

2021

Colorism Experiences of Non-White Women Leaders in Higher Education

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Colorism Experiences of Non-White Women Leaders in Higher Education

by

Aimee Elaine Haynes

A Dissertation Presented to the
Halmos College of Arts and Sciences of Nova Southeastern University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Nova Southeastern University
2021

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January 2021

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

This dissertation was submitted by Aimee Haynes under the direction of the chair of the dissertation committee listed below. It was submitted to the Halmos College of Arts and Sciences and approved in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University.

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1/27/2021

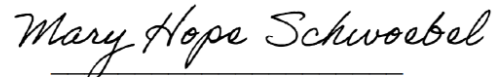
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Dedication

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to Almighty God, who graciously bestowed guidance, strength, power of mind, and health in life to accomplish this goal.

Thank you, Father.

To my beloved parents, Linda & Joe:

Mommy, my voice of reason, my friend, my God compass, thank you. When I doubted myself and struggled you prayed, encouraged me, and was my advocate. When stress and emotions overwhelmed me your grace, faith, strength, love, charisma, honesty, and confidence anchored me. You helped me make sense of this journey and turned the most daunting, arduous moments into an adventure. I cannot express my love and appreciation enough for who you are, your character, your unrelenting fire, and loyalty.

Daddy, thank you for always affirming that, **I am somebody, I am successful, I am beautifully, and wonderfully made, helping me to believe it, and ensuring I behave like it.** You are my teacher of discipline, good work ethic, and devotion to God, you are the personification of a real superhero. Thank you for your unwavering faith, wisdom, commitment to our family, love, and fervor. Thank you for listening to my dissertation ideas, even when they changed weekly. No matter how many times I fall you always wait in the wings to catch me, dust off the hurt, and help me try again.

To my siblings (John, Joe, Becca, Tim, Angel, & Selina), nephews (Elijah, JoJo, & Lucas), and grandparents, you have inspired me to do better & be better. You are my definition of success. You are everything good I hope to be. I am proud to be part of this family. I dedicate this milestone to you.

Acknowledgements

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” – Jeremiah 29:11

All thanks and praise to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is the head of my life. His grace and mercy brought me through. He is the source from whom all blessings flow.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my esteemed committee, firstly my chair Dr. Dustin Berna whose patience and expertise pushed me to sharpen my thinking and brought my work to a higher level. Thank you to Dr. Judith McKay, & Dr. Mary Hope Schwoebel for serving as accompanying members and providing invaluable guidance, tutelage, and outstanding effort to help me reach this auspicious moment.

Special acknowledgement goes to my mentors, Dr. Robin Cooper, Dr. Richard Harvey, and Dr. Robin Jacobs whose wise counsel and sympathetic ear anchored me throughout this process and led to stimulating discussions that generated quality research questions and methodology to further my research. I would also like to thank my tutors Dr. Sandra Ojuronbe, Dr. Radleigh Santos, Dr. Jason Gershman, and Dr. Kathleen Hagen, whose wonderful collaboration provided me the tools needed to choose the right direction and successfully complete my dissertation.

I genuinely appreciate Dr. Bishop Elaine A. Brown, “Mama,” Bishop David Brown, & the entire Holiness Temple Church family who supported me spiritually, emotionally, and financially since birth. Thank you. I love you.

Thank you, Mr. Michael Todd from Social Science Space, for publishing my call to action and all participants. Special thanks to MAPS, Sash, Maui, Rod, Nessa, Keisha,

& the Crew for your unwavering love and support. To my friends, family, colleagues, co-workers, gatekeepers, I could not have made it without you. I cherish you all. Thank you.

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Abstract

As the population of the United States becomes more diverse the ethnic makeup of postsecondary institutions expands. Women of color (WOC) represent a growing number within the academic community earning more postsecondary degrees than men and serve as leaders in higher education throughout the country. The increased presence of WOC in academic positions of power, such as deans, directors, supervisors, tenured faculty, presidents, etc., indicate America's progression towards inclusivity. However, colorism, a subset of racism favoring and advantaging lighter skin complexions and disadvantaging darker skin tones, exist as a predictor of socioeconomic status, educational attainment, martial capital, occupational, and interpersonal success for WOC. This quantitative study examines colorism experiences of non-White female leaders in the academy. Survey items focused on skin tone discrimination within colleges and universities and sought to answer the following research questions: 1) To what degree has colorism been a factor in the careers of WOC who are in positions of power, 2) To what degree are experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education, 3) What demographics of WOC are most associated with experiences of colorism (age, skin tone, SES) and 4) How have WOC coped with and/or responded to colorism in their workplace experiences? Findings show that colorism negatively influences the career outcomes of WOC, contributes to lowered perceptions of social justice in higher education, and affects their coping mechanisms. Redressing skin tone bias from a human resource and conflict resolution perspective can help build more inclusive organizational teams across diverse workplaces.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Study

The changing racial and ethnic landscape of the United States consistently trends as a leading topic. The U.S. once stood as a primarily biracial society having a large White majority and smaller black minority (Higham, 1988; Krogstad, 2019; Zong, Batalova, & Burrows, 2019). The concept of race dictated negative interactions between African Americans and Caucasians during colonialism. Racism, the notion of racial superiority of one group over the “inferior other,” received nationwide approval and predetermined white supremacy as justification for slavery (Enomoto, 1995). During this era, fairer toned African slaves received advantages from their colonial capturers while darker bodies were denigrated (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1992). Slavery served as the conduit for interracial color stratification in the Black community. Herein, blacks regarded darker skin as, unattractive, unrefined, unintelligent, classless, and poor, and attributed sophistication, prominence, wealth, education, and beauty to brighter skin hues (Norwood, 2015). However, the reverse also occurs in the Black community,

Traditionally, the color complex involved light-skinned Blacks’ rejection of Blacks who were darker. Increasingly, however, the color complex shows up in the form of dark-skinned African Americans spurning their lighter-skinned brothers and sisters for not being Black enough. The complex even includes attitudes about hair texture, nose shape, and eye color (Russell et al., 1992, p. 2, para 3).

Historians classify intragroup color-based bias benefitting lighter skin-tones and disadvantaging darker tones as colorism, also called the color complex, colortocracy, or

shadeism (Walker, 1983; Russell et al., 1992, Russell-Cole et al., 2012; DuBois, 1968; Hall, 2008).

Recently, academics and human resource officers identified colorism as a barrier to career development and social interactions in the workforce (Harrison, 2010), particularly in higher education (Sims, 2006). Employees carry their intrapersonal values and cultural beliefs into organizations. Twenty-first century scholars discovered lighter skin is associated with greater wealth (Goldsmith, Hamilton, & Darity Jr., 2006), employment opportunities (Keith & Herring, 1991), perceived intelligence (Hannon, 2015), better education (Keith & Monroe, 2016), marital partner selection (Hunter, 2005, 2007), and social privileges (Hutchison, 2010), among WOC (Hunter, 2002). Furthermore, the media oftentimes features fairer toned Eurocentric WOC in movie roles, music videos, and magazine covers as attractive and desirable (Hunter, 2002), but undervalues and ignores darker shaded women (Hall & Crutchfield, 2018; Harrison, 2010; Hill, 2002). Conversely the media portrays darker skinned men as menacing, dangerous, and sexually perverse, (Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2012). These images fuel racial profiling and frequent incidents of mass incarceration in America (Alexander, 2012).

