroury et al., 2012). Additionally, a study found that instructors, not students, were the most frequent perpetrators of racism in the graduate classroom (Curtis-Boles et al., 2020). While experiences of racism and oppression are highly prevalent in the college and graduate school classroom, students exhibit resilience in their coping with stress and trauma (Ingram & Wallace, 2019). Despite higher education professionals and counselor educators' progress in articulating their commitment to diversity and equity, there remain instances in which students are harmed in the classroom and in peer and faculty interactions. A comprehensive review and analysis of empirical articles related to student experiences along the lines of success, satisfaction, and well-being (Sverdlik et al., 2018) further demonstrated that the experiences of power especially the use of power along racial lines are underexplored for doctoral students. Existing literature that has shaped the changes in programs typically explore student experiences in a specific field (Protivnak & Foss, 2009), clinical supervision or their overall satisfaction (Fernando & Hulse-Killacky, 2005) in a program without further exploration into the manifestations of power. Without this exploration

of power, educators in the field may be causing harm and replicating harmful dynamics learned in their training programs potentially affecting degree completion and student learning.

### Need for this Study

It is important to center the societal and mental health needs of graduate students, especially doctoral students of color. It is also imperative to consider the in-class behavior of faculty, which can contribute to students' social and academic integration (Skipper, 2005). This proposed study will address the needs of CEIT and highlight their needs via the perspectives of power in their classrooms. Exploring the perceptions and experiences among graduate students of color related to power may highlight spaces for development and redesign for counselor educators in training and counselor educators.

### Needs of the Counselor Educator in Training

According to the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) standards, doctoral students must develop their professional identity including develop their knowledge of pedagogy and relevant teaching methods and curriculum design, delivery, and evaluation methods (CACREP, 2016, p. 35). S. F. Hall (2007) found a general dissatisfaction among counselor educators during their training regarding the perceived effectiveness of their experiences in preparing them to teach. In a study of African American women enrolled or graduated from clinically focused programs, such as couple and family therapy, clinical psychology and counseling psychology doctoral programs, participants reported experiencing discriminatory behaviors by faculty because of “the infrastructure of racism” (Horsford et al., 2019, p. 234) having to manage power dynamics with faculty as a challenge and

sometimes oppressive (Horsford et al., 2019). Participants reported throughout their programs their White peers did not experience similar stressors, such as feeling unsupported by faculty and experiencing microaggressions which sent the message the students were “problems within the system” (Horsford et al., 2019, p. 232). Counselor educators and supervisors in training, similar to counselors in training, are also in need of instructors with diverse interests and teaching strategies from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds partially because diverse faculty can enhance student learning (Chun et al., 2020; Turner, 2008). In this study, CEITs will reflect and identify specific practices and behaviors where power manifested and if that impacted their educational experience. This study may also provide context to the needs of the students, especially doctoral students and recent graduates of color, which will later be educated by CEITs.

### Conceptual Framework

In this section, the conceptual framework for this proposed study is described. Information regarding the author’s identity and positionality concerning the focus of this study will also be provided. Additionally, a brief description of the theoretical frameworks for the study is provided.

### Identity and Positionality

The focus of this study and my positionality are consequential. My primary role is researcher, and my other roles are relevant because they inform the way I approach the proposed study. As a counselor educator and supervisor in training, I supervise students with identities different from my own and have counseled clients with different cultural identities. As a Black

Woman that is experiencing counselor educator training, I have personal experiences that may influence my interpretation or understanding of the data. This will be remediated by bracketing, which requires a researcher to take a new perspective when reviewing phenomena by placing aside their own experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Bracketing can be done and has been embraced by researchers by first describing their own experiences with the phenomenon and then focusing on the experiences of the participants with further exploration in Chapter III (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

As a counselor educator in training, it is my ethical responsibility to understand the uses of power in graduate programs that may impact the CITs and CEITs I later serve. Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) comprise the framework for my exploration of power in counselor education.

### Theoretical Frameworks

Within the context of this research, I chose two grounding theoretical frameworks: transformative learning theory (TLT) and critical race theory (CRT). CRT evolved from Critical Legal Studies, which was an analysis of the law applied by legal scholars, but it did not significantly engage or consider race (Crenshaw et al. 1995). CRT as it evolved was applied to education (Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995), specifically the centrality of race and racism in education and interrogating Whiteness within the system of White supremacy (Bell, 1995; Castagno, 2008; Mason, 2006). CRT has developed many branches, with varying principles and beliefs exploring the presence and impact of the multiple forms racism has taken in our society. Further information regarding CRT will be provided in Chapter II. The second theoretical framework utilized in this study is a transformative learning theory

Transformative learning theory was developed by Jack Mezirow (Mezirow, 1981; 1991;1996; 1997). Unlike pedagogy, this andragogical approach to learning theory focuses on the adult learner. TLT suggests that adult learners can develop transformative skills when placed in experiences and conducive learning environments that allow for a change of assumptions, beliefs, and worldviews (Mezirow, 2011). TLT and CRT together inform the focus on the manifestation of power, specifically because how power manifests may influence the learning environment, be a transformative experience and or illustrate the pervasiveness of race and racism in education in counselor educator doctoral programs.

#### Definition of Terms

Several terms and concepts will be discussed in this study. The following terms are defined below: counselor educator in training (CEIT), relational power, systemic power, structural power, students of color, and transformative learning theory (TLT).

*Counselor educator in training (CEIT)*: doctoral-level counseling students in CACREP accredited counselor education and supervision programs. This definition will be measured based on the demographic information noted by participants in this study.

*Critical race theory (CRT)*: CRT is a way to address racism and White hegemonic societal practices that silence the voices of marginalized ethnic and racial groups (Bell, 1995; Castagno, 2008; Mason, 2006).

*Power*: the ability to achieve desired social outcomes with dimensions which are rooted in organizations (Domhoff, 2006).

*Relational Power*: the subordination of one group of actors by another due to power asymmetries (Azmanova, 2018).

*Systemic Power*: the manner in which structures of the social system affect participants' life-chances (Azmanova, 2018).

*Structural Power*: how structures of the social system is enacted (Azmanova, 2018).

*Students of Color*: Students marginalized by racism and not raced as White

*Transformative learning theory (TLT)*: TLT is a form of andragogy that is specifically adult learner-focused. TLT is defined as a three-dimensional process of psychological, conventional, and behavioral change. Mezirow believed that adult learners experience disorienting dilemmas that trigger a transformation, which leads the adult learner to open and reflective change (Mezirow, 1991).

### Research Questions

Although there has been research into the learning environment and counselor educators' perceptions of preparedness after completing their doctoral study, the exploration of the manifestation of power within this setting and from the perspectives of doctoral students of color has been underexplored. Thus, the following research questions for this study include:

- How do doctoral-level students and recent graduates of color describe the manifestations of power in the context of their program and university?
- What experiences with power do counselor educators in training (CEITs) cite as influential or particularly memorable in their counseling program?



These research questions indicate the direction of this study in hopes of identifying ways power manifests in doctoral-level counselor education and how this influences the experience of students.

### Brief Overview

In short, this study provides an opportunity to explore how racialized power intersects with transformative learning experiences for counselor educators in training. This study will potentially provide the counseling profession with a more thorough understanding of equitable and just teaching practices to assist CEITs, particularly CEITs of color. This proposed study will also explore power at systemic, social, and individual levels and within the context of counselor education. Counselor education literature about counselor educator learning experiences and counseling education practices will also be explored. Furthermore, the methodology of the study will be described, and the results of this study will be explained. Finally, this study will conclude with a discussion of findings, limitations of the study, implications for counselor education, and suggestions for future counselor education research.

### Organization of the Study

The proposal for this study is presented in three chapters. The first chapter introduced the conceptual literature related to race, power and counselor education. An overview of the study was provided, as well as the statement of purpose, statement of the problem, a description of the need for the study and the conceptual framework that is shaping the study. The researcher's identity and positionality were shared in addition to the research questions and the definition of relevant terms used in this study.

In Chapter II, a review of the literature on race in the United States, higher education, counseling, and racial identity development will be presented. Chapter III will present the methodology, including participants and data collection and analysis.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of research related to counselor educators and their training. Additionally, a review of the literature and research related to the concepts of race, power, transformative learning theory, and andragogy is included. The review of literature in this chapter will further provide a rationale for the focus of this study.

### Race

This section explores the concept of race with an overview of the literature regarding race in the United States, race in education, and race in counseling and counselor educator training.

#### Race in the United States

The field of sociology generally asserts that race is a social construct (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998; Morning, 2007; Stevens, 2003) but this definition of race is not in agreement amongst all the social sciences, natural sciences, or academia. The constructivist umbrella has found varying degrees of meaning for race under its purview with differing beliefs such as race is a byproduct of social forces and or power (Jeffers, 2019; Kitcher 1999; Mallon, 2007; Outlaw 1996), biological race is an illusion (Gannett 2010), race is not real (Hochman, 2017; Morning, 2007) and race is a social kind (Diaz-Leon 2015; Haslanger 2012; Mills, 1998; Taylor 2004).

Throughout this study, race as a social construct will be discussed and used, primarily the lens of race as a social kind that may have biological inclusion criteria (Pierce, 2014).

Race beyond being a static identifier is a matter of becoming and being, something that is beyond time that exists and belongs to the future and the past (Hall, 1989). That is to say, that race, as well as other cultural identities, are ever transforming and as such are often transformed by history, culture, and power (Hall, 1989). The current conception of race and racial order, in a United States context, has been shaped by the White supremacist movement active in the United States (Christian, 2019; Ferber, 1998; Mills, 2014). Eugenic policies in the past relied upon racial studies to impute deeper meaning onto physical differences as modern White supremacist discourses utilize science to evoke authority (Ferber 1998; Panofsky & Donovan, 2017; Saini, 2019). White supremacist ideology also argues that there is a concerted effort to replace the White race through displacement and immigration (Feola, 2021). A social constructivist view of race opposes White supremacy ideology as it allows for the exploration of racism and misogyny in its construction of race (Ferber, 1998, Diaz-Leon 2015; Haslanger 2012). A strictly biological approach to race misconstrues what is historical and cultural as simply biological and genetic and as such does not dispute but upholds racism (Hall, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2015).

One potential understanding of race is through the three paradigms of ethnicity, class, and nation (Omi & Winant, 2015). In the United States, the development of the ethnicity concept was largely driven by European immigration around the turn of the 20th century which has since shifted to neoconservative approaches and colorblind ideology. An identified fault with this paradigm is to treat race as a matter of ethnicity is to understand it solely in terms of culture, in which ethnicity theories of race can regard racial status as more voluntary and consequently less

imposed (Omi & Winant, p. 22, 2015). A class understanding of race explores how race operates economically and then reproduces in economic relationships. Omi and Winant (2015) describe this perspective as limited because it reduces race's importance to a secondary aspect of class (Omi & Winant, 2015). This reduction, though, has been useful as a means for White people to ascribe race to others to maintain class. Slave owners, for example, created the category Black and then maintained the category by maximizing the number of slaves (Glenn, 2003). This was done by ascribing the race of Black to children with mixed parentage and determining that the child's identity status followed the mother, and not the father as was customary then (Glenn, 2003). This change from the custom was also a way to deny parentage of children born from the rape of enslaved Black women by their White owners. Though some owners in their wills did bequeath property to their slave children or partner which was then highly contested by their White relatives (Jones, 2009). The production of racial difference is central to the project of White supremacy and, as such, influences areas outside of individual identification (Ferber, 1998). Though the topic of race in the United States is deeply complex, with different perspectives of its conception, ontological basis, and material impact, it is also a construction that impacts education and educational curriculum.

### Race in Education

Race and its intersection with education will be discussed primarily through the lens of curriculum development and dissemination in the United States. Education is deeply involved in the politics of culture and, as such, does not simply involve the sharing of a neutral body of knowledge and information but also in knowledge formation. The educational curriculum is part of a selective tradition that is selected by someone using a specific group's vision of legitimate

knowledge (Apple, 1993). Therefore, education cannot be neutral as it is a directive process. The educational process directs students on how to engage in a specific mode of agency, how to understand the larger world and their role in it, and how to define their relationship to others (Giroux, 2010; 2011). The educational curriculum is produced out of the “cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize a-people” (Apple, 1993, p. 2). Race, racism, and exclusion can then be viewed through the ways it manifests in education curriculum design (Apple, 2004; Au & Apple, 2009). The education curriculum is a manifestation of inclusion and exclusion, which represent broader social and political struggles taking place outside of schools (Au & Apple, 2009); therefore, the curriculum is not siloed to just education in the classroom or the education field.

The field of curriculum studies has established a foundational canon of mostly White men with a Eurocentric focus, which constructs a narrative via curriculum design about the field it has tried to critique (Brown & Au, 2014). Sleeter and Grant (1991) posited that textbooks engage as they present socially constructed relationship dynamics as natural and inherent in human society. Hammond (2015) has stated that it is imperative to acknowledge the realities of students’ lived experiences and the reality of inequality. This inequality is also reproduced within the classroom and in institutions of higher education. Education institutions in the United States have had persistent issues of racial exclusion and institutional racism which then reproduce racialized exclusions in curriculum studies and curriculum design (Brown & Au, 2014). An area of racialized exclusion in design and training is evidenced in the racism in the medical and counseling field. The next section explores race in counseling and counselor educator training.

