Employing Intersectionality as a Data Generation Tool: Suggestions for Qualitative Researchers on Conducting Interviews of Intersectionality Study

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Abstract
Intersectionality has been widely explored in terms of methodological approaches, the theoretical framework, the intersectional marginalized identities formation, and interlocking systems’ oppressions. Discussions on how to critically utilize intersectionality as a data generation tool are either overlooked or heavily theoretical. Student researchers and emerging scholars working on intersectionality studies still struggle with how to critically employ and empirically practice it to generate data from interviews. The purpose of this paper is to provide insights regarding how to conduct qualitative interviews by using intersectionality as a data generation tool. To guide researchers to critically explore how to effectively conduct interviews, research of intersectionality is used as a case to discuss the various facets of interviews, including epistemological positions, researchers’ positionality, participant/listener continuum, complexity, interview methods, interview structure, dynamicity of researchers’ roles, and intersectionality interview itself.

Keywords
intersectionality, in-depth interview, qualitative methods, race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, complexity, dynamicity

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, researchers such as Crenshaw (2018) took a new look on inequality and started to realize that inequality should not be understood along only one dimension, such as race or gender. A noticeable absence of discussion linked to intersectionality related to inequality existed during this period. After Ferree and Hall reviewed the most widely used textbooks in the 1980s, Ferree (2018) argued that a basic sociological understanding of inequality was not informed by the intersection of race, gender, and class. However, Crenshaw (2018) highlighted an important exception when employing intersectionality to inequality as applied to the lived experiences of African American women, establishing them as prototypical intersectional subjects for the following decades. When exploring multiple marginalized subjects from feminist theory and anti-racist policy discourse scholarship, Crenshaw (2018) argued that single-axis analysis (e.g., focusing on gender or race only) did not suffice. Crenshaw critiqued previously published material for merely utilizing a single analytical category to understand African American women; for example, feminist theory usually gave emphasis to White women, and anti-racist policy discourses emphasized racial discrimination from the perspective of men of color.

Since then, the intersectionality has been extensively employed in academia to explore intersectional inequalities and to articulate the intersecting oppressions, complex...
relationships of power and oppression, and social locations which are formed by analytical identity categories such as race, gender, and sexual orientation (Battle & Ashley, 2008). In qualitative, quantitative, and/or mixed-methods research, intersectionality has been employed as a theoretical framework, methodological approach, critical inquiry, and critical praxis. For instance, as a theoretical framework, Collins and Bilge (2018) stated that intersectionality “is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experience” (p. 25). Collins and Bilge (2018) demonstrated that intersectionality as a form of critical inquiry explores lived experiences of people with multiple marginalized identities and critiques the existing bodies of knowledge associated with social inequalities. Intersectionality as a form of critical praxis intends to “explicitly challenge the status quo and aim to transform power relations” (Collins & Bilge, 2018, p. 33). McCall (2005) indicates that the intersectionality as a methodological approach is aimed at exploring “the relationship among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formation” (p. 1771). However, practical guidance regarding implementation of intersectionality in data generation process has been rarely discussed in the academia. The purpose of this paper is to study some major issues in the data generation process by employing intersectionality as a data collection tool.

Introduction

This paper addressed some major issues that student researchers and emerging scholars may confront when they conduct the intersectionality research. These major issues are: (a) the interview methods for intersectionality study; (b) epistemological positions; (c) interviewers’ positions in the scope of participant/listener continuum; and (d) the impact of a PI’s positionality on data generation. In the conclusion section, we discussed limitations with regard to the implementation of intersectionality as a data generation tool in interviews and future data generation designs for intersectionality studies.

The interview processes in two empirical qualitative studies are used as data sources for this study. One empirical study is to explore the intersection of race, gender, and sexual orientation as they relate to the lived and educational experiences of the Asian American female sexual minority (AAFSM) college students at the Midwestern universities in the United States; the other is to explore the intersection of race, gender, and nationality as they relate to the lived and educational experiences of Asian Chinese International (ACI) students in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the AAFSM study, I interviewed 10 AAFSM college-aged students who either are currently enrolling in or have graduated within the recent 2 years from a Midwestern university in the United States. Interviews took place in a one-on-one setting and lasted from 60-to one hundred and twenty-minute. In the ACI study, 10 ACI students who are currently enrolling in a Midwestern university participated in the study. Each interview was conducted either in an individual or a focus group setting.

