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Customer Relationship Management Strategies at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Johnny Balman McDonald

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Customer Relationship Management Strategies at Historically Black Colleges and

Universities

by

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BS, Colorado State University - Pueblo, 1984

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2017

Abstract

Historically Black colleges and university managers lack sufficient understanding of customer-relationship management strategies to create high enrollment rates leading to increased financial stability. The focus of this qualitative single case study was to explore customer-relationship management strategies managers use to improve financial performance from historically Black colleges and universities located within the state of Georgia with a student enrollment that exceeds 2,000 students. The conceptual framework for this study was the general system theory. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and employee handbooks. The data analysis consisted of compiling the data, disassembling the data into common codes, reassembling the data into themes, interpreting the meaning, and reporting the themes. The use of member checking and methodological triangulation increased the trustworthiness of the study. Themes that emerged were efficiencies with technology, student retention, and financial performance. Using up to date and effective technology including customer relationship management, and creating strategies to focus on student retention can help educational organizations improve their financial performance. The potential for social change includes the opportunity to increase the graduation and student retention rates to provide more opportunities for local business leaders and enhance the economic sustainability of local communities.

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Dedication

First, I dedicate this doctoral study to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Second, I dedicate this doctoral study to my sister and brothers, Rosemary Smith Little, Earl Smith, Harold Smith, and David McDonald. To my children, Kemisha, Lashanta, Latarsha, Joshua, and Johnae: Thank you for your unconditional love and I encourage you to continue to trust God. To both churches I currently pastor, Miles Chapel and Howard Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal church members, and especially to my prayer warriors Brother and Sister Williams. Your prayers and encouragement have been invaluable. I am overwhelmed with gratitude to all who supported me to study to become part of the scholars. Through this doctoral study process, I have learned to love all of you more now.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are institutions of higher education established before 1964 to serve the Black community (Wilcox, Wells, Haddad, & Wilcox, 2014). Some HBCU enrollment managers experienced a substantial decrease in the student enrollment rate because other college and university recruiters aggressively enrolled Black college students using effective strategies (Patterson, Dunston, & Daniels, 2013). Many enrollment managers in educational institutions, including HBCUs, continue to seek strategies to improve relationships with their customers to increase profitability (Montgomery & Montgomery, 2012).

Background of the Problem

Across the United States, HBCUs are struggling financially and the enrollment declined by 14% (Davis, 2015). High student enrollments are signs of efficiency at HBCUs and are important to an institution's profitability (Brown & Burnette, 2014). Black colleges and universities enrollment increased by 42% between 2000 and 2010; however, enrollment declined drastically reducing the total productivity (Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015).

Problem Statement

HBCU managers lack sufficient understanding of CRM to create a high enrollment rate leading to increased financial stability (Webber & Rogers, 2014). HBCUs' enrollment declined by 14%, which resulted in a lack of financial stability for the organizational leaders (Davis, 2015). The general business problem was that the low enrollments at some HBCUs are negatively impacting business operations financially and

nonfinancially. The specific business problem was that some HBCU enrollment managers lack customer relationship management (CRM) strategies to improve financial performance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies used by HBCU enrollment managers to improve financial performance. The population for the study included one enrollment manager from Georgia who worked at an HBCU with high student enrollment rates and who had financial knowledge of their organization. The findings of this study will contribute to positive social change, by improving student enrollment to increase the financial stability of the HBCU. Improved CRM strategies for HBCU managers can result in improved services for employees and may provide long-term growth for the institution and the community leading to more productive citizens.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies that HBCU enrollment managers used to improve financial performance. A qualitative method is more effective than a quantitative method to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' perspective (Smith, 2015). Quantitative and mixed methods did not meet the needs for the study because these methods do not gain participants' in-depth perspectives regarding phenomena. The quantitative method includes numerical data and statistical calculations, and mixed method research includes quantitative and qualitative methods that include numerical and statistical data for effective outcomes (Frels & Onwuegbuzie,

2013). A mixed method design includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which often results in more accuracy in the results and conclusion (McKim, 2017). Based on my decision not to use quantitative methods, I opted against using a mixed method approach.

A single exploratory case study design was the most appropriate design for the study. Perrin (2014) indicated that researchers who select the right research design should gain valuable data and yield effective results. A qualitative case study design is an in-depth exploration strategy to explore a complex phenomenon within its real-world context (Yin, 2013). An exploratory case study met the needs for exploratory or explanatory research to ask how or what questions to comprehend the characteristics of real-life events (Polit & Beck, 2013). A phenomenological design was not appropriate because the primary goal of a phenomenology design is to study the human experience from the viewpoint of those living the phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2014), which was not the purpose of the study. An ethnographic design was not appropriate because as indicated by Marshall and Rossman (2014), researchers of ethnographies focus on studying an entire culture of people to gain perspectives from those who live in that culture.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: What CRM strategies do HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance?

Interview Questions

The Participant answered the following questions:

1. What strategies do you use to improve the financial performance of your organization?
2. What are the challenges you overcame to increase financial stability?
3. What technology do you use for tracking financial growth while building effective customer relationship strategies?
4. What customer relations management strategies do you use to improve technology while maximizing financial performance?
5. What do you consider a challenge for the internal financial sustainability systems at your organization?
6. What challenges do you encounter in your organization during the implementation of the CRM strategies?
7. What do you consider a financial challenge for the external growth within the organization?
8. What organizational strategies do you use to enhance financial long-term goals?
9. What additional information can you provide to assist in understanding successful financial stability?

Conceptual Framework

The general systems theory (GST) served as the foundation for the study. In the 1930s, von Bertalanffy (1968) coined the term GST. Von Bertalanffy (1972) contended that GST included the importance of the external environment on a system or organization. The GST was appropriate for tackling each element in an entire system

(Kerzner, 2013). When personnel from an organization works as a unit, leaders share an understanding with colleagues and coordinate their decision behaviors with their actions (Chakraborty, Vishik, & Rao, 2013). Moreover, von Bertalanffy (1968) noted that leaders who used GST could resolve a problematic system as a whole. Chakraborty et al. (2013) emphasized that using the general system in business strategies may result in converting individual activities into team activities within the organization. Key constructs from the GST are organization strategies, the appropriate technology, and effective internal and external systems working together (Chang, Jiang, Klein, & Wang, 2014).

The main purpose of using GST for this study was to reflect how GST aspects work together in HBCUs. The results indicated the importance of organization strategies, technology, and internal and external systems by reflecting on problems that occur in HBCUs, such as the lack of skills necessary to remain competitive and profitable. The findings influenced the process, systems, and organization; improved enrollment rates, and helped to minimize employee turnover.

Operational Definitions

Customer relationship management (CRM): Customer relationship management is an effective approach for collecting, analyzing, and translating valuable customer information into managerial action (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2012).

Customer satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is the perceived discrepancy between expectations and the actual performance of a product (Ding, Yang, Zhang, Liang, & Xia, 2014).

Enrollment data: Enrollment data refer to the number of students attending a college (Hinrichs, 2012).

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs): The HBCUs are institutions of higher education in the United States established before 1964 with the intention of serving the Black community (Brown, 2013).

Marketing: Marketing is the process of creating, distributing, promoting, and pricing goods and services with customers to develop and maintain favorable relationships in a dynamic environment (Wang, Hu, & Hu, 2013).

Marketing strategy: Marketing strategy is the process organizational leaders use to concentrate resources on optimal opportunities (Simons, 2013).

Retention rate: Retention rate is a measure, in percentage terms, of first-time students who return to their university to continue studies the following semester or year (Webster & Showers, 2011).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are statements made and considered true, but not verified (Davison, Maraist, Hamilton, & Bing, 2012). The general assumption was that each interviewee had the same level of interest in the results of the research (Parker & Crona, 2012). Another assumption was that the participant would understand the confidentiality and anonymity of the study and would respond candidly. I assumed that the participant would answer the interview questions honestly based on their experiences inside the educational institution.

Limitations

Lakshman (2012) indicated that limitations are constraints that challenge researchers conducting qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research. The first limitation was that an exploratory case study of one HBCU appeared insufficient with adequate data to answer the research question. The results of the study may limit the ability to make transferable business recommendations for other HBCUs. Another limitation of this study was the challenge of obtaining approval from HBCU enrollment managers to allow the inclusion of proprietary information before submitting the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application. I obtained approval from the HBCU managers to include proprietary information request feedback from the enrollment managers for one HBCU, which can make the approval process easier to include proprietary information.

Delimitations

Delimitations control boundary conditions for theory (Ody-Brasier & Vermeulen, 2014). The delimitation was the focus on customer relationship strategies for one HBCU in Georgia. The delimitation of the population are characteristics that make the transferability of results difficult to apply other studies (Gau & James, 2013; Ody-Brasier & Vermeulen, 2014). The participant work in the capacity of enrollment managers serving HBCUs.

Significance of the Study

The study findings may be of value because enrollment managers could learn CRM strategies that could increase profitability at other HBCUs. The findings of the

study may also influence HBCU managers' future decisions to deter poor student enrollment rates. Moreover, HBCU enrollment managers may use the results of the study to develop a new process to implement effective, ethical business policies and define standards for student retention and stakeholder value.

Contribution to Business Practice

Leaders of HBCUs avoid business failures by creating and sustaining a solid financial position (Fogle, 2012). Further exploration of management strategies and practices may help to determine the best strategies by HBCU business practitioners in a competitive environment, and the results of the study may show insights into successful strategies. Results of this study may expand existing knowledge for other HBCU enrollment managers to improve the financial stability of their institutions through effective enrollment management and identification of management strategies that demonstrate success despite competitive challenges. The results from the study may equip aspiring and existing HBCU business practitioners with information to survive in a competitively challenging environment.

Through a focus on key constructs, the results of the study may include valuable information for the management of private or for-profit universities on why many students leave before graduation. Enrollment managers at HBCUs constantly look for ways to encourage students from dropping out of college (Palmer, Davis, & Maramba, 2011). Effective CRM results in financial benefits to companies, regardless of the industry (Wang, Hu, & Hu, 2013).

Implications for Social Change

A business in decline impact jobs, organizations, and communities (Anderson et al., 2013). The results of the data from this study may contribute new insights into how practitioners of HBCU leaders can succeed beyond 5 years. HBCU leaders may survive competition by implementing new strategies and practices from this study. HBCU business practitioners contribute to economic growth through job creation and total production output (Judge, Fainshmidt, & Brown III, 2014). Leaders of successful HBCUs may continue to provide employment for the employees who depend upon these jobs for their livelihood (Anderson et al., 2013).

Successful students provide continuous revenue to HBCUs and contribute socially and financially to their communities upon graduation (Wood & Palmer, 2014). In contrast, low student enrollment rates have financial and social implications for local communities, businesses, governments, and institutions (Ansari, Munir, & Gregg, 2012). Managers at HBCUs will find that the results of this study include valuable information regarding why students decide to leave an HBCU before graduating.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The literature review is a historical overview of CRM strategies with an emphasis on detailed information and findings. Factors in the literature review include the systems theory, an overview of the higher education industry, business challenges of HBCUs, strategic opportunities of businesses, and the concept of CRM. Topics in the literature review also include the evolution of CRM, success factors of CRM, the role of CRM in business promotions at HBCUs, and business challenges of CRM. Other factors include

the adoption of CRM and the history of measuring customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer engagement versus customer satisfaction, and CRM.

The literature review consists of peer-reviewed articles, materials, texts, research documents, and doctoral studies relevant to the constructs of the research question. Table 1 includes the article counts and percentages for references in this doctoral study. The table includes categorized numbers of articles and materials with the total percentage of peer-reviewed articles. To select sources appropriate for this literature review, I considered scholarship rigor and depth, content relevancy, peer-reviewed status, and currency of research. The total number of peer-reviewed journal articles was 229, or 93% of the materials are peer-reviewed. Of the total number of peer-reviewed, 110 articles in the literature review represents 92% with publication dates between 2013 and 2017 that are within 5 years of completion of the study.

