African-American Women Faculty Teaching at Institutions of Higher-Learning
in the Pacific Northwest: Challenges, Dilemmas, and Sustainability

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Abstract approved:

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Institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest have successfully recruited
African-American faculty, yet these institutions have difficulty retaining African-
American faculty for at least five years. African-American women faculty experience
problems obtaining promotions and tenure at predominantly White institutions. High-
level administrators are aware of this attrition, but little or no action is being taken to
reverse this trend.

There is a lack of research and data available on African-American women
faculty prior to the 1990s. However, current literature exists regarding the challenges and
benefits of recruiting, hiring, and retaining African-American women faculty. The results
of this study support the existing findings on African-American women teaching in
institutions of higher learning.

The researcher used an African-American feminist perspective with many facets
of Grounded Theory to conduct this study. This critical philosophical view is believed to
be the most appropriate way to share the lived experiences of the research participants.

The sample consisted of ten African-American women faculty participants, which included the researcher's experiences. The data was analyzed for thematic connections, coded sentence by sentence, and categorized based on the common themes.

The researcher captured the lived experiences of the participants by sharing statements that displayed their thoughts, emotions, areas of growth and struggle, suggestions for sustainability, and other issues that they felt were important. The current work status of the participants was noted. The participants offered many strategies for sustainability for new African-American female faculty.

Based on this study's findings, the researcher theorizes that there are three essential elements needed for new African-American women faculty to achieve success at the IHE. The new African-American woman faculty should: establish a strong support network on and off campus, obtain a mentor at her institution to guide her through the tenure process, and use her spirituality as a sustainer.

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by
Linda Townsend-Johnson

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Linda Townsend-Johnson, Author

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I express sincere appreciation to my husband Jonathan and my two children who inspired me to do more. Thank you to the participants for their willingness to allow me to walk alongside them in the halls of the academy. Thank you to the entire village of loved ones, friends, and colleagues that acted as a support mechanism when the times got hard. An old African proverb says that it takes a village to raise a child. I say it takes a community of support for an African-American female to obtain a terminal degree. Thanks to all of you. Glory be to God.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This research study examined the experiences of African-American women faculty teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest. The problem statement identifies the current situation that exists for African-American women employed as faculty at institutions of higher education (IHE) in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher posed several questions pertaining to African-American women teaching at IHE in the Pacific Northwest and addressed the challenges faced in their positions. In this section, the researcher chose to be forthcoming about her demographic information; she believes that it may have influenced the research study outcomes.

The researcher obtained data from 10 African-American women faculty teaching in the academy. Several questions were asked about how faculty members sustained themselves at the IHE, the challenges they faced at the IHE, and their current support systems. From this data, the researcher hoped to deepen the understanding of the struggles these educators faced as they negotiated the pressures of academic life. There is a dearth of research on this subject, so this study addressed a significant but largely ignored area in the higher education literature. It was the researcher's goal to conduct research that was not only informative about diverse populations, but would also initiate policy changes in higher education administration. At this time, there is very little research on faculty of color, and even less specifically geared to African-American women.

Problem Statement

Currently within the Pacific Northwest, many institutions of higher learning have been able to successfully recruit African-Americans. However, these institutions have had great difficulty retaining African-American women faculty for a period of up to five years (Villanueva, 2005). African-Americans experience problems obtaining promotions and tenure at predominantly White institutions (PWI) (Gordon, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Villanueva, 2005; Washington & William, 1989). High-level administrators at universities and colleges are aware of this attrition with African-Americans in this region, but little or no action is being taken to reverse this trend (Bower, 2002; National Association for Education Statistics (NCES), 2001; Villanueva, 2005).

Situating the Self

The researcher considered the recommendation of Ellsworth (1992), who suggests that the researcher disclose her background and/or other information that may influence the results of the study. This researcher shares her state of being. The researcher is a Christian African-American female faculty member teaching at a predominately White institution in the Pacific Northwest. She has taught at the collegiate level for over three years and successfully completed the third year peer review; a step towards obtaining tenure at her university. However, she has experienced challenges in her position as a tenure-track faculty member at this university. The researcher's first inclination was to rely on her professional skills and abilities to succeed in this new work environment. Eventually, she suspected there were some unforeseen obstacles that prevented her students from recognizing her as a teaching professional. For unexplained reasons, students initially exhibited a lack of respect and questioned her professional skills and

abilities. Strange work-related events began to happen to her, very different from that experienced by new European-American faculty members at her university. Her ethnicity was thought to be the factor. In time, and with discernment, several of her European-American colleagues concurred with this perspective.

Definition of Terms

Academe - the academic life, community, or world (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 2003, p. 6).

Academic Colonialism - the European-American male domination of faculty and administrative positions in higher education (Luz Reyes & Halcon, 1988).

Academy - a body of established opinion widely accepted as authoritative in a particular field (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 2003, p. 6).

Axial Coding - the analyzing stage in data collection that generally occurs after open coding. It is when categories are joined to subcategories; a link is made at the properties and dimensions level with the existing categories. The purpose of axial coding is to begin the process of reassembling data that were fractured during open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 124).

Critical Theory - analysis that discloses the interests of oppressed or subordinate groups. This research methodology emancipates the researcher(s) by encouraging them to tell their story in their own voice while using research methodologies and the choice of lexicon that best represents their cultural beliefs (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2005).

Epistemology - the study or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to limits and validity (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p.421).

Feminist Research - a research methodology that seeks to remove the power imbalance between the researcher and the subject. The purpose is to change social inequalities. The participants of the research give their viewpoint and share their lived experiences.

Grounded Theory - is derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process. Data collection, analysis and eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another. A researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind (unless the purpose is to elaborate and extend existing theory [Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 12]).

Marginalize - to relegate something to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, 759).

Open Coding - the analytic process where concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 101).

Open-ended - not rigorously fixed; adaptable to the developing needs of a situation, permitting or designed to permit spontaneous and unguided responses (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p. 868).

Situating-self - researchers discloses their background information as it pertains to the research study (Ellsworth, 1992).

Tenure - a status granted to a teacher after a trial period that gives protection from summary dismissal (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p. 1288).

Tenure-track - a teaching position that may lead to the granting of tenure, a permanent position in academia (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p. 1228).

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The negative work experiences of an African-American faculty member at a European-American institution of higher learning led the researcher to confer with a small number of African-American women and other female faculty of color within the United States regarding their work experiences. The researcher found their experiences similar to her own. The researcher also desired to establish a network of African-American women that could identify with her circumstance of being the sole or one of a small minority of female faculty of color at an institution of higher education. These discussions were held in the hope that these women would share strategies that would help the researcher inevitably achieve success in obtaining tenure, promotion, and sustainability at the institution. Through this research study, the researcher would like to reveal three points:

- the dilemmas that African-American women have faced in the academy,

- how they sustained themselves at institutions of higher learning,

- and insights for African-American women to obtain tenure and/or promotion at an institution of higher education.

This information helps the researcher have a better understanding of her plight as a faculty member and to be proactive toward her goals. The desire to know and to comprehend the dynamics of African-American female faculty experiences led to this research study.

Research Questions

1. How do African-American women teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest sustain themselves in their teaching positions?

2. What challenges do they face as African-American women faculty members?

3. What, if any, support systems do African-American women teaching in the Pacific Northwest have to support them in their positions as faculty members in institutions of higher learning?

Limitations to the Study

Ideally, according to poststructuralist philosophy, the researcher would disclose as much information about the participants as possible. However, disclosing this information would easily reveal their identities due to the small pool of potential candidates. Consequently, the researcher has chosen not to write short descriptors for each candidate.

A small number of African-American women participated in this study. These faculty members were pooled from the state of Oregon and Washington, with the exception of one participant who relocated to the Midwestern United States. Therefore, individual experiences may not be applicable to many African-American women faculty members outside of this region. In actuality, there is only a small list of potential participants that could qualify for the study and the researcher wanted to be sure not to include all of the African-American women in this region to ensure confidentiality.

An additional limitation to this study is that the researcher alone chose the themes and categories that the participants' stories would represent. There is a lack of available research in this area of study, although several of such studies have commenced in the last few years. The researcher chose the methodology for the study and developed the theoretical framework based on the philosophical perspective of prior qualitative research studies. The study is limited to African-American women faculty and does not include other women of color that may have similar experiences. The participants may not have been forthcoming with relevant lived experiences. This study does not consider the faculty members current or past economic status. The study does not consider skin tone as individuals in the United States with darker skin tone appear to be marginalized to a greater degree than those of a lighter tone. This study does not address African-American women faculty that teach at historically Black colleges and universities. Currently there are no historical African-American colleges or universities in the Pacific Northwest.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This section of the study examines the current literature regarding African-American women faculty, particularly the challenges and benefits of recruiting, hiring, and retaining African-American women. The literature review informs the reader that there was a lack of research and available data on African-American women faculty prior to the 1990s. The philosophical framework of the research study and the researcher's African-American feminist perspective is explained.

African-American Women Faculty

African-American women have been teaching in the academy for over one hundred years (see Appendix A). Yet until recently, their role as pillars in the academy, had not been documented by research and minimally addressed at best (Gregory, 2001). However, there are essays and narratives that summarize experiences of African-American scholars and teachers in the academy (Bower, 2000; Cobham, 2003; Moule, 2004).

Currently, there are a small percentage of African-American faculty members in the United States and an even smaller percentage in the Pacific Northwest (Furlong, 2001; Gregory, 1995; Gregory 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2005; Washington, & William, 1989). African-Americans teaching kindergarten through the twelfth grade compose less than ten percent of the total licensed and employed teachers within the states of Oregon and Washington. There are even fewer African-Americans teaching at the collegiate level in undergraduate and graduate programs (Oregon

Department of Education, 2005; Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; 2005).

Opp & Gosetti's (2002) research study reveals the trends in hiring African-American women and women of color at two-year institutions in 1991 and 1997 by comparing the findings with four-year institutions during the same period, with great limitations due to the lack of data on women faculty at four-year institutions. The two-year institutions of higher learning outpaced the hiring of African-American women faculty members in comparison to their counterpart four-year institutions of higher learning. In general, a higher percentage of women are found to be in the new cohorts of college hires within the past seven years of this study. The National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) provided the statistical information on the women faculty members at four-year universities. The ranking position of these faculty members was provided. However, the NSOPF did not disaggregate the data based on ethnicity/race prior to or during the years of this research study. The constant growth of women faculty at institutions of higher learning is attributed to the hiring of women at two-year institutions as opposed to four-year institutions. The numbers of African-American women faculty have increased at two-year and at four-year IHE, however, the percentage of growth reflected in this study was minimal.

Opp and Gosetti (2002) reveal possible biases with the data collection process as they were unable to obtain data from small institutions of less than fifteen faculty members, several private institutions, and the disaggregate listing of female faculty members based on ethnicity in some two-year colleges. The researchers also disclose that the statistical information on women faculty at the four-year colleges and universities are

clustered, making it virtually impossible to determine the number of African-American female faculty or other female faculty of color. The researchers were unable to determine the representative percentage of female faculty of color or African-American faculty against the student population within the United States. The information was obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2001 as cited in Opp & Gosetti, 2001) fall survey and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, 2001). There was no direct contact with the women faculty represented in the study for the purposes of gathering data.

The number of women faculty members grew from 44.4 percent to 47.5 percent from 1991-1997 at two-year institutions of higher learning; a 3.1 percent growth. However, the growth was not uniform within the various ethnic groups. European-American female faculty faired better in the hiring process at all categories of two-year institutions; the percentage of European-American female faculty at two-year institutions increased at all of the various types of two-year colleges. The change in the mean for European-American female faculty was 2.39 from 1991-1997. The change for African-American female faculty and other female faculty of color was less than one percent combined (Opp & Gosetti, 2001, p. 610-615).

Opp & Gosetti's (2001) study neglected to look at what hinders African-American women from assuming roles as full-time faculty members at two-year colleges. The study does not allow the researcher to assume that the growing pattern of hiring African-American women as faculty will continue as it did during the years of 1991-1997. This study informs one of the past hiring practices of female faculty of color. It leads one to consider how future-hiring processes can change to bring more African-

American women to two-year and four-year institutions. It definitely establishes the grounds for hiring more African-American women faculty when considered along with other studies that indicate the increasing number of students of color (Aguirre, 2000; Bower, 2002; Diller & Moule; 2005; Emerson & Smith, 2000; Furlong, 2001; Gregory, 1995; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004).

Furlong (2001) shows the trend of hiring practices for faculty of color at two-year and four-year institutions of higher education. In 1998, European-American faculty composed 85.1 percent of the faculty and staff at institutions of higher learning and the remaining were faculty of color: American Indian or Native American 0.7 percent; Asian and or Pacific Islander 5.8 percent; African-American 5.1 percent; and Spanish-speaking or Hispanic 3.3 percent (p.11). The current demographics of faculty of color, and specifically African-American women at institutions of higher learning, have shown some progress, yet there is a need for growth (See Appendix A).

Benefits of African-American Women at Institutions of Higher Education

African-American women faculty are needed in the academy to support students of color, to dispel myths for European-American students, and to bring a different pedagogical style and outlook to the IHE (Aguirre, 2000; Allen, 2005; Gregory, 2001; Holland, 1989; Holland, 1995; Smith, 2002). Bower (2002) states that in 1976, 19.8 percent of the student population at community colleges in the United States was students of color, including African-American, Hispanic, and Asian groups (p. 79). By 1997 the percentage of students had increased to 31.8 percent (p.79). She subtly expresses the possibility of hiring new African-American women as many faculty members are approaching the retirement age (many baby boomers are retiring) giving community

colleges the chance to hire faculty in proportion to the demographics of the institutions. Moses (1989) notes that the proportion of African-American faculty on staff positively correlates to African-American student's ability to successfully complete their programs. According to Moses, the mere physical presence of these faculty members sends the message to the African-American students that they too can succeed in the academy. She further states that many African-American women students lack mentorship when they do not have access to African-American women faculty. The difference of ethnicity and gender make it challenging for African-American women students to find a faculty member willing to become their mentor. Without the presence of African-American faculty, African-American students ability to remain at the IHE decreases and the degree completion rate is reduced (Moses, 1989).

As stated earlier, the demographics in institutions of higher learning in the United States are rapidly changing; there are growing numbers of people of color at all stages of learning (Aguirre, 2000; Emerson & Smith, 2000; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). There is a need to hire African-American women faculty in proportion to these changes. Anaya and Cole (2001) found that a small number of interactions as well as good relationships with faculty had a positive effect on the grade point average of students of color. Hernandez (2000) found that Latinos students remained at the institutions of higher learning when they believed that faculty cared for them and faculty were attentive. Other scholars found that Native American students were more persistent and remained in their educational programs when supported (Wolf & Melnick, 1990; Swisher, Hoisch & Pavel, 1991 as cited in Hernandez, 2000).

According to Lundberg & Schreiner (2004), students experience learning gains due to positive interactions or consultations with faculty members, regardless of ethnicity. Unfortunately, students of color are more hesitant than European-American students to confer with professors for fear of being misunderstood. Some African-American students, Native American students, and Hispanic students have avoided going to a faculty member possibly to avoid being marginalized, trivialized, considered lazy, or other negative stereotypes or events (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). "Jacqueline Fleming, in her study of Black students found that overt and covert racism in faculty/student relationships creates a climate of hostility and rejection, as well as lasting psychological damage" (Moses, 1989, p. 3). Moses (1997) asserts that African-American students perceive that European-American faculty have lower academic expectations for African-Americans. These students also believe that European-American faculty ignore them in class until issues regarding African-Americans are mentioned, then they feel forced to be the expert on all African-Americans (Moses, 1997). Students of color prefer to confer with faculty of color with issues pertaining to academics, mentorship, and counseling (Moses, 1997; Pewewardy, & Frey, 2002). The scholars' examination of the significance of faculty interaction with all students, including their explanations of why students of color prefer faculty of color as advisors, supports the cause of recruiting and retaining African-American women at institutions of higher learning.

Good mentors can be Black or White, female or male. It isn't easy

for Black women students to find mentors for several reasons. Many potential

mentors are unfamiliar with Black issues and women's issues and may be unable

to relate to the needs of Black women students. Many white mentors-male and

female find it difficult to build a truly sharing experience with Black females (Moses, 1989, p. 10).

Lundberg & Schreiner (2004) claim that there are areas of concern that need to be addressed by institutions of higher learning on behalf of Native American, African-American, and Latino students. Scholars recommended further research into specific behaviors of faculty members that are most supportive of students of color.

There are additional benefits in having African-American women faculty at educational institutions; the percentages listed above show that there are numerous students of color that require mentoring and role models. African-American women help to prepare students of color for leadership roles while conducting minority-related scholarly work and developing innovative methodology (Aguirre, Jr., 2000; Bower, 2002; Cokley, et. al, 2004; Gregory, 1995; Gregory 2001, McGowan 2002; Pewewardy, & Frey, 2002). Therefore, they expand our way of knowing and doing. African-American women faculty also provide buffers to historical and contemporary stereotyping of non-European-American people (Aguirre, Jr., 2000; Bower, 2002; Cokley, et. al, 2004; Gregory, 1995; Gregory 2001, McGowan 2002; Moule, 2004; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Washington & Washington, 1989). Since having African-American women faculty adds direct and indirect support to students, there appears to be obvious reasons for hiring and retaining African-American women (Aguirre, Jr. 2000; Bower, 2002; Cokley, et. al, 2004; Collins, 2000; Moule, 2004). In addition, given the negative history of slavery and oppression for African-Americans (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 2001), it is critical that students can access faculty who reflect students' experiences, beliefs, and values.

Challenges Faced by African-American Women Faculty

Washington & Williams (1989) state that the lack of African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians, and other ethnic faculty members at institutions of higher learning is alarming. Holland (1989) states the lack of African-American faculty sends a prejudicial notion that they are not qualified for teaching positions. This mistaken perception causes students to view faculty positions as those to be held by European-American males. There are many barriers to African-Americans and other people of color from becoming faculty, one of which is obtaining the terminal degree. The Civil Rights Act of 1972 was never fully implemented by most universities to sufficiently enroll students of color and hire faculty of color (Allen, 2005; Holland, 1989; NCES; 2005; Washington & Williams, 1989). "Several barriers to equal access and effective affirmative action can be identified, including the lack of available data, reduced federal support, philosophical debates, and inadequate financial aid" (Washington & Williams, 1989, p.35).

At several institutions, European-American faculty argued against the hiring of faculty of color for "fear of harming the integrity of the institution" (Aguirre, Jr., 2000, p 67). The difficulties that people of color encounter in finding teaching positions at institutions of higher learning are well documented (Bunzel, 1990; Luz Reyes & Halcon, 1988; Mc Combs, 1989; Thomas, 1990; Washington & Williams, 1989). There are several additional claims as to why predominately European-American institutions of higher education are not hiring African-Americans: Administrators and faculty will state that there is no "available pool" of qualified applicants. The prevailing myths about potential hires are that there is a continuing decline of African-American and Hispanic

candidates. African-Americans with terminal degrees appear to be concentrated in the fields of education, humanities, and social sciences. Yet, even where there is a good supply of qualified African-Americans holding terminal degrees, they are rarely hired at predominately European-American institutions of higher education (Furlong, 2001; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Luz Reyes & Halcon, 1988; Washington & Williams, 1989).

There are universities that embrace the call for diversity and hire African-Americans into tenure track positions. Hughes (2001) acknowledges the significance of having a diversified faculty, staff, and student body, stating:

Diversity is critical to higher education, for when we take seriously cultures, religions, and perspectives that are different from our own, we learn to see the world through someone else's eyes. More than that, we learn to critique ourselves from another's point of view. If we memorize all the historical data in the world, if we find ourselves on the cutting edge of scientific thought and development, and if we hone our technological skills to perfection-if we do all this, but never learn to critique ourselves from the perspective of another culture or another religious tradition, then all of our claims to be educated people ring hollow indeed (p.3).

Seidman (1985) found that faculty of color whether in New York or California, describe similar experiences and confront many of the same issues. Luz Reyes & Halcon (1988) show the number of Chicanos holding terminal degrees applying for faculty positions that have been marginalized by the faculty and administration that interviewed them for a position. They experienced higher scrutiny in their scholarly work; scholarship

in relation to their ethnicity was not seen as legitimate research. Faculty and administration were stated as having made blatantly offensive remarks regarding the applicants' ethnicity. And they found when faculty had the opportunity to interview the Chicano candidates, the number of faculty present at the meeting was significantly higher than with the European-American faculty counterpart in each instance. European-American faculty establishes a more rigorous hiring process for faculty of color.

Once hired by the institution of higher learning, African-American women have experienced poor ratings on teacher evaluations and anonymous letters to administrators and other department heads criticizing their pedagogical skills (McGowan's, 2001; Townsend-Johnson, 2004). Faculty members often wondered if their ethnicity had any influence on their evaluations. McGowan's (2001) research findings show:

> that African-American faculty perceive that some European-American students are more ready to: (1) critique their classroom effectiveness; (2) challenge their authority; (3) have a lower level of respect; and (4) report their concerns and critiques to the professor or his or her superior (p. 21).

Institutions of higher learning must recognize the marginalization of African-American faculty and students as injustices in higher education in order to develop students that are culturally competent and academies that embrace multiethnicity on campus (Allen, 2005; Banks, 1996; Bower, 2001; Banks & Mc Gee, 2001).

The "academic colonialism," as characterized by Chicano scholars, prevents many Chicanos and African-Americans from entering the academy into faculty positions. Academic colonialism can be described as the European-American male domination of faculty and administrative positions in higher education (Luz Reyes & Halcon, 1988).

