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Female Faculty Experiences of Discrimination in Higher Education

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Kylie Gray Cole entitled "Female Faculty Experiences of Discrimination in Higher Education." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

Mark A. Hector, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Kathleen L. Davis, Joel F. Diambra, Tricia McClam

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Female Faculty

Experiences of Discrimination

in Higher Education

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Kylie Gray Cole

May 2007

DEDICATION

One of the most satisfying things about completing a dissertation on a women's issue is
being able to dedicate it to three women who have inspired me.

To my paternal grandmother, Donna Humpal Cole.
You are an independent
and tireless woman and an inspiration to me.
A true matriarch of our family,
your assertiveness taught me it is okay to ask for what is right
even if it makes others uncomfortable.

To my mother, Nola Evelyn Sullivan.
You always support me in the way only a mother can,
by knowing when I need you to let go and when I need you to hold on.
With more sacrifices than I'll ever know,
you provided the foundation of who I am
and the model for who I want to be.
Thanks, Mom.

In memoriam,
to my maternal grandmother, Dorothy Catherine Gray.
In your legacy, you modeled taking the difficult road,
which took amazing strength of heart and mind.
I think of you often and am always aware
of the remarkable sacrifices you made for your family.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to obtain a description of women faculty

members' experiences of discrimination in higher education. The phenomenological

research methodology informed the study. Seventeen participants were asked to respond

to the question, "Can you tell me about your experience of discrimination as a faculty

member in a higher education institution?" The interviews were in-depth and

unstructured. Verbatim transcripts of the audio-taped interviews were completed and a

phenomenological research group analyzed the data using the phenomenological method.

Two grounds and three main themes emerged from the data. The first ground was

Minimize/Describe Discrimination. This captured the participants' tendencies to deny or

minimize discriminations at times and then to describe experiences of discrimination at

other times. The second ground was Overt/Covert Discrimination. This ground served as

the foundation for each of the themes. Participants' descriptions varied between obvious

and overt acts of discriminatory behavior to subtle and covert examples. The three main

themes were: 1) Burdened, 2) Devalued, and 3) Supported. Each of these themes

encompassed several sub-themes which illustrated the participants' experiences of

discrimination in higher education. The final chapter of this dissertation related the major

findings of this study to existing literature and included research and practical

implications of the findings.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Discrimination on the basis of gender in higher education settings serves to undermine the progress women have made toward equal pay and respect in this employment area. Despite increases in the number of female faculty members employed in higher education, the number of women in the higher ranks is significantly fewer than that of men (Blum, 1991; Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998; Johnsrud, 1993; Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006). Furthermore, women faculty members are less likely to have tenure, and when tenure is achieved, it usually occurs later in their careers in comparison to men (Caplan, 1993; Pfafflin, 1984; Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006). In addition to lower status, discrimination against women faculty has been identified in other areas such as unwanted sexual attention, unfair pressure, questioning of qualifications, and exclusion from departmental groups (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998).

These areas of discrimination against women faculty have been identified by researchers through analysis of objective measures such as pay scales, tenure status, and incident reports as well as subjective measures such as surveys regarding the departmental climate for women. Additionally, there are many theories and speculations regarding the reasons for pay and tenure discrepancies. It has been proposed that the lower salaries and promotion rates are due to inferior work on the part of women faculty members. It has also been speculated that the roles of parenting and career are at greater conflict for women faculty members than for their male counterparts, resulting in less time dedicated to the professional lives of women faculty members. These explanations

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will be explored further in the literature review of this dissertation. However, the question remains as to what the experiences of discrimination are like for women faculty and what their views are on the reasons it continues to occur.

Purpose of this Research

This research fills a void by contributing to the understanding of the experiences of women faculty members who encountered discrimination. By tapping into the voices of women faculty members, this researcher entered their worldview and came away with a better understanding of the state of academe for women and the obstacles they encounter. A description of discrimination, guided by the participants' own words and representing their unique experiences, is the end goal of this research.

Research Question

This research was designed to answer the following question: How is discrimination experienced by women faculty members in higher education? Interviews, based on a qualitative research design and utilizing open-ended questions, enabled research participants to speak freely about the parts of their experiences that were most salient and important to them. This method of inquiry opened up the widest range of data, as the interview was unguided by the preconceptions of the researcher. The main objective was for the women to speak openly about their experiences of discrimination in higher education. Themes that emerged from the interviews were descriptive of the experiences of the women faculty and aimed to avoid contamination by the biases of the researcher.

Literature Review

The following literature review is divided into four sections corresponding with different barriers/discriminatory practices that are prevalent in the literature on women in academia. The areas include: 1) promotion and tenure, 2) salary, 3) institutional climate, and 4) parenting roles. Historical, as well as current studies were reported to illustrate the changes that have occurred in addition to the obstacles that remain for women in academia. The literature features an abundance of quantitative reports on numerical and statistical differences between male and female academics as well as several survey studies assessing perceptions of inequities in higher education. What are less common in the literature are qualitative studies documenting women's experiences in academia. And as stated by Mason and Goulden (2004a), "One cannot know what goes on in the thousands of minds represented by a single data point." (p. 4). This dissertation seeks to illuminate what goes on in a few of those minds.

Promotion and Tenure

Women tend to hold the lower ranks of the promotion scale in institutions of higher education. Some recent data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006, Table 227), documented that during the Fall semester of 2003, females held 23.7% of the positions at the professor level, 38.0% at the associate professor level, and 46.4% at the assistant professor level. Quite apparently, the ratio of women to men is much lower at the highest levels of the profession. Furthermore, at the lowest ranks of academia, women held just over half of the positions, 51.8% at instructor and 52.8% at lecturer.

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These numbers illustrate the "leaky pipeline" of academia, a term coined to describe the attrition of women and girls from all areas of math and science. When one considers that over half of all undergraduates are female and that the proportion decreases at each level of graduate education and faculty promotion, it is apparent that the "pipeline" or "funnel" narrows in a way that squeezes women out of academia (Caplan, 1993). Within the academic system, each level of promotion corresponds with an increasing level of exceptional work and contribution to a field. Respect and responsibility increase as individuals negotiate the academic ladder which, in turn, allows greater leverage for negotiation of salary, benefits, or positions outside the university. Thus, women are not standing on equal footing with men, particularly in the area of applying for and achieving tenured status. Caplan (1993) suggested that this filtering out of higher status positions in academia occurs in part due to the lack of incentives for women. For example, she asserted that women learn early in their academic endeavors that they are less likely to be mentored, paid well, or promoted and more likely to be sexually harassed, devalued, excluded, and isolated. Thus, there is little incentive to encourage women to pursue a graduate degree or a career in higher education and they begin to move away from academia.

Inequity is evident in the tenure system just as plainly as it is in regard to promotion. Likely this is due to the fact that at many institutions tenure is linked with promotion to associate professor rank. This is illustrated by data from the 2003-2004 academic year; when tenure was considered across all ranks, the percentage of females with tenure was 41.5% while the percentage of males with tenure was 56% (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006). When these numbers were assessed at each rank it was found that at

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the full professor level, 92% of male and 91.1% of female faculty members had tenure. At the associate professor level, 74.2% of males and 75.3% of females had tenure. And at the assistant professor level, 8.2% of males and 9.9% of females had tenure. Numbers were not analyzed for males and females at the instructor and lecturer levels (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006, Table 242).

Another national study found that of those individuals in tenured positions, 60% were male and 42% were female (Bradburn & Zimbler, 2002). Additionally, of those faculty members who were employed as full time instructional faculty, but not in a tenure track position, 15% were male while 24% were female. Thus, the researchers concluded that men were more likely than women to hold tenured status while women were more likely than men to be employed in non-tenure track positions. Since there are greater numbers of men at the higher echelons of academia, it follows that job performance evaluation criteria are, for the most part, set by men and evaluated by men.

What this factual data does not tell us is why women are underrepresented at higher levels of academia. Are women seeking promotions and tenure? Is their work of lower quality? Are the evaluations equitable? Do women perceive this as discriminatory? Do men? Many researchers have attempted to address these questions.

A survey of medical faculty by Buckley, Sanders, Shih, Kallar, and Hampton (2000) found that only 5% of women faculty had attained the rank of professor versus 39% of the male faculty. Of those at the level of professor, 13% of the women and 48% of the men were in tenured positions. Male faculty members tended to value national visibility, scholarship and leadership much more than women, while women tended to place more value on recognition by peers, patients and students. Since the values of the

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male faculty members were more consistent with the tenure evaluation criteria, males were more likely to achieve these measures of success and attain tenure than women.

In a qualitative study, Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004a) interviewed female faculty members with regard to management of their personal and professional lives. Their subsequent data analysis revealed a theme of "ambiguity of tenure expectations." Women were unsure of the requirements and procedures for receiving tenure and thus found the process stressful. One participant described the ambiguous process as "smoke and mirrors." Another commented, "You hear a lot on different people's views on what it takes to get tenure around here, and what they say is there can be no gaps. If that is the case, I already have a gap [because of having a child], and I am doomed" (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a, p. 246).

In another study, participants were asked about organizational barriers that hinder career progress (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). Sixty percent of women of color stated that they believed that removal of organizational barriers would make their progress easier, compared to 45% of white women, 35% of men of color and 30% of white men. One participant in this study commented that she felt "manipulated" by the university when her offer for a tenure track position at another site was not matched by her department until after she made herself more valuable in their eyes by winning a prestigious award. She wondered, "Why was there now a tenure track job for me because I had gotten an award, whereas a month or two before there was no tenure track job?" (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001, p. 170).

Other research supports the view that women are more likely than men to either gravitate toward or be assigned to duties other than research within their academic

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programs. Some researchers assert that teaching and advising are disproportionately assigned to women because they are perceived to be better at "nurturing" students (Caplan, 1993). However, the evaluation criteria for promotion and tenure rely heavily on research to determine merit. Advocates for women suggested that teaching and service roles, such as serving on committees or advising students, should be given more weight in making promotion and tenure decisions (Caplan, 1993; Viers & Blieszner, 2004). For some, difficulty or failure in the critical process of promotion and tenure can be detrimental or even fatal to the career of aspiring academics. In particular, Bronstein and Farnsworth (1998) noted that such decisions can cause psychological trauma because individuals are very committed to their research and teaching agendas and may take negative feedback as very personally based.

Both quantitative numbers and qualitative descriptions gathered in current research attest to the assertion that the promotion and tenure process in higher education favors men in many respects. This same trend is also evident in salaries for men and women in higher education as illustrated in the next section of this literature review.
Salary

The National Center for Education Statistics (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006, Table 235) found that during the 2004-2005 academic year, women at the professor level made an average of $79,160 compared to their male colleagues' average salary of $91,290. At the associate level, salaries differed by about $4,500, with men making $65,394 for women's $60,809. Women made about $4,000 less than men at the assistant professor level, $51,154 and $55,215, respectively. Male instructors made $51,380 on

average, while female instructors made an average of $48,351. Finally, when considered at the lecturer level, women made an average of $42,455 to men's $46,929.

A survey of female faculty and staff indicated that 63% perceived sex discrimination at their institution and 43% of those specifically mentioned hiring or salaries as an area of discrimination (Reid, 1987). Salaries for male and female faculty members averaged about 20% higher for males across all ranks, but were most pronounced at the full professor ranks (Rose & Danner, 1998). Salaries are, of course, dependent on a variety of factors such as tenure status, rank, teaching load, research and grant productivity, and departmental service. However, in a national study in which many demographic variables such as age, race, field, research, and other mitigating factors were controlled, full-time women faculty members earned on average, $53,600 while their male counterparts earned $58,700 (Bradburn & Zimbler, 2002). Bradburn and Zimbler (2002), therefore, concluded that for equal work, education, status, and prestige, women are worth over $5,000 less to universities than men. Reasons have been proposed for these salary differences (Rose & Danner, 1998). One is that women do not negotiate sufficiently for their deserved salaries; a second is that women are often unaware of the discrepancies in salaries.

Another variable that has an impact on salary is field of study. Those fields to which women are more likely to gravitate such as, library sciences, education, humanities, and English tend to be among the lowest in salary at a university. Whereas engineering, chemistry, biology, and law are areas often dominated by men and are correspondingly among the highest paid positions (Perna, 2001; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995; Smart, 1991). An example is in the field of English literature,

"women faculty earn $27,000 less than women in Mechanical Engineering and $33,000 less than men in Mechanical Engineering." (Umbach, 2006, p. 17). Umbach concluded that since women tend to teach in fields that have high teaching loads and less time and funding for research, they take a "double hit," as they earn less due to their field of choice as well as their sex.

Many researchers have attempted to control for these and other variables when analyzing salary differences. For example Umbach (2006) used a research model that controlled for many individual characteristics such as status, tenure, research productivity, and teaching load. He found that controlling for these factors reduced the gender inequity pay gap from about 22% to about 8% in favor of males. Umbach (2006) then assessed another variable that up until this point had not been considered: the supply of doctoral level applicants for particular fields. He found evidence that consideration of the labor market when analyzing salary differences reduces the male/female salary gap from 8% to 6.8%.

A qualitative study on career development experiences by Hernandez and Morales (1999) uncovered a theme of the "compromising woman" which may provide some insight into why women settle for lower salaries for equal work. The "compromising woman" is a description of a woman who sacrifices her career in favor of her spouse's career. This woman has the attitude that she makes "enough" money at her job and that she is expected to give up professional "ladder climbing" if her spouse is transferred to a new location. Thus, she never becomes overly committed to her career because she could be required to abandon her pursuits at any time. In one survey, women were much more likely than men to report that their own careers were affected by their partner's career

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decisions (Buckley, Sanders, Shih, Kallar, & Hampton, 2000). This deference to another's career aspirations may be construed as a lack of interest or dedication to one's own career and negatively affect hiring, salary, or tenure board decisions.

In sum, gender inequities in salary are well documented and numerous reasons for this trend have been posited and researched. Some possibilities include: women are less committed to their careers than men, women are more likely to choose low paying fields, women do not negotiate well for salary, and women devote their academic time to areas other than research. The next section on institutional climate illuminates even more possible reasons for women's lower status and pay.

Institutional Climate

The perceptions, attitudes and expectations that define an institution are often referred to as the "institutional climate." Depending on one's status within an organization, institutional climate can vary. For example, race, sexual orientation, seniority, sex, religious affiliation, and attractiveness are all variables that can cause differential treatment and, therefore, can vary the "climate" in which one works. Research on faculty consistently revealed that women and men experience academia differently (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998; Caplan, 1993; Johnsrud, 1993). One factor that sways this climate is numbers. In academia, those who set the institutional climate are usually white males because they have typically been there the longest and have the most power (Viers & Blieszner, 2004). This is not to say that academic climate cannot be influenced by those with less power, but it is a less likely occurrence.

To begin talking about institutional climate we must first recognize that women are a minority in higher education. The National Center for Education Statistics reported

that for the fall semester of 2003, females represented 39.3% of full time instruction and

research faculty members at degree granting institutions (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006,

Table 223). Furthermore, African-American women represented only 2.9% of faculty

members in the same survey. These numbers are important when one considers that

review for promotion and tenure in most universities is done by peers and colleagues.