### Race in Counseling and Counselor Educator Training

Professional counseling as a service is a practice of care that is facilitated by counseling practitioners within our society and as a process that exists within society intersects with race and racism. People of color in the United States navigate social, political, and cultural systems that can create barriers to access counseling and medical support, while these systems also have historically harmed women and people of color when they sought assistance (Beck et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2015). There are histories of scientific racism from the 19th and 20th centuries including pseudoscientific methodologies like eugenics sterilization programs and craniometry of Black and Indigenous women (Renuncio-Martinez, 2007). Researchers for John Hopkins' Kennedy Krieger Institute in the 1990s conducted a study in which they studied potential lead reduction methods in homes inhabited by African American families and their children to find an inexpensive means to treat lead poisoning (Rosner & Markowitz, 2012). Some families sued stating they were not fully informed of the study, test results, or risks to themselves and their children (Buchanan & Miller, 2006). These experiences happened in the larger health services realm, but the counseling profession has also directly intersected with race and racism. In a study seeking to describe reasons for the unmet need for mental health care among Black people, a researcher examined racism as a context of the unmet need using sequential mixed methods and focus groups (Alang, 2019). One focus group participant from this study recalled how "Black people have gone into the mental health system to get help but have lost things that are important to them such as their children, jobs, and their sense of control" (Alang, 2019, p.351). This participant is referencing their lived experience and pointing to a reality of people of color engaging with counseling, mental health systems, and welfare systems, and then being stripped of autonomy or having their children removed even in cases where the state believes it is

preventing harm (Trivedi, 2019). The counseling field asserts that cultural competency and an obligation to not harm are integral to being an ethical and efficacious counselor (ACA, 2014) and yet practices which ignore the impact of race and the insidiousness of racism are still present within education and health care. People of color are more often diagnosed with disruptive behavior and severe psychotic disorders (Feisthmel & Schwartz, 2009) and as an example, several studies have indicated that the strongest predictor for a diagnosis of schizophrenia was race and not symptomatology (Schwartz & Blankenship, 2014). Just as race and racism have influenced levels of care or approaches to clinical work, it has also impacted counselor educator training.

In a study conducted by Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy (2004) to explore the career experiences of African American counselor educators, the results indicated the participants perceived their stress factors as racism, lack of mentoring, and research and publishing. Participants also reported that they believed their research on race issues was undervalued and considered a “soft discipline” (Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy, 2004, p. 266), a similar sentiment by a participant in another study who was encouraged to research a topic other than African American women (Henfield et al., 2013). This latter study conducted by Henfield et al. (2013), explored African American doctoral students’ perceptions of challenging experiences while in their counselor education programs, with the participants citing feelings of isolation and faculty misunderstandings and disrespect. One participant stated that faculty showed preferential treatment to White peers which damaged the ability to have close relationships with those peers (Henfield et al., 2013). Though attention is being given to the experiences of African American



students, with some implications able to be generalized, there is also a gap in the research of counselor educator training experiences for other racial identities.

As recently as 2015, Lerma et al. stated, that after careful research, theirs was the first study to examine the experiences of Hispanic doctoral students in counselor education (Lerma et al., 2015). They (Lerma et al., 2015) explored what experiences Hispanics who completed their doctorates in counselor education believe contributed to their success. Participants of the study reported that their family and Hispanic culture was a significant factor to their doctoral degree attainment, with their ethnic identity and cultural expectations shaped their perspectives and resiliency to navigate the program. Additionally, research conducted on Asian American counselor educators or professional counselors is limited. In recent years, research has emerged on supervising Asian international counseling students (Li et al., 2018) including a dissertation on the lived experiences of South Asian counselors (Daniel, 2021). If “counseling research gives voice to our lived experiences as counselors and serves as a buffer against marginalization within the mental health research community” (West-Olatunji, 2013) we must endeavor to explore how race and marginalization, which happens as a result of power hierarchies, manifest in our training programs.

### Power

In this section I explore power with an overview of existing concepts of power used to then present the definition of power for this study. The intersections of power and race and power and higher education in the United States will also be explored.

To understand how power can be wielded and hoarded, a grounded understanding of power is needed. There are many forms of power and many ways in which power can be wielded

as a means of control. The following concepts of power have been applied to different fields and ways of understanding individual and societal dynamics but when considered and critiqued together ground the type of power that will be explored in this study.

### Concepts of Power

#### Structuration Theory

Giddens (1984) defines structuration in *The Constitution of Society*, as a process of an individual's autonomy being influenced by structure. Structuration theory departs from other theories of power and that it also takes a look at the systems and at individual actions. Giddens claims that actors do have agency to operate within the context of rules produced by social structures, but only by behaving in a way that these structures are reinforced. Structural power can be understood as how structures of the social system is enacted (Azmanova, 2018). For Giddens (1984), "agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place... agency implies power" (p. 9). Giddens explores what he calls the dialectic of control, that those who are subordinate or inferior power positions can influence the activities of their superiors (Giddens, 1984; 1991). Relational power and the subordination of one group of actors by another due to power asymmetries (Azmanova, 2018), will be applied as a means of understanding Giddens power including individual actions.

The core of structuration theory is in three concepts: structure, system and duality of structure. The structures can be divided into three parts signification, legitimation and domination and have no stability outside human action because they are socially constructed and there is also a duality of structure (Giddens, 1984). Duality of structure is the supposition that

rules and resources used in the production and reproduction of social action are also the means of system reproduction (Giddens, 1984). Giddens theory, though one of the earliest on structuration has received significant criticism. Notable, from Craib (1992) there are critiques of Giddens from a methodological, theoretical and psychoanalytic lens. Particularly, that Giddens in defining the theory is not eclectic enough, an argument counter to common critiques of Giddens which claim structuration is “too soft” (Graaff, 1993, p. 36). Another point of critique is that the theory was based on faulty analogies with too much emphasis on human volunteerism and an unclear presentation of what is meant by structure (Graaff, 1993). Part of this critique is rooted in the fact that Giddens stopped working on structuration in the ways he had done previously, with certain arguments seemingly switching frameworks (Bertilsson, 1984). Structuration is not an infallible theory but provides a theoretical understanding of power, structure and systems that can be bridged from one social theory of power deeply invested in structures to other theories and understandings of power.

### Class-Domination Theory of Power

William G. Domhoff developed and presented his Class-Domination Theory of Power in 1967 in his work *Who Rules America*. A central claim of the theory is that those who have the money or income-producing land, and business are the ones in power (Domhoff, 2006). Domhoff adopts Wrong’s definition of power as “the capacity of some persons to produce intended and foreseen effects on others” and Domhoff states this definition is appropriate because it allows for application with other forms of power (1995, p. x). Domhoff then expands this definition to include that power is having the ability to achieve desired social outcomes with dimensions which are rooted in organizations (Domhoff, 2006). This definition of power is similar to what

Azmanova would describe as systemic power the manner in which structures of the social system affect participants' life-chances and structural power, how structures of the social system is enacted (018).

Foucault argued if we want to understand how power operates, we should look at the margins, self-understandings, and struggles of those whom powerful groups in society have cast out (Foucault, 1982). Domhoff takes an alternative approach with a focus on the powerful, this theory claims there are three primary indicators of power, which can be consolidated into three questions, who benefits, who governs, and who wins (1967). Domhoff's approach is to instead look at who is well connected with institutions and government and there, power can be explored.

The key to Domhoff's (1967) theory is that those who have the money have the power and regardless of different interests will collaborate to retain domination. Domination is maintained by the ownership-based social upper-class leadership group, the power elite, those who serve as directors or trustees in profit and non-profit institutions controlled by the corporate community (Domhoff, 2006). Domhoff adopts the concept of the power elite from C. Wright Mills (1956) *The Power Elite*. Wright Mills claimed corporate, government, and military elites possess a dominant social role which was overlooked in other popular views of power such as Marxist views which claimed the state was the instrument of domination (1956). Wright Mills, in evolving this Marxist view, claimed instead of politicians acting solely on behalf of the state, they were under command of these elites (1956).

The power elite uses their power to develop and maintain institutions to later pass on to their children, assimilating new wealthy people (Domhoff, 2006). The control of corporations is

a key benefit to being a member of the power elite as corporations are a foremost method of generating and holding wealth in the United States (Domhoff, 2006). Additionally, members of the power elite go to elite schools, and these elite educational experiences are also a part of maintaining power and assimilating new wealthy people (Zweigenhaft, 2006).

Domhoff's Class Domination Theory of Power (2006) is crucial to understanding the use of power that will be used and explored in this study. Domhoff's theory highlights how the power elite, decision-makers, and institutions can influence policy, to encourage social cohesion, solidarity, and strength of group members is important from a class-domination perspective. This social cohesion and how this power manifests and is experienced in a classroom does not happen in a vacuum but also through the lens of a class-domination theory power, primarily due to the classroom being situated within a higher education institution.

### Power and Race

Omi and Winant (2015), asserted that we cannot dismiss race as a category of social analysis, we must recognize that race is not fixed but is "constantly being transformed by political struggle" (p. 110). If race is constantly being transformed by political struggle, a search for a type of social and political power, then racism is aimed at creating and maintaining structures of domination based on conceptions of race (Omi & Winant, 2015). One example of this racial transformation due to political struggle is through assimilation into Whiteness in the United States such as with the Jewish community (Brodin, 1998; Goldstein, 2006). In all of this, power is present in social relations of all kinds. The relationship between race, racism, and social conflicts is circular, as race is a concept that signifies and is constructed by social conflicts and interests, while also serving as the foundation for the conflicts by assigning value to different

types of human bodies (Hall, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2015). Ferber argues, if race is represented as the given foundation to power, the relations of power which constitute race are further obscured (Ferber, 1989). Even if obscured, Glenn (2003) argues power is legitimized in the assumptions and practices of those engaging in this type of political struggle. Therefore, challenging the hierarchies of race also requires challenging everyday assumptions (Glenn, 2003). The challenge of everyday assumptions, as a means to disrupt or interrogate power also connects to other understandings of race and power, particularly the Racial Contract.

Mills (1997) described the Racial Contract as an exploitation contract and theorizes the Racial Contract creates a group of White and a group of non-Whites using shifting race criteria. This contract, which is a set of agreements, formal and informal, between the members of the White group of people, is then used to determine rules, norms, and access depending on what particular variety of non-White the other groups are (Mills, 1997). The access and power that was then available to those determined as non-White was diminished and delegitimated (Mills, 1997). Access available to those deemed as non-White can be seen in the ways power and race manifest in the US education system.

### Power and Education

Macedo (2018) argued teacher education in the United States has created a system that rewards students for reproducing “dominant mechanisms designed to produce power asymmetries along the lines of race, gender, class, culture, and ethnicity” (p. 12). Schools are in constant relationship with other institutions that are unequal and exist through the relations with other more powerful institutions (Apple, 1995). Some schools employ local law enforcement officers through employment partnerships with police departments and as result, engage in

relationship with the powerful prison industrial complex. Handcuffs in Hallways: The State of Policing in Chicago Public Schools, a report published in 2017 by the Shriver Center on Poverty Law, states that the presence of police officers in school increases the likelihood that a student will be referred to law enforcement for adolescent behavior and “Poor policing within schools, therefore, puts students on the fast track to the school-to-prison pipeline” (Mbekeani-Wiley, 2017, p.4 ). Higher education institutions also participate in policing, in partnering with local police departments as well as creating their own robust private campus and neighborhood policing. For example, the University of Chicago Police Department is one that has the power to arrest and detain and patrols the university campus as well as surrounding areas (University of Chicago Police Department, 2019). The relationships between schools, higher education institutions and more powerful partners, combine to further concentrate power and generate structural inequalities of power and access. These inequalities are also reinforced and then reproduced by schools and other institutions (Apple 1995, 2003).

### Critical Race Theory

This section will include a brief review of the literature regarding critical race theory (CRT), CRT’s development, and recent discourse on CRT in schools and higher education. CRT will be explored as it bridges literature on race, racism, and its embeddedness in society and education.

### Theory Development

Critical race theory is a social scientific approach that emerged out of the criticisms of the critical legal studies field and radical feminisms (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) grounded in

eradicating all forms of racism, racial subordination, and discrimination (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Two prominent figures of CRT are Derrick Bell and Kimberle Crenshaw, legal scholars that had begun to counter the prominent legal discourse of civil rights. Legal scholars began to feel limited as conversations in critical theory and legal studies removed race and racism as a factor (Crenshaw, 2002). Bell, Crenshaw, and other scholars began noting that despite civil rights legislation material conditions had not improved for African Americans (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). In 1980, Bell argued that the *Brown v. The Board of Education* decision was not about racial inequality being a moral failing, but that Whites “in policy making positions [were] able to see the economic and political advances at home and abroad that would follow segregation” (p. 524). Bell elaborates that interests converged in the legal decision due to the economic benefit of the decision, the credibility the US would gain against communism, and the reassurance to African Americans that equality and freedom could be afforded to them as well (1980). In interest convergence “the interests of Blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of Whites” (Bell, 1980, p. 523) and becomes a key understanding in critical race theory. Delgado and Stefancic (2012) add to the understanding of CRT and claim there are four tenets, it is based on the premise of the social construction of race, “race is ordinary, not an aberrational” (p. 7), the incorporation of intersectionality, and the understanding that racism serves a purpose. Critical race theory also accounts for what Ferber (1998) calls racial difference in line with Omi and Winant’s (2015) understanding of race through an economic lens in its concept of differential racialization. CRT understands differential racialization as how society racializes different marginalized groups as needs shift of society or the economy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). As CRT is developed and utilized by



different communities it continues to provide a lens to examine how social systems work (Tate, 1994) and as such has been transformed and applied in Latino/a, Tribal, and Asian critical race theory (Yosso, 2006) and its adoption in education. Applying a critical race theory framework with this qualitative study, I aim to legitimize the focus on race and ground the use of phenomenology as the research methodology and design in this study.

### Transformative Learning Theory

In this section, a discussion of Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) will be provided. This section will include a brief review of the literature regarding TLT in education, TLT's development, and its limitations. This study is not looking to explore the application of TLT in the participants' doctoral programs but information on the theory will be provided to ground the experiences of the participants within their learning environments.

#### Theory Development

Transformative Learning Theory is a learning theory with an emphasis on adult learning developed by Jack Mezirow (1991). TLT is a three-faceted process that includes psychological, conventional, and behavioral change (Mezirow 1991, 2009). Mezirow (2009) has described the transformative learning process as a form of learning that transforms harmful frames of reference to be more inclusive, open, and emotionally able to change. One of the primary factors of TLT is the "disorienting dilemma." Mezirow (1991, 2009) notes that the disorienting dilemma is an experience or grouping of experiences that do not fit an individual's current beliefs or knowledge about the world. After a transformation, individuals see themselves and their world in a clearer manner, one in which they can understand themselves and their learning better because their

assumptions and outlook are modified to better fit their reality or context (Howie & Bagnall, 2015). These modified beliefs and knowledge then shift one's worldview and ultimately lead the individual to engage in critical reflection (Mälkki, 2012; Mezirow, 2009). Mezirow theorizes critical reflection is needed to shift frames of reference by interrogating our interpretations, assumptions, and beliefs which is an indispensable dimension of learning for adapting to change (Mezirow, 1997). Further, critical reflection is a fundamental aspect of "effective collaborative problem posing and solving" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 9) which is a necessary component to learning.