Luz Reyes' (1988) statement sums it up:

> We realize that, in spite of bona fide college degrees, our credentials are challenged by pervasive racist attitudes and our efforts toward full incorporation into academic positions in institutions of higher education (IHE) are hampered by layers of academic stratification . . . The very idea that racism could
>
> exist among the educated elite is disconcerting to new academicians of color, and might come as a surprise to aspiring novices looking from the outside (p. 90).

As stated earlier, European-American faculty members are concerned about the percentage of faculty of color on their staff and how it would affect the school's reputation. Faculty and administrators within the educational system have difficulty acknowledging their lack of cultural competency. Tusmith & Reddy (2002) state that 86.7 percent of White faculty polled by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* journal in 1998-1999 perceived that faculty of color were treated fairly in their work environment, and only 9.8 percent reported ethnic conflict (p.2). The European-American faculty was unable to recognize or make themselves aware of conflict faced by faculty of color, although the faculty of color felt that racial tensions were heavily present.

Scholars have noted that while teaching at the university, African-American women have issues of classism, gender, and sexism to overcome (Moses, 1989). Moses (1989) contends that African-American men face issues of ethnicity and class but do not encounter issues of gender. Many of these men are able to understand the issues of ethnicity and economics for African-American women. However, these men fail to see the oppressive nature of sexism, and as a result, some marginalize these women based on gender. African-American men have also had the ability to assume roles traditionally

held by European-American men. Like European-American men, African-American men feel that many leadership roles should be held exclusively by men (Gregory, 1999; Gregory & Tillman, 2003; Moses, 1989). Although European-American women share the same gender as African-American women, many marginalize African-American women based on ethnicity. European-American women have made great strides in attaining faculty positions and administrative positions at IHE but have intentionally excluded African-American women from such opportunities (Gregory, 1999; Gregory & Tillman; 2003; Moses; 1989). African-American women find themselves separated from those one would assume to be natural allies in the academy, African-American men and European-American women, due to the competitive socialization in mainstream culture that pervades public schools and the socialization of all segments of society through this vehicle (Ibrahim, 2005, personal communication). McGowan (2002) explained that African-American women faculty frequently conducted conversations amongst themselves about the challenges they encountered teaching at predominantly European-American institutions. According to Bower (2002), the world of academe has not made substantial changes to hiring, supporting, or the retention of African-American women during the last 20 years, although there is an increase in population of students of color.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

In this chapter the framework and process for conducting this research study is presented. The critical philosophical view and the rationale for conducting this study in an African-American feminist perspective are explained to help the reader understand why a non-traditional methodology is the best way of conducting this study. Many facets of Grounded Theory (GT) were applied to this study, as the researcher believes that by juxtaposing GT with an African-American epistemology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Hill, 2003), the methods of collecting and analyzing data would have many similarities. The two epistemologies allow for adjustments, modifications, and creativity to best represent the stories of the participants of the study.

The researcher interviewed nine African-American women faculty participants and included written data from the researcher for a total of ten participants. The researcher obtained the data from a previous paper submitted to the university where she is employed. The data was analyzed for thematic connections, coded sentence by sentence, and categorized based on the common terms and connections.

Framework for Conducting the Research

Research Interviews

The researcher incorporated Scheurich's (1997) warnings about positivist, post-positivist, and modernist perspectives on interviewing. The positivist conception of interviewing is seen as a war on information; the researcher knows what he or she is doing and questions can be formed to provide stability to their assumptions. The

researcher is considered competent and has the ability to form "good" questions. This method assumes the researcher's questions are appropriate and applicable for the study. There is also an assumption that the interviewee is able to provide the correct answers for the *truth*. It assumes the interviewee understands the question the same as the researcher, the researcher can deliver questions so that the interviewee is not influenced, and the physical nonverbal aspects of communication disappear. The positivist perspective does not take into account the setting or other possible influences on the results of the interview.

Scheurich (1997) explains how in the data analysis stage of the positivist interviewing process, a creative interaction occurs within the conscious and unconscious mind of the researcher. The decontextualized data presented is assumed to represent reality or at least reality as interpreted by the interviewees. GT research shares this problem. Use of the tactical procedures adopted to reproduce the systematic rigor of the scientific method mask the intractable uncertainties in the unstable ambiguities of linguistically communicated data. According to Scheurich, the modernist representation is not sheer fabrication since all of the juice of the lived experience has been squeezed out in the coding, all the intractable uncertainties, and the unstable ambiguities have been erased.

Strauss and Corbin's (1998) grounded theory also claims to remove uncertainties in an almost scientific method. They explain how the transcribed text becomes data in a sense very similar to quantitative data; intonation is lost and the words are decontextualized. Scheurich (1997) suggests from a postmodernist perspective that "the researcher has multiple intentions and desires, some of which are consciously known and

some of which are not" (p. 62). What a question or answer means to the researcher can easily mean something different to the interviewee. Scheurich believes that if the same sets of questions were asked by the interviewer, and the interviewee were the same, you would get a different response from the same interviewee on any given day. He further states that changing the interviewer will change the participant's results, even if the new interviewer asks the same questions they are going to get a different response. If you try to keep all factors the same for an interview such as time, place location, and people, the results of the interview would still be different (Scheurich, 1997).

In data analysis in modernist methodology, the researcher removes words from the interview and puts them into new categories that no longer reflect the conversation held with the interviewee. Modernists are said to mirror society; they presume to know reality. Modernists can be criticized as not describing meaning but inscribing meanings. Modernist researchers are thought of very highly; they are considered to consciously know what they are doing in the research analysis and dissemination of information. Scheurich (1997) states from a postmodern perspective that the severe modernist reduction and the manipulation of data is a "kind of violence" to the research project. Scheurich sees modernist methods as way to "control," to "solidify," and to "unify people's language," which wrongfully eliminates their differences.

The different strategies for conducting interviews according to the positivist and post-positivist, modernist, and post modernist/poststructuralism methods are listed below (See Table 1-3):

Table 1

Strategies for Conducting Posivitist and Post-positivist Interviews

Positivist and Post-positivist

_____

- Write the date

- Use open-ended and closed questions

- Researcher has right questions

- Interviewee understands the question

- Interviewee has the right answers (holds the truth)

- Researcher knows what he/she is doing

- Questions can be bound and stable

_____

Table 2

Strategies for Conducting Modernist Interviews

_____

Modernist

- Write the date

- Opened-ended and closed-ended questions

- Mirror society

- Know and describe reality

- Disaggregate the data

- Categorize

- Triangulation

Table 3

Strategies for Conducting Postmodern/Poststructuralist Interviews

---

Postmodernism\Poststructuralism

- Record date, time and location

- Record other relevant information

- Share personal bias or other influences

- Allow participants to view the data

- Participants contribute to data analysis

- Acknowledges physical changes, not included in the language

- Verbal and nonverbal cues

- Cultural influence

- Linguistic influence

- Acknowledges the inequity in interviewing between the interviewer and the interviewee

- Does not claim to find the best, the key, or most important way

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Ropers-Hulim (1998) states:

> I understand [poststructuralism] to mean a disbelief, skepticism, or suspension of belief in universal truth or in the possibility of a totalizing master narrative and, instead, focus on the various master narratives, disciplines, or theories as regimes of truth as historical and socially constructed knowledge with varying and unequal relations to various apparatus of power (p.3).

Poststructuralism allows for an "imbalance" in ways of knowing. A flaw and strength of poststructuralism is that it views knowledge of truths as changing over time, cultures, situations, and so forth, preventing any theorist from *owning* a concept, definition or any possible way of knowing a *truth*.

Marsiglio's (2005) recommendation of beginning the interview with simple factual information about the topic or a general question about the interviewee (nothing very personal) allows the researcher to commence the interview from a poststructualist perspective. This approach allows the researcher to gradually delve into the topic of interest. Marsiglio also offered strategies in confronting issues that the researcher may have while conducting an interview: from working with the non-talker, to the distracted verbose interviewee, to the interviewee that appears to constantly contradict his or her own statements. Mathers, Fox, & Hunn (2002) encourage the researcher to establish an environment conducive to open expression. The researcher should attempt to find private, quiet locations with minimal interruptions (Marsiglio, 2005; Mathers, Fox, & Hunn, 2002).

Critical-Theory

> When any group within a large, complex civilization significantly dominates other groups for hundreds of years, the ways of the dominant group (its epistemologies, its ontologies, its axiologies) not only become the dominant ways of that civilization, but also these ways become so deeply embedded that they typically are seen as "natural" or appropriate norms rather than as historically evolved social constructions (Schreurich & Young, 1997, p.7).

Critical-theory research methods as described by Gall, Gall, & Borg, (2005) will be applied in this research study because:

> Critical-theory research involves a broad range of methods aimed at uncovering the detrimental effects of unequal power relationships in cultures and in the global community. Through critical inquiry it seeks to emancipate individuals from the many forms of oppression that exist in the world (p. 381).

Critical-theory challenges the systems of education and educational research methods. It confronts widely held beliefs or norms that are oppressive and place certain individuals into marginalized populations. It acknowledges privilege of the group in power and how this group works to maintain their power structure at the expense of others. Critical-theory exposes how subordinate groups aid in the continuous cycle of their oppression while giving power to the dominant group (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005).

Critical-theory seeks to disclose the interest of the oppressed or subordinate group. Participants tell their story with a chosen research methodology that has not been prescribed by the dominant group. This research methodology emancipates researchers by encouraging them to tell their story in their own voice, to use research methodologies, and to use the lexicon that best represents their cultural beliefs. Voice is referred to as the "degree to which individuals occupying particular social categories or identities are privileged, silenced, muted, or empowered through the operations of discourses that maintain or contest dominant and subordinate cultures in a society (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005, p. 383). Emancipation is said to be "a process of generating actions and changes in consciousness of and toward the members of oppressed cultural groups that help free them from their oppression" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 382).

Critical-theory acknowledges that the oppression experienced by one person may have several aspects of oppression connected to them. For example, a Latina working as an employee may experience sexism, racism, and classism in her efforts to gain a promotion at her workplace. Critical-theory confronts such injustices and, therefore, disrupts equilibrium with the dominant group. When the beliefs and norms of the group in power are debunked, there is a strong emotional element that the oppressed group and the dominant group are not sure how to handle (Jensen, 1998). Critical-theory acknowledges that in releasing one group from an oppressive state, there is a chance that a different group may be oppressed, which may appear in many different forms. For example, in empowering the Latina female, other groups may be threatened by her position. Critical-theorists believe thoughts are mediated by socially and historically constructed relations that are highly influenced by power (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005).

African-American Feminist Research

bell hooks states, "I am waiting for them to stop talking about the "Other," to stop even describing how important it is to be able to speak about difference. It is not just important what we speak about, but how we speak. Often this speech about "Other" is also a mask, an oppressive talk hiding gaps, absences that space where our words would be if we were speaking, if there were silence, if we were there. This "we" is that "us" in the margins, that "we" who inhibit marginal space that is not a site of domination but a place of resistance. Enter that space. Often this speech about the "Other" annihilates, erases: "no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will

tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Rewriting you, I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still the colonizer, the speak subject, and you are the center of my talk." Stop. (hooks, 1990, pp. 151-152).

Feminist research methods actively seek to remove the power imbalance between the researcher and the subject. It is motivated to change social inequalities. The participants of the research give their standpoint and share their lived experiences. The researcher is seen as part of the research study by interacting with the participants and the data and by sharing personal insights. Feminist theorists believe the researchers should acknowledge their perspective and personal biases regarding the subject, as these views will affect the results of the study (Collins, 2000; Ellsworth, 1992; hooks, 1984; Maguire, 1987).

Ellsworth (1992) encourages the researcher to give elaborate context to the study without disclosing the participant's identity. The data collected should portray participants' knowledge, thoughts, and attitudes. Multiple ways of collecting data may strengthen the research study. Once the data is collected, Arhar, Holly, & Kasten, (2001) offer "prompts" on how to categorize data (See Table 5). Ellsworth (1992) states that the participants should have the opportunity to review the data and make changes to the transcribed interview. When researchers interpret data, they should avoid "single master discourses" or choose a word or words that carry the presumption of representing all of the individuals within a group or to describe participants. The researcher should be aware of the multiple identities and discourses participants use. When conferring with African-American women faculty, the researcher should take heed to the words of Ellsworth (1992):

If you can talk to me in ways that show you understand that your knowledge of me, the world, and 'the right thing to do' will always be partial, interested, and potentially oppressive to others, and if I can do the same, then we can work together on shaping and reshaping alliances for constructing circumstances in which students [faculty] of difference can thrive (p.322).

Table 4

Prompts for Categorizing Data

- *Setting*- school demographics, location, per-pupil expenditure, classroom management, and classroom environment.

- *Definitions*- how students and teachers define concepts such as discipline, engagement, or a good student, as well as the political, religious, socioeconomic orientation that shape their perspectives.

- *Rules and Norms*- the ways tasks are routinely done, such as reviewing math homework at the beginning of each class, are often expressions of underlying rules, values, and beliefs.

- *Roles and Relationships*- roles such as mother, caretaker, and police officer, and relationships such as mother-child, nurse-patient, police officer-criminal, leader-follower, and boss-worker, often emerge as important ways to understand how people see or do not see themselves.

- *Processes*- time periods, steps, chronology, turning points, benchmarks, and transitions are ways to organize data to show changes and growth.

Kirsch (1999) recommends that researchers proceed with caution when using feminist perspectives in interviewing. In some instances, researchers using feminist methods have established relationships with the participants of their study, gaining the participants' trust and insightful information about the interviewees. Once the researcher builds a trusting relationship with the interviewee, the participants conveyed more information than they wanted to give under lack of trust circumstances. Participants revealed the information to a person they considered to be a friend. In some situations, according to Kirsch, this information was used against the participants in a negative hurtful fashion, thereby victimizing the participants.

Feminism has additional weaknesses; it alludes to a sisterhood of all females that does not exist (Bower, 2002; Collins, 2000; Gregory, 2001). The differences in culture are not included in the current design, but they are not excluded either. The framework for feminist theory tries to be as inclusive as possible, but it does not necessarily convey the desperation felt by some individuals to be heard, such as African-American females who struggle to overcome sexism and racism.

Ellsworth (1992) shares a statement from Barbara Christian:

As Barbara Christian has written, 'What I write and how I write is done in order to save my own life. And I mean literally. For me literature is a way of knowing that I am not hallucinating, that whatever I feel/I know is,' Christian is an African-American woman writing about the literature of African-American women, but her words are relevant to the issues raised by the context of C&I607. I understood the words written by the Minority Student Coalition and spoken by

other students/professors of difference[1] on campus to have a similar function: they serve as a reality check for survival. It is inappropriate to respond to such words by subjecting them to rationalist debate about their validity in a radically different arena of proof and carry [carries] no option or luxury of choice (p. 94).

For the reasons listed above, the researcher received the participants' testimony of their experiences as real, true, and valid but the researcher was free to provide a response. The researcher respected the tone of their conversation as well as the type of lexicon chosen to convey their message. For example, some African-Americans choose to use African-American English/Ebonics to tell heartfelt stories or to conjure up stories or clichés that best represent their message (Delpit, 1995; hooks, 1984).

Gordon (1990) stated that many African-American scholars followed the procedures and methodologies of the dominant group, yet their work has gone largely ignored, even that of the most prestigious of African-American scholars. Scheurich & Young (1997) argue that the epistemologies typically used in research studies are racially biased and they have coined the term *epistemological racism* to represent this social injustice. They believe that there is a lack of understanding among researchers as to how the research methods could be oppressive to specific cultural groups.

Allegedly, there is a scarcity of cross-cultural studies to give guidance to teachers. But the fact is that the ideas, agendas, perspectives, and programs produced by African-American scholars and writers have been marginalized. While there are well respected Black educational scholars whose works are being published and reviewed in mainstream (Anglo) journals, these scholars' ideas,

theories, and experiences have not significantly affected the prevailing paradigms and ideology within the scholarly community. Although African-American scholarship is given lip service under the broad rubric of minority, multicultural, and/or cross-cultural studies, dominant Anglo scholarship seems to be directing the field (Gordon, 1990, p.89).

Gloria Ladson-Billings applied Patricia Hill Collin's African-American Epistemology with the four contours Collin recommended. Billings conducted a three-year research study of successful teachers of African-American children using an epistemology that she felt best reflected who she was and what she believed (Sheurich & Young , 1997). Like Billings, the researcher used Collins epistemology as a resource in analyzing and sharing of data. Collins (2000) feels there are four reasons why African-Americans need to conduct studies with an African-American feminist epistemology:

1. African-American women provide a unique angle of vision concerning African-American womanhood unavailable to other groups.

2. African-American intellectuals inside and outside of the academy are less likely to walk away from African-American women's struggle when the obstacles seem overwhelming or when the rewards for staying diminish.

3. African-American women intellectuals from all walks of life must aggressively push the theme of self-definition because speaking for themselves and crafting their own agenda is essential to empowerment.

4. African-American intellectuals are central in the production of African-American feminist thought because they alone can foster the group autonomy that fosters effective coalitions with other groups (Adapted from p.35-36).

Ropers-Huilman (1998) emphasizes the need for epistemologies that allow the individual to share her research without rigidly defined parameters. She acknowledged that the feminist theory must never be defined in such a way as to exclude others from having the ability to apply its tenets. The author informs how poststructural epistemology can be seen as a "tool for understanding–one that has the ability both to build up and break down rigid social structures" (p. 6). The African-American feminist perspective allowed her participants to tell their stories in their own voices.

Methods

This research study examined the experiences of African-American women faculty at predominately European-American universities and colleges in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher interviewed nine African-American women faculty and contributed data from her own records (obtained from a document submitted as a job requirement to the university where she is employed), making the sample ten participants. The researcher captured the perspectives of the nine participants by recording their interpretations of lived experiences working at institutions of higher learning. To qualify as a participant in this research study, the faculty member needed to be a female who worked at a two-year or four-year institution of higher learning for at least one year or more in the state of Oregon or Washington. The ranking of the faculty member was taken into consideration; only faculty that ranked as instructors, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors were interviewed. Although guest lecturers and lecturers have good insights into students' perspectives and could provide strong testimony regarding their teaching experiences at the universities, the researcher only interviewed faculty that were more vested in the institution by job requirements and responsibilities.

The researcher hoped to increase understanding of the struggles that African-American women face as they negotiate the pressures of academic life. There is a lack of research on this subject, so this study addresses a significant but largely ignored area in the higher education literature (Bower, 2002; Gregory, 2001; Opp & Gosetti, 2002). The researcher's goal was to conduct research that was not only informative about African-American women, but would also lead to the initiation of policy changes in higher education administration. At this time, there is very little research on African-American women faculty or faculty from non-dominant cultural groups (Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Opp & Gosetti, 2002).

African-American women faculty were interviewed for several reasons: Currently African-American females have the highest percentage of employment as faculty among non-dominant cultural groups at institutions of higher learning, African-American women have taught in the academy for over one hundred years (Aguirre, Jr., 2000; Bower, 2002; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001), and as an African-American female, this researcher believed that these individuals may offer wisdom and knowledge about how their culture has affected their experiences in the academy. The investigator was interested in finding out how African-American women faculty achieve success given their culture, history, knowledge, and experience in the academy.

The researcher contacted African-American women faculty that she had encountered at meetings or conferences to participate in the research study. The participants were asked to provide the names and contact information for other individuals that may qualify as participants for the study. The researcher also obtained participants by researching the Websites of institutions of higher learning in the Pacific

Northwest. The investigator obtained data via a recorded interview of the participants' responses to a survey (See Appendix C) that was later transcribed. Some of the participants were video recorded using a digital camcorder (with the option of using a cassette recorder if the camera failed) or a cassette recorder. The researcher used the cassette recorder to conduct interviews when the participant either preferred not to be video recorded, preferred to be tape recorded or when circumstances did not allow for videotaping. The researcher had predetermined to document if such incidents occurred as they may affect the outcome of the study (Scheurich, 1997).

The final participant's data was extracted from a paper submitted to the administrators at her IHE as a job requirement. When the digital camcorder, tape recorder or email messages were used, the location, and other pertinent information were recorded. The researcher used phone interviews and email to allow a participant to clarify a response from the initial interview or to be asked a question that was overlooked in the initial interview process (Arhar, Holly, & Kasten, 2001). The interviews were informal because the researcher posed broad open questions and allowed the interviewee to share her experiences relating to the questions. For this study, the postmodernist /poststructuralist perspective was applied to support the researcher's African-American feminist perspective which is described earlier in this paper.

Participants chose the location of the interview to create a comfortable environment for themselves (Marsiglio, 2004). The purpose of the interview was explained and terms for confidentiality were discussed. Disclosure of the interview's format occurred at the interview's beginning (Marsiglio, 2004). The interview did not exceed one hour to show respect for the participant's time (Marsiglio, 2004; Scheurich,

1997). Marsiglio (2004) recommends that the researcher pose icebreaking questions, such as those listed on the Questions for Qualitative Study sheet (See Appendix C), to help the participants feel comfortable about sharing their thoughts. The researcher did not want the participants to feel like a subject in a study, but to feel as though they were having a serious conversation with a colleague about their work environment. A few open-ended questions were posed and the interviewee carried the conversation. The questions in the study were derived from the participant's comments as well as based on recommendations by grounded theorists (Charmaz, 2000; Strauss, & Corbin, 1998). As an active listener, the researcher kept personal opinions private as the participants shared their stories. Participants were encouraged to expand or elaborate on their responses. Participants also had the opportunity to contact the investigator or the faculty dissertation advisor with questions or concerns about the research study at any time, as well as the Institutional Review Board Office (IRB) at the university (See Appendix B).