When there is inequity in the numbers of men versus women or racial minority versus

majority, the criteria for evaluation may be similarly skewed in favor of the majority

(Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995). For example, in-groups, in social

psychology research are often given leniency and the benefit of the doubt, whereas out-

groups are held to the standards (Caplan, 1993; Williams, 2004). Hypothetically, if a

woman and man with identical credentials and vitas were applying for a job, the man (in-

group member) might be hired despite the fact that he is not licensed, whereas the woman

(out-group) might be denied the position for the same reason. In addition, individuals are

more likely to recall negative information regarding out-groups than in-groups due to the

recall bias (Williams, 2004). Thus, a woman's mistakes may be recalled longer than a

man's.

Often the institutional climate within the university system is based on a

"patriarchal power structure" which is incompatible with many women's work styles

(Viers & Blieszner, 2004, p. 492). This structure emphasizes individual achievement,

competition for limited funds, and rivalry within and among departments for prestigious

and desired positions, including administrative positions. Women tend to work best in

collaborative, supportive environments that allow them to make use of their

communication and relationship skills. Thus, the systems that have been embraced by the

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higher education system put women at a disadvantage (Viers & Blieszner, 2004). In one study, both women of color and white women reported their institutions as more hostile, reserved, indifferent, disrespectful, elitist, competitive, worsening, and unsupportive than did white males (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). One reason for this differing perception might be that assertive behaviors, which are viewed favorably in men, may be criticized in women. Women who do not conform to the patriarchal power structure are labeled "not collegial" and suffer retribution by those in power (Caplan, 1993). On the other hand, nurturing behaviors in women may be viewed as "intellectually weak" (Williams, 2004). This double bind situation leaves women little room for maneuvering in the academic world.

In a study of African-American faculty and administrators, both men and women believed their institution's leave policies were fair and that promotion and tenure criteria were clearly defined (Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995). However, African-American women perceived the opportunity for collaborative research as less available to them than did African-American men. In addition, women in this study were less likely than men to agree that administrators were helpful to faculty when obtaining support for research endeavors. These perceived differences could have an impact on applications for promotion or tenure, particularly because research is such a strong variable when considering a faculty member's productivity. If women perceive less opportunity for collaboration with other faculty members, they will be less likely to be involved in collaborative research which undoubtedly will be reflected in their curriculum vitae. Or as stated by the authors, "If Black women faculty and administrators feel excluded from the collaborative process, if they lack mentors and older colleagues who are willing to

work with them, then these perceptions and conditions create a professional milieu for African-American women that is not conducive to research productivity because many research projects are jointly conceived and pursued by colleagues." (Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995, p. 406).

When presented with data that showed that men were much more likely than women to participate in an orientation program at their institution, Singh, Robinson, and Williams-Green (1995) made a disturbing interpretation. They posited that university administrators take the socialization of male faculty members more seriously, thus providing males with more means and opportunities to interact with and become comfortable in the system. By denying female faculty members this same privilege to become familiar with the climate in their new environment, they are putting women at a disadvantage to their male counterparts from the beginning of their employment. It is no wonder that these women reported feeling less accepted in the academic community and felt less citizenship in the institution than their male counterparts.

Johnsrud (1993, p.7) summarized several studies that indicated that women and minorities experienced feeling "unwelcomed, unappreciated, and unwanted" in academia. This atmosphere is frequently referred to as the "old boys' network" by those familiar with the sentiment (Hernandez & Morales, 1999). For example, many women faculty members sense a lack of respect from male colleagues (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998) which can manifest in a devaluing of research prerogatives or pressure to alter research plans to conform to departmental agendas (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). In comparison to African-American men, African-American women indicated that they felt less acceptance and citizenship in the academic community (Singh, Robinson, & Williams-

Green, 1995). In regard to being excluded, women participants in Bronstein and Farnsworth's (1998) study reported that they were left out of both social events as well as important meetings.

Bronstein and Farnsworth (1998) posited that the more excluded and devalued a woman feels in her department, the more likely she is to withdraw from experiences with other faculty members and keep to herself. This behavior, they assert, while it is self-protective and understandable, can be detrimental to the woman's career because she will become marginalized and have less input into policies that may affect her and could change the institutional climate for women. "If women and minorities reside on the periphery of the academy, they are far less likely to receive the same assistance as those on the 'inside'." (Johnsrud, 1993, p. 10).

Mentoring is another variable that affects institutional climate for women (Gibson, 2004; Johnsrud, 1993). Many studies have found that women enjoy less mentoring when new to the field or see their mentoring as less useful than do males (Caplan, 1993; Hernandez & Morales, 1999; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). Thomas and Hollenshead (2001) found that when participants were surveyed to ascertain if they had a mentor whom they valued, women of color were least likely to report such a person in their lives (58%), men of color (65%), white women (75%) and white men (78%). Further, of those women who had a mentor, the sex of that mentor was likely to be male. Men may be less attuned to the particular issues women academics face and therefore may not be ideal mentors for young women professionals. One woman in Gibson's (2004) interviews on the experience of being

mentored, stated that her male mentor was not the best advisor for her concerns about issues that pertained to women in particular.

When good mentoring relationships are established, they are touted as invaluable to the experience of beginning a career in higher education. Women with good mentors reported feeling "less alone" in their experiences (Gibson, 2004). On the other hand, with no or poor mentoring, it is difficult for faculty members to negotiate the highly established and often political realm of academia. "Unwritten rules" are a frequent complaint of women of color faculty members. They stated that they were expected to abide by rules and policies on which they were not informed or counseled (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001).

It may be discouraging and intimidating to young women faculty members who are not provided with a solid path to attain their goals. They rarely see successful women in high ranking academic positions, and even less often do they see high ranking women who have children and families. Thus, their own aspirations may be stifled. Viers and Blieszner (2004) suggested that the mentoring of female faculty needs to be supported by the administration and should focus on developmental patterns of women that may differ from those of men. But as with many solutions, the need for more women mentors to guide and advise junior faculty members creates additional problems for the few women who have attained the ranks of seniority in an institution. Since there are fewer women at high ranks of faculty and administrative positions, the burden of serving as a mentor and role model to all incoming female faculty members creates less time to devote to research and grant writing which is undoubtedly more valued by the institutions. Some have

suggested that mentoring new faculty members should replace certain other duties so that the workload does not become unmanageable (Viers & Blieszner, 2004).

Finally, a major impact on institutional climate for women in academia is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, according to DeFour (1987), is an attempt by one person to exert power over another person. Sexual harassment can be manifested in several different ways including gender harassment, sexual jokes, language, seductive behavior, sexual bribery, and sexual imposition. Women in higher education reported receiving unwanted sexual attention significantly more often than men (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998). In a 1998 survey of faculty experiences of interpersonal climate, 10% of newly hired females and 20% of long-term female faculty members reported sexual harassment (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998). Additionally, inappropriate comments regarding personality, communication style, age, appearance, or personal life were experienced more often by women than men in academia (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998; Johnsrud, 1993).

These experiences can be particularly damaging to the victim both professionally and personally, as it may leave the women feeling disrespected, devalued, and helpless. Specifically, non-tenured faculty may feel that their future careers hinge on their reactions to inappropriate sexual references because of the possible difficult and public investigation that may follow as a result of a formal complaint (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998). Some have suggested that not wanting to alienate male colleagues, who are frequently in higher positions of authority, is another reason for women's silence (Grauerholz, 1996). For the same reason, women who do come forward risk isolation from their female colleagues as well, who desire to protect their own tenuous positions.

Sexual harassment comes from supervisors, colleagues, and students and is nearly always initiated by men (Grauerholz, 1996). For example, a case study related the sexual harassment of a young Japanese faculty member who heard sexist jokes, was touched inappropriately, and was expected to serve food and drinks to her male colleagues at faculty gatherings (Akita, 2002). Other examples include when students or colleagues address female faculty members more informally than they do male faculty members, such as by first names or terms of endearment (Akita, 2002; Grauerholz, 1996). While these examples of sexual harassment certainly affect the institutional climate, Grauerholz (1996) suggested that questions remain about the impact of sexual harassment on women faculty members' experiences in higher education.

Overall, institutional climate consists of a variety of factors some of which are: the availability of women mentors, sexual harassment, perceptions of exclusion, devaluing of women's work, collaborative opportunities, the "good old boys' network," and the attitude of those in power toward women. Research studies have found inequity for women in all of these areas.

Parenting Roles

One often cited reason for the gender disparity in promotion, tenure, and salary at institutions of higher learning is the differing roles of mothers and fathers regarding child care. Our society continues to encourage and expect women to have a larger role with regard to family than men (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a). This remains true of women faculty members, of whom about 31% have children (Perna, 2001). Several studies show that women academics had fewer children than men and were less likely to be partnered (Caplan, 1993; Mason & Goulden, 2004a; Mason & Goulden, 2004b; Perna, 2001).

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Researchers found negative correlations between having children and research publications (Hargens, McCann, & Reskin, 1978). This relationship can be detrimental to parents during the tenure review process when research publications are heavily weighed. At large public and private universities with strong reputations, the most important variable in promotion and tenure decisions is the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals. Additionally, increased anxiety and conflict is a common difficulty for women trying to balance their family and professional roles because interruptions from work for pregnancy and maternity leave may be construed as a lack of commitment to her career (Armenti, 2004). Other research taps into the fear many women faculty members have that time dedicated to children will threaten their ability to gain tenure status (Armenti, 2004; Finkel & Olswang, 1996), thus many postpone or abandon their desire for children in order to pursue a career in academia. The outlook is bleak for those women who want both tenure and a family (Mason & Goulden, 2004a). In one study, tenured women were twice as likely as tenured men to be single 12 years after graduating with their doctoral degree. Further, only one in three women who began a tenure track position prior to having children ever became mothers. Men, however, were more likely to have children and to have their children enter their family during the pre-tenure process (Mason & Goulden, 2004b).

Another interesting finding of the Mason and Goulden (2004a) project was that "second tier" women PhDs (i.e. adjunct or part-time) were on a comparative level with men regarding having children and remaining married, while "first tier" (i.e. full-time) women PhDs were less likely to have children and more likely to divorce. Certainly some of these facts are due to lifestyle choices and many women do not desire parenthood.

However, Williams (2004) asserted that work environments that are not family-friendly hurt both women who desire families and those who do not. She noted that resentments can occur when non-mothers are asked to cover responsibilities of women out on parental leave or when they are asked to support family-friendly policy change, as this may increase the perception that their choice to be childless is "unnatural."

In Armenti's (2004) research, there is support for the belief that taking time away from work for maternity leave or child care will result in "cumulative disadvantage across her career" (p. 214). Having children early in a career tended to have a smaller impact on career achievement for men than for women. For example, when a child was born within the first five years of receiving a doctoral degree (for men or women), men were 38% more likely than women to receive tenure (Mason & Goulden, 2004a). One woman who decided to have a child prior to receiving tenure viewed her decision as "career suicide" and another stated she had to "lower her expectations" in regard to a career in academia (Wilson, 2003).

Evidence exists that for those women who do have children during their academic careers, much thought goes into the timing of the pregnancy. Armenti (2004) interviewed women who described the "May baby phenomenon" and the "hidden pregnancy phenomenon." Mason and Goulden (2004a) referred to the "baby gap." Women attempted to time their pregnancies so that their children were born in May. This allowed them the summer months, in which academic demands were usually less, to become accustomed to parenthood prior to beginning classes again in September. Another alternative was that women postponed having children until after they received tenure, a sacrifice that left many having children after the age of 35, which coincides with

increased risk of complications in pregnancy (Armenti, 2004). Additionally, women were over twice as likely as men to agree with the statement, "I had fewer children than I wanted." (Mason & Goulden, 2004a). These situations occur because women "are attempting to adapt to the male life course model which sets the taken-for-granted parameters of the academic career." (Armenti, 2004, p. 223). Men at the highest ranks of academia are often older men, who, due to generational norms, did not often have to consider the expenses both in time and energy of child rearing, and thus may fail to recognize the barriers that this patriarchal system holds for women academics.

Some universities have attempted to appease women who were concerned about having a family prior to gaining tenure by instituting a policy that added one year to the tenure clock if a woman had a child during her pre-tenure employment. While a step in the right direction according to most women, many remained concerned that it "fails to eliminate the damaging effects of having children" (Armenti, 2004, p. 221). Women feared their department chairs and colleagues might view the stopping of the tenure clock as a "handicap" or as evidence that the applicant received special treatment, thus damaging their chances at tenure (Armenti, 2004; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004b). Therefore, many programs aimed at recruiting and retaining women in faculty positions are underused for fear of "retribution" (Mason & Goulden, 2004a).

As Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004a) summarized, "the literature suggests that while men and women as professionals, partners, and parents struggle with the task of achieving a balance between work and family life, the challenge for women is greater than for men, given the simple logistics of the biological clock, the tenure clock, the physical demands of pregnancy and childbirth, the gendered expectations of family

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obligations and the ongoing disparity with which women take on the 'second shift'

through maintenance of children and home" (p. 236). So when assessing the state of

academe for women compared to men, it is important to look at both the numbers for

rates of tenure, promotion, and salary, but to also consider the lifestyle adapted by men

and women academics. It seems that even as the gap closes on the traditional measures of

success in higher education, the sacrifice may be coming in another area of women's

lives.

<div align="center">Conclusions of the Literature Review</div>

Literature on the state of women in the academy is reported primarily from the

1970s through the present. Most of the literature is empirical and quantitative and it

documents the inequity in the numbers of women versus men in higher education, the

disparity in the salaries of women academics compared to men, and the differences in

promotion and tenure rates for the sexes. National population compilations, such as the

National Center for Education Statistics report (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006), are

generated annually to track changes in education related statistics. Thus, there are many

quantitative documentations of the status of women faculty in higher education and the

discriminations that exist. Some researchers have surveyed women on the various aspects

of institutional climate and other factors that impact their careers. In recent years, more

emphasis has been put on the importance of individual experiences and women's voices

are heard more often in the literature pertaining to gender inequity.

With the exception of Caplan's (1993) book, no research studies were found that

focus on understanding the totality of women's experiences of discrimination, as defined

and lived by women. However, many researchers regard this as an important area to

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document and understand. Specifically, researchers of women's issues call for the further uncovering of women's stories and perspectives to highlight discriminations and stimulate change (Caplan, 1993; Hernandez & Morales, 1999). The Knight Higher Education Collaborative (2001), in an essay based on the Roundtable on the Opportunities for Women in Higher Education, stated unequivocally, "Indeed, the telling of stories is a powerful first step in changing the character of an institution. It is an action that exerts pressure on an existing order, helping to drive a cultural shift that would allow more women into the centers of power in a university or college." (p. 5). They further asserted that, "the contribution of the personal narrative is to help formulate what questions should be asked and what data ought to be considered as part of the decision-making process." (The Knight Higher Education Collaborative, 2001, p. 6). This researcher sought the personal narrative, the descriptive experience, of women in higher education who have experienced discrimination with the goal of coming to a better understanding of their experiences.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research

A plethora of quantitative data has been compiled on women in higher education, as reported in the first chapter of this document. Documentation of individual experiences are essential to understanding and ultimately overcoming inequities and researchers in psychology call for the use of qualitative research methods when studying minority groups (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Therefore, a qualitative research methodology was used in this research study.