Educators are the primary facilitators of TLT as they are responsible for creating and maintaining spaces and opportunities for transformative learning for their students as the disorienting dilemma may frequently occur in academic learning environments (Mezirow, 1991, 2009). TLT provides an opportunity for educators to interrogate the environments they are creating in their classrooms and encourages intentional engagement with their students' previously held assumptions and perspectives. This study is exploring students' experiences with power and therefore it was necessary to review a primary theory of learning's development and applicability to higher education.

### Counselor Educator Education

This section is an overview of the education and standards for doctoral students who are training to be counselor educators. This section will also include research directly related to counselor educators' training and experiences.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program is the accreditation body for counseling education developed in the 1960s (CACREP, 2016) and has created and continues to develop standards for master's and doctoral-level counseling education

programs. For this proposed study, attention will be focused on the doctorate-level program standards provided by CACREP. The doctorate-level program standards list specific standards for the following areas of professional identity: counseling, supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy (CACREP, 2016). These five doctoral core areas represent the foundational knowledge required of doctoral graduates. Within each area are categories in which specific standards are noted: these include educational standards, practice standards, and professional standards. What is consistently required in all specialty areas is an emphasis on developing ethical and culturally relevant strategies and practices (CACREP, 2016); this specific emphasis on cultural integration is relevant to the focus of the study.

### Chapter Summary

There is a need in the counseling education profession to explore the use of power, specifically the way power intersects with counselor educator training and development. Much of the research related to counselor educator training and development reflects students' general preparedness and satisfaction with their programs (Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Swank & Houseknecht, 2019; Thacker & Minton, 2021), but do not address CEITs' experiences with power. This proposed study aims to contribute to the existing literature regarding counselor education training, while also providing context regarding the use and manifestations of power in counselor educator programs which has not been extensively studied in the field of counselor education. The following chapter will discuss the planned methodology for this dissertation study.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore how CES doctoral students and recent graduates of color experience and describe the uses of power in their program. I aim to bridge the gap in understanding how uses of power may influence a student's experiences with power. This chapter is divided into eight sections. The first section provides a description and exploration of phenomenological theory and the methodology of this qualitative inquiry. The second section discusses participant recruitment and selection. The third section outlines the context of the research setting. The fourth section describes the plans for and process of data collection. The fifth section discusses the data analysis procedures. The sixth section describes the potential benefits and risks of study participation. The seventh and final section presents my positionality statement and background of personal interest for this study as strategies for trustworthiness.

#### Rationale for Research Approach

A qualitative research design best fits this study and the developed research questions to explore the manifestation and experiences of power for doctoral students of color in counselor education and supervision programs. Qualitative research is useful when we want to understand the contexts in which participants in a study address a problem, this context recognizes that we cannot always separate people from the context (Creswell, 2018).

## Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study include:

1. How do counselor educators in training (CEITs) of color describe the manifestations of power in the context of their program and university?
2. What experiences with power do counselor educators in training (CEITs) cite as most influential in their counseling program?

## Methodology

To better understand another's experience, we first must inquire about their experience, elevate their voice, and listen intently to their narrative. Van Manen described the basic purpose of phenomenology as a way to "grasp the very nature of the thing," (Van Manen, 1990, p. 177). Presenting the stories of the participants, with their assigned contexts, in community with other participants, and maintaining the integrity of their words requires researchers to grasp how the participants are constructing meaning and describing those meanings (van Manen, 1990).

### Phenomenological Research Design

In phenomenology, the study describes the common meaning for individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a researcher, it is the perspective of the participant that captures interest (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003) in regard to their perception and not diminishing their voice in the analysis. It is not the role of the researcher to explain but rather to describe the participants' impressions, understandings, and feelings that are included and relevant, not just their behavior or reactions noted by the researcher. The goal of

this study's phenomenological analysis was to provide depth, and complexity to the participant's narrative and for the researcher to strive to understand, interrogate, and then deconstruct the phenomenon under investigation (Bhattacharya, 2017). As we are exploring how power has manifested and been experienced by the participants my research questions are open and intended to understand their interaction with this phenomenon.

### Participant Recruitment and Selection

Prior to participant recruitment and data collection, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of my university received and approved the study. Potential participants were emailed (Appendix B) via a listserv of counselor educators and supervisors, which had been used for professional event promotion, hiring within CES and study recruitment and subscribers potentially met the inclusion checkpoints. Other listservs included counseling group practices and researcher university counseling department listserv. I purposefully chose a virtual option for interviewing as a result of the changes in in-person interaction and engagement due to Covid-19. Participation in the study was voluntary and there were no incentives provided. To determine qualifications and obtain consent from participants, I conducted initial survey screenings (Appendix D) via Qualtrics to verify that all participants meet the following inclusion checkpoints: (a) currently enrolled in or completed a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision within the last two years, (b) are willing to discuss attitudes and perceptions regarding power in relation to faculty and peers in an interview, (c) identify as a non-White person of color, and (d) be willing to discuss how their identities and the identities of those using the power was experienced. Participant length in the program is an excluding factor as the study will target the lived experiences of students with more than two semesters in the program. Participants who

completed the survey and met the criteria, were contacted by the researcher for scheduling and for most participants we could not align schedules for a virtual focus-group meeting. The participant recruitment shifted, with IRB approval, as the sample size was refined, and data collection method changed. The primary change in recruitment messaging and later data collection procedures, was a change from recruiting for focus groups and a larger sample size, to recruiting for individual interviews and a smaller sample size. This smaller sample size is justified as researchers using a qualitative design have used a participant sample as small as one individual (Boddy, 2016) or slightly larger in phenomenology with a heterogeneous sample of three to four participants (Creswell & Poth, 2013).

I communicated the change in study structure and data collection procedures to all participants who had be in contact for scheduling (Appendix F), to ensure they were informed of the scope of the project and options to discuss further should they choose to cease involvement or had questions. I continued with updated recruitment messaging via the listservs and other email outreach. I reviewed the CACREP website and emailed institutions that had a doctoral CES program and a listed program contact. For professional courtesy, each program I contacted I introduced myself, briefly summarized the study and asked if they would be able to send a recruitment email to their department and students (Appendix G) and if so, I would send the recruitment letter in a separate email. Full recruitment emails were not sent to these programs as of the 24 emailed, there were no responses.

### Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study occurred through individual interviews designed to explore participants experiences of power. At the start of the online meeting, participants were given an

electronic informed consent document to review alone and reviewed verbally with the researcher. The informed consent document included the processes for protecting confidentiality: (a) the use of pseudonyms, (b) describing their institution by type and not by name (c) the use of a password-protected video recorder, computer, and storage, (d) the physical protection in place for the laptop and other physical documents (e) all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file on a device that only I use, (f) video recordings will be made and stored on a physical device not uploaded to a “cloud” and accessed only by the investigator for transcription and data analysis. All video recordings are securely retained and will be deleted from the external hard drive, three years after completion of the research.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually using the web-based cloud conferencing application Microsoft Teams. Together, the participants and I began gathering the qualitative data with the responses to the developed open-ended questions. Individual interviews allowed for the opportunity to "collect open-ended data, to explore participant thoughts, feelings and beliefs about a particular topic and to delve deeply into personal and sometimes sensitive issues" (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). As the researcher, when I communicated the informed consent process, I emphasized confidentiality procedures that I will undertake regarding the data analysis as well as stressed the importance of confidentiality during the data collection. Additionally, meeting virtually can present unique security concerns (Greene, 2020). Therefore, I did not use open Wi-Fi, adjusted the settings to restrict access and prevent anyone but the participant from joining the meeting and turned on the waiting room, to ensure I allowed in the correct participant. All transcriptions, survey responses, video recordings and notes were de-identified with a key stored separately and were stored on an external hard drive and not on any



cloud servers. Further, all data collected was only accessed and accessible by the researcher and when not in use was securely locked and stored. All video recordings remain securely retained and will be deleted from the external hard drive, three years after completion of the research.

### Data Analysis Procedures

The modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method as described by Moustakas (1994), and the simplified version of Moustakas by Creswell and Poth (2018) was employed in analyzing participants' words. I began with a full description of my own experience of the phenomenon and then bracketed them throughout the study to be intentional and give attention to the participants and their disclosures in the study (Van Manen, 1990) and reflected by making voice notes to myself. Each interview was recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Due to the small participant sample size and to protect the confidentiality of the participants, each was given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym to be used throughout the study. I then immersed myself into the data by first reading through the transcript and removing or altering information that may have identified the participants this included names of faculty or institutions that may have been mentioned. I then listened to the recordings, while reading and editing each transcription multiple times, to remove information that was irrelevant and repetitive. This included removal of filler words such as "um" and "like" and consecutive repeating words such as "okay, okay." This was done to ensure the transcript was readable and the information clear. After removing filler words, I continued to review solely for accuracy in the transcription by reviewing the recording and transcription to ensure correct phrasing, word usage, and editing similar sounding words.

I then began phenomenological reduction, by slowing down and dwelling on the narrative and identifying significant statements and from them meaning units or ideas of the data (Moustakas, 1994). This was guided by noting the patterns in the participants description of how they experienced power and how power manifested in their programs. With the use of horizontalization, each statement by participants were given equal value as having equal worth, representing a segment of meaning. I highlighted the significant statements in the transcription using the Highlight and Comment feature in Microsoft Word and placing them into an Excel sheet for tracking. Using the question “what did the participants experience?” as a guide I grouped the significant statements together based on similarities in content or message. Throughout the grouping, I continued to shift and rearrange groupings to get to clearer answers to the question. These codes of the responses were then placed into broader themes of information, these themes were reviewed, defined, named and renamed to ensure they best reflected the data. Once the themes emerged it then allowed for creation of a textural description. The textural description is “the what” the participants in the study experienced regarding power perceptions. The generation of themes and textural description can also address divergent participant experiences as they may be potentially significant in part due to its divergence (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The structural description was then added where I constructed “the how” of their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The structural and textural descriptions of all participants were synthesized to inform the composite description, which emphasized the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

### Benefits and Risks of Study Participation

Potential risks for the participants were minimal but may have included discomfort, distress, reminders of prior trauma or anxiety. The participants as needed were given information on national resources for mental health, anxiety coping skills handouts, the opportunity to virtually step away from the interview and return if needed or desired. Participants were able to take breaks at any point in the data collection and were able to withdraw from the study if desired, none did. Perceptions among doctoral students and recent graduates of color regarding their experiences in higher education related to power can provide needed information that may highlight spaces for increased cultural competency, culturally responsive teaching, and potential incorporation of critical race theory. Existing literature that has shaped the changes in programs typically explores student experiences in a specific field (Protivnak & Foss, 2009) and their experiences or their overall satisfaction (Fernando & Hulse-Killacky, 2005) in a program without further exploration into the use of power.

### Evaluating Qualitative Rigor

Guba and Lincoln (1989) explored how qualitative research has over time developed two sets of criteria for rigor, methodological and data based. The methodological criteria are aimed at assessing how the researcher adheres to standards and assuring the credibility of data and the data-based criteria (Lincoln, 2015). Guba and Lincoln (1989) also found what they considered a unique problem in the rigor and ethics of constructivist inquiry, the selection of materials. That when a researcher is choosing which materials to work with, especially digital content, another researcher may be unable to determine which data material was chosen and why (Guba and

Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln, 2015). As I will be managing the data materials digitally, it is imperative that I am clear in my rationale of the interpretation and analysis as well as the storage and maintenance of the data. It is important that I continue to consider the interpretation and presentation of the data with fairness and balance.

### Strategies of Trustworthiness

Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest four criteria to establish trustworthiness, being credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Maintaining credibility is to ensure the study measures what is intended and “is a true reflection of the social reality of the participants” (Maher et.al, 2018, p. 3) which can be accomplished by “prolonged engagement” (Maher et.al, 2018, p. 3). Member checks can give the participants the opportunity to challenge misinterpretations of the data and volunteer additional information garnered from the check in as a means of establishing credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). A concern of member checking is that they may cause unintended harm to participants (Hallet, 2012), especially due to the power imbalance with me as the researcher (Candela, 2019). My study analyzed data from separate interviews, though addressing the same phenomenon the specific participants, context, and data was considered and therefore a member check was not implemented (Hallet, 2012).

Transferability accounts for the ability for information to be transferred to other contexts or generalized, while dependability requires a clear detailing of the process so that the line of inquiry could be repeated within the same constructs. Lastly, confirmability where researcher bias is minimized and decentered in the interpretation and analysis, this was obtained through research reflective journal and peer debriefing. All evidence of trustworthiness will be further explored within Chapter IV.

### Researcher Role

As a researcher that has been enrolled in a graduate program and has had interactions with faculty and peers this is an experience similar to my participants. I am intending to have a broad outreach for participants and will be mindful of how institution type or participant experiences might affect the interview process. My goal is to establish rapport with the participants and work to establish trust with the participants so that they are forthright and participative. I will also account for any identity connections with the participants, along with class, race, gender or otherwise that might influence my interpretation of their data materials.

### Positionality Statement

I am a Black Woman and a second-year doctoral candidate pursuing a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision. I have a Master of Education in Counseling with a focus in College Counseling and Student Affairs. During my doctoral degree program, I have completed two supervision internships and two teaching internships. Prior to my doctoral work, my professional career consisted of student affairs and higher education student services. This included career services, working with offices that served multicultural students, lower-income students, first-generation students, and adult learners. These experiences strengthened my desire to support students of color while also highlighting the power dynamics embedded in the roles as I have served as an educator, supervisor, or administrator.

A common thread throughout my reflection is that I was interested in how the experiences in personal and academic settings were influencing the success or progress of college students. The focus of interest was also specifically regarding students of color/students

not raced as White, because of the intersections of identity in society and also the overwhelming Whiteness in the counseling field. Narrowing this focus, I wondered how students may experience flexes of power significantly different from their peers due to their own race, gender identity or expression, ability, or class, and other cultural identifiers. This interest was further informed by my own experiences with this phenomenon, particularly how power was wielded against me by peers and faculty, which will be further discussed with bracketing in the data analysis and collection sections.

