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## Women Faculty of Color, Higher Education, and Sociocultural Change

Luz Areli Medina  
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Social Behavioral Sciences  
Senior Seminar Service Learning Capstone  
Capstone Advisor, Dr. Armando Arias

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Women of color, Higher Education, and Sociocultural Change

By: Luz Areli Medina

Track 2

<https://luzarelimedinablog.wordpress.com/>



May 19th, 2019

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**Abstract**

This capstone will focus on women faculty of color who are underrepresented in faculty positions in predominantly white institutions. Although not all women faculty of color experience discriminatory treatment we can not ignore the lived experiences of these women who are in a disadvantage within academia. The lack of diversification, unequal representation, and socio-cultural understanding prompts society to take a closer insight to determine the necessary steps in facilitating institutional change within higher education. In order to promote equality for women faculty of color I recommend changing the institutionalized policies, developing quality support and mentoring groups in order to hinder negative experiences in job satisfaction that lead to greater retention rates within women faculty of color pursuing tenured or leadership positions.

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## **Introduction**

In American life, racial stratification has remained a constant within the world of higher education. Women of color have been gendered and oppressed when it comes to faculty and tenured position opportunities. The reported marginalized experiences of these women create greater educational opportunities for women of color in higher education for underserved minorities in the United States. Our society fails to adequately address the reality that racial and gender oppression affects women of color and their experience in higher education. Divisions of labor and racial inequality have unfairly marginalized and stratified the opportunities and resources that women, primarily what Latinas and African Americans encounter, in higher education. Faculty of color provide an important contribution to the undergraduate education.

People of color make up majority of the United States population. Women of color have increased their college enrollment, but numbers have remained unchanged in higher education faculty positions (Aguirre, 2000). Women of color have been stigmatized into gendered roles that prompt them to service students as a caretaker rather than as their professor. However, while White women experience gender stereotypes, but have a higher ranking than women of color. Women faculty of color are underrepresented in academia with limited opportunities for success that lead them to failure in acquiring tenured process or advancement for leadership positions. These women faculty of color face barriers, marginalization, and oppression in predominantly white institutions. Women of color are rarely reflected in the tenured and promotion advancement. Women faculty of color get hired for entry jobs within higher education and remain underrepresented in faculty positions (August & Waltman, 2004).

Women faculty of color enhance a comfortable environment to provide support and mentoring for students of color. Women faculty of color provide encouragement to succeed that academic performance and career aspirations, more or less as educational role models. Women faculty of color have fewer opportunities to access promotions and track-based tenure, based on their institutional and cultural role, which has often trapped them into a serving position for students as their confidant rather than their professor.

The purpose of this capstone proposal is to determine whether supporting and mentoring women faculty of color may increase their access to obtaining a promotion or tenured position. If so, their success could strengthen our higher education institutions to bring diversity, in order to provide social and professional integration. Although many public higher education institutions have attempted to diversify faculty by recruiting women and women of color, they fail to address the understanding of how racial and gender discrimination has an impact on identities that shape professors experiences in the academic workplace. By identifying how marginalization and alienation impacts women of color, I can examine how they fit in the academic culture, that has been designed for White- males within a closed intellectual system.

Throughout my capstone, I will conduct an extensive literature review of scholarly sources of interviews and recent literature to address the research question: “How did these women faculty of color respond to the barriers they experienced as they ascended to tenured advancement at predominately white institutions? Higher education enhances human and social development to increase knowledge for the world around us and change it. It also serves to create skills that can improve the economy and develop point of views of how the world should be. The importance of women faculty of color in higher education leads college students to develop intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is essential for 21st century students to



develop because it guides them to be able to function across different cultures. College students can learn to act appropriately, communicate and work with various cultural backgrounds that is an essential skill to have in a diverse society (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Why does diversity, and what do women's lived experiences, teach us about navigating gendered racism and white privilege in higher education institutions? Women faculty of color endure challenging workloads and obstacles that influence their retention and recruitment assessment. Through strategies proposed in this capstone, women of color may integrate research-backed recommendations when dealing with marginalization. Amidst, academic culture, resistance refrains from diversity in higher education institutions. Power and privilege perpetuate women faculty of color as they are discriminated by their gender and racial status.

My capstone research is on women faculty in higher education because, as a first generation Latina student, I have already faced minor racial and gender oppression for continuing to further my education. In today's society, women of color often take on leadership roles to both advance their careers and break gender stereotypes. Racism and gender discrimination will continue to be barriers that women of color will have to overcome if they find coping mechanism for success within higher education institutions. Yet, these barriers that they face will lead to discord between their family and career goals. The importance of this study is to inspire women of color to participate in the academia hierarchy, in which women of color are underrepresented and where women faculty of color can express their testimonies of resistance, hope, and survival. These women examine how racism and white privilege affect women of color in higher education.

## **Literature Review**

The purpose of this literature review is to examine the representation and experiences of women of color. They have dealt with gender oppression and stigma in the United States higher education faculty positions. I want to emphasize how the resistance to diversity impacts women in the academic workforce that deprives them from adequate representation and sociocultural understanding. Sociocultural change is developing our perspective in what values will characterize our society, but also seeking how women faculty of color will orient themselves in higher education. It is vital that as a society we identify the personal demographics and university factors that impact women faculty of color in predominantly white institutions.

The personal demographics and university factors determine the job satisfaction of women of color. I want to evaluate our society's perspective on why we allow our learned beliefs and values to determine how we treat people of color. I want to explore literature through qualitative research to identify the marginalization and alienation of minority female faculty experiences in higher education. In my literature review, I will address how gendered racism affects women and women of color in faculty positions and how gendered stigma connects with our society's view of women. I want to address the difference between White women faculty and minority women, because although they are both exposed to gender discrimination, minority women are much more marginalized due to the intersectionality of race and gender that impacts their experiences working in higher education. 21% of all executive, administration, or managerial position are held by minority groups (De Welde, 2017). Most women in leadership positions are White.