Table 1

Reference Table

Publications	Published between 2013-2017	Older than 2013	Percentage of overall sources
Books	12	3	4%
Other	2	1	1%
Peer-reviewed articles	229	6	93%
Government websites	3	2	2%
Total References	95%	12	100%

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies that HBCU enrollment managers use to improve the financial performance. The literature review includes relevant and significant literature regarding strategies that improve the

student enrollment at HBCUs. I plan to use the results of the literature review to address the research question. For a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of HBCU student enrollment, the literature review includes an explanation of the systems theory.

General Systems Theory

The GST was appropriate for a tackling of each element in an entire system (Kerzner, 2013). When employees worked as a unit, leaders share understanding with their colleagues and coordinate their decision behaviors with actions (Chakraborty et al., 2013). Moreover, von Bertalanffy (1968) noted that leaders could use GST to resolve a problematic system as a whole. Chakraborty et al. (2013) emphasized that using general systems in business strategies resulted in converting individual activities into team activities within an organization. The key constructs from the GST were organization strategies, appropriate technology, and effective internal and external systems working together (Chang, Jiang, Klein, & Wang, 2014). The main purpose of using GST for the study was to reflect how GST aspects work together in HBCUs. The findings of the study included the importance of organization strategies, technology, and internal and external systems while reflecting on problems that HBCUs incurred inappropriate skills necessary to remain competitive and profitable. The findings influenced the process, systems, and organization helps improve student enrollment and minimizing employee turnover.

System Theory

The system theory literature includes information on how independent parts of the system of an organism affect the whole system (von Bertalanffy, 1972). The components of organic systems, characterized by open systems affected by internal and external

factors and by inflows and outflows, constantly change (von Bertalanffy, 1972). A living organism needs investigation as a whole because its individual parts cannot include a complete picture of its functioning (von Bertalanffy, 1972). System theories have a structure and continually change in unpredictable ways; therefore, their future and structure are not predictable (Ge, Feng, Song, Chang, Li, & Cameron, 2010). Decision makers use systems theory to establish guidelines and values to create an efficient method of planning, controlling, and making decisions (Kerzner, 2013). Organizational leaders need to understand the relationship of how independent parts of the system of an organism affect the whole system (von Bertalanffy, 1972).

Ge et al. (2013) noted that a system includes collections of individual components that are necessary for operating the system, but the individual components lack sufficiency to characterize the system. The two components of systems theory are independent, but they interact with each other to achieve the objective of the system (Kerzner, 2013). Components of a system will respond differently when the components stand in isolation from the other parts of the system (Chakraborty et al., 2013). Using systems theory in business strategies will result in converting individual activities into team activities within an organization (Eden, & Ackermann, 1998). When an organization works as a unit, its leaders will share understanding with colleagues and coordinate their decision behaviors with their actions. In systems theory, each distinctly categorized characteristic includes a decision by management that will identify the relational impact on the entire organization (Jiang, Lepak, Hu, & Baer, 2012). Each part of a decision has a relationship to information created from either a process or a person

(Shotton et al., 2013). Managers create organizational systems that may distinctly categorize characteristics that include a decision by management that will identify the relational impact on the entire organization (Jiang, Lepak, Hu, & Baer, 2012).

Organizational Principles of General Systems

Leaders can use general systems to serve as an opportunity for understanding the wholeness of organizational systems by emphasizing organize functions, including management (Godfrey & Mahoney, 2014). The driving idea behind system theory is the concept of system wholeness (Ge et al., 2010). GST includes completely organizational systems with societies working together to ensure organizations meet objectives (Wilson, 2012). A business organization is a set of subsystems with each system working together to accomplish the organizational goals. Frost, Armstrong, Siegelman, and Christiansen (2015) indicated that GST was a strategy to interpret how retention affects an organization and why retaining skilled personnel affects organization profitability. The perspective of general systems organizational activities affects personnel turnover and includes strategies some leaders use to retain personnel (Armstrong, & Armstrong, 2009).

Complex Systems Theory

The complex nature of the educational system necessitates how complex systems operate. Complex system theory was a relevant theory for my study and warrants further research. Competitive environments, constant changes, and evolution include complexity that leads to unpredictability in organizations (Matthyssens, Vandenbempt, & Van Bockhaven, 2013). The organizational environment, tasks, and goals contribute to the complexity of systems and organizational management (Simons, 2013). Systems become

even more complex because they depend on people and social systems that are complex (Sommerville et al., 2012).

Student enrollment is collections of factors that need to work together as a unified system (Kahu, 2013). DeTienne, Agle, Phillips, and Ingerson (2012) provided a relevant example for the phenomenon of student attrition and noted that the financial pressure to increase revenues and profitability might result in internal competition and conflict among departments. The interdependency of multiple factors, together with the interactions of academic and administrative personnel, adds considerable complexity to the university system. College managers identify the issues addressed through the strengths and weaknesses of systems theory to ensure that improvements result (Simons, 2013). Managers should gather information from all systems of a business and then make decisions accordingly (Kerzner, 2013). In most colleges or universities student enrollment consist of departments that help recruit, admit, provide financial aid, and student retention.

Tinto's Integration Theory

Tinto (1975) was among the first to research the effects of student interactions and integration within the university system. Tinto linked student success with the university environment and the academic and social integration between students and their academic institutions. Factors such as socioeconomic status and previous achievements impact the level of students' commitment and integration (De Clercq, Galand, Dupont, & Frenay, 2013), to positively influence student outcomes (Kahu, 2013).

De Clercq et al. (2013) noted that the higher the engagement and interaction are, the greater the chances of success. The relationships and bonds new students build with other students, staff, and faculty, help them integrate into their new environment and affect success (Chhuon, & Hudley, 2008). Eseryel, Law, Ifenthaler, Ge, and Miller (2014) described how student motivation and external influences affect student engagement and necessitate the use of complexity theory. Kahu (2013) concurred with the use of complexity theory to understand student engagement but added an emphasis on principal factors such as prior student experiences. The factors that matter and have a favorable impact on student engagement and retention improved involvement by both faculty and administrative business service professionals (Munoz, Miller, & Poole, 2016). Sidelinger, Frisby, and Heisler (2016) proposed that student integration, interactions, and involvement with faculty and the university should happen in the classroom. However, the unwillingness of faculty to interact with students may minimize the effectiveness of student–faculty interactions (Linder, Harris, Allen, & Hubain, 2015). Therefore, exploring other functions where students meet and interact could provide new knowledge (Wei, Peng, & Chou, 2015). For example, dormitories, student unions, sports venues, and student affairs offices might be more effective in enhancing student engagement in this study.

Overview of the Higher Education Industry as a Business

HBCUs are part of the higher education industry and were vital to the success of this study. The notion that leaders of higher education institutions need to act like business leaders attracted the attention of both scholars and practitioners (Zaksa, 2012).

The landscape of higher education has undergone a significant paradigm shift. Various factors such as technology growth and changes in the economy have a significant influence on the behaviors and operations of higher education institutions (Aparicio, Urbano, & Audretsch, 2016). Factors such as the challenging economy lead to significant changes in the landscape of higher education. Some of the changes include a shift from elite education to mass education, globalization, changes in funding systems, and an increase in regulatory frameworks (Zaksa, 2012). Leaders of higher education institutions increasingly adapt applied business and marketing strategies to increase efficiency, strengthen financial stability, and attract more students (Lynch & James, 2012).

Business Challenges of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Institutions of higher learning are vital institutions for preparing Black students for careers and graduate education in the United States (Payton, Suarez-Brown, & Lamar, 2012). Noonan, Lindong, and Jaitley (2013) wrote that the 103 HBCUs represent only 3% of the higher education industry in the United States. However, the institutions of higher education graduate approximately 20% of African Americans with undergraduate degrees (Volberda et al., 2012).

HBCUs have several factors that influence their competitive advantage within the higher education industry. Competitive advantage is the differences in service and products that are of interest for current and potential customers (Zaksa, 2012). Competitive advantages are necessary to identify strategies for a successful CRM implementation (Trkman, 2013). Leaders of higher education institutions have the challenge of meeting the social, cultural, and economic needs of their customers, as well

as remaining competitive (Matzler & Abfalter, 2013). Another challenge institutions face is a low customer retention and admission rate (Payton et al., 2012).

Student retention is a challenge for every higher education institution but is greater for HBCUs (Payton et al., 2012; Pearson, 2012). On average, HBCUs have a 30% graduation rate, which is low comparing to predominantly White universities (Payton et al., 2012). The HBCUs also lack resources, which is one of their biggest challenges (Griffin, Muniz, & Espinosa, 2012). Iloh and Toldson (2013) discussed fund-raising as another challenge of HBCUs.

Strategic Opportunities of Businesses

Marketing researchers increasingly realized that service businesses might exceed profitable objectives by becoming the focal point of a consumer's personal life and social experiences (Kang, Tang, & Fiore, 2014). Older consumers or the socially and emotionally isolated often seek human interaction in commercial establishments (Rosenbaum & Smallwood, 2013). Business managers have the opportunity to leverage the increasing diversity among their customers. Although the main goal of HBCU managers is to educate Blacks, approximately 20% of students enrolled at these institutions in 2011 were not Black (Flores & Park, 2015). By using the right CRM strategy, leaders at the universities continue to leverage a diverse customer base to strengthen their school's competitiveness in the higher education industry.

In addition to leveraging a diverse customer base, HBCU managers have the opportunity to build and sustain a positive global image. Over half of HBCUs' administrative bodies offer study abroad opportunities to their students (Volberda et al.,

2012). HBCU managers can leverage these opportunities to establish a positive image around the world. Increasing financial stability through fund-raising is another opportunity for business decision makers at HBCUs. Since 2009, given the decline in public funding, fund-raising is one of the most important factors for the long-term sustainability of HBCUs (Cantey, Bland, Mack, & Joy-Davis, 2013). Developing innovative and comprehensive fund-raising is vital to the survival of HBCUs (Iloh & Toldson, 2013).

Institutional decision makers who have substantial fund-raising strategies did not have issues with customer retention, employee satisfaction, and accreditation (Iloh & Toldson, 2013). Although HBCU managers always struggled to raise funds, they have the opportunity to increase their endowments by establishing partnerships with alumni, other HBCUs, and community organizations (Cantey et al., 2013). HBCU managers can improve fund-raising through positive faculty involvement and public relations (Iloh & Toldson, 2013). Online learning is an opportunity for HBCU managers. Managers of institutions who do not have online courses are at least discussing the option (Romero, López, Luna, & Ventura, 2013). The number of students enrolled in at least one online course continues to grow 10 times faster than the overall higher education population (Lynch & James, 2012). McPherson and Bacow (2015) indicated that 65% of chief academic officers (CAO) in the United States see online offering as a core strategy. HBCU managers struggle to raise funds; they have the opportunity to increase their endowments by establishing partnerships with alumni, and community organizations (Cantey et al., 2013).

Concept of Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

The concept of CRM began in the early 1970s (Chen, Yang, Chen, Tseng, & Lee, 2013). Chatterjee (2013) explained that the actual business of every company is to make and keep customers happy. The strategy resulted in customer satisfaction and loyalty between the two to carry on with potential business (Saccani, Visintin, & Rapaccini, 2014).

The emergence of new strategies and technologies in the global marketplace leads to competition in business, and proactive strategies (Marx & Hsu, 2015). Allameh, Shahin, and Tabanifar (2012) noted that effective CRM is essential to gain competitive advantages. Managers can use customer relationship management to improve an organization's business, and relationships with customers (Guercini & Runfola, 2012). Kim, Kumar, and Kumar (2012) wrote that CRM originally includes three major principles, shielding current customers, fostering new customers, and enhancing the asset value of all customers. A CRM system emerged for management to improve customer satisfaction, increase business profit, and reduce business costs and investment (Lim, Han, & Ito, 2013).

Chopra, Bhambri, and Krishan (2012) noted that the era of globalization remains competitive, but the fast-changing economic environment is a paradigm shift. Luftman et al. (2012) suggested that the existence and success of any organization predicate on the customers and on the employees working to provide quality care to the customers. Organizational decision makers around the world are competing hard to attract and retain

customers and enhance CRM, which is the main area of interest for decision makers (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2016).