Colorist ideologies of “to be white is right,” and “lighter is better” extend globally, from the development of the Far East to the expansion of the West (Hunter, 2002; Russell-Cole et al., 2012; DiAngelo, 2012). Messages of increased desirability and higher social status linked to white privilege are found throughout Africa (Hall, 2018; Cooper, 2016) and Asia (Pattani, 2017). Many use illegal skin lightening cosmetics and sun avoidance to preserve “whiteness.” Some countries propagate slogans of “you need

to be white to win,” like the 2016 skin whitening commercial in Thailand (Rogers, 2016). The ad featured an actress in blackface being compared unfavorably to a fairer toned woman. To gain acceptance, the actress shed her “blackness” using Snowz, a manufactured pill (Lefevre, & Skulpichetrat, 2016; Rogers, 2016). Popularity for such pills and bleaching creams are slowly reaching U.S. and British markets (Pattani, 2017). Herein reinforces the colorism phenomenon of practiced prejudice where skin tones are awarded different benefits, or the lack thereof (Walker, 1983). Consequently, such attitudes create a color gap that embraces “whiteness” and rejects “blackness” (Russell et al., 1992).

Despite America’s history of color sensitivity, the nation grows more diverse. Non-white women dominate the public. The 2010 Census reflected a less White more pluralistic populace, one where experts project the White non-Hispanic faction will peak then decrease towards the end of the twenty first century (Johnson, 2020; CIS, 2020). Immigration, voluntary intermarriage, enslavement, and rape resulted in a slow melding of cultures and ethnicities that blended to create new skin tone palettes (Downie, Cook-Bolden, Nevins Taylor, 2004). The influx of Asians, Hispanics, and those from the Caribbean blur the “color lines” (Cook-Bolden et al., 2004) producing a more diluted “black/nonblack” binary, as predicted by renowned sociologist Herbert J. Gan’s (1999) in his essay, *The possibility of a new racial hierarchy in the Twenty-first Century United States*.

Significance of Study

Today, women outnumber men by nearly five million as of 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018) and drive economic growth by 51% as they pour into the workforce

(Whitmore Schanzenbach & Nunn, 2017). Economists Long & Van Dam (2019) note that for the first time in U.S. history most working age new hires are people of color. Analysts estimate America will transform into a majority-minority by 2043 (Johnson, 2020; Vespa, Armstrong & Medina, 2018). The labor force and educational arena is slated to follow suit as the number of minority women who attain postsecondary degrees increases and they seek employment (Toossi, 2002, 2006, 2015; Toossi & Morisi, 2017). Research indicates that earning a college credential correlates to greater employment opportunities, lower unemployment rates, home ownership, participation in civic engagement, healthier lifestyles, increased voting, and overall improved quality of life (Torpey, 2019; Ma et al., 2019; Turk 2019). As a result, women of color now attain more education than before, yet “the rate of change in the faculty body is not consistent with increases in diversity among undergraduates or even PhD recipients” (Griffin, 2017, p. 273; Harris Brown, Alvarez McHatton, & Frazier Trotman, 2017). Therefore, the shift in American demography places a strong emphasis on workplace diversity and inclusion for WOC in higher education and mitigating hindrances to their upward mobility (Harris Brown et al., 2017).

A continued rise of publications indicates skin tone as a lynchpin in intraracial disparities (Keith & Monroe, 2016) within education (Monroe, 2013; Vasquez Heilig, Wong Flores, Barros Souza, Carlton Barry, & Barcelo Monroy, 2019) and the job market (Goldsmith, Hamilton, & Darity, 2007). Most scholarship predominantly focus on African Americans (Watson, 2015), Asians and Hispanics in the United States (Rondilla & Spickard, 2007; Hersch, 2018). Traditional ethnic and organizational conflict studies describe intraracial practices of discrimination as a linear black/white issue (Gonzalez-

Barrer, 2019). Globally, literature documents transcontinental narratives of color-based contentions valuing light over dark skin tones particularly among women in North America, Africa, Asia, and Hispanic countries (Hall 2008; Rondilla & Spickard, 2007).

Furthermore, research shows colorism as a social justice issue in which skin tone affects race relations, legal equality proceedings, and job outcomes (HRM Guide Human Resource Management, 2017). “American courts are not fully committed to recognizing colorism claims whether intra-racial or inter-racial. Their discomfort with these claims is exaggerated when the colorism practices complained of have their roots in cultures outside the United States” (Banks, 2015, p. 681). Colorism experiences among minority women leaders in higher education careers is more underappreciated. Amidst the new wave of diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace, this project aims to go beyond the Black/White paradigm of color discrimination to analyze skin tone bias amongst non-White ethnoracial female leaders serving in positions of power at postsecondary institutions. For this study, positions of power are defined as any managerial role in which the individual has one or more direct reports, manages a project, achieved tenured or full professorship, department chair or co-chair, any level of deanship, directorship, chief academic officer-provost or vice provost, president or vice president, governing board member, team or course lead, supervisor, manager, etc. Filling this gap in research seeks to redress implicit discrimination, build cultural competence, include underrepresented voices, and improve diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Statement of the Problem

Colorism issues are multilayered and under researched in higher education. A gap in conflict resolution studies exists in evaluating the degree to which colorism experiences among non-White women leaders effect their career outcomes, perceptions of social justice in higher education, and the relation to their socioeconomic status, years of service, and age. Human Resource practitioners assert that color-discrimination is “ubiquitous,” understudied” (Marira & Mitra, 2013) misunderstood and avoided in organizations (Mirza, 2003). Comprehensive studies, like *Faculty of Color in Academe: What 20 Years of Literature Tells Us* (Sotello Viernes Turner, Gonzalez, & Wood, 2008), and the American Council on Education briefing, *Pipelines, Pathways, and Institutional Leadership: An Update on the Status of Women in Higher Education* (Johnson, 2017) present the progression, and uphill climb towards egalitarianism from a gender and racial perspective. A collection of equity explorations focus on the pervasive role skin tone plays in earning wages (Goldsmith et al., 2007; Keith & Herring, 1991; Gaskell, 2019; Rosenblum, Darity, Harris, & Hamilton, 2016), educational attainment (Hersch, 2008; Keith & Monroe, 2016; Hunter, 2002), and the marriage market (Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Hunter 2007).

Findings of most studies typically show the existence of color stratification amongst African Americans (Watson, 2015; Bryant 2013; Gray, 2017) and Latinx groups in academic institutions (Sims, 2006; Mirza, 2003; Vasquez Heilig et al., 2019). Scholars describe unique cases in which ethnicity and skin tone create intraracial and intraethnic microaggressions across U.S. college campuses and workplaces. As a result, individuals from the same ethnoracial group categorize themselves in a social caste system marking

clear distinctions between native and non-native American generations. For example, some Korean Americans will marginalize native-born Koreans for maintaining their sense of ethnic identity evident by their clothing or accent, and reinforce the preference of lighter over darker skin tones by attempting to become or maintain whiteness to better assimilate to western culture (Garber, 2017). Garber (2017) noted that these subtle and implicit biases impede communication, dismantles relationships, and builds workplace hierarchies.

Social scientists further debate the complexity of ethnoracial distinctions among immigrant populations in the US. America's cultural classification system yields several complications (Waters & Pineau, 2015). For example, high levels of intermarriages between Asians and Hispanics to Whites blurs the "color line" creating hard boundaries for separate groups (Waters & Pineau, 2015). Lighter skin toned individuals may identify as white in an attempt at racial amalgamation. Authors, Waters & Pineau (2015), of the National Academy of Sciences asserts,

Discrimination, skin color, and socioeconomic status may interact to particularly affect ethnoracial self-identification.... with rising socioeconomic status, they are more likely to become familiar with U.S. racial taxonomies and select "white" as their racial identity. Investigators studying immigrant integration must therefore remember that self-identifications are both causes and consequences of integration and socioeconomic mobility, sometimes making it difficult to measure such mobility over time (p. 51-52).