Qualitative research is one way to access the stories and experiences of a group when quantitative data is insufficient to provide the descriptive and necessary details to completely understand the issues in question. Qualitative research, as defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2000), "seeks answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning [whereas] quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables" (p. 8). This search for meaning is the essence of qualitative research in that it allows the researcher to observe and to contemplate the interactions of others within societal boundaries and come to an understanding of how and why individuals act as they do (Vidich & Lyman, 2000).

Greenwood and Levin (2000) argue that qualitative research can be "socially meaningful" by focusing on the needs of particular groups. Thus, by invoking a method which gives individual voices to the multitude of numbers and statistics that surround the issue of gender discrimination, this research contributes to the field by creating a fuller understanding of the experience of discrimination in higher education. Meaning for experiences comes from the participants themselves rather than being defined by the

researcher. Tapping into the voices of the participants and seeking to understand their worldviews was the goal of this research. The remainder of this chapter describes the precise methodology and technique used in this research and presents the findings of the bracketing interview.

<center>Existential-Phenomenological Research</center>

This study relied on a specific technique of qualitative research: the existential-phenomenological approach. The goal of this research technique was to uncover and descriptively express themes of an individual's experience (Polkinghorne, 1983). Rather than predict behavior or generalize experiences, as is often the goal of more traditional methodologies, the objective of this research is to describe experiences. This method, "neither denies experience nor denigrates it or transforms it into operationally defined behavior; it must be, in short, a method that remains with human experience as it is experienced, one which tries to sustain contact with experiences as it is given" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 53). The goal of a phenomenological researcher is to gain an understanding of the phenomena being studied in order to have a deeper understanding of the lived experience. In a recent article on the use of phenomenology in counseling psychology research, Wertz (2005) summarized the intent behind Edmund Husserl's call to move away from traditional scientific inquiry which relies on hypotheses, theories, and assumptions. He stated that the phenomenological researcher does not assume that those assumptions are false, but he/she sets them aside in order to have "fresh access" to the phenomena.

The identification of commonalities within and among participants' experiences is required for the researcher to understand fully the phenomena (Patton, 1990). An

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interview is the ideal forum for reaching the goals of the phenomenological researcher because one of the keys of phenomenology is context. Interviews allow participants to give the context around their experiences and enable the researcher to understand the phenomena within the framework of the participant's life. When context is obtained it brings a critical understanding to a phenomenon that would otherwise be subject only to the researcher's biased perceptions (Suzuki, Ahluwalia, Mattis, & Quizon, 2005).

The interviewer is described as the "tool" in phenomenological research and the relationship between the interviewer and the participant is seen as collaborative (Merriam, 1998b; Thomas & Pollio, 2002). This collaboration, while viewed as having a potential for "error" in traditional research endeavors, is seen as an opportunity for deeper understanding by phenomenological researchers (Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

The phenomenological method consists of an open-ended interview in which the researcher begins by asking the participant to describe his/her experiences (Wertz, 2005). During the interview, the researcher attempts to closely follow the participant's descriptions. He/she often summarizes the participant's words in order to clarify and show understanding. The researcher refrains from introducing new material into the interview through questions or comments in order to limit the influence of his/her bias (Giorgi, 1970). Typically, the interviews are audio-taped and transcribed verbatim; the transcripts of the participant's descriptions serve as the data to be analyzed in subsequent steps.

No single method or procedure can be delineated for phenomenological research, as the approach should vary depending on the phenomena in question and the researcher's aims (Colaizzi, 1978; Wertz, 2005). As a general outline, Colaizzi suggested

seven steps for phenomenological data analysis: 1) read descriptions given by each participant, 2) search for sentences that relate directly to the research question, 3) discover meaning in these statements, 4) devise clusters of themes, 5) compile themes and statements into a comprehensive description, 6) make a statement about the structure of themes, and 7) verify findings with each participant (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 59-62). Giorgi (1985) likewise presented a similar protocol for phenomenological researchers which included 1) reading the description of the experience; 2) tracking "meaning units" within a description; 3) considering each meaning unit in the context of the phenomenon being studied; and 4) integrating one's insights about the meaning units into a descriptive statement about the experience. Colaizzi's (1978) and Giorgi's (1985) protocol were followed in this research.

<p style="text-align:center">Bracketing</p>

Prior to conducting the research, the researcher must become aware of his/her own perceptions and biases regarding the topic under investigation (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1970; Suzuki, Ahluwalia, Mattis, & Quizon, 2005; Thomas & Pollio, 2002; Valle & King, 1978). Colaizzi (1978) suggested that a researcher should begin by questioning what prompted his/her interest in the phenomena, and how his/her own perceptions might influence the outcome of the research. Valle and King (1978) recommend attempting "to suspend or put in abeyance one's preconceptions and presuppositions" through the use of a bracketing interview (p. 12). It is maintained that complete objectivity and indifference to the phenomena is not essential, in fact, it is inevitable when conducting meaningful research that the researcher will be impacted by the topic. However, an awareness of presuppositions may allow the researcher to be open to any unexpected ideas the

participants may bring up in the interview. This process of questioning one's own

motivations and biases is known as "bracketing" and is typically done through an

interview process that is similar to the interviews carried out with the participants. The

researcher often engages in this process by inviting another trained phenomenological

interviewer to dialogue with her/him about the phenomena in question. This discussion is

then reviewed and analyzed for biases and themes with the goal of bringing to awareness

any presuppositions that may influence the researcher. Since the researcher for this

dissertation was familiar with data and experiences relating to sex discrimination in

higher education, the bracketing interview was an important attempt to preclude her bias

from the project. In addition, it gave her the experience of being interviewed on the topic

and allowed her to become more aware of her own understanding of the phenomena

(Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997). The results of this bracketing interview are

presented at the end of this chapter.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

Participants in this study were 17 women faculty members at institutions of higher

education who have experienced discrimination. Polkinghorne (1983) stated that an

experience of the phenomena and a willingness to share that experience are the only

factors to be considered when selecting participants. No other criteria were used when

recruiting participants for this research. With quite the opposite intent of the tradition of

random sampling, researchers using the phenomenological method seek participants

purposefully, to gain the most knowledge from them (Merriam, 1998a; Thomas & Pollio,

2002; Wertz, 2005). In regard to selecting an adequate number of participants, Wertz

(2005) stated that one must consider "the nature of the research problem and the potential

yield of findings" (p. 171). Between six and twelve interviews is normally considered

sufficient to identify commonalities and themes among participants (Thomas & Pollio,

2002). It is acceptable practice in phenomenological research to continue analyzing

transcripts until the themes are redundant and no new themes emerge from the data

(Morrow, 2005; Thomas & Pollio, 2002). This saturation of data may occur after an in-

depth analysis of three to five transcripts and subsequent interviews may be deemed

unnecessary to understand the phenomena (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997; Wertz,

2005). Eighteen women were interviewed for this research and seventeen of the

interviews were transcribed and analyzed (One was omitted due to a problem with the

audio recording.). Although redundancy in the themes occurred well prior to the

eighteenth interview, the researcher wanted to ensure saturation of the data due to the

nature of this research project.

   Participants were recruited via the snowball sampling method (Huck, 2000). The

first step in this technique involves the direct solicitation by the researcher of individuals

who have had the experience in question. If enough participants cannot be obtained using

this method, the second step is for the researcher to ask participants for referrals to

individuals they think might be willing to participate in the research. This process

continued until enough individuals agreed to participate. This method allowed the

researcher to gain as much in-depth data as possible about the research question by

soliciting participation from individuals who were either known to the researcher or

connected with another individual who was known to the researcher. This personal

connection, while not recommended for quantitative research, is acceptable for

qualitative research because the purposes differ. For qualitative research, the fundamental

purpose is the gain a full description and understanding of the phenomena in question and not to generalize the findings to a larger group.

Of the 72 women who were asked to participate, 52 declined, 18 accepted, and 2 accepted but were not interviewed due to scheduling conflicts. Reasons for declining participation included individuals stating they were "too busy," "not a good candidate," or "concerned with being identified." Demographic information such as tenure status, rank, age, race, type of institution, marital status, and field of study were solicited from the research participants following the interview (Appendix A). This was done to prevent the participants' descriptions of discrimination from being influenced by the demographic questionnaire. The final tabulation included 18 women, however, participant number 17 was omitted from analyses because her interview could not be transcribed due to an audio taping error. She is included in this table because she did share her story of discrimination. The age range of the participants was 29-67 years, and they had spent between 1 and 38 years as faculty members in higher education. Fourteen of the women were currently employed in research universities, and two each came from community or liberal arts colleges. Five achieved the rank of full professor, seven associate professor, and six assistant professor. Further demographic data are presented in Table 1.

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

Potential participants were contacted via personal communication from the researcher. Individuals were asked if they had experienced discrimination as a faculty member in higher education and if they were willing to be interviewed regarding that experience. For the purposes of this research, "discrimination" was defined by the

Table 1.

Demographic data of participants.

	Age	Years in Higher Education	Type of Institution	Rank	Tenure Status	Publications	Marital Status
1	54	15	Research	Associate	Not Tenured	20+	Married
2	59	32	Research	Professor	Tenured	22	Single
3	48	7	Research	Associate	Not Tenured	9	Divorced
4	42	10	Research	Associate	Tenured	9	Married
5	61	33	Community	Professor	Tenured (retired)	6	Married
6	58	25	Research	Professor	Tenured	20	Married
7	67	38	Research	Professor	Tenured	40+	Widowed
8	60	33	Research	Professor	Tenured	35	Single
9	66	28	Liberal Arts	Professor	Tenured	12+	Married
10	62	22	Research	Associate	Tenured (retired)	Not Reported	Single
11	42	4	Research	Assistant	Non-tenure Track	50	Married
12	29	1	Liberal Arts	Professor	Not Tenured	2	Single
13	32	7	Community	Associate	Not Tenured	1	Single
14	48	5	Research	Assistant	Non-tenure Track	1	Divorced
15	34	5	Research	Assistant	Non-tenure Track	8	Married
16	61	12	Research	Associate	Not Tenured	7	Partnered
17	40	6	Research	Assistant	Not Tenured	4	Married
18	47	8	Research	Associate	Tenured	0	Married

participants. Rather than putting restrictive boundaries on the subject matter of the interviews, any experience that a participant viewed as discriminatory was acceptable. At the time of this initial contact with the participant, informed consent, audio taping, and confidentiality were explained so the participants had time to consider their participation before the actual interview date. An interview time was arranged at the participant's convenience in a private setting and a reminder phone call or email was made to the participant one day in advance of the interview. Two hours were scheduled for each interview, however, participants were not asked to talk for the entire time.

Upon meeting with the participant for the interview, the researcher provided two copies of the informed consent document (Appendix B). The participant was given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the procedure for the interview and taping. The researcher explained that a pseudonym will replace their name in the transcripts and all identifying information will be removed, such as references to specific individuals, departments, institutions, and cities. The researcher requested that the participants not specifically identify individuals and departments. After the interview, the participant was given the opportunity to review the final transcript of the interview if they so desired. Only one participant wished to do this. When the participant's concerns and questions were fully addressed, they signed the informed consent document. The participants received a copy of the document for their own use; it included the researcher's contact information in case the participant needed to contact the researcher following the interview.

Each interview began with the question, "Can you tell me about your experience of discrimination as a faculty member in a higher education institution?" The interviews were in-depth and unstructured, with the researcher responding with prompts for additional information when appropriate. The researcher attempted to maintain an impartial attitude during the interview and did not solicit information other than that introduced by the participant. Wertz (2005) noted that gaining concrete details about a phenomenon as it is lived, rather than conjectures or theories about an issue, is the aim of the interviewer. Thus, the researcher often responded to a break in the participant's dialogue by saying, "Can you tell me more about that?" or "Could you share an example to illustrate that idea?" Alternatively, the researcher summarized the participant's story and asked for confirmation on the accuracy of the summary. When the participant had no more information to give the researcher, the researcher summarized the narrative of the participant. This process enabled the research participant to identify any themes which had been ignored by the researcher (Hector, 2003). Each interview was audio taped for later transcription.

Before the participant was excused, the researcher indicated that she would be following-up with the participant by email within three days. This follow-up contact allowed the participant to add any additional information after they had time for reflection. The demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) was either given directly after the interview or sent with the follow-up email in order to gain descriptive information on the participants without that information affecting the course/content of the interview. Additionally, the researcher explained to participants that in order to ensure that the end product fully captures their experience, they would be given the opportunity to react to

the final thematic structure. An attachment of the thematic structure was sent to each participant via email and any additional feedback was considered in the final research project.

<center>Data Analysis</center>

An open interpretive research group, consisting of 3-5 individuals who were familiar with the process of phenomenological research, took part in the data analysis (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997). Group members were not required to be experts in the phenomena being studied, but were asked to critically examine the transcripts and themes to ensure the participants' descriptions and meanings were upheld (Thomas & Pollio, 2002). This process of involving a research team helped ensure that one individual did not unduly affect the interpretation of the data and thus was critical to maintaining rigor in phenomenological research methods.

The confidentiality of the participants was always the utmost concern of the researcher and thus, three protections were in place to help ensure anonymity: 1) the replacing of identifying information with pseudonyms in the transcription process, 2) the requiring of research team members to sign a pledge of confidentiality (Appendix C), and 3) the respecting of one participant's request that her transcript not be studied by certain research team members.

The research team was involved in steps one through four of Colaizzi's (1978) recommended steps for phenomenological research. First, the group read the transcripts aloud and attempted to identify meaning units and general themes within interviews. Their intent was to analyze these transcripts independent of the influence of prior research and theory to the extent possible (Giorgi, 1970; Wertz, 2005). Each team

member made their own notations on a transcript and then shared what they considered important with the group. In the second phase, the research team searched for examples as well as contradictions in the data and attempted to be aware when experiences of individual participants were similar or repetitive.

Colaizzi (1978) referred to the third step in the process as the "formulation of meanings" stage in which the researcher extrapolates meaning from the participants' words. Wertz (2005) denoted this stage as a time of reflection on the meaning units and themes to uncover the deeper dimensions in the descriptions. This procedure was done with much care in order to maintain the integrity of the participant's spoken words and to ensure always that the meanings are grounded in the participants' descriptions, not the researcher's interpretations. The fourth step involved bringing together various themes and meaning units from individual descriptions and "clustering" the meanings into themes that the participants commonly shared. Experiences that were described or implied in numerous transcripts were considered for inclusion at this stage. Themes were included if they applied to many transcripts and excluded if evidence for the themes could not be supported by the participants' verbatim descriptions. Any discrepancies between thematic clusters and the original transcripts were resolved by going back to the research group for discussion and alterations until the thematic clusters matched the transcripts. Wertz (2005) referred to this process as gaining knowledge of "limited generalities." He believed these limited generalities are of importance because, while not "universal" or "generalizable," they may indicate common variations and distinctions in experience which are useful for understanding phenomena.