European-American institutions of higher learning have shown difficulty in confronting issues of ethnocentrism, sexism, and classism (Diller & Moule 2005; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001). Therefore, participant confidentiality was protected to prevent them from experiencing any consequences for their involvement in the study. IRB requires confidentiality and approval was obtained in order to conduct this research study. Ethics of research require confidentiality, and in this case it was even more important to protect the participants because they are classified as a vulnerable population.

Following the interview, a memo was recorded on a mini-cassette recorder or notebook regarding the interview. The researcher chose to resist using terms such as

"minority" that are oppressive by design. Which dominant group would choose to label itself with negative terms? It is the dominant group that labels other groups with fragile terms or considers populations that are not in power as "at-risk." Instead, the researcher sought to use terms that showed a positive outlook on situations and used terms such as "ethnicity," and "individuals of potential", and so forth, to describe and record data. The memos were created to help the researcher reflect on the interview and to process the information provided by the participants.

Once their interviews were transcribed, the participants were able to read the transcription, request changes, provide clarifications, and request the deletion of information that disclosed their identity. The participants had the right to pull out of the study, if necessary. Participants had the right to request that the audio or video recordings be erased after the data were transcribed and numbered.

Data Analysis

The interviewees were active participants in the data analysis. Once the interview was transcribed, participants were asked to review the data, to request for changes and clarifications, and to request the deletion of information that disclosed their identity. The researcher analyzed each transcript manually as there were only a small number of interviewees. First, the researcher conducted open coding in which she looked for common themes as well as frequently used words of the participants. Second, she went over each transcription line by line and coded each sentence. Finally, the researcher developed categories based on the coded and thematic data (Ellsworth, 1992; Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Open coding is what the name suggests, open to a full spectrum of possibilities where the researcher is free to categorize data as deemed appropriate. The data can be placed in more than one category based on criteria established by the researcher, which includes her thoughts, feelings and insights about the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998 as cited in Townsend-Johnson, 2003, p. 5).

Any particular object can be named and thus located in countless ways. The naming sets it within a context quite differently related classes. The nature or essence of an object does not reside mysteriously within the object itself but is dependent upon how it is defined (Strauss, 1969, p.20 as cited in Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 104).

Townsend-Johnson (2003) stated that in open coding, one notes the properties and dimensions associated with the data that depicts the interpretation of meaning that is derived from the text. The word "pass" has several different meanings based on the prevailing situation. The American Century defines pass as:

a move onward, past 2. be transferred from one person or place to another

3. surpass; exceed 4. get through 5. **a** go unremarked or unsecured **b** be accepted or known (as) 6. move; cause to go 7. **a** be successful or adequate, in an examination, course, etc**. b** judge (a candidate) to be satisfactory 8. **a** (of a bill) be approved by a legislature **b** cause or allow (a bill) to proceed **c** be approved 9. occur; elapse; happen 10. (cause to happen) circulate; be current 11. spend (time or period) 12. Sports throw; send (a ball, etc.) 13. forgo one's turn or chance 14. come to an end 15. discharge from the body 16. utter (legal sentence, criticism) upon; adjudicate … 19. ticket or permit giving free entry, access, leave travel, etc.

..23. make a pass at *Colloq.* Make sexual advances to 24. pass away *Euphem.*die

…

The usage of the word "pass" demonstrated above relies heavily on the context and situation where the word is used. In open coding, the researcher looks at each individual sentence or sometimes completes a one word analysis to determine the meanings of the words used. The researcher must analyze what may appear to be minute details such as a single word and reveal the point lost due to its vagueness. The researcher may be able to use a standardized tome such as a dictionary for the meaning of some words; however, the researcher must also become confident at deriving original meaning to provide full disclosure of a word's meaning. The word "pass" has several meanings that are acknowledged in a formal manner (within a dictionary) unknown to many. "Pass" is defined further in alternative ways that are not shown above within the same dictionary (p. 5).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) believe this type of microanalysis should be done early in the research project to help generate categories with dimensions and properties. The investigator or researcher can look for connections among categories. This practice unites the open and axial methods of coding. Categories are abstract concepts; they represent individual and/or group stories and are represented by highly conceptual terms. Ellsworth (1992) allows for coding using holistic themes that consider the many humanistic aspects that may be overlooked in the choice of narrow descriptive words. In axial coding, categories are joined to subcategories; a link is made at the properties and dimensions level with the existing categories. "The purpose of *axial coding* is to begin the process of reassembling data that were fractured during open coding. In axial coding, categories are

related to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomena (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 124). In addition, Strauss (1987) suggests axial coding involves several tasks, such as presenting the properties of a category and their dimensions. The researcher should note the actions, interactions, and consequences associated with central ideas in the data that are labeled as concepts (referred to as phenomena) to observe commonalities between major categories and/or how they relate to each other.

In axial coding the researcher begins to ask the why and the how type of questions. This process is how one discovers the relationship amongst categories and builds a phenomenon, or in other words, the person can relate structure with process. Structure is significant because it acts as a camera that exposes the problems, actions, issues, or circumstances. Process is vital as it denotes the events over a period of time, people, organizations, or groups such as communities to nations. Both process and structure are keys in axial coding; structure informs of the *why,* process tells you *how* events take place (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) share a method of comparison that was presented by Spradley:

Spradley (1979, p. 111) indicates that in his own work he has found it useful to look systematically for certain semantic domains of the following sort:

- strict inclusion - X is a kind of Y.

- spatial - X is a place in Y; X is a part of Y.

- cause and effect - X is a result of Y, X is a cause of Y.

- rationale - X is a reason for doing Y.

- location for action - X is a place for doing Y.

- function - X is used for Y.

- means-end - X is a way to do Y

- sequence - X is a step (stage) in Y.

- attribution - X ix an attribute (characteristic) of Y (as cited in p. 340).

Spradley did not mention a plausible state for X; X is the opposite of Y.

If open coding is where you pull the 500 puzzle pieces apart and look at the chosen individual pieces or small clusters, then axial coding is where you attempt to put the pieces into the appropriate pile or category based on some connection. It is in these piles that the investigator can eventually match the correct pieces or discover the phenomenon, or in other words, "looking for repeated patterns of happenings, events, or actions/interactions that represent what people do or say, alone or together, in response to the problems and situations in which they find themselves (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 130) that leads to the final completed project ready to be displayed to others. Systematically developed categories that are linked with subcategories define axial coding.

In analyzing the data, conditions for occurrences will become apparent. The three conditions noted by Strauss and Corbin (1998) are casual condition, intervening condition and contextual condition, which define both the micro and macro conditions. Casual conditions are events or situations that influence phenomena. Intervening conditions alter the impact of the casual condition. Contextual conditions are specific sets of conditions or events that take place that perpetuate certain actions/interactions. Contextual conditions are embedded in casual and intervening conditions causing the two to overlap and form

patterns of information in a shape such as a kite. In making a kite, two sticks are placed in the shape of two intersecting lines and tied together. A cloth is placed on the two sticks in a shape of a diamond. Imagine the kite lifted into the air revealing the many intricate patterns that were overlooked in plain eyesight. The crossing of the two conditions can display data in a new format more easily seen and understood.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) stress more emphasis on the investigator, focusing on the "complex interweaving of events (conditions) leading to a problem, an issue, or a happening to which persons are responding through some form of action/interaction, with some sort of consequences …(p. 132)" rather than overemphasizing the correct labeling of the three types of conditions listed above. Erickson's (1986) suggestion of write-ups supports this type of thinking because the researcher is forced to add insightful information that may not be included in the raw notes.

Knowing when to stop collecting and analyzing data in grounded theory appears to be difficult to determine. The researcher performs open coding and axial coding, at times simultaneously, until the topic has been covered well from every angle according to Strauss and Corbin, which seems ambiguous at best. They show insightfulness and honesty in acknowledging that researchers have biases that influence the perception of the data and the interpretation of its meaning. Therefore, emphasis is placed on the researcher continuously comparing one piece of data to another to validate the findings. Strauss and Corbin suggest ending the process of acquiring and coding of data when categories are saturated, meaning "A category is considered saturated when no new properties, dimensions, conditions, actions/interactions, or consequences are seen in the data" (p. 136).

A theory can take form when the major categories are integrated to form a larger theoretical scheme. Selective coding ensures that categories have been refined and integrated, an additional step toward the building of theory. Erickson (1986) explains that discrepant case analysis enables the researcher to refine and adjust assertions and theoretical presuppositions as data is obtained. During the selective coding process it is recommended that the researcher analyze data immediately following attainment; one should transition almost immediately from the open to axial coding process to help strengthen relationships amongst categories. Relational statements revealed during selective coding can be derived as a result of discovering interrelated concepts within the data. A central category should be formed that relates to the other major categories. There should be many indicators that lead to the central indicators. The investigator should not force the data to connect categorically with the central indicators. The central category should be entitled with a generic term that may prove applicable to several other substantive areas. The formation of a central category combines larger theoretical categories.

Central categories grow as result of further research projects and investigations. The theory should explain variation as well as the main point elucidated by the data. In other words, when the conditions vary, the explanations remain the same. The researcher should be able to explain contradictory or alternative cases in terms of that central idea (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Erickson stresses that the researcher should be open to data that may disconfirm the researcher's initial perceptions, record the data, and reflect on it, as evidence that the investigator's thoughts and data collection changed during the course of the project leading to the central category (Erickson, 1986).

The researcher conferred with the interviewee at least two times: first to conduct the initial interview and second to analyze the data. The researcher and the interviewee were the only individuals to view the video recording. For some participants, the only data they reviewed was the transcription when video recording was not possible. The interviewees were asked to define unfamiliar or ambiguous terms, to provide clarification of stories or other information, or to tell what information needed to be eliminated in order for the participant to maintain anonymity. The researcher made appropriate adjustments to the data before beginning analysis.

In viewing the data, a search for common terms that were used by the participants that describe their lived experiences at the academy were sought. Strauss & Corbin (1998) describe how to conduct line-by-line analysis of data to look for word patterns. As mentioned above, the researcher looked for connected themes, as it appeared to be a more holistic way of viewing data, and placed them into a category (Arhar, Holly, & Kasten, 2001; Hill, 2000; Gordon, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In searching for common words, the researcher did not separate the words from its context only to later categorize the data outside of its context, as is possible in grounded theory. Where and how the words were used and the meanings associated with the words in connection to the participants were considered. The researcher looked for common experiences that the participants had at the institutions of higher learning or within their personal lives as a direct result of working in the world of academe.

The researcher triangulated the data by allowing the participants to review the transcripts and provide feedback, comments, and approval of their written data. The findings were later shared with two female faculty of color to validate that the

researcher's conclusions appeared to be accurate and her limitations forthcoming. The female faculty of color ensured that the researcher did not oppress the participants within the study or possibly marginalize future female faculty candidates. The results of the research study were made available to the participants after the final submission of the dissertation to the university.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Summary of Results

In the results section, the researcher captures the lived experiences of the participants by sharing specific statements that display their thoughts, emotions, areas of growth and struggle, suggestions for sustainability, and other important issues. Here is the current work status of the participants. Five participants have obtained tenure positions as faculty at the IHE. However, four do not see tenure as a guarantee for future employment at their IHE. Two faculty members have found employment outside of the Pacific Northwest, and one is currently seeking employment. The participants offer many strategies for sustainability for new faculty, from suggestions of developing and improving pedagogical skills, obtaining a mentor, and being a mentor, to establishing a network of support both on and off campus. The network of support and the individual's spirituality are seen as key factors for sustaining a position at the IHE by the participants.

Participants

The participants in the study are ten African-American women faculty members that teach in the Pacific Northwest. The names used to represent the nine faculty research participants interviewed are pseudonyms. The specific names used to represent participants are: Daniels, Hargrove, Carter, Spells, Phillips, Cooper, Francisco, Grant, and Bey. Townsend-Johnson's data was obtained from an unpublished document submitted to a university. The women have taught at institutions of higher learning in the states of Oregon and Washington ranging, from four years to well over two decades.

They come from various fields of study not limited to the traditional social fields held by African-American women.

Analysis of Data

Findings

The researcher followed the guidelines established for data analysis. The participants were asked to review the transcription of their interview and provide feedback, clarity, or request that information that might disclose their identity be withheld. Once the transcriptions were finalized, the researcher read them to look for themes, common terminology, and patterns in the responses. She then conducted a line by line analysis to open code the data. In holistically axial coding the data, she categorized the data based on themes (Arhar, Holly & Kasten, 2001; Ellsworth, 1992; Strauss and Corbin, 1987). The major categories and themes developed are listed below and are further expanded within the chapter:

1. African-American women faculty are still clustered in low ranking positions.

2. There are few students and faculty of color at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest.

3. Institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest do not appear to be a positive work environment for African-American women.

4. Participants experience marginalization or negative differential treatment in comparison to other faculty members.

5. Participants feel isolation and stress.

6. Participants have learned how to overcome obstacles.

7. Participants act as a mentee and/or mentor.

8. Strategies used for success were shared by participants.

9. Spirituality is used as a sustainer.

Theme One: African-American Women Faculty Tend to be Clustered in Low Ranking Positions

This study's results reflect what current literature informs us about African-American women faculty; they are often clustered in lower ranks, in part-time and non-tenured positions, and in marginal positions for programs that will be phased out over time (Djanna, 2003; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Washington & Williams, 1989). Two of the participants ranked higher than Assistant Professor at four-year institutions and two individuals gained tenure at two-year institutions of higher learning. Three of the faculty members no longer work at IHE in the Pacific Northwest; two of the faculty members left on their own accord, while the last faculty member's position was phased out or eliminated. According to Guillory (2003), African-American female professionals generally witness the intersection of ethnicity and gender in their experiences of alienation and marginalization that affects their ability to remain and receive promotions in their positions (Etter-Lewis, 1993; Gilkes, 1982; Weber and Higginbotham, 1997 as cited in Guillory, 2003, p. 7). In the studies listed above, "African-American wom[e]n experience limited access to occupational networks and opportunities for professional growth as members of work environments that are most often [W]hite and male dominated" (Guillory, 2003, p. 7). Guillory (2003) suggests that African-American women learn to "negotiate the conflict" in order to be successful in their professional occupation (p. 8). African-American women faculty learn to sustain themselves in the same manner as other professional African-American women.

Theme Two: There Are Few Students and Faculty of Color at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest

The research participants tend to feel isolated due to the low number of African-American faculty and students of color on campus (See Table 9). Djanna (2003) believes that middle class African-American women are sometimes aggressively recruited to work at IHE and then find themselves placed in a position where they will have little to no opportunity to be promoted beyond that position. Collins (1991 as cited in Djanna, 2003) uses the term "outsider-within" to describe this situation. The person has the credentials and experience that warrant her having the position. However, the department or institution in which she works has difficulty envisioning her in a higher ranking position for which she is qualified. This scenario creates a "chilly climate" that Turner and Myer ascribe to the underrepresentation of African-American faculty at IHE predominately European-American universities and colleges. It is believed that the presence of African American women and their contributions are undervalued. This chilly environment creates high turnover rates (Demus, 2004, p. 11-12).

Hargrove stated that:

> And what makes that a challenge is, there is a constant need to kind of identify the issues, I'm a (name of position). Let me be clear; so this becomes particularly important to someone teaching (field of study) at the Master's level (field of study). They have to become sensitive to the needs, thoughts, and ideas of people of color, and more specifically, to African-American people. In other words, we've become, myself and the other colleague of mine, we've become the only voice. And very often it is met with, what I can say, frustration, doubt, being

basically ignored, and marginalized. Because once again, if we don't raise the issue, it doesn't get raised, and when we do raise it, we're perceived as "oh, here they go again." But in its absence, we don't serve the most underserved population in Oregon, you know.

Hargrove continued:

The other challenge is that people are culturally inept, whom one would think had a certain competency, but clearly not everyone does. But there are certainly those who are right up there on my list that are profoundly ignorant as it relates to issues of race; and specifically, African-Americans. There are feelings of anxiety or fear, or guilt regarding African-Americans. I can't tell you what it is, but they have difficulty believing the issues that a person of color experiences on a faculty like that, and even more so, the experience of the few students of color that come through. So you know the challenges have been profound for me, so much so in looking at differential treatment of African-American faculty. That's not an arbitrary complaint, I've actually been present in teams and have seen it happen, and I've watched it occur as it relates to review committees. I witnessed clearly differential treatment. When you are dealing with longstanding faculty, they have clout and do not see the need to change anything.

Grant explained that she felt isolated in her position as a faculty member in the Pacific Northwest because she was unable to establish a strong system of support. Grant stated emotionally:

The challenge for me in just being in the Pacific Northwest was that it was not as diverse as I thought; it was very, it was kind of hard for me to sort of find a good

community for myself. It seemed to be few African-Americans in the area; and although my colleagues were very nice to me, especially the African-American colleagues, we're all very busy. And so being a single person out there, I find… I found it very isolating. I find the department a little isolating because of the culture in the department. It's just come, go into your office, close the door, and that's it. So it was hard for me to get a feel for like I was a part of the area. So I tended to stay home more. So if I could, if all I was going to do was go in the office and sit there by myself and work, then I may as well stay at home and work. I did not make a lot of connections across the campus. I could have, I didn't, and I felt that within my particular unit, they were really looking for someone who shared their philosophy of teaching, and I did not.

Carter stated that she received a warm reception at her welcoming celebration from her colleagues at the IHE and everyone seemed pleasant until a faculty member walked up to her and asked, "Well, who are you!" After they introduced themselves, the tenured faculty member then introduced her to other faculty members, giving her a sense of collegiality within the department. She stated at this initial meeting of faculty and staff, the fact that she was the only faculty of color was evident. In the interview Carter later explained that it took the students and faculty a while to get used to seeing her, an African-American women faculty member on campus. "I saw quite a bit of, you know, people getting used to seeing me on campus. They had never experienced a faculty member of color working on campus; I'm guessing with my particular color, they were taken by surprise."

Theme Three: Institutions of Higher Learning in the Pacific Northwest Do Not Appear to be a Positive Work Environment for African-American Women

Four of the faculty members learned of negative experiences of students and faculty of color at their IHE prior to their arrival or shortly after accepting their teaching positions. They have attempted to change their plight while at the IHE as a direct result of these past individuals' negative experiences. Eight of the ten faculty members attempted to be proactive or to take deliberate steps to ensure their ability to remain employed at the IHE, in spite of the histories of these institutions (as inhospitable to people of color). Daniels built a network of support on an international level. Francisco has strong national connections with individuals in her field of study (but not in her local community). Hargrove and Phillips created strong ties in their local community within their field. These women have successfully produced scholarly work in direct connection with their area of interest and service.

Carter and Grant no longer work within IHE in the Pacific Northwest as faculty. Carter is currently seeking employment at a different IHE, having separated from her former IHE. Grant relocated to the Midwest in search of a more supportive environment that is more aligned with her professional interests. Grant, like Carter, initially felt that her department would be supportive and happy to have her as a member. However, she later felt that the department did not value her ideas, scholarly work, and pedagogical style since it was different from theirs. Grant felt that although she was hired for the attributes listed above and the unique aspects that she would be bring to the department, there was little support to help her attain success at the IHE.

Grant noted:

> I was hired based on the fact that my philosophy was different, that I
>
> would bring all my learning to the position, but I found that when I tried to
>
> _____, my colleagues were not prepared to do so. They weren't prepared
>
> to do it nor were they prepared to allow me to do so. And since
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> my scholarship, my research is on _____, I felt that it was _____
>
> mismatch for me, and that I needed to leave.

Townsend-Johnson obtained employment as an administrator in education in the Southwestern United States. Three of the faculty members admitted that they contemplated leaving their positions and seeking employment elsewhere, but felt that there was a purpose or task that they needed to complete, which caused them to remain. They linked this cause to their spiritual beliefs and established a purpose based on those beliefs.

Theme Four: Experiences of Marginalization or Negative Differential Treatment in Comparison to Other Faculty Members

Student Evaluations.

Four of the faculty members stated that the majority of their students gave them good evaluations. Three of these individuals do not teach issues on ethnicity or gender in their course content. Two of the four faculty members mentioned have tenure. These four faculty members average over fifteen years of teaching experience in IHE. The four faculty members hold positions of power in their local communities or in their field of study. And the students, faculty, and administration are all knowledgeable about their network or systems of support.

The other four faculty members that are currently teaching in the Pacific Northwest experience negative student evaluations or ratings that are questionable. These faculty members address issues of ethnicity and gender as part of their course content. Although these faculty members received negative ratings from several of their former students, their colleagues and administrators have confidence in their professional abilities and pedagogical skills. Faculty and administrators have seen conflicting information based on students' evaluations and the plethora of varied professional contributions of the African-American woman faculty members. Carter taught issues of culture in her courses and she believes that her student evaluations reflect student's disequilibrium with the course content. Carter noted she has learned, "You can't push people's buttons, they have to do it on their own," which was translated as students must make the decision to change their beliefs and perceptions; no one can make them do so. This group of four does not have the accumulated years of experience as the first group, nor do they have well-established connections with high ranking officials in the community, with the exception of Cooper who does not reference her strong ties to the community in the courses that she teaches.