Experts call this process racialization- the social practice of taking on the identity of the dominate racial or ethnic group to gain sociopolitical and economic advantage or

acceptance (Waters & Pineau, 2015). Consequently, such actions reinforce systemic bigotry and exclusionary practices in American society, like in the cases of indigenous immigrant groups and darker skinned Hispanics who do not meet phenotypic criteria of “whiteness” (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2019). Members of this “out-group” may be classified as “other” much like biracial African Americans of the antebellum period. Until recently, laws separated blacks from whites, prohibited intermarriage, and defined racially mixed persons having one drop of black blood or African ancestry as black, and therefore inferior, outcasted, and a disadvantaged “other” (Davis, 2001). For this reason, as organizations seek to be more inclusive and WOC advance in the academe, a stronger awareness of institutional practices, cultural competency, and social justice are paramount. This study uses history as a framework to address how colorism challenges egalitarianism in the workplace.

Purpose of Study

The intent of this study is to examine colorism experiences among non-White women leaders in their academic careers. The researcher analyzed the perceptions of social justice in the academy, the demographic (age, sex, skin tone, socioeconomic status, position of power, and educational attainment) most associated with these experiences, and their coping mechanisms when faced with skin tone discrimination. The research design controlled for variables such as sex, race, and position, by asking a series of inclusion and exclusion questions on an online survey in accordance with quantitative analysis.

Color-based research requires a more extensive exploration beyond the usual topics of racially homogenous groups. A deeper investigation of intercultural differences in higher education administration introduces a new layer to workplace conflict.

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. To what degree has colorism been a factor in the careers of women of color who are in power positions?

Hypotheses: Women of Color (WOC) will report moderate to high experiences with colorism in their hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

2. To what degree are experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education?

Hypotheses: a) Higher reported experiences with colorism in each of these areas listed above will be associated with lower social justice perceptions in the higher education industry; b) Higher reported experiences with colorism in each of the areas listed above will be associated with important work-related outcomes including higher intentions to leave higher education, lower job satisfaction, and lower engagement.

3. What demographics of women of color are most associated with experiences of colorism (age, sex, skin tone)?

Hypotheses: a) Darker skin tone women will report more experiences with colorism than lighter skin tone women; b) Older women will report more experiences with colorism; c) Women with lower SES will report more experiences with colorism.

4. Exploratory Question: What coping mechanisms have been deployed as a means of dealing with colorism? This was asked as an open-ended question: How have you coped with and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences?

Definitions

This dissertation uses different terminologies, definitions, labels, and phrases. Some words are used interchangeably because they mean the same. The literature discusses topics and subjects of a sensitive nature using strong terms and outdated vernacular considered derogatory and otherwise unacceptable in the mainstream public. Adam Croom (2013), Professor of Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania State attests, although delicate, slurs provides context and encapsulates “language and its important role in social interaction” (Croom, 2013, p. 200). Therefore, using these words helps to fully understand the history and long-term effects of colorism and its corresponding layers.

Terms and Definitions are below:

Black Americans: The terms black, African American, African descent, ancestry, heritage, and lineage, person of color, & Negro mean the same and are used interchangeably (Davis, 2001; neo-natal specialty Russell, Wilson, Hall, 1992; Corso, 2014). Descriptions of skin shades include light, dark, cinnamon, fair, brown, and yellow as mentioned in Russell et al., 1992.

Minorities: In the context of this dissertation, minorities represent racial and ethnic groups not part of the dominant White majority in America. People or communities of color constitute the broader spectrum of non-White ethnoracial groups

(Malesky, 2014) as defined in the U.S. Census Glossary (n.d.) (i.e., non-White Latino/Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaskan Native, 2 or More Races, & African American).

Skin shade associations on a color spectrum

The following terms are slang and proper names ascribed to skin tone pallets in relation to shades of brown in individual pigmentation (Downie et al., 2004; Wilder, 2010): Light: bright, collie, cream, high yellow, fair, yellow, mulatto, caramel, beige, house slave, French vanilla, bisque, olive, red, red bone.

Medium: chestnut, cinnamon, tanned, warm, honey, mocha, cappuccino, golden, almond.

Dark: mocha, cocoa, hazelnut, espresso, darkie, black, blackie, burnt, purple, midnight.

Mulatto: The root meaning of mulatto, in Spanish, is hybrid, defining the unions between “pure whites” and a “pure African Negro” (Davis, 2001, p. 5). Mulattos were considered black due to their ratio of perceptible Negro blood.

Mixed race: In most censuses, enumerators considered mixed race as those who had a fraction of African lineage and European ancestry in the 20th century. A person can belong to more than one racial group apart from the traditional black and white categories, for example, an African-Native American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Hispanic/Latinx/Latino-a: A person of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Central or South American, and Spanish origin regardless of race (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

American Indian or Alaska Native: Individuals with tribal and ancestry origins from North, South, or Central America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Asian: A native of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Indian subcontinent, including, but not limited to, those from China, the Philippines, Japan, Thailand, Cambodia, Pakistan, Malaysia, etc. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017a).

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Island: A person originating from Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, amongst other Pacific Islands (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017a).

Predominantly White Institutions (PWI): Institutions of higher learning with a 50% or more majority white populace of student enrollment, along with faculty and staff (Jones-Wilson, 1996).

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC): A regionally accrediting body that monitors, evaluates, and accredits degree granting educational institutions in the Southern region of the U.S., Latin America, and other international sites. They serve the states of Florida, Texas, Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, & Alabama (SACS, 2019).

Public Four-Year Institutions: State-affiliated colleges and universities whose programs are primarily supported by public taxes. At least half of the degrees and certificates awarded are at or above the bachelor's level (Espinosa, Turk, Taylor, & Chessman, 2019a).

Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Colleges and universities not sponsored, compensated, or supported by governmental organizations or individual agencies for anything other than expenses for assumed risks, wages, and rent. This includes graduate schools that do not confer undergraduate degrees and certificates. At

least half of all degrees and certificates are to par or are above the bachelor' level (Espinosa et al., 2019a).

Public Two-Year Institutions: Colleges and universities operated by publicly elected officials and supported by public taxes. Degree-granting programs offer associate degrees, and other postsecondary certificates, awards, diplomas for less than four academic years. Less than half of all degrees awarded are at or above the bachelor's level (Espinosa et al., 2019a).

For Profit Institutions: Undergraduate and graduate degree granting institutions receiving compensation from the individual or ruling agency (Espinosa et al., 2019a).

Positions of power: Faculty holding permanent positions, and postsecondary administrators that oversee student services, faculty research, and academics such as any level of deanship, directorship, department chair or co-chair, chief academic officer-provost or vice provost, president or vice president, supervisors, managers, course, team leads or equivalent (BLS, 2020).

The proceeding chapter reviews literature regarding colorism through a historic lens, demographic trends across America, inter-and-intraracial investigations of skin tone bias, seminal research on color bias experiences of minority women in higher education, and the result of colorism in present-day 21st century academic institutions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The term black, mostly associated with describing differences between light and dark or good and evil, expands to include negative feelings towards others who wear the color on their skin (Norwood, 2015). Author and Civil Rights Activist Alice Walker (1983), coined the term “colorism,” in her work, “If the Present Looks Like the Past, What Does the Future Look Like.” Walker (1983) describes the prejudice treatment of individuals from the same ethnic group based on skin-tone. According to feminist theorists Margo Okazawa-Rey, Tracy Robinson, & Janie Victoria Ward (1987), colorism is the means “...in which the shade of one’s skin functions as a status-determining characteristic” having advantages for some and disadvantages for others (as cited in Wilder, 2015, p.4). W.E.B. DuBois (1968) explained this behavior as “colortocracy,” the social hierarchy brought to America through colonialism. Colortocracy is driven by a racist ideology intentionally separating and privileging whiteness while demoralizing and justifying the inferiority of blackness (DuBois, 1968). Leading social scholars Russell, Wilson, & Hall (1992, 2012) & Wilder (2015) further call this phenomenon “the color complex” and “shadeism” (p. 6).