### **Representing the experiences of women of color in classroom interactions**

Throughout the years, women faculty of color have experienced gendered racism in

classroom interactions, particularly with White male students. These male students question their authority and teaching competency, which reflects society's perspective that women are less credible and intelligent than men. These male students use their privilege and authority, which expresses the gender and race inequality in the U.S. Moreover, Pittman (2010) determine that women faculty of color are impacted by race and their experience is a demonstration of the Western views of women of color in educational roles.

Pittman (2010) analyzes that women faculty of color represent gendered racism that is experienced mainly by women educators. Women faculty of color attribute to higher education institutions to promote academic and professional success (Carroll, 2017). Pittman (2010) argues that Patricia Collins Intersectional Oppression theory can be used to explore faculty perceptions of classroom space and the experience of female faculty of color. Pittman expressed that many of these students has no respect towards women faculty with a doctorate title, but respected male faculty with doctorate titles. Carroll shared her personal narrative that trained as a clinical practitioner in counseling psychology at a Southeastern urban research institution. The institute challenged her academic credentials, as they were not enough for the institute (Carroll, 2017).

In particular, such racism shapes the lives of African American women educators. Black women are impacted by race and their experiences are also intertwined with sexism. African American women have been historically impacted by racism as it shapes the roles of minorities and their experiences in the academic workforce. Women faculty of color are unrecognized and marginalized (Carroll, 2017). Wingfield (2007) states that African American women experience stereotypes and discrimination as well as pay inequity because of their race. African Americans are represented much more in low paying jobs. The intersectionality of race and gender represent the marginalization that women faculty of color face in their daily lives. Black women are

stigmatized and often times labeled as incapable for motherhood or to be successful single mothers. Black working class women are not given the opportunity to gain occupational chances to guide them away from their minimum wage job. Wingfield (2007) states that racism is a socially constructed aspect of life meaning that racist stereotypes label Black women and men according to their gender roles. Women of color are betrayed due to racism and must gain full access to equal opportunities to reach full potential (Carroll, 2017).

Pittman (2010) also reflected that students were knowledgeable of racial bias and continued to harass their female professors. Gendered racism affects women faculty of color as Pittman (2010) emphasizes through the personal narratives of Cathy, a Black women who shares not receiving the authority associated with a faculty title. Emily, a Latina women, stated,

“ As a women of color, I have to... be very careful about how I behave in the classroom... because of the issues of authority.... I cannot be too friendly... I can be sensitive as a human being, but I can not open up totally”.

These women faculty of color are not only concerned with race, but their gender identities that cause threat to their authority. Male students resist the authority of women with passive-aggressive behavior in class that leave women faculty of color questioning their authority and teaching competency.

The oppression perpetrated by white male students refers to society's perception to maintain privilege and authority of the dominant group. Critical race theory institutes racism an interest for White faculty (Carroll, 2017). These women are underrepresented in full-time occupations and thus mainly employed at minority-serving institutions, community colleges, or at less valued positions within U.S. colleges and universities. These women also hold a lower rank and are referred as instructors, lecturers, or assistant professors. Colleges are hiring more

minority female professors, but maintain them as part-time/ associate professors/lecturers. This distribution of women in higher education reflects gender and race inequality.

Although women are scrutinized, women of color are racially discriminated and alienated from advancing from their academic social networks. Pittman (2010) notes that society fails to recognize their authority due to their gender. Wingfield (2007) determines that in society, white employers tend to hire Black women more than Black men because they are less threatening, which echoes the stereotype of “aggressive Black males”. Like Pittman (2010) using the Intersectional Oppression theory, Wingfield (2007) references Patricia H. Collins “the modern mammy”, which dehumanizes Black women to be essentially caregivers to children, therefore, modifying their behavior, control perceptions, and maintain social control. The mammy stereotype makes classism, sexism, and racism as inescapable that oppress the Black community that represent White women as primary caregivers.

Wingfield (2007) reviews that gendered racism still exists and women are asked to do things that are not always comfortable doing. African American women are stereotyped and not seen much more than that in higher education. Pittman (2010) and Wingfield (2007) state that women of color, more so African Americans, endure difficulty in the United States and are exploited by Whites. Angie, a higher education administrator had an unpleasant interaction with a lower level staff coworker at the university. Angie shared her personal narrative of Black professionals that integrate in predominantly White workplaces are exposed with racism. Black women are expected to fit into the “modern mammy” and make personal sacrifices.

“The dining hall had mistakenly charged the dinner to Angie’s department. Angie attempted to fix the error, but calling the dining hall. A woman answered, hung up, and filed a complaint. Angie met with the dean to arrange a mediation. During the

meditation, Angie was surprised that everyone was supporting the other woman, although Angie had a higher position than her. Even though everyone was supporting the other woman, the woman got made and walked out. Angie then asked herself, “Can you imagine if I was a White man?”. She expressed that there is no way that woman would have talked to her that way and others would have not supported her. Black workers are treated disrespectfully by other coworkers. Angie had to conform to the image of the modern mammy and accept the disrespectful treatment to avoid any further conflict. Yet, that would have not occurred if she was a White woman or a White man”. (Wingfield, 2007).

African American women are stigmatized in society, which reflects our views of women. The future of higher education is to develop new ways to structure higher education and destroy the academic culture to sustain racist and betrayal practices and value diverse faculty to integrate new students (Caroll, 2017). Historically, African Americans have been racially discriminated by White Americans, which continues to prove that they are viewed as less credible and intelligent than their counterparts. The personal narratives of women faculty of color is intended to understand Critical Race theory and to promote sociocultural changes to societal norm (Caroll, 2017). Women continue to progress in higher education institutes and become leaders in education. Women leaders are changing gender stereotypes by addressing the ability to balance life and work responsibilities.