The objective of every marketing person is to attract, satisfy, and win over the customers (Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Many business decision makers continue to seek new methods for gaining insight to cultivate personal relationships with current and potential customers (Chopra et al., 2012). Business decision makers who use the concepts of CRM found profitability in retaining and rewarding existing customers rather than seeking new customers (Hutchinson, Donnell, Gilmore, & Reid, 2015). The conventional market approach is the four P's (product, price, place, and promotion) grounded in the industrial age using mass media (Mikalef, Giannakos, & Pateli, 2013). After the introduction of the information era, researchers noted CRM also includes customers on a one-to-one and one-to-many basis and satisfying individual needs (Chopra et al., 2012).

Customer relationship management is an integral business model and a set of operating practices to coordinate and align to maximize profitable revenue from target customers (Kumar & Reinartz, 2012). Customer relationship management is a business strategy that includes effective integration of marketing, sales, and integrating people, process, and technology (Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Through the impact of the Internet, e-CRM includes the CRM techniques with new electronic channels, wireless technologies with business applications (Chopra et al., 2012).

Evolution of CRM

Managers in the field of marketing advocated that company managers should work beyond selling products and focus on improving relationships with customers

(Allen & Peloza, 2015). Before becoming a standalone software system, CRM evolved from various other business programs and processes (Pearlson, Saunders, & Galletta, 2016). As concerns emerged regarding tracking, collecting, storing, and segmenting customer information, the evolution of CRM attracts the attention of scholars and practitioners (Cummins, Peltier, & Dixon, 2016). The process of CRM includes significant progress since the 1980s, converting to standalone systems (Lema, Quadros, & Schmitz, 2012). Four companies dominated 55% of the CRM market since 2008: Sap, Oracle, Salesforce.com, and Microsoft (Wang, Dugan, & Sojka, 2013).

The growth of the Internet and new technologies include new opportunities in the field of CRM (Chen, Chiang, & Storey, 2012). Chen et al. (2012) noted that new information and communication technologies are an opportunity to shop, negotiate prices, and share information regarding products using the web. Social media includes a platform of information sharing between companies and customers (Wang, Hu, & Hu, 2013). Business decision makers increasingly direct their efforts toward the web and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ for their CRM needs (Gonçalves & Zhang, 2013).

Success Factors of CRM

Despite the billions of dollars spent on implementing CRM systems, many companies' managers remain unhappy with the results of their CRM (Kumar & Reinartz, 2012). The success of CRM results from identifying and addressing the needs of customers (Allen & Peloza, 2015). The failure of most CRM is the poor implementation of CRM projects and the over expectation of companies from their CRM systems (Steel,

Dubelaar, & Ewing, 2013). Technological implementations, management support, organizational implementation, and employee support are the four main drivers of a successful CRM strategy (Steel et al., 2013). Technological implementations include the effective acquisition, evaluation, storage, and accessibility of data.

The management support driver is a commitment from management and a clear vision for the CRM system (Kishor & Nagamani, 2015). The organizational implementation driver includes a good organizational structure, employee incentives, and training. The employee support driver includes a commitment from employees and a willingness to use the CRM system (Nishat Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2014).

Williams, Ashill, Naumann, and Jackson (2015) noted that a successful CRM has three factors: contextual factors, individual factors, and organizational factors. Allen and Pelozo (2015) posited that limiting the failure of CRM systems involves five propositions to drive a successful CRM implementation. The proposition includes meeting customers' need and focusing on satisfying customers likely to yield a high profit. The proposition includes relationship symmetry that companies should have power over their customers repeated business. Although Allen and Pelozo's five propositions may help company leaders increase profit, they may also affect long-term relationships. The focus of the propositions is on helping maximize profit from customers rather than on satisfying these customers. Ahearne, Rapp, Mariadoss, and Ganesan (2012) noted that CRM must remain people-driven, which means effective customer satisfaction promotes profit growth.

In multiple case study research, Ahearne et al. (2012) investigated the value of customer-driven CRM and the factors that drive a successful people-driven CRM. The

results of the study indicated customer-driven CRM could reveal some important elements, such as customers' emotional needs, that technology-integrated and performance-driven CRM cannot find (Delcourt, Gremler, van Riel, & van Birgelen, 2016). Ahearne et al. identified customers' emotional needs, customer involvement, employee capabilities, and organizational customer-oriented culture as drivers of a successful CRM.

Role of CRM in Business Promotions at HBCUs

Marketing includes managing profitable customer relationships (Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Managers who market on the behalf of HBCUs help sustain economic success for institutional decision makers, which are vital for small schools because student enrollment is essential (Mende, Bolton, & Bitner, 2013). A goal of marketing personnel for HBCUs is to attract new students by exceeding their needs, retain and grow current student enrollment by delivering student satisfaction. For example, McDonald's fulfills its motto by being its customers' favorite place to eat in the world, which gives nearly as much market share as its closest four competitors combined (Till, Heckler, Mathews, Hall, & Wacker, 2012).

Marketing must not reflect the old sense of marketing and sales, which was telling and selling, but must satisfy customer needs (Urde, Baumgarth, & Merrilees, 2013). The leaders of some companies define marketing as a process used to help create value and to build strong customer relationships to capture value from the customers in return (Mende et al., 2013). Yeh and Yeh (2016) defined marketing as the process of creating,

distributing, promoting, and pricing goods, services, and ideas to facilitate satisfying exchange relationships and maintain favorable relationships with stakeholders.

As purchasers of the products and services that organizations such as HBCU enrollment managers develop and promote, customers are the focal point of all marketing activities. Historically, Black colleges and universities must define their products to satisfy customers or student's needs. For example, the Walt Disney Company is in the business of making people happy and not in the business of establishing theme parks (Lidh, 2013).

Business Challenges of CRM

Marketing decision makers in businesses include the benefit from understanding customer needs and wants, as well as the marketplace of their operation. Some organization leaders suffer from marketing myopia (Davis, Golicic, Boerstler, Choi, & Oh, 2013). Marketing myopia is the process of paying more attention to the specific products sold by a company's personnel than to the benefits and experiences produced by the products (Ahearne et al., 2012). Organizational leaders should examine five core customer and marketplace concepts (a) needs, wants, and demands; (b) market offerings (products, services, and experiences); (c) value and satisfaction; (d) exchanges and relationships; and (e) markets (Yeh & Yeh, 2016).

Giving customers what they need is essential for long-term competitive success in a competitive market (Nwude & Uduji, 2013). Employees of effective marketing companies go many lengths to discover and understand their customers' needs, wants, and demands (Dabholkar & Sheng, 2012). The leaders of many organizations achieve

superior customer satisfaction by spending hours reviewing their customer comments, sharing these comments throughout the organization, identifying issues, and addressing these issues (Yeh & Yeh, 2016). Kumar and Rajan (2012) described CRM as an effective strategy to identify, track, meet, and manage the need of customers.

Despite the growing popularity and adoption of CRM, many organizational decision makers struggle to implement the theoretically prescribed CRM strategies (Li & Mao, 2012). The most important factors of CRM failure are structural (Nishat Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2014). Through a review of multiple case studies, Law, Ennew, and Mitussis (2013) identified four emerging challenges of CRM strategies: managing customer perception, identifying customer issues, valuing information, and making continuous changes in CRM systems. I believe the adoption of effective CRM strategies would help increase financial profit for HBCU managers.

In general, implementing CRM strategy involves the participation of various roles and individuals, processes, technologies, costs, and time. One of the most common causes of failure of CRM strategies is the reliance on CRM software to drive customer relationships (Nishat Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2014). Software includes the collection and management of customer information; however, organizational leaders should not rely only on CRM software to drive customer relationships and satisfaction (Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013). A good CRM strategy should involve both technology and process (Nishat Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2014). Through a review of the literature, Nishat Faisal and Al-Esmael (2014) identified the following common challenges of CRM strategies (a) a lack of employees' trust in the CRM implementation,

(b) communication issues, and (c) weak leadership. Also, Nishat Faisal and Al-Esmael indicated that the deployment of CRM as a complex solution includes a focus on technology rather than process, a repeat of CRM initiatives, and the reconstruction of CRM strategies.

Leaders of different-sized organizations may face different challenges in CRM implementation (Merhi, 2015). The main challenges of small and medium-sized organizations are the balance between electronic communication and traditional communication and the integration of technology into existing processes (Harrigan et al., 2012). The leaders of large organizations have three challenges: organizational readiness, over expectation, and poor project management (Wang, Hu, & Hu, 2013).

Adoption of CRM

A CRM system is an effective tool to improve the relationships with customers (Kishor & Nagamani, 2015). As the need to focus on customer satisfaction increases, leaders within organizations are incorporating technology into their operations (Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Many leaders fail to adapt to CRM because of an overreliance on technology, inadequate segmentation, and confusion regarding leadership roles (Vella, Caruana, & Pitt, 2012).

Fang, Wade, Delios, and Beamish (2013) indicated that marketing managers tend to focus on technological attributes rather than human resources aspects. The successful implementation of CRM initiatives needs effective marketing competencies through information, technology (Nishat Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2014). Despite the negative aspect attributed to CRM systems, research includes stories that demonstrate how the correct

implementation can enhance performance (Vella et al., 2012). The concept of CRM in this study includes the integration of people and technology to ascertain total customer satisfaction. Vella et al. (2012) stipulated that CRM adoption should include customer lifetime value. An effective CRM system is critical to sustaining an efficient customer understanding and relationship marketing. Identifying the right people to maintain relationships with customers is important (Vella et al., 2012).

Businesses such as higher education institutions continue to undergo significant changes on how to improve their relationships with their customers (Lynch & James, 2012). The treatment of customers, including students, should become the foremost priority in higher education institutions (Thomas, Thomas, & Wilson, 2013). During the 1990s, many higher education institutional leaders started changing their operations to focus on cost reduction and efficiency in an increasingly competitive market (Kim, Bae, & Bruton, 2012).

Many institutional leaders experienced a paradigm shift that involved adapting enterprise resource planning applications, because their leaders realized that building their own applications in-house was time and resource extensive (Das & Dayal, 2016). The leaders of enterprise resource planning applications helped institutions achieve efficiency in areas such as enrollment, finance, student information management, inventory management, and grants management. The focus of higher education continues to change from internal operation efficiency to customer satisfaction. Customer relationship management is becoming an important marketing tool in the higher education industry. Following a decline in public funding, leaders of higher education institutions

must rely on student tuition fees as a source of revenue (Zaksa, 2012). Consequently, leaders of higher education institutions continue to use applied business and marketing strategies to attract and retain customers (Kamal Basha, Sweeney, & Soutar, 2015). Most higher education institutions are nonprofit organizations, which means their orientation is more toward social benefits than toward financial benefit; therefore, CRM is the most appropriate marketing strategy for these organizations (Zaksa, 2012).

Customer relationship management is a widely accepted and effective marketing tool for organizations to help company decision makers collect, analyze, and translate valuable customer information into managerial actions (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2012). Customer relationship management is perhaps the most important concept of modern marketing (Yeh & Yeh, 2016). Maintaining positive relationships with customers, students, and alumni is an important goal and strategy within HBCUs. Higher education institutions, including HBCUs, are likely to achieve sustainable growth with CRM. Through CRM, the leaders of higher education institutions might collect, analyze, and translate valuable customer information into managerial actions (Zikmund et al., 2012). Retaining customers is the common focus of all higher education institutions (Shamma & Hassan, 2013). These institutional managers orient, train, and motivate everyone within their organization to help retain their customers by building lasting customer relationships (Šonková & Grabowska, 2015). Business decision makers use CRM strategies to focus on meeting the needs of their customers (Kumar & Reinartz, 2012). Furthermore, CRM managers help higher education institutional managers to

facilitate collaboration and communication with their customers, suppliers, and partners (Shamma & Hassan, 2013).

Customer Satisfaction

Many issues fall into the category of what customers consider customer satisfaction. Satisfaction of current employees is one factor that affects customers. If employees feel satisfied with their job, the employees' attitude transfers to their interactions with customers and leads to building customer's trust (Yee, Guo, & Yeung, 2015). Measurements of employee contentment indicated the value of customer relationships and consumer confidence in the establishment, which indicated the importance of job satisfaction and positive behavior toward customers in creating a trusting relationship (Yee et al., 2015). For employees to create positive long-term relationships, executives must understand and focus on the resources and attitudes needed (Yee et al., 2015). Business executives who understand their customers' needs take advantage of an excellent opportunity to implement strategies through customer orientation. Using data and the information obtained through market orientation, which includes customers, competitors, and technology, executives can offer essential information to strengthen the level of customer satisfaction (Wang, Chen, & Chen, 2012).