Periodically, all of the participants experience negative racist evaluations from students. However, this behavior was rare for the faculty members that were well established at their institution and held positions of power. Some of the research participants believed that some student's rated them poorly due to their ethnicity. Townsend-Johnson (2004) noted with emotion:

In many of my student evaluations students made comments such as, the course requirements and the grading scales used were not clear. The program in which I

teach has a very structured program that I follow religiously. The syllabi that I use are basically the same that are used by other faculty in the program (As a team, we decided to maintain consistency throughout our program). However, out of the many years the syllabi have been used, there have been no major complaints until I used them in my courses. In speaking to the chair of the department, she informed me of this information and stated that she has received excellent ratings for basically the same syllabi that I have distributed in class for poor ratings (p. 7).

Hargrove believes that students feel that they can respond to African-American and faculty of color differently than European-American faculty. Hargrove stated:

You see what I'm saying? They just show up in the classroom from _____, and they are looking at a Black face, and their assumption is they can question that Black face. If I share this with my colleagues, my White colleagues, they're just incredulous—"Are you sure?"(Laughter). "Are you sure you're not being oversensitive?" You see, I didn't just fall off the truck. The students by virtue of they're being White make assumptions that they can question you as a professor. How much do you want _____. And I blow back so much hair and I'm done, you know. So then, the challenges I think are not so different than how the *other* faculty, to what my research has shown in terms of faculty of color across the United States, experience.

Carter and Spells stated that many European-American students react negatively to their teaching of diversity and cultural competence in their courses; those feelings are portrayed in their student evaluations of the courses.

Grant stated:

> The first time my evaluations were fairly good. I taught the way that my colleagues basically taught, but it didn't feel right to me; and I think that students were upset. I think some of them were a bit overly critical, but I think more than that they were apprehensive about me as a new faculty member. The rest of the year they plummeted. I began to teach more social constructivist methods, and I used more group work, and made them responsible for more of the teaching, and it took about a year for them to get used to that; and after that, the ratings started to improve a little bit more.
>
> But they accused me of not teaching, not doing my job. I did have some students that, you know, really liked it, but the majority of them were very critical and unforgiving. So if they felt that I did something early on, and I always did like a formative evaluation about ethnic groups, to find out how people were feeling, and see if I needed to make some adjustments. If they felt that what I had done was wrong, then I felt they were unforgiving, and like a group of them carried that through to the end of the _____. They went and told the administrator for my particular program, they went and complained to her—so they complained to my colleagues that they felt that I wasn't teaching. And she came to me to let me know what they had said and she suggested that I change the way that I teach. At that point I refused, it was halfway through the term, they had not given me any feedback when I asked for some, and it was too late to change at that point.
>
> So I talked to the classes, and I think many of them understood, but I think most of them did not appreciate the way that I was teaching them. They wanted to

be told what to do, they wanted me to sort of summarize the reading to them, and

sort of give them a lecture, and then maybe give some small group work, and I did

it the opposite. I gave them some small group work and then I didn't lecture. I

may fill in if they don't understand. But I absolutely refuse to summarize reading

_____ students, and I should not be summarizing the reading for them.

So that was a mismatch and my colleagues, I feel, did not appreciate the way that

I taught.

Leveling the Field: Multiethnicity on Campus.

Townsend-Johnson states that European-American faculty at IHE can have the

privilege of not knowing or experiencing marginalization based on race, and therefore,

they have difficulty believing or understanding that racism exists.

My colleagues at the university have been wonderful; they have been supportive,

resourceful, and available but many of them are blind to the real problem at hand,

racism. I have experienced blatant attacks as a professional, and as a human

being, that I experienced as a result of being a faculty member of color. I am not

the only faculty member of color in the Pacific Northwest to experience cruel

actions or comments from students. Universities know that eerie things happen to

faculty of color in this area, but too little or nothing at all is done to prevent such

actions from reoccurring. Universities should take permanent measures to support

faculty of color if the real goal is retention (Townsend-Johnson, 2004, p. 9).

The students of color also experience racism that goes undetected by many European-

American faculty members.

Carter stated:

> African-American students born in the Pacific Northwest have experienced racism. They see it, they have been a part of it, and they either just watched other adults back-up or go someplace else. But they haven't been taught how to deal with it. And my having come out of another generation and also out of another century, from the 20th century to the 21st century, I believe everything is still the same. Issues are still there, biases are still there . . ."

Scholars agree that institutions of higher education need faculty who are culturally competent; have the ability to effectively teach diverse and special populations. Faculty should be able to understand the history of ethnic and special needs populations and make provisions to attain and retain them at the IHE. Faculty should be able to identify their personal biases, and to understand the privileges that they have in this society and the impact of these privileges on others (Banks, 1996; Delpit, 1995; Gardner, 1999; Moses, 1997). Mc Clenney and Waiwaiole (2005) emphasize the need for effective advising of students as a means of attaining student success. They recognize that faculty are "experts in their fields, familiar with specific courses in their departments, and knowledgeable about educational and career opportunities in their fields" (p.40). Students of color appear to be negatively affected when they do not receive this type of mentoring from the faculty (Mc Clenney and Waiwaiole, 2005; Vivian, 2005). Keels (2004) found that when students on academic probation participated in the Strategies for Academic Success classes in which they are mentored by faculty at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the retention rates for students in the mentoring program increased from 41 percent to 68 percent. Vivian (2005) states those students at-risk, college students who

are socially, financially, or academically undersupported are in need of mentoring. These at-risk students are most likely to experience failure or withdrawal from IHE and are least likely to pursue mentoring from faculty. Students of color may have difficulty understanding and adapting to the college culture without direct support from faculty. "Students experience [the] character of institutional life through the interaction with other students and faculty" (Tinto, 1993 as cited in Gardner, 2005, p. 566).

Students of color, such as African-American students, are affected adversely by negative mentoring, which can occur if the mentor has low expectations or biases against the student (Tinto, 1993 as cited in Gardner, 2005, p. 336-339). Faculty at institutions of higher learning must be willing to admit that they are not fully culturally competent and seek personal and professional growth in this area. Tinto (1993 as cited in Gardner, 2005) asserts that IHE are able to retain students that feel strong allegiance to the IHE. In order for this institutional commitment to occur, the student must be integrated into the social and intellectual life of the community. Students that do not have the faculty-student and student-student connections are least likely to remain at the IHE. Tinto believes this is the largest factor in student withdrawal or removal from the IHE (Gardner, 2005, pp. 566-567).

Gardner's (2005) research study reveals how an IHE was able to retain 100 percent of the students of color in the nursing program after the development of the Minority Retention Project. The project was developed after criticism from the local community of the low number of nurses of color graduating from the university. In the university's efforts to support the students, the researchers acknowledged that the students of color encountered issues that the IHE were unsure of how to mediate.

Therefore, the Retention Coordinator partnered the students of color with nurses from a non-dominant population, and additional resources where provided for the students such as tutoring. The university recognized the importance of having people of color as mentors for students of color in the nursing program and also recognized the importance of adding people of color, including African-American women, as faculty at the IHE. Brown, Morning, and Watkins (2005) assert that the hiring of faculty and administrators of color provides direct and indirect support to the students of color on campus. With faculty of color present on campus, students perceive the IHE to have a more positive environment.

> I do not use my ethnicity as an excuse: it is a reality. It is neither expected nor common to find people of color teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest, including the university in which I teach. That is a reality that I face. Hispanics and African-Americans are most thought to be in subordinate roles or those that require service. Therefore, I have had to combat stereotypes that are so embedded in our culture that most White people do not think twice about them; they have just "received" the stereotype as reality. African-American faculty face the same obstacle that other African-American professionals do; we must prove our abilities through many years of excellent service or come with an outstanding reputation in order to be well received. If these factors, amongst others, are not present, we never gain the position of a "real expert" in the field. We continuously have to prove ourselves, as often we are thought to be under qualified for the job or have only received the job due to affirmative action, disregarding our true abilities (Townsend-Johnson, 2004, p. 14).

European-Americans tend to learn about racism and issues of marginalization at the expense of the person of color (Lee, 2002; Moule, 2005). Moule (2005) expresses how she, as an African-American faculty member, was doubted when she made comments about covert racism or acts that worked to hinder the abilities of people of color at institutions of higher learning. Moule (2005) shares her struggles of attempting to help create an inviting multiethnic environment for all students, which jeopardized her standing with her friends and colleagues at the institution of higher education.

Hargrove stated, "Because everyone White thinks, 'Oh isn't the playing field level? Do you really think there's racism?' I mean statements that are profoundly ignorant come out in 2006. White faculty have said 'I don't notice that' and, of course, if it is not their experience, it isn't real, which is everything. In order for me to validate my experience, they need to authenticate the point. And so they can authenticate what it feels like to live in this skin. They would be offended or cry if you called them 'racist'". Hargrove further describes issues that cause her frustration. She proclaims that, "In attaining tenure I've done all the things that I need to do. I know that I'm going to be taken through an extra challenge because I'm Black, I know that. And I think there are folks that will literally do all that they can to stop that process. . . I don't fit their image of what they want the faculty to look like. . . . And I don't fit into their idea of what it means to be a part of their club".

Spells explained:

> There's this perception, particularly among liberal Whites, that if there is any
>
> racism in the system, they would see it; which is a real slap in the face to me
>
> because it denies my experience. They're saying 'if there is any racism, I would

see it. You're not seeing what you're seeing.' They are telling me that I am not seeing what I'm seeing. You're making it up. And so there are way, way too many times when I've seen this actual stated attitude, if not the implication. So there is a real devaluing of my experience, and I think that I've come up with ways to make that work for me. But some of those ways aren't too popular either.

Spells went on to explain that when she shared an experience in which she was being marginalized in the field with her colleagues, her peers further marginalized her when she asked that provisions be made to alleviate future possibilities of such negative situations.

This is such a no-brainer to me that you can't really, really embrace that I'm making suggestions that will help me do my job in an environment where I'm not _____ coming in. And yet you're making me feel like this is special treatment. When no, I'm just trying to get more of a level playing field, which is that I can work at _____ _____, they know who I am, or they give me the respect that you may get just because of the color of your skin. You do not understand what it is like to go in, explain who I am, put on, just do things that are beyond my stated job description, just to make people around me feel more comfortable . . . And if that was the only thing, of course, that wouldn't even be enough to mention, but it's, the amassing of multiple experiences like that, and then having someone say when I worked to make some accommodations, it's my job so do it. "Well Spells, it has nothing to do about race," that is really a slap in the face. "Spells when you don't get what you want, you pull the *race* card." I mean come on, those kinds of comments are so totally inappropriate, and so I think that the harder I worked to try to make a difference by doing some things

more authentically, the more that I had to go against the status quo, and the more difficult it was.

The Black Women Employees Association of Michigan State University made a written plea to the Board of Trustees to increase the percentage of African-American women faculty members to twelve percent in hopes of making a more supportive environment for faculty and students of color (Smith, p. 123 2002). This association, like many scholars, contends that IHE are not making provisions to hire and retain faculty of color (Aguirre, 2000; Allen; 2005; Antonio, 2002, Bower, 2002; Bunzel, 1990; Cobham; 2003; Gregory, 2001; Smith, 2002). Antonio (2002) contends students of color receive poor mentoring as a result of low numbers of faculty of color. He brings awareness that the faculty and students of color experience feelings of isolation when there is a low representation of people of color on campus. Antonio further states that faculty of color uniquely contribute to the enterprise of American higher education: faculty of color disproportionately advise students of color and students-at-risk of withdrawing from the IHE; this faculty acts as role models, supportive of non-traditional and ethnic research; they give ethnic groups greater voice in governance of IHE across the nation; and they produce innovative scholarly work (See Figure 1.0).

Two of the participants in this study work at an institution that has established a hospitable environment for them as faculty by creating a diversity department with administrative clout that supports students and faculty of color. There is a sense of respect and appreciation for their work by colleagues and administrators for these two individuals. They feel a sense of empowerment as to how they have arranged their work conditions, which has allowed them to be successful.

Three of the faculty that work at large IHEs believed that larger IHEs made a better concerted effort to make accommodations for faculty of color. Three of the participants that worked at small or private institutions of higher learning believed that there was a need for more efforts at diversity and diversity education. Grant explained that the work environment for her new faculty position is more positive than her former position in the Pacific Northwest. She believes this development is, in part, due to the department being more diverse, willing to embrace differences in pedagogical skills, and in general being more supportive of one another. She states that she now has more African-American students and other students of color in her courses than when she was in the Pacific Northwest.

According to Grant:

He [male faculty member of color] has had some issues in his classes. So he's brought them to the faculty and they talked him through it. They didn't try to tell him what to do or try to get him to teach like them, as if to say "you teach like me, you won't have any problems." But they were very helpful, and it was a very collaborative and helpful environment so that he could open up and talk about some problems that he was having in his teaching.

When I first approached a colleague in the Pacific Northwest about an issue that I had with an assignment, I just felt that the student didn't do the assignment the way that I wanted her to, and since the same assignment was a review in all the classes, I just wanted to know what _____ there had been. And her comment to me was "Wow! That's very brave of you to make yourself so vulnerable to me." So that's the kind of climate where you don't talk

about your problems; and if you do, the answer you're going to get is, "Well if you just do like me. This is what I do. So if you teach like me then you won't have a problem." Teaching in the Midwest is very different.

Theme Five: Participants Describe Feelings of Isolation and Stress

Carter expressed with emotion the need for African-American women to obtain an advocate to support them at the IHE. Carter states, "You get isolated and it will close in on you in a minute, and you will be doing your very best work and everything is questioned. You need an advocate, you need an ally, and you need some breathing room." Table 5 list areas of isolation that the research participants noted.

The areas of isolation mentioned above depict the challenges in the work environment for these African-American women. The participants provided a more in-depth look at what causes the work environment in IHE in the Pacific Northwest to be overwhelmingly negative and stressful at times. Daniels emotionally noted, "It was a challenge because so many of my colleagues that came in at the same time with me did not achieve tenure. So getting tenure was bittersweet because I know the iniquities and unfairness one person has gone through. The person has gone back to ___ but that was a horrible situation. I felt lost not being able to really advocate for him in a way that would change the outcome." In her ability to gain tenure she states that, "It was bittersweet for me because I did not experience the same iniquities that he and others have for some reason. I knew that it would not be easy but I did get support from my department."

Table 5

Areas of Isolation for African-American Women Faculty

- Research on marginalized populations is devalued

- Mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual security are lacking

- Independently providing service to vulnerable communities

- Area of service ranked low in pursuit of tenure

- Students view African-American women faculty as subordinates, not professionals

- Holding students accountable for biases

- Denial of ethnicity as a means of attaining tenure

- Some faculty of color lack the ability to endure

- Lack of support from colleagues

- Alienation

- Recommendations not respectfully considered by peers

- Peers do not recognize the differential treatment

- Invalidation of experiences; peers authenticate the point

- Lack of diverse student and faculty body

- Different perspective of peers

- Peers express feelings of anxiety or guilt regarding ethnic issues

- Longstanding faculty not supportive of social justice projects

These women work to prevent being the token representative for the IHE or for their departments. Bey warns about joining too many committees, as it can become incredibly time consuming. Daniels learned to create a "pick your brain time" where she poses questions to her colleagues or other individuals and leads them to consider why some situations may exist.

> Whenever one of my colleagues would approach me to ask the same type of question, I would ask, "What do you think?" I always have these experiences of pick your brain time. I get tired of teaching them. Now you make some judgments of your own based on the knowledge or lack of knowledge that you have about people of color. I don't represent everyone, I only represent myself. So I put the onus of responsibility back on them.

She also explained emotionally, "A few years ago I lost several colleagues due to their not attaining tenure. Some colleagues who were experiencing challenging experiences left, quit and went to other institutions."

Seven out of the ten participants stated that due to their non-supportive work environment, instability in their position, or negative work conditions they were or had considered seeking employment elsewhere. When Daniels feels she is being marginalized by her peers and/or her administrators she takes actions for self-preservation. "I just remove myself from the environment, go into my office, or leave the building completely and go take a walk." There are a plethora of stress factors that impacted the research participants on a regular, and even sometimes daily, basis at the IHE (See Table 10-13).

Tenure is not seen as a guarantee for employment because departments as well as positions are phased out at IHE, even when faculty within those departments hold tenure.

Table 6

Personal Stress Factors for African-American Women Faculty

- Family responsibilities

- Feeling obligated to speak out and take actions for diversity

- Protecting the self from biased acts; Informing a supervisor of incidents with students or faculty

- Maintain thorough records of interactions with challenging individuals

- Experience doubts about ability to stay in position as faculty member

- Feel the need to protect students of color because they are believed to have low coping skills on resisting biases

- Lack of support from colleagues and lack of community make it difficult to stay

- African-Americans are a small percent of the states' population

- Felt naive about embedded racism and institutional racism

- Thought faculty and administrators were sensitized and knew what it took to retain faculty of color

- Students are not sure of how to respond to African-American women faculty

- Faculty of color leave the area after only a few years of employment

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Therefore, although many of the research participants aspire to tenure or have achieved it, they do not see it as a given or a promise for employment. The participants referenced how some IHE have decreased the size of departments or

have completely eliminated departments from within the IHE that once had tenured faculty; ethnicity of faculty was irrelevant in the closure of the departments.

Table 7

Roles and Responsibilities That Cause Stress Factors for African-American Women Faculty

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- Difficult to obtain position as a faculty member

- Scholarly work, service, and teaching

- Committee assignments

- Developing programs to support students of color

- Students questions show doubt of research and credentials

- Different teaching perspectives and different pedagogical skills seen as less qualified

- Teach courses that are not in an area of specialty

- Asked to teach courses with insufficient preparation time

- Difficulty progressing professionally and obtaining promotion

- Barriers to tenure

- Does not see tenure as a guarantee for employment

- Counseling students, although there is a counseling center

- Being a role model

- Physical presence challenges academy norms

Daniels sums up this tension remarkably well with her comments, "The interplay between the rhetoric and the action is always source of tension between me and the faculty as well as the relationship with the student."

There are many factors that lead to high levels of stress for African-American women faculty members, from personal reasons such as family responsibilities, to being the token representative, to working in an environment that minimizes issues of marginalization, and so forth (See Table 10-12). Mentors could prevent the faculty member from becoming overly patronized or patently ignored or isolated, two issues that Collins (1998 as cited in Holland, 1995) states causes African-American women to leave in desperation for an institution that is more consistent with their own background, training, and ethnicity.

Carter shared how she was asked by a male colleague during his tenure process to write a letter of recommendation. She willingly wrote the letter that would be sent to the review committee without the colleague reading it (which is normal in the tenure process) but questioned if one of her colleagues would be willing to do the same for her without betraying her trust. She also received little support from the IHE in her pursuit of her terminal degree at a different IHE. Carter felt a lack of support from her peers and administrators at her place of employment.

Spells contends that her work environment is stressful due to prevalent biased policies and procedures that are deeply embedded within the school's culture. She believes that many of the structures that are in place within the institution act as barriers to faculty and students of color. Some of these systems are extremely subtle in how they repress individuals of color. Yet, they have become a normal part of the institution's

culture, making it difficult to facilitate change. The lack of change toward cultural competence at her university creates a stressful work environment.

Spells stated:

 And so I think I came in under the assumption that the system itself and the people were already sensitized and aware of what it took to retain faculty of color. . . . I think that when I first came in, I sort of accepted the norms that were there, and didn't realize until I started doing my own research; as a matter of fact, just how embedded racism was in so many facets of our structure: unintentional racism, by just people making assumptions, from what tone of voice you use, to how the admissions process is operated, to how to recruit for students of color. You name it. I was always going up against a norm that had been going on for a very long time, and it is difficult to break those. So at first, I just assumed that the people were further along than they were. But the longer that I was there, the more it looked like there was a lot more rhetoric than there was action. And eventually, I found that very difficult, and if I continued to go along with the system that was there, without working hard to make changes, that I was in some ways participating in maintaining the status quo. And in some ways I participated in my own oppression by not challenging the structure.

Challenging the structure also meant often challenging my colleagues who probably were a little less sensitized to things. We know that even well-intentioned teachers call upon boys more than girls, they really think they are being equal but they're not. The things that we are looking at are not conscious acts of bias, but they are there nonetheless.

Table 8

Areas of Marginalization That Cause Stress Factors for African-American

Women Faculty

- Issues relating to ethnicity as a faculty member or student

- The need to assuage a colleagues when they feel disequilibrium regarding their stances on racial issues

- Educating peers on marginalization

- Actions and efforts for diversity low at IHE

- Students and faculty deny having biases

- Concern that they participated in their own oppression by not challenging the structure

- Lack of support

- Feel marginalized because of their religious beliefs

- Intellectual conversations derail the process towards diversity

- Credentials are questioned

- Peers or administrators try to limit African American faculty to ethnically focused committees

- Feel there is a lot of rhetoric about diversity, but mostly faculty of color are the only one's working for social justice

- Devalued or neglected as African-American faculty

- Low retention rate of faculty of color in the Pacific Northwest

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Based on the research of Tierney and Benisimon (1996) and Demus (2004), unless junior faculty established formal relationships with senior department members, such as mentorship, the guidelines for tenure were unclear. "African-American female faculty members indicate lack of respect, lack of publication opportunities, and lack of recognition for their scholarship as major barriers to their career progression in higher education" (Hendricks & Caplow, 1998; Turner & Myers, 2000 as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 47).

Theme Six: Participant's Share How They Overcome Obstacles

Bey, Francisco, and Hargrove have strong connections within their IHE and the students are aware of their clout. They have direct access to administrators or offices that address student issues and possible concerns. Hargrove stated that her students know of her strong and large number of affiliations with individuals in her field of study in the local community and her students encounter these individuals when they complete practicum experiences. Her reputation and strong relationship in the community in which her students interact established her as an authority figure to her students. She believes this is the attributing factor for her good student evaluations. The participants provided strategies that have helped them to be successful in working at a predominately European-American institution (See Table 12).