### **Rethinking the gender stereotypes about women in higher education**

Women of color are marginalized on their performance by societal norms. Women are stigmatized about their capabilities about leadership, reflecting stereotypes that women are

nurturing and compassionate and are not able to take on leadership roles as well as men. Women and women of color face barriers that isolate them from their male counterparts, which consequently reinforces male power and dominance in all aspects of life. Gender and race are complex processes that not only impact women and women of color today, but the future women and women of color. The retirement rate for senior faculty has increased and higher education institutions must replace retiring faculty members with qualified people of color instead of having a predominately white staff (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). The senior faculty retiring from faculty tenured track positions is opening future positions that will provide opportunity to diversify faculty ranks for female and faculty of color (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). Pre-tenured faculty is encouraged by other faculty within the department to socialize and to gain leadership skills through interactions with their peers.

Reuben, Sapienza, and Zingales (2014) note that women majorly outnumber men in undergraduate enrollment, yet fail to major in STEM majors, such as math or science, as often as men do. Reuben, et. al (2014) wanted to find out if the stereotypes of women as less drawn to STEM were based on gender. They stated that in high school, girls and boys both are required to take math and science classes, yet when women reach their first year of college, they are less likely to major in science or math. Reuben, et. al (2014) analyzed the performance related to the beliefs on the basis on gender reflecting that men tend to show their performance much more than women meaning that when interviewing for a job. Women faculty of color express low satisfaction with their career stages (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) also focus on the challenges that women of color endure on their journey to achieve and perform in leadership in work settings. Women of color face multiple barriers that limit them from reaching leadership positions within their occupation. Faculty of color also face isolation

with their workplace and community (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). According to the authors, this is due to gendered racism that ultimately impacts leadership. Males are more likely to obtain the job because they promote themselves more often and more confidently than women. Though women are more often neglected, the researchers' findings demonstrate that women did as well as men in their testing. Yet, what men did was show off their results more, which in the end served them.

Reuben, et. al (2014) evaluated women in college that continued to break barriers. This is not a typical stereotype that men are better at STEM, because testing demonstrated that women are as capable as men to do well on the test, the downfall for women was explicitly promoting their performance to employers, which would guarantee them a job after college. This is a gendered issue that women in the future must surpass in order to be recognized for a major that historically was only available to men. Faculty of color face challenges to adjust their working conditions (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011).

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) state that women make up 51% of the labor force, which entitles women to be potential leaders, but are gendered into low-ranked managerial jobs. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis express that the barriers for women of color are existent. Therefore, society must realign its standards in promote gender equality. Reuben, Sapienza, and Zingales (2014) and Sanchez-Hucles and David (2010) state that women of color are ignored by white males in leadership roles. Women of color are marginalized by males, which limits their ability to influence others in higher education to be rethink gender stereotypes that will enable women of color to navigate their lived experiences though gendered racism and white privilege. Women faculty of color face isolation, frustration, and discrimination in their workplace (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). Women of color are discouraged to get promotions and transition,



making them feel anxious and like they need role clarity, self efficacy, and social acceptance (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011).

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) state that even women who achieve leadership roles are marginalized by others, which limits their ability to influence others, because they are only seen as child caretakers and compassionate. Their experience teaches us that women of color are set up for failure and social exclusion due to the lack of mentors and social networks that can guide them to achieve academic success. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) review that in a patriarchal society, gender bias help us understand the struggles that women face, which means that men become elected leaders because of their masculine traits and dominance, as women are seen more nurturing and compassionate. Women face more barriers than just trying to achieve leadership roles. Women of color experience discrimination at a higher rate than men of color. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2016), stated full-time faculty in higher education that reported that 41% were White men, 35% White women, 6% Asian men, 4% Asian women, 3% Black men, women, and Latino men, and 2% Latina women. Women faculty of color are a underrepresented population and experience inequality in the U.S. higher education. Promoting personal and professional relationships with faculty enrich tenured stages for pre-tenured faculty replacing retiring professors to create change (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011). The need for women leaders in the future depends on the actions we take and the changes we are willing to make. We need a pathway to success that entails a diverse vision of what we can do in order to make a social change.

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010), and Reuben, Sapienza, and Zingales (2014) determine that although women make up more than 50% in higher education institutions, women are underrepresented in STEM majors. Women of color struggle to achieve leadership roles, even

though they are as capable as men based on their testing. This analysis demonstrates that women continue to experience gendered oppression by society. As a society, Americans have made progress, but we must continue to address the issues in order to make true sociocultural changes. Faculty of color provide insight and expand understanding change academia for no racial and gender discrimination (Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower, 2011).

### **Social Justice for Women of Color**

American society is historically dominated by the Western thought styles of Christian, white males (Orelus, 2012). As a result, women and women of color are pushed to the margins by society. Privileged people tend to avoid addressing inequality because they do not understand what it is to be Black, Latino, Asian, etc., and/or benefit from systemic oppression. Higher education has paved the way for women of color to obtain admission into primarily White institutions (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Gender oppression shapes our institutions, explaining how teachers perceive and teach their students, as well as their interactions with one another. Gender oppression leads to white males having more resources and privileges than any other racial group. The Civil Rights Movement of 1960, referred to as the Affirmative Action Law, created an opportunity for women and minorities toward college (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). The matrix of race and gender oppression that impacts the life and careers of women and women of color. Women of color, primarily those who are first-generation students, have crossed color, gender, and borders from their journey from student to faculty member (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004).

African American women use their voice to resist society's gender oppression through social networks to shield and protect themselves from negative comments that may impact their

psychological health (Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, & Hunt (2013). Historically, African American women have been impacted by gendered racism that shaped their lives. African American women, as well as women of color, are perceived differently in the eyes of others. White males have many more resources and privileges which demonstrates their dominant authority. Women of color represent a small population that once was only available to privileged White men (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). The matrix of oppression enables white men to hold important leadership positions that keep the power structure to keep women inferior. The matrix of oppression is a sociological paradigm that discusses race, class, and gender that recognize different social classifications.