#### Limitations, Delimitations

The study will consist of an exploration of the perceptions and experiences of the participants. The study will include doctoral-level CEITs and recent graduates of color. This study is limited to doctoral-level CES students and recent graduates who are uniquely positioned to explore power due to the nature of the preparation programs and role collapse. The study will have an over-representation of CEIT's of color in relation to the larger counseling field because it focuses specifically on students of color. Racial identity development and saliency vary for individuals, and this may be a limitation for making broad claims along racial lines. Specific decisions for participant criteria were made during the study design including limiting participants to people of color currently enrolled or recently graduated from a CACREP accredited counselor education doctoral program. The study was designed to be small in size due to the nature of qualitative and phenomenological inquiry with sizes from 1 to 25 (Boddy, 2016; Polkinghorne, 1989).

## Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a rationale for the use of phenomenological inquiry into the experiences of CEITs of color. This chapter also discussed the methodology of the qualitative inquiry, the process of participant recruitment and selection, the process of data collection, the data analysis procedures, and the benefits and risks for study participants. I then presented my positionality statement and background of personal interest for this study. The data will be presented and explored in Chapter IV.

## IV. RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore how doctoral students of color describe and experience power in their counselor education programs. The gap in literature exploring this phenomenon and the various understandings of power furthered my interest in investigating this phenomenon. A qualitative framework was used to design my study using the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of analysis which guided the data collection and subsequent explication (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). To study how doctoral students of color experience and describe power, my research framework was developed with two primary questions:

- How do doctoral-level students in counselor education and supervision programs and recent graduates of color describe the manifestations of power in the context of their program and university?
- What experiences with power do counselor educators in training (CEITs) cite as influential or particularly memorable in their doctoral counselor education program?

Chapter IV first includes a summary of the data analysis procedures for the study. The report of the results includes composite themes, subthemes, and the composite structural and textual description of the essence of the participants' experiences with power. Next, the elements of the study that provide evidence of trustworthiness are summarized, concluding with a discussion of



the findings in relation to the two research questions. A discussion of additional findings is included to end the chapter.

### Summary of Data Analysis Procedures

I used the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method as described by Moustakas (1994) and the simplified version of Moustakas by Creswell and Poth (2018) in analyzing participants' narratives gathered via virtual 60-minute interviews. I began with describing and bracketing my own thoughts and experiences to center the participants and their disclosures in the study. I then reviewed the transcripts with intelligent transcription methods. This includes removal of filler words such as "you know" "um" and "like" I also removed repeating words such as "okay so, okay so what happened." This was done to ensure the transcript was readable and the information clear. I then compiled a list of significant statements from the interview that detailed the participants' experiences of the perceptions around power in their experiences with peers and faculty. I developed a list of the ideas and meaning units of all the participants' responses. These ideas were placed into broader themes of information, which allowed for creation of a textural description, considered the "what" of the experience, and the structural description, which is the "how" of their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The structural and textural descriptions from all of the participants were synthesized to inform the composite description, which emphasized the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Throughout all the methodological procedures of phenomenology, I also considered the lens of critical race theory. Specifically, by analyzing the data with the approach I was exploring counter narratives (Delgado, 2000) of the participants and their interactions with conditions of

marginality (Foucault, 1982) which also allowed for seeing who governs and who wins (Domhoff, 1967) within the participants experiences.

### Summary of Participants

The results for my phenomenological study were developed through data collected from three virtual interviews with current doctoral students of color. Criterion sampling helped refine the population for my study and further promoted the reach to students who had experienced the phenomenon. I only included participants who: (a) were currently enrolled in or completed a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision within the last two years, (b) were willing to discuss attitudes and perceptions regarding power in relation to faculty and peers in an interview (c) identified as a non-White person of color, and (d) be willing to discuss how their identities and the identities of those using the power was experienced.

The sample of three included two women and one man; the participants ranged in age from 28 to 33. One of the participants identified as Asian and the other two as Black. The recent graduates were in the inclusion criteria, all of the participants were currently enrolled in their doctoral programs. None of the participants shared the same master's program and all were enrolled into different CES programs which provided diverse perspectives, though all three shared being currently enrolled in a CACREP accredited CES doctoral program. Participants chose their own pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality. Additionally, a table including the demographic information for each participant is included as a reference (see Table 1).

Table 1  
Participant Demographics

Participant	Age	Gender Identity	Racial Identity	University Type	Degree Title	Carnegie Classification
Paula	28	Woman	Black	Public	PhD in Education, emphasis in Counseling	Research Doctoral: Professional-dominant
Carlton	33	Man	Black	Public	Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision	Research Doctoral: Comprehensive programs
Shine	28	Woman	Asian	Public	Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Counseling	Research Doctoral: Comprehensive programs

#### Textural/Structural Descriptions

While analyzing the data, I kept the question in mind “what did the participants experience?” (Creswell, 2013). Using this question as a guide I grouped the significant statements together based on similarities in content or message. Throughout the grouping process, I continued to shift and rearrange groupings of ideas to get to a clearer answer to the question. For example, I reviewed the participants statements in relation to their statements and other participants statements and then grouped them together and attempted to identify the theme. As themes were gathered from the data, later the textural description emerged. The textural description is “the what” the participants in the study experienced regarding power perceptions. The structural description is then added where I construct “the how” of their

experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The structural and textural descriptions of all participants were synthesized to inform the composite description, which emphasizes the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

### Textural, Structural and Textural/Structural Description of Participants

#### Textural Description for Carlton

Carlton is unique in the study as he is the only man. Carlton emphasizes his identity as a Black man as central to his desire to become a counselor educator and his approach to advocacy. Carlton stated how his gender identity at times influenced his comfort in challenging power and his choice to isolate. Carlton identifies as an existential counselor, and this informs his approach to his professional and personal life. Carlton identified experiences with the phenomenon in his role as a doctoral student, in classes and interactions with peers and faculty and also as a graduate assistant working with master's level counselors in training.

#### Structural Description for Carlton

Carlton experienced self-imposed isolation due to experiences with power within his program and the actions of his instructors. Carlton described this isolation as a protective attempt to not overwhelm himself with navigating emotionally harmful interactions and experiences. Carlton described a primary experience with power that happened in his multicultural class with a peer and with the instructor. Specifically, a peer engaged in a use of gender and race-based power that harmed him and other classmates of color and instead of the instructor, who was a

woman of color, attending to him and the other students of color, the instructor attended to the White woman classmate. Carlton details how the instructor then tried to use her power and control to assign a “pointless” reflection.

Carlton shared another experience with power which was related to this previous incident as he details how the aftermath spilled over into another class. Carlton reports emotions were heightened after the class and admittedly him and some classmates may have been trying to regulate their emotions by eating, engaging with work on their laptops or having short side conversations. Carlton describes a White man faculty member who exercised his power based in gender, race, and position to scold, yell and belittle him and his classmates instead of check-in with them about what caused the change in behaviors. After these events, Carlton ceased engaging with those two faculty members. Carlton did later though, attempt to use his power positively by advocating for masters students, specifically in ensuring supports for Masters students within their clinical training.

#### Textural/Structural Description for Carlton

While in his CES program, Carlton experienced power used negatively by his peers and faculty. During his interview, Carlton did not anticipate re-engaging as he once had in his first year, partially because of preparing to propose his dissertation and being done with the majority of his classes but was resolute in trying to use his power positively. Carlton, as an existential counselor found value in the principle of “kill your reputation” to encourage him to use his own power positively without worry of the consequences. Carlton as a Black man had anticipated potential microaggressions as he entered into the program, but he had been assured by a faculty

member within his program that he and his cohort would be treated as colleagues and new professionals and did not anticipate being disrespected by instructors and peers.

### Textural Description for Paula

Paula is unique in the study as she was the furthest along in her CES program and in her dissertation candidacy set to defend and graduate in the Spring of 2022. Paula emphasized this change in her academic career as a catalyst to decrease engagement with faculty, peers or issues that were overwhelming or time consuming. Paula's experience in her master's program, particularly the multicultural counseling class informed some of the experiences with power she later described and later informed her experiences within her multicultural class within her CES program. Paula identified experiences with the phenomenon in her role as a doctoral student, in classes and interactions with peers and faculty, as a research assistant and as a doctoral representative on a department committee.

### Structural Description for Paula

Paula described how she saw power used by her cohort mates in her master's programs in the multicultural class, primarily by weaponizing white fragility and white guilt. Paula used the experiences within this course to adjust her engagement and interaction with peers in her doctoral multicultural class. Specifically, Paula found she used her power more to challenge her peers and their statements. Paula also identified an experience with power where she was a research assistant with someone outside of her department who engaged in boundary crossing and was using his power to collapse Paula's roles. Paula also described an experience with power that happened over a longer course of time than the other participants. Paula described how she

organized writing a letter to her department about it not being aligned with its social justice values and a faculty member using his power to deflect, avoid accountability and then later avoided interactions with Paula by having his camera off when she attended faculty meetings as the doctoral leadership and service committee chair.

#### Textural/Structural Description for Paula

Paula discussed how experiences with power shaped her feelings about her master's program and her outlook regarding her doctoral program. Paula did describe feeling greater trust with her doctoral peers due to seeing them work to change and grow from negative behaviors. Paula also discussed concerns regarding potential retaliation and joked that perhaps the incident with her instructor was why she hadn't gotten hired yet in her search for a position in counselor education. Paula described experiences with power that were beyond being interpersonal or just from one instructor and described experiences that were also informed or bolstered by inaction or action of individuals within her program.

#### Textural Description for Shine

Shine is unique in the study as she is Asian and the other two participants are Black. Shine is an international student and emphasizes this identity as informing her understanding of race in the US and her own experiences with race. She identified experiences with the phenomenon in her role as a doctoral student, in classes and interactions with peers and faculty and also as an instructor teaching masters level counselors in training.

### Structural Description for Shine

Shine described how she saw power used by her cohort mates while they were interacting with master's students regarding scheduling and supervision. Shine also identified an experience with power where she was given information by a faculty member that her peers weren't, and it placed her in a compromising position with what to do with the information. Unlike the other participants, Shine also gave an example of power that had not happened to or been observed by her, but rather reported to her by an older classmate. Shine repeatedly discussed ways power could be used positively and how she attempted to do so, such as providing greater choice and flexibility to her students.

### Textural/Structural Description for Shine

Shine's experiences with power used negatively limited her sense of agency and autonomy. Throughout her interview, she talked about the importance of flexibility and shared power with the students she teaches. In addition, Shine discussed her struggle with being given information by an instructor she shouldn't have received and trying to find support to navigate through meeting with her department chair. Shine continued to remain engaged in her program and communicative with peers or faculty who she noticed "misused" power.

### Composite Description for Participants

Currently, the participants in this research study are enrolled in CACREP accredited counselor education and supervision programs. Throughout the interview process, the participants identified experiences with power they felt were negative and positive and shared their experiences of the negative and positive power they encountered as a doctoral student in their CES program. Participants felt that the negative experiences were uncomfortable and



frustrating to encounter, while identified positive experiences were typically their own attempts at using power. The most common experiences of power were encountered in situations in which others held status or position and the most common manifestation was power being used in a negative and limiting manner.

For example, Carlton detailed an experience with a faculty member yelling at him and his class for behavior the faculty member deemed inappropriate and remarked that they needed to do as they were told due to their positions as doctoral students. This is just an example of the experiences with power that were used and or influenced by position and status. Another example is Paula during her interview shared how a faculty member in her program was unwilling to acknowledge the power he held within the program even though he wielded it visibly and frequently. Some participants experienced frustration with their peers and instructors in their classes and chose to disengage or isolate. They felt that certain people and interactions within the classroom or program environment had become tense and uncomfortable.

When the interviewer asked the following question, “What have you learned about how to engage in your CES program due to how power is used?” All the participants answered that the experiences with power shifted how they engaged with their program. Some of the participants discussed how the shift coincided with their placement in the program. For example, Paula stated as a student preparing to exit the program, she had greater priorities to navigate. Also, Carlton stated his reduction of time on campus due to his placement in the program was a part of the ability to engage less. All participants described instances of how their own cultural identity and the cultural identity of those who used power, informed how they perceived the use.

## Composite Themes

The result of the analysis of the data is represented by four composite themes and eight subthemes. The themes were gathered from the horizons in the transcript, along with the textural and structural descriptions of the participants' experiences. Specifically, through increased saturation with the data, the number of themes decreased from nine to four through combining and designating certain themes as subthemes. The four themes generated from the three interviews are:

1. Power is relational and exclusionary with the subthemes that the use of power is informed by cultural identities and power may manifest in a multicultural class and related values context due to the nature of the content of the course.
2. Power in CES programs is used by those with positions or status of authority and is hierarchical and dynamic.
3. Experiencing power prompts feelings (overwhelmed, empower, exhaustion) and internal states of being (avoidance, self-isolation) that are positive and negative dependent on use of power, with subthemes of challenging power and retaliation for challenging power.
4. Power can be both detrimental and productive in its use and acknowledgement.

### Description of Composite Themes

Reported below are the descriptions of the four composite themes and eight subthemes from the analysis of the three transcribed interviews. Verbatim descriptions of incidents in which participants experienced the enactment or presence of power in particular ways and circumstances are presented. An explanation of the four themes and eight subthemes and direct

quotes from the participants are shared. Themes are denoted using a number and subthemes as the theme number and then in alphabetical listing, always starting with a.

### Theme 1: Power is Relational and Exclusionary

Power is relational and exclusionary, and the nature of the relationship influences the experience of power. Participants' stories included descriptions of power as a relationship between the person acting and the person being acted upon. Shine described power as being from a "relationship lens," which means "I have the ability to impact the other person in the relationship, and I have the ability to not be impacted by the other person." Participants identified power in situations where it increased disconnection by peers and faculty due to behaviors that were harmful. Participants identified instance where power also served to diminish relationships by excluding others based on campus or other factors. Participants emphasized the roles of respect and trust in the relationships they had when navigating power and power-filled interactions.