Francisco commented, "Yes, I feel like if I'm mistreated, then I go to a higher person, you know? But I'm in a position now where I have strength in my faculty position and I have strength because of the uniqueness of it, and I want to replace myself with somebody who appreciates what I've tried to set up there."

A flexible work schedule and working outside of the office environment makes working in the academy more manageable, according to several research participants. Bey warns about faculty managing their time and not becoming overly committed in service projects and committees at the IHE. The participants identified methods that allowed them to be successful as graduate students in predominantly European-American institutions and/or methods that they applied with their students to help the student attain success in the academy are listed below (See Table 9). Cooper states that she loaded her schedule with committee work in hopes of establishing positive relationships with other faculty, but it was very time and energy consuming and distracted her from activities that were vital to her position.

Cooper noted:

> Interesting because, you know, you're trying to become permanent or tenured, you get yourself involved on committees and you establish relationships, maybe more so than you would if you're already tenured because you are trying to get, over that hurdle. To become full-time on staff, I stayed involved with a lot committees; probably more so than I should have been because I was new at teaching, and I really became involved with committees in order to make friends, meet other faculty and establish relationships.

Theme Seven: Participants Describe Their Role as Mentee and/or Mentor

Daloz (1999 as cited in Vivian, 2005) identified six mentoring tasks that could be applied to African-American women as a mentee and that could later apply to their position as a mentor. Daloz (1999 as cited in Vivian, 2005) saw the mentor as a guide who has the specific tasks of: engendering trust, seeing the student's movement, giving

the student a voice, introducing conflict, emphasizing positive movement, and keeping an eye on the relationship (p. 340).

Cooper was able to link with a well-established faculty member to mentor her through the process of obtaining tenure and learning the ethos of the IHE. "You need to have all female faculty of color, or female faculty, or female staff to become role models or mentors for other faculty. I mean they have them in the program," said Cooper. Cooper stated:

> For example, when I first started, I was part of the mentoring program. Now the woman, who was my mentor for 11 years, was a White woman. But she was real clear on issues that happen to people of color, because she has a daughter who she adopted from a foreign country. So she is real mindful of issues of color, but you know, I probably got a more mindful person, better than getting someone else who would not have had a clue about issues around racism or color or what not. So I was one of the few faculty of color hired to hire more people of color, and to support people of color.

Due to the differences of gender, ethnicity, research interest, and cultural styles, it is difficult for African-American women faculty to obtain a mentor. Cooper felt that due to the difference of cultural communication styles, African-American women faculty could be marginalized, "And I think that Anglo faculty struggle with faculty of color just because we're direct. People think in so many different ways. They feel somehow that we are, it's like we're attacking, and we're not; we're just speaking our minds. And that can be a little difficult in working in a predominantly Anglo environment." Although African-American women faculty lack mentorship, they feel compelled to provide it to

many undergraduate and graduate students. The research participants provide suggestions on becoming a mentee in order to achieve success at the IHE (See Table 9). The research participants also felt that this experience would train the African-American women faculty how to be an effective mentor to her students.

Table 9

Recommendations for African-American Women as Mentee

- Obtain a mentor

- Graduate students should grow professionally and personally

- Network with others

- Work in small groups to complete tasks and assignments

- Locate support systems on campus

- Allow mentor to help guide you to your next position

- Use strengths and prior knowledge to prepare for your position

- Document and keep records of all the questionable and relevant events in your graduate program

- If necessary, obtain a mediator to help record the events for graduate meetings

---

African-American Women Faculty as Mentors

Nine of the African-American women faculty in the study acknowledged their awareness of the demographics of the student population prior to being hired at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest, but expressed how the reality of the miniscule number of students of color was difficult to accept once they were hired at the IHE. Daniels

explained, "There are very few teachers of color that I interface with in the state and even fewer candidates of color and it's quite interesting. I expected that when I came here from a different state, but it is one thing to have that expectation and another to be staring that right in the face."

Francisco stated:

> My passion is for civil rights and for leadership because I feel like I owe my ancestors, you know? My parents were the children of _____ and moved across the country years ago, and they instilled in us a real desire for the rigors of hard work and for helping somebody else. I came from a poor family, a very poor Black family, we went to college, all (number of siblings) of us. But I didn't realize how unusual that was until I looked back and said, 'Wow'!

The African-American women in this study acted as mentors to students of color and European-American students. Francisco stated that students of color avoided taking unnecessary courses or taking courses in the incorrect sequence due to her advisement. She also goes into the local high school to meet students to inform them of what classes they need to take in order to gain entry into the IHE. Francisco declined the opportunity to enter a tenure-track position to ensure that she would be able to teach and support students of color at the IHE. While in her faculty position she has offered independent studies to students, and closely facilitated research projects and service projects with students. Spells and Townsend-Johnson go into the inner-city areas to link with public schools to develop partnerships that will give students of color exposure to the university.

Pewewardy (2002) documents that marginalizing experiences can negatively affect students' academic and social experiences while at the IHE. The Southern Poverty

Law Center, a civil rights group that tracks hate crimes, found that college is the third most common place for the occurrence of a hate crime (Corey, 2000). To attend the university, students of color tend to be physically distant from familial support systems, that which makes succeeding at the university quite challenging. The article strongly establishes the need to consider students' perspective of the environment in which they matriculate. African-American women help to guard students and to teach them coping skills at IHE.

Pewewardy (2002) contends that most colleges and universities are predominantly European-American with few, if any, faculty members of color on staff. When you factor in the racial injustices in this country's history, and the fact that there has been little resolution to these racial problems, it is comprehensible why institutions of higher learning would reflect the tone of our society. Although the students, faculty, and administrators are all products of the society, they matriculate and work in a setting that can initiate great change.

The presence of African-American faculty is the most significant predictor of success for recruiting and retaining African-American students (Holland, 1995). The miniscule presence of African-American women at two-year and four-year institutions has a detrimental impact on students of color in numbers and completion of education programs (Allen, Epps & Hanniff, 1991; Fleming, 1984; Mickelson and Olvers, 1991 as cited in Cobham, 2003). Two-year colleges should take heed of such information recognizing the fact that, according to Phillipe (2002 as cited in Rideaux, Jr., 2004), 46 percent of African-American, 55 percent of Hispanic, 46 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, and 55 percent of Native American students represent the make-up of American

community colleges (p.3). The service of women faculty of color mentoring students is beneficial to students' ability to sustain themselves in the academy and to learn the ethos of the university (See Table 10).

The Journal of Black Issues in Higher Education (2005) conducted an online poll of its mostly African-American readers to determine their perspectives on student retention. The survey showed that 57.32 percent felt that with the reduction of remedial classes the number of students of color being retained had decreased. Approximately 21 percent of the sample believed that IHE have improved assistance efforts, such as counseling and tutoring services, 20.73 percent of the sample were unsure of changes due to lack of information, and 1.22 percent stated none of the above. If this survey is a true indicator of the views of many African-Americans regarding four-year institutions of higher learning, then they are not seen as supportive environments for African-Americans. IHE need to make efforts to change African-Americans perception of institutions of higher learning. African-American women faculty are needed to alleviate concerns of students of color and can function as a support system for the students (p. 5).

The National Center for Education Statistics (2005) states that women earned two-thirds (67 percent) of degrees granted to Black, non-Hispanics, 63 percent of degrees granted to American Indians/Alaska Natives, 61 percent of degrees granted to Hispanics, 58 percent of degrees to White, non-Hispanics, and 55 percent of degrees granted to Asians/Pacific Islanders. Hubbard (1978 as cited in Rideaux Jr., 2004) explained that:

> For Black individuals the social influence of similar others (Black teachers, counselors, administrators, coaches, and so forth) may serve to convey the appropriate value orientations to achieve tasks. They argue that positive affective

expressions from these similar others would likely result in high interest orientations, characterized by strong intrinsic efforts (p. 42).

Daniels informed the researcher about the significance of having an African-American woman faculty member as her graduate mentor. She was able to acquire skills and strategies that proved helpful as a graduate student and that prepared her for life in the academy as a faculty member. Under the guidance of an African-American woman faculty member, she learned strategies to sustain herself as a faculty member, being both proactive and responsive in a way that falls in the "norms of the academy." Bey used the term "norms of the academy" and stated that she deliberately teaches her graduate students what they need to know about what is expected in the academy. She teaches students the requirements to hold a faculty position, such as building a strong teaching portfolio, conducting scholarship, and performing community service, as well as the school's hidden curriculum (See Table 13 & 14). Chartock (2000) described the hidden curriculum as the unofficial information that schools indirectly teach such as the school's culture, ways of doing, and systems of classification.

Willie (cited in Collins, 1988) proposes:

> That the first principle of mentoring is to accept the fact that the minority is unlike the majority. Whenever the minority feels that he or she has to forget where he/she came from, and act like someone who she/he is not, that person is in trouble. One of the best ways, Willie explained, for a faculty member or administrator to show acceptance of the protégé is to break bread with them (p.12).

Hackett (2002) composed a list of conditions that African-American women students and staff felt IHE should do to retain African-American students on campus. Hackett believed that orientation programs should be created to teach students what to "do" in order to succeed in college. Some of the suggestions Hackett noted were IHE should create mentorship programs, assign "Life and Living" advisors, create peer support programs, and design ethnic, cultural, and social support groups for new college students. The institutions of higher learning need to increase financial assistance to students of color, as well as conduct workshops and seminars for college survival strategies according to Hackett. Hackett recognized the need to recruit more African-American administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In order to support the African-Americans at the IHE, there is a need to develop African-American arts, performance, and speaker series. Hackett also acknowledges the need to create campus-based family support groups to help students adjust to the IHE and to establish strong systems of support (cited in Rideaux, 2004, p. 5).

The relationship of support for students and faculty of color is reciprocal. As stated earlier, the mere presence of students of color on campus provides indirect support to African-American women faculty. However, it has become increasingly more difficult for students of color to gain access to some four-year IHE and, therefore, be visible on campus.

> Blackwell (1998) suggests that there . . . is a [W]hite monopoly on graduate education, and if minorities can not [cannot] gain access to graduate school, they can not [cannot] obtain the credentials and education necessary to become faculty. He proposes that this monopoly has far reaching implications for access, training, and production of

minorities with requisites for faculty positions in universities and colleges

(as cited in Holland, 1995, p. 6).

Table 10

African-American Women Faculty as Mentors

_____

- African-American students must have coping skills

- Encourage graduate students to have a life beyond the university

- Model successful behaviors for students

- Mentor students from various ethnic backgrounds

- Give students insights that lead to success in courses

- Inform students of procedures in the academy that will support them in their career in the academy

- Give students the inside information about the academy

- Teach students how to deal with issues of diversity

- Students feel good about talking with African-American women faculty

- Provide appropriate academic advising; Counsel students when seeing a counselor is not enough

- Hold students accountable for academic and personal responsibilities

- Establish long-term relationship with students

- Help students resolve issues with other faculty members

- Help students understand the rigor of the academy

- Help students to obtain tutoring services

Mentorship and Support from Peers

Francisco and Daniels were recommended by professionals in their field of expertise or faculty within an IHE to pursue their doctoral degrees. They received consistent and good mentorship throughout their time in the academy from faculty as graduate students, which has led to their current success as IHE faculty. In fact, Daniels stated that she asked her colleagues to be her mentor prior to her attaining tenure because she felt that they already understood the culture and the requirements for tenure at the IHE. She knew the input from her colleagues would strengthen the likelihood of her reaching the goal of tenure. Spells was encouraged to apply for a faculty position at the university by faculty within the department in which she was later hired. The faculty was aware of her abilities and felt that she had much to offer the department. Table 11 provides aspects that research participants stated helped them to have success within IHE in the Pacific Northwest. The attributes listed are of a personal nature, as well as specific skills acquired via training and years of professional training and growth. The aspects listed highlight the faculty member's responsibility of working to advocate on their own behalf. Their goal of being highly accountable in completing their work responsibilities, regardless of the work environment and other circumstances, is noted.

Administrators should provide support and resources to the African-American women faculty member. Since many high-ranking individuals in the institutions of higher learning choose individuals that are most similar to themselves in appearance and culture, research studies and current literature show a lack of mentorship for African-American women at IHE (Holland, 1995). The lack of mentorship hinders faculty member's ability to produce scholarly work, to obtain research grants, or to gain tenure or promotion

(Fultz, 2005; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Holland, 1995). Demur (2004) found that "Black women sociologists struggle with the lack of mentorship opportunities, with utilizing negotiation skills, and with publishing as scholars and teachers" (p.viii). These faculty members are forced to rely on their own resources for attaining success.

Daniels was unable to get a stable mentor in her position in the Pacific Northwest. A male faculty member that volunteered for the role as mentor left for his sabbatical after Daniels' first three months at the institution. The second individual that would act in the role as mentor left the institution after one year of their partnership. There is a feeling of isolation when the participants were unable to obtain mentorship in their position. Hargrove shared an experience of isolation that she felt while attending a faculty meeting:

> There is this feeling of alienation, a lack of mentoring, a lack of, I don't know, support from colleagues, junior/senior faculty. I've been to faculty meetings where I raised a point and my suggestion was not acknowledged. Another faculty that is White raises the same point maybe an hour later, and people go, "Wow, good idea." I've had that happen, you know. I think the level of stress experienced by many African-American or faculty of color is never measured. No one has ever measured that level of stress.

Hargrove does not currently have a mentor at the IHE to advocate on her behalf.

The participants identified an abundance of factors that place them in situations in which they experience isolation. Although there are many items listed in Table 5, the participants felt that it would be difficult to create an exhaustive list as situations of isolation continue to arise. Isolation brings stress and anxiety to the workplace that make

it difficult for these women to remain in their positions as faculty at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest. Daniels noted with strong emotions that she had feelings of isolation:

> Because having had the background prior to my arrival, and then listening to the rumors in the grapevine, and knowing that here I am one African-American female in this institution in the department where I didn't see anyone that looked like me, except for one male who has been here for _____ years, just knowing the iniquities that exist, period.

Cooper also expressed feelings of isolation:

> Because sometimes I think in the class, I am not as valued as I would be if I were a White male. I don't think I'm as supported as a Black woman instructor by the college campus. I think they form groups that support the Spanish culture; and I don't mean any disrespect or disregard, but I think sometimes people get so focused on one ethnic group that they can only see one group that they can help while they leave everybody else behind. So since I don't fit into that one ethnic group anymore, it's like I'm kind of shoved aside and not given the full respect or regard as a faculty person or as a person of color.

Theme Eight: Strategies for Success Are Provided

Pedagogical Skills Applied at the Academy

Several participants in the study offered teaching strategies that work in courses and may prove useful to other African-American women faculty. Hargrove feels that her course design is straightforward, and the students are able to monitor their own progress, giving them a sense of control. She provides her students with copies of her lectures at the beginning of each class and if students are absent they can obtain the lecture notes.

Students are also given very clear expectations for assignments in the course, so there are no excuses for low performances. There are no major surprises for students as to what their grade should be at the end of the course.

Table 11

African-American Women Use Professional Abilities as a Sustainer

---

- Use prior knowledge to prepare to be one of a few or the only African-American in the academy

- Engage in dialogue with various faculty at the institution of higher learning

- Re-conceptualize courses to fit pedagogical style and educate the students

- Gather resources to mentor students

- Attend conferences

- Be political

- Be highly qualified in an area of specialty

- Be resourceful

- Find out hierarchy within the campus

- Research the university prior to employment

- Maintain autonomy

- Pedagogical skills must be stimulating and challenging

- Exercise the option of not participating in activities that will place you at-risk

- Use your academic freedom appropriately and fulfill other obligations

---

Three additional faculty members apply specific teaching strategies that support students' learning and provide a wall of defense from students' negative reactions (See Table 11). Daniels reviews past student evaluations and discusses students' issues and concerns at the beginning of the course to help students gain focus and purpose for their enrollment in the course. Daniels stated:

> Yes, some of you may think this class is x, y, and z. You're here as a graduate student to examine your own beliefs about knowledge, not mine. You're here to discern, 'What is your purpose,' not mine. I use that, and just put it out there.

By proactively addressing students' issues and concerns that are not relevant to the course, the entire group can channel their energies and mental capacities to the learning and teaching process. Cooper applies a similar practice and requires students to acknowledge their purpose in the course, and she clearly states that she is not the focus, but the content of the course is. Townsend-Johnson establishes a foundation for her courses by explaining to students how the course applies to their field of study and the significance of the course. She explains the teaching methodology being used and why that particular teaching methodology was chosen. Townsend-Johnson's students receive a copy of the rubric for the assignments and are encouraged to evaluate their assignments before submission. She also reviews a draft of students' papers prior to the final draft submission of major assignments.

Additional measures are taken by these African-American women as an attempt to establish a good working relationship with their students. Daniels asks students to complete an additional course evaluation to improve her pedagogical skills and to become aware of students' concerns. Grant and Townsend-Johnson asks students to

complete mid-evaluations to ensure students are learning with the applied teaching strategies, and also to determine what issues or concerns students have pertaining to the course. African-American women faculty in this study exercise pedagogical skills that are nontraditional and exceed that of their European-American peers in the hopes of gaining the same status as their colleagues in the classroom (See Table 11).

Table 12

African-American Women Faculty Using Professional Interest as a Sustainer

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- Faculty position should match your philosophy and scholarly interest

- Develop mentoring programs that will provide support to you and others

- Establish good relationships with colleagues

- Realize some students may be shocked by social justice issues in courses

- Provide service to under-represented populations

- Establish parameters for work hours and responsibilities on areas of interest

- Network

Sustaining at the Institution of Higher Education

The research participants provided strategies that helped them to remain in the IHE, and may also be utilized by new African-American women faculty in the Pacific Northwest (See Table 12). Allen & Jewel (1995 as cited in Allen, 2005) notes that:

For Black people, the centuries old struggle for access and success in higher

education has been emblematic of a larger fight for personhood and equality in

America. In this struggle, progress has come in fits and starts, interspersed with

roll backs and lost ground, as White backlash periodically reared its ugly head, intent on reversing Black educational gains and in the process defending White superiority (p. 19).

Francisco explained how the IHE established a social justice support system for students and faculty by creating an office/agency where students and faculty could take their concerns to resolve them independently. Francisco states that some faculty were not supportive of the program. However, they were cautious not to react negatively to the program or to those involved in the it. The office is well respected by all on the campus, as it carries rank, power, and influence. Several of the participants engage in social justice causes that serve as indirect support for their efforts to remain at the IHE (See Table 12).

The faculty in this study felt it was vital to establish systems of support outside of institutions of higher learning for personal and professional reasons in order to sustain themselves at the IHE (See Table 13). Daniels states that she came to the university with a good sense of self, which helps to sustain her at the university, and also helps her to develop good open relationships with her colleagues. She states, "So I came in with that idea of, this is who I am, I am not going to censor myself one way or the other, and here are some of the questions that I have." Bey understood that the faculty within her department did not share her research interest. Therefore, she created a national network of support for herself in order to produce scholarly work. Bey encourages all new African-American women faculty to "Do what they are supposed to do . . ." in order to be successful at the academy in order to gain tenure. She explains that as a faculty member, African-American women know that they will need to conduct scholarly work, provide

service, and have strong pedagogical skills; these are normal expectations for faculty members.

Table 13

Professional Characteristics That Support African-American Women Faculty

---

- Determination, commitment, faith, and persistence

- Match your personal and professional vision to the IHE

- Ascribed power positively influences student perceptions and course evaluations

- Establish good working relationships with colleagues for outcomes

- Do the best job you can, regardless of external motivators

- Rank and/or tenure provide a sense of security

- Value networking at professional conferences

- View faculty of color in other departments as models of success at the IHE

- Investigative to the nature of the IHE

- Create scholarship and scholarly work on marginalized populations

- Willingness to allow students to write mid-course evaluations

- Learn from the mistakes of others

- Advocate for yourself

- Recognize that ambiguity exists in the current tenure process structure

---

According to Bey, African-American women faculty should spend their time at the IHE working toward these goals. Table 14 outlines suggestions from the participants on how to endure and achieve tenure at the IHE. The research participants felt that the tenure

process is rigorous for all faculty members. They also believe that they have additional barriers, such as racism and sexism, in their pursuit of tenure. In establishing strong connections with their departmental colleagues, the study's participants believe they created an ethos that was more receptive of their difference.

Daniels encourages new faculty members to learn the requirements for tenure in their department and to advocate for themselves. Daniels stated:

> But having gone through the process of tenure, there were things that were not in place that I questioned. I said, 'According to *this*, *this* is the tenure guideline, *this* is supposed to be such and such and such. So I advocated in a way for myself knowing that the guidelines were there but people could interpret those guidelines differently . . . . As I saw situations, and they started to escalate, I defused them.

She also insisted that all meetings held with administrators regarding issues of tenure were written down and that she and the administrator(s) had copies of all documents pertaining to the meetings. She learned to document everything based on past professional experiences that required documentation of events, as well as witnessing a faculty member fall prey to the review committee regarding issues that appeared to be very subjective. She was very open with her colleagues and administrator and let them know the types of obstacles that she encountered in her position as an African-American faculty member at the institution. "Initially, I said 'Listen, this is what I am experiencing here, let's discuss this,' and not only with my Administrator. I went in very directly, I am having a tough time here and I need to speak to you very honestly." Table 14 provides suggestions for African-American women going through the tenure process.