Communities of color, meaning all non-Caucasian minority groups, compose a larger more diverse portion of today’s global and national workforce than in the past (Catalyst, 2019; The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2005). Individuals bring their cultural values and ideas to their office space which affects their organizational decision-making (Devarag, Quigley, & Patel, 2018; Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016) and their social interactions (Powell, 2017). Colorism creates workplace inequities

and adversely effects women of color domestically and internationally (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016). In India, Southeast Asia and parts of Africa, colorism stands as a customary practice reinforced in the media, social institutions, and cultural ideologies (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016; Dhillon-Jamerson, 2019). In the U.S., colorism acts a byproduct of slavery and holds implications for recruiting and retaining minority faculty and administrators (Sims, 2009). Traditional, studies explore colorism in American organizations and academia, specifically among African Americans (Sims, 2006). However, quantitative research regarding the degree to which colorism influences WOC career outcomes, perceptions of social justice in the higher education industry, and the relationship of these perceptions to their demographics (age, level of position, number of years served, etc.) appear non-existent. This study intended to contribute a comprehensive look at the intersectionality between colorism, career outcomes, perceptions of social justice in the academic industry and how these experiences relate to ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and positions of power in higher education. This exploration helps to further engage academics and human resource specialists in ways to recognize, discuss, and train intellectual communities in addressing implicit bias. As international women of color enter American institutions of higher learning, individuals responsible for hiring and developing employees must consider implications of colorism particularly from other countries where women are less likely to challenge the status quo and develop skills to handle or prevent workplace issues (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016).

To understand the layers of colorism among WOC in educational leadership and administration the literature includes scholarship from humanities, legal studies, business, psychology, biology, and social science. The journey begins with a brief historical

perspective of race, colorism, and its influence on Western civilization. The proceeding section acknowledge America's emerging multiracial society and its significance in diversifying the workforce, specifically in academia. The literature review tracks colorism as a sociocultural phenomenon for non-White women both native and foreign-born, with a primary focus on Latinas, African Americans, Indians, and Southeast Asians. This provides a richer context and consideration of the impact intraracial discriminations have within varying ethnic groups and how it translates to organizational conflict.

A wealth of research exists regarding skin tone bias in Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU's) and general workplaces (Harrison, 2010). The U.S. is more diverse than ever before, and social scientist's reconnaissance increasingly addresses the best practices for diversity and inclusion across and within agencies (Harrison, 2010). However, less is known about skin tone bias experiences across communities of color beyond black-white color lines in academia. American history focuses on colonialism and slavery's influence on interracial relationships and how higher education in the antebellum south reinforced extreme pro-southern politics of white elitism, proslavery, racism and southern nationalism (Sugrue, 1992). This project redressed the gap in research by drawing attention to traditionally underrepresented intellectual communities of color affected by skin tone bias, who are now employed as leaders in the professoriate and/or administrative positions throughout higher education.

The new context aims to broaden the scope of organizational conflict, educational reformation, and improved ethnic studies in areas that have been otherwise untouched or lackluster. Keith & Monroe (2016) affirm a deficit in colorism scholarship from an educational vantage point declaring that most literary works focus on race rather than

microscopic issues or the ambiguity of skin tone preference. An example of Keith and Monroe's point about the limitations in research is demonstrated in antidiscrimination initiatives. With the expansion of ethnoracial groups in the United States, the law requires institutions of higher education, and all employers, to comply with affirmative action guidelines prohibiting discrimination of applicants based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (American Association for Access Equality and Diversity, 2019). However, human resource practitioners assert that color-discrimination is "ubiquitous," understudied" (Marira & Mitra, 2013) misunderstood and avoided in organizations (Mirza, 2003).

Providing education to human resource developers (HRDs) on the relationship between colorism and minority women encounters with shadeism in positions of power across colleges and universities can boost inclusion and empower WOC to address workplace inequalities. In his article, "*Colorism: The Often Un-discussed "ism" in Americas Workforce*" Dr. Matthew Harrison (2010) states,

As more and more organizations begin to employ affirmative action policies, more and more people of color are being hired and considered for positions in upper-level management- positions where they are likely to be considered a "pioneer" for someone of their race (p. 70).

Therefore, it is valuable to address these concerns to reach best practices in organizations.

We begin by understanding the role of race.

Understanding Race

Race, arguably a powerful social dynamic, "drove science to organize society and its resources along racial lines" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 80), in the United States and across

the globe (Frazier, 1957b; Jablonski, 2013). History witnessed America's participation in controversial practices of enslavement (Africans), displacement, genocide (Native Americans), and colonization (Mexican lands) (DiAngelo, 2012; Bishop & Shu, 2016). While fighting for noble ideas of equality and freedom from the British, slave owners sought to reconcile and legitimize the cruelty of their actions against captive Africans. As a result, they classified people based on physical characteristics erroneously grounded in nature (Frazier, 1974). Consequently, race derived from a time in science when an incomplete understanding of genetics, pigmentation and human ancestry proposed a means of cataloging human groups based on superficial differences in skin color, hair texture, eye shape, and skull size (Cheng, 2008; Gould, 1996; Frazier, 1974).

Colonizers used the works of Swedish biological taxonomist Carlus Linne (1767), German anthropologist Johann Friedrick Blumenbach (1865), and American physician Samuel George Morton (1839), amongst others, to explain race and external characteristics as reliable indicators of internal variations between people (DiAngelo, 2012). Linne (1767) pioneered modern taxonomy and assigned negative personality traits to people of color and non-Anglos, "proving" their inferiority to whiteness. Father of anthropology, Johann Friedrick Blumenbach (1865) added aesthetic value to phenotypic traits of the skull (Cheng, 2008). Samuel Morton (1839) collected and measured skull sizes and concluded,

The Caucasian Race is characterized by a naturally fair skin, susceptible of every tint hair fine, long and curling, and of various colors. The skull is large and oval, and its anterior portion full and elevated. The face is small in proportion to the head, of an oval form, with well-proportioned features. The nasal bones are

arched, the chin full, and the teeth vertical. This race is distinguished for the facility with which it attains the highest intellectual endowments (p. 5, para 2).

In contrast, Morton (1839) further postulated, that the Negro family is,

Characterized by a black complexion, and black, woolly hair; the eyes are large and prominent, the nose broad and flat, the lips thick, and the mouth wide: the head is long and narrow, the forehead low, the cheek-bones prominent, the jaws projecting, and the chin small. In disposition the negro is joyous, flexible, and indolent; while the many nations which compose this race present a singular diversity of intellectual character, of which the far extreme is the lowest grade of humanity (pp. 6-7).

Scientific physical descriptions created ethnocentric assumptions of intelligence, beauty, and white preference shrouded in privilege, and justified centuries of human atrocities worldwide (Cheng, 2008). These same ideas reinforced racism and colorism in the 21st century (Cheng, 2008).

Modern researchers reject the notion of race as a biological or genetic determinism, and rather accepts race as a social construct (Bamshad, Wooding, Salisbury, & Stephens, 2004; Guo, Fu, Lee, Cai, Mullan Harris, & Li, 2014; Tishkoff & William, 2002; Gould & Lewontin, 1979; Gould, 1996; Sternberg, Grigorenko, & Kidd, 2005). Most scientists agree that civilization began in Africa (Cavalli-Sforza, Piazza, Menozzi, & Mountain, 1988; Tishkoff & Kidd, 2004; University of Cambridge, 2007; Tattersall, 2009) then expanded across the globe due to migratory patterns and adaptations to the environment (Stringer, 1990) leading to differences in traits (i.e., the lightness and darkness of skin).