**Interview on Intersectionality with Different Philosophical Approaches**

Interview on intersectionality is also influenced by different philosophical approaches. Having reviewed Roulston (2010) four interview forms and Alvesson and Deetz (2000) three methodological approaches, I examined five interview forms on intersectionality research—neopositivist, localist, romanticist, constructionism, and postmodernism. The neopositivist attempts to uncover “a context-free truth about the reality” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p.16). This approach, like the structured interview, may lead research participants to produce superficial and uncritical responses. The romanticist seeks to explore deeper and genuine social realities of the interviewees, which aligns with the unstructured interview. The predominant goal of this approach is to accomplish “deeper, fuller, conceptualizations of those aspects of our subjects’ lives we are most interested in understanding” (Miller & Glassner, 1997, p. 103). This approach tends to treat participants as equals by emphasizing the development of rapport with the interviewees. As Fontana and Frey (1994) wrote:

“This makes the interview more honest, morally sound, and reliable, because it treats the respondent as an equal, allows him or her to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more “realistic” picture that can be uncovered using traditional interview methods. (p. 371)

Romanticists’ epistemological position is to treat research participants as active knowledge-producing individuals rather than as merely a vessel of answers. To encourage participants to tell more inside stories that they usually are hesitant to share with others, sensitive questions can be asked in an open and general way so that the participants can choose either to respond them as a general observation, or as their personal experience. An example will be: “What is it like to be an Asian American female sexual minority (or Asian Chinese International student) on campus in your educational institution or in the U.S. in general?” Participants can choose to share their personal experience, or to talk about their general impressions of Asian American female sexual minorities based on their observations. This will leave an open space for participants to share the sensitive topics in a comfortable way.

The third approach is localism, which is aimed at socially contextualizing the individual’s lived experiences for the purpose of uncovering its situational meanings (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). Constructivists share similar epistemological standpoints with localism by also focusing on “the situational practice of interviewing, and there is a disbelief in conceptions of data as stable nuggets to be mined by the interviewer” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 586). However, constructivists...
interpret the interview as a social practice rather than a research instrument because it emphasizes the “how” instead of the “what” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, pp. 586–587). For example, Windsong (2016) interview questions about race asked participants how they identified racially and what race meant to them. Such questions were framed by a social constructionist understanding of race with no uniform answer choices. Participants could respond to these questions differently based on different contexts.

Finally, postmodernism aims to bring new kinds of people and worlds into being (Denzin, 2001). Bellah et al. (1985) indicated that postmodernists actively practiced interviews to capture new understandings of social values through the conversations between interviewees and interviewers where the roles between interviewees and interviewers were blurred, but the collaborative nature of the interviews was highlighted (Borer & Fontana, 2012). For instance, in the AAFSM study, participants reported that they were racially, sexually, and genderized objectified as Model Minority, hypersexual, and submissive in an intersectional manner. These intersectional objectifications were stemmed from White heterosexual males’ entrenched racial stereotypes, stereotypical gender roles, and heteronormativity ideology. By taking postmodernism epistemological position, my study provided opportunities for my participants to share their voices to deconstruct biased understanding; meanwhile, to educate others with new understandings on race, gender, and sexuality.

Drawing on Roulston (2010) four interview forms and Alvesson and Deetz (2000) three methodological approaches while taking into account the complexity of intersectionality research, I constantly reflected on the process of interviewing rather than utilizing the interview as a mere tool. In order to ensure interviews were as effective as possible, the intersectionality interview method should move from one dimension to a more complex model, which I called the Dynamicity and Complexity (D&C) model (see Figure 1 above). You may design a structured one-on-one interview with the neopositivist’s epistemological position or conduct an unstructured focus group interview from a romanticist’s standpoint. You may also conduct either a one-on-one or focus group semi-structured interview from the perspective of the localism, constructionism, or postmodernism. For instance, in

Figure 1. Dynamicity and complexity (D&C) model.
Table 1. Dynamic roles of PI in an interview.