Orelus (2012) emphasizes that white men hold key positions in our society. Presidents, deans, and chairmen of colleges and universities are usually White men who then subordinate women and women of color. Women of color are perceived as outsiders that threaten the higher education hierarchy (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Our society is dominated by men's values and beliefs. Orelus (2012) points out that men also have higher salaries and influence than women. The academy undertakes the faculty into the socialization process to adapt into the behaviors and norms of the academic culture (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Orelus (2012) states that females face their invisibility of professionalism and gender roles instruct them to take care of children and domestic chores.

Orelus (2012) illustrates that women of color are racially stigmatized. However, oppression can be reconfigured within the power structure that historically only has benefited white males. Women of color report feeling isolated and marginalized, which keeps them in academic inequality living in low income status (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Meanwhile, white, American-born women are at an advantage as well as a disadvantage. They

experience gendered oppression, but women of color experience the additional intersectional oppression of race and gender. Orelus (2012) emphasizes that to understand gendered oppression we must take the next steps in reconstructing society to provide an equal opportunity for every individual.

Lewis et Al. (2013) write about how Black women cope with negative comments every day which can be verbal or behavioral expressions towards to race and gender. The study was conducted with 17 Black women. Participants were undergraduate, graduate, or professional women that encountered psychological and physical health issues, which impacted their lives due to racism. Lewis et Al. (2013) examine the coping strategies that these Black women use which included using their voice as power in order to speak up and resist society's Eurocentric standards of beauty in order to define the ideal image of women and embrace their true selves. As a culture, individuals are obsessed with size which is connected to personal identity. Women of color often have fuller body silhouettes than White women. These two types of resistance-coping strategies emphasized cognitive and behavioral ways that addressed their oppression.

The focus on personal narratives of women faculty of color represent the discrimination and strategies of survival prevalent in academia (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). An African American scholar and two Chicano scholars describe their experience of struggling to thrive within and break into higher education roles as they protested for social justice (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). The personal experiences of women of color entail a different experience in academia than White women (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Lewis et al. (2013) address the intersectional framework that demonstrates how Black women cope with aggression. (Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, & Hunt, 2013) use collective coping ways that illustrate that they relied on their social support network. The authors focused on having

group-centered activities to as a coping mechanism to maintain a reliable support team. They also practiced coping strategies that allowed them to shield themselves from negative comments. Using the collective strategy and the two strategies made me understand how women of color and particularly Black women dealt with such negative comments in their experience. Faculty of color reported low levels of job satisfaction due to the neglect received from their senior faculty (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Lewis et. al (2013) examine the understanding of how women of color cope with such negativity that can potentially have serious consequences. Yet, since they know how to protect themselves, it creates a barrier that enables them to resist gendered racism in society in some cases.

Orelus (2012) and Lewis et Al. (2013) examine the ways in which women cope when dealing with negative comments. The negligence that women of color give heavy workloads that constrain them from engaging in research (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Women and women of color are second-class citizens in society. Senior faculty expect them to perform their roles with and diversify the faculty, but they are ignored and not rewarded for their work (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). Women are subordinately considered as less-than, due to the historical past of women in the United States. Women of color are also not equally afforded the same benefits or rewards as their colleagues (Balderrama, Teixeira, and Valdez, 2004). It is important to understand the experiences of women in faculty positions in order to attain a greater representation of underrepresentation populations within higher education. As a society, we must question our own attitudes in order to strengthen our understanding of these women's experiences, and to learn towards diversification.

## **Hostile and Isolation in Academic Workplace**

Due to the invisibility and the lack of social and professional integration women of color endure in their educational experience (Marbley, A. F., Wong, A., Santos-Hatchett, S., Pratt, C., & Jaddo, L. 2011). Women faculty of color are forced to be more creative and excel in their higher education positions (Marbley, et Al. 2011). The authors examine that these women faculty of color have to combat marginalization in their positions and find strategies to climb the academic ladder in order to succeed. The underrepresentation of women faculty of color in higher education institutes highlights the need for more diverse leaders in senior level positions as society continues to diversify (Hannum, K. M., Muhly, S. M., Shockley-Zalabak, P., & White, J. S. 2015). As of 2013, women hold 48.4% tenured track positions, and only 37.5% of all tenured positions (Institute of Education; The U.S. Department of Education). Adalberto Aguirre (2000) writes that we must shed light on the educational experiences of these women who have developed gender, cultural, and academic identities. Women faculty of color have to adapt within academic culture to resist marginalization through the lens of womanism (Aguirre 2000). Womanism is a form of feminism that emphasizes women's natural contribution to society. Women faculty of color have to develop a strong professional identity to find a sense of self in higher education institutions (Marbley, et. al 2011). In 2011, the American Association of University Professors reported that the percentage of college and university presidents rose from 23% to 26% (Hannum, et. al, 2015). Women are creating an equal system to establish opportunities for themselves, although women of color are underrepresented in higher-paying positions than White women. Many women of color are not in senior positions, which explains the limitation of diversity senior level leaders (Hannum, et.al, 2015).

Marbley et Al. (2011) and Aguirre (2000) emphasize that the standards of higher education are framed around male lenses of cultural and behavioral norms. Higher education institutes fail to recognize women faculty as the traditional leadership model (Hannum, et. Al, 2015). That being said, higher education is rooted in the needs of White males, which negatively impacts the needs of women and other minorities. Aguirre (2000) writes that the negative impacts of discrimination on women faculty of color having to prove themselves despite having excellent credentials.