The limitations of research make customer retention difficult for having strong CRM when management does not have an effective marketing strategy focused on meeting their customers' needs (Tarasi, Bolton, Gustafsson, & Walker, 2013). When studying the significance of customers, servicing customers and building trust with customers are important. Customer relationship management remains significant for

meeting customer needs and for obtaining information on decision channels to understand and determine the value and needs for a consumer foundation (Kaur & Gupta, 2012).

Customer Engagement versus Customer Satisfaction

Sashi (2012) stipulated that the concepts of customer engagement and customer satisfaction apply to the business world and company leaders must retain personnel and customers. The effective CRM tools can effectively predict, and improve customer loyalty. Many business experts questioned the importance of customer satisfaction and its impact on loyalty (Politis, Giovanis, & Binioris, 2014). Harrison, Beatty, Reynolds, and Noble (2012) indicated that loyalty indicates that customers had not left yet; and would remain loyal to a company for the long term.

Organizational leaders should consider customer satisfaction as a solution to the customer loyalty problem (Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Teeratansirikool, Siengthai, Badir, and Charoenngam (2013) suggested that measurement strategies such as SERVQUAL help company leaders determine their customer satisfaction strategies (Zhao, Lu, Zhang, & Chau, 2012). Wei, Miao, and Huang (2013) contended that the objective of customer engagement is to pursue customer loyalty because fully engaged customers feel an emotional investment in a brand and its employees. Compared to customer satisfaction, customer engagement is an excellent measurement tool for improving retention and other business outcomes such as profits and return on investment (Wei et al., 2013).

Complexity in Education and Student Retention

Complexity in educational systems with multiple agents involves the faculty, students, parents, and community leaders (Lawson, 2013). Gunasekaran and Ngai (2012) added that the educational system is inherently complex because of continuous evolution, adaptability, and the efficient management of costs and resources. Until the 1990s, the factors that defined higher education systems were student enrollment, student outcomes, and institutional policies (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2012). The education system remains more complex because of some new elements such as globalization, an emphasis on management over academia, and the move toward a knowledge society that challenges current competencies (Cornell et al., 2013). Furthermore, the multiple interests of external agents, governments, accreditation bodies, and communities, as well as the higher demands and expectations of internal agents such as staff and students, create highly complex higher education systems (Duntley-Matos, 2014).

The numerous inputs and outputs that interact in higher education institutions create complex systems (Sommerville et al., 2012). Sommerville et al. (2012) indicated the processes include underperforming academicians, unprepared students, and inadequate facilities. Some of the variations identified by Sommerville as making interactions difficult to predict and manage related to faculty and student demographics, educational background, and approach to education. The multiple variations add complexity to the education system. Wolf-Branigin (2013) added that complexity arose from multiple variables, including mission and vision; programs offered; quality of education and services offered; quality attributes with research and internal and external

accreditations; and relationships with internal and external customers. Additionally, Marshall and Farahbakhsh (2013) contended that relationships of power and the different directions of stakeholders are difficult to manage within complex systems such as higher education institutions. Wolf-Branigin suggested that the leadership of a university must recognize a campus needs to function as a system and function superior to its individual parts.

Rios, McConnell, and Brue (2013) recognized the complexity of the university environment since the 1980s. Student services organizations became more complex through the addition of new student support departments. Rios et al. indicated that departments such as admissions, the registrar, student activities, health services, and financial aid reported to the student affairs department. Wong, Ng, Mak, and Chan (2016) suggested that student enrollment system may include complex, overlapping responsibilities, a lack of accountability, and unclear reporting structures. Goh, Elliott, and Richards (2015) noted that traditional hierarchical structures must reform and become more flexible by aligning resources and employees and by setting clear organizational goals to drive efficiency and effectiveness.

Sommerville et al. (2012) contended that because of the complex nature of higher education systems, department managers often function inadequately and inefficiencies force modifications. Sommerville et al. noted that higher education needs transformation regarding the way that personnel in all departments should understand the system and work together to achieve common goals. The interactions and competition among faculty, administrators, students, and other university personnel create challenging and complex

environments (Marion & Gonzales, 2013), hindering the needed transformations that could drive effective and efficient practices. The complexity of maintaining effective customer retention arises from the interaction of academic, psychological, and sociological factors (Tinto, 1975).

Higher completion rates can improve students' employability and future income prospects and lower the need for social services, welfare, and unemployment benefits (Cellini, 2012). Societies also gain human capital and have citizens with lower criminal activity. Tinto (1975) indicated that students who obtain a degree have higher returns than those who do not. Individuals from lower socioeconomic groups often drop out and do not obtain a degree, thus creating even bigger earning differentials among the better educated and the less educated (Tinto, 1975). The benefits include higher job satisfaction and job security, lower criminal activity, and higher self-confidence and self-awareness (Pitesa & Thau, 2013).

Mariotti and Meinecke (2015) estimated that the maximum returns from education include 15 years of formal education, which means following the completion of higher education. Walker and Zhu (2011) also noted that irrespective of tuition increases, the return on education over the life cycle of earnings is significant, especially for some specific subjects, such as law and economics. Students' earnings are higher for graduates from selective universities, achieving economic returns of 20% higher than students selected (Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013). Bettinger, Boatman, and Long, (2013) contended society bears significant financial costs when students do not succeed and drop out before graduating from institutions. For example, the annual cost for

students studying at a for-profit higher educational institution in the United States is approximately \$51,600 (Cellini, 2012). Taxpayers bear an additional cost of around \$7,600 per year per full-time student (Cellini, 2012). Therefore, students forego the money already spent, institutions lose revenues, and society does not get a return on investment.

Aud et al. (2012) noted that the average total cost for first-time, full-time students enrolled for the academic year 2010-2011 at private nonprofit 4-year institutions was \$39,800. The total cost at public 4-year institutions for in-state paying students was \$20,100 (White, 2013). Student tuition fees are the largest portion of revenues for private nonprofit institutions and accounted for 33% of the \$172 billion in total revenues (Aud et al., 2012). The revenue proportion from student tuition fees for private for-profit institutions was even higher at 91% of the \$25 billion in total revenues (Aud et al., 2012). Therefore, clear economic benefits result for institutions whose leaders manage to retain students (Cellini, 2012). High retention rates reflect long-term tuition revenues and minimize the costs to replace students who leave, thus ensuring the sustainability of institutions (O'Brien & Sarkis, 2014). Webster and Showers (2011) noted that managers are under financial pressure, and they need to ensure the students who enroll remain in their institutions.

Raza-Ullah, Bengtsson, and Kock (2014) indicated that company decision makers compete, cooperate, and interact in a state that alternates between stability and instability. The changing environment influence decision makers to become more creative and to improve their organizations and human capital, so they survive over time (Robbins,

Judge, Millett, & Boyle, 2013). The systems theory could influence business decision makers to monitor the changing environment and identify the strengths and weaknesses of their organizations (Simons, 2013).

Numerous external factors such as competition, the economy, and government regulations are beyond the control of organizational managers in the business world (Gunasekaran & Ngai, 2012). Business managers use the systems theory to look beyond the internal operations of a company and evaluate how external factors influence the plans and performance of an organization (Simons, 2013). Managers, therefore identify positive contributors from the external environment, such as favorable regulations, economic conditions, and weaknesses in the competitive climate (Holburn, & Vanden Bergh, 2014).

Sommerville et al. (2012) described the principles of the system theory as the efficiencies in the manufacturing and service sectors being relevant and applicable to the management of education. Simons (2013) investigated an entrepreneurial university and considered universities dynamic systems that consisted of inputs such as internal resources, structure, culture, and regulators and teaching, research, funding, and management and financial processes. Sommerville indicated that for the university system to work and maximize inputs and outputs, all stakeholders, including academic and administrative, need to collaborate. Williams and Karahanna (2013) explained that a university system in need of effective transformation needs the coordination of activities previously managed separately. Bowen (2016) indicated that academic and student affairs staff members needed to increase their collaboration and integrate their operations to

retain students. Coordination and collaboration among department decision makers, faculty, students, and community members could help university leaders align their strategic goals and manage the challenges and complexities associated with education.

Complexity and Business

A small change in an activity within a system can lead to changes in the whole system. Complexity theory is relevant to business organizations because organizations have radically transformed following small changes in their systems (Burke, 2013). Simple systems often turn into complex systems, and complex systems can become simple and fail. Simple processes may not apply to larger complex organizations that were once simple (Burke, 2013). Buss (2014) noted that evolution of organizations into a complex system, characteristics are positive feedback that transforms the system and brings it to a higher level. Customer-relationship management strategies, strategic marketing, and student enrollment processes are integral parts of effective operational execution and profitability (Bierbooms, Van Oers, & Bongers, 2014). Bierboom et al. (2014) indicated that executives should target markets, position products, and develop a plan for strategic marketing. Historically, Black college and university enrollment managers must effectively use CRM, a student retention strategy, and a marketing strategy to achieve enrollment goals and focus on growing revenue and profits. The findings of the study may contribute to positive social change, such as improving student graduation and retention rates to increase the financial sustainability of the HBCU. Improved CRM strategies for HBCU managers may also result in improved financial results for college institutions.

Transition

In Section 1 of this research study, I described the problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, conceptual framework, research question, significance of the study, and literature review. The information in Section 2 includes the purpose statement, a review of my role as the researcher, the participant, and an overview of the research method and design, population and sampling method, and ethical research. The section also includes the data collection instrument, techniques of data organization, and data analysis. Section 3 will include the research study findings, including applications to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for future study.

Section 2: The Project

The qualitative study includes the research method of a case study design based on the research question, the role of the researcher, participant, and data collection. This section includes a discussion of the study participant, research methodologies, data collection, data analysis, and the reliability and validity of the study. Section 2 also includes an in-depth approach to understanding and connecting the research question to the role of the researcher, method, and design of the study, and data gathering to support the research findings. Section 3 will include a detailed summary of the research findings related to business practices, recommendations for social change, and recommendations for professional practice. Section 3 will also include recommendations for future research, reflections, and the conclusion of this research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance. The population for the study included one enrollment manager from Georgia who worked at an HBCU with high student enrollment rates and who had financial knowledge of their organization. The findings of the study may contribute to positive social change, such as improving the student enrollment to increase the financial stability of the HBCU. Improved CRM strategies for HBCU managers may result in improved services by employees and may provide long-term growth for the institution and the community leading to more productive citizens.

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher was to gather, organize, and analyze the data for patterns and themes. Rikli and Jones (2013) suggested reporting study findings accurately to meet the validity and reliability requirements of the study. Neutral relationships can develop by setting up special meetings, collaborating, following up, and ensuring consistent communication with the participant. Berger and Iyengar (2013) noted that e-mail and phone calls are the basic communication channels for communicating with participants. As the researcher, I have 15 years of personal experience in an extensive research network with personal, professional, and educational contacts. The criterion of the sample was that managers have experience in an HBCU's student enrollment process. To enhance each interview session, I used appropriate interview procedures to avoid biased information. Malone, Nicholl, and Tracey (2014) emphasized that working through the data collection process and using prepared interview protocols assists in mitigating the influence related to personal biases. Timmermans and Tavory (2012) and Malone et al. (2014) noted that bias occurs during any stage of research. Therefore, my role as the researcher was to remain aware of any personal prejudices that may influence the participants' responses and potentially influence the data analysis. Amerson (2011) also indicated that a researcher has an obligation to report the study findings in an unbiased way to improve veracity and validity.

I preserved all ethical standards throughout the study by adhering to the protocols outlined in the *Belmont Report* (1979), which includes beneficence. Wisdom, Cavaleri, Onwuegbuzie, and Green (2012) and Yin (2013) also emphasized the importance of

comprehensive disclosures of all research practices, policies, and information to develop and maintain an atmosphere of trust. In compliance with the standards, the interview protocol included a detailed informed consent form (see Appendix A). The interview protocol information is necessary for an individual to develop the interview script, as well as to define the parameters for questions and responses (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Powell & Barnett, 2015).