Literature reflects a dominant discourse where systems and ideologies of racial exploitation are downplayed or ignored in higher education (Patton, 2016). Some academics show little to no interest in addressing systemic racism in institutions of higher learning while others follow a public consensus of discrediting the long-term effects of racial oppressions in the 21st century (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; McKee, 1993). Other scholars note that efforts addressing social and racial stratification have not resulted in enough cultural inclusion or diversity within the education industry (Herring, 2004). For example, social sciences oftentimes avoid racial theory or the investigation of institutional structures of discrimination and rather conflate the topic with notions of domestic color-blind race relations. In-so-doing, academics regard race as an insignificant or non-existent condition, silencing the voices of vulnerable populations, especially communities of color (Harper, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995).

The early works of authors Robert Park (1950) and Jordan Winthrop (1968) provided a linear theoretical framework for understanding race. Park's (1950) and Winthrop (1968) viewed race as a natural byproduct of cultural differences through human interactions. They recognized race primarily as a binary conflict having only two sides- the 'in-group versus the 'out group.' In this paradigm, the elite in-group exercise dominance over the out-group, and justifies their ethnocentrism (Winthrop 1968; Park, 1950). As such, race becomes more of an augmented metaphorical reality seen as a natural automatic response to conflict brought on by human interaction. Sociologists like Edward Franklin Frazier (1957a, 1957b, & 1974) disputed such claims calling race a "social construct," a concept Benjamin Ringer (1983) revisited in his book, *"We the People" and Others: Duality and America's Treatment of its Racial Others*. Wilson

(1978), Ringer (1983), Frazier (1974), and other respected scholars, acknowledged race as an evolving ideology overtime. They examined race as a human categorization while racism or ethnocentrism refers to the exploitation of minority groups through the colonization of whites.

Critical Race and Black Feminist Theory

Historically, the concept of race presented epistemological limitations, denying the reality of America's practice of marginalization and the extent to which it is embedded in daily discourse. Modernized theoretical perspectives disputed the oversimplification of race as an ideological construct within multicultural paradigms. Social activists, Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate IV (1995) helped legitimize race as a topic of scholarly inquiry in education by urging educators to question, discuss, and expose racism in schools. Together they used Critical Race Theory (CRT) as an analytical tool to assess and challenge social inequality otherwise ignored and pathologized as an African American problem in the educational system.

Pioneers of CRT like W.E.B. Dubois, Derrick Bell, and Frederick Douglass criticized sociopolitical leaders for organizing society through the evolution of racial hegemony which led to the victimization of non-White groups, particularly African Americans (Patton, 2016). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) expanded this focus through a multitextured analysis of White supremacy and racism in K-12 urban teaching facilities. They revolutionized the educational process by denouncing color-blindness and racelessness in a society that valued the senseless categorization of human populations. Furthermore, they asserted that "race" only served as a useless socioeconomic and political force to sequester classes from one another to decay the moral fabric of

civilization (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The approach called for social justice in education by acknowledging, celebrating, and supporting the diversity among different ethnic, racial, cultural, lingual, and gendered groups, whose competing interests and needs are oftentimes melded together and subverted to benefit whites (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In their own words, the authors assert,

...as critical race theory scholars, we unabashedly reject a paradigm that attempts to be everything to everyone and consequently becomes nothing for anyone, allowing the status quo to prevail. Instead, we align our scholarship and activism with the philosophy of Marcus Garvey, who believed that the black man was universally oppressed on racial grounds, and that any program of emancipation would have to be built around the question of race first (p. 62).

Lori Patton (2016), a CRT advocate, defined how racism, white privilege, and microaggressions in the faculty experience affect policy and limits access to higher education. Patton (2016) recognized that traditional CRT, and by extension Black Feminist Theory, commonly analyzed the nations legacy of slavery, affirmative action, and civil rights laws. Some tote the belief that higher education is paramount in leveling the playing field and provides equal opportunities to all who work hard. However, Patton (2016) argues, “U.S. higher education, from its genesis, has been a primary force in persistent inequities” (p. 318). For example, post-secondary institutions educated and benefited from powerful affluent slaveholders (Sugrue, 1992). Wealthier plantation farmers matriculated and indoctrinated younger generations across the country. Researchers Sugrue (1992) and Wilder (2013) examined ties between prestigious schools (i.e. South Carolina College, Princeton (New Jersey), Yale, and Columbia) and

accumulated wealth powered by the transatlantic slave trade. Archival studies reveal how the enterprise of slavery facilitated financial stability for the United States and the establishment of academic institutions (Wilder, 2013). Sugrue (1992) explains,

Proslavery extremism, states' rights dogmatism, and Southern nationalism were articulated and successfully transmitted to young men who later became key figures in Southern cultural life: doctors, ministers, educators, editors, lawyers, judges, and most importantly, politicians. Many of these men moved to the lower South after graduation, and they were among the most prominent politicians in those states (p. i).

Southern colleges in the 1800's purposefully reinforced racially charged curriculums to foster anti-Black sentiments which served as the underpinnings for race/color discriminations (Sugrue, 1992). From the Supreme Court, to Congress and the U.S. Senate, a wide array of its membership is overwhelming White, many of whom earned or participated in some level of post-baccalaureate training at an institution linked to the oppression of disenfranchised groups (Wilder, 2013).

Systematic bigotry created long-term personal, professional, educational, and socioeconomic hurdles for Blacks post-slavery, and influenced intraracial skin tone discrimination commonly known as colorism (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1992). Colorism is the prejudice against darker skinned members versus privileges granted to lighter members within or outside of the same race (Sims, 2004; Hall & Crutchfield, 2018; Russell et al., 1992). However, theorist rarely include non-Black and non-White communities of color, such as Indians and Southeast Asians, when analyzing skin tone bias in American organizations or education.

Colorism in America typically emphasize the colonial period of slavery in which European colonists placed higher value on lighter skinned captives (Hall, 2020). The common practice of showing favoritism based on phenotypic features caused dissension and contention amongst Africans from darkest to lightest skin tones (Hall, 2020). After the abolition of slavery, constitutional amendments granted freed Negroes the right to vote, citizenship, and the ability to attend educational facilities, whereas initially all literary endeavors for blacks was considered illegal and a lynch-worthy offense. However, the newfound liberties were short-lived as the Supreme Court issued a series of decisions in the form of Jim Crow Laws- a modernized enslavement tactic of pervasive discriminatory practices intended to create a caste system where Blacks remained at the bottom tier under “separate but equal treatment in public schools, social settings, and transportation accommodations” (Berlin, 1975; Davis, 2014). The judicial branch of government virtually nullified Congressional efforts to introduce recent slaves as citizens during Reconstruction. As Reconstruction failed and White supremacist regained control over southern state governments, Whites antagonized and oppressed Blacks through segregation and disenfranchisement (Davis, 2014). Intra-racial tensions ran high as lighter-skinned blacks were more tolerated than their darker counterparts, nevertheless, White society put in measures to limit and even eradicate the “contamination” of black influence where possible (Russell et al., 1992).

The 1896 Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson* challenged the constitutionality of Negro maltreatment in the form of “separate but equal public transportation accommodations” (Supreme Court of the United States, 1895). It took over half a century before the judicial system revisited the topic of national prejudice and challenged

the prevalence of Jim Crow Laws. By the 1950's citizens disputed the ongoing oppression which resulted in the desegregation of schools under the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and later the Civil Rights Movement Act of 1964 (Berlin, 1975). Desegregation did not nullify the sting of skin-tone bias, instead it remained prevalent in Black intellectual communities because of its foundations in segregator ideologies. Reverse colorism took root as darker hued Blacked rejected lighter-skinned individuals and demonized perceived conformity to "white norms" in speech patterns, clothing styles, phenotypic features, and levels of educations" (Russell et al., 1992). As a result, skin-tone acted as a double-edged sword by adding a secondary layer of discrimination especially Black women.