At this point the researcher prepared "exhaustive descriptions" of the experiences as they related to the research question and identified an underlying structure of the phenomena (Colaizzi, 1978). This underlying structure was then represented in pictorial format so as to provide a quick reference to the layout of the themes and their relationship to one another. Importantly, participant feedback was solicited regarding the final themes and thematic representation. Each participant was sent a copy of the themes via electronic mail. They were asked to reflect once again upon their stories of discrimination in order to identify the themes that reflected their experiences most accurately. All the data analysis was characterized by a great deal of rigor (Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Rigor in Phenomenological Research

This brief section summarizes the steps involved in the phenomenological process that help ensure that the study was conducted in a rigorous and mindful manner. The information presented here is not new, but an attempt to emphasize the attention to meticulous detail that gives phenomenological research its merit. "The validity of these procedures is established by demonstrating their fidelity to the phenomenon under investigation in its prescientific life-worldly presence." (Wertz, 2005, p. 173).

The bracketing interview and analysis was the first step toward ensuring a methodologically rigorous study. It allowed the researcher to ponder and organize her thoughts regarding why this topic was of interest to her as well as what her own experiences had been as a woman in a higher education setting. It brought to mind her expectations about what the participant interviews might entail which helped her put aside these views and be open to alternative outcomes (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1985; Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

The nature of the interview question was designed to limit the researcher's impact on the participants' descriptions. The question was formulated and asked in the same way to each participant and the researcher did not introduce new material to the interview. Reflection and summary of content and queries for additional information were the only tools of the interviewer. Admittedly, the researcher's mere presence impacted what information was shared by the participant and the participant had an equal effect on the researcher. However, in phenomenological research, objectivity is not defined as "detached observation" and "documenting reality", because "there are no facts or truths independent of experience" (Thomas & Pollio, 2002, p. 39). Colaizzi (1978) spoke to this matter: "It is a refusal to tell the phenomenon what it is, but a respectful listening to what the phenomenon speaks of itself. To the extent that I cannot deny my own experience, I cannot deny that others have experience. Objectivity, then, requires me to recognize and affirm both my own experience and the experience of others." (p. 52).

The use of an interpretive research group adds rigor to phenomenological research in that it keeps the primary researcher's opinions and expectations in check. Since the research group is encouraged to be critical and "respect the material presented in the transcripts," the influence of any one person's ideas is mitigated in the framework of the group (Thomas & Pollio, 2002, p. 34). This fosters an atmosphere that is participant-focused, rather than theory-driven.

Finally, returning to the participants, as experts of their own experiences, and asking them to review and verify the themes is an important step toward rigor in phenomenology (Thomas & Pollio, 2002). Returning to the participants is basically a validity check; the veracity of the meanings was verified with the individuals who had the

experience of interest. After all, their words and descriptions propelled each step of the data analysis and they must in turn be able to recognize the end product as representative of their experiences.

Bracketing Results

The bracketing interview, in which the researcher was asked to reflect on her own experiences of discrimination in higher education, was conducted prior to any participant interviews. The researcher of this dissertation is a 27-year old female doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at the University of Tennessee. She had been interacting with faculty members in higher education for nine years, and these experiences colored her views of the phenomena in question. The appeal of this topic for the researcher was in part due to her interest in pursuing a career in higher education following her studies. Thus, a very personal interest in the phenomena was present when she embarked on this project. These were important considerations for the researcher when reflecting on her biases and presuppositions as they may impact her reaction to the data.

An experienced member of the phenomenological research team guided the reflection in the same manner described previously for participant interviews. An audio recording was made of this interview. The interview began with the question, "Can you tell me about your experience of discrimination in a higher education institution?" and ended when the researcher stated she had no more to add to her description. The bracketing interview was analyzed in the same fashion as the participant interviews. The ground, a concept on which the themes are superimposed, provides the framework for understanding the themes and their relationships. The ground in the bracketing interview was Questioning/Doubting. In addition, there were three themes, namely, Oblivious,

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Teaching, and Comparisons. The ground and each of the themes are described and example text from the interview are provided to support each theme.

Ground: Questioning/Doubting

A ground of Questioning/Doubting seemed to underlie each of the themes in the bracketing interview. For the researcher, there was an amount of uncertainty about whether her experiences were affected by gender. The researcher seemed to be questioning whether her experiences represented "reality" or more specifically, whether her perceptions of reality were accurate. Thus, she described herself as being cautious about even bringing up the topic of discrimination because others might disagree and believe that sex discrimination was not a factor in the experience. The following quote of the researcher illustrates this ground:

> So those events come to mind, but there is always this idea that I'm 'hypersensitive'…'overanalyzing' things. You know, like 'Am I making a big deal out of the fact that my professor liked [male's name] reaction paper better than mine?' Maybe it really was better. And, that, I think is the main thing I wanted to convey, I guess, with all this talking, stories, is that there is always doubt, discrimination can be perceived. I've perceived it, but others can perceive it differently, so it's muddy, you know, it's not clean and clear. I will probably always assume it is just me because it seems presumptuous or arrogant to say it is discrimination, like an excuse. You know, like you did a bad job and now you are rationalizing it by blaming someone else. How do you know when it is legitimate? I know I shouldn't, but that's how I feel.

Bracketing Theme One: Oblivious

The first theme, Oblivious, refers to the researcher's lack of awareness of discrimination on the basis of sex. The researcher reflected that upon entering higher education she was oblivious to discriminations that women face in the university setting. She commented that she rarely considered sex as a factor impacting her education or interactions with faculty members as an undergraduate. She reported that in retrospect

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many situations come to mind in which she questions how being a female influenced the

course of events.

> I was a criminal justice major for a while as an undergrad and of course I was one
> of the few women in the program. Most of my classmates were 'good old boys
> from the farm' who were intending to become police officers. My professors were
> male, all but one, and the one female professor in the program was young, just
> one or two years out of grad school and she was very attractive. I remember
> thinking she was a bitch in class. She was very abrupt and seemed, I guess, rigid
> and maybe defensive. She was just rude when people asked questions. Looking
> back, I wonder how much of her personality came from wanting to be seen as
> 'tough' by a bunch of macho 18 to 20 year olds and a bunch of 'good old boy'
> professors. At the time, I just thought, 'What a bitch.' I didn't think about how
> she had to present herself in order to get respect. She probably would have been
> seen as a joke if she had presented herself as kind and approachable. People
> wouldn't have believed she knew how to deal with hardened criminals. I don't
> know any of this at all; I guess what I'm saying is that I didn't attribute things like
> that to gender at the time, but looking back I am more sensitive to the fact that she
> may have had a hard time being the one woman on the faculty. Especially being
> young and pretty.

Bracketing Theme Two: Teaching

Teaching as a theme referred to experiences the researcher had when she was in

the role of instructor or teacher or in observing others in the teaching role. First, in

teaching and lecturing in her own classes, the researcher was aware of her impact as an

expert and professional. She wanted to be perceived as competent and was aware that her

confidence in her role varied depending on the sex of her students.

> So I knew I was teaching a class of 200 students, and I wanted to be perceived as
> knowing what I was talking about because there is so much complaint at big
> universities for letting 'students' teach large intro level classes, and I wanted to be
> respected by the students. Not just the female students, I found I was a lot more
> comfortable talking to [the female students], after class and in office hours, I
> would answer their questions and give them feedback, and I usually felt pretty
> good about it, at ease you know. But when I had to tell a male student that his
> answers were wrong or he couldn't retake a quiz, I got nervous. I tried to be more
> apologetic or whatever, more….nice, that's not really the word. Anyway, I think
> my expertise and confidence went out the window when I was talking to men.

I remember reading something or having someone tell me not to make jokes or try to be funny when I teach because it takes away your credibility. It's so weird, like being nice or likeable takes away your credibility. So they'll think I'm dumber if I joke around or share personal stuff? Like for example, when I teach I always use examples from my own life, like my cats. I have this one lecture where I even show a slide of one of my cats and after I was told this I thought, well maybe I shouldn't do that, maybe the students will think I'm smarter if I just use the examples from the text or whatever. Um, and actually, I hadn't thought of this before but I'm really kind of upset, um, sad about that, you know. I want to be both likeable and fun or able to joke and still be, you know, smart or perceived as knowing what I am talking about. I think men can have that easier than women can.

Second, the role of a woman as an expert in teaching and instructing became apparent in her peers and in her observations of faculty members. The researcher perceived inequity in how questions were phrased, how confrontations were made, and who was seen as the expert. She voiced uncertainty about the question, if women were treated differently because of the way women presented themselves.

Well just recently in the search [for an assistant professor candidate] when people would come in to present their research in the colloquium, I think some of the questioners were really hard on them, and I noticed it for the women more. It might have just been the people who were in the room at the time, in the audience. Maybe they would have been that way to a man too. I don't know, maybe this isn't a good example, but I noticed that there was kind of a mean-tone, like aggressive in asking their questions about the person's research. And I also noticed the women who were presenting seemed less confident. Maybe the man who I watched was too confident. Maybe he didn't admit that there was error or limitations or whatever and the women brought it up right away themselves, but it was a different feeling, you know, for women.

And with my friends you know, I know they were just joking around, but they'd say things like, 'Oh, she's hot.' Or you know, 'I'd go to class if I got to watch her teach every day.' And then I'd get paranoid, like if one of my students said they liked my earrings, I'd wonder if they weren't taking me seriously because of how I dressed or something. It just gets stupid. I have to learn to just forget about stuff like that at times. But then I wonder what if it is important. So I don't know.

40

Bracketing Theme Three: Comparisons

The final theme of the bracketing interview, Comparisons, dealt with the

researcher's comparisons of herself and other women to men. She observed differences in

expectations that seemed to be based on sex.

> Like in my cohort, I'm usually the one people asked about stuff like that, you
> know, when something is due, or what paperwork goes with what. And if not me,
> then it is another woman in our group who knows that, you know the 'responsible
> ones.' We always have Kleenex, or Tylenol, or staplers, whatever, just like
> 'mothering' the others. So I'm sure that affects how people view me, I don't know
> if a man would do that. Could be because I'm controlling, I guess, you know so I
> volunteer to make sure something gets done for everyone…no, really though, it's
> an expectation that others have of me, maybe because I'm a woman, maybe
> because I just started doing it. I don't know. And I'm not saying that it is
> discrimination, I don't feel oppressed by it, but maybe it opens the door for it or
> something, you know. And I guess when I compare the…not respect, but well
> kind of respect. Like a man in the program could keep to himself and not work
> with others or do things to help the group out and he might still be thought of as
> good, right, like he's independent. But I think if I did that it would be not a team
> player, not as acceptable I guess.
>
> Okay, well I hate to say this one because it sounds arrogant, and I don't mean it
> that way, but when I was presenting on a topic with [man's name], like I knew
> about it a lot more than he did. I mean, he knew it too, but it was really my area.
> But it seemed like they asked him more questions or maybe they just assumed that
> he knew it better than I did, or even outside school, like when my husband and I
> go shopping for a computer or something. I know more about that stuff than he
> does, but the salespeople usually talk to him first. It is just frustrating.

Understanding the three themes of Oblivious, Teaching, and Comparisons

superimposed on the ground of Questioning/Doubt, helped the researcher to be aware of

her biases and expectations. As the researcher progressed through the process of

interviewing participants, reading transcripts, thinking about themes, and understanding

the experiences, she had her own themes and biases in mind and attempted to

acknowledge them as separate from the experiences of the participants.

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

This chapter describes and illustrates the results of this phenomenological research study on 17 female faculty members' experiences of discrimination in higher education. First, an overview of the grounds and themes and their relationship to one another is provided. Additionally, a thematic representation is included to pictorially display the associations between themes and grounds. Next, a detailed description for each theme is given, along with illustrative verbatim quotations from the participants' transcripts (Wertz, 2005). Finally, a summary of the results concludes the chapter.

Overview of Grounds and Themes

Three themes and two grounds emerged from the data during the analysis process that was described in the second chapter of this dissertation. The themes were: 1) Burdened, 2) Devalued, and 3) Supported. These themes also included sub-themes which provide additional details and authenticate the main themes. The themes are framed by two grounds: 1) Minimize/Describe Discrimination and 2) Overt/Covert Discrimination. These grounds provided the context for understanding the themes. An outline of the themes and grounds is provided in Figure 1. Figure 2 provides a pictorial depiction of the thematic representation. The double spacing between quote blocks indicates the quote came from another part of a transcript, or from another participant. Seventeen of the seventeen participants are represented in the quotations that were selected.

Descriptions of Grounds

A ground is a concept or idea on which themes are superimposed. It serves the purpose of tying the themes together with a common thread and providing a context for understanding the themes. In this study, there were two grounds: 1) Minimize/Describe

Outline of the Themes

Grounds:
1) Minimize/Describe Discrimination
2) Overt/Covert Discrimination

Themes:
1) Burdened
   a. Repository for lots of stories.
   b. Value of time.
   c. Juggling family.
2) Devalued
   a. Left out of the network.
   b. Others' perceptions.
   c. Aesthetic bias.
   d. Inequity in salaries.
   e. Unheard.
3) Supported
   a. Familial support.
   b. Talking to other women.
   c. Mentors.