Participants

The participant in this study came from HBCU enrollment managers. To gain access to participants, I used networking strategies with HBCU managers. One HBCU manager from one HBCU in Georgia participated in the interviews to discuss their business strategies. In qualitative case studies, participants must have experiences in the phenomenon of interest (Yin, 2013). Using a single source of contact ensures the privacy and authenticity of the data (Morris, Kleist, Dull, & Tanner, 2014). I contacted the selected HBCU manager by phone to participate in the study. The initial contact took place by telephone and I requested an interview. The next step was to introduce the doctoral research and its purpose, the criteria to participate, and the confidentiality and informed consent process. The participant who completed the interview signed a consent form stating their participation in the study was voluntary.

Research Method and Design

I interviewed one HBCU enrollment manager in Georgia, using purposive sampling. Yin (2014) indicated that three participants are a sufficient sample size for a qualitative researcher. However, I chose a single-case design rather than a multiple case

design for this study because the focus was on a single organization with a systemic problem. In qualitative research, researchers use the personal lived experience of participants to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Tufford & Newman, 2012) & (Berger, 2015). The importance of engaging students in the educational business environment is crucial to the success of educational business organizations. A qualitative method and case study design was the best fit for this study. A qualitative case study provides the understanding of a contemporary phenomenon and the use of multiple data sources (Yin, 2014).

Research Method

In the study, I used a qualitative research method to understand the CRM strategies HBCU managers use to increase student enrollment. Qualitative research includes the multifaceted complexity-characterizing human experience and the sociocultural context in which humans' act (Borochowitz, 2011). Marshall and Rossman (2014) indicated that qualitative researchers have an interest in understanding the meaning people construct to justify their experiences in the world. The goal of using a qualitative method was to generate substantive details of the phenomenon of interest and the experience of people in natural settings. Qualitative research data include textual data, narratives, and stories obtained from participants that researchers record digitally, on tape, or with written notes (Merriam, & Tisdell, 2015). Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative methods include participants' responses to their words and express personal labels (Yin, 2015).

In a qualitative study, Power and Gendron (2015) indicated that the researcher is the instrument of research. A major philosophical difference between qualitative research and quantitative research is the contribution of researchers to the research outcomes. A quantitative method is the appropriate research method for studies with theories or hypotheses with variables (Hunt, 2014). A qualitative study suits the needs for studies that involve synthesizing human experiences that result in an inductive analysis (Merriam, & Tisdell, 2015). Hoy and Adams (2015) noted deductive analysis occurs during a quantitative study to which a researcher can reject or accept a null hypothesis. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research includes the responses of participants to express their personal associations (Coenen et al., 2012). A quantitative method is the appropriate research method for studies with theories or hypotheses with variables (Hunt, 2014). A qualitative method suits the needs my study because the qualitative method involve synthesizing human experiences that result in an inductive analysis.

Mixed methods research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Mixed methods research is the integration of quantitative numerical data with the qualitative meaning of participants' experiences (Starr, 2014). In addition, mixed method research is for synthesizing approaches by integrating quantitative and qualitative data in a single study (Petticrew, Refuess, Noyes, Higgins, & Mayhew, 2013). In conclusion, mixed methods research did not meet the needs of this study because mixed methods research does not make allowances for competing interpretations to coexist (McNabb, 2015). The qualitative case study approach met the needs of this study more appropriately than a quantitative or mixed

method approach to explore CRM strategies for HBCUs. A mixed methods study includes qualitative data to validate the explanation of the quantitative data (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). This study involved rich insights into the CRM strategies used to increase enrollment. The qualitative method is appropriate for collecting descriptive data from participants in words rather than numbers (Elo et al., 2014).

Research Design

In this study, I selected a case study because case studies involve an analysis of projects, policies, systems, and characteristics of real life events (Yin, 2013). Research designs include links to the components of research in the exploration of research questions to draw conclusions in a study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). All elements of the research design are from CRM strategies of HBCUs. A case study design is an empirical inquiry involving the exploration of a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 2013). The case study design is most suitable for studies that involve significant cases related to the study of an individual, or program (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

A case study is particularly useful when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van de Ven, 2013). Langley et al. (2013) used the case study method to explore the uses and outputs of personal contact networks. Qualitative case studies are appropriate ways to observe, and analyze particular cases in a perfect setting (Yin, 2013). I chose a case study design to facilitate the understanding of a real-life contemporary phenomenon in context. Case study designs include contextually rich data to study a phenomenon in a real-life context and provide an

in-depth understanding of the nature and complexity of the phenomenon (da Mota Pedrosa, Näslund, & Jasmand, 2012).

Other design options for a qualitative method are (a) phenomenology, (b) ethnography, and (c) the narrative design (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Hunt (2014) indicated that researchers study the meaning of lived experiences of a group of people around a specific phenomenon using the phenomenological research design. However, the phenomenological design approach does not apply to this study, because the design was more suitable for exploring strategies of activities and processes. Ethnography is the study of shared behaviors, beliefs, and language of an intact cultural group in the field in a prolonged time (Acheson, Nelson, & Luna, 2015). An important feature of the ethnographic research is the researcher's ability to access the participants' environment, conceptualize participants' experiences, and make sense of participants' experiences (Yanow, 2012). Ethnographic research was not as suitable as the case study design for this research because ethnography involves researchers immersing themselves in the daily activities of participants by delving into the daily lives, behaviors, and activity of a community or culture (Down, 2012; Yin, 2015).

Corsten, Schimpf, Konradi, Keilmann, and Hardering (2015) described using a narrative design as a way to identify the chronological narration of the life stories and experiences of individuals. Narrative inquiry involves composition, ordering of life experiences, and developing a core focus on the study of the experience lived (McMullen & Braithwaite, 2013). The narrative design was not a suitable research design for this study because the design works best when the participant is an individual or a small

group (Hunt, 2014). Narrative design was not an appropriate research design because this study do not involve gathering the life stories and experiences of individuals narrated chronologically (Banyai & Glover, 2012).

Methodological triangulation and multiple data gathering techniques are pertinent strengths of case study research (Denzin, 2012; Walters, 2016). Data saturation is the point at which no new information or themes are observable in data collection (Nguyen, 2013). Yin (2013) noted that scholars use case studies to observe, study, and analyze particular cases in a perfect setting. I used methodological triangulation in this study to enhance the trustworthiness of the research.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study consisted of one HBCU manager from a HBCU in Georgia. The population selected for this qualitative study was a purposive sample from one HBCU. Wahyuni (2012) noted that researchers use purposeful sampling to find participants who will provide rich information on a phenomenon. Elo et al. (2014) indicated that for a purposeful sample, researchers use their judgment to select participants based on the study criteria. Elo et al. described important parts of the design for analytic and descriptive studies help researchers determine the appropriate sample size of the study. The criteria for HBCU enrollment managers used in this study included 1 year of management experience. The population and geographic location may appear suitable for other HBCU managers to learn more regarding student enrollment in HBCUs in a state with economic and growth challenges similar to those of other HBCUs.

Including a sample size of one HBCU enrollment manager is an opportunity to gather information using interviews and secondary data. Asking semistructured, open-ended questions of a small sample of participants adds richness to the interview process (Yin, 2014). Rowley (2012) indicated that case study research should include sample sizes between one and 10 participants. Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) described researchers using large or small sample sizes must continue to conduct case study interviews until reaching the redundancy or saturation of data. Marshall et al. suggested that saturation occurs when information from participants becomes redundant and newly acquired data does not lead to new information and themes (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012; Walker, 2012). I interviewed one HBCU enrollment manager until saturation with no new data, coding, or themes emerging from interview responses.

Ethical Research

Informed consent is an important concept of moral requirements for the protection of participants in a study (Jeong et al., 2012; Lambert & Glacken, 2011). Rowley (2012) indicated that researchers must protect participants' rights and anonymity, develop trust, protect against potential harm incurred through the interview process, protect against impropriety, and ensure research integrity. I studied at the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research and received the certification required to engage in research involving human subjects (Lincoln, Borg, & Delman, 2014) (see Appendix B).

Mason and Suri, (2012) reported that researchers have an obligation for ethical conduct while conducting human research. The participant joined the study on a volunteer basis and can withdraw from the study at any time. A consent form includes the

purpose of the study, the procedures of the study, and the communication channel throughout the study (Polit & Beck, 2013) (see Appendix A). Wiek, Xiong, Brundiers, and Van Der Leeuw (2014) indicated that a common practice among some scholars is to offer incentives for participation in a study. However, the participant did not receive any incentives to take part in the study. Upon publication of the study, the participant received an electronic copy of the completed study upon request. To establish trust with the participant, the names of study participant remained confidential at all times during the study as recommended by Eriksson & Kovalainen (2015).

I secured and will store the data for 5 years in a file with a password to meet the requirements of the Walden University protocol, after which I will delete the electronic files. Data will remain on a computer hard drive secured in a home library for safekeeping, and the destruction of data after 5 years will involve shredding. Walden University protocol is the destruction of the data to protect privacy. The Walden University IRB board serves an essential role in the protection of human participants in research and helps ensure that researchers conduct the research safely and ethically. Cronin-Gilmore (2012) suggested storing data in a safe cabinet before destroying the data. Final publication of the study will not include the participant's name or the name of the organizations.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments include tools to collect data from human participants (Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). In the qualitative research process, instrumentation is pivotal (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Yin (2013), Leedy and Ormrod (2013), and Xu and

Storr (2012) served as primary data collection instruments to collect data from participants. I worked as the primary data collection instrument and was the only interviewer collecting information from the participant. Yin indicated that qualitative researchers are the primary instrument.

Leedy and Ormrod (2013) claimed that data collection should involve reusing an existing instrument or developing new instruments. Marshall and Rossman (2014) suggested that facilitating conversations during fieldwork and making sense of the research data are functions for researchers in qualitative research. Broderick, Wright, and Kristiansen (2011), Hood, Hart, Belgrave, Tademy, and Jones (2012), and Morrison-Sandberg, Kubik, and Johnson (2012) used semistructured interviews to standardize questions within an interview protocol. To generate responses relevant to this research problem, I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions as suggested by these experts.

An interview guide, a digital voice recorder, and a journal was the primary data collection tools for the study. The digital voice recorder included a Samsung 6 Smartphone voice-recording device available as a Samsung 5 smart phone backup. The interview protocol included nine open-ended questions on CRM strategies for HBCUs (see Appendix A). The use of open-ended interview questions facilitated the exploration of management skills that contribute to the success of small businesses in competitive environments (Broderick et al., 2011). The interview protocol included enquiries regarding CRM strategies for the HBCU. The interview protocol should include enquiries regarding the formal and informal mechanisms to maintain consumer trust (Broderick et

al., 2011). The participant can provide further details through follow-up or probing questions (Falchikov, 2013).

Each participant chose the time and location for the one-on-one interviews. Sattari, Serwint, Neal, Chen, and Levine (2013) interviewed study participants for approximately 60 minutes to collect data for a study. The interview process consisted of administering questions in interviews that last approximately 60 minutes. In addition to audio recording the interviews, I observed body language, nonverbal cues, and gestures by the participants and maintained handwritten notes. Black, Palombaro, and Dole (2013) indicated that researchers ensure confirmability through an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity. In this study, I triangulated the data sources by comparing transcribed data with interview notes.

Ekekwe (2013), Panepinto, Torres, and Varni (2012), and Williams, Dixon, McCorkle, and Van Ness (2011) used the expert validation strategy to ensure the reliability of the instrument by presenting interview questions to experts and asking for their views of the instrument. The data collection instrument for the participant interviews is in Appendix A. The strategy for addressing validity and reliability in case studies involves different methods of the research process (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) noted that pattern matching, explanation building, exploring rival explanations, and developing logical models are appropriate to ensure internal validity in the data analysis phase of a study. Because of these experts, I demonstrated reliability in the data collection stage of this current study following a strict case study research protocol. To enhance dependability in this study, the participant had 24 hours to check any aspects of the

interpretation of the interviews. Participant approval is a process that indicates whether the data analysis aligns with the participants' experiences (Dogherty, Harrison, Graham, Vandyk, & Keeping-Burke, 2013).