Marbley et al. (2011) focuses on the voices of women faculty of color. Within the academic culture, these women have developed a new sense of self, but also had to find strategies for coping with the mental and emotional challenges, turning them into positive milestones from mentorships and support from one another, but also from male colleagues that understand their hostile situation. Women find it difficult to find mentors and supporters throughout their careers, which helps identify the experience of women senior leaders to discuss challenges and benefits of their role (Hannum, et al., 2015). Women experienced a chilly environment in their academics (Aguirre, 2000). Aguirre states that we must understand how women and other minorities fit within their faculty. Aguirre promotes that we must prioritize socialization within the academic culture in order to create change to reduce this isolated environment. Women who were interviewed expressed that if they were too aggressive, they were seen as too tough or not likeable. Women also expressed that if they were too compassionate they were seen as too soft instead of as strong leaders (Hannum, et. al, 2015). Marbley, et. Al (2011) and Aguirre (2000) points out that the recruitment for women of color by universities has diminished due to the job satisfaction in job stress and alienation within the faculty.

Aguirre (2000) argues that the job satisfaction of women faculty of color endures them to struggle when obtaining either tenure or a promotion. Aguirre states that although more women have been represented in higher education, the number of women faculty of color has not changed since the 1980's. Although the diverse demographics in college student enrollment has increased, those in senior leadership positions will help us understand the pathway to better support the future college students and faculty (Hannum, et. al, 2015). The voices of these women faculty of color express that their job satisfaction is low because the institutional environment serves in the interests of White male faculty. The 35 senior leader women interviewed were enabled to gain a better understanding to describe the experience of women in higher education institutions (Hannum, et. al, 2015). Marbley, et. al (2011) and Aguirre (2000) highlight that higher education institutions have to propose a change to meet the needs of others. Women of color should feel welcomed, furthermore, encouraged for their willingness to learn and grow (Aguirre, 2000).

Conclusively, the authors reinforce that higher education institutions are comprised of closed intellectual White males that resist diversifying, thereby trapping women of color in temporary positions. Women in senior leadership positions are stereotyped into gender roles. Women leaders note that the importance of culture cultivates the way people view the world and their own perceptions. Women in senior leader positions give women of color the chance to build their careers and reach their full potential while overcoming the challenges of a hostile environment.



## **Breaking the Institutionalized Marginalization**

Women faculty of color have constructed their own opportunities in higher education. However, these women also experience invisibility within the academic culture. Turner (2002) states that when she applied to graduate school, her admission counselor discouraged her from applying. This article analyzed interviews and literature review about the experiences of women and minority faculty in order to suitable be in higher education. Latina professors are newcomers in a well-defined and controlled environment. Turner (2002) emphasizes that research may not contribute to the world just yet. The experience of women of color in predominantly white public research universities shows that majority of faculty positions are held by white women which demonstrates an underrepresentation of women faculty of color (Turner, C. S. V., González, J. C., & Wong Lau , K. 2011). The National Center for Educational Statistics, 2013 states that 35% of all full-time faculty positions are held by White women compared to the 2% of Latina women full-time faculty. The purpose of this research was to improve and develop effective recruitment strategies for higher education (Stanley, 2006). Critical race theory demonstrates the power hierarchy to withhold women of color from exhibiting their potential.

The theme of autoethnographic narratives educate the challenges with demanding behaviors to white male professors to resist diversity (Stanley, 2006). The experiences of invisible and hidden lives of women faculty of color in their interviews emphasize the lack of representation, the personal stress, and notice when it is a difficult time to obtain credibility (Turner, 2002). Turner emphasizes that women faculty of color and women in college face barriers in academia due to racial and gender discrimination. Higher education institutions entail campus culture, habits, decisions, practices, and policies that demonstrate the power hierarchy of professors (Turner, 2002).

Women faculty of color and White women are placed in gendered roles to trap them in marginalized settings. However, White women are more likely to come from a more financially privileged background. Yet, first generation college students and women of color are more likely to be marginalized within their job (Turner, 2002). According to the Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (2010), only 4% of Latinas had faculty positions, and 78.2% of White women held faculty positions. This demonstrates that the underrepresentation of women faculty of color exists, although the women ranking has increased, the representation of women faculty of color decreased (Turner, Gonzalez, and Wong, 2011). Racism and sexism continues to limit educational opportunities for women of color in higher education. Racism exists in research institutions that limit tenured opportunities and teaching evaluations that discriminate women (Turner, Gonzales, and Wong, 2011). College students evaluate women faculty of color with low satisfaction, which leads to more women of color being fired or laid off (Stanley, 2006).

Women of color are targeted by their own students and colleagues, making it difficult to diffuse the situation (Stanley, 2006). Women faculty of color who held tenured positions, and some with high level administrative positions, shared their experiences with interlocking effects of race and gender in their academic workplace, in order to determine if race and gender influenced their lack of underrepresentation (Stanley, 2006). Women of color, primarily Latina women, are devalued in higher education. White faculty members treat White women better than women faculty of color. Meanwhile, White women treat women faculty of color the same as White male faculty (Turner, 2002). Women faculty of color are divided between their career and family responsibilities (Turner, Gonzalez, and Wong, 2011). Women faculty of color are overloaded with emotional drain, as well as maintaining a sense of self to improve academic achievement. Women faculty of color sacrifice their families and responsibilities (Turner, 2002).

Women of color face frustration in higher education based on racial and gendered assumptions of minorities.

In order to understand and challenge oppression to a better understanding that minorities becoming the largest U.S. group in recruiting more students of color in college. Recruitment of women faculty of color and students of color is vital for the future of finding ways to cope with institutionalized discrimination. Recruiting more diverse faculty members will impact students to become more aware of how society is diverse and that stereotypes are not accurate (Stanley, 2006). In society's view that women and women of color face marginalization, discrimination, racism, and gender bias. The underrepresentation of women in tenured and administration positions limits the opportunities that enable to have change in the learning of their students (Turner, Gonzalez, and Wong, 2011). As a society, we must address the racial and gender issues that only serve in the interests of White male faculty and ultimately disadvantage both staff and students.