Figure 1.
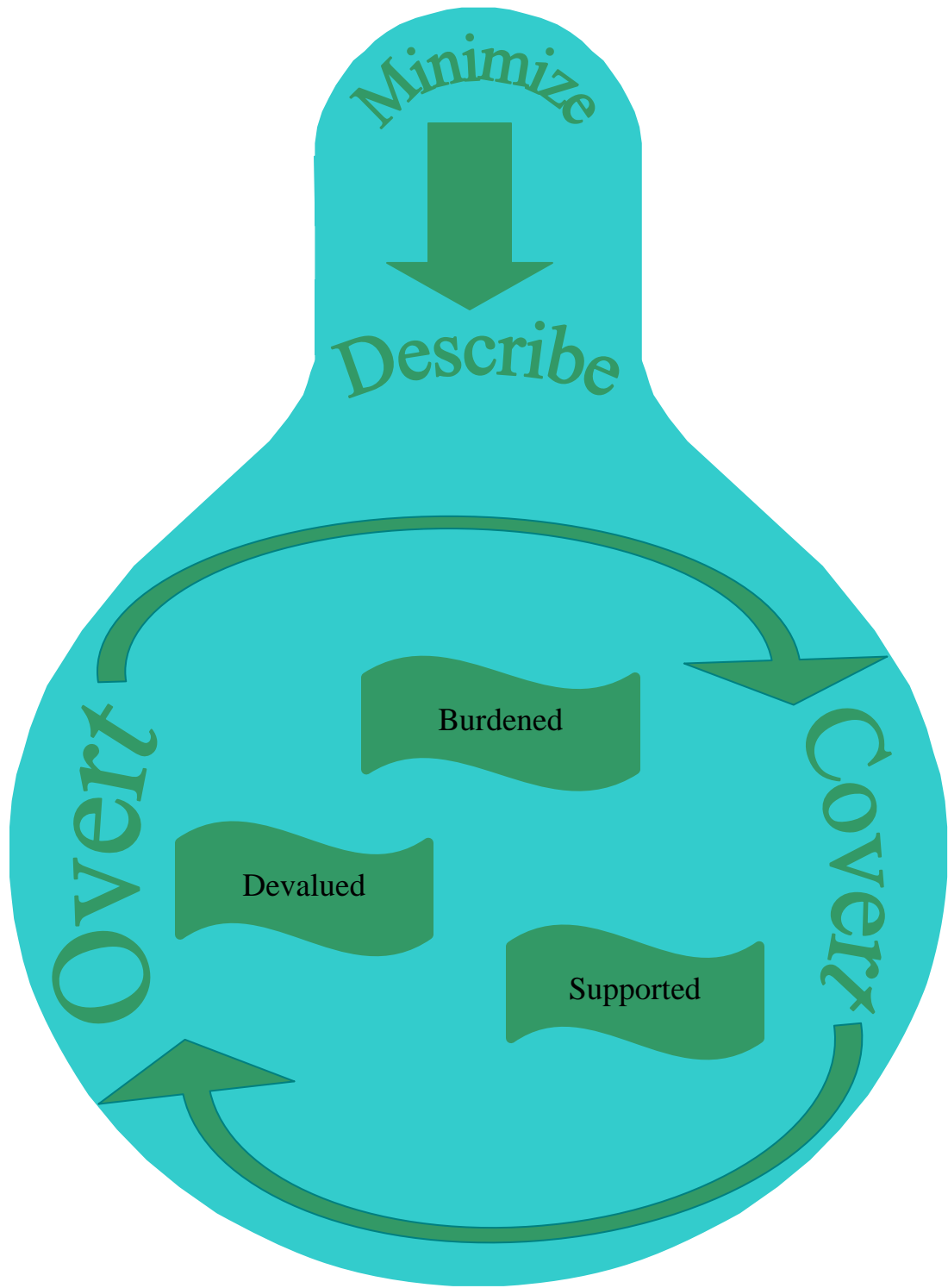
Figure 2. Thematic Representation of Female Faculty Experiences of Discrimination

Discrimination and 2) Covert/Overt Discrimination. The words of the participants follow each description of the grounds to further illustrate their meaning.

Ground One: Minimize/Describe Discrimination

This first ground emerged from the researcher's reflection on her experience of soliciting participants for this research as well as from the interviews themselves. The researcher found that when she asked women if they would consider participating in an interview about their experiences of discrimination in higher education, many of the participants immediately reacted by minimizing or denying that they experienced discrimination. Some stated that they would not be a good source of information on discrimination because they had not "really" experienced the phenomena or their experiences were not "good enough" to be useful to the researcher. The researcher did not attempt to persuade participation, but simply inquired as to why the women did not feel their experiences were "good enough." Interestingly, as these women continued to talk with the researcher, they seemed to decide that they did have something to contribute on the topic and agreed to be interviewed. One woman, who initially refused participation, emailed the researcher the following day and stated she had given the matter some thought and would like to participate. Another interesting occurrence was that the participants seemed to have no trouble thinking of other possible participants. They often provided the researcher with long lists of women's names. However, when the researcher solicited participation from these women, they seemed surprised to have been identified by their colleagues. This phenomenon may illustrate women's hesitancy to see discrimination as affecting them personally, but rather as a more global problem.

Evidence from the transcripts further illustrates this ground. In several interviews the women stated they recalled "one" incident of discrimination that they could share, however, after sharing the story they often continued to talk about other experiences. One woman noted her surprise at sharing more than she intended by stating, "I didn't think I'd have this much to say." Some women were reluctant to label their experiences as discrimination; it seemed easier to use terms such as "unfair" or "negative." A woman stated, "There is not really permission to label it or support to label it as gender discrimination." Another participant questioned whether her story was "severe enough" to warrant the label of discrimination. After speaking of being alienated from male faculty members because she was not a part of their informal network, she questioned, "So is that discrimination? I don't know. Is it discrimination because I'm a woman? Is it discrimination because of the topic? I don't know. I can't say." Other examples include the following verbatim quotations:

> Okay, when you first described your research, I thought, 'I know people who can probably talk to you, but I'm not sure if I've experienced unfair treatment or discrimination.' And so really before I agreed to interview I had to sit down and try to think back on where I might have encountered something. It has just gone away. It is too long in the past or something. I haven't dwelled on it.

> So I don't know if this was an isolated incident with our class. If you could chalk it up to personality issues, I don't know. But it became evident that it was male and female for some reason. So I just got out so I don't have to deal with him again. Goodbye. He is at [school name removed] and I am not. …It is not worth fighting. And it was nothing that you could pinpoint as being discrimination. You couldn't prove anything. It just became evident that he was being harder on the girls than the boys.

> I realized that I think my definition and awareness have changed over time with experience. …I think at the early part of my career I would have staunchly denied any experience of discrimination, particularly of gender discrimination. In retrospect, I think there certainly have been experiences over time they changed. And I think it is very hard to tie down what really is discrimination.

Okay, I've been thinking about this since you called me. On the face of it I have very little experience of discrimination. I was hired under somewhat unusual or extreme circumstances in that it was, I was an affirmative action hire. That is to say they were told they had to hire a woman at about the time that the job that I was applying for came open. …. In the first month or so of my second year when I had achieved the tenure track appointment there was a general faculty meeting with [name removed] and all of the faculty. And one of my colleagues said, in front of God and everybody, that the department was very annoyed that we were forced to hire a woman. And I'm right there. So there was clearly some rather intemperate behavior on the part of my colleagues. That was the worst public case. I don't know about the ones I didn't observe.

In the thematic representation this theme is depicted at the top of the figure. The funnel shape of the figure depicts the tendency for women to be more guarded and minimize their experiences during the first contact and early in the interview. As the figure widens it shows how the participants began to open up and describe their experiences in detail as the interview progressed.

Ground Two: Overt/Covert Discrimination

The second ground, Overt/Covert Discrimination, represents the varying nature of the examples given by the participants. Some instances were indisputably discriminatory, while some examples were more subtle and open to interpretation. This ground was referred to directly by the participants and is evidenced by comments such as, "I also would just sort of preface what I will say by saying that a lot of what is going on is like academic climate stuff that is not outright discrimination; but it still has a really profound and especially cumulative effect." This concept was echoed again in the following statement, "It is not necessarily about the things that stick out in your mind, and the stories you remember, it is about the everyday feeling of being treated as though you are less and have less respect and deserve less." Another woman recognized the difference in

types of discrimination in her statement, "I don't know that I've been affected by overt

discrimination but what I think of as more covert."

The participant's stories were contextualized by this concept of overt and covert

discrimination which was dynamic in nature. Different examples that the participants

gave, and sometimes different aspects of the same examples could be categorized as

overtly or covertly discriminatory. Nearly all of the participants gave examples of both

obvious and subtle discriminations that were a part of their experiences. The following

quotes denote this relationship:

> You would think this would be burned in my brain because of what I am going to
> tell you, but I don't remember anymore. So it [a job opportunity] sounded
> interesting and it was in my general area so I called the guy and he simply
> laughed when I called the faculty member at this university who was there at the
> meetings and he laughed and said simply, 'Oh well I'm sorry, but we don't hire
> women.' And I was really stunned because this had not occurred to me. I think I
> had been very well treated in graduate school. And although there were not very
> many women in the graduate program, I don't think I really, I guess, I was naïve,
> I didn't think that was terribly odd, because in those days there weren't a lot of
> women going to graduate school in a lot of areas. And I certainly didn't think I
> had been discriminated against, so I was kind of surprised to hit it just like that,
> that there was just overt discrimination.

> After that there were various forms of much more subtle, but I think equally
> effective kinds of discrimination against women in the hiring process. One
> question that I was asked repeatedly as I interviewed for jobs was, 'What do you
> intend to do after you get your first job, et cetera?' And along with my male
> colleagues, we all talked about, 'How do you answer this question?' So we talked
> about what do we want to teach, the kinds of courses we wanted to develop, the
> kinds of research we wanted to do, et cetera. And then I realized that I was getting
> the question, and it took me a little while to realize this, but after I answered all of
> those questions, they would say, 'Yes, but what do you intend to do?' It finally
> dawned on me that the question that I was being asked was, 'Do you really intend
> to have a career? Or won't you really go home with your children and give this
> up?' That was what they were asking. But they couldn't quite ask it in that way
> and at least they were smart enough to know. I did finally have one faculty
> member at a major state university come straight out and ask me if I didn't think
> that after a year or two, I would decide that I really wanted to stay home. And so

there was that kind of clear discrimination in the minds of the faculty who were doing the hiring.

I worked for one supervisor and I think it was intentional because he thought women should stay home. He told me that several times. But that was a long time ago, a very long time ago and what I see now is just, I don't think it is intentional because you are a woman but I think it is intentional because I think men and women think differently and value different things. …So is it intentional? No. Is it deliberate? Yes.

The ground Overt/Covert Discrimination was depicted in the thematic representation as cycling around the three main themes. This is important because the concept of Overt/Covert Discrimination is found in each theme and was apparent in all of the participants' interviews.

<div align="center">Descriptions of Themes</div>

Three main themes emerged as a result of the data analysis and each encompassed several sub-themes. This section includes descriptions of each theme and sub-theme and exemplifies them with verbatim quotes from the participants.

Theme One: Burdened

Many participants spoke of being burdened in their roles as female faculty members. The emotion in these stories often had a tired or hopeless aspect to it. In fact, one woman stated clearly, "I think it is very hopeless. And I don't think the answer is to go somewhere else because everything else is probably… if it is a male dominated paradigm then I think it is hopeless." Another said, "And it did get, your morale got really down, particularly when you would talk with other women about it. And you'd sit around and say, 'What can we do?'" Burdens for these women were also about others' perceptions and how those perceptions can add to their challenges. One woman contemplated her colleagues' and students' reactions to women's issues, "But again the

perception is, 'If women are involved it must be feminist, and if it is feminist it must be

bad or radical or dangerous in some way.'" Still other women spoke of the "little things"

that added to their burdens. "But it is those series of things that you are rendered invisible

that it can become a self-perpetuating cycle. And it is all the little things that add up that

make it a hostile environment." Another said, "So, it's like stabbed by 1000 paper cuts

thing, it is like all the time. It is hard to think of exact, specific examples but there are just

constantly little comments or … attitudes at faculty meetings." Another talked about her

frustration with the lack of impact she seems to have on others when she speaks about

women's issues.

> I was shocked. I thought they would be more sensitive to these issues. Absolutely not. … So, I was really discouraged after that. I was like, 'Why do I bother?' You know. So I give all these talks, I go over to the Women's Studies program. I've presented in three luncheon seminars, one about activism, one about women here at [university name removed]. I've given talks to classes in the Women's Studies program and I get invited. I've given a couple talks to Forest Service in [names of states removed] and I'm doing all this stuff but what the hell is the point of it? Because it doesn't seem to be having any real effect. Like I am starting to get kind of beaten down.

> I've always heard that women, to get to full professor, have to do at least three times as much as the men do, and maybe that is a myth, but I don't think so because somehow women have gotten that attitude that we have to do more, more, more.

> One [of the men] had absolutely nothing to write on, and one of them had this little tiny pocket notebook thing that you literally put in your shirt pocket. So at one point I saw the other one whisper to him and he passed a little tiny sheet of paper to him. The other one did happen to have a pen with him so he could take a few little notes. And I was taking page after page of notes and the other woman was on my laptop taking very detailed notes. And it was, to me it was very familiar in things that had always been implicit to me of how the men seem to think the women in the group are going to take care of all that stuff for them and all they need to do is sit there and share their ideas.

Some of the burdens were things the women believed were important or things that coincided with their values. For example, listening to and supporting other women on campus or serving on a search committee were activities many of these women deemed worthy. However, they noted that taking on these important roles often took them away from doing things that would advance their careers, such as research and grants. Specific burdens that were named by several participants were: 1) Repository for lots of stories, 2) Value of time, and 3) Juggling family.

Repository for lots of stories.

Interviewees referred to the idea that other women and students sought them out to share stories of their experiences. They noted that they felt it was their responsibility to listen to these stories and give support, but they also were aware of the toll this took on them personally and professionally. The following quotes illustrate this sub-theme:

> I guess the other thing that happens is that you become, as a member of an outsider group in a majority institution, is that you become the repository for lots of stories. So for example, women will come to me and tell me their job interviewing stories, 'You won't believe the things that they said to me during the interview. You won't believe what this guy said. You won't believe what they asked me. You won't believe what happened in my summer experience.' And that takes a toll. And you want to be receptive and you want to be supportive and you want to be helpful. …And so I think that is a form of discrimination against women. You become the repository for a lot of stories about discrimination … of being shunted aside, of not being taken seriously, of sexual harassment. Lots of those things end up at the doorstep of women faculty members.

> I loved working with students and the students knew they could come and talk to me and that could be the fact that women generally are more approachable, I think. And so some women graduate students in another Engineering Department came and introduced themselves and asked if I would go to lunch with them and I said, 'Sure.' And we made the date and I was sure they had some problem and they wanted to discuss it with me.

> And another thing, this is a trap that a lot of women fall into and I'm struggling with it myself, we become the mentors for everyone. And for me the obvious one

was student mothers because I got pregnant during my Ph.D. program and had my first child and I was the first one in this program to have a baby at that time. And then after that we had this really strange rash of pregnant graduate students. We had like five in three years, just babies popping out all over the place and every single one of these girls [sic], whether they were married, whether it was a planned pregnancy or not, was in my office crying. Every single one. And in some cases they just came and in other cases as soon as they said, 'I'm pregnant.' Their advisor said, 'Go talk to [participant's name removed].' … And then it just got to be this thing that any time we have a women who has anything or sort of problem over anything, 'Go see [participant's name removed].' And I just had a graduate student in here again last week, not my student. I have more than enough students with my own problems without other people's students with problems. …I am a nice person and I want to help her but I spend, you know the time is not trivial, it's not trivial. And it takes emotional energy and I want these women to succeed. … But I was the woman on the faculty. And my department chair here said to me explicitly when I started, 'We want you here because we don't have any women and we need a woman, you are our woman.' And he values the time that I spend with the students. He sees me as a person that mentors the students and supports the students and that is wonderful. But then what happened when I went up for promotion? They didn't give jack shit. They don't care. That is not valued in the university system. It's not valued at all.

Value of time.

This sub-theme refers to the participants' assertions that they were asked to do more service responsibilities than their male colleagues: for example, advising students, serving on committees, or teaching more classes. Again, these were things they valued as important in many cases, but they reflected on the sacrifice of time on their parts to fulfill them. One woman reflected on not being recognized for supporting the students, "Why is it that nobody seems to have recognized that I am carrying like half the graduate students in this department? I have no idea why that is. I don't know. I have to work harder." Another noted that her male colleagues believe, "women's time may be less valuable, as they assume that women are more likely to be caring, and therefore should spend more time advising or doing other things for which the rewards are not as great within the

university structure." Other comments that supported the sub-theme of Value of time

were:

> You don't get tenure for advising. That's right. And you don't get the raises … if you are spending a lot of time advising and I think that there is [an] assumption that women are better at that. And frequently, women will spend the time doing that because that is part of their socialization as well. They are socialized to do that as well. So that kind of discrimination still goes on.