The reflexive journal note is a tool to support the triangulation of data for coding and identifying themes from the data collection (Petty et al., 2012). A part of interview sessions is a clear detailing of the process of recording of the participant' response and noting that participant can withdraw from the study at any time by e-mail or phone without repercussion (Edmunds & Brown, 2012). To ensure study notes match participant responses, the last part of the interview process included a review of the handwritten notes. The participant assisted with amending notes to reflect information shared during the interview sessions to ensure accuracy. I applied the member checking process and engaged the participant for accuracy the day after transcription. Faseleh-Jahromi, Moattari, and Peyrovi (2013) indicated that researchers use member checking so participants can review the content from an interview to ensure data are precise. In addition, member checking is an opportunity to make modifications to the language, if necessary, to increase data credibility and support data conformability. Faseleh-Jahromi et al. posited that member checking affords participants the opportunity to review content to ensure data are accurate, and researchers can make corrections if needed to strengthen data credibility.

Data Collection Technique

I began the data collection process with an introduction to explain the purpose of the study, encourage participation, explain the withdrawal process, and offer an

opportunity to ask questions. Participants share their relevant experiences by responding to interview questions on varying aspects of a research topic (Bjerregaard, 2011). For the study, the interview setting, time, and place came from the choice of the participant. Each interview began with a review of the purpose and the reason for the study. The review included the consent form and details regarding the participants' rights to withdraw. A research field note is appropriate to gather data such as names, dates, questions, responses, and general observations for a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The participant provided supporting documentation during the interview process. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes.

The advantages of open-ended interview questions are that (a) participants should feel at ease and (b) the questions facilitate detailed answers (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). An additional advantage is that open-ended interview questions allow opportunities for follow up questions (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Another advantage of open-ended interview questions is that participants can express thoughts freely. The disadvantages of semistructured interviews include (a) interviewing participants require more time and expense and that (b) participants may have less interest in discussing sensitive topics (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Yin (2013) stipulated that pilot studies are studies researchers usually conduct to test their proposed research design. For this study, a pilot study was not necessary as a test of the proposed research because I used a case study.

Member checking is the most effective way of eliminating the possibility of misrepresentation (Carroll & Huxtable, 2014). Member checks serve to decrease the incidence of incorrect data and the incorrect interpretation of data to provide authentic

and original findings (Harper & Cole, 2012). For the study, I shared the findings with the participant to allow participants to analyze the findings critically and comment appropriately. Member checking affords participants the opportunity to review content to ensure data are accurate, make corrections if needed and strengthen data credibility (Faseleh-Jahromi et al., 2013).

Data Organization Technique

Reflective journals are appropriate to organize thoughts on a topic or concept, to document work and experience, as well as to help students over a period for the purpose of developmental changes (Mertens, 2014). Davies, Reitmaier, Smith, and Mangan-Danckwart (2013) described reflective journals as documents that students create while thinking of various concepts. Using journals are appropriate methods of accessing rich qualitative research to collect data (Hayman, Wilkes, & Jackson, 2012). Journals include notes written during interviews, as well as categories of the ascribed meanings to participants' responses (Hayman et al., 2012). For the study, I saved the data in a personal safe for 5 years before the final destruction by shredding of the hard copies and erasing the electronic data.

Aguirre and Bolton (2014) categorized four types of triangulation for social research. Data triangulation is for correlating people, time, and space; investigator triangulation is for correlating findings from multiple researchers in a study (Yin, 2013). Theory triangulation is for using and correlating multiple theoretical strategies; and methodological triangulation is for correlating data from multiple data collection methods

(Yilmaz, 2013). Multiple sources of data can enhance multiple external analysis methods concerning the same events and the validity of the process (Aguirre & Bolton, 2014).

The data organization tools I used were NVivo 11, Microsoft Excel™, and research logs. Perrin (2014) noted that researchers could organize and store data from qualitative research by interview questions, assigned participant codes, and responses in columns in Microsoft Excel™ workbook files. The Microsoft Excel™ workbook file include a separate spreadsheet for each question. I used NVivo 11 to organize responses and identify themes and research logs to track and categorize data (Goffin et al., 2012). I scanned and saved each signed consent form in an electronic folder. I am the only one with access to the Microsoft Excel™ workbook file and the password. All data collected and organized in the file will remain in a safe cabinet for 5 years and will destroy the data after the study concludes (Sin, 2010).

Data Analysis

Methodological triangulation involves using multiple qualitative and quantitative methods to study the program (Cho & Lee, 2014). For example, researchers can compare results from surveys, focus groups, and interviews to see if results are similar. If the conclusions from each method are the same, then they are valid (Yin, 2013). For example, a researcher who conducts a case study of a welfare-to-work participant by documenting changes in the participant's life after participating in the program over a 1-year period may use interviews, observation, document analysis, or any other feasible method to assess the changes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Triangulation is the use of more than one approach to investigate a research question to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). Cope (2014) noted that triangulation is the process that occurs when researchers use multiple sources to draw conclusions. Four methods of data collection are interviews, observation, notes, and journaling (Cope, 2014). Using more than one method for gathering data in a study may occur at the level of research design or data collection (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). A company's internal documents include annual reports and policy documents (Leung, Parker, & Courtis, 2015). External documents include published news, announcements, and relevant websites. Bekhet and Zauszniewski (2012), Black et al. (2013), and Marshall and Rossman (2014) used source triangulation as a strategy in their studies, which was the appropriate strategy to compare transcripts. The data through semistructured interviews validated data from the company documents, and notes from the face-to-face interviews in this study. Marshall and Rossman (2014) appropriately applied methodological triangulation to confirm reliability and validity in a study to determine a success predictor. I used the triangulation approach in this study to investigate a research question and enhance confidence in the ensuing findings.

Data triangulation is a process of analyzing all primary data from open-ended interview questions and secondary data collected from business brochures, pamphlets, and websites (Kammerlander & Ganter, 2015). The initial phase of analysis involves independently reading transcripts and identifying specific codes. After the completion of specific codes identification, the researcher develops a comprehensive code list through rereading along with following the initial interviews and transcriptions. The next step is

refining, collapsing, or eliminating codes when appropriate. Charach, Yeung, Volpe, Goodale, and dosReis (2014) generated and refined codes continuously until no new unique codes in the study. I used the process of generating and refining codes until I could no longer identify any new unique codes, consistent with the epistemology of a qualitative research method. Miquelutti, Cecatti, and Makuch (2013) recorded and transcribed semistructured interviews with each participant before performing thematic analyses on categories of relevant themes. Analysis should align with the following steps recommended by Yin (2013) (a) transcribe interviews and records; (b) review transcribed notes to obtain the general meaning of the data; (c) code the data by arranging data into manageable themes; and (d) explain the meaning of the case study.

Tom Richards developed the first NVivo™ software product in 1999 (as cited in Geiger & Turley, 2006). Originally called NUD*IST™, the software contained tools for detailed analysis and qualitative modeling (Morse & Richards, 2002). NVivo™ is a qualitative program for data analysis that expedites thematic coding and involves categorizing collected data during the analysis stage (Morrison & Seaton, 2014). NVivo™ used diverse data types to collect, organize, and analyze data (Castleberry, 2014; Zapata-Sepulveda, Lopez-Sanchez, & Sanchez-Gomez, 2012). NVivo™ is user-friendly, unlike Atlas.ti™, which has a complex analysis process (Scales, 2013). NVivo11 is appropriate for a study that involves coding, referencing, counting, sorting, and displaying data gathered from participants (Glaser & Laudel, 2013; Hanson et al., 2011; Morrison & Seaton, 2014).

Hanson et al. (2011) indicated that researchers use NVivo11 to search for and identify themes within the data collected. Using a coding manual, analysts may compile and organize all transcripts using NVivo 11. In accordance with Masse, Naiman, and Naylor (2013), coding of transcripts continued until reaching data saturation, and I explored any discrepancies between codes until attaining 100% satisfaction. The iterative process of organizing codes into categories is reflexive and involves using a constant comparison between transcripts to identify common and recurrent themes (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012).

As themes develop, an interpretation of the interviews may emerge with an increased understanding of customer relationship skills for improving overall student enrollment for the benefit of HBCUs. A conceptual framework is a connection between the literature, method, and the results of a study (Borrego, Foster, & Froyd, 2014). The core of the study is to guide HBCU managers to use CRM strategies effectively to increase student enrollment. The data analysis technique was exploring the strategies HBCU enrollment managers used to improve CRM to increase student enrollment. Morse and Richards (2013) used verbatim quotes from participants to support the analysis of the research data. I located the research within the current field of study and used verbatim quotes from the participant to support the analysis of the data where necessary.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Achieving the highest possible quality when conducting and reporting research is a challenge (Cope, 2014). Reliability and validity may affect the practical relevance of

research through provisions of measured assurances (Street & Ward, 2012). Street and Ward (2012) posited that reliability and validity reflect an assurance that actions derivable from study conclusions do not include bias. Measured assurance that conclusions are not hearsay, but valid science is essential to ensure the reliability and validity of study findings (Street & Ward, 2012). For every research study, readers raise questions about validity, reliability, and generalizability (Loh, 2013). Trustworthiness of research is an important methodological issue because peers in the same field need to perceive the research as trustworthy for people outside the field to trust the qualitative research findings (Loh, 2013). The trustworthiness of qualitative findings reflects their credibility, confirmability, transferability, and dependability (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013). Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability are the common criteria used to assess the rigor of qualitative research (Cope, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013).

Reliability and validity are measures to enhance research rigor and add to the credibility of statistical data (Rao, 2013; Sin, 2010; Srivastava & Misra, 2014). Reliability and validity include quality case analysis to guarantee the research findings reflect the purpose of the study. Measurements established to ensure conclusions and not biased observations are the results of reliability in research (Street & Ward, 2012). In qualitative research, reliability includes data collection and data analysis techniques, with the coding of data (Mangioni & McKerchar, 2013). A qualitative coding (categorization) is appropriate for reliability and validity in case study research (Goffin et al., 2012). Implementing the same techniques for data collection and data analysis may lead to

equivalent methodological results (Ali & Yusof, 2012). I provided a full description of the study to ensure data quality and reliability of this qualitative study to ensure credibility, transferability, and dependability, of the findings and conclusions.

Validity

In qualitative research, procedural reliability has a relationship with consistency, which means that another person should examine the work and come to similar conclusions (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011). Silverman (2013) stipulated that careful documentation of how a researcher collects, produce, and interpret the data; however, threats to reliability exists at every stage of the qualitative research process. The threats to procedural reliability during data collection include inaccurate and interview questions, as well as inaccurate transcriptions (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011; Silverman, 2013).

Failure to tape record the interviews may increase random errors (Meyer, Hajcak, Torpey-Newman, Kujawa, & Klein, 2015). Lacking a comprehensive research plan or a documented case analysis is also problematic. Relationships that develop may also threaten procedural reliability during data collection. McLeod, MacDonell, and Doolin (2011) indicated that researchers undermine the procedural reliability of qualitative research if they fail to collect data over long periods, or are not aware of informal evidence. Errors may also occur in classifying data, attaching data to constructs, and drawing links between constructs, as well as in the reduction, interpretation, and development of links with theory (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011). Threats to procedural reliability during data analysis and interpretation also include research preconceptions (Yin, 2015).

Threats to contextual validity during the research design phase include contradictions in logic such as a mismatch between research questions and the study design (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011). Some threats to contextual validity that can occur during data collection include observer-caused effect, observer bias, researcher bias, data access limitations, and complexities and limitations of the human mind (Barpanda, & Mukhopadhyay, 2014). Finally, the threats to contextual validity that occur during data analysis and interpretation include a lack of descriptive validity of the settings and events that affect size (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).

Dependability is the steadiness of data over comparable conditions (Polit & Beck, 2012). Houghton et al. (2013) described dependability as comparable to the concept of reliability in quantitative research, where qualitative researchers use dependability to connote the stability of the research data. Replication of the findings involves using appropriate processes and similar participants in similar conditions (Eddy et al., 2012). If this study demonstrates dependability, it can have positive implications for other HBCU Enrollment managers.