### **Service Learning Outcomes**

#### **Self and Social Awareness:**

Critical race theory states the relationship of privilege and power between women faculty of color and White women. Women faculty of color have focused on creating sociocultural change for higher education institutions, which lets American society analyze our past. Higher education institutions used to serve the White, rich men of the United States and were originally built for this purpose. Women and minorities have seen themselves pressured to be their best and sacrifice themselves in an unwelcoming environment. Higher education institutions fail to

recognize women faculty of color despite of their academic achievements. Women faculty of color often find themselves having to choose between their career and their family responsibilities. As our society continues to diversify, higher education institutions require more racially diverse leaders as different levels.

George Herbert Mead argued that people develop images about themselves through their interactions with other people. The self is the product of their social experience. Mead emphasizes that the self is a perception of who we are to ourselves, but also in society. Our self-awareness is a social construction through the interactions with others. In our society, our identities are defined in terms of the matrix of domination that governs where we stand in society based on our race, income, and ethnicity. That being said, women faculty of color face barriers in attaining leadership or administration positions due to their gender and/or race. If we become socially aware of different societies and communities that women and minorities face, we can engage in more welcoming environments across the nation. Higher education institutions can provide mentoring support groups within higher education institutions that can assist women faculty of color in adapting to the social strain of being a women of color. By having better social awareness, we can understand and respond to the needs of others in order to gain respect for others on their perspective and empathize with their experience.

During my service learning at Immigration Task Force, Monterey County I volunteered at tabling events that promoted to assist those who were in risk of detention or deportation. The nonprofit organization educated undocumented immigrants about their alienable rights in the United States. The organization also provides an emergency plan for families to have a caregiver to have a caregiver for them in case of the parents becoming detained. It is important that we are socially aware because individuals are scared, feel threatened because of their racial status.

**Service and Social Responsibility:**

Our society cultivates the ways in which people view the world. Future generations are influenced by the array of civic engagement that their parents' generation takes part in. Women faculty of color have a social responsibility to educate and prepare college students of social problems that impact our economy, but also local communities. College students are educated to be well aware of social causes that impact individuals' well being. College students have the social responsibility to engage with nonprofit and volunteer-driven organizations to learn to develop civic engagement in their society.

Social responsibility requires that individuals make ethical decisions that will benefit society, and not just the self, in order to create social fairness. During my service learning at Immigration Task Force of Monterey County, I was given training to learn about sexual harassment because the Catholic church believed it was important since volunteers would engage in family events. It was an ethical decision that the organization collaborated with the Catholic church to make, in order for the nonprofit to be able to participate in family events. Our quality of work strengthens our society in the way that individuals take social responsibility of their actions, which can make them into role models for our society and future generations. The Immigration Task Force provides a hotline to report ICE activity which is a confidential line that enables privacy policies and rules. Once the call has been made to report suspicious activity to update the community. It is seeking trust within the community for those attempting to obtain help from each other.

## **Community and Social Justice**

It is important that, as a community, we take the necessary measures to recognize diverse identities. It is vital that we shed light on how individuals are racially and genderally discriminated throughout society. Women faculty of color deserve equal rights and treatment from their fellow colleagues and students; they should not be stereotyped based on their race or gender, but their academic contributions. The United States is founded on the matrix of domination, which entails that people are prejudiced based on their race and gender rather than judged by their academic successes. Women faculty of color have been systematically racially discriminated against despite their excellent qualifications. The need for social networks that support and mentor women of color is highly encouraged in order to pursue a different outlook on what a community should contribute and to appreciate diverse identities. I decided to do my service learning although it was different from my capstone topic. I identified with their mission and values to help undocumented immigrants as I am a daughter of immigrants and I once remember my parents feeling isolated and scared. I wanted to gain knowledge about the resources available to these individuals.

## **Multicultural Community Building/ Civic Engagement**

In order to promote a better quality of life, American society must be willing to understand everyone's point of view. We must bring awareness of social problems and develop values that make a difference within communities. Communities are populated by different ethnic groups that establish various perspectives. In order to understand various perspectives, individuals must establish relationships with individuals that do not necessarily have similar

opinions to them. Multicultural community-building explains distinct ideas and beliefs that guide individuals from different countries and cultural backgrounds.

During my service learning, I volunteered at Immigration Task Force of Monterey County. Throughout my service learning, I met various people, mostly Caucasian women, whose values were that illegal immigrants are unfairly targeted and vilified in today's political climate. However, when I volunteered at tabling events, I learned to set aside racially discriminating beliefs. I also felt like a bridge between the nonprofit organization and those immigrants seeking resources combating discrimination from society. Service learners can interact with others of different ethnic backgrounds and experiences that promotes personal growth and development.

### **Role of Technology in Service to the Community, Community Building, Civic Engagement, and Service Learning**

The role of 21<sup>st</sup>-century technology has allowed nonprofit volunteers to contribute outreach in order to engage and reflect on the community needs that contribute to a social issue. The use of social media has allowed individuals to bridge cultural differences and bring people together to advocate and support each other. Service learning addresses social injustices in order to bring awareness from local nonprofit organizations about what is important to that community. However, the cultural difference between those that can access social media and those without the access to social media can actually learn from it. The use of technology can grant people the ability to communicate with people from different groups. Nowadays, individuals can act with reciprocity, which means that, with the use of social media, individuals can share their thoughts on the social issue with each other and even worldwide, spreading awareness. During my service learning, we handed out flyers and brochures. However, that was

limited to the individuals that could access it, because we were not sharing it with those that use social media. However, I uploaded various flyers to bring awareness to what I took action in, or announced tabling events or celebrations, such as the Cesar Chavez March that took place in Salinas, where we walked two miles through town, protesting for farm workers' rights.

Reciprocity describes that a positive action is returned to those with a positive action. Nonprofit organizations like the Immigration Task Force provide resources to people with limited knowledge of social services, such as lawyers, housing, and childcare safety plans.