Table 14

African-American Women Sustaining Their Selves Through the Tenure Process

_____

- Ask questions about the tenure process

- Advocate for yourself; defuse challenges

- Request that administrators put their expectations in writing; record all correspondence relating to tenure off campus

- Tenure provides limited security

- Student evaluations can be critical

- The process for tenure can be seen as overwhelming

- You will have to make sacrifices to gain tenure

- Fulfill the job requirements

- Publish regularly in a variety of journals, regardless of their ranking

- Use committees as a means of attaining tenure by networking and making connections

- Avoid becoming the token representative for committees; do not become overcommitted by joining numerous committees

- If necessary, take leave prior to going through the process to prepare documentation for tenure

- Establish connections

_____

Hargrove has a vibrant and established network of support from the local community. Hargrove understands the requirements for tenure but expressed difficulty in

having to choose to conduct scholarly writings for scholarly journals versus sharing her research findings with the population she hopes to serve in a way that they would receive and understand the information. She also believes that it is vital to provide direct assistance to the population that she serves in order to meet their needs. The work in the community is seen as important, as opposed to the production of a scholarly article that neither the community nor her colleagues will read. Hargrove contends:

> But for those of us who are _____, there is another issue of being a person of color or being African-American. It's that _____ of being involved in our community. Our community has so many injuries and so many challenges that I believe African-American faculty and probably other faculty of color tend to spend more time in the community than our White counterparts. You know, well the majority of the community is White, for them. But for us, we have these struggling communities that are vulnerable so we commit a lot of time there. And where _____ scholarships _____ scholarship _____, it ranks very low. It ranks low because they are not involved in the community. You see what I'm saying? If the tables were flipped and White people spent as much time working in the community as we did, then service would definitely move up the ladder in terms of what is viable toward tenure. You see what I'm saying? But do I quit working in my community to write journal articles. . . but the people that I'm trying to work with are never going to see those journals. Let's make it clear. And the folks that are not in the profession of _____, they're not even going to read your work _____.

Ibrahim (1999) hypothesizes that our cultural identity influences how we process information and interpret situations. Several of the African-American participants viewed service as an essential element to their work at the IHE. Service to the community or to individuals was seen as direct and indirect support to the IHE. The service of the research participants was beneficial to the IHE in many ways: students of color were recruited by the IHE, students of color as well as European-American students were retained at the IHE as a direct result of the mentorship of the research participants, and the agencies receiving the service from the African-American women faculty viewed the institution in a positive manner. Therefore, a positive rapport had been established by agencies and the IHE. The service of the African-American women faculty appears beneficial to the entities involved.

> In a relational cultural system, the self is defined by the familial/group context, time is polychromic, personal control is secondary, mind and body are seen holistically, and morality is defined by duty. In an analytical cultural system, the self is referential, autonomy is exemplified by individualistic assumptions, time is monochromic, personal control is primary, mind and body are perceived as dualistic, and morality is defined by a rights orientation (Landrine, 1992 as cited in Ibrahim, 1999, p. 27).

The researcher contends that most of the African-American women that participated in this study view themselves as part of the larger community and that supersedes individualistic goals. The goals should benefit the individual, but the welfare of others is also a priority. Hargrove posed an eerie dilemma:

I can certainly sit down and spend the amount of time necessary to produce the level of scholarly work necessary for publishing, and I have _____ journals that I have published in. _____ there's someone over here lacerated and bleeding. _____ they're lacerated and bleeding, um-um, who do I help? Do I go back to my office and continue writing that article?

Holland (1995) notes that faculty of color receive mixed messages in their roles at the academy which may inhibit their ability to gain tenure.

Blackwell (1998) reports that a dilemma is created for minority faculty. On one hand they must work and meet traditional requirements for tenure and on the other, they must respond directly to minority student demands and departmental expectations not only to work with minority students, but also to be the minority representative on every committee. Many African-American faculty who choose the latter course receive the impression that such responsiveness is appropriate and may compensate for lower scholarly output at the time of consideration (cited in p. 10).

The African-American women in this study have produced scholarly work on ethnic populations. They realize that this scholarly work may or may not be viewed as acceptable in their attempt to gain tenure. Nevertheless, due to their lived experiences and desire to help others, they continue to create scholarly work regarding marginalized populations. Several of the African-American women faculty have joined large organizations in order to meet scholars, on a national basis, in order to conduct research and scholarly works.

Demus (2004) emphasizes the importance of making professional affiliations and joining national organizations in order to develop support systems in order to sustain in the world of academia, "I think it's important to go to conferences and network, because a lot of what you'll find out there in terms of people doing research . . . how other Black people have been successful . . . on white campuses . . ." (p.29).

Daniels noted:

> For sustaining anyone, particularly in this arena, you need to have a good sense of self and your identity needs to be intact. You need to make connections to your immediate community and connections to the broader community. And try to balance and make some tough decisions about what your boundaries are. Balance between home life and work life, sometimes those lines can become extremely blurred. Be a supportive colleague. Find and connect with other colleagues, in particular colleagues of color. I always say that I am not interested in having a pity party, and we are not going to complain and moan. Let's lay our hair down; let's talk about the pathways that we can ascertain for maybe not solutions but ideas or tangible outcomes that we can all use. That would be helpful.

The special attributes that the researcher believes has helped the African-American women faculty remain and pursue success at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest is listed in Figure 1.0.

Theme Nine: Spirituality is Used as a Sustainer

The participants of this study stated that their spirituality or religious beliefs helped them to remain in their positions at the IHE. They stated doing such acts as reading the Bible, praying, meditating, attending church, and so forth was used as a

means of sustaining themselves. A scripture Townsend-Johnson claimed helped to sustain her during her first year at the IHE is listed below. This scripture was read daily, weekly, and during the most stressful, tumultuous times: *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles; They shall run, and not be weary; And they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31*

According to Hargrove, "Largely, what sustains me is a very strong spiritual belief in God. A clarity about who I am, about the intrinsic nobility of human beings, and that spiritual reality is what sustains me throughout my life and through this as well." Grant, Carter, and Townsend-Johnson emphasized the significance that their faith played in their ability to endure a challenging work environment.

Grant noted:

> I think if I had not had my faith, I would have fallen apart. I do think that another one of the challenges that I faced there was this anti-Christian climate that I felt was prevalent at the institution. I would hear my colleagues make comments about the Christian students in their classes that were not complimentary; and so they were narrow-minded. I have had people walk up to me and tell me that they felt that I was brave just for wearing my cross on the outside of my clothing; they tended to wear theirs on the inside. I think if I had not had my faith to sustain me, I don't know if I would've made it for the _ years.

Figure 1. Special Attributes of African-American Women Faculty.
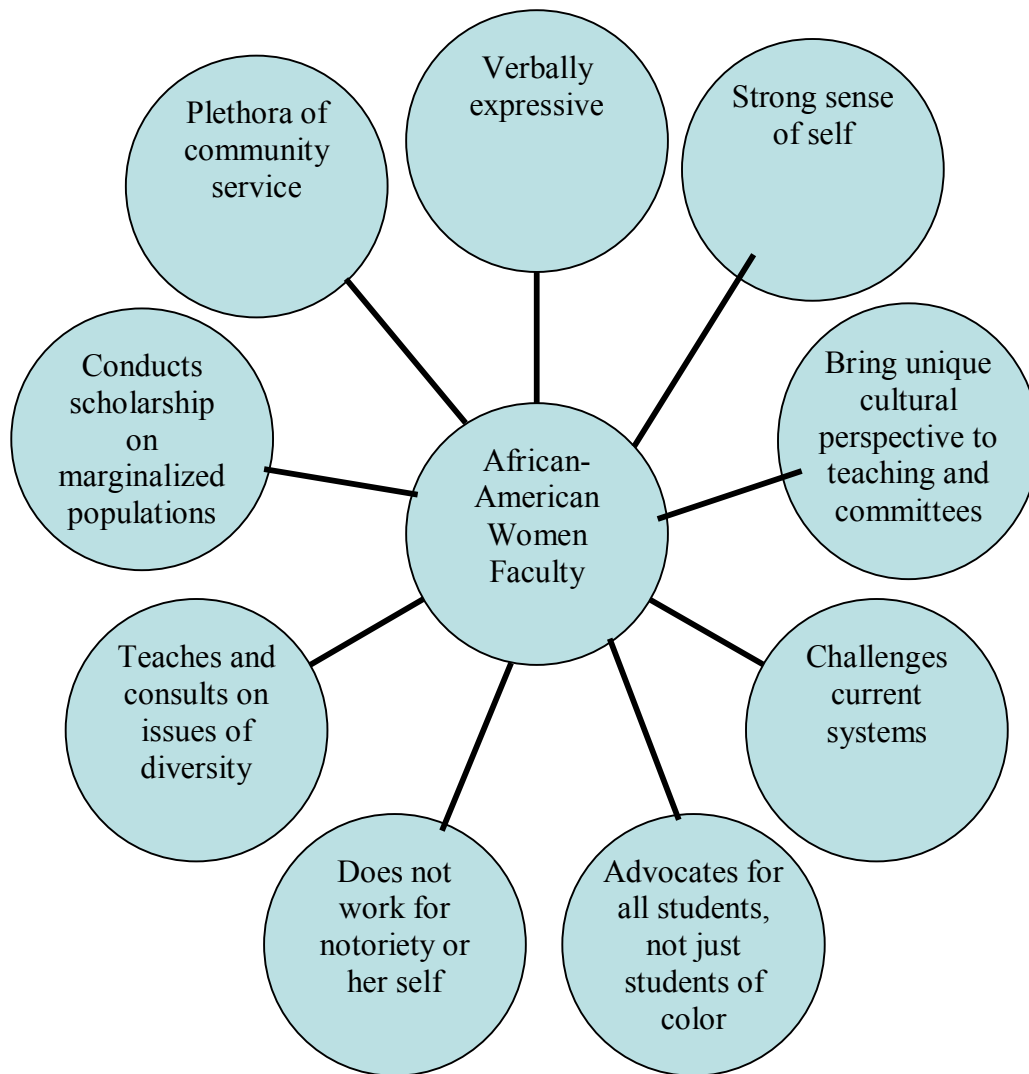
Carter stated:

> Because you are the only person of color, and you are there all by
>
> yourself, it just closes in on you. You like your job, you like what you are doing,
>
> and you want to be creative, but everything in your workplace is not conducive to
>
> the environment - it's toxic. And depending on what strengths you come to the
>
> table with, and I'm going to have to say the strengths of prayer because this stuff
>
> is so toxic you cannot think your way through it; you cannot finesse your way in;

you don't have enough political savvy to get through some of this madness.

Townsend-Johnson (2005) stated:

I am able to stand as an African-American faculty member because I am grounded by the Holy Spirit, who is my comforter. I pray continually for His guidance and the saints pray alongside me. I hold steadfast, "*That Christ may dwell in your [my] heart[s] by faith; that ye [I], being rooted and grounded in love, (*Ephesians 3:17). *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye [I] may be filled with all the fullness of God" (*Ephesians 3:19) (p.12).

Francisco believes that you have to have a spiritual rootedness in order to ensure that you do your very best to meet the needs of your students any way that you can. The faculty member should have a strong sense of spiritual self; that the faculty member will be the ethical, accountable, determined, and professional individual that students need in order to ensure their success, according to Francisco. Faith in God or spirituality plays a significant role in some of the participants and helps them to remain at the institution of higher learning as a faculty member.

Some of the participants stated that they connected with God through prayer and the Word of God (which translates as reading the Holy Bible). It was stated that God provided: purpose, the ability to endure, and the direction as to what they should do. Ephesians chapter six of the Bible was referenced by two participants as a chapter that provided strength, protection and renewal. Through their faith, the participants believe that they have certain rights and protection (See Figure 2.0). According to Poplin (2005), "God always calls us to tasks we cannot possibly do without Him and, after all, He has

supplied us with the mind of Christ and His Holy Spirit; what more could we need?" (p. 7).

Poplin (2005) stated:

> . . . there are five interrelated tasks that Christian scholars must engage in order to serve the university today. These include (1) seeking the mind of Christ and the Holy Spirit for our disciplines, (2) building a diverse community of Christian scholars around this task, (3) securing places at the academic tables, (4) increasing in holiness, and (5) serving students, colleagues and the universities and colleges. I fully recognize and respect the way God's calling on each of us differs and that there is an infinite set of possibilities for how He creates, molds and calls us (p.7).

Daniels also emphatically stated the significant role that her faith had on her ability to stay at the IHE:

> My faith or spirituality is the foundation for my ability to stay at the university! I usually, on my way to work, ask God to put the words in my mouth. Guide me to do your work. I know that I am going to be faced with challenges but help me to process, understand, and do your will, because everything comes through him or her . . . I have to go to church, that is what keeps me grounded and connected with the children, faith, and family and it reminds me that, that is why you do what you do everyday. I am (discloses specific denomination) and I believe in just a universal faith. I would go to any church building because I need to be renewed.

All of the women interviewed expressed how their spirituality played an important role in their ability to remain at predominantly European-American institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest. Although the actual religious affiliation of the

participants was never requested, many were forthcoming about their Christian background. Two of the participants felt that they were spiritual but did not identify with any particular religious group. Many of the African-American women in this group felt that their spirituality was the key factor in their ability to stay at the academy.

Ours is a spiritual tradition. So, I want to begin class with mediation . . .

We must continue to thank our ancestors, our spirits for the ground upon which we stand, for their struggles enabled us to survive genocidal wars, enslavement, and dehumanizing oppression. First I thank our ancestors, elders, and those who prepared the space for us . . . then, I tell my story . . .

Ours is an oral tradition. We tell stories to illuminate the paths we travel and to share humor, courage and wisdom in this liberation struggle. Our storytelling is our theorizing. And so an "introduction" into theory is an introduction into spiritual, political struggles for peace and freedom. I consciously began "theorizing" as Barbara Christian calls it, when I was nine and my father, returning from Viet Nam, brought the war home (James, 1999, p.32).

Literature supports the finding that many African-American women faculty members contribute their ability to remain at the IHE because of their spiritual calling to work at the institution, and that their service is not only to the community, but for a greater cause, to serve God (Cobman, 2003; Townsend-Johnson, 2004; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001).

Townsend-Johnson (2004) stated:

Although things once seemed bleak, and I contemplated my decision to work as a faculty member, I cannot think of a better place to work at this stage in my life. I

made the decision to forgive those that have trespassed against me so that I too can be forgiven for my own iniquities. 'I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity have I hid not. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the inequity of my sin. Selah.' (Psalms 32:5) God has poured out blessings for my obedience to His will (p. 12).
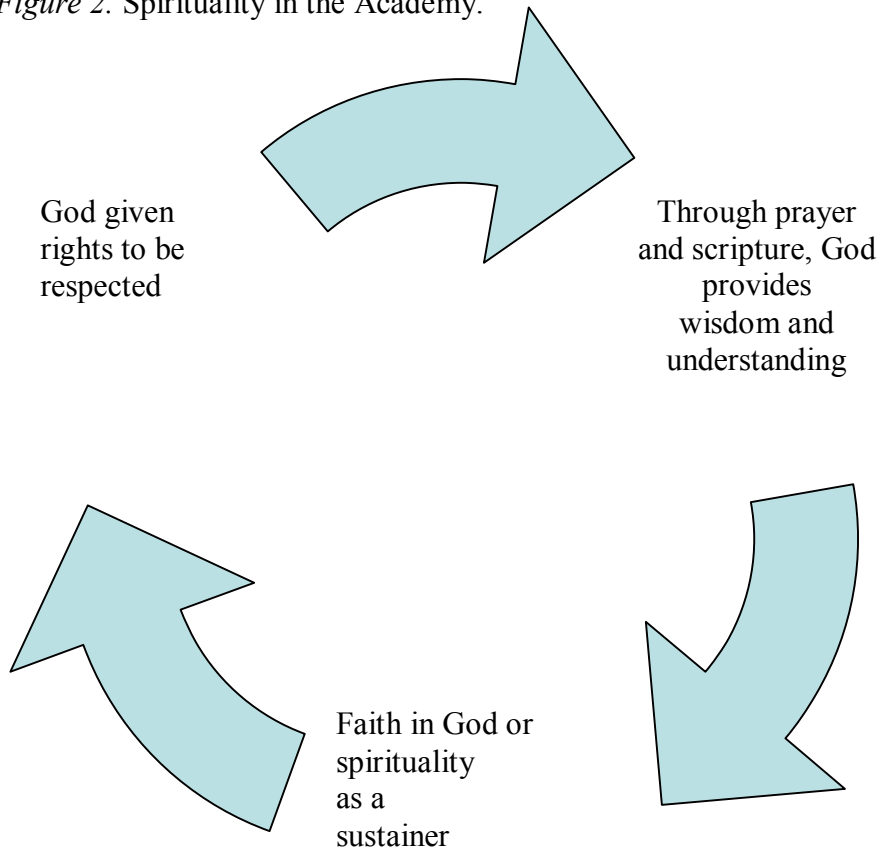
Cobman (2003) stated that God provided her with "peace amid the chaos" (p.v) at the IHE. It is believed that through their religious beliefs, African-American women faculty are able to:

Carve out a space for themselves . . . resisting negative language and behavior directed toward them, strategically using pain and hurt as a momentum for success, accepting overwhelming tasks with the understanding that hard work would lead to better opportunities, and forming partnerships with Black colleagues and genuine colleagues who were not Black but shared similar values. These behaviors and attitudes were very instrumental in the faculty member's acquisition of tenure and other career successes over the years (Cobham, 2003, p. viii).

In summary the following idea emerged: African-American women faculty in this study have experienced challenging work environments at IHE in the Pacific Northwest. Many participants experienced marginalization, negative differential treatment, isolation and stress in their faculty positions. Nevertheless, these African-American women faculty members have shown great tenacity and determination in sustaining themselves at the institutions of higher learning.

The research participants shared many strategies that entering African-American women faculty could apply to achieve tenure and promotion at institutions of higher education. Many of the research participants relied upon their spirituality as a sustainer. They also worked diligently to refine their pedagogical skills, establish systems of support, and become knowledgeable of all their job requirements and expectations.

Figure 2. Spirituality in the Academy.

God given rights to be respected

Through prayer and scripture, God provides wisdom and understanding

Faith in God or spirituality as a sustainer

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Implications, and Conclusions

Summary of Research Study

Chapter 1 is the introduction to the research study and the purpose of the research study is presented. The problem statement identified the current situation for African-American women employed as faculty at institutions of higher education in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher posed several questions pertaining to African-American women teaching at IHE in the Pacific Northwest and addressed the challenges that they face in their positions. In this section, the researcher chose to be forth coming about her demographic information, as she believes it may have influenced the research study outcomes.

Chapter 2 examines the current literature regarding African-American women faculty; the challenges and benefits of recruiting, hiring, and retaining African-American women is examined in the literature. The literature review informs the reader that there was a lack of research and available data on African-American women faculty prior to the 1990s. The philosophical framework of the research study and the researcher's African-American feminist perspective is explained.

Chapter 3 explains the framework and process for conducting this research study. The critical philosophical view and the rationale for conducting this study in an African-American feminist perspective are explained to help the reader understand why a non-traditional methodology is the best way of conducting a study such as this. Many facets of Grounded Theory were applied to this study, as the researcher believes that by juxtaposing GT with an African-American epistemology (Strauss & Corbin, 1988; Hill, 2003), the methods of collecting and analyzing data would have many similarities. The

two epistemologies allow for adjustments, modifications, and creativity to best represent the stories of the participants of the study.

Chapter 4 captures the lived experiences of the participants by sharing specific statements that display their thoughts, emotions, areas of growth and struggle, suggestions for sustainability, and other issues that they felt were important. The current work status of the participants is noted; five of the participants have obtained tenure in their positions as faculty at the IHE, however four of them do not see tenure as a guarantee for future employment at their IHE. Two faculty members have found employment outside of the Pacific Northwest and one is currently seeking employment. The participants offer many strategies for sustainability for new African-American women faculty, from suggestions of developing and improving pedagogical skills, obtaining a mentor, being a mentor, to establishing a network of support both on and off campus. The individual's spirituality and support network are seen as key factors for sustaining an IHE position.

Chapter 5 further justifies conducting this research using an African-American feminist perspective. She discusses the findings and implications for African-American women faculty teaching in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher provides insights as to what strategies the research participants have used for sustainability in their faculty positions. The spirituality of the participants is noted again as a key factor toward retention of the African-American women faculty. The recommendations for new African-American women faculty members are provided. Based on the results of the research and the current literature, the researcher theorizes that three essential elements are needed in order for new faculty to achieve success at the IHE. The new African-

American women faculty teaching in the Pacific Northwest should take three steps: establish a strong network of support both on and off campus, obtain a mentor at their institution of higher learning that can guide them through the tenure process, and use their spirituality as a sustainer at the institution of higher learning.

Discussion

If universities are really trying to understand and embrace people of color, then why are they not making conscious efforts to hear us? …Educators feel themselves to be victimized by the institutions that seek to educate them. They believe their voices to be unheard, their concerns unheeded (Delpit, 1995, p.107).

Mc Gowan (2000) states, "Virtually no qualitative research or literature addresses African-American teaching faculty's classroom experiences in predominantly [W]hite colleges" (p. 20). I will address the three original questions of this study, the additional findings derived from this study, and a continued review of the literature.

- What challenges do they face as African-American women faculty members?

- How do African-American women teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest sustain themselves in their teaching positions?

- What, if any, support systems do African-American women teaching in the Pacific Northwest have to support them in their positions as faculty members in institutions of higher learning?

In my quest to reveal the solutions to these questions in the results and discussion sections, I have "put my prayers up to the Lord that he would be graciously pleased to strengthen me, that setting aside all views of self-interest and the friendship of this world, I might stand fully resigned to his holy will" (Steere, 1984, p. 188).