An effective audit trail of field notes appropriately addresses dependability (Carlson, 2010; Charach et al., 2014; Houghton et al., 2013). An audit trail is a clear documentation of all research decisions to examine narrative accounts and attest to dependability. Schutt (2011) described audit trail in qualitative research, as an appropriate way for keeping careful documentation of a study for external auditing. Keeping observation field notes, journals, and various drafts of interpretations are all part of creating an audit trail (Ward, Furber, Tierney, & Swallow, 2013). Member checking is

a process of discovering whether the data analysis is congruent with the participants' experiences (Dogherty et al., 2013). I provided the participant with a copy of the transcripts from their contributions to verify participant's accuracy.

Reilly (2013) posited that member checking involves testing the data and analyzing categories, with participants who supply the data as a process to ensure truthfulness and authenticity. Participants may edit or delete their words from the narratives. In line with the concept of member checking, Dogherty et al. (2013) suggested participants have access to the interpretations to verify reasonableness. Credibility is the degree to which individuals perceive a message that is believable by the individual receiving the message (Schmidt, Ranney, Pepper, & Goldstein, 2016). In qualitative studies, Polit and Beck (2012) described credibility as a researcher's representation of the data or the participants' views and interpretation. Creditability in this study can have positive implications for other HBCU Enrollment managers

Credibility reflects the value of research findings (Houghton et al., 2013). A qualitative study credible shares the same experience and recognize the descriptions of human experiences as individuals (Cope, 2014). Houghton et al. (2013) indicated that researchers could enhance credibility by conducting research in a believable manner. The trustworthy dimensions of credibility include the perceived morality of the source like truthfulness, fairness, and lack of bias (Schmidt et al., 2016).

Prolonged engagement, triangulation, and member checking is to enhance the credibility of a study (Black et al., 2013). Prolonged engagement involves spending adequate time in prior visits and 45-60 minutes of interview time with participants to

understand the phenomenon, which is an appropriate way to ensure descriptions of human experiences (Cope, 2014). Validity is the accuracy of research findings (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). Validity is critical in qualitative research based on the logic that data, credible, and trustworthy can individually defend the data. Data saturation occurs when no new information emerges (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). I collected data using in-depth interviews from one enrollment manager and continued interviewing until data saturation occurred. The examination of data involves documenting themes and analyzing repetition to confirm and validate data saturation (Guest et al., 2006; Poghosyan et al., 2013).

Member checking is a quality control process in which participants have the opportunity to review statements for accuracy (Harper & Cole, 2012). Merwe (2014) noted that confirmation of data saturation through member checking takes place after all participants have no additional contributions. Results developed from saturated data have strong credibility (Ashworth, 2012). I implemented the member-checking process and methodological triangulation at the end of the data collection and data analysis processes to track emerging themes, ensure validity, ensure creditability, and engage participants from the study (Denzin, 2012; Parker, 2012).

Transferability is the extrapolation and indicates the findings to other environments or groups (Elo et al., 2014; Heikkinen, Marmion, & Luoto, 2012; Holehouse, Garai, Lyle, Vitalis, & Pappu, 2015). I incorporated transferability in this study to provide a precise and detailed description of the research context on CRM strategies for HBCUs and to clarify any assumptions. In applying the ideology of Fogle

(2012), transferability adds an element of rigor to a qualitative study and indicates how the conclusions apply to other HBCUs seeking increased student enrollment and revenue growth through marketing strategies. In addition, the doctoral study committee helps to examine and assess the qualitative research findings to help ensure the credibility of my content analysis.

Mason (2010) suggested that saturation occurs when the research data become repetitive and no new information emerges during the coding process for categories. For many qualitative studies, the saturation point is the determinant of sample size. Habersack and Luschin (2013) contended that the point of data saturation is an assumption that a researcher captured everything important in a study. Carlsen and Glenton (2011) used the point of saturation to describe the determination of sample size in focus group studies in health journals. Mason (2010) ensured the point of data saturation through observation at the point of diminishing return. I ensured data saturation by identifying when the data became repetitive and did not lead to more information.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of the qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies that a HBCU enrollment manager use to improve financial stability. Section 2 included the method and research procedures useful for conducting qualitative case study research. Section 2 also included the purpose statement, role of the researcher, the participant, research method, research design, population and sampling, ethical research, and data collection. Additionally, Section 2 included the data organization technique, data

analysis, reliability and validity, and a summary. In Section 3, I included the results of the research study, recommendations for professional practice, social change, and suggestions for future research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore CRM strategies HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance. HBCUs' enrollment declined by 14%, which resulted in lack of financial stability for the organizations (Davis, 2015). The HBCU enrollment manager received a consent form and a schedule for an interview after I received approval from the participant's college IRB and approval from IRB at Walden University for data collection to take place. I described the purpose of the study in the consent form, which was e-mailed to the participant. After receiving consent from the participant, the participant responded to nine questions outlined in the interview protocol (Appendix D). The interviews lasted from 35 to 45 minutes. To capture a better understanding of the participant's responses, member checking was applied with follow-up interviews. To achieve triangulation, various college documents were examined that outlined CRM strategies that supported the reliability and validity of the answers from the interviews.

Following the second interview, I conducted a transcript review and clarified the correct meaning of several statements through member checking. The data received triangulation from the marketing collateral and business documents that reflected the CRM. The NVivo qualitative data application facilitated the identification of three principal themes from the data regarding factors related to business success: (a) efficiencies with technology (b) student retention, and (c) financial performance. Section 3 includes the presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, and the

implication for social change. In addition, Section 3 includes recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and conclusion of the study.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What CRM strategies do HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance? I used semistructured interviews and reviewed the college's website and student handbooks to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies the HBCU enrollment manager use to improve financial performance. The analysis of the college student handbooks included clear information regarding the benefits of HBCU, an indication of the enrollment manager using effective CRM strategies.

I conducted and recorded semistructured interviews over the telephone. During the interview process, the participant contributed concepts, experiences, and perceptions regarding strategies to improve financial performance. The HBCU enrollment manager responded to nine open-ended interview questions.

The interview protocol (see Appendix B) served as a guide to help answer the overarching research question: What CRM strategies do HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance? After the interview was completed, I thanked the participant for cooperating in my research study. I asked the participant to correct and highlight any inaccurate statements. After participant verification, I imported the verified interview data and the information from the student handbooks into NVivo 11, a qualitative analysis software, which gave me the ability to code, organize, and analyze data. I replaced the name of the participant with the label P1 to maintain confidentiality.

The HBCU enrollment manager who agreed to participate in this single case study met the requirements for the study. Coding the interview transcripts from the participant uncovered categories and established themes until no new data or themes emerged confirming data saturation. Organizational documents from the recruitment and student enrollment were appropriate to establish a reference point of customer relationship strategies at HBCUs to triangulate and confirm participant inputs through member checking.

Once the interview process was complete, I used NVivo 11 to discern and organize the data. NVivo 11 is a software program used for qualitative data analysis to extract key words and statements from the interview transcripts. Evaluation continued until no new codes emerged. Three main themes emerged related to the research topic: (a) efficiencies with technology, (b) student retention, and (c) financial performance. The findings of this study contain basic strategies HBCU enrollment managers need to improve financial performances. I found congruency between all three themes in the peer-reviewed articles in the literature review for this study. The GST enhanced the themes applicable for CRM strategies and aligned with the overarching research question. After identifying the themes, the findings were analyzed in relations to the themes using methodological triangulation. I extended knowledge by comparing the findings with published literature and examined the findings in the context of the conceptual framework.

Themes

I identified three themes that emerged from the interview transcripts and the other data sources. The first theme, efficiencies with technology, included statements regarding the technology objectives and goals of business. The second theme, student retention, was composed of statements regarding how the HBCU created and employed student retention strategies. The final theme, financial performance, composed of strategies to increase the business financial profitability through student enrollment management.

Emergent Theme: Efficiencies with Technology

I identified efficiencies with technology as the first main theme. Participant responses to the interview questions and college documents indicated that efficiencies with technology has a major role in customer relationship strategies at the HBCU. The efficiencies with technology theme relates to the central research question by confirming that the organization had an objective or business goal that relates to using technology strategies to generate student enrollment success. In response to interview questions three and four—what technology do you use for tracking financial growth? What CRM strategies do you use to improve technology while maximizing financial performance? P1 mentioned that efficiencies with technology have an important role in meeting their student's needs. P1 also mentioned that their college currently applies technology to communicate with and provide services to students through an automatic system. Chakraborty et al. (2013) emphasized that using GST in business strategies may result in converting individual activities into team activities within the organization. Key constructs from GST are organization strategies, the appropriate technology, and

effective internal and external systems working together. The main purpose of using GST for this study was to reflect how GST aspects work together in HBCUs.

P1 stated that their organizational goal was to explore CRM using technology. The effective use of technology could improve procedures to help meet and exceed the needs of future and current students. P1 stated that the use of technology by the college staff would aid the students in an effective manner.

Table 2 includes the list of subthemes for efficiencies with technology in this doctoral study. The table includes categorized number of responses and percentage of frequency of occurrence. The total number of responses was 57 of the subthemes mentioned in the doctoral study. Of the total number of responses of subthemes, CRM strategies was mentioned 48 times with percentage of occurrence 8.4%, effective technology was mentioned three times or 0.5% and internal and external systems was mentioned six times, or 1.0%.

Table 2

Efficiencies with Technology

Subthemes	Number of responses	Percentage frequency of occurrence
CRM strategies	48	8.4
Effective technology	3	0.5
Internal and external systems	6	1.0

Emergent Theme: Student Retention

Student retention relates to the central research question by identifying strategies enrollment managers can use to create an effective student retention program. As indicated in the college handbook and the college strategic plan regarding student retention, P1 mentioned that the institutional goal was not to recruit and enroll freshmen, but to recruit and enroll college graduates. The literature aligned with the core theme that supported effective student retention and its positive effect on financial performance both short term and long term. Bertalanffy (1968) noted that leaders who use GST could resolve a problematic system as a whole.

P1 mentioned that all stakeholders in the college, including the administration, staff, faculty, students, donors, and alumni, have an important part in helping to maintain a high student retention and graduation rate by engaging students, mentoring students, and guiding them to graduation in a consistent manner. Tinto (1975) linked student success with the university environment and the academic and social integration between students and their institutions. Factors such as socioeconomic status and prior achievements impacts the level of students' commitment and integration (De Clercq, Galand, Dupont, & Frenay, 2013) to influence student outcomes (Kahu, 2013). De Clercq et al. (2013) noted that the higher the engagement and interaction, the greater the chance of success. The relationships and bonds new students build with other students, staff, and faculty help them integrate into their new environment and lead to academic success.

P1 described the enrollment selection procedure and acknowledged that the college recruiter goal is to enroll some of the best, brightest, and most academically

prepared applicants in their pool. P1's intent was to focus the college recruiting efforts on future college graduates and not freshmen. Participant 1 also mentioned meeting and exceeding current and future student needs is a minimum expectation from all employees working for the college. P1 stated that the college employees always strive towards achieving 100% student retention and graduation rates.

Table 3 includes the list of subthemes for student retention in this doctoral study. The table includes categorized number of responses and percentage of frequency of occurrence. The total number of responses was 29 of the subthemes mentioned in the doctoral study. Of the total number of responses of subthemes, customer satisfaction occurred 22 times with percentage of occurrence 7.0%, graduation rate emerged five times or 1.6% and internal and meeting customer needs was two times, or 0.6%.

Table 3

Student Retention

Subthemes	Number of responses	Percentage frequency of occurrence
Customer satisfaction	22	7.0
Graduation rate	5	1.6
Meeting customer needs	2	0.6

Emergent Theme: Financial Performance

The third theme, financial performance, emerged from interview questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. The participant responses and college documents showed financial performance as a strategy. P1 noted that the college demonstrated a strong financial performance

because of an effective fiscal affairs office. The college's goal is to enroll students who are financially responsible, and offering minimal tuition discounts. The literature supported the core theme of financial performance.