> It used to be the case that on university-wide committees or college committees or departmental committees that there was an understanding that there needed to be a female faculty member. Well, when there weren't very many female faculty members then you got put on lots of committees…. I think the intent was to get a female representative. Plus, I think there was a general feeling; I guess I would say it this way; I'd say there was a general feeling that my time wasn't as valuable as that of my male colleagues. And again I don't think this was not being said frequently by people who were male chauvinists, this was just kind of an assumption.

> I did notice that the women on the faculty, myself included, were given more classes to teach than males. We were slated toward a specific kind of class, an activity class as opposed to a lecture class. And we would have a number of them and many of us wanted to teach the lecture class, but they were reserved for the men.

> We had extra classes; you'd also notice that women would be assigned a lot more service responsibilities. Sponsoring clubs, student clubs, being faculty advisor for a certain group and men would not be assigned those. That would take you away from your research responsibilities and you are being evaluated on your research responsibilities. But most of the women were given service activities and that has been historical…I think you'd find a lot of women, in my field especially who would note that. So you were head of the majors club and head of the cheerleading and head of those things in addition to your teaching, where the men didn't have those extra service activities. It is in addition to. But those are the things that have to be done like you'd do it for family, so the women did it.

> It was generally assumed that women were more student-friendly, so you were given more responsibilities for advising, expected to do more advising, just not given the same sets of responsibilities as male colleagues of the same rank, same status.

Juggling family.

Burden was evident in this sub-theme as women spoke of the differences in expectations for male and female parents in society as well as in the university. One woman stated, "So there are often comments like, 'She just doesn't seem to juggle family well with her position.' Well, when in fact the person who is making that comment has never had to juggle family because they had a woman at home who was a full-time wife." Participants reflected on the different views colleagues might take when a parent takes time off for child care. Many women noted the need for a "low-profile" when balancing family needs with work commitments. The need for this secrecy is documented by this woman's experience. She stated, (in reference to a secondary education post she had prior to working in higher education), "I'd just gotten a new job and so I went in and told the principal that I was pregnant and his reactions was he took a book and threw it down across the table and said, 'Oh God!' Now you wouldn't do that to a male." Others reflected on the university policies for maternity leave and the considerations women must give before taking advantage of time off. One woman noted that it was difficult to know how to balance the roles of parent and professional due to lack of role models. She stated, "Because [partner's name removed] had his job and I was conflicted because I didn't know whether I could handle a full time job and have a baby. I just didn't have any role models or anything about how that could be done." Even some of the participants who did not have children of their own mentioned this common obstacle for the advancement of women in higher education. The following examples support this sub-theme:

I was applying for jobs this year and I had several, two women faculty members tell me, 'You might want to think about what you are going to say to someone if they ask you if you want to have a family because you may think, 'Oh that is nice, they are worried about whether I want to have a family or not.' But on the other hand what they might really be asking is, 'How long are we going to have this person for?' Like is this person going to come here, fall in love with someone, get married, have a kid, and then in two years be gone. So I guess that is another type of discrimination that I hadn't experienced [and] I still haven't experienced because frankly no one asked me that question but it is another thing that you have to worry about in the workplace. And for a man it would be assumed that he is not going to play 'Mr. Mom.' You know and how funny that we would call it 'Mr. Mom' and not just him being a dad. Like, why isn't he just being a dad by taking care of his kids? He's a 'Mr. Mom' and absolutely I don't think any man would have to worry about that.

And so what I ran into was during these whole three years I never talked with anyone about either having a baby or adopting because there were no personnel policies in place and the few women who had had babies had really struggled to keep their jobs. And there was one lady who was the division chair and she had two children while she was working there, but she planned her pregnancies so that it happened during the summer and she told me some years later that she never said a word about being pregnant and she made sure she was there everyday and carried a full load. Delivered and then came right back. So she felt the weight of behaving in that way. And I don't know whether anyone said very much to me but I assumed I could not talk about this sort of thing with anybody in an official capacity. So I came back and I spoke with the dean of academics, now the position would be the vice president of academic affairs, and I just said, 'Oh, by the way, the good news is that we adopted two children this summer.' And his face just fell and it was not a very positive reaction. So there was not any overt comments, but the atmosphere was not one where a woman could be completely comfortable being a mother and a full-time employee.

But I do know that during my tenure, the first person to ask for time off from the tenure track part of it, which I did not ask for, I only asked for time off for maternity leave. But the person who asked for an allowance in her tenure clock was treated in a way that you are treated when you are the first person asking for something; she became an anomaly.

Now we had one male faculty member that when his divorced wife passed away, then he was the one that was in charge of his daughter and he had to be there to pick her up after school. There was never any question about his schedule. He was simply not available and no one questioned that. But for a woman to say, 'I'm responsible for picking up the kids.' That was not as popular an idea. Not that you couldn't do it but it wasn't really allowed for.

This young woman had gotten a call from the daycare center where her child was and they said, 'We're really sorry, but we think you'd better come and get your child, she is throwing up and crying like her stomach is hurting.' You know, a toddler-aged child. And so this was the last day of classes and in this one course this faculty member had planned this last class session where she was going to tie everything together in the course and she was very excited about it and ready for it and she thought, 'Oh my gosh, how am I going to make this work?' She looked at the clock and she said, 'I have just enough time to run, pick up my daughter, run by the video store, get her her favorite video, bring her back and set her in front of her video machine and let her watch her video while I teach this class.' So she dashes to get her daughter, dashes to the video store and then she is carrying her daughter back up the elevator to go to her office and in the elevator her daughter threw up all over both of them and the woman said to her friend, 'You know, for just a minute I said to myself, there is still time, I can run in the restroom, clean us both up and get to class.' And then she said, 'I kind of stopped in the middle of that and with horror thought about what am I doing, my daughter is sick, she needs me to take her home.' And so that is what she did; she didn't go to that last class. And so the woman and I on the plane, we both were crying a little bit because I remember times that I had not been there for my daughter as I tried to do everything to make it in this world of higher education.

Summary of Theme One: Burdened

The main theme of Burdened represented the participants' feelings of being weighed down and held back in their professional endeavors. A feeling of discouragement was interwoven throughout the three sub-themes: 1) Repository for lots of stories, 2) Value of time, and 3) Juggling family. The participants commented that while they felt accountable to their colleagues and students to provide support and guidance with regard to women's issues, they were also troubled by the time and emotional toll it took on them. Many participants referred to the amount of time they spent doing the "less glamorous" work of a faculty member, including advising and supervising students. They noted that while they enjoyed these activities in many cases, they were not given "credit" for them when it came time for evaluation of their work. This, they said, had a negative impact on their promotion and tenure applications. Finally,

several women spoke of their role as a parent or caregiver and how the expectations of male versus female parents were inconsistent and led to unfair assumptions regarding their commitment to their careers.

Theme Two: Devalued

According to the participants, the devaluing of women and women's work took place in a variety of contexts in higher education. At times the cheapening of their work was plain and blatant, as described by this woman: "Men were promoted ahead of me for having done less work, for having done less quality work, but because of the people who were in the hierarchical positions, they were men and they were promoting men over women." Women consistently talked about having to work harder than men. "I always felt like I had to be better than any man in the job to just maintain. If I was only as good as another qualified male, then why wouldn't he be in the position?" Another participant shared an example of the attitude her male colleagues displayed toward women when she stated, "He put up a poster on his office wall that said, 'Sexual harassment won't be reported, it will be given a grade.'" Another illustrated this derogatory attitude by sharing a male colleague's comments, "He'll say, 'Oh, you are a junior scientist.' What the fuck is that? Junior scientist? I have my Ph.D." Other participants noted more subtle devaluing, such as lack of opportunities to collaborate or circumstances that disallowed for their success in a patriarchal system. The women felt diminished in their roles by both colleagues and students. Five sub-themes comprised this theme: 1) Left out of the network, 2) Others' perceptions, 3) Aesthetic bias, 4) Inequities in salaries, and 5) Unheard.

Left out of the network.

One of the most common examples women gave of being devalued was being left out of collegial relationships that their male colleagues enjoyed. They stated they did not feel welcomed to share in either social or professional activities. One woman voiced her frustration by stating, "Academic freedom, if other people don't want to ask me to collaborate, they don't have to ask me to collaborate." Other experiences were expressed in the following statements:

> You just never even hear the opportunities because you were never invited to the room. And I think that is the way I would put it. And so, over a period of time, if there is just enough background manipulation and friends being made and handshakes and whatever, and then you get separated from the pack and they move on and you are somewhere else. And so I think that as a result, I'm not saying that this is a good thing, healthy or unhealthy, but I'm pretty alienated from the other faculty members: the male faculty members. And it has to do with what I think is covert discrimination. And that is that they engage in activities that do not include me and my way of thinking.

> Male faculty will say, 'Yeah, there's five of us guys, we're professors, for the last 20 years, and we all came in around the same. We all go out to the beach, we've been camping and all these things over the years, we are off on the boat for a week or whatever. And so and so, another male faculty member, when he came, we started bringing him along and we think we've got his consulting business going pretty good and we got him some contacts.' And well, there's nothing wrong with that, but those five guys are not going to invite a new female faculty member in and introduce her to people so that her consulting work gets going. And 'Oh, by the way join in with me on this paper.' All that happens over a week at the beach. … You are not included in that social circle....You have to do it all yourself. You know your first paper isn't because you tagged along with somebody else…. You've got to do it all yourself and it wears the women out. Women are worn out because they have to do it themselves. And I'd say that throughout my career, I've had to do it myself. And then the guys accuse us of not being team players. And it's like, 'Team player? So when did you ask me to be on your team?'

> The poker games are one manifestation I know of where males would be invited to play poker and drink beer and whatever. So that females would be excluded and it is a little hard to say what the consequence of that is except is that you are sort of out there on the edge. I guess one of the things that I should maybe

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mention there is that certainly when I was first a faculty member and I think many years thereafter, at social events, as the female faculty member you were really expected to talk to the wives at parties even though it was not necessarily the wives where you had the most conversational interest.

He [a colleague] said, 'The good old boy network is alive and well. You need to just suck it up and shut up.' He also said, 'You are too assertive and you are never going to amount to anything unless you just let it go. You have ruined your career.' And then within the next year he also said to me, 'A poisoned atmosphere has infiltrated the department and it is your responsibility and you need to put an end to this. We are just a bunch of gray haired good old boys around here and you need to accept it.'

Others' perceptions.

Participants were also aware of being devalued by others' perceptions of them and of their actions. Judgments came from both colleagues and students. In particular, the perception of the word "feminist" was often a negative one. A woman said, "It's like, 'Oh my God, bitchy feminist.' You know, 'Can't take a joke. Has to see everything as discrimination against women.' And so I think they don't want to be put in that." One participant discussed how her male colleague's interactions with her contained an assertion of power when she stated, "And he [a colleague] also calls me kiddo, 'Hey, kiddo, how's it going today?' You know what I mean, it is just not indicative of respect." Several participants commented about students' use of the title "Dr." for male faculty and "Mrs." for female faculty. Some participants stated that their colleagues expected women in the department to fight and be envious of one another. One woman shared that when she approached a male administrator about a problem she was having with a female student he stated, "Oh yes, but I thought it was a 'woman thing.'" Similarly, another said, "Well, everybody thinks women can't work together, we are jealous they think." The participants noted that they encountered resistance when they were in positions of

authority over men. A participant recalled an instance of having to reprimand a male

subordinate and the fallout that resulted. She stated, "It wouldn't have been embarrassing

to him if I'd been a man, just a guy exercising his authority. But I was a woman

exercising authority over this guy." This sub-theme of Others' perceptions is evidenced

by the following quotes:

> They [male students] think, 'Okay, you are female, you are like a high school teacher.' But if a male teacher comes into the room there is a lot more respect. But because I teach a lot of developmental classes usually when I start talking math and they get their first test back, we've eliminated that issue. I had to prove that I know what I'm talking about and I am qualified…. I've had a couple that were just belligerent. They dropped the class and one of them said it was because I was a female, he didn't give problems like this to a male teacher. I can see it more from the students looking at us than I can from the administration.

> They don't quite know what to do with me because I am not a guy, they can't talk to me that way, but I am also clearly not interested in being viewed as the 'overly helpful and exuberant warmth.' That is not my interest. These people are engineers. They are going to be working with engineers. They are going to be working with women engineers. And engineers should not be expected to be 'mom' just because they are a woman engineer. And that is my goal, is to train them that I am actually, I'm representative of someone they are going to work with and interact with in that way before they go out.

> Well one part is when the male faculty members would transfer an advisee to me and say, 'Dr. [name removed] will be your advisor.' I'll get an email from students saying, 'Dear Mrs. [name removed], I've been transferred to you by Dr. [name removed].' But the students would say Mrs., but would still refer to men as Dr. and I bet well over 50% of students call me Mrs. Like if you are female, of course you are married and don't have a doctorate. It is two different dimensions.

> Is the way that female teams on campus are always referred to as 'The Lady something' like we don't call them the 'Male Owls' or the 'Men Vols' or you know, but we do call the 'Lady Vols' or the 'Lady Owls' or 'Lady Huskers' or whatever it is. So it is that need to identify women's teams as 'lady something' as though, 'Just so you know, you are not coming to see the real thing, you are coming to see the lady version of it.'

> I thought of one other topic that my female colleagues and I frequently talk about and that is the differential in the degree to which students acknowledge the expertise of male versus female professors. Several of us have observed this

and are puzzled about what to do about it. Students appear to have less confidence in our expertise than they do for male professors. In fact this was recognized by the administration at [university name removed] when I was there way back in 1980, so they gave all women professors a training course in classroom lecturing, thinking it was the women's fault. I got a lot out of this course, and I think my presentation skills are quite good, but it remains an issue for me.

You know, I got, one of the statements was, 'Well, women are not suited for forestry, women are more nurturing and better in fields like nursing.' And this is an individual who is going to have a Ph.D. in a few years and be on university faculty. This is the new generation.

They felt more comfortable talking to me than they did talking to him in the sense that they would, if they had a really important question, they would go and ask the man, but if they had a question like, something silly, something frivolous they would come and ask me. And I would constantly be standing there at the front of the class thinking, 'I'm standing here too.' There would be a line of three guys getting ready to talk to my co-instructor and I'd think, 'Here I am standing here I could answer these questions just as well. But none of them are coming to me. Isn't that interesting.'

When I told my boss at [organization] that I was pregnant he did not take it well. And I was really shocked. The first thing he said was, 'Maybe you can go to the university full time.' And I was really shocked when he said that because I had been like his superstar out there and then to think that just because I was going to have a baby he was trying to bargain me off! And I talked to a few women who had children out there and they had even worse experiences than I did. Somebody saying, 'I'm never going to hire a woman under 40 again!'