Question 1: What challenges do African-American women faculty members face at IHE in the Pacific Northwest?

The results section reveals that African-American women in the Pacific Northwest have a challenging work environment. There are several factors that contribute to this environment: The European-American students, faculty, and administrators at IHE in the Pacific Northwest have unintentionally and intentionally marginalized many of these African-American women faculty by inappropriate comments, denial of the faculty members' lived experiences, and blatant racist acts toward the faculty members. The lack of diversity at IHE in the Pacific Northwest adds to the stress and isolation of the African-American women faculty in this study. The IHE in the Pacific Northwest need to become more ethnically diversified as recent statistics reveal that the population within the United States is becoming more and more ethnically diverse (NCES, 2005). In order for students in the Pacific Northwest to be prepared to work successfully in today's workforce, students at IHE need to be competent in working with diverse populations. African-American women help European-American students learn to engage with non-dominant populations, even though the process causes disequilibrium for both groups.

Question 2: How do African-American women teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest sustain themselves in their teaching positions?

The African-American women have learned strategies to remain at IHE, although the work environment is not always positive. The women in this group have developed pedagogical skills that reflect their philosophical perspectives and introduce the students to different teaching strategies. They build networks of support on local and national levels in order to pursue their areas of interest in order to produce scholarly work. They

rely on their faith in God or spirituality and family to battle the many iniquities that they face on a regular basis. These women are smart, persistent, competent, and committed to making a positive difference in the lives of students.

Question 3: What, if any, support systems do African-American women teaching in the Pacific Northwest have to support them in their positions as faculty members in institutions of higher learning?

The research participants relied on their professional skills and abilities, the network of support that they built for themselves, and their spirituality as key factors in remaining at the IHE in the Pacific Northwest.

Omalade (1994) maintains, "all questions cannot be answered through objectivity, and certainly the Black woman's power and knowing can't be understood without a knowing of her spirit and spiritual life" (112). A reliance on the spiritual center for solutions, explanations, and focus is the strongest opposition to Western social and natural science (Omolade, 1994). Spirituality, the notion that there is a higher power, a God or gods, who guide our paths and inner selves, is central to the Black woman's existence. This supports the notions of survival of a whole people and survival being enlivened by the spirit (Collins, 1998; Walker, 1984 as cited in Hill, pp. 20-21).

There was a need to emphasize the spiritual aspects of these women's lives as it directly related to their ability to remain at their IHE and to continue their struggle to empower marginalized groups. "Empowerment involves rejecting the dimensions of knowledge, whether personal, cultural, or institutional, that perpetuate objectification, or being the object instead of the subject, and dehumanization, or not allowing one the

ability to fulfill their total potential as humans (Collins, 1990 as cited in Djanni, p. 27).

To ignore such a significant contributing factor of most of these women's successes

would be negligent on the part of the researcher, as these women have to work to

overcome:

> Perceived lack of preparation, lack of sponsors, overt discrimination, competing
>
> obligations, obstacles to productivity, and negative climate (Johnson & Des
>
> Jarlais, 1994; Lewis, 1993; Maitland, 1990; Singh et al; 1995). Although women
>
> are attending college and graduate school in increasing numbers and studies show
>
> they make satisfactory grades, complete doctorates as quickly as men in all fields,
>
> are successful at obtaining fellowships, and have commitment to their fields, there
>
> is a common perception that women are less prepared for an academic career. As
>
> a result [,] they receive fewer rewards such as promotions and salary increases
>
> (Lewis, 1993; Maitland, 1990 as cited in Djanni, p.57).

"Another barrier faced by women in academia is overt discrimination. In addition to

lower salaries, women sometimes receive discriminatory recommendations for tenure

and/or promotion" (Gregory; 1999; Lewis, 1993; Maitland, 1990 as cited in Djanni, p.

57). A question that the researcher has is, "Without a spiritual basis, how could one go

through such tumultuous times and be able to bear the weight for so long and achieve

success?"

Implications: Making a Difference

As an educator, the researcher desires to empower marginalized groups by providing information, opportunities, and to give a voice to those who have not been heard in the field of education. The researcher hopes this qualitative study reveals the need to continue and expand multicultural education programs and encourage IHE in the Pacific Northwest to hire more faculty of color and enroll more students of color. Multicultural education encompasses race, gender, class, religion, and special needs (Banks, 1996). Bower (2002) acknowledged the scarcity of qualitative research on faculty of color. She noted that faculty of color not only face issues of ethnicity, but other issues that other faculty endure, such as pressures to be published, obtaining tenure, and so forth. Johnson (1965) stated the following:

> You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'You are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair' (p. 2 as cited in Allen, 2005, p. 19).

The public needs to be informed about circumstances of marginalized populations through research studies such as this. And faculty and administrators should elicit meaningful changes once educated on social injustices and areas in need of improvement.

The IHE need to take deliberate actions to reverse the negative patterns of injustice inflicted upon African-American women faculty and students. Kelley (as cited in Steere, 1984) shared how many of us make the decision to take on a particular task or cause on our own and that we calculate the task that needs to be done and conclude that no one other than ourselves will bring forth resolution. This chosen task of African-American women faculty attempting to help develop culturally competent faculty and

create a supportive environment for students and faculty of color can seem insurmountable and become overwhelming with the many other services that faculty are committed to perform (Moule, 2004, Steere, 1984). But when one is spiritually led to perform a task, there is a passion that this is something one *must* do. To deny this calling is to feel a sense of neglect, guilt, and conviction (Steere, 1984).

> When we say yes or no to calls, on the basis of inner guidance and whispered promptings of encouragement from the Center of Life, or on the basis of a lack of any inward "rising" of that Life to encourage us in the call, we have no reason to give, except one- the will of God as we discern it. Then we have begun to live in guidance (Steere, 1984, p. 304).

Many of the participants see their service as essential on a personal and professional level, and the service makes a significant contribution to the IHE. For example, Hargrove explained how she feels the need to provide service to her community as being more important than merely producing scholarly work. Many of the faculty in this study provided a wealth of direct service to the community. Yet, the bulk of that service is not seen as valid or relevant toward tenure at both private and public universities, regardless of size.

Decision Making Review Committees.

The review committees that make decisions toward tenure need to re-evaluate the criteria for tenure and weigh service more heavily in the tenure process, especially for women who tend to do more service at IHE than men (Furlong, 2005; Gregory, 2001). Ibrahim (1999) states that, "Gender demarcates the experiences of men and women in any cultural context" (p. 30). It is this

researcher's belief that since service is an area that male faculty do not hold as a strong point as a majority, this area of review is minimized.

I pose the question of whether universities should rethink the current method of obtaining tenure. The policies toward tenure appear to favor the majority group at the universities. Perhaps, universities could provide an additional track toward tenure that acknowledges the service and advising that many female faculty of color perform (Townsend-Johnson, 2005, p. 63).

Ethnicity and gender are obvious factors that hinder African-American women from attaining tenure. Administrators need to acknowledge such obvious factors and make accommodations and establish support systems to ensure the success of African-American and other faculty of color. European-American faculty, male and female, must attempt to envision themselves in an environment where they are the only ones of that particular ethnicity and/or gender. If they can envision themselves feeling displaced, perhaps they can truthfully acknowledge that differential treatment of groups numbered in the minority does exist. They would also, hopefully, see that there is a flaw in the current demographics in the IHE for both faculty and students of color (Aguirre, 2000; Furlong, 2005; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Holland, 1989; Opp & Gossetti, 2002; Washington & William, 1989).

The researcher disclosed strategies provided by African-American women faculty for self-preservation in the work environment as well as for others. Ideally, such substantiation would apply to most women, individuals of color, and other marginalized groups experiencing difficulties at the institutions of higher learning. The researcher

sought to interview African-American women faculty that may have experienced marginalization in the work place or have entered into a receptive culturally competent teaching environment and triumphed.

Perhaps this research study could be used to start a discourse on issues of power and oppression in the academy. This study attempted to inform current and future African-American women faculty on methods of self-identification, empowerment, and techniques for acquiring support systems for longevity at the IHE. The project informs African-American women faculty that they are not alone in their struggles to succeed in higher education. The issues of ethnicity, spirituality, and gender were broached to discourage African-American women from living in isolation with negative situations that they may consider uniquely theirs. This research study was about *becoming*; the researcher staying true to her Christian biblical principles while utilizing an African-American feminist perspective to portray the lived experiences of these African-American women.

African-American Epistemology: Theory into Practice

The additional questions I formed by reading the literature and implementing the research design are:

- Why are the trials of African-Americans working at IHE not made well known in our colleges and universities?

- Why not record the experiences using an epistemology that reflects the African-American culture?

- Can this revised epistemology be respected by university review committees that make decisions toward tenure?

- Ibrahim and Cameron (2005) addressed these issues and stated:

The historical issues in ethical-racial research include: Concerns regarding the paucity of research that focuses on racially and culturally different groups, the extension of research findings, [using] White middle class college students (originally all male) to explain all human behavior, the lack of respect for different cultures [,] and research showing various cultures and races as deficient on psychological variables without understanding the cultural context and the reasons for social norms or behaviors that differed from western norms and behaviors (p.4).

Casas (1985 as cited in Ibrahim & Cameron, 2005) highlights that conceptually biased research paradigms are used to research racial and ethnic minorities. Communities of color have experienced negative ramifications for research conducted by the researchers from the dominant cultures, even when the intentions of the researcher were good (Ibrahim & Cameron, 2005). Ibrahim & Cameron (2005) have concluded that,

Academic and governmental research has been used to "prove" the inferiority of minorities, to denigrate community and tribal practices, accentuate the negative or misrepresent the beliefs, norms, and cultures of the communities under study. In almost every community of color there have been serious 'breaches of ethics and harm of individuals' (Krieger, 1987, as cited in DHHS, 2001, p.18 as cited on p. 10).

Therefore, there was a need to conduct this research study using the African-American feminist perspective offered by the researcher. It allowed the researcher, an African-American woman, to obtain and share the perspectives of African-American

women faculty in a way that the researcher wanted their stories to be told. History reveals that African-American scholars have produced articles and other writings abiding by the standards established by the dominant group and their writings were trivialized and not recognized as scholarly work. African-American scholars of the past such as W.E.B. Dubious, Carter G. Woodson, Horace Mann Bond, and so forth conducted extensive research using modernistic and scientifically based research to disprove myths and stereotypes regarding African-Americans. However, many of their writings went virtually unrecognized because their work was not respected or valued by most European-American scholars (Washington & William, 1989).

In time, these scholars, known as founding fathers of African-American scholars, determined that their work would never be valued by the dominant population they hoped to educate and began to change their epistemological perspective (Washington & Williams, 1989). They did not create an African-American epistemology, but they opened the door for future African-American scholars to do so.

Hill (2003) uses a womanist theoretical framework in her research study of three African-American teacher educators. She stated, "I was led to clarify my experiences within Afrocentric feminist epistemology; a feminist standpoint [or a] way of knowing which maintains and justifies women's validation through their lived experiences. Feminist standpoint epistemology advocates using women's lives as a foundation for constructing knowledge; it demands that women speak from and about their views of reality; and, it instructs using women's everyday lives as a basis for criticizing dominant claims which are based upon men's lives" (Allen, 1995, p. 20). Like Hill, this researcher felt compelled to utilize epistemologies and strategies that she felt best allowed her to

represent the African-American women that are in her study. She feels her theoretical framework could be used by other researchers conducting studies on African-Americans, on other people of color, and on other marginalized groups. The researcher stands in agreement with Strauss and Corbin (1987) that the researcher must obtain the vision of where the grounded project will go. Substantive areas that are unfamiliar to most can be of interest to the researcher and launch a new field of study as in qualitative research "Intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional methods" (p. 11).

This researcher believed that an African-American epistemology would best reveals the stories, concrete experiences, individual and group perspectives, emotions, and spirituality of these women. Hargrove's straightforward response about how she demands to be treated reflects the empowerment that she exhibits as a faculty member and supports the researcher's claim that it is valuable to hear the voices or actual statements made by the research participants.

Hargrove stated:

> You know, whether you like me or not is irrelevant. I don't really care if you like me, but I insist that you respect me. And that's where I draw the line, when I feel I'm being disrespected. I think every human being has a right to be treated with dignity. You don't have to earn it, in other words. It is a God-given right. You're born deserving to be treated with respect.

Bey is very direct and represents herself as a professional, whereas her ethnicity is not considered a factor in her teaching methodology. In other words, she does not allow students to establish different expectations for her pedagogical skills based on her

ethnicity. Any student attempting to exercise biased practices in her course would be held accountable immediately. Bey is tenured and has held tenure and power within the IHE for well over a decade. The faculty in this study could be seen as African-American feminists, who can be described as change agents, informants, critical analysts, members of the research group, spiritual beings, and care providers to the marginalized group (Hill, 2003). The African-American feminist research participants have all pursued social justice at their institution in some way, using either covert or overt methods.

The researcher hopes that the participants are satisfied with the results and findings of this study. The researcher hopes that the participants are in agreement with the results, conclusions, and discussion section. She hopes that they are not marginalized, victimized, or wrongfully represented in this study. The researcher hopes that this document will be used to provide support and create positive change.

Future Research Recommendations

1. A large scale qualitative and quantitative study of women of color at institutions of higher education in the Pacific Northwest.

2. A qualitative research study similar to this study on African-American males at predominately European-American institutions of higher education.

3. A follow-up research study on the participants of this study in five years to assess each participant's ability to retain their position, attain tenure and promotion at the institution of higher learning.

4. A research study on European-American faculty and administrators at IHE to reveal their recent and current training or knowledge of issues of gender and ethnicity.

Conclusions

"Higher education must be a model for society in promoting equity,

excellence, and diversity."

Walter R .Allen

IHE must be agents of change and learn to eliminate biases that are deeply embedded within our society that prevent the IHE in the Pacific Northwest from becoming more diversified.

Basic assumptions tend to be those that are neither confronted nor challenged and are extremely difficult to change. To learn something new in this realm requires the individual and the groups to resurrect, reexamine, and possibly change some of the more stable portions of its cognitive structure. Such learning is intrinsically difficult because the reexamination of basic assumptions temporarily destabilizes the individual's and the group's cognitive and interpersonal environment, which can lead to the onset of anxiety and the triggering of defense mechanisms. In this sense, the shared basic assumption that make up the culture of a group can be thought of at both the individual and group levels as psychological cognitive defense mechanisms that permit the group to continue to function (Schein, 1992 as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 31).

The IHE have established norms within the institution that privilege European-American males and females in entry positions as faculty at the IHE (Aguirre, 2000; Allen, 2005; Bower, 2002; Bunzel, 1990; Gregory, 2001). The current norms for hiring faculty at IHE benefit European-American students, ensuring their continuous enrollment into IHE at a much higher rate than "other" ethnic groups. It also ensures that European-American

students, unlike African-American students and other students of color, have a plethora of faculty available as support, role models, and mentors.

Edgerson (2004) states that the executive mandates and the allocation of funding have encouraged women and students of color to enter IHE. According to Edgerson (2004), the United States census reveals that six percent of the population is composed of African-American females. African-American women were seven percent of students enrolled in IHE in the Fall 1999 term. However, African-American women are only three percent of the full-time faculty at IHE. At the Full Professor rank, they are only one percent of the faculty (Almanac 2002-3, as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 10-11). The NCES (2005) also reveals the high percentage of female students in IHE. Nevertheless, with the increase of female students and other non-dominant groups, there has not been, nor does there appear to be, a concerted effort to hire more African-American women faculty or other non-dominant group faculty at IHE to ensure retention of students of color.

In a study to investigate the work conditions and possibilities of new faculty members, Smith, Wolf, and Busenburg (1996) identified six myths associated with faculty hiring. Four of the six myths related directly to faculty of color. One of the four myths implies that the qualified faculty of color are heavily recruited by numerous institutions. A second myth is that there is a high demand for highly qualified people of color in their field. A third myth is that the most prestigious and wealthiest IHE that can offer higher salaries and benefits are continually and vigorously recruiting individuals. The final myth that applies directly to faculty of color implies that faculty of color are heavily recruited by private and governmental agencies (as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p.

11-12). The myths listed above support the current status quo, a male dominated teaching and administrative environment at the IHE.

> The effect of patriarchal leadership (leadership that is male-dominated and normed on male standards) often results in masculine norms perpetuated throughout the institutional structure and culture. Faculty ranks, tenured full professorships, and the production and presentation of scholarship continue to present the "generic man" as being the norm while women's location is marginalized or even excluded. As a result, students receive patterns of information that perpetuate the continuation of the status quo, namely the generic male model in a male-dominated institution. Women, on the other hand, continue to hover on the fringe of the institution (p. 13 as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 16).

A direct positive correlation is made with the degree completion rate of African-American students and other ethnic groups with the number of African-American faculty. Yet, deliberate efforts are made to exclude African-Americans from IHE. There are well established norms in hiring practices and the process of attaining tenure that act as barriers that prevent African-American women from becoming faculty or retaining their positions. The procedures for admissions work to prevent African-American students as well as other ethnic groups such as Latinos/Latinas, Native Americans and other indigenous group from enrolling into IHE. "America's social, political, economic, cultural, and educational institutions have been shaped (should we say warped?) by beliefs, values, and practices established and evolved in defense of racial hierarchy" (Allen, 2005, p. 18).

At the center of the American Dream is the emphatic conviction that,

in this society, education opens doors to success and that, with hard work, even the poorest American-of no matter what race, creed, or culture-can achieve greatness (Hochschild, 1995). In many instances, talent has been equated with the level of education attained. Education and educational opportunity speaks volumes about openness and power relations in American society (Allen, 2005, p. 18).

Ethnic Research Conducted for Sustainability

Yancey's study (Demus, 2004) showed that sociologists who experienced discrimination with ethnicity and/or gender were more likely to pursue academic interest in those areas. Therefore, it seems natural that an African-American woman faculty member would conduct this study. The researcher has some insights as to the working conditions of African-American women faculty in the Pacific Northwest. The realization that African-Americans constitute less than five percent of the total population in the state of Oregon and Washington adds a dynamic that is peculiar or unique to these faculty members. The students that enroll in these women's courses, in truth, could have never had a relationship or strong interaction with an African-American beyond the media prior to entering their course. The shear lack of diversity in the area allows for students to be encapsulated by individuals that share their culture and more than likely the same ethnicity, European-American. This eerie situation fostered a sense of closeness for the interviewee and interviewer, which helped to establish a connection between the two in the initial interviewing process.

The researcher also accepts the participant's stories as real and valuable. The participants offered effective coping strategies that have worked in their favor. After each

interview, the researcher always compared what the interviewee was doing in her course to counter possible negative attacks to what she was doing in her classroom. The participants also offered specific strategies that would help refine the researcher's pedagogical skills in teaching in the Pacific Northwest.

The researcher is grateful to the participants of this study. By interviewing these extremely powerful, graceful women, she has found a sense of community. Although there is great physical distance between the researcher and some of the women that participated in this study, she has come to know that they are walking right beside her in this journey to provide opportunities for empowerment for all students, not simply the dominant group and a small pool of others.

The participants brought focus to the researcher's purpose at the university and in the field of education. Each and every one of the African-American women that participated in this study were essential to the educational systems within the Pacific Northwest. The demographics in the United States continues to grow and change, students from the kindergarten to the graduate level need to be equipped with skills, strategies, and knowledge to interact successfully with these populations. Historically, African-American women have successfully mentored students of color and European-American students so that they would be successful in the academy and in the work environment. The African-American women faculty act as hammers that smash or destroy myths and stereotypes that are often used to represent African-Americans. These women signify models of success for the students of color that hope to teach or enter a well-respected profession. These women extend beyond their traditional duties and act as academic advisors and personal counselors to students of color in need; they counsel

students that do not feel comfortable going to European-American faculty and staff for fear of being mistaken or marginalized. They have an overwhelming commitment to service to their community and toil over whether they should sacrifice tenure for the good of the community. Unfortunately, many institutions do not recognize the outstanding service provided by African-American women faculty as beneficial to the university (although the university in many cases receives direct benefits for the service via student retention), and dismiss the faculty member once tenure is not obtained in the sixth year.

Out of the ten women that participated in this study, well over half are tenured or are in a tenured-track position. This is a positive step in the right direction. Due to the time limited nature of this study, the number of women that actually achieve tenure will be unknown for a period of at least three to four years.

Accountability of the Gatekeepers

African-American female faculty members are vital to IHE, however, discrimination may hinder their ability to attain success at the institution (Cobham; 2003; Gregory, 1995; Gregory 2001). Holland (1989) considers faculty as being the gatekeepers at the IHE who help decide who is allowed to become one of the gang or a faculty member. Holland recommends bringing African-American faculty and graduate students on campus for visitations to help recruit faculty. Aguirre, Jr. (2000) provides an interpretative approach as to why the number of women faculty has increased. He believes that the actual increase of numbers may simply be due to the great increase of the student population, as opposed to gains made by organizational changes to employ these women. The percentage of European-American women faculty hired has outpaced the percentage of women faculty of color hired combined (Aguirre, Jr., 2000; Bower,

2002; Bunzel, 1990; Gregory, 1995; Gregory & Tilman; 2005; Holland, 1995; NCES, 2005). Many African-American women faculty are forced to endure difficult work conditions such as doubts of their level of competence, being forced to act as the school's person of color representative or token, their service to the community not being seen as valuable in the tenure process, being expected to advise many students of color and European-American students, and so forth (Bower, 2002; Bunzel, 1990; Cobham, 2003; Edgerson, 2004; Furlong, 2001; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Gregory & Tilman; 2005; Guillory, 2003; Holland, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 1996; Moses, 1997; Smith, 2002).