| Interview Questions                                                                 | Epistemological Positions and Methods                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Do you rank your three identities? Like your race, gender, and sexual orientation (or nationality)? | Neopositivism, structured, one-on-one                      |
| What did cause you to make this ranking decision? Would this ranking change? What would it be if in a different situation? | Postmodernism, unstructured, one-on-one                    |
| What is it like to be an Asian American female sexual minority (or Asian Chinese International) student on campus in your educational institution or in the United States in general? | Romanticism, unstructured, one-on-one                      |
| What voices do you want universities to hear in order to make a change?              | Localism/constructionism, semi-structured, one-on-one       |

both AAFSM and ACI studies, I dynamically and strategically switched interview epistemological positions to capture the most effective data for the study. To ensure that I could arrive at a meaningful understanding, I began each interview with questions from Table 1 (see below). In the interviews, we talked about their understandings of the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality (nationality).

Interview on Intersectionality with Different Structures

Gubrium and Holstein (2001) noted various forms of interview methods that could be utilized to gain insights into people’s experiences. For instance, interviews could take place in either one-on-one or a focus group setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Qu & Dumay, 2011). The choice of which method to employ mainly depends on the sensitivity of research topics. Thus, a focus group interview may not be encouraged for studying sensitive topics such as sexuality. In comparison to the ACI study on intersection of race, gender, and nationality, the study explored the topic of sexual preference, which participants might be reluctant to discuss in public, the interviews were designed, in AAFSM project, to be one-on-one in a safer space to share their experiences, including but not limited to coming out experiences, whereas participants from the ACI study were interviewed via either one-on-one or focus group setting, since the interviews were not involving sensitive topics.

In addition, interviews can be designed to be unstructured, semi-structured, or structured. Specifically, Conrad and Schober (2008) delineated that the structured interview was conducted by researchers who read questions exactly as worded to every respondent and were trained never to provide information beyond what was scripted in the questionnaire. Brinkmann (2018) concurred viewing structured interviews as “passive recordings of people’s opinions and attitudes, and they often reveal more about that cultural conventions of how to answer questions than about the conversational production of social life itself” (p. 579). In both AAFSM and ACI interviews, research participants were asked, “Do you rank your multiple identities?” This yes or no question helped to explore if the ranking of their multiple identities were dynamic or situational.

On the other end of the continuum was the unstructured interview which highlighted “the most important influences, experiences, circumstances, issues, themes, and lessons of a lifetime” (Atkinson, 2002, p. 125). Some feminist researchers emphasize individual agency and give more voices to participants without involving too much prior assumptions or knowledge in data collection (Cuadraz & Uttal, 1999). The data can only be generated in the course of giving full voices to interviewees. In this type of interviews, interviewer’s main role is to listen and facilitate the telling of a story rather than devising specific questions (Brinkmann, 2018). In both AAFSM and ACI interviews, I asked participants to further explain the reasons of why they ranked their identities in such an order, and how were their identities’ ranking formed.

However, a common critique of both structured and unstructured interviews is that it is impossible to avoid structure in an unstructured interview, and vice versa. Therefore, the semi-structured interview tends to be the most common in the human and social science fields (Brinkmann, 2018). The semi-structured interview can give relatively full voices to participants who can naturally produce knowledge from an unrestricted dialogic and can guide conversation between interviewees and interviewers back on track to keep the focus on the research questions. In both AAFSM and ACI studies, some participants were very engaged in sharing their lived and educational experiences, which were great. Nevertheless, I, as researchers, had to focus on their responses relating to research questions rather than capturing their discursive stories.

Issues in Interview Process

Interview questions from both AAFSM and ACI studies will be utilized to help researchers understand the D&C model (see Table 1 below). Interviews in these two cases are about the understanding on the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality (or nationality).