When describing a use of power by an instructor, Carlton stated that the professor "just was rude and very disrespectful." This behavior resulted in further relationship disconnection between Carlton and his professor. Shine discussed the perspective that because power is relational it can be seen when people are exclusionary of others. Shine shared she observed "different treatment towards the different student because one of the professors kind of tend to treat students differently, not based on their race, ethnicity, just based on a very random factor which is campus." Shine had observed a faculty member being "warmer" to students from a certain campus. Specifically, Shine believed the faculty member had their own personal preference and ideas about the kind of students who were from each campus and though it did

not upset her much, she did recognize her cohort mates were bothered by the dynamic. Shine emphasized when she is an instructor “I want to be more intentional and mindful to make sure everyone feels accepted and everyone feel recognized and respected by me.” Paula also described a change in relationship dynamics but with peers. Though an interpersonal interaction, what is similar across the participants stories, is trust and respect. Paula described the way her relationship with her classmates was initially impacted by their use of power through the lens of their Whiteness, by making assumptions about her meaning, speaking for or over her but their ability to show growth despite their negative uses of power, helped reinforce trust between them. When discussing peers and navigating power interactions in class, Paula shared:

just because I'm black does not mean, you know automatically what I'm feeling because you read this one book, you read *White Fragility*... my cohort's response and growth from that experience has taught me they were safe people that there are people who I could trust.

Paula's description highlighted how although her peers used their power in ways which had an initial impact on her the relationship improved thanks to their growth. Paula's experience also informed the emergence of the subtheme about power through the lens of cultural identities.

#### Subtheme: Power through the lens of Culture

A subtheme to power as relational emerged through participants description that power was experienced through lenses of race, gender, and class. Participants described the primary cultural identity that connected with power and relationship was Whiteness. Carlton, described the first thing he visualizes when thinking of power “is a person of whiteness and to me in that power position is a person of whiteness who may identify as a man.” Carlton specifically, identified how White men used power within a setting like an academic department as a smaller

scale use transferred from society at large. Carlton described these experiences with power as something expected and that he is familiar with. Interestingly, Carlton noted he experiences or chooses to challenge the power differently if it is wielded by a White woman. Carlton identified the “power in white women fragility.” He noted how as a Black man he is aware of the ways White women have historically used their fragility to harm Black men. Paula described someone who “has a certain amount of privilege in maybe one or multiple areas and that privilege gives them access to things that others who are not in that majority, may not have access to.” For both Paula and Carlton, the representation of power was someone who had privileged or dominant cultural identities. All three participants discussed manifestations of power being used or enacted upon them and how the other person’s race influenced how they experienced the use, particularly when exercised by faculty members who identified as White men. Paula noted “when you’re one of the few male faculty members in my program and then you’re also White and then you’re also tenured and supposedly known in the field, yeah, you have power.” Shine shared that power was able to be used differently depending on cultural identity, specifically that cisgender White men “get to do what they get to do, and I know if I do similar thing I’m more easily to get into trouble and I’m more vulnerable just based on my marginalized identity.” Carlton’s observation of power through the lens of culture is not just static Whiteness but also an active striving for it by those of marginalized racial identities. Carlton shared, “I think the worst thing could ever happen is when a person of color perpetuates white supremacy, that is the worst thing in the world, in my opinion, and I dislike that.” Carlton observed power in his program through the lens of racial identity in two ways:

So, the way that I've seen in my program has been displayed two ways. One it has been displayed by individuals of whiteness in both the instructional space and as peers within

the classroom, but then also seeing how power is displayed within minority faculty members who have been just very ingrained in colonization.

Specifically, Carlton is referencing how he has seen power by used by faculty with marginalized racial identities in service of White supremacy, as a way to access more power, assimilate or be seen as more legitimate of an instructor. Shine described not just the ability to have power over others, as in the examples described by Carlton and Paula but also reported how her own use of power was informed by race and cultural identity. “And also, as a woman of color, I try to navigate how to have the power I should have and how to also hold space for students.” The three participants discussed how the uses of power they experienced may have been different if the person was of a shared cultural identity. Shine discussed how in the example of power she referenced regarding information being shared with her and not her classmates, that she may have perceived it differently if there was shared marginalized identity. Shine remarked she could have seen it as “the professor trying to support me or protect me because we are both marginalized” but that she would still not “appreciate” it as she is “not a victim, so I do not need your protection.” Carlton referenced cultural relativity and an increased feeling of safety and there it would “probably be a little bit more easier to be assertive.” Paula believed the experience would be “slightly different” but did detail power-filled interactions with shared racial identity and how the person’s position influenced that experience.

In summary, participants’ descriptions included a relational view of power informed by cultural identities. Their own racial identity or those who was using the power was included in every participants’ story. Participants identified ways in which identities including Whiteness influenced how they perceived the interaction and the person who acted owns understanding or intent of their actions.

Subtheme: Multicultural Class and Social Justice Values

Power is manifested in a multicultural class and related values context.

Two of the participants highlighted a common setting of power manifesting in their multicultural class. This setting is significant as it was the only class named specifically by participants where power-filled interactions occurred. Paula identified an experience in which power dynamics were at play from her master's program and from her CES program and Carlton related an experience from his CES program. Paula's experience highlighted the relational aspect of power and the lens of race in how the power was used by others and how she used power.

When discussing her CES program Paula stated:

when we had our multicultural class, I think second semester of our first year. I was still kinda in a zero fucks given kind of mindset for my master's program... and that setting was very frustrating when we had our multicultural class a lot of white tears, a lot of white guilt type of stuff. So, when I had my multicultural class, I was just like, I'm not calming down. If you're gonna cry, you're gonna cry. But you know I'm not pulling back any punches. And, respectfully, like, I wasn't gonna start a fight. That was not called for... Or, oh my gosh, 'we're talking about race and I notice that Paula is not talking and I wonder what she's going through now, I feel so bad because we're shutting her down and she's feeling all these things'. I was just like, is there someone else named Paula in this room who is sad and crying and feeling shut down. I just don't wanna talk to you all about race.

Paula discussed how the power in her peers using white tears or white fragility previously attempted to shut her down. Paula decided though, with those experiences in mind that she needed to reassert her space as an autonomous being in her CES program. Carlton described in his CES multicultural class a similar use of white tears and white fragility by a peer and how that use was abetted by the instructor who then used her own power as a faculty member in a way that was detrimental. Carlton stated:

And so, we had this big conversation and it just it kind of it blew up and the instructor, to me, she minimized the feelings and emotions of me and my other peers who are

individuals or color. And more than anything, she was attentive to this white woman in the space and not us. And she apologized in the following week for this white woman experience in the classroom space... Yet, she used her power and control to have us write a pointless fucking reflection to write about what she could have done better or how we were feeling. What was the point?

Carlton also shared how departments and faculty being incongruent with the stated values was a poor use of power. “We can't sit here and as a program which is annoying to me where we teach about multicultural and equity and changing things and nothing is happening. That is the problem the issue for me.”

### Theme 2: Power as Position

Power in CES programs is used by those with positions of authority and status. A shared theme among all three participants was that in their observations of power, those with status were more freely able to use that power. The type of status or position observed in the program varied minimally among participants and the position was granted in the form of a designation by the department or field at large. For example, Paula described an experience with power from someone who had distinguished professor status and two others with tenure status, Shine had a similar experience with someone who was an educator in the program and Carlton referred to someone with tenure status. Paula described seeing power by someone “who is a faculty member who definitely has power. They have power because one, they're a tenure track faculty. They've been there for a long time.” Paula also highlighted that through this tenured role, the person had institutional power that was exercised in sending a letter, saying it was a “personal letter” but sending it on “a school letterhead sent by the school’s email. So, it wasn't personal you’re using your position as a tenured faculty whether you realize it or not.” Paula’s experience with a distinguished professor was also rooted in relative positions. Paula stated, “you're trying to use



your power as, this distinguished professor with a lot of money. And supposedly it, a lot of collections to make me do research and work, more work than I'm supposed to be doing.” Furthermore, the status or position as tenured was typically connected to the conditions under which the participants had interacted with those who used power.

#### Subtheme: Hierarchies of Power

In the participants’ stories they identified hierarchies of power within CES programs and how they fit into the hierarchy and how power manifested depending on level. Shine and Carlton observed hierarchies from instructor to student, Shine discussing her work with master’s students as an instructor and as a CES student and Carlton as a CES student with his instructors. Shine stated:

And they are the instructors, so it's my obligation to respect and follow up and I don't think that's super helpful to my learning and still I recognize the power dynamic, so I still follow to the best I can, and I do not have to see it as the most helpful thing in my life... And I'm also an instructor, so I'm still navigating that part. There is a power dynamic, there is a hierarchy, professor, that's kind of above doc students, doc students, kinda above master's students. That's a hierarchy which could be necessary in the department. And that hierarchy could make me to follow an instructor, to show respect to the instructor, because that's my obligation as a student... However, the genuine respect and trust is earned.

Shine also discussed hierarchies of power for first year and third year doctoral CES students. Shine recounted a story of a Black first year student who was not put as first author on a paper and instead a White peer, who was also a third-year student, put her own name down as first author. Shine trusts the person who recounted the story to her and stated being told this story of power through a relative position lens and a racial lens was influential for her. Shine shared that learning about the Black student’s experience “made me be more intentional about how I use my power as a second-year doc student in the doc program.” Paula also had an experience of power

manifestation that was related to an individual's year in the program and the order of authors for a publication reinforced by a Black woman tenured faculty member. Paula wanted to explore authorship and share power and responsibility of the article Paula stated:

It wasn't one of those things where I want to be first author. It was just in general, we haven't had this conversation... she was just 'Yeah, we can talk about it, but you know this is your first year here and you should just be lucky to be on an article, you have time to be first author' and again at no point did I ever say I wanted to be first author. I was just like; can we just talk about authorship? Because again, ethically that amount of work put in should equate... it was just like you're in position of power this is an ethical matter and you're telling me basically to shut up kinda. I know that's kind of what it sounded like.

Carlton also described the power dynamics between CES faculty and CES students that he witnessed. He described an incident in which a CES faculty member yelled at his class and ending the class early. Carlton attributed the faculty member's outburst as a reaction to being challenged by his students. Carlton shared, "how dare we challenge him. Then he told us that we asked too many whys and that we shouldn't. It's a part of doctoral passage to do what they are telling us to do as faculty."

In summary, participants' experiences with power were referenced in the context of relationship and position in the program. Position-based power experiences and year in the program experiences were interconnected in that those who were older in the program, had more power positionally. Based on participants' descriptions, it appears that status and position were integral to the participants' experiences with power.

### Theme 3: Feelings and States of Being

Experiencing power used negatively, which the participants described as harmful was associated with exhaustion, avoidance, disconnection and self-isolation. References to the

emotional impact of experiencing power were part of the textural description of participants. Participants described emotions they experienced as well as uncomfortable emotions they wanted to prevent others from feeling. When participants observed power manifesting, even if not directly acted upon, it elicited a response. Carlton described when noticing White peers coast by and using their power to do so, “as a student of color there's times that I just have to overly prove myself and this is exhausting.” Paula and Carlton named similar feelings of avoidance as a result of observing power being used by a faculty member. Paula described how because she was feeling “overwhelmed with everything. I don't have time to give this man anymore of my attention or focus” she reduced her engagement in her program. Carlton shared that “when it comes to instructors, I just don't even interact with most of them at all... None of the white faculty members I interact with outside of institutional spaces, no more than like 2-3 minutes and that's it.” Carlton had become disconnected from his CES program and still felt the emotional effects of the ways he experienced power manifest. In the beginning of the interview Carlton shared that “I'm glad that I'm past it. But just thinking about the situation just puts me on edge a little bit.” The experience with negative power also began to show up for Carlton in other ways as he navigated feeling on edge within his CES program. Carlton shared due to feeling on edge he became more hypervigilant. As he shared “there's this hypervigilance that comes up inside if me when I'm interacting with people of whiteness and institutional space, specifically white women.”

Shine described a negative use of power that involved a faculty member disclosing information to her that she felt should not have been shared with her and that was also not shared with the rest of her cohort, it left her feeling upset. Shine shared:

I kinda feel bad, honestly, it's just a weekend time gap. I can literally do nothing and that professor really put me in a very difficult position in that way for me to navigate the cohort dynamic, that's bad and they have access to information as part of their power and they were part of the decision making process which is their power and they share the information to me which is also their power. And to me that's not necessarily abuse but kind of misuse of the power.

More often though, Shine shared about how she tries to prevent her students from experiencing negative power or causing a negative emotional response by communicating clearly with her students her intent and checking in when a potential misuse of power may have occurred. Shine described teaching alone for the first time as her faculty co-teacher was absent and trying to understand why some of her students were giggling in the class, so she had asked a student if it was them. Shine described that she framed her follow up to the question in a way that exhibited she was not trying to hurt anyone. Shine shared “and I didn't make aim to, I didn't mean to blame you. Or do you feel targeted did that hurt your feelings?” Shine also described a positive experience of power and reported feeling empowered. “I would say in my master’s program I had a lot of empowering or empowered moments from my past advisor. And so, I entered this program kind have some self-advocacy skills.” Shine’s experience and the positive emotional impact, from this experience was a skill she needed later as she navigated her CES program.

Understanding the participants’ feelings and states of being was at times challenging because though participants were not directly asked about their feelings, they frequently referenced how an action influenced their emotions such as feeling frustrated and identified emotions in others such as anger. For example, Paula references that she cried when discussing challenging power regarding sending a letter to her program to make changes. Although participants’ descriptions of emotions were imprecise, it was clear they had experienced and could more easily recall uncomfortable or negative emotions. While the feelings they associated

with power varied, a significant characteristic was participants were then motivated to challenge negative power when it manifested.

### Subtheme: Challenging Power

Challenging power occurs at both an intrinsic and extrinsic level.

Power was described in participants' micro and macro-level interactions with others and each participant shared ways in which they attempted to challenge manifestations of power was harmful or conditions in which the manifestation of power was harmful. The researcher identified an intrinsic motivation, wanting to be brave, and an extrinsic motivation, wanting to improve conditions for others, in the participant stories. Paula described how she chose to draft a letter to her program leadership regarding incongruence between the program's actions and policies and the promoted social justice values. Paula's intent with the letter was to bring awareness to the identified concerns so that hopefully changes could be made to better align with the communicated values. Paula reported she knew she would send the letter even if her peers did not feel comfortable signing because she believed in the message of the letter. Paula's description of choosing to send a letter to her department is below to provide an example of challenging power; this reflects her continued challenging of power by "calling out" a faculty member:

So, I wrote the letter, the initial letter and shared it with all of the doc students and whether or not anyone else was going to sign it, I was still going to send it to them [the department]. And then I was also the one who called him [the faculty member] out on his bullshit during that second meeting and realizing that outside of the program there are a lot of spaces where I'm not the majority, but realizing that in this unique space, I was in the majority in terms of like interacting the most with the all of the faculty. Because of my position.