Aesthetic bias.

Aesthetic bias was reported by some participants who noticed that their appearances or the appearances of other women influenced how they were treated. Some reported hearing inappropriate comments made by male faculty members either about their own appearance or about the appearance of students. This area seemed particularly difficult for women to label as discrimination; they often qualified their stories by defending those who made inappropriate comments. The following quotes illustrate this phenomenon of Aesthetic bias:

I do have a lot of female graduate students and I do notice that some of them have a much easier time than others, especially with certain people and I have to say that aesthetic bias comes into it. That is, if you are a nice looking woman you have a better chance than if you are shy or withdrawn or fat or some other unattractive quality is dominate. And these less than beautiful women will often get challenged really bruisingly.

There is the occasional comment, you know, I had a professor, one of my friends walked in in pretty short shorts and granted I wouldn't have worn the shorts to class, but she did, and she had a great body and he told her the shorts should be illegal and could she please not wear them to class again because he might not be able to concentrate. And again, I know this man, I've met his wife before, I have seen pictures of his grandkids, he's like a beaming granddad, but technically that is kind of some form of harassment. And you know he has said things before to me in the hallway, I saw him one day and he had a piece of licorice and I said, 'Hey where'd you get that?' And he said, 'Oh it is in my office, I keep it there for when pretty little girls like you come to visit.'

I think it was definitely gender related, even though I would get him off the hook by saying it was professional jealousy there is no doubt in my mind that he never would have done that to another male, never. He accused me of getting by on my looks, I'm sorry but he would not have done that to a male. So there is no doubt in my mind that that is a gender issue. And that by the way is the same person who has this tendency to overly challenge female graduate students if they happen to not be good looking according to his idea of what good looks are. … They have come to me to complain about subtle efforts at making a pass which they reject and wish they hadn't had to even confront that. That has come up a number of times and with also a new woman professor has had that experience. So inappropriate, but nothing grotesque mind you.

And he had said to a couple of the students that I'm a woman of leisure and that he agreed with [name] that I just got where I was going because I batted my big blue eyes around. Well, I was ticked at this point because I had worked hard for my degree and I had done far more work than [name] and this guy that had come in and I had several articles published and I had even won an award for outstanding teaching and I thought, 'This is just not fair.' So I called him up on the phone and I talked with him and he said, 'Oh, you're misinterpreting what I'm saying, I'm just saying you are a woman of leisure because you live by a beach and you go to the beach a lot.' Which I knew was a big fat lie anyway…. And then later on I had heard that the reason I'd gotten where I am today is that I would bat my big blue eyes at people….I'd bat my big blue eyes to people and I would get whatever I wanted and of course I had nothing that I could contribute to his particular program.

Inequity in salaries.

The fourth theme under Devalued was Inequity in salaries. Many of the

participants exemplified the devaluing of women by commenting on the salary

differences for men and women faculty members. Some were aware of being underpaid

compared to men in their departments. As one woman said, "I figure I am at least 14,000

dollars underpaid per year given my rank and my accomplishments and so forth." Others

were aware only of the overall trend of women making less than men in academia,

although they stated it did not affect them directly. The following are examples:

> And also in the amount of money that I would make in comparison to men who
> were on the same level of assistant professor or whatever. And that seemed to
> have followed me throughout my lifetime and up until now, it still exists. And I
> think the commission for women a few years ago indicated that the women now
> that entered when I entered the university owes us probably about $80,000 to
> make up for unequal pay.

> Yeah, let me mention one other thing about higher education that I think is an
> issue, that again, does not affect me directly but I've seen it in other instances and
> that is the issue of pay. That there still is, even in 2005, gender inequity in salaries
> that cannot be accounted for based on discipline. That cannot be accounted for
> based on experience or credentials, so the conclusion should be that there are
> other factors that are affecting salary inequity, and one of them may be gender
> discrimination and undervaluing either what women teach or women faculty
> themselves.

> I remember going and saying I'd done a comparison of salaries for myself and
> other people at the same rank and I remember going to him and saying, can you
> consider my salary and the equity and so forth. He had agreed that the salary was
> low in comparison to others and he said he would put me first on the list for
> equity pay and he did. The equity pay that the women receive on this campus was
> such an insult, I mean it was good to be acknowledged, 'Yes you're making less
> than anybody else, we are trying to do better.' But I just said, 'It is such an insult
> it is so low. Give it to the library as a donation.' And that's how, and it was an
> effort to say, 'You're going to get equity pay, isn't that wonderful?' But it was
> such a low amount that it didn't amount to anything. And it still doesn't, we are
> still, like I indicated, so many thousands of dollars behind. That will never be
> made up.

Unheard.

The sub-theme Unheard included women's experiences of being ignored or overlooked when expressing their opinions and ideas. One stated, "I can't tell you how many times when, before this other woman left our department, she would say something and it would be completely disregarded. And five minutes later, somebody else would say it and it was the greatest idea." Another shared her perception that, "And your voice has no way to be heard because there is already a room full of a different voice." Some women noted that when this occurred they tended to blame themselves for not making themselves heard. Other examples of Unheard follow:

> Something else that I would notice also would be serving on various committees in every place that I've worked if you were the only woman on the committee, or one of a few women on the committee, you were not acknowledged when you said something. In other words, you might present an idea to the committee which was predominately men and it would be ignored, but if a male came up with the same thing it was, 'That's a great idea; wish we'd thought about that earlier.' And it was a total, like you were invisible. You weren't there to actually have anything to contribute. I notice that happening today. I don't know if it is conscious on the part of other individuals, but it still happens. It definitely still happens. I'll bring up something or I'll watch another woman bring up something and it is totally negated. It is like it wasn't even said. But the same thing could be said by a male and it is acknowledged. And that is both by other females and by males by predominately by men.

> I can remember being at faculty meetings and we'd be discussing some policy and I would suggest something, when I felt brave enough to speak up, and it was usually ignored. …. I just didn't know how to present my ideas, or at first I thought, 'Well they are just not any good.' But then I began to feel like, 'Well, no, you just aren't communicating well.' Because I noticed that usually some man would come up with my idea a few minutes later and everybody would immediately talk about it and pay attention to it.

> And so there were 10 men and me and I was the leader and then we had probably 15 to 20 students who would come to our departmental meetings. And also the support staff, the secretaries would come and these other professors on staff. And after a while the women, particularly these two professional staff members would

say to me, 'We've started counting the number of times you have to say something before it is actually heard by the men.'

Summary of Theme Two: Devalued

The theme of Devalued included the participants' feelings of being diminished in their roles as instructors, researchers, and colleagues. Five sub-themes comprised the theme Devalued, they were: 1) Left out of the network, 2) Others' perceptions, 3) Aesthetic bias, 4) Inequity in salaries, and 5) Unheard. Some participants noted that their male colleagues excluded them from formal and informal meetings and gatherings and thus they were often left out of collegial opportunities. Many spoke of their work as being cheapened by colleagues and students who do not respect them as professionals; some mentioned sexually demeaning comments that were based on their appearances. Reference was made to the gap between men's and women's salaries, with women being paid less for equal work. Finally, the participants referred to being unheard when they voiced their opinions or ideas; they gave many examples of their comments being ignored or dismissed by colleagues. All of the sub-themes impacted the main theme of these women being devalued in their work.

Theme Three: Supported

The theme of Supported included the women's experiences of seeking, giving, and receiving support. The theme also included those experiences where the women sought support but did not receive it. Alternatively, many women spoke of support being imperative in making their experience as faculty enjoyable. For example, after speaking of many negative, discriminatory experiences, a woman ended her interview by stating, "On the other side it is having colleagues that are supportive and excited about their

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scholarship and a collaborative environment in the middle of all that which makes it rich." Sub-themes for this theme of Supported included: 1) Familial support, 2) Talking to other women, and 3) Mentors.

Familial support.

Some women spoke of family and partners who supported them and influenced their views. One woman noted that her career success was partly possible because of her partner's support. She stated, "I am very lucky because my partner picks up as much of the work as I do." Another reflected on her mother's influence by stating, "I was raised by a very strong woman to believe in myself to be very confident in myself and to never think that anything, regardless if it was a man or woman told me I couldn't do, was true." The same woman noted the male influence in her life was an important source of support as well, "I've had two strong men in my family who have been nothing but supportive." Other quotes that illustrated the importance of familial support follow:

> I may be very unique in the situation of women you've interviewed. As a child I was never told 'You can't do anything because you are a girl.' I was raised in an orthodox Jewish synagogue and the rabbi who would normally say to a girl, 'You can't be a rabbi.' When I got enthusiastic about religion when I was about in the 5th grade, I was going to be the first woman rabbi. And either I didn't hear it or nobody said to me, you can't. And of course back then there weren't even any reform rabbis or conservative rabbis. And when I was a child and we had Hebrew school programs I was always the rabbi. My parents never said I couldn't do anything. When I came and told them that I wanted to be an engineer in the 8th grade my father was happy because I had originally said I wanted to be a nurse and he thought the kind of things that nurses did were menial.

> When I was nominated for one of the YMCA Tribute for Women. I didn't win, I was just a nominee, I didn't go any further than that. But we had a lunch with the laboratory director after that at [organization] but you know some of the women say, 'Yeah, I am trying to juggle, I get up early I work at home for two hours then I take my kids into school.' And he was extremely supportive, he was like, 'Keep breaking those rules. Keep doing what you are doing. You are doing a great job.' So I would have to say I think that a lot of the administration is very supportive of

women. They want to have women. And them allowing me to do this alternative workplace from home was really very good. I mean I was able to get my energy up and to get things more organized and I am really appreciative of that.

Talking to other women.

Gatherings with other women were mentioned often in the participant's interviews. Reaching out to other women and hearing their experiences seemed to give some women insight and understanding of their own experiences. One woman noted that in comparison to when she began as a faculty member, "Women are reaching out to each other more, so it is better in that sense." Another stated the importance of serving on the commission for women because she felt it was helpful to know "that you are not facing that alone." Alternatively, one woman reflected that she avoided these gatherings of women because "I found that these women were going to make a lot of people mad and I didn't feel like we would get anything changed other than people would avoid all of us. And I just frankly shied away from them." Other examples included the following:

> One of the things that I've found useful is to gather with a group of women from the college… we don't quite do it monthly, but to gather with them and to talk about different events, politics, issues that are going on and to figure out ways to address those. You know ways to support each other.

> And it helped me to talk to other women, it helped me to be able to vent, it helped me to get insight and input from other people who are familiar with the university system without having to worry that they were on my faculty and too close to the situation. I'm also hesitant even with other women on the faculty because bringing up too much of this stuff. We have this new woman now and I don't want to color her experience with a lot of my bad experience. So it is helpful to have, like we have these women's faculty lunches. I love to go to those. It is like, 'These people speak my language.' It is just nice and so [in regard to] the women in science club, we started that as graduate students and it wasn't as successful as we hoped. My initial vision was that it would be an opportunity for networking among women graduate and undergraduate students and that we would have speakers come in and we would facilitate networking and we were trying to set up a mentoring program with women faculty and women undergraduates. And what sort of happened is that the woman, the other graduate student who took the

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position, was elected to the position of president, sort of turned it more into a social club and that is not the kind of group that I am interested in. I mean I have friends. I want one that is going to be more helpful for me in dealing with these issues. And so it became too much of that and not enough of what I hoped it would be. The other problem that we had is that the population that we really need to reach is the undergraduate women. … I give presentations on this all the time and basically there is like a tiny, tiny number of women and a lot of men and what we found is that we cannot get those undergraduate women involved in these women's programs because they are still operating under the belief that they can be one of the guys and they are trying so hard. They don't want to do anything that is going to make them stand out. And so we weren't successful in reaching the undergraduates like we wanted to be and that was a big failure.

I am really interested in any type of women's support group because one of the things that really helped me when I started going through all that shit with the breastfeeding and the other stuff is to understand that this was a product of the culture in which I was working and not me.

Mentors.

Mentoring that the women gave or received was included as a sub-theme within the theme Supported. One woman reflected, "I think that I've been able to nurture a lot of people and a lot of women and encourage them." Another woman shared how other, more senior women, would support her. She stated, "So I would just kind of feel confused from time to time. And other women would take me aside and they would share some things." Another shared, "I was really in a situation where I got mentored and people recognized that I could do some of these things very well because I would not have conceived of myself in those roles." In addition, women sometimes sought mentoring and guidance and were not rewarded; these experiences are also included in this sub-theme. For example, one woman stated that some women were not given the opportunity to go up for promotions. She stated, "So it was the men who were mentored to go up for promotion that meant more money and women were not even mentored as they are today." Other examples of the sub-theme Mentors follow:

Well, I have to say, I don't feel as if I've been mentored at all. I was on the search committees for the associate dean of academic affairs and one of the things that they were continually asking questions like, 'Well, how are you handling this mentoring thing?' And I was thinking, 'Nobody's come up to me and said this is your mentor and they are going to work with you.' Nobody. And it really made me a little angry that that hadn't been put in place. But again, I can't separate the fact that I am joint faculty member. But no, I would say I haven't been mentored at all.

I knew my colleagues fairly well and it was a reasonably congenial place and the department chair, [name removed] was a champion of me. He helped me a lot. He did virtually everything he could to help me understand what the situation was, how I could get tenure and all that when those became the issues. So I credit him with a great deal and he frequently spoke overtly about the need to have women in the profession and so forth and he was not just passive he was active about it and he did that nationally.

And any number of [the women I've mentored] now have their doctorates because I thought the mentoring I received was something that I should pass on and in most cases these women did not initially perceive that they would be doctoral candidate material. It was not something that entered their heads. But at least three of them decided that the atmosphere that was created by the whole school and partly by me, decided to go and get their doctorates and there are two more who are working on them right now. But they might have anyway, but I helped them kind of tune in on the program where they could get their doctorates paid for.

I spoke up and said I think this woman needs a woman mentor, she didn't have one, she had a male mentor. 'I think she needs a women mentor who can help her understand the hidden rules of working in a man's world.' And it was fascinating to see the men in the room, almost every one of them did some kind of startled reaction. And a few laughed out loud and just a sudden quick laugh. A couple got red in the face, like really angry and one or two spoke up and said, 'Wait a minute [name removed] did I hear you say we have hidden rules?' And I said, 'Yeah, I really think you do and you don't know them because you've grown up with them but it can be difficult for a woman to see how to work unless she has another woman mentor to help her through that.' And other women began to say, 'Yeah, yeah, I think you are right.'

Summary of Theme Three: Supported

The final theme of Supported focused on the participants' descriptions of support they both did and did not receive as faculty members. Three sub-themes were

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encompassed in Supported, they were: 1) Familial support, 2) Talking to other women, and 3) Mentors. Several women touted the importance of support from parents, partners, and spouses during their career achievements and struggles. Talking to other women was seen as mainly a benefit and a source of support from those who understand the academic world from a woman's perspective. However, an alternative view of women's support groups was expressed in that these groups angered and isolated women from others in their departments. Finally, the reciprocal nature of mentoring was discussed by the participants, some of whom felt they received great mentoring, and others who cited poor or little mentoring in their careers.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of sex discrimination in higher education is a topic that has gotten much consideration by researchers. Differences in salary continue to exist and are likely explained by sex discrimination. Other areas of research on sex discrimination in higher education include academic climate, sexual harassment, parenting, promotion, tenure, and mentoring. While many studies continue to document discrimination in higher education and propose solutions, much of the consideration focuses on the number and types of incidents rather than the lived experiences of the women.