My intention throughout the entire interview was to dynamically change my epistemological positions and interview structures. In particular, I opened up an unstructured interview form with a broad question (e.g., “what is it like to be an Asian American female sexual minority on campus in your educational institution or in the U.S. in general?”) to capture rich narratives with thick descriptions of lived and educational experiences. Meanwhile, I positioned myself in the standpoints...
of romanticists to remain a listener rather than a participant in this participant/listener continuum, which I discussed in the later section of this paper. In this way, interviewees had a greater space to chronologically share their most memorable experiences ranging as far back as elementary school to their most recent schooling. This open space also allowed them to include influences from family, peers, social media, the society, or their community from a horizontal scope. Then I purposefully changed my role as an interviewer to ensure dynamicity. I started from the neopositivist perspective with a relatively structured question, “do you rank your three identities—race, gender, and sexual orientation?” to capture a superficial yes or no answer regarding whether the individual’s multiple identities were ranked. Nine out of 10 participants from the AAFSM study and 10 out of 10 participants from the ACI study said yes. Then, I switched to a semi-structured interview question from a constructivism/localism epistemology to focus attention on how and why they made their ranking. Thus, my attention was switched from simply getting a yes or no response to wanting to capture more critical responses on how social practices had impacted their ranking. More importantly, I purposefully changed my position to postmodernism because I aimed to capture an emerging theme—a new understanding of social value—from my conversation with research participants.

Moving within the Participant/Listener Continuum

Regarding the participant/listener continuum, the relationship between researchers and participants is inseparability. Although the interview is “a face-to-face verbal exchange, in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief rom another person or persons” (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954, p. 449), to what extent researchers keep themselves separated is the key on making an effective interview. It is challenging, especially as an interviewer on intersectionality study, to play an effective role during interviews. Practically, the extent to which the interviewer is engaged in interview is distinguished into three types: complete participant, partial participant, and complete listener. An interviewer who acts as a complete participant in the interview is arguably problematic. Although qualitative interviews are usually conversation-based and there are some expectations that interviewers have more voices (Windsong, 2016), a complete participant approach usually makes the voice of interviewers overshadows the voice of interviewees. For instance, complete participative interviewers usually enjoy sharing their experiences when resonate with interviewees, which make interviews go longer with lower efficiency. On the other side of extreme, the interviewer who plays a role as a complete listener may not inspire participants to share certain experiences or guide them to discuss specific topics.

During the interview, a good qualitative research interviewer may move his/her role from a complete listener towards a complete participant, or vice versa, depending on the conversation between you and interviewees. For instance, you may start as an outsider who emphasizes listening to stories of interviewees and change to that of an insider who attempts to make resonation with your participants. In this regard, your research participants may be given more voices to share and be inspired to recall more experiences that are relevant to your research goals. As Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) suggested that researchers could take advantage of their insider status through matching self-analytical categories, such as race, gender, and sexual preference, for the purpose of gaining access to an interview and obtain cooperation and rapport within the situation. Nevertheless, it could be problematic if researchers reply heavily on the insider status without balancing the outsider status that provides opportunities for researchers to gain access in understanding “the other.” For instance, one participant, Lee in the AAFSM study lost patience when I kept encouraging her to share lived experiences. Lee expected that the researcher understood the situation she described. She lost interests in sharing more nuanced and in-depth data when the researcher could not resonate with the experiences that she shared.

**Immersing PI’s Positionality into the Interview Process to Inspire Interviewees’ Story Sharing**

In intersectionality research interviews, understanding the researcher’s positioning at the outset of interviews is extremely important because it can help bracket the research’s pre-assumptions, biases, and prejudices. The extent to which researchers can control their pre-assumptions, biases, and prejudices is still debated, though having the idea of positionality in mind at the outset of inquiry can help. One of the strategies to situate yourself at the outset of the research is to think about your own identities. For instance, I am an Asian, male, heterosexual, English as a second language learner, middle-class, able-bodied… The list of identities can be endless because it will never be complete. However, the purpose of taking into account positionality in intersectionality studies is to guide PIs to share specific lived experiences that may evoke research participants’ memories and emotions regarding similar experiences. As Davis (2014) argued that “such [endless] list does not do much work and may, ironically, even end up becoming an excuse for not doing the necessary analysis of situating one’s self” (p. 20). Further, Davis (2014) suggested that researchers consider how their specific location shapes or influences them and their research instead of merely including an endless list of multiple identities. To this end, I developed a narrative about how my specific location led my interviews. And I shared it in interviews at the appropriate moment for the purpose of directing conversations and addressing pertinent topics.