When Paula mentions she is not in the “majority,” she is referencing not being a socially dominant racial and gender majority, that she is not a White man. Uniquely in her program, she felt she was able to challenge power due to her position as the doctoral leadership and service committee chair and though she doesn’t explicitly state feeling brave then, she later describes her action as such. Paula shared “I’ve learned that I have to be kind of brave, even if it’s anxiety provoking because the letter was in anxiety provoking like I sent it and I cried in the closet.” Paula reveals bravery but also gives insight into the emotional fatigue of challenging power, particularly due to the response from the letter. Carlton also did not name his feeling as brave, but it could be inferred in his choice to continue to speak up. Carlton shared he learned to “not feel as if I need to silence my voice because of my professor has a PhD, just because they have a doctorate doesn’t mean that I have to shut myself down.” Similar to Paula, Carlton references his position and the position of those using the power as he shared his rationale for challenging the power. Carlton also discussed how he felt greater ability to challenge a White man using power than a White woman.

Whereas when it comes to a white man, interacting with them, I feel a little bit more okay with challenging them I don't know why. It's like, you know what, I don't got time for you... I'll acknowledge that it is a gender thing based off my interaction on the danger of a fragile White woman versus challenging a white man in power position.

Carlton is unique as the only man participant and he identified gender, particularly womanhood, as a way in which power was used. Carlton’s view of womanhood was informed with an intersectional lens, that the grouping of White and woman meant something different to him as a Black man. Particularly, Carlton uses the language of “danger,” and this danger can be evidenced in examples or lynchings historical and modern-day, accusations of harm and assault and in the ways White manhood seeks to protect White womanhood. Further, Carlton as a Black man,

encounters stereotypes regarding his perceived capacity to be violent, aggressive or combative. The dichotomy that exists between being fragile and in need of protection and being perceived as violent and in need of subduing, makes sense as to why Carlton would be hesitant to challenge power with White women.

The participants also associated challenging power with extrinsic motivations, particularly, trying to make conditions better for others. Due to some of his roles in his CES program, Carlton challenged power by trying to improve conditions for master's level students.

Carlton shared:

as a doctoral student is by advocating for students when I see that they are struggling in the classroom space or as supervisees and going to my supervisor or whomever supervised me or instructors and letting them know, hey, we need to assist this student or find a way that they can either regroup after their burnout. Or what is it that we need to do to change? Maybe this practicum experience for them?

Shine also attempted to improve conditions for master's students but through sharing power with her students. She shared:

I do a lot of clarification... I am aware some of my supervisees spending a lot of time watching tapes in other supervision, so I would open up the space... So, you're kind of prepared and not caught off guard. And other times I would want to open up the space as open as possible for you. So that's kind of me sharing my power.

Although Shine didn't explicitly state she was challenging power, by choosing to share her power, she challenged existing power dynamics that existed between instructor and student. Specifically, Shine sought to improve their conditions by avoiding certain practices and policies she deemed unhelpful or overwhelming to students.

Carlton's, Shine's and Paula's challenging or sharing of power were done for extrinsic reasons, namely, to improve conditions for others, such as their students or peers. Participants also found that when challenging power, it can be useful to take a step back and encouraging

peers or others with power to step up. Paula described that her letter writing and advocacy within the department then created the sense that she was constantly being called upon to do more work for others, share more information, or participate in more meetings for the benefit of others. Paula found value in being called to support and recognized that she could not advocate and challenge the power alone:

when do I need to be the forefront of it? And when can I take a step back?... I'm dealing with my own stuff and panicking and there's a lot, so it was really great to have other friends in the program who I was just like, yo, I can't do this...I had a few friends who are just like, okay, I can do this, I can focus on this, this can be what I lead or what I push forward or whatever I was like, Thank you, Appreciate it. I think that was helpful.

Carlton described how he thought it appropriate to step back after observed uses of power in his multicultural class as he did not have to be the one to always speak up for others, especially if they did not speak up and challenge power as well. Similar to Paula, it was Carlton's peers who filled that space, but Carlton was also worried about the sincerity of their actions.

Not sure if you're able to trust them because of the past experiences within the space and then sometimes having white peers advocate in the space. Yet wondering, is this just a show or are they just doing so because they're around in the moment and 'I need to position my power in this space as a White person to coast by' or are they truly advocating for the peers of color in the space?

For Carlton that question remained unanswered but his and Paula's choice to challenge power then ignited worries about retaliation or their reputation.

#### Subtheme: Fear of Retaliation for Challenging

Paula did not use the specific term "retaliation" but when describing her worry about the response to her letter and standing up to her instructor, Paula was worried she could be retaliated against. Paula described being on the academic job market and having worry that a hiring



manager or someone from a school she was applying to, might know the faculty member she challenged and reach about a reference.

There was a part of me that was like, okay, but what about him? What is he going to do especially in terms of looking for jobs, so him in that meeting saying, oh, I don't have power... you do, you know a lot of people, if you really wanted to be petty, you could be like 'I know some people,' even when they [hiring universities] have references that they know, there's someone else that they know who they have a connection to, they'll contact them like 'hey what about this student who's applying here,' and granted, I don't know. Maybe that's why I haven't heard back from schools [laughter]. But no, I'm not gonna say that. But like, yeah, that fear was there.

Paula discussed having positive letters of recommendation from other faculty to help in the job process and some of those letters referenced their positive perceptions of her partially due to her challenging of power, namely the letter writing, which she described as “great.” Carlton also had concerns about retaliation and how it would influence his reputation in the field. Carlton, when discussing the tenured White man faculty that “scolded” him and the minority instructor who did not check on him or his classmates, he felt that they could have been instrumental in reducing his access to opportunities or influencing other’s’ perceptions of him. However, he took an approach grounded in his philosophical lens, as a clinician of existentialism, called “kill your reputation.” Killing your reputation references the belief in existential counseling that some of a person’s worries are rooted in concern of the opinions of others. Specifically, that relying on others for your own self-worth gives away control of your life and by “killing your reputation”, you affirm that your own perception of yourself is the only thing that matters.

If you’re going to advocate for people or group of people or for self, your reputation doesn’t matter. And so, if I’m going to embody that, I have to walk in it as well. And so that’s what I’m choosing to do. So that’s one thing for me. I know that this is a small field or whatnot. But my reputation regarding advocacy, it doesn’t bother me if they if they dislike it, they dislike it. That’s not on me.

It is important to note, though Paula and Carlton both described challenging power on multiple occasions, they were also navigating potential future consequences outside of their control. The participants' descriptions illustrate that challenging power can feel risky, and that because of their own intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, they may still choose to do so.

#### Theme 4: Power can be both detrimental and productive.

Manifestations of power can be both detrimental (reducing boundaries and autonomy) or productive (advocating and flexibility) in its use and acknowledgement of power.

Power was associated with functions that were both positive and negative. Some of the negative ways it operated according to by participants included boundary crossing and reinforcing a "do as you're told" mentality. Some of the positive ways participants described its operation was in advocacy and being flexible. The descriptors were directly from participants' descriptions.

#### Subtheme: Detrimental or Harmful Uses of Power

When participants described negative functions of power, generally the description entailed how the use had a negative impact or message on others. Paula described boundary crossing by a faculty member for whom she was a research assistant. Paula's description included being assigned teaching assistant responsibilities as well as her research assistant duties, which was improper and against university procedures. Paula also referenced that she was being asked to do research work by the faculty member's wife, to the extent that his wife was calling Paula in the evenings.

You're also crossing a lot of boundaries here. Your wife is calling me late at night, asked me to help her with her research. I'm like, no, and you're talking to my advisor behind my back. Trying to get things that I've already told you that I can't do.

Paula also described an incident with this faculty member that after informing him she could not miss one of her classes to be present in one of his classes, he tried to get her out of the class she was enrolled in so that she would be available to support him. He went so far as to speak with her advisor. This is an example of not just the harmful uses of power, but also the ways those in positions of power, and those who hold assumed power believe it appropriate to attempt to exercise their power over others. The faculty member did not attempt to confer with Paula about his idea to talk with her advisor and Paula had already thoroughly explained why she was unwilling as well as unable to support him in that class. Yet, the faculty member dismissed Paula's concerns and went so far as going above her to try to change her course. Paula referenced finding this out by discussing this with her advisor, as the faculty member didn't attempt to share this information with Paula at all. Paula's experience highlights just how powerful assumed power can be. For instance, if Paula's advisor had a different relationship to the instructor or to Paula, it is possible Paula's academic trajectory would have been impacted simply due to the interests of a faculty member from a department outside of her program. Tangentially, Carlton described another function of power as a "do as I'm told" experience. Carlton shared:

I think that from what was happening in the classroom space, it was contradicting to what we were told. We were told to show up and this is gonna be a peer environment, as doctoral students, as clinicians, and of course instructors they have their doctorates but we're also their peers and that will be the case. So, we were told that but when we came into these educational spaces we were shut down, that's how I felt. As if I had to just show up and be submissive and quiet, do as I'm told.

Carlton's description of the functions of negative power, connected to earlier themes of position as he referenced being informed the dynamic would be of shared position and power but

instead, he experienced the difference in position being reinforced, that as a doctoral student he needed to defer to his faculty and do as he was told.

Subtheme: Productive or Facilitative Uses of Power

When participants described positive functions of power, generally the description entailed how the use had or could have a positive impact or outcome on others. Carlton described:

the use of power regarding advocacy and social justice. That's the use of power. Using your power as a person who's in the position of power or leadership to advocate and bring justice for those within the communities or marginalized communities who may not be able to have the voice or the education you have in order to assist them in becoming either better individuals or fighting the system that can assist them personally instead of oppressing them as people.

Similarly, Paula described advocacy as a function of positive power. Paula shared choosing to write a letter to the department with concerns was good use.

That was an example of using power, I believe in a good way to advocate for the needs of not only the doctorates, but also the master students because the doc students work a lot with the master students. So, if the doc students are struggling the master students are struggling as well.

Shine shared how when professors and those in power are flexible with students, it is power functioning positively.

There were professors that were flexible. They would observe our energy level and they will say, 'let's see what you want to do, how can we best cover the content that we need to cover... and that flexibility as a doc student I truly appreciate that. So, to me that's a good use of power.

Shine also offers insight to how flexibility could be operationalized, either through shared agendas for the course or shared decision making and negotiation.

### Subtheme: Acknowledging Power

References to positive and negative functions of power also were associated with the person who had power acknowledging it. Shine described “I would say one of the micro strategy I observed, which could be helpful is to openly acknowledge the power I do have... say intentionally acknowledging my power often,” Shine described that acknowledging this power allowed for increased communication between her and her students and increased trust. Conversely, Paula described a function of negative power where the power was not acknowledged. Paula described a department zoom townhall regarding the pandemic and the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, intended to support students in talking with their clients of color who might be struggling. Instead, the tenured White man faculty member, chose to make public comment about the letter to the doctoral students, which Paula described created confusion for masters’ students as they weren’t involved with the letter. Paula shares that “the faculty were like, ‘please don’t’. And he continued on, I still don’t understand why no one muted him or kicked him out... and I felt that was another usage of power, because he had that control, I guess over the zoom to do that. Paula described “the faculty he turned it into, ‘well, you know, actually, I don’t have power. I don’t have any power’... Obviously, in a position of power, because your tenure you can do a lot dude, but not using his power.” Further, Paula described this through the lens of culture and how certain interactions “reinforced” previously held “beliefs of white men, where they’re like, I don’t have power. I’m like, yes, you do. You just never realize that because you’re always in the majority.”

In summary, the participants described functions of power that were both negative and positive, power functioned to advocate and be flexible or attempted to dismiss other’s healthy

boundaries and reinforce control. In either description, participants discussed how acknowledging power was to function more positively.

### Theme and Subtheme for Each Participant

Phenomenology intends to develop a composite description of the data (Moustakas, 1994) and within the study not all participants' descriptions included evidence of each theme and subtheme. For example, two participants identified a worry about retaliation while the other did not volunteer information related to that concern. Two of the participants identified multicultural class as a setting of power manifesting and one did not. These variances among participants are captured in the table below (see Table 2).

Table 2

Compositive Textural-Structural Theme Variances Among Participants

Theme	Subtheme	Carlton	Paula	Shine
Power As Relational		X	X	X
	Informed By Cultural Identities	X	X	X
	Multicultural Class	X	X	
Power As Position		X	X	X
	Hierarchies Of Power	X	X	X
Feelings And States of Being		X	X	X
	Challenging Power	X	X	X
	Retaliation For Challenging	X	X	
Manifestations Of Power		X	X	X
	Detrimental Or Harmful Uses of Power	X	X	X
	Productive Or Facilitative Uses of Power	X	X	X
	Acknowledging Power	X	X	X

### Essence of Power: A Composite Textural and Structural Description

I used the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of analysis to create a composite textural-structural description of the participants' experiences. The textural-structural descriptions of each participant were then integrated into a composite description of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). I provided the textural and structural descriptions gathered from the transcribed interviews, which provided the "what" and the "how" in the experiences of each participant. Following the textural and structural descriptions, I have provided the composite textural-structural description. The essence of the experiences of power as told by the participants is central to phenomenology inquiry. I determined that the essence of participants' experiences centered on power being acted upon and the related impact on them or choices they make. These are congruent parts as an action causes a reaction.

Participants described experiences of power in their CES programs that existed inside and outside of a set classroom space. The essence of the power use was not grounded in the location but the larger CES environment. This was true regardless of the context, as a CES doctoral student instructor within a multicultural class.

Participants' stories of how power manifested and what experiences were influential or memorable had substantial emotional content. Emotions elicited by manifestation and interactions with positive power were described as empowering while negative experiences were characterized as frustrating, exhausting and overwhelming.