Immigration Task Force wants to work with diverse individuals to build more equitable communities. However, during my service learning I learned that the organization had a facebook and instagram page as well as a web page, but the social media websites were outdated. I asked my supervisor, Deb Clifford and she said that because most of the volunteers are learning to use technology they need assistance from service learners in college to update social media websites. The organization is in need for diverse and younger volunteers build more inclusive communities especially people of color. I think that there is a communication misstep in terms of in order to bring awareness and promotion to their organization , nowadays people rely on social media as their only source to be aware of social issues.

## **Theory**

Critical Race theory (CRT) addresses how racism plays a part in societies and cultures relating to being categorized by race, law, and power (Yosso, 2006). Critical Race theory identifies power structures, examining white privilege and white supremacy. CRT is an approach to examine race, racism, and society. The term was first introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw and Derrick Bell who analyzed the discrimination of people of color during the Civil Rights



Movement in the 1970's to 1980's. Therefore, I will apply this theory to examine how women faculty of color have difficulty obtaining equity access and confront the inequalities of institutional racism, particularly with respect to how whites attain wealth, power, and privilege. CRT examines institutionalized racism to promote social justice to empower individuals to learn about diverse cultural groups. Although women faculty of color and White women are gender stereotyped, women faculty of color endure gender and racial oppression from their White, male colleagues. Moreover, Critical Race theory acknowledges that racism is embedded in American society. In order to bring about true social justice, our society must establish policies and practices that support women faculty of color (Han & Leonard, 2016). CRT emphasizes the importance for diverse faculty to share their experiences. CRT scholars such as Tara Yosso attempt to understand how victims of systemic racism are affected by cultural perceptions of race. Tara Yosso et Al. (2009) state that the social construction of race explains how people of color are constrained in society. The authors examine that racial microaggressions are experienced by Latino students in the three universities that were part of the study.

Critical Race Theory contributes to the idea to align the differences between Whites and people of color to distribute equity and social justice (Han & Leonard, 2016). This theory will help me explain how women of color in college have dealt with gender oppression and stigma in order to understand the impacts of how women in higher education to take a new stand on challenging gender roles. Higher education institutions represent White faculty in academia and mainstream knowledge and culture, which maintains White supremacy and the systemic subordination of people of color (Crenshaw, 2011).

Kimberle Crenshaw (1995) introduced intersectionality in correspondence with Critical Race theory. CRT occurred after the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960's and 1970's which

has disputes racism (Crenshaw, 2011). Crenshaw states that women faculty of color experiencing racial oppression as well as gender oppression. Intersectionality within Critical Race theory recognizes that race is not alone in being a tool of disempowerment. Higher education institutions are founded on a racial hierarchy that White dominant groups maintain on all aspects of life, such as cultural, social, historical, educational, and economic issues (Crenshaw, 2011). Intersectionality focuses on the interpretation of race, sex, class, among other social factors. Critical Race theory discusses the centrality of experiences of people of color and how it plays in professional settings. According to Villenas and Deyhle (1999), "Critical Race theory provides a powerful tool to understand how the subordination and marginalization of people of color is created and maintained in the United States" (pg. 413). The way that women of color are disempowered due to their skin color, but also their gender, shows that our society oppresses women of color to disengage in professional settings and keeps them marginalized from high leadership positions. Faculty and administration resist to social justice and the lack of exposure to diverse ideas and people (Han & Leonard, 2016). I want to understand the impacts that women of color in higher education have on learning and taking on new roles to challenge stereotypes.

Jennifer Esposito (2011) analyzed a predominantly white institution of higher education. Esposito used critical race theory to explore how race and gender impacted women of color's roles and femininity. The author collected data by conducting interviews and focus groups. The author's findings revealed that femininity was not the main concern, but women of color felt that their bodies among white students did reflect an issue. Esposito explained that white students and professors viewed them through a stereotypical lens due to their race. Esposito's focus group of seven young women found that race and gender affected their lives within a predominantly white institution of higher education. Critical Race theory views how race functions within a society

that maintains the interests of white males. It is important to understand education in order to examine society and culture in relation to how women of color are marginalized in higher education. This impacts their access to equal opportunities, if they are as equally experienced and qualified for roles. Women faculty of color are the future to higher education; they will address different social problems that our society deals with. Critical Race theory analyzes the issues within higher education that some individuals pretend do not exist in a “colorblind” society (Han & Leonard, 2016). The importance of CRT is to examine and attempt to understand the socio-cultural forces that shape how we and others are perceived, their experiences, and how they respond to racism, power, and privilege.

### **Methodology**

This study will engage interdisciplinary methodologies to address antecedent objectives. These methods entail qualitative research within the California State University, Monterey Bay’s online databases. I chose 15 academic scholarly sources that discussed Critical Race theory and those with an emphasis on theoretical concepts within themes and patterns. I selected these 15 articles with key search terms such as women faculty of color and higher education. I also selected the articles from 2000 to present, although I did have a few dated from 1999 for background information. The secondary sources I decided to include were ERIC: Education Resource Information Center, Genderwatch, and dissertations. I conducted an extensive literature review of previous studies, based on qualitative data that emphasizes narratives based on a sociocultural perspective of women faculty of color identities. All participants in the articles were female, women of color and employed at predominately white institutions. I had no disqualifying criteria such as their marital status, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. The

extensive literature review will analyze personal narratives in order to promote a welcoming environment to diversify people's ideas and perspectives of faculty of color and address new development of social norms and equity for minorities in higher education. The secondary data analysis interprets theoretical perspective on the personal work experience for women faculty of color and the barriers they have to overcome in order to succeed in academia culture.

I researched previous studies that conducted personal narratives in higher education, discussing their experience becoming tenured faculty, temporary positions, or their recommendations on how to improve addressing the realities of minorities in the academic workplace through supporting and mentoring social networks. I researched about various women faculty of color and their experiences to examine whether they experienced similar racial and gender discrimination, or if it differs within racial groups. This will include in-depth descriptions of their experiences as women academics in previous research studies to anticipate if support groups and mentoring will decrease barriers with White professors when women of color were socializing within the academic culture.