Here is the narrative that I developed of how my location shapes my thinking on intersectionality. In 2018, I had a chance to visit Doha Qatar. I was walking through an historical landmark called the Souq Waqif. It is basically a market.
I unexpectedly heard a group of young kids yelled at me “gay” and “chink.” At that moment, I felt extremely insulted because it was the first time I had been harassed verbally and labeled with these discriminatory slurs. I pretended that I did not hear those discriminatory slurs from the young kids and kept walking. Suddenly, I realized that I was different. I was different because of my overt racial identity and covert heterosexual identity. I was trying to figure out why these kids called me “chink” and “gay” despite knowing nothing about me. They discriminated against me on the basis of race because of my distinct racial identity, which is an Asian face. They discriminated against me on the basis of sexuality because of my long hair, less masculine, and a man bag that I carried with me in spite of my heterosexual identity. This unpleasant experience made me realize that I have multiple unworthy identities. I realized that my racial, gender, and sexual orientation identities are not separate from one another; instead, they are co-influenced by one another. As an Asian, heterosexual with less masculine, and male person, I always consider how race, gender, and sexuality as the intersecting identities affect my lived experiences. Therefore, I shared my experiences along with positionality before I asked an interview question to my participants in the AAFSM study. The question was “What it is like to be an AAFSM in the U.S. in your university and/or in your K-12.”

The question being asked right after I shared my experience with positionality did elicit responses that reflected intersectionality lenses regardless of whether the theme of intersectionality was specifically prompted or not. John and Mei were specifically informed to answer the questions from an intersectional perspective, whereas Joe was not. John is an AAFSM college student who expressed strong interests in the research by openly sharing her stories in the interview. She said,

What it is like to be as the Asian American female sexual minority? I think…I mean I don’t think I was a person who originally said this, but I forgot who quoted it. But I think when you have multiple marginalized identities, every single day feels like a protest against like society as a whole.

She got emotional by recalling and sharing some negative experiences, which made her cry. So, I asked her if a break was needed to relieve her emotion. She was okay because she wanted to share her lived experiences to get her voices to be heard. Mei recalled,

…But the thing the problem was she picked me out of all the class of everyone else in the class was white except for me. Everyone else in the class was straight or…straight… because nobody was out except for me. So, I’ll assume that she picked me out either because of my race or my gender or my sexual orientation or all three. so that’s what my mom thinks, too.

And Joe said,

It’s a very interesting time, cause in the United States, It’s…it’s just the minority group stepped on top of minority group on another minority group because you know I’m not white. I’m not heterosexual. And I’m not a man. And so, they just kind of get put together. And sometimes I think what kind of mean joke was this? Like who gave me all of these intersecting minority identities and then put me in a country where I’m not a majority?

These responses reflect the effectiveness of sharing positionality and experiences by the PI, which can inspire and evoke participants to share their experiences from an intersectional lens to some extent and how racial, gender, and sexual exclusions are inseparable.

Bracketing Researchers’ Bias, Pre-assumptions, and Prejudice

It is helpful to situate researchers before and during the interview for the purpose of guiding participants to discuss specific topics. But it has to be carefully implemented because the PI’s pre-assumptions and/or bias may be subconsciously implemented in interviews as well. So, how to bracket researchers’ biases, pre-assumptions, and prejudices at the outset, during, and after interviews should be discussed. With this being said, it is crucial to situate the self in relation to your research participant groups. According to Milner (2007) framework on positionality, searching the self and the self in relation to others can bring to researchers’ awareness on “seen, unseen, and unforeseen dangers in the practices of researchers’ inquiry” (pp. 394–395). A researcher’s epistemological positions are typically derived from their experiences, subjective opinions, dogmatic beliefs, and popular ideas, which may pave a path for misinterpretations and misrepresentations of people. In both my studies, researchers’ epistemological positions and understandings were different from the participants. As the researcher leads interviews in the study, sometimes their interests and voices may overshadow the interests and voices of participants. Therefore, it is incredibly important to bracket yourself as much as possible to maintain the trustworthiness and validity of responses that your participants generate. For instance, in an interview with Ling who was 21 year-old queer female Filipino American, I did not get what I expected from the response, but I still encouraged the participant to share her authentic understanding.