Participant's descriptions also included ways they chose to use their power to engage with others. Some noted they chose to use their power to be braver and to challenge power, while also noting times where they needed to step back. A participant's choice to challenge varied from departmental levels and advocacy to adjustment of personal teaching philosophies. Some participants identified that their attempts to challenge power could cause retaliation by the person they were challenging but they made the conscious choice to do it anyway because of a personal and professional desire to create more fair and equitable spaces.

Finally, participants found meaning from these experiences with power that were lessons in how to engage with peers, faculty or the program. The manifestations of power were explored within class and in virtual departmental settings. Additionally, participants found meaning from the relational aspect of power. Participants identified the impact of tenure status and being an instructor and the hierarchical nature of CES programs. Participants identified the changing nature of relationship, collapsed boundaries or exclusion as influenced or reinforced by position. When power by someone in a position of authority was used negatively, the relationship experienced ethical concerns, minimizing and boundary crossing.

Participants' descriptions of how power manifested included stories of interactions with peers and faculty, and those stories were consistently referenced in their description of power. Faculty and peers, whether they acknowledged their power or not, were a part of the participants stories of power. Position and relationship were intertwined with experiences of power, thus representing the essence and meaning behind the stories disclosed.



### Evidence of Trustworthiness

Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest four criteria to establish trustworthiness, which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, which is what I used to establish trustworthiness for this study. To ensure researcher credibility, I completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program course for Social & Behavioral Research in January 2021. This course training included the ethical principles of research, defining research with human subjects, privacy and confidentiality, internet-based research and HIPAA privacy protections. I secured IRB approval on October 22, 2021 and maintained IRB guidelines throughout the process. In addition, I followed the structure of my phenomenological method of data analysis described in Chapter III and used member recordings and transcription for accuracy of participant report and prolonged engagement with the data.

Transferability refers to the usefulness and relevance of the findings, only on a to case-to-case transfer (Tobin & Begley, 2004). To address transferability, I used thick description for those who will want to transfer the findings to their own site (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To ensure dependability, I adhered to Northern Illinois University's quality standards and guidelines from the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety. In addition, I actively engaged with my dissertation committee throughout writing drafts, participant recruitment and data collection and incorporated their suggestions. I also ensured the research process was logical, traceable, and documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004) with written and typed notes.

For confirmability, I engaged in bracketing to minimize and decenter myself in the interpretation and analysis and engaged in reflexive journaling via audio journaling.

Additionally, my interpretation and findings were tracked and derived from the data with

demonstration of how my conclusions and interpretations were reached (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Further, according to Guba and Lincoln (1989), confirmability is established when credibility, transferability, and dependability are all achieved.

### Findings by Research Question

Data were collected and analyzed from the three participants to answer the two research questions. The description of the themes above provided an exploration of each question. The research questions and responses were found in the textural descriptions of the participants' experiences. A brief summary of each research question is below.

Central Research Question #1: *How do doctoral-level students of color describe the manifestations of power in the context of their program and university?*

The manifestations of power as identified by CES doctoral students of color appear to be relational and span cultural identity and position in the program. All participants shared at least one experience with power that was focused on the relationship aspect of the people involved. Participants' observations of how power manifested were sparked by being in relationship with master's students, faculty and peers, by nature of classes, teaching, or academic related work. There was a positive and negative association with power, in which, the participants then reviewed their position and their ability to challenge or improve conditions for others. The participants descriptions of how power manifested in their programs also elicited a variety of feelings and responses, including feeling exhausted in shared spaces or the program, being hypervigilant, or engaging in avoidance and isolation. When participants saw manifestations of

power as positive, it was because the participants were shown flexibility, were empowered, and those who held power acknowledged it and were responsible with it.

Central Research Question #2: *What experiences with power do counselor educators in training (CEITs) cite as influential or particularly memorable in their counseling program?*

A final review and reading of the participant transcriptions was completed and the themes explored in order to identify or understand the experiences with power that were influential. The review found that all the participants were primarily referencing one primary manifestation of power. Though they may have referenced another for additional context, each participant consistently referred to a single specific manifestation of power. In each influential experience, power was used negatively by another, and this use had a negative impact on the participant. However, after each experience, the participants used it to adjust their own style, approach to advocacy, or view of self. This section ends with a quote from Shine:

So, I think we are all trying to be intentional to pass on the spirit and the skills. By the spirit, I mean not abusing our power, be intentional and the skills are how we have those conversations, how we advocate for ourselves as necessary. So, I would say that's probably another part impacting my use of power and all those experiences are kind of part of my doc program now, may not be classes, but definitely people in the program and they impacted my use of power.

### Chapter Summary

In Chapter IV, the findings of my study were represented by the stories of three CES doctoral student participants. The chapter included a summary of the data analysis procedures, identified themes, textural and structural descriptions, as well as the composite textural-structural description of the group. A brief summary of the trustworthiness strategies used was provided. A review of the research questions and a discussion of how the questions were answered, were

provided to end the chapter. Chapter V includes a discussion of the findings within the context of current literature and implications of the findings for counselor educators, supervisors, and counselor education programs.

## V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore how doctoral students of color experienced and described the manifestations of power in their counselor education training programs. I aimed to bridge the gap in understanding how power manifests and how the manifestations of power may influence a students' experiences.

### Introduction

In Chapter IV, the results of an analysis of doctoral students' experiences with power was presented. The analysis identified four themes and eight subthemes of participants' power experiences. The focus of Chapter V is centered on a discussion of the findings within the context of the current literature and implications of the findings for counselor educators, supervisors, and future research. The chapter ends with an exploration of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

### Connections to Research

The findings of the current study revealed four themes that were extracted from three participant interviews. In a review of the professional literature, no other studies were found that focused on understanding and examining the experiences of power for counselor educators in training. However, there were studies that explored the perspectives of counselor educators in

training on their training and preparedness, their efficacy regarding research, and their experiences of belongingness. In the following sections of this chapter, the researcher will identify and discuss findings from prior research that corroborate the findings from this study and the themes that emerged.

### Power As Relational

The first theme addressed in the study was *power is relational and informed by cultural identities* and speaks to the way doctoral students in CACREP accredited counselor education and supervision programs experienced power. This finding is congruent with research regarding race and power relations (Glenn, 2003, Hall, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2015), specifically, the ways in which power and domination is informed by race. The researcher made the argument in Chapter II that race, racial identity, and the experiences of power were central to the current study, and this was congruent with participant disclosures. All participants in the current study identified how the racial identity of those who used power influenced their perspective and experience of the event. Similarly, critical race theory is useful in reviewing how social systems work (Tate, 1994), how racial difference (Ferber, 1998) informs interactions, and how cultural ideologies of race reinforce social and cultural systems (Plaut, 2010).

A subtheme theme that emerged was about a particular setting in CES programs, that *power uniquely manifests in multicultural class and related values contexts*. Melamed (2021) discussed how the multicultural class can be a space of transformative learning and disorienting dilemmas due to conflict that arises within the class. The experiences shared by participants highlighted how conflict can arise in multicultural classes and dialogues and was revealed to be

connected to institutional conflicts. Such as frustrations with their program or an instructor's perceived mishandling of conflicts in the classroom. Carlton shared how he felt harmed by the behaviors of a peer in class and the response of his instructor, which was exacerbated by the class being assigned a reflection that he perceived as not sufficiently paired with discussion or understanding. Mezirow (1997) discussed that engaging in discourse is a component of arriving at critical reflection, that with the presence of more interpretations of a belief and more analyzing of experiences, there can be a common understanding gathered. Instead, as detailed by Carlton, there was not discourse that would have encouraged challenging, defending, assessing evidence for or judging arguments, but rather a rush to critical reflection. This quick push to reflect is what Carlton described as "pointless", the educator did not fully foster reflective thought and discourse (Mezirow, 1997). The instructors perceived difficulty in navigating this conflict and tension aligns with Milan and Bridges (2019) who discussed when counselor educators in training teach multicultural classes, they experienced troubling as well as pleasant emotions related to teaching the course. As counselor educators in training, the experiences shared by the study's participants may also later influence their choices and decision making as they move into positions in which they would be teaching the courses independently.

### Power As Position

The second theme in the study was *power in CES programs is used by those with positions or status of authority and is hierarchical and dynamic*. Domhoff (2006) theorized that when exploring where power resides, a question that can be asked is, who governs. Specifically, Domhoff (2006) discussed how decision-makers and institutions can influence policy to encourage social cohesion. Researchers, such as Anicich et al. (2015) have also made similar

references to power and status. They explored interpersonal conflict but through the lens of having power and varying states of status. The researchers argued that there is a distinction between status and power, which is congruent with participants stories that described power as being connected to, but not the same as, status. Fickling, Graden, & Tangen (in press) found that participants in their study of feminist counselor educators found that participants acknowledged that power exists and the presence of a power differential in student-teacher and supervisee-supervisor relationships as almost always present. Martin (1998) discussed the academic hierarchy and noted that universities themselves are hierarchical. Further, Martin described those with power within institutions include, in descending order, chief executive officers, heads of departments and professors, tenured faculty, and then non-tenured academic staff. Martin, suggests that:

Students form the bulk of the university population, yet they have little power within the system. Sometimes there are student representatives on departmental committees or on governing bodies, but the numbers are seldom large enough to sway major decisions. Students may have a small impact on course offerings and methods of assessment... Essentially students are consumers who have little say in what is produced or how. (1998)

Paula as a student served as the chair on the doctoral leadership and service committee, and through her position, had some but limited power. This connects to Martin's viewpoint because it was not the position of student alone that held power, rather chairing a committee that was connected to heads of departments, professors and tenured faculty.

### Feelings and States of Being

The third theme is that for students *experiencing power prompts feelings (overwhelmed, empower, exhaustion) and internal states of being (avoidance, self-isolation) that are positive*



*and negative dependent on use of power.* Research related to power and behavior affirms the participants' experiences. Keltner and Anderson (2003) discussed how people who feel powerless are more likely to experience negative emotions and affect and behave in more inhibited ways.

The subthemes are about *challenging power* and worry about *retaliation for challenging*. Participants Shine and Paula both discussed how their choice to challenge power was influenced by their desire to improve conditions for others and to enhance respect for others. The approach of the participants to use their power to try to influence change aligns with Giddens' research on dialectic control. Giddens explored the dialectic of control, specifically that those who are subordinate or in inferior power positions can influence the activities of their superiors (Giddens, 1984; 1991). Shine and Paula, though in inferior positions due to being doctoral students, still attempted to influence their faculty and program by speaking up, questioning procedures, and pushing for greater equity.

#### Power can be Both Detrimental and Productive

The fourth theme that emerged was how *power can be both detrimental (reducing boundaries and autonomy) or productive (advocating and flexibility)*. For example, Paula detailed how a faculty member tried to encroach on her boundaries and seemingly encouraged his wife to do so. Paula's story with the faculty member's wife was a breach of two barriers, first by contacting Paula outside of normal business hours and then that it was the professor's wife, someone with no personal, professional or academic connection to Paula. Paula also noted how acknowledging or not acknowledging power, contributed to the experience of power. An

example of the participants witnessing productive manifestations of power was witnessed by Shine when she described a faculty member that attempted to be flexible and attentive to her and her classmates' energy levels to collaborate with them on what material they would cover. Domhoff (2006) would argue that domination is central to power and used by the power elite to develop and maintain institutions and social cohesion. As participants noted how power was used by others to limit their own control and autonomy in service of another person or department, exploring power through a lens informed by domination theory of power may be fruitful.

### Implications

The collective findings from this current study and prior studies present an opportunity to discuss and propose implications related to the presence and utilization of power in counselor education settings. Participants had experienced power manifestations in a variety of ways in their programs. The experiences they shared, and the resulting themes and sub-themes provide information that offer implications for counselor educators, administrators of counselor education programs, and researchers.

### Counselor Educators and Education Programs

For counselor educators, while transformative learning theory studies have assisted in understanding the connections between educator and student (Taylor & Cranton, 2012), drawing information from first person accounts of power might increase interest in and connection to supervision and leadership and advocacy. Further interest directed towards power beyond it as an abstract idea might provide support for counselor educators in their teaching and supervision in cultivating conditions that encourage their students, supervisees and colleagues to acknowledge

and use their power to advocate and empower. For example, as suggested by participant Shine, offering greater flexibility and communication regarding assignments, agendas and tasks.

All participants described experiences with power used by faculty or instructors that they felt were negative and all participants had to navigate how to respond to those experiences by themselves or in talking with other peers. Paula chose to share a specific concern with her department chair, but the incident was related to her peers, not to faculty. Counselor educators and program leadership could potentially enhance student experiences by giving attention and time towards the ways in which power is enacted in their programs. They may develop new ways to build on their students in-class experiences and reduce student isolation, avoidance, and disengagement from their CES program. Further attention can be given to the content, structure, and objectives of the multicultural class requirement to reduce negative manifestations of power and reduce power being used harmfully along racial and cultural lines. This reduction of the manifestation of negative power does not mean an avoidance of conflict. Conflict is a natural part of socialization and interaction and can be considered a difference in values, wants or interests. Therefore, conflict will occur in academic and educational settings where values, needs and wants are a part of how students understand their experiences and the content in the course. As such, conflict does not equal harm and though may bring discomfort can be generative. Specifically, counselor educators can consider how to present cultural difference from a strengths-based perspective; use an intersectional lens in assignments, discussions and include the review of assumptions and bias; and model how to navigate conflict with care and intention.

## Limitations

As in all qualitative studies, there are limitations that exist. Due to researcher positionality and identity, bracketing was necessary; however, pure and complete bracketing was not possible. Prior to data collection, I documented my potential biases in my study proposal, and I also met with my dissertation chair and committee to discuss my biases and how they might impact my study. I also communicated the study was a part of the completion requirements for a doctoral degree and participants may have felt pressured to disclose beyond their comfort due to the perceived importance of their impact of the researcher's future.

The sample group participants had a shared experience with the phenomenon or construct and was a heterogeneous group of three. In this study, the construct was power, and the purpose of the study was to gain an understanding of the experiences CES doctoral students had with and how they described the manifestations of power in their programs. The researcher had planned for a larger number of participants, but participant recruitment garnered a low response rate and scheduling proved difficult. This was perhaps as an artifact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consistently changing personal and professional needs of the participants. Specifically, some respondents completed the screening survey but did not respond to the follow-up emails and others responded to the follow-up emails but did not provide availability and ceased communication.