Bodies of literature describing the advancement of the Civil Rights movement and women's suffrage considerably alienated women of color, namely African descendants (Burton, Bonilla-Silva, Ray, Buckelew, & Hordge Freeman, 2010). Initially, the feminist movement spotlighted the hierarchical stratification system in the US, and the socioeconomic ramifications of marginalizing the white middle-class. African American and minority interests were unexplored as Blackness and feminism were considered mutually exclusive. During that time, feminism became synonymous for the Caucasian struggle, and their experiences were generalized to represent all women, limiting Black female expression (Burton et al., 2010).

Black feminists critiqued the unexamined views of people of color and sought to make the invisible visible. They analyzed the intersectionality of race, class, and gender as means of championing equality and amplification of African American female voices. As a result, researchers observed ethnoracial and gendered conflict beyond race, and

investigated micro-aggressions in the form of colorism. Critical Race Theory and Black Feminist Theory communicates the experiences and narratives of the oppressed by explaining skin tone bias as a subset of race within the Black community linked to slavery, white privilege, black subjugation, white conformity, and intracultural restrictions introduced by the dominant society (Burton et al., 2010).

Sims (2004) explored perceptions of privilege associated with African American lighter skin and contended that minorities experienced adverse effects due to their level of pigmentation. Sims affirmed, “Both light-skinned and dark-skinned African Americans described incidences that included frequent references to their skin tones and/or other physical features. They also have similar experiences with negative stereotyping via name calling and exclusionary acts” (2004, pg. 71). Recently, Adam, Kurtz-Costes, & Hoffman (2016) investigated the consequences of colorism over the life span of African Americans and supported Sim’s claims of unequal treatment minorities faced in the workplace. Adam et al., (2016) noted darker skinned African Americans experienced more negative outcomes due to their hue than lighter skinned individuals. The results complimented earlier studies by Wilder (2010), Hunter (2007), Maddox and Gray (2002), scholars who studied higher levels of implicit in-group bias and intragroup stereotypes favoring lighter skin and rejecting darker pigments.

A collective body of human resource inquiries further affirms the pervasiveness of colorism applied in organizational settings. Muhammad (2018), Powell (2017), & Harrison (2010) asserts that colorism remains a persistent problem in the workplace, namely among African Americans. Muhammad (2018) noted that African American female administrators employed in Black homogenous environments carried colorist

ideologies and experiences with them from childhood which influenced their treatment of others from the same race in adulthood. Powell (2017) added that skin tone bias served as an underlying mechanism for attractiveness and affected opportunities for employment and hiring decisions particularly among Black women. Harrison (2010) emphasized human resource implications which extend beyond race to include color inasmuch that lighter skin Blacks who align closely to “whiteness,” allows Caucasians to feel more comfortable in their presence than darker individuals (Hannon, 2015). Therefore, they are oftentimes more likely to be hired or desirable (Hannon, 2015). The media upholds the status quo of white desirability and superiority by promoting images of lighter skinned blacks as beautiful, acceptable, and in leadership roles (Hannon, 2015). Scholars recognize the international effects of color stratification. Sims & Hirudayaraj’s (2016) examination of global colorism revealed Indian women are poorly regarded based on color inequalities. Findings show skin tone effected the career aspirations and occupational outcomes much like patterns of skin color disadvantages of African American women in the U.S. (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016). Darker women struggle to compete with their lighter counterparts in the occupations, especially the movie and beauty industry and martial market (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016).

Colorism Catalyst: Colonization and Slavery

Historically, skin color informs the definition of race and feeds a subset of racism called colorism (Hunter, 2007). According to the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America (2020), “Structural racism—the normalized and legitimized range of policies, practices, and attitudes that routinely produce cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color, especially black people—is the main driver of racial

inequality in America today” (para 1). The salience of pigmentation reflects a more subtle form of discrimination for minorities of the same race by granting access, privilege, and preference based on skin tone gradients in which lighter skin tones are advantaged and darker tones are disadvantaged (Walker, 1983). Heritage and skin shade characterized slavery and functioned as sole contributors to unequal treatment, disproportioned socioeconomic outcomes, and differences in behavior towards Blacks in North America (Hall, 2008). Keith and Monroe (2016) distinguished the two concepts by stating,

Ethnoracial and color discrimination intersect in that skin complexion is perhaps the primary physical feature that is used to ascribe racial classification when interacting with others. However, the two systems are distinct in that the level and consequences of unfair treatment that people within a given racial or ethnic group confront tend to vary by physical appearance (p. 4).

Colonialism curated a racial hierarchy and color-based prejudice of in-group out-group status within and without the black community (Tharps, 2016). During the 15th century and beyond, whites favored lighter-skin tones over darker pigmentation (Hall, 2018). Slavery produced a series of racial mixtures in North America, South America, and the Caribbean, Afro-Hispanics, Afro-Native Indians, Afro-Caucasians. African and White indentured servants who shared similar societal identifications resulted in intermarriages (Davis, 1966). Common practices of consensual and nonconsensual relations between Caucasian slave owners and women of color resulted in children with Eurocentric phenotypes of fairer skin, straighter hair, light eyes, and thinner noses (Davis, 2001). The racial blends of “black Indians” and Mulattos (those with African and European ancestry) produced heirs having a rainbow of lighter skin-tones and striking

features that slave masters preferred and rewarded which caused a long-lasting intraracial contention (Davis, 2001).

Introducing Colorism to Colonizers

Colorism's legacy presumably began when British slave owner Willie Lynch gave a purported speech in 1712 at a Virginian slave market, prescribing how to control African Americans both present and future (Lynch, Lushena Books, & Black Arcade Liberation Library, 1999). In his address, "*How to Make a Slave*," Lynch outlined the use of subtle nuances, such as skin color, as a deliberate, conscious, and divisive tactic to breed distrust and envy amongst blacks (Lynch, Lushena Books, & Black Arcade Liberation Library, 1999; Jones, 2000; Wilder, 2015). Lynch further suggested the "one-drop rule," a racial classification asserting that anyone with one sub-Saharan African ancestor (one drop of black blood) is rendered black (Norwood, 2013). Whites assumed that mixed individuals were automatically classified as non-White, and therefore, underprivileged, but better than darker skinned Negroes (Du Bois, 1968; Rex, 1973; Rex, 1986; Jablonski, 2012). Regardless of the letter's origins the ideologies remained embedded in Black America's cultural identity, and segregated the community internally (Norwood, 2013).

The One-Drop Rule

Lynch's ideas served as a foreshadowing for Jim Crow laws segregating whites from blacks in all social aspects such as public schools, restaurants, transportation, etc. (DuBois, 1968). Activist W.E.B. DuBois ([1903] 1968) forecasted problems with black-white racial divides framed by color lines in the twentieth century. Color lines refers to the socially constructed parameters of race based on skin tone, hair texture, and facial

features (DuBois, [1903] 1968). During slavery, blood politics defined black group status as any person having “one drop” of black blood or African ancestry (Davis, 2001, Reece, 2018). Light skinned slaves were typically favored over darker skin slaves (DuBois, 1968). Mixed-raced individuals (also known as mulatto’s) were automatically identified as black yet represented the “other” form of whiteness (Lee & Bean, 2007).

Mulatto slaves, perceived as privileged, worked indoors closer to “massa” while dark skinned slaves worked distantly in the fields (Davis, 2001). Offspring oftentimes possessed lighter skin and eyes, “good hair” and aquiline noses, seemingly preferred Eurocentric features that slave owners considered more sophisticated than that of the darker unmixed Negro (Frazier, 1957a; Park 1950). This systematic form of racial and ethnic “white washing” gave way to in-group conflict, white preference, and privileges to individuals deemed “white” while denying and degenerating dark identities (Rex, 1973, Bonilla-Silva, 1997, & Doane & Bonilla-Silva, 2004, Jablonski, 2012).