Me: …Okay, So, we talk about racism, sexism, and heterosexism. When you share your understanding on those…on those aforementioned three social forces. Hm…How do these social forces intersect with one another? For instance, do you see those sexism, heterosexism, racism intersect with one another for you, or to you, or on you? Yeah…Uh…yeah

Ling: I know that this is like the point of your research, but I don’t…I don’t really think so.

Me: Yeah, It’s fine. You know…we cannot…we cannot let the interviewees to…to say something that I expected because
research is completely based on the interviewees’...you know...experiences. So, what you share will be the source. You don’t need worry about...you know...whether you satisfied my expectation or not...you don’t even worry about that.

Student researchers and emerging scholars are encouraged to be as much open-minded as possible. Conducting research is not to readdress what has previously existed in academia, but instead to discover and explore something new. An unexpected response from a research participant is a moment to make a contribution to the academic world.

**A Pilot Study for Intersectionality Study**

Although sufficient preparations are completed before conducting actual interviews for a study, things always go in an unpredicted way. In order to make a better use of in-depth interviews and gain the most understanding from participants based on the interview questions, a pilot study is highly suggested for intersectionality study. In order to measure the effectiveness of the interview protocol, clarity of wording, convenience of the interview setting, length of interviews, and adequacy of answers, a pilot study was conducted with Asian American homosexual man who graduated from a Midwestern University in the United States. To achieve these goals, the participant from the pilot study was asked after the interview to answer several questions in order to make any needed modifications or adjustments. Some beneficial questions included:

- a. Was the interview too long causing you to lose your patience?
- b. Were the interview questions and wordings clear enough for you?
- c. Were the interview questions understandable or too scholarly to understand?
- d. Did some of the interview questions need to be omitted or paraphrased?
- e. Were there additional questions that I should have asked but did not?
- f. Was the interview environment convenient to you, or do you have any better places to suggest?
- g. Did you have any other concerns, suggestions, or questions you wanted to share with me in order to make my interview questions and interviews more effective?

After these responses were collected from this pilot study, some appropriate changes were made in the interview protocol in order to clarify the interview questions and improve the efficiency of the interviews for both ACI and AAFSM studies.

In addition, emerging scholars and student researchers need to be aware that one pilot study cannot serve as a tool to make the best use of in-depth interviews or gain the most understanding from participants based on interview questions. However, it can improve the effectiveness of research interviews to some extent. Therefore, PIs need to treat each interview as a pilot study in order to make an improvement for the next. To this end, each interview is encouraged to be evaluated and assessed right after the interview and each feedback from the interviewee should be collected for the purpose of effectiveness of improvements for the next one.

**In-depth Interview Duration for Intersectionality Study**

The next important facet on conducting an effective interview for an intersectionality study is time duration. The average interview participation span is between 60 to ninety-minutes depending on the participant’s state of mind and physical condition. Practically and experimentally, interviews generate limited data within 60 minutes because the interview is too short for (PIs) to collect sufficient information. Similarly, interviewees normally lose interest and/or attention when the interview lasts towards almost 2 hours. Ten participants for each study were interviewed and the interview durations varied from 60 minutes to almost 2 hours. Participants whose interview duration reached approximately 2 hours started to switch their attention from the conversation between them and interviewer to their emails and smartphone message checking. One participant yawned due to the long duration of interview time (e.g., 110 minutes approximately). One participant Zoe in the AAFSM study lost patience when I kept encouraging him to share lived experiences.

Zoe: I mean, I think like being minority in all three, there’s definitely going difficulties. And it took me a long time for me to be comfortable with having these identities and being part of me. But I think at this point, because I am more comfortable with that, I...I usually see it as like a way for me to like, connect with other people through solidarity. Yeah. Yeah.

Me: Can you explain a little bit more about...through solidarity with...as you mentioned...feel more comfortable through...

Zoe: I think I’m running out of life stories to tell you.

Me: That’s good. That’s good.