When leaders share an understanding of company goals with colleagues and coordinate their decision-making behaviors with their actions, the personnel are more likely to work as a unit (Chakraborty, Vishik, & Rao, 2013). HBCUs experienced several factors that influence their competitive advantage in the higher education industry. A competitive advantage is the positive difference in the services and products that are of interest to current and potential customers (Zaksa, 2012). Identifying strategies for a competitive advantage is important for a successful CRM implementation (Trkman, 2013). Leaders of higher education institutions have the challenge of meeting the social, cultural, and economic needs of their customers in order to remain competitive (Matzler & Abfalter, 2013).

P1 stated that the college had effective business decision makers concerning tuition, scholarships, student discounts, and cost containments to help the college sustain financial profitability. P1 also stated that the college tuition for their students exceeds the average cost to attend an HBCU. P1 said, their college recruit the strongest students possible who are prepared academically, and financially prepared; our goal is to recruit first year students that become college graduates P1 stated that the college had effective business decision makers to help the college sustain financial profitability. P1 said, their college recruit some of the most academically, and financially prepared students to help sustain their high graduation rate.

Table 4 includes the list of subthemes for financial performance in this doctoral study. The table includes the categorized number of responses and percentage of frequency of occurrences. The total number of responses was 19 of the subthemes mentioned in the doctoral study. Of the total number of responses of subthemes, business decision makers emerged seven times with percentage of occurrence 3.6%, tuition occurred seven times or 3.6% and financial profit occurred five times, or 2.6%.

Table 4

Financial Performance

Subthemes	Number of responses	% frequency of occurrence
Business decision makers	7	3.6
Tuition	7	3.6
Financial profit	5	2.6

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this study were critical to improving business practices because the results contain accurate information concerning effective customer relationship strategies for HBCU enrollment managers to increase financial performance. I conducted the interviews with one HBCU enrollment manager in Georgia, and found three main themes using NVivo coding, which consisted of (a) efficiencies with technology, (b) student retention, and (c) financial performance. HBCUs should build their strategies based on the essential details that contained in these three themes for their business profitability and financial sustainability. Based on GST, Chakraborty et al. (2013) emphasized that using general systems in business strategies may result in converting

individual activities into team activities within an organization. The key constructs from the GST were organization strategies, appropriate technology, and effective internal and external systems working together (Chang, Jiang, Klein, & Wang, 2014). The main purpose of using GST for the study was to reflect how GST aspects work together in HBCUs.

The findings of the study may also influence HBCU managers' future decisions to deter poor student enrollment rates. Moreover, HBCU enrollment managers may use the results of the study to develop new process to implement effective ethical business policies and define standards for student retention and stakeholder value. The results of this study indicated what CRM strategies HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance.

Results of this study may improve the financial stability at HBCUs through effective enrollment management and strategies that demonstrate success despite competitive challenges. The results from the study may equip aspiring and existing HBCU business practitioners with information to survive in a competitively challenging environment. Findings from this study may help unsuccessful HBCU enrollment managers to improve their organization's financial performance. P1 indicated that HBCU enrollment managers must ensure the entire system and departments are communicating effectively and implementing CRM strategies to help retain their students, and improve graduate rate and help improve financial performance.

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Results of this study may expand existing knowledge to other enrollment managers through effective enrollment management and identification of management strategies. The results from the study may equip aspiring and existing HBCU business practitioners with information to survive in a competitively challenging environment. Findings from this study may help unsuccessful HBCU enrollment managers to improve their organization's financial performance. P1 indicated that HBCU enrollment managers must ensure the entire system and departments are communicating effectively and implementing CRM strategies to help retain their students, and improve graduate rate and help improve financial performance.

Implications for Social Change

HBCU business practitioners contribute to economic growth through job creation and total production output (Judge, Fainshmidt, & Brown III, 2014). Leaders of successful HBCUs may continue to provide employment for the employees who depend upon these jobs for their livelihood (Anderson et al., 2013). Findings from this study might positively influence social change through increasing awareness to managers at HBCUs regarding why students decide to leave a HBCU before graduation.

The findings and recommendations from this study may contribute to social change by identifying potential opportunities or problem areas to help HBCU managers retain more students and increase financial profitability. Historically Black college and university leaders may survive competition by implementing new strategies and practices from the new insights in this study. HBCU business practitioners contribute to economic growth through job creation and total production output (Judge, Fainshmidt, & Brown III,

2014). Leaders of successful HBCUs may continue to provide employment for the employees who depend upon these jobs for their livelihood (Anderson et al., 2013).

The results of this study could affect social change by improving student retention, graduation rate, and financial profitability at HBCUs. The ability to retain students and increase the graduation rate could increase the size of the college-educated workforce in the United States. This study provides significant value to postsecondary institutions, which could lead to increasing college enrollment, graduation, and other success rates to create a study body population that reflects the communities and workforces in the United States.

Recommendations for Action

Anderson et al. (2013) indicated that a business in decline impact jobs, organizations, and communities. Historically Black colleges and universities' enrollment declined by 14%, which resulted in lack of financial stability for the organizational leaders (Davis, 2015). Leaders of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) avoid business failures by creating and sustaining a solid financial position (Fogle, 2012). Further exploration of management strategies and practices may help to determine the best strategies by HBCU business practitioners in a competitive environment, and the results of the study may show insights into successful strategies.

Based on the results of this study, implementing appropriate CRM strategies is important for current and future HBCU enrollment managers to improve financial performance and financial sustainability for their organization. After exploring the CRM strategies used by a HBCU enrollment manager to improve financial performance, I have

three specific recommendations for action. First, HBCU enrollment managers must utilize technology that demonstrates effective CRM strategies. Second, HBCU enrollment managers should select strategies for setting student retention and graduation goals at 100%. Lastly, HBCU enrollment managers should create and implement new strategies to help improve financial performance for the educational institution. Furthermore, HBCU enrollment managers should consider adopting CRM strategies alignment choices that result in implementing efficiencies with technology, create an effective student retention and graduation strategy, and create strategies that may create and sustain financial performances. The results of this study will receive dissemination for training new HBCU managers to improve their student enrollment, graduation rate and financial performance.

The participant will receive a copy of this study, as stated in the invitation to participant. This study will receive publication in the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database for anyone to review. I will also seek opportunities to present the research findings at relevant forums, conferences, and business-related events.

Recommendations for Further Research

I used a qualitative single case study to explore CRM strategies HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance. Future studies may need to include the two limitations of this study, bias and sample size. Despite following all procedures to manage any prejudice and not allow my personal thoughts or practices to confirm the analysis and conclusions, bias may appear present because of personal experience as a

HBCU enrollment manager. Second, I collected the data from one participant so future researchers should include a larger sample population to gather additional data.

I recommend future research reflecting on customer relationship strategies for HBCU outside of the state of Georgia. Future research results could also obtain data from employees in HBCU enrollment departments to determine the congruence of their statements regarding work commitment and the CRM strategies offered by managers to improve financial performance.

Reflections

The experience during the DBA Doctoral Study process was a great learning experience and challenging. At the various stages of the process, I felt overwhelmed by the data. However, I learned to believe that it's all about the journey, not the destination. After reading Emerson's, quote my entire attitude changed towards being on this DBA journey. Reflecting, on my first residency and hearing one of the instructors say that we stand on the shoulders of other scholars' giants, and our objective should find the gaps in research. Throughout this journey, I gained incredible knowledge from literature reviews, especially about HBCU financial profitability.

During the research process, my perception and understanding of doctoral-level research expanded enormously. At various stages of the process, I felt overwhelmed by the data. However, I remained focused and true to my dream and purpose of becoming a Doctor of Business with a concentration in marketing. My experience with the DBA Doctoral Study process was very challenging, yet rewarding and life changing. After

attending residency 1 and 2, I could identify a business problem and establish a problem statement.

During my interviews with the participant, I realized the importance of customer relationship strategies and the participant fascinated me by her flexibility, compassion, professionalism, and love for their educational institution. I minimized errors and bias by not having any prejudiced beliefs about HBCU enrollment departments. I followed the interview protocol while conducting this research (see Appendix B). After completing the study, my level of information and understanding improved as my research expanded. I broadened my experiences, and now the findings of this study have added to my repertoire of strategies. I can use these strategies in my current and future profession.

Lakshman (2012) indicated that limitations are constraints that challenge researchers conducting qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research. The first limitation was that an exploratory case study of one HBCU might appear insufficient with adequate data to answer the research question. The results of the study may limit the ability to make transferable business recommendations for other HBCUs. Another limitation of this study may come with the challenge of obtaining approval from HBCU enrollment managers to allow the inclusion of proprietary information prior to submitting the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application.

Conclusion

According to O'Brien and Sarkis (2014) high student retention, rates reflect long-term tuition revenues and minimize the costs to replace students who leave, thus ensuring the sustainability of institutions. Implementing effective CRM strategies is important for

an organization to improve financial profitability. However, some HBCU enrollment managers do not utilize effective CRM strategies to improve financial performance.

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies used by one HBCU enrollment manager to improve financial performance and answer the following research question: What CRM strategies do HBCU enrollment managers use to improve financial performance? HBCU enrollment manager from one HBCU in the Georgia area of the United States participated in semistructured interviews, and a review of companies' employee handbooks augmented the data. Three main themes emerged after collecting and analyzing the data (a) efficiencies with technology (b) student retention, and (c) financial performance. The findings indicated HBCU enrollment managers who utilize CRM strategies succeed in improving financial performance.

The results of this study indicated managers that implement customer relationship- management strategies might increase financial profitability for their HBCU. Von Bertalanffy noted that leaders who use GST could resolve a problematic system as a whole. Chakraborty et al. (2013) emphasized that using the general system in business strategies may result in converting individual activities into team activities within the organization. Key constructs from the GST are organization strategies, the appropriate technology, and effective internal and external systems working together.

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Appendix A: Email Invitation Letter

Email invitation letter

Dear _____:

My name is Johnny McDonald. I am currently pursuing a Doctorate of business administration through Walden University in Minneapolis, Minnesota. My doctoral study title is customer-relationship management strategies at HBCUs. I am interested in studying your college enrollment management. Permission was granted to conduct interviews in your organization, the public relations manager has provided names, and phone numbers of all HBUC Enrollment managers who have one-year experience in the organization. This email is to all the HBCU Enrollment Managers who want to volunteer and participate in the study, I will call to set up a meeting to discuss further the details of where and when to meet with all volunteers.

The study will take the form of semistructured interviews with participants lasting approximately 45- 60 minutes and will be in their offices. Your protection in your participation and information will be consistent with Walden University's confidentiality guidelines. Your participation will be instrumental in providing the required data best to analyze HBCU Enrollment managers. If you decide to participate, I will send you a consent form via email that dictates your rights during the process and the purpose of the

doctoral study. At the end of this study, I will share results and findings with participants, scholars, and other stakeholders.

Participation in the interviews will be voluntary, and the right to decline to take part or stop at any time during the interview was respected. All willing participants interested must give their names the public relations manager or email me directly confirming their acceptance to participate in the study. Please advise if you have any questions or require any additional information. My contact information is XXX-XXX-XXXX or XXX@waldenu.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Johnny McDonald (Walden University DBA student).

Appendix B. Interview Protocol Guide

Interview Scheduled Date: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interviewee Identification No: _____

Signed content form received confirm confidently, and voluntary informed that transcript will be available

The purpose of this case study is to explore the _____.

Demographics:

Current Job Title: _____

No. of years on Job: _____

Interview Questions

The following are the open-ended questions for the interviews:

Participants will have an opportunity to answer the following questions:

1. What strategies do you use to improve the financial performance of your organization?
2. What are the challenges you overcame to increase financial stability?
3. What technology do you use for tracking financial growth while building effective customer relationship strategies?
4. What customer relations management strategies do you use to improve technology while maximizing financial performance?
5. What do you consider a challenge for the internal financial sustainability systems at your organization?

6. What challenges do you encounter in your organization during the implementation of the CRM strategies?
7. What do you consider a financial challenge for the external growth within the organization?
8. What organizational strategies do you use to enhance financial long-term goals?
9. What additional information can you provide to assist in understanding successful financial stability?