

# Defining Academia Influences on Mobility, Identity, and Culture of Deaf Scholars in Higher Education

Trisha Houston, Ed.D.  
California State University, Fresno

**What made me curious?**

# Background of the Study

- Growth of Deaf Scholars<sup>1</sup>
- Lived experiences of Deaf academics being limited in research

- Perceived Fear Factors in Academia<sup>2</sup>

- “If I hire you ... I have to ...”

# Most Prominent Theories used:

Social Phenomenology<sup>3</sup>

Deaf Critical Theory<sup>4</sup>

Deaf Epistemology<sup>5</sup>

3 (Moustakas, 1994), 4 (Gertz, 2003), 5 (Hauser et al., 2010)

# Exclusivity of Deaf faculty in data

- ASL users
- Works in college/universities

# Mixed Method

(Timeline)



Start

December 2017

Finish

March 2018

# Correlations

The desire to teach increased  
when barriers decreased.

$$(r = -.44, p = .008)^*$$

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)



# Personal Successes & Barriers

## Positive Results

Academic mobility  
supported



## Negative Results

Constant  
fight for access



Out of 55 respondents, 47%  
reported that they have  
experienced marginalization  
from other Deaf faculty.

# Qualitative Results

- Two sources of data  
Surveys and Interviews
- Thematic Coding and  
Triangulation

# Cultural competence

- Accessibility - Audism
- Burden (Academic and Administration)
- “Good Enough”
- Proxy

## Economic Issues

# Elitism

“You are not deaf enough”

“Told me I needed to take  
Deafhood workshops to  
decolonize myself.”

# Collaboration

“Having a Deaf-heart”

“Working with hearing people who truly believed Deaf people were equal.”

# Discussion

Concerns about accessibility and the need of qualified interpreters for academic level (quality)

- Cultural competence<sup>6</sup>  
training for all levels
- Role of Human Resources  
Departments in all Higher  
Education Institutions



# Mentoring and Partnerships

Communicating and imparting  
knowledge through sharing

The power of Proxy is something we might overlook.

We should grab the opportunity to work with others.