The goal of this research was to use a phenomenological research method to understand the experiences of seventeen women faculty members who, from their perspectives, have experienced discrimination. The methodology was well suited to this sensitive research topic as it allowed the women to direct and lead the interview to the most salient aspects of their experiences. With the help of a research group and extensive attention to rigor and detail, their experiences were analyzed for commonalities and themes. Two grounds and three themes were uncovered; the grounds were Minimize/Describe Discrimination and Overt/Covert Discrimination. The major themes were: 1) Burdened, 2) Devalued, and 3) Supported. Within each of these themes, several sub-themes were documented.

In this final chapter, the researcher delineates four major findings of this study, relates them to the current literature, and gives research and practical implications for their use. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the research procedure with benefits and limitations.

Summary of Major Findings with Research and Practice Implications

The results of this research will help researchers and professionals who want to understand the experience of discrimination for women in higher education from the perspective of the women. Four areas that are both interesting and valuable in relation to the current literature are: the ground Minimize/Describe discrimination, and the sub-themes Left out of the network, Unheard, and Mentoring. Research and practical implications for each are discussed.

Minimize/Describe discrimination.

The ground Minimize/Describe discrimination is an important finding in this research because it encompasses the idea that this is a difficult topic for women to describe and discuss. As with any uncomfortable topic, individuals need time to compose their thoughts and consider what they are willing to share. Many types of research do not give the opportunity for this reflective time or the quiet support that allowed these women to feel comfortable sharing their experiences. As mentioned earlier, several of the women who were approached by this researcher declined to participate at first, but upon reflection and discussion, they often agreed that they did have experiences to share. They seemed to need time to think about their experiences and consider the idea of sharing them with the researcher. If they had been asked to make a decision on whether to participate without this time to weigh their options, they probably would have declined. This phenomena is indicative of the way women have been taught to ignore their dissatisfaction with their professional environment and keep quiet.

Additionally, among those who agreed to participate, many began their interviews by qualifying, minimizing, and understating their experiences. As the interviews

continued, however, they opened up more, recalled more examples, and spoke with more passion and enthusiasm about incidents of discrimination. Some even contacted the researcher days after the interview with additional examples and comments. Future researchers in this area would do well to recognize this phenomenon and design their studies to account for the hesitancy women have to talking about discrimination. In this researcher's opinion, this means more than assuring anonymity. It means developing a relationship with the participant and expressing genuine care and interest in women's stories and experiences; going above and beyond a "researcher" role helped the women feel more comfortable when discussing this topic.

Another reason this finding is important is because it has largely been ignored in the current literature. If researchers on the topic of sex discrimination have encountered a similar phenomenon when recruiting participants for their studies, they have omitted these important data from their reports. Even Caplan (1993), in her book based on interviews with hundreds of women academics, did not mention information about women who declined her requests for interviews or were hesitant to speak with her about their experiences. Women are trained, through experience, that any reference to sex discrimination is not well-received, therefore it takes patience on the part of researchers, administrators, and colleagues to create an atmosphere where women know they will be heard and not judged.

Left out of the network.

An area that is well supported in the literature, and remains an important consideration, is that many women continue to feel left out of the network of their professional colleagues. This concept emerged as a sub-theme under the major theme of

Devalued in the current study. The participants gave numerous examples of times they perceived their male colleagues as excluding them from activities, both professional and casual. This finding supports previous research by Singh, Robinson, and Williams-Green (1995). In addition, several of the participants in this research referred to the "good old boys' network," which was also noted by Hernandez and Morales (1999) in their research. Many other researchers continue to observe and document this unfortunate fact (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001).

Bronstein and Farnsworth (1998) reported that when a woman feels excluded and devalued, she is more likely to withdraw from experiences with other faculty members and keep to herself. This finding was directly supported by the current study in which women noted that as a result of feeling left out they have become isolated within their departments. This perpetuates the cycle of continuing to be left out and continuing to withdraw within the academic circle, thus affecting tenure, salary, collaboration, and mentoring opportunities (Johnsrud, 1993; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995). This is often referred to as a "catch-22" situation (Caplan, 1993), as women who try to share in the "good old boys' network" make it more difficult for other women and minorities, and women who resist it endure a difficult work climate and are less likely to succeed.

Several researchers have suggested solutions to this continuing problem (Buckley, Sanders, Shih, Kallar, & Hampton, 2000; Caplan, 1993; Johnsrud, 1993). Caplan (1993) suggested that making professional connections within and outside of one's institution is important to combat isolation. While she proposed attempting to find collegial

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relationship within one's own department, she cautions against taking it personally if

establishing healthy and beneficial relationships is impossible. She stated that women

often blame themselves for not being able to have friendly relationships in their

departments, when in actuality there is little chance of success due to others'

preconceived ideas. In addition, Johnsrud (1993) proposed solutions for what she called

the "diverse realities" of men and women in academia. She suggested such things as

simplifying institutional policies of parental leave and supporting women and minority

faculty members in attaining the institutional resources such as research facilities, clerical

support, and graduate assistants. She also touted the importance of mentoring

relationships with senior colleagues and recommended training for chairs and committees

on issues of professional work climate, sexual harassment, and performance review.

Finally, she suggested implementing at the institutional level, clear guidelines regarding

discrimination and racism, "no matter how covert" (Johnsrud, 1993, p.12). She noted that

many of the attitudes that contribute to the "good old boys' network" or the hostile

environment for women can be combated by increased interaction and shared scholarship

to foster understanding and mutual respect. While Johnsrud's (1993) research and

recommendations are now over a decade old, her suggestions remain viable options for

impacting institutional climate in the university. Many of these options remain

unexplored and undefined in many departments.

Unheard.

Another major finding of this research is the sub-theme Unheard; this fell into the

broader theme of Devalued. This theme is not reported in the literature. Participants

spoke of the astonishment and anger they felt when their colleagues would ignore or pass

over their comments in a meeting. Some women gave examples of taking suggestions or concerns to department heads or administrators and being dismissed or patronized. They reported that their suggestions were often misattributed to a male or that when a male restated a woman's idea, it was welcomed more readily by others. Interestingly, they stated that both male and female colleagues would do this.

This sub-theme, more than any other, gives evidence to the subtle and ingrained nature of societal attitudes about women. Most of the participants did not feel that their colleagues were being intentionally disrespectful or trying to undermine their authority, in fact, many were at a loss to explain why it occurred. Several noted the effect of being unheard or dismissed repeatedly resulted in them being less likely to speak out and thus, they became more isolated. One woman reported some success by bringing this phenomenon to the attention of others when it occurred in a meeting. Education and awareness seem to be the best tools to fight this covert and subtle form of discrimination.

Mentors.

Mentoring, a sub-theme under Supported, is a concept that is well-documented in the literature and often suggested and implemented as a technique to recruit and retain more women and minorities (Gibson, 2004; Hernandez & Morales, 1999; Johnsrud, 1993; Viers & Blieszner, 2004). In the current study, mentoring referred to positive and negative experiences of both giving and receiving mentoring. Some participants saw the mentoring they received as inadequate or nonexistent or complained of the lack of availability of female or minority faculty members who could serve as mentors. Other participants reported that their mentors were a source of support and guidance that was imperative to their success as faculty members and researchers. Many noted that their

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mentors helped them navigate difficult political situations and avoid pitfalls of tenure and promotion.

Many of these ideas about mentoring are apparent in other research. Gibson (2004) conducted interviews with women on the experience of being mentored and found themes regarding political guidance, support, and connection. In Hernandez's and Morales' (1999) research however, a concept labeled "the desert" emerged as women spoke of the lack of mentors, particularly female and minority mentors, with whom women can connect. This dissertation seems to support both the positive and negative views on mentoring that exist in the literature.

Based on these studies, many administrators put time and resources into devising mentoring programs and connecting new female faculty members with those who have experience in academia (Viers & Blieszner, 2004). This often results in another problem for the few, seasoned, female academics; they are often stretched too thin and expectations to mentor incoming faculty members adds to this burden (Viers & Blieszner, 2004). Additionally, mentoring does not solve sex discrimination at its core, it only gives women and minorities support in navigating and dealing with difficult situations that may arise. While these efforts to support women are certainly needed, it is important to ensure that mentoring is not the only solution being employed in the fight against sex discrimination. Other avenues such as diversity training for administrators and committees and solidifying policies on parental leave and tenure are other excellent steps to fight sex discrimination (Johnsrud, 1993).

Evaluation of the Research Procedure

The existential-phenomenological research methodology was used in this study. It was chosen because the researcher's goal was to come away from this study with a better understanding of the experience of discrimination for female faculty members. Like all research procedures, it has both strengths and limitations. A brief discussion of the benefits and limitations of using this methodology conclude this dissertation.

<u>*Benefits.*</u>

Using unstructured interviews and allowing the participants to control the length and content of their responses is a common procedure of phenomenological research. In this study, the benefit of this open-ended questioning was a primary strength in that it allowed the women's voices to be heard. Their experiences, stories, and accounts were shared on their own terms; they provided the raw data for this study. Several of the participants commented to the researcher about the experience of being asked to talk about discrimination; all reported that it was positive. Some described a cathartic, even therapeutic, aspect to telling their story and others noted that the process of preparing for the interview forced them to put a structure on their experiences which they found useful. The open invitation for participants to "add to" their interview if they recalled something after the interview was over resulted in several emails and further discussion with participants.

Another benefit of this procedure is that participants were given the opportunity to review the themes and thematic structure and give feedback to the researcher on whether the results fit with their experiences. Several participants took advantage of this and the researcher's understanding and confidence in the results grew as a consequence of this

feedback. It was also apparent from the continued contact that the researcher had with participants that they were interested in the final product of the research, therefore giving credibility to the importance of this topic.

Limitations.

The results of this study cannot be generalized to the population of female faculty members in higher education. The sample size of seventeen women was ideal for gathering varied and complete descriptions, but the participants were not selected randomly, thus, the homogeneity of the sample was not a concern for the researcher. Women of different cultural or geographic backgrounds may have experiences that differ from those documented in this study.

Another possible limitation is that the women self-selected for this study, and a case could be made that these women's experiences differ significantly from those women who declined participation. Again, this is a limitation only in that it prevents generalization of the results, which is not a goal of phenomenological research.

Finally, this research could be criticized for not defining the "experience of discrimination" in objective terms. The participants were given the latitude to interpret this in any way they wished. Some stuck with a legalistic definition of discrimination, some relied on their belief in the "unfairness" of a situation, and others used their own knowledge of the literature on sex discrimination in higher education to guide their definition of the term. All of these were considered acceptable to the researcher and all were in line with the goal of understanding these women's experiences, each within their own context.

In conclusion, this research met the goal of providing a framework for understanding the experience of discrimination for seventeen women faculty in higher education. The results indicate that discrimination continues to exist in a variety of contexts for these women and there are both obvious and subtle challenges to a professional career in academia for women. Research and awareness must continually be brought to this problem in order to make higher education a welcoming environment for all individuals.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____   Date: _____

Number of years employed as a faculty member in higher education: _____

Rank (assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, etc.) _____

Number of years at your rank: _____

Tenure Status: _____

Marital Status: _____

Number of children: _____

Race: _____

Age: _____

Salary: _____

Type of Institution (e.g. research 1, liberal arts, community, etc.) _____

Number of publications in peer-reviewed journals: _____

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Project: Women's Experiences of Discrimination in the University

This research is designed to investigate the experience of women who have experienced discrimination in the university. The investigation involves two parts:
1) Explanation of the study and gaining of your informed consent, and
2) A discussion of your experience of discrimination.

The length of the interview is anticipated to be approximately 30 minutes, however, you may take any amount of time you would like, up to two hours. The interview questions will be open-ended, informal and conversational in nature. The interviews will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time at a private location on the University of Tennessee campus.

Your participation in this study entails no unusual risks or discomforts. A research paper based on this research will be prepared as partial fulfillment of degree requirements in a doctoral psychology program. The knowledge gained from this research may be presented to others through published works and/or presentations.

The only potential risk is your identification. While anonymity cannot be guaranteed, confidentiality will be maintained by replacing names, titles and organizations with pseudonyms to be used in the typed transcripts. The interview process requires audio-taping of the interview and subsequent preparation of a transcript of the interview. The audiotapes will be retained in a secure location on the campus of the University of Tennessee. After the transcripts are completed, the tapes will be erased.

The transcripts and informed consent statements will be retained in separate locked file cabinets for three years on the campus of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. If you so request, a copy of the transcript of your interview can be provided to you until the end of the three-year period, after which all records will be destroyed. Every precaution will be made to insure confidentiality of records.

I have read the above statement and agree to participate in the research. In addition, I am aware that:

1. My name and audiotapes will remain confidential and the tapes will be erased after transcripts of them are prepared.
2. I am entitled to have any further inquiries answered regarding the procedures.
3. No royalties are due to me for any subsequent publication.
4. Participation is voluntary and I may withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time and for any reason without penalty. For further information about this study or your role in it, contact:
   Kylie G. Cole-Zakrzewski
   University of Tennessee
   307C Austin Peay
   Knoxville, TN 37996
   (865) 977-0902 (home)
   kcole333@aol.com
5. The primary investigator and other researchers who are graduate students or faculty at The University of Tennessee will review the transcripts for themes.

Participant Signature _____ Date_____

Printed Name _____

Primary Investigator Signature _____ Date_____

APPENDIX C: PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Women's Experiences of Discrimination in the University

As a member of this project's research team, I understand that I will be reading

transcripts of confidential interviews. The information in these transcripts has been

revealed by research subjects who participated in this project in good faith that their

interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to

honor this confidentiality agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information in these

transcripts with anyone except the primary investigator of this project, Kylie G. Cole-

Zakrzewski (865-977-0902); the research advisor, Dr. Mark A. Hector (865-974-5131);

or other members of this research team. Any violation of this agreement would constitute

a serious breach of ethical standards and I pledge not to do so.

_____ _____

Research Team Member   Date

_____ _____

Research Team Member   Date

_____ _____

Research Team Member   Date

_____ _____

Research Team Member   Date

_____ _____

Research Team Member   Date

VITA

Kylie Gray Cole was born June 30, 1978 in Atkinson, NE. She was raised in the rural community of Emmet, NE and graduated from St. Mary's High School in 1997. She received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Nebraska, Kearney in 2000. Kylie then enrolled at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and obtained a Master of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling. In 2002, she began a doctoral program in Counseling Psychology and she completed an APA accredited internship at the University of Maine Counseling Center. She received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Tennessee in 2007. She currently resides in Bangor, Maine with her husband, Dr. Robert Zakrzewski and their six cats.