I analyzed the overarching effects that women faculty of color encounter, by examining the previous studies conducted by scholars in determining developing new ways that women of color can fit in the academic workforce. I have obtained critical information from 15 scholarly sources that discuss women of color's experiences in higher education. I utilized Critical Race theory to analyze their experiences within the academia culture and to determine if diversity matters. Women of color are underrepresented in faculty positions.

## Findings

Why does diversity matter in higher education institutions? Diversity matters because society keeps changing and women faculty of color promote different ideas, beliefs, and values that are important in shaping a college student. Throughout the contribution of women faculty of color to undergraduate education we are able to understand their experiences, feelings, and their reactions to the five themes found throughout the academic sources in relation to social justice. Higher education institutions, as mentioned, were originally created to serve the interests of White rich men. Higher education institutions are inherently based on white privilege and power to subordinate people of color. White faculty still oppress faculty of color, primarily women faculty of color, due to their lack of exposure to the tenure track process, as well as the commitment of their career and family responsibility, since many women faculty of color are first-generation professors. Women faculty of color maintained in associate profession levels, with limited opportunity ( De Welde, 2017). I found that women faculty of color who are hired in predominantly white institutions are not treated with validity leaving them with feelings of marginalization and no support system.

Within these scholarly sources, we find empowerment on the reflection of the women faculty of color in creating support and mentoring social networks. These personal narratives have empowered women faculty of color to find their voice and raise awareness to face racism in higher education about identity and culture. I conducted this research to shed light onto the experiences of women faculty of color, to find their cultural identity within the academy. I found that women faculty of color are told they are not adequately suitable for higher education institutions. The women faculty of color responded that they must know themselves in the academia culture and beware of the attribution they can take which insists them to be mindful of

their identity. The findings emphasize that women faculty of color are scrutinized and alienated, however, they push through in attempting to advance in their careers and find balance with their careers and their family responsibilities. In order to promote professional and academic success for college students we must value diverse faculty.

The findings highlight that women faculty of color must encourage themselves to socialize and gain the necessary skills to promote themselves with their fellow colleagues. These women must ignore the gender stereotypes to resist male dominance. Nonetheless, additional findings reveal that women don't promote themselves as much as men, despite having the same intellectual capacity; women are not confident with themselves due to gender racism. Overall, if women faculty of color find a mentor they are more likely to achieve success in learning to navigate through the institution's standards. Findings emphasize that mentoring is crucial for success of women faculty of color to guide them and find strategies to assist them to endorse them. The pathway to success is founded on the professional relationships between White faculty and women faculty of color that creates socio-cultural change.

It is vital that women faculty of color voice their struggles and resilience to eliminate the matrix of oppression in order to dismantle men from leadership positions and create social networks with existing faculty. Women faculty of color are instructed to adapt themselves to the norms of academic culture rather than encouraged to create their own change. The first socio-cultural change to gain opportunity for equity is to change the institutionalized policies to be able to understand how race and gender affect women faculty of color. The findings demonstrate a major difference between women of color and White women's experiences within predominantly white institutions. I determined that women faculty of color must be unique, creative, and be outside the box in order to be able to climb the academic ladder. I found that these women are

not only professors, but also become mentors to their students in finding a sense of belonging, however, these students are mainly students of color. Women faculty of color strive to find motivation in themselves to conquer such an unwelcoming environment that disregards their academic achievements along with their attributions to their student's learning. College is the prime time for students to gain the essential fundamentals to survive the fast changing world. I found it to be very effective to resist racial and gender bias by women faculty helping women faculty of color. Similarly, women faculty of color who established a relationship with a White women faculty increased their opportunity at advancing in their career. Additional findings suggest that higher education institutions promote change, thus far facilitate the representation of male dominance and privilege. I found that the need of support and mentors are crucial for the women faculty of color's growth in academia since their work collaborations are ignored.

Women faculty of color note that they can not cultivate the minds of others to make a change when this is no perseverance to embrace that change (De Welde, 2017). Many women faculty of color have sacrificed their families to achieve their career goals to transform higher education institutions by using their stories toward helping society understand the racial and equity issues. I found that women faculty of color used coping mechanism to attain success by surrounding themselves with supportive individuals, helping one another feel welcomed and embracing relationships with others.

## **Conclusion**

This research paper examined how predominately white institutions have sought to diversify its faculty by recruiting women faculty of color, but fail to address the racial and gender oppression of the lived experiences of these women. Their narratives provide a glimpse

of how they respond to the barriers they encounter as they rise to tenure process at predominately white institutions. We can't change the past of the policies and practices of higher education institutions, but we can change the matrix of domination to bring social awareness and justice to equity. Women faculty of color battle hostility and isolation of those marginalized that can affect the feelings of women faculty of color that directly impact their identity; figuring out social networks that contribute to the support and mentoring groups to overcome the struggles of marginalization.

For further research, I recommend that higher education institutions have an introduction to develop coping mechanism for newly hired faculty of color, establish a mentoring program create a relationship between the department chair and new hires for supportive colleagues that can assist the difficulties of academia in order to gain the necessary experience and exposure in surviving throughout their journey. Support groups empower women and give them the opportunity to connect with others who have been treated the same. Mentoring and support groups can deliver a difference to the lives of women faculty of color, but also White faculty that can learn about the socio-cultural differences that can guide future generations toward diversity. I also advocate that women faculty of color know themselves about their own strengths and weaknesses. Moving up the academic ladder is very competitive and will test faculty's capacity. Some of the limitations of my research were that I only focused on predominately white institutions. I could have focused on comparing community college and more diverse accepting higher education institutions. Another limitation of my research is I focused on was the narratives of women faculty of color when I could have also focused on the narratives of White women faculty.



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