Frierson and Lewis (1979) point out that most European-American faculty do not share the same research interests as that of African-American faculty. As a consequence, they do not engage in research studies pertaining to African-Americans. This lack of interest explains their lack of support for African-American research (as cited in Cobham, 2003). Scheurich (1993 as cited in Cobham, 2003) contends that in order for African-American women to obtain success at the IHE, the African-American faculty should mirror the strategies applied by European-American male faculty. However, these women cannot easily alter the striking differences of ethnicity and gender. Therefore, the biological differences of ethnicity and gender become stumbling blocks for African-American women faculty, regardless of their credentials. "African-American female faculty members indicate lack of respect, lack of publication opportunities, and lack recognition for their scholarship as major barriers to their career progression in higher education" (Hendricks & Caplow, 1998; Turner & Myers, 2000 as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 47).

As stated before, in some cases at IHE, African-American women are placed in positions where African-American males see them as competitors. Combined with racism, a competitive climate makes the African-American woman an easy target for stress. These forces are what Tatum calls "mundane extreme environmental stress" (MEES), in which "the many forms of racism and oppression are an ever present part of daily living rather than occasional hazards." For the African American professional, these "chronic, unpredictable acts of racism . . . and MEES, which is anticipated, ongoing and pervasive" results in what she calls "assimilation blues" (Baraka, 1997, p.235).

> Despite the demonstrably chilly climate on many college and university campuses, many African-American female faculty members remain committed to their academic professions. Professional satisfaction and the belief that the good aspects of the profession outweigh the bad are the incentives that drive African American female faculty members' resolve to stay and persevere (Moses, 1997 as cited in Edgerson, 2004, p. 14).

Although the work environment for the women in this study has not always been favorable, these women have proven to be incredibly resilient. They are true professionals that work to prove themselves in excellence. They do not see themselves as victims of a negative environment but change agents within the IHEs and the community. They each have a powerful voice and have all made a stand in some fashion for social justice within their IHE.

In learning of the participants' circumstances one can speculate that they would be hostile or angry with the IHE. But that is not how they presented themselves at all. They were optimistic about change at the IHE but disappointed at the very slow rate of

improvement or growth. Francisco was concerned that many IHE were reverting back to practices held prior to the 1970s.

Remaining in the Academy

In May, 1929 Dr. Jane Ellen McAllister became the first African-American woman to obtain her doctorate and become a faculty member at an IHE (Fultz, 1995; Jones-Wilson et al., Mc Allister, 1929; Williams-Burns, 1982 as cited in Djanni, 2003). This researcher believes that if she were alive today, she would be astonished by the small percentage of African-American women that have and are currently pursuing terminal degrees and are currently employed as faculty members at IHE. Sara J. Woodson-Early was the first African-American woman to teach at an IHE in 1859 when she accepted a position at Wilberforce University, a historically Black college (Cobham, 2003). Since that initial hire, many African-American women have entered the academy as faculty members, and they are in the field to stay. Administrators and faculty at the IHE can make the work environment a more hospitable place. In institutions where the participants received support from administration and a clear message of acceptance, the African-American women faculty have thrived in all areas toward tenure. In IHE where support seemed elusive, faculty were less confident in their longevity at the IHE.

African-American women faculty should be respected, honored, and appreciated for their service to the university and to the community. They should be evaluated fairly toward tenure and their service weighted heavily, as it brings direct support to the university financially by student retention. Further, the IHE public relations are enhanced since the African-American female faculty member represents not only herself in community service, but the institution as well. Institutions of higher learning need to

establish support systems for African-American women faculty in order to retain them at the university.

The institutions should make students, faculty, and others aware that they support students and faculty of color by creating a Multicultural Affairs Office (MOA) or an office that serves such purposes of ensuring that students, faculty, and administrators of color have an agency within the institution to take concerns and issues to. This office should have authority and clout in the university to take appropriate actions with and for individuals. This office should hold all university personnel and students accountable and create safety for students, faculty, and administrators. This step would deter individuals from making sexual or ethnic attacks on others. All students at the university should be informed of the purpose of the office and encouraged to see the office as a resource in relations to civil rights matters. The MOA should work closely with the other agencies on campus that provide support and services to students. Interchanging of ideas and resources would be a key to the success of this office.

A work environment that has a sense of collegiality should exist for African-American women faculty, and the administration at the institutions of higher learning should demand that all employees and students of the university adhere to that expectation. The milieu for students of color and faculty of color should be positive, with faculty and students embracing their presence and not fearing them. Fellowships, internships, and other additional funding resources should be made available to students of color to support them in their undergraduate and graduate programs (Demus, 2004). Rideaux, Jr. (2004) suggest that IHE complete "statistical monitoring" on their outreach

and retention programs of African-American males within institutions of higher learning that which can be applied to people of color in general.

The individuals at the institutions of higher learning should recognize the need for the diverse interactions with students and faculty to prepare students for the work environment. Holland (1995) believes that "while a strong and committed administrative leader can influence a faculty, as a general rule, the faculty control access to its ranks (p. 7). Therefore, faculty should receive diversity training and be made aware by the MOA that biases have a negative affect on students and faculty of color. Unfair treatment of students and faculty of color should not be tolerated.

The African-American women in Cobham's (2003) study had reasonable workloads that allowed them to teach and pursue other interests such as service and scholarly work. However, many obstacles faced by these women were pay, workload, and other deterrents to advancement. To ensure retention of faculty, administrators should ensure that African-American faculty are paid comparably to their peers for performing fair and balanced workloads.

Recommendations for New African-American Faculty Members

Moses (1997) stated that she conducted two types of research in order to gain credibility at her IHE, "I have survived because I do two sets of research: one that is mainstreamed within my profession. It is the only way I will have legitimacy when tenure time comes" (Moses, 1997 p. 32). According to Daniels, a new African-American women faculty should:

> Do your homework and your research about not only the process, but the overall nature of various institutions and have your vision and philosophy intact. You

should research to try to find the best match for not only your professional vision, your philosophy, but your own personal vision of who you are. How can that be fulfilled within whatever institution you choose? And beyond the institution of higher learning because you do not live at the institution [sic].

Francisco states, "You know, I think it is important to be part of a team in your department and to see what's going on, and find your niche—how you can be an integral part of the diversity of students. And if you're an honest person to, not so much for the glory of accolades, but for delivering services—someone notices that."

Gregory (1999) states that African-American female faculty had bittersweet experiences in the IHE; they had both positive and negative experiences working in the world of academe. In this study, the female faculty that attained success were able to manage role sets or adapt to a multitude of responsibilities. Doing so, however, added complex challenges to faculty with families. Gregory (2001) provides specific strategies that she believes will assist African-American females meet success in the academy. She recommends saying no to requests that will detract from research projects. She encourages the new faculty member to find out their friends and foes, to listen more than speak, and to find a trustworthy mentor. She emphasizes the need to build a coalition among colleagues in and outside of their department. In doing so, you will make oneself visible and active in one's communities of reference. There is a need to think one's battles through and choose them carefully. Finally, she recommends learning how to succeed quietly to facilitate being seen as a team player rather than as a threat to one's peers.

Table 15

Recommendations for New African-American Women Faculty

_____

- Obtain a mentor

- Use prior knowledge to prepare yourself to be the only African-American in the academy

- Engage in dialogue with various faculty at the institution of higher education

- Re-conceptualize courses to fit pedagogical style and educate the students

- Gather resources to mentor students

- Attend conferences

- Be political and resourceful

- Be highly qualified in your area of specialty

- Find out hierarchy within the campus

- Research the university prior to employment

- Teaching to be stimulating and challenging

- Maintain autonomy

_____

Gregory notes how education has historically been the pathway for African-Americans to become leaders, make contributions to their community, and their society. African-American female teachers, at all levels, help to mentor students of color and guide them through the educational system. African-American women outside of the world of academe also benefit from the support and mentorship from the female faculty of color. These females have extraordinary demands placed upon them, in part due to their small number. According to Gregory's (2001) study, in the midst of the numerous

overwhelming factors listed above there is an absence of institutional support. However, the research participants offered practical recommendations to aid new African-American women faculty at the IHE (See Table 15).

Researcher's Connection to the Research Study

I have experienced a tremendous amount of psychological stress relating to ethnicity writing this dissertation. Rager (2005) informs the reader that emotionally laden research studies have an effect on the researcher. She stresses the need for self-care during the research study from obtaining support from the major professor, to obtaining counseling during and after the research study, if necessary. Rager (2005) made many connections to her research participants in the study on self-directed learning of breast cancer patients; the research participants were women, some of them mothers of young children such as her. Rager was diagnosed with a form of skin cancer during her research study, which was diagnosed early and eliminated. Yet, the experience caused her to further link with the stories and lives of the participants. I identify with the participants of my research study as an African-American woman faculty member teaching in the Pacific Northwest.

I have fought a spiritual battle during every step of the dissertation writing process. I prayed to the Lord to protect me spiritually, psychologically, physically, and emotionally as I addressed the very sensitive issues of oppression: gender, classism, and sexism. I believe that most of these women have experienced some psychological stress related to their ethnicity by reliving some of their negative experiences so that I would be able to complete my research study. I, like many other students of color, put a pressing demand on the research participants' time, forced them to be the token representative,

and caused them some emotional strain. And because these women have a heartfelt desire for service, they felt obligated to support my goals. I have been blessed in knowing them. Although the information in this study is challenging to face, there was a need to conduct this research study. "Ruth Behar (1996 as cited in Rager, 2005) states that 'it is only worthwhile doing research that breaks your heart' (p.23)" and as a result of conducting this research study on African-American women faculty, I agree.

I think that all of the women that I have interviewed are dynamic and extremely powerful. This research study has been a healing and an inspiration. Information and stories were left out of the research findings, but I do not believe the stories should go untold. Nevertheless, I have respected the wishes of the participants and have not used any information or stories that they did not want disclosed. Although I will forget the details of their stories over time, I will always recall the feelings associated with these womens' experiences. One participant said, "No one knows about the stress. No one talks about the psychological stress this causes us," and I agree. If some European-Americans do not want to feel "guilt" in short diversity trainings, they should consider the heaviness of living with issues of ethnicity every day coupled with issues of gender. It is the world that we African-American women faculty encounter daily. I do not know how African-American women, as a group, would endure without their faith. The mountains before us are just too high and the rampant rivers to wide to cross. It is faith, our religious beliefs and convictions that causes many of us to continue on, and also the reason that we excel beyond expectation. As for me, the prayers of the saints have helped to sustain me thus far, and I know that God will keep me as I continue to fight for social justice for marginalized populations.

To African-American women and faculty of color considering entering the academy in the Pacific Northwest, and I indeed hope that you do, it is wise to understand the battle that you will fight. If you are going to survive in the academy, you need to equip yourself with the tools and connections that you will need. I recommend that you reference the King James Bible or the New Living Bible and read Ephesians chapter six that teaches Christians to put on their full body armor to be prepared for the upcoming spiritual battle that you will have to fight. Unfortunately, you will be forced to fight this spiritual battle whether you are a religious person or not. The battle I refer to is the fight for equality, the fight against iniquities, and the fight to be appreciated for the contributions that you bring, and much, much more. You will fight this battle whether you are at a public or private institution. Unfortunately, there is no respite in Christian or private IHE.

> Christians then are placed in the difficult and less productive intellectual position of contending with the secular rather than being out front with life-giving solutions. The multicultural agenda is a good example of this. Christian academics did not take up the very real issues of racism that plagued the nation so we were left in a position of accepting/refuting the secular ideas. Christ's solutions to racism would be both far more radically demanding . . . and more conservative than the modern and postmodern interpretations we have now (Poplin, 2005, p. 13).

It is my Christian religious foundation that has allowed me to remain strong and "fight the good fight" at the university. A colleague once commented that I must have a spine of steel to endure my experiences at the university. I said, "No not really, my spine

has been held up by prayers of the saints." I have sustained due to my relationship with Christ, personal prayers, and prayers from my fellow Christian loved ones. Spells also stated her reliance on Ephesians chapter six as a method of sustainability. Not all of the women in this study are Christians, but all contend to have a religious foundation. Some participants attributed their spirituality to the African-American spiritual foundation. This foundation may be based on southern religious practices that many, but not all, African-American Christians in America stem from.

Theory Development

The researcher theorizes that in order for an African-American woman faculty member to succeed by obtaining tenure and promotion at a Pacific Northwest IHE, she must take the following steps: establish a strong network of support both on and off campus, obtain a mentor to can guide her through the tenure process, and use her spirituality as a sustainer.

This study was designed to empower the researcher, inform administration and faculty of the benefits of hiring African-American women, and to enlighten African-American women with terminal degrees on how to succeed in two-year and four year-institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher hopes all goals are attained. As she continues her walk by faith in the field of education, she will continue to promote justice for marginalized populations. Thank you to the participants for their willingness to allow the researcher to walk alongside them in the halls of the academy.

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Appendix A

Table A1

History of Employment for African-American Faculty from 1936 to 1985

1600-1800s African-Americans excluded from higher education in America

1865 By 1865 (the year slavery was intended to end in America) fewer than 30

African-Americans had graduated from a college or university.

1876-1900 Only 13 African-Americans a year graduated from northern colleges and

universities.

1936 African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans virtually invisible at European-

American institutions of higher education. By 1936 there was a sizeable group of African

Americans with a Ph.D.; 80 percent of the African-Americans with a

Ph.D. taught at historically African-American colleges.

1. Atlanta

2. Fisk

3. Howard University

1941 Two African-Americans noted as tenured faculty at PWI.

1947 Out of the 3,000 African-Americans listed as "college teacher" only 78 had ever

taught at PWI, many as part-time lecturer.

1958 200 African-American faculty at PWI.

1961 300 African American faculty at PWI.

Executive Order 10925 John F. Kennedy term "affirmative action established the Table

President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity Kennedy required the

Table A1 *(continued)*

development of written affirmative action plans and established official penalties for non-compliance.

1967 President Johnson signed *Executive Order 11375* to include gender to categories of discrimination.

1972-1973 *Executive Order 11246 Affirmative Action* signed by Lyndon Johnson applied to institutions of higher learning.

African-Americans represented 2.9 percent of all faculties (including those at historically Black colleges).

Affirmative action initiated at institutions of higher education.

The other people of color represent 2.8 percent of faculty, excluding Asians.

There were 1500 faculty identified as Mexican-American or Chicano (600 were in community colleges).

1976 There was an increase of African-American and Hispanic-American faculty until 1976. After this period there was a leveling and or decline of African-American and Hispanic-American faculty at PWI. There was a steady decline of African-American professoriate during the 1970s, despite growth in faculty positions.

1977-1984 National faculty representation of African-Americans dropped from 4.4 percent to 4.0 percent. African-Americans were listed as 60 percent of the faculty at African-American institutions of higher learning. During this era, 2.2 of the faculty at predominately White institutions of higher learning were African-American.

1985 There were fewer African-Americans in faculty positions in 1985 than in 1977.

Table A1 *(continued)*

1988 European-Americans are 85.1 percent of the faculty at IHE.

African-Americans are 5.1 percent of the faculty at IHE.

1999 African-American women 6 percent of the total U.S. population but only 3 percent of the faculty at IHE.

2003 African-Americans are approximately 6 percent of all faculty members including those teaching at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. European-Americans are approximately 80 percent of the faculty at IHE. Asian Americans are approximately five percent of the faculty at IHE. Hispanics are 3 percent of the faculty at IHE. Native American/Alaska Native are less than one percent of the faculty at IHE. (Edgerson, 2004; Furlong, 2001; Opp & Gosetti, 2002; NCES, 2004; and Washington & William, 1989)

Appendix B

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Project Title: <u>African-American Women Faculty Teaching at Institutions of Higher Learning in the Pacific Northwest: Challenges, Dilemas, and Sustainability</u>

Principal Investigator: Farah Ibrahim
                                   Linda Townsend-Johnson
Co-Investigator(s):

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in a qualitative research study on African American women faculty teaching at institutions of higher learning. As you know, research is a potential avenue for educational professionals to grow and refine their work. As an African American faculty member at a small Christian university, my goal is to engage in educational research that will improve my pedagogical skills in facilitating cultural competency to preservice teachers, learn strategies for self-preservation as a faculty member, and develop systems of support for myself and other faculty of color at the university level. My proposed dissertation topic examines the experiences of African-American women teaching at institutions of higher learning in the Pacific Northwest.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are believed to be an African American female faculty member teaching at a two-year or four-year institution of higher learning in the Pacific Northwestern part of the United States of America. To qualify as a participant in this research study, you will need to have worked at a two-year or four-year institution of higher learning for at least one year or more. You will need to have worked at the institution of higher learning for more than one year as an Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Full Professor to be considered for participation. The study will focus on interviewing faculty members that are vested in an educational institution by job requirements and responsibilities. If you do not fit these criteria, please notify me immediately and your name will be removed as a possible participant for this study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?
I will interview 10-15 female African-American women faculty in the Pacific Northwest. I will interview African American women faculty for two reasons: currently African American females have the highest percentage of employment at institutions of higher learning for females of color (Bower, 2002; Gregory, 1995; Gregory, 2001;), and as an African American female, I believe that you may offer wisdom and knowledge about how your culture has, and will affect your experiences in the academy.

I will obtain data via the recording of each individual interview using a digital camcorder with the option of using a cassette recorder, if the camera fails. I will use phone interviews and email messages as a means of allowing you to clarify a response to the initial interview or to ask a question that was overlooked in the initial interview process. The interview will be informal where I will pose broad questions and allow you to share your experiences relating to the questions.

You will choose the location of the interview in the hope that you will feel comfortable talking freely in a setting of your choice. I will explain the purpose of the interview and discuss the terms of confidentiality. Disclosure of the format of the interview will occur at the beginning of the interview. *You have the right to discontinue the interview or withdraw from the study at any time during the research study*. Forty to sixty minutes is the allocated time for the interview. I will pose icebreaking questions such as those listed on the Questions for Qualitative Study sheet (See attachment) to help you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts. I do not want you to feel like a subject in a study but to feel as though you are just having a serious conversation with a colleague about your work environment. You will need to analyze the transcription of the interview. Therefore, I will meet with you two times in the research process; firstly, to conduct the initial interview, and secondly to analyze the data. The second face-to-face or conference will take a half hour. Triangulation of data will occur via two female faculty of color that will read the findings of the research study. The two female faculty members are employees at Oregon State University and members of my doctoral committee. The video will be viewed by the interviewee and interviewer only, and will not be sold or shared with the public. The video recoding will be destroyed after one year after the completion of the dissertation. The estimated completion date of this study is June 2006.

Timeline for the research study

Phase I	August & September	Research for possible participants
Phase II	December week one	Recruit participants and schedule interviews
Phase III	December	Conduct initial interview of participants
Phase IV	December	Transcribe interviews
Phase V	December week four	Continue interviews and transcriptions
Phase VI	January	Send a copy of the transcripts to the participants and schedule a second appointment
Phase VII	January	Face-to-face- meeting with interviewee or confer with the interviewee by phone regarding the transcription
Phase VIII	January week four	Complete the first draft of the dissertation. Submit a copy of the findings to two Faculty members of Color.
Phase IX	April	Complete the dissertation process

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no significant foreseeable risks to you as a participant at this time. However, you may experience emotional "heaviness" as a result of participating in this study since the questions posed are of a personal nature and may cause you to reflect upon past negative experiences. I cannot predict any specific consequences for participation in this study that could befall you however sometimes actions can be taken against an individual for sharing difficult experiences at an institution. In order to minimize this possibility, your name and your institution's name and identifying information will not be released and will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You will not gain any direct benefit from being in this study**.** However, I hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because institutions of higher learning will understand the significance of supplying support mechanisms to female faculty of color.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. To help protect your confidentiality, I will use a pseudonym instead of your name. The video recording will only be seen by you and the researcher. The video recording of the interview will not be sold or shared with the public. I will make a copy of the video recording unto a tape cassette recorder prior to sending a copy to a professional transcriber. Once I have received the transcription, I will send you a copy so that you may provide feedback, make clarifications, or request that some content not be disclosed at the risk of revealing your identity. If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Do you have any questions or concerns about the research study at this time? If you have any questions about this research project in the future, please contact me, Linda Townsend-Johnson, at 503-554-2831(O). You may also contact Professor Farah Ibrahim, Principal Investigator as faculty supervision, for this research project at farah.ibrahim@oregonstate.edu or 541-737-8263.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541) 737-3437 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed):

_____

_____

(Signature of Participant)   (Date)

Appendix C

Questions for Qualitative Study

African-American Women Faculty Teaching at Institutions of Higher Learning in the Pacific
Northwest: Challenges, Dilemas, and Sustainability

The questions listed will not be presented in a specific order.

1. How long have you worked at an institution of higher learning?

2. Is it a two-year or four-year institution of higher learning?

3. Is the university/college a public or private institution?

4. What is your ethnic background?

5. What is your rank or title at the institution of higher learning?

6. Are you in a tenured or non-tenured track position?

7. Do you have tenure in your current position?

8. Please share your work experience at (name of institution of employment)

   8a. What are some of the challenges you experience as an African American
   faculty member?

   8b. What are some of the dilemmas that you face?

   8c. What sustains you in your work?

9. Can you describe your relationship with students? with faculty?

10. What impact, if any, does faith or your spirituality play in your ability to work at
an institution of higher learning?

11. Do you have job security in your current position? Why or why not?

12. Who or what are your support systems in your role at the institution of higher
learning?

13. Additional questions will be formed based on the information provided by the participant.