The final identified limitation is related to the subjectivity and complexity of power. The individuals' experiences with power varied but did have a shared understanding of the essence of someone acting with an impact on others. Two of the participants sought clarity regarding what

was meant by how power shaped their engagement. Intentionally, a definition of power wasn't given to participants to reduce the shaping of their narratives without imposing researcher's belief. To ensure understanding of the participant's reports, the research read back and confirmed or clarified participant language.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Power within the counselor education space is not frequently researched as a singular and unique construct as it is often collapsed within studies of privilege and oppression (Hays et al, 2003; Hays et al, 2007, Chan et al., 2016). The following suggestions for future research are based on the findings from the current study and are believed by this researcher to be legitimate areas of study and worthy of pursuit.

Researchers may find it useful to examine experiences of doctoral students with power using the themes of power through the lens of position and relationship extrapolated from participants' descriptions. This will allow researchers to study the positions and hierarchies inherent and reinforced in the counselor educator programs and or the relationships being created and disconnected within.

#### To understand and define the construct of power

Future researchers can continue to gather clearer conceptual understanding of power and should work to differentiate power from other constructs, such as privilege and oppression. In examining this construct, researchers could continue to engage in qualitative research, such as phenomenology or grounded theory. As a result, the data may help researchers establish a clearer

conceptual model of the phenomenon and construct of power within counselor education settings.

To identify the barriers to acknowledge power in counselor educators

Participants discussed how they perceived people in positions of power, such as faculty, unwilling to use their power positively or perceived them to be in denial of their power; participants shared their frustrations experienced as a result of these factors. While this was not the focus of the study, future researchers may benefit from exploring if there are unique qualities or characteristics of counselor educators and their training that then make power difficult to acknowledge as counselor educators in the classroom and in interactions with students or if this is a common phenomenon across disciplines. The barriers to acknowledging power are multifaceted and could be approached from a lens focused on counselor educator training, counselor training, or how cultural identity influences the use of power. Specifically, researchers focusing on counselor educator training could limit to counselor educators in various stages of their professional experience and their navigation of power with CEITs within surveys. Researchers interested in focusing on cultural identity, can choose to limit to race, gender, class or ability and use a narrative methodology and collect data from participants within focus groups or interviews.

To understand how CES programs are addressing power

Participants' stories highlighted the importance of acknowledging and being aware of power and how people were using their power. For example, Shine described how she felt a faculty member was unwilling to acknowledge and address his power and instead pointed to

other power-filled institutions. Participants also discussed difficulties with responses from their programs or faculty when power was used negatively. For example, Carlton discussed frustration with having been assigned a reflection by an instructor because it was an additional burden that did not seem connected to a harmful use of power display in his multicultural class, and it added to the hurt he had already experienced. Paula described confusion that a faculty member was able to use a zoom town hall to address doctoral students who signed the letter she wrote, and more specifically frustrated that no faculty muted him or kicked him out as she felt what he discussed was unrelated and off-topic. Future researchers could explore what processes or trainings are in place to support faculty in exploring the power they hold using surveys. An added level could be to explore what changes for faculty contextually, from society at large to the academic department setting with their use of power using a mixed methods design. Researchers could also explore how faculty describe power and perceive their interactions and engagements with students using interviews. By gaining an understanding of how faculty use their power, as described by faculty, researchers and counselor educators can be more knowledgeable about the ways in which they can create environments that more effectively support students and minimize the power imbalance.

### Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to explore how doctoral students of color experienced and described the manifestations of power in their counselor education training programs. Exploring and understanding the essence of these experiences can potentially provide information that can lead to the development of new structures and conditions, or revision to existing structures and condition, which would reduce the power imbalances and power-related harmful experiences for

students. The findings from this study may provide counselor educators and counselor education programs with some insight into their students' experiences with power. Hopefully, these findings will encourage researchers, counselor educators, and researchers to explore more with sincerity, through research and practice, the presence and use of power in CES programs.



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APPENDIX A  
RECRUITMENT FLYER

**CACREP CES DOCTORAL STUDENTS OF COLOR NEEDED  
FOR RESEARCH STUDY!**

## **PARTICIPANTS NEEDED PERSPECTIVES OF POWER**

- **Enrolled in a CACREP doctoral Counselor  
Education and Supervision**
- **Enrolled for two or more semesters?**
- **Identify as a Person of Color?**

Thus the purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the uses of power by their institution, faculty, and peers in their program.

**Complete Screening Survey at  
[reallygreatsite.com](http://reallygreatsite.com)**

**IRB \_\_\_\_\_  
If you are interested or  
have questions, contact  
me at: [sdyson@niu.edu](mailto:sdyson@niu.edu)**



APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL RECRUITMENT LETTER

Greetings,

I am Sharazazi C. Dyson, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision from Northern Illinois University who is currently recruiting counselor education and supervision (CES) doctoral students (and recent graduates) of color from CACREP accredited programs for my qualitative dissertation study. The purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the manifestations of power in their training programs.

**CALL - CES DOCTORAL STUDENTS OF COLOR NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY!**

As part of my qualitative dissertation, I am seeking to interview, in a virtual focus group setting, approximately 25 doctoral students of color about power in their programs and the ways power presents itself.

**Who Can Participate?**

In order to participate, you must be a doctoral student or recent graduate in a CACREP accredited Counselor Education and Supervision program and meet all the following inclusion criteria:

- Identify as a person of color, defined as a non-white racial identity.
- Have been enrolled for two or more semesters or graduated within the last two years.

**What is Involved:**

Selected participants will participate in a semi-structured virtual focus group, which will last approximately two hours and will be recorded. You may also be contacted at a later time to provide follow-up feedback on the study's preliminary findings. There are no major anticipated risks involved in participation, and you may discontinue the study at any time without penalty. Click on the hyperlink below to find out more information about the study and to complete the prescreening questionnaire!

<https://bit.ly/SDysonScreening>

Thank you,  
Sharazazi

APPENDIX C  
INFORMED CONSENT



Northern Illinois University  
Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Perspectives of Power: Phenomenological Inquiry Exploring the Manifestation of Power in Doctoral Programs

Investigators

Name: Sharazazi Dyson Dept: Department of Counseling and Higher Education Phone: 773.426.3508

**Key Information**

- This is a voluntary research study interview on doctoral students' experiences and described manifestations of power.
- This one-hour study and potential 30-minute follow-up, involves participating in an individual interview discussing the topic of power.
- The benefits include exploration of the manifestation of power in doctoral programs and potential generalizable knowledge as well as potential for increased knowledge, awareness and/or information about participants' own experiences of power; the risks may include participant discomfort, distress, reminders of prior trauma or anxiety. Participants are able to take breaks at any point in the data collection and are able to withdraw from the study if desired.

**Description of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the manifestations of power in their training programs. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things: complete one demographic survey and participate in one one-hour interview.

**Risks and Benefits**

Potential risks for the participants are minimal and will be minimized but may include uncomfortability, distress, reminders of prior trauma or anxiety. Participants are able to take breaks at any point in the data collection and are able to withdraw from the study if desired.

The benefits of participation are greater exploration of the manifestation of power in doctoral programs and potential generalizable knowledge. Potential to help others in the sharing of information and experiences. Potential for increased knowledge, awareness and/or information about their own experiences and power.

**Confidentiality**

- The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential in my home and research records will be kept in a locked file, only I will have the capability to access the files. All

electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file on a device that only I use.

- Video recordings will be made and stored on a physical device not uploaded to a “cloud” and accessed only by the investigator for transcription and data analysis. All video recordings will be securely retained and then deleted from the external hard drive, three years after completion of the research. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.

### **Your Rights**

The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study at any time. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right to skip any question or research activity, as well as to withdraw completely from participation at any point during the process.

You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered before, during, or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact the researcher, Sharazazi Dyson at [sdyson@niu.edu](mailto:sdyson@niu.edu) or by telephone at 773.426.3508. You may also contact the committee chair, Dr. Suzanne Degges-White at [sdeggeswhite@niu.edu](mailto:sdeggeswhite@niu.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigators or if you have any problems or concerns that occur as a result of your participation, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity, and Safety at (815)753-8588.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigators.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I give my consent to be video recorded during the interview.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX D

SCREENING SURVEY VIA QUALTRICS

My name is Sharazazi C. Dyson, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision from Northern Illinois University who is currently recruiting counselor education and supervision (CES) doctoral students and recent graduates of color from CACREP accredited programs for my qualitative dissertation study.

The purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students and recent graduates of color experience and describe the manifestations of power in their training programs. As part of my qualitative dissertation, I am seeking to interview, in a semi-structured virtual individual interview setting, approximately 25 doctoral students and recent graduates of color about power in their programs and the ways power presents itself.

**Who Can Participate?** In order to participate, you must be a doctoral student in a CACREP accredited Counselor Education and Supervision program and meet all the following inclusion criteria:

1. Identify as a person of color, defined as a non-white racial identity.
2. Have been enrolled for two or more semesters or graduated within the last two years.

**What is Involved:** Selected participants will participate in a semi-structured virtual individual interview setting, which will last approximately one hour and will be recorded. You may also be contacted at a later time to provide follow-up feedback on the study's preliminary findings. There are no major anticipated risks involved in participation, and you may discontinue the study at any time without penalty.

This study has been approved by the Northern Illinois University Institutional Review Board. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact the researcher, Sharazazi Dyson at [sdyson@niu.edu](mailto:sdyson@niu.edu) or by telephone at (708) 942-5514.

By choosing "yes," you also understand that participation is voluntary and that you may refuse to participate or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

I have read or it has been read to me and understood the foregoing information. I consent voluntarily to be contacted after the completion of this screening survey to be informed if I have been selected as a participant for this study.

- Yes    No

Are/were you enrolled in a CACREP accredited doctoral Counselor Education and Supervision program?

- Yes    No

Have you completed two or more semesters in the Counselor Education and Supervision program?

- Yes    No

If graduated (had a degree conferred), from the CACREP accredited doctoral Counselor Education and Supervision program was it within the last two years?

- Yes    No

Are you of Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin?

- Yes    No

How would you describe your racial identity? (Choose all that apply.)

Written response

Name and how would you like to be contacted? Provide the information (email address, phone number, etc.).

APPENDIX E

INFORMATION SURVEY VIA QUALTRICS

- What is your age?
  - Written response
- What is your current gender identity?
  - Written response
- Before entering the Counselor Education and Supervision program, how many years had you been out of school?
  - Written response
- Please describe your graduate education experience other than counselor education.
  - Written response
- What is the name of your institution?
  - Written response

APPENDIX F

CHANGE IN STUDY PARTICIPANTS EMAIL

As an update, the study's data collection method has shifted from a focus group to individual interviews (remaining virtual, 60 minutes). If you are still willing to participate with this change,

I will send over proposed dates, using your availability as reference. To confirm continued participation, please reply in the affirmative.

If you have questions about this change or you would like to be removed from the study, please let me know and we can discuss further.

Appreciative of your patience,  
Sharazazi



APPENDIX G

EMAIL TO CACREP PROGRAM CONTACTS

Greetings,

I am Sharazazi C. Dyson, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision from Northern Illinois University. I am reaching out in the hopes you could share an email to your students to aid in my recruitment and as you are listed as the program contact on the CACREP website, I hope this email is directed to the correct person.

I am currently recruiting counselor education and supervision (CES) doctoral students of color from CACREP accredited programs for my qualitative dissertation study. The purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the manifestations of power in their training programs. I am seeking to interview participants individually via Microsoft Teams for 1 hour, with ability to withdraw at any time. My committee chair is Dr. Suzanne Degges White, [sdeggeswhite@niu.edu](mailto:sdeggeswhite@niu.edu) and this study has been approved by Northern Illinois University IRB (IRB HS22-0119).

If you are able to send the recruitment email out, please let me know and I will send over a recruitment email that you can forward as appropriate. If you are unable to do so, thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Sharazazi

APPENDIX H:  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## Interview Protocol:

Perspectives Of Power: Phenomenological Inquiry Exploring the Manifestation of Power in  
Doctoral Programs

*Script*

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Sharazazi Dyson, and I am a doctoral candidate at Northern Illinois University conducting my dissertation study. Thank you for completing the surveys, and this interview will take about 1 hour and will include 6 questions regarding your experiences. There may also be a 30-minute follow-up (member check) post interview. Member checks can give you as a participant the opportunity to challenge misinterpretations of the data and volunteer additional information. This study will be analyzing data from separate interviews, so the specific participants, context, and data will be taken into account before a potential implementation of a follow up. I would like your permission to video record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the video recording or the interview itself, you have the right to do so. Please be advised that although I will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of interviews prevents the guaranteeing of confidentiality. Your responses will be used to develop a better understanding of how you view your experiences with power and how it manifests in your counselor education doctoral program. The purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the uses of power by their institution, faculty, and peers in their program.

At this time, I would like to remind you of your electronic consent to participate in this study. I am the principal investigator, specifying your participation in the research project: Perspectives of Power: Phenomenological Inquiry Exploring the Manifestation of Power in Doctoral Programs. You and I have both electronically signed, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other electronically secure, separate from your reported responses. Thank you.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop or take a break, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence, regardless of point of exit all participants will receive a mental health resource list. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission, we will begin the interview:

Date:

Time of Interview:

Virtual Place:

Interviewer:

Position of interviewee: Doctoral student of color enrolled in or graduated from CACREP accredited Counselor Education and Supervision programs who have experienced uses of power.

Brief description of project & purpose of interview: The purpose of this study is to explore how doctoral students of color experience and describe the manifestations of power in their training programs.

Interview Number:

Participant IDs:

Questions:

The following questions were used in this study to explore participants' experience with power:

1. When you hear "use of power" what does that mean to you?
2. How have you seen power used by others in your counselor education and supervision (CES) program?
3. How have you used power in your CES program?
4. What have you learned about how to engage in your CES program due to how power is used?
5. What is difficult or easy about engaging with others in your CES program where you experience a power imbalance?
6. To what extent, if any, did the person's race, gender, or position influence your experience of their use of power?