To maximize the efficiency, it is suggested that emerging, or student researchers ask participants if they need a break or stop for the interview when a sixty-minute duration has approached. Some participants may have a good state of mind or physical condition, which helps keep them engaged in sharing stories; some may prefer to stop the interview and arrange for another one in the near future due to their hectic schedule. John is an AAFSM college student who expressed strong interests in the research by openly sharing her stories in the interview. She got emotional by recalling and sharing some negative experiences, which made her cry when the interview...
reached around 60 minutes. Reacting emotionally during the interview caused extra energy of the participant. When asked if a break was needed to relief her emotion, she stated that she was okay because she wanted to share her lived experiences in order for her voice to be heard.

Me: Do you need a little bit break?
John: Um…I’m okay. I have my water and like my issues. But yeah thanks.
Me: Yeah…Yeah…Very, very good.

Some participants may hesitate to express their willingness to end the interview due to their business afterward. For instance, Alex started to be unsettled and inattentive when the interview hit almost 60 minutes. I then asked her if a break or stop was needed based on my perception and observation.

Me: Just by the way, if you feel like the interview is too long, you can stop it immediately. And we can arrange another…the second interview. If you feel like I’m still comfortable to talk so far, you’re more than welcome to talk more. But if you feel like I need…I have other things to do. I have a quiz. I have exam. I have other things to do. You can stop it and we can make a second interview. It’s all…
Alex: Maybe like I can talk about this model minority question. And then after that we can like…I do have to do homework.
Me: Sure. Let’s talk about this. And we make a second interview, or whenever you’re available. And then we can talk about the rest of questions. Okay?
Alex: Yeah. Okay. So…

Nevertheless, the length of interviews varies. It needs to be designed reasonably based on the nature of the study. For instance, the nature of intersectionality study is complex. Unlike a study that mainly gives emphasis on either race, gender, or sexual orientation, the intersectionality study is to specifically ask research participants to use an intersectional lens by taking into account multiple analytical identities including but not limited to, race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, ableness, nationality, and the like. With this being said, interviews on intersectionality studies should be much more carefully designed for the purpose of rich data generation.

**Conclusions and Discussions**

Although this paper discusses various facets to provide a practical guidance for student researchers and emerging scholars, even skilled researchers, there is no standard rules that researchers can always apply to all interviews since in-depth interviews of intersectionality study is complex and dynamic. Unlike interviews for race, gender, or sexual orientation study, challenges of interviews for intersectionality studies are not as difficult for either race, gender, or sexual orientation as for intersectionality. One of the difficulties need to be explored further is how to design in-depth interview questions on race/racism congruent with the questions about gender/sexism and sexuality/heterosexism. How to reflect the theme of intersectionality in the interviews also struggles many researchers. For instance, Windsong (2016) struggled if the themes of intersectionality should be directly mentioned in the interview or should the themes emerge without being specifically prompted. Empirically, Windsong (2016) chose to directly address intersectionality in the research to guide participants to share their lived experiences from an intersectionality lens. I, however, suggest future researchers to design a comparative study based upon Windsong (2016) qualitative research, which lack the comparison between direct and indirect prompt on the theme of intersectionality in interviews. Despite that the research theme of intersectionality is visible to some extent because it is always demonstrated in research consent forms and participant recruitment letters by PIs, a comparison study is needed to uncover the degree of impacts of direct prompt on interviews of intersectionality studies.

Overall, the significance of this paper attempts to encourage PIs to constantly be reflecting on interview methods, epistemological positions, interview formats, positionality to practice the nature of intersectionality research interviews—dynamically and complexity. For the future studies, I suggest that researchers should use intersectionality as a critical data generation tool as departure rather than a superficial reporting tool as arrival. In addition, I appeal that the intersectionality should not be utilized as a buzzword in research; instead, it should be employed critically in the data generation process for the purpose of uncovering educational and political interlocking inequalities. Last but not least, the intersectionality as a data generation tool should be ultimately served as part of a social moment for educational and political intersectional reform rather than merely a report for the purpose of emancipating people with multiple marginalized identities and eliminating, ultimately eradicating, intersectional exclusion, marginalization, or discrimination.

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2. All names of participants are pseudonym.
3. This participant prefers he/him pronoun.

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