Mulattos “higher status” caused major intraracial turmoil. Post-slavery, they were granted more access to education, greater business opportunities, representation in political parties, participated in the entertainment industry, and maintained a stronger marriage market (Reuter, 1917; Burton et al., 2010). Many believed that “light-skinned Blacks were intellectually superior because of their White blood.... and dark-skinned Negro men were consciously or unconsciously considered more criminally dangerous and sexually driven than those lighter-skinned” (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1992).

Additionally, fairer skinned blacks used skin color to established prestige as the Black bourgeoisie (Kerr, 2005; Frazier, 1957a). Color controversy scandalized black enterprise as affluent clubs surveyed members requiring their skin tones be lighter than a

brown paper bag or light enough for blue vein visibility, and their hair smooth enough to pass through a comb (Kerr, 2005; Frazier, 1957a). Preferential treatment given to Blacks within and outside of racial constructs communicated that conforming to whiteness and whiter standards of beauty appeared more rewarding (Kerr, 2005).

The assumed pride of being “mixed” was eclipsed by an identity crisis many mulattos experienced, like depicted in the 1959 film, “Imitation of Life” (Sirk & Hurst, 1959). The American drama chronicles the lives of Lora (Lana Turner), a white single mother with ambitions of Hollywood stardom, her heartfelt relationship with her daughter Susie (Sandra Dee), Lora’s black housekeeper Annie (Juanita Moore), and Annie’s fair skinned youngster Sarah Jane (Susan Kohner). Sarah Jane rejected and desperately tried to conceal her African American heritage in grade school and later as an adolescent with her white boyfriend Frankie. She attempts to “pass” as white. Before leaving the house for a romantic clandestine dinner, Sarah Jane tells her best friend Susie, “I don’t want to have to come through back doors, or feel lower than other people, or apologize for my mother’s color. She can’t help her color, but I can” (Sirk & Hurst, 1959). Upon arriving to her destination, Frankie confronts and interrogates Sarah Jane about rumors of her “one drop” African ancestry. Frankie discovers the truth and punishes her dishonesty with a beating. Nevertheless, in her adulthood, Sarah Jane passionately proclaims to her mother, “I’m White! White! White!” (Sirk & Hurst, 1959). Once tragedy strikes, she and all the women come to terms with their identities.

Today, the term “mulatto” still represents a point of privilege and contention for African Americans as opposed to those living in African countries (Cooper, 2016; Kerr, 2005). In the U.S., “mulatto” skin carries positive and negative connotations. As

aforementioned, light-skin blacks embodied status, beauty, and self-esteem within the Black community, but to darker complexioned African Americans, mulattos are not quite white or black, and therefore presumed not “black enough” (Hall, 2018). Hunter (2007) observed that a Black person in the 21st century can be too light much like in mid-century when light skinned blacks were considered yellow, assimilators of whiteness, sell-outs, and outsiders lacking ethnic authenticity. On the other hand, places like Accra, Ghana and Lagos, Nigeria, are teeming with billboards advertising skin lightening cosmetics that market blatant messages of “lighter is better” and how to get “perfect white skin” (Cooper, 2016). Skin complexion complicates how people engage with each other and their access to social necessities such as schools and jobs.

Historical Perspective of Colorism in Education

Critical Race Theory notes that race fuels disparities in economic success for children of color (The U.S Department of Education, 2016). According to the U.S. Department of Education minority students face,

Gaps in college opportunity...which... have contributed to diminished social mobility (e.g., the ability to jump to higher income levels across generations) within the United States, and gaps in college opportunity are in turn influenced by disparities in students’ experiences before graduating from high school (DOE, 2016, p. 1)

In addition to race, “skin tone bias is a linchpin of intraracial disparities, connections between colorism and educational outcomes are underappreciated.” (Keith & Monroe, 2016, p.1). Skin complexion impacts prospects for advancement in the U.S. and acts as a socioeconomic and educational indicator for African Americans (Hochschild & Weaver,

2007), Latinos/as (Vargas, 2015), and some Asians (Glenn, 2009). Skin tone independently serves as a criterion for discrimination having favorable outcomes oriented towards lighter complexion and disadvantages for darker complexions in the following examples:

- Occupational and income differences between light and dark African Americans nearly replicate the disparities between that of Whites and Blacks (Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Chetty, Hendren, Jones, & Porter, 2018).
- Educational levels and employment opportunities ranked highest among lighter skin Mexicans than those with darker skin. Reports reveal that the darker the skin the hardest it is to progress in Mexico and the U.S. (Reeskens & Velasco, 2020; Murguia & Telles, 1996; Villarreal, 2010).
- Skin tone gradients is a salient marker in Indian women education and career outcomes. There is an effect of skin tone on social mobility indicating darker complexions are penalized with lesser job prospects and educational attainment (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016).

Education strongly influences socioeconomic status in the U.S. (Turk, 2019). The earliest school system under colonial rule sought to create an educated elite class as opposed to educating the masses (Brackemyre, 2015). These practices prohibited enslaved Blacks from learning altogether (Brackemyre, 2015). Post-abolition, the antebellum south focused efforts on racially separated schools (Enomoto, 1995). African American schools suffered from understaffing, unqualified teachers, restricted curricula's, and overcrowding in inferior buildings (Enomoto, 1995). After desegregation, many whites fled urbanized areas and school districts were redlined, the

exclusionary practice of limiting minority group access to amenities such as high-performing schools based on racial and economic characteristics (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1996).

The unequal treatment of racial and ethnic minorities in educational attainment and socioeconomic outcomes continue to exist. Students from affluent homes benefit from resources their high-income earning parents provide such as living in prominent neighborhoods with access to preferred schools in the district, and state of the art institutions offering top notch programs taught by highly qualified teachers. Financially secure parents can better choose careers that allow them to participate in school activities, formulate relationships with school staff, and purchase supplemental teaching materials like computers and educational games to support advanced learning (Keith & Monroe, 2016).

Children from working and poor classes are less advantaged even when attending affluent schools because, at times, they are defaulted to academic programs rather than college preparatory tracks (Keith & Monroe, 2016). In adulthood, Keith & Herring (1991) found that lighter skinned African Americans were considered more prestigious and produce more wealth than darker toned Blacks in obtaining high wage jobs (Goldsmith et al., 2007). Hunter (1998, 2002) added that light skin served as social capital for women in the work and marriage market allowing them to marry high-status spouses, and/or secure their own employment, earning higher wages to create a fiscally stable lifestyle for their families. Therefore, lighter complexioned women who earn higher levels of educational attainment have greater prospects for a more fiscally fit lifestyle compared to their counterparts (Allen, Telles, & Hunter, 2000).

Maxine S. Thompson and Steve McDonald (2016) of North Carolina University, completed a national longitudinal analysis of Adolescent Health and Adolescent Health and Academic Achievement. The authors discovered that skin tone variations impacted educational performance (Thompson & McDonald). Findings showed a significant comparative difference in grade point averages (GPA) and grades within and across self-identified races. Non-black races with lighter skin-tones earned higher GPA's and grades as opposed to darker students (Thompson & McDonald, 2016). The study highlights the present-day interplay between race and colorism and the disadvantages of color stratification in the education system.

Present-day Colorism in Higher Education

Composite literature on legal efforts, like affirmative action, confirms employers recruit, hire, and retain qualified persons of color, in higher education (Griffin, 2017). White men, and later white women, solely dominated the college system before the 1980's (Harvey Wingfield, 2016). Men and women of color were excluded, generally denied admission to predominantly white institutions (PWI) or employed at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) (Harvey Wingfield, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 1991). The 1950's experienced an expansion of higher education and growth of the middle-class following World War II and the Korean War (Gumport, 1997). The federal government offered financial assistance to help reintegrate returning soldiers into the labor market through the GI Bill of Rights (Gumport, 1997). The GI Bill of Rights opened access to higher education to the masses and boosted enrollment in institutions (Gumport, 1997). Additionally, the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Rights Movement sparked an increase in minority and female presence in higher ed as federal

aid expanded to marginalized groups (Gumport, 1997). As the number of underrepresented populations swelled so did their desire for inclusion and diversity in America's homogenous federal republic (Loo, 2018).

Underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities contended for a seat at the decision-making table in the presence of White male hegemony in post-secondary education (American Association for Access Equality and Diversity-AAAED, 2019). However, some members of the black community used a combination of skin tone and other physical characteristics (i.e. eye color and hair texture) to stratify and distance themselves interracially, creating a hierarchy that perpetuated elitism and color prejudice (Maddox & Gray 2002). Ideas of lighter skin and White European features informed skin tone discrimination and acted as the most desirable and sought-after existence, disproportionately advancing Blacks of lighter skin and disadvantaging darker identities in daily aspects of life like the workplace and education (Keith & Herring, 1991).

During slavery, southern capturers utilized dark-complexioned bondmen as the epitome of the labor force, obligating them to work in the fields because they believed light-skinned Blacks were best suited for more intellectual and skilled assignments indoors (i.e., butlers, cooks, blacksmiths) (Fredrickson, 1971). Pro-slavery psychologist and American surgeon Samuel Cartwright (1851) speculated that darker skin was synonymous for physicality and health when he wrote, "All negroes are not equally black — the blacker, the healthier and stronger" (p. 697).

In contrast, history shows an affinity towards lighter skin and perceived intelligence. Fairer complexioned, long-haired, White "passing" Black women were presumed smarter, more attractive, and gentler causing their value to be higher at

auctions (Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Reece, 2018; Sheldon, 2019). Colorism operated as a divisive factor that created an internal subset of bondpeople in the educational area.

Social scientists Gasman & Abiola (2016) support this claim by stating,

Specific to educational sectors, color privilege positioned fair-skinned Blacks to benefit from both formal and informal educational opportunities. Skilled

bondsmen were sometimes able to apprentice their children in trades of the day...all opportunities that were a farther reach for unskilled slave laborers.

Moreover, slaves who became literate could teach their children to read and write, thereby passing on educational advantages generationally (p. 41).

Institutions of higher learning like HBCU's strengthened complexion privilege oriented towards lighter skin. HBCU's allowed members to differentiate themselves in social clubs, and fraternities and sororities, resulting in disproportionate advancement and positive representation of fairer identities (Bryant, 2012). A qualitative study by conflict resolutionist Patrice Bryant (2012) examined the impact of colorism in black American collegiate Greek letter organizations. Bryant (2012) demonstrated how discriminatory practices between black Americans based on skin-tone gradients remains a persistent and significant impactor of extracurricular outlets at HBCU's beyond a historical context. For example, lighter skinned blacks frequented a select group of Negro Ivy League institutions, like Morehouse and Spellman College in Georgia, & Howard University in Washington D.C. These schools "educated the upper crust of Black society," and contributed to the creation of the Black bourgeoisie (Hall, 1995) Black fraternities and sororities, college campus organizations originally formed to foster a sense of belonging, solidarity, and collaboration, matured skin tone bias by using the brown paper bag, comb,

and blue vein test for admittance (Lake, 2003). Color politics denied admissions to dark skinned women (Bryant, 2012; Hall, 1995).

Historical records point to a time during the Civil Right Movement when HBCU's changed the focus of skin-tone bias to embrace darker hues, natural hair, and African heritage (Bryant, 2012). The Black Panther movement promoted Black pride and echoed slogans of "say it loud I'm Black and I'm proud." However, some became suspicious of lighter-skinned blacks mistrusting their loyalties, authenticity, and allegiance to the Black cause (Hunter, 2007). Consequently, lighter complexion Blacks became targets for backlash and marginalization (Hunter, 2007). In response to these experiences, academics are studying existing structures of racial stereotypes and stigmatization incurred through shadeism, with a commitment to bring awareness to ongoing dynamics (Hunter, 2007).

Colorism in American Workplaces

Women of color now have a more pronounced, yet underrepresented, presence in the labor force and face challenges in areas of economics, education, public policy, and scholastic enterprise (Whitford, 2020). Colorism presents an additional barrier because of the maltreatment and disadvantages associated with employment, advancement, and career opportunities based on skin tone bias (Glenn, 2009). Several astute scholars assert that light-skinned Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics experience privilege and favor better than those of darker complexions within their ethnoracial group (Hall, 2008; Hunter, 2007; Villarreal, 2010; Devaraj, Quigley, & Patel, 2018; Rondilla & Spickard, 2007). Skin complexion accounts for and can predict occupational mobility (Keith & Herring, 1991), higher incomes (Devaraj et al., 2018; Rosenblum, Darity Jr., Harris, & Hamilton, 2016; Hersch, 2018), and more options for marital partners (Hunter, 2002; 2007).

The significance of skin tone exerts influence on human affairs in such a way that it mirrors the country's socioeconomic and educational pecking order (Gans, 2005, p. 17). Whites and "whiteness" serve as a position of status, a highly valued characteristic in America and worldwide (DiAngelo, 2012; Branch et al., 2008). Previous research indicates that physiognomies, such as skin color, hair type, attractiveness, and facial features, impacts life outcomes of minorities within the same race (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1992, 2012; Hochschild & Weaver, 2007; Hill, 2002). The disenfranchisement of dark bodies and privilege given to those of lighter skin in the same race produces an obstacle to personal and professional success (Goldsmith et al., 2006). Some implications appear in earnings and employment opportunities. For example, lighter-skinned blacks and Hispanics have been shown to earn more and hold better jobs, along with their spouses, as opposed to their darker counterparts (Goldsmith et al., 2006, 2007). According to a previous study by Vanderbilt University professor of economics and law, Joni Hersch (2008), skin tone discrimination extends to legal U.S. immigrant populations, in which those of lighter skin tones earned higher wages than individuals with darker skin tones.

People management expert, Dr. Ray Muhammad of Walden University conducted a study exploring critical implications of intraracial discrimination on African American women leaders in a predominantly Black environment (2018). Using a multiple case study approach, Muhammad (2018) found a labyrinth of barriers for Black female managers. Firstly, gender acts as an obstacle in women attaining higher level positions even as overqualified and well-educated professionals. He highlighted that women are more likely to be appointed in leadership roles when companies perform poorly as

opposed to being assigned positions during favorable conditions (Muhammad, 2018). Furthermore, color discrimination challenge perceptions of worth and success once in leadership roles (Muhammad, 2018).

Muhammad also noticed varying perceptions of colorism among African American women compared to males. His findings indicated a more pronounced bias towards lighter skinned female leaders than darker individuals (Muhammad, 2018). The discovery directly contrasted to previous suppositions like that of Adams et al. (2016), who witnessed darker skinned African Americans as the primary targets of intraracial discrimination in personal and professional interactions. Muhammed (2018) exclaimed, “Interestingly, the darker complexioned participants stated they did not experience challenges to authority by subordinates related to skin tone, but lighter complexioned participants noticed and experienced challenges and difficulties when leading” (p. 116). One explanation indicates that although colorism occurs within a race, complexion bias in racially homogenous environments manifest differently (Burton et al., 2010).

Furthermore, Myers (2015) indicated workplaces perpetuate gender and color inequalities by constraining leaders who do not fit institutional norms (i.e., White and male). Moreover, as genderism and colorism intersect in male dominated careers, female minority leaders endure a devaluing of their contributions despite the acknowledgment of diversity and inclusion as a pillar in the development of society (Tuitt, Hanna, Martinez, Salazar, & Griffin, 2009). Women of color are using counter-stories of transparency rooted in CRT to help challenge narratives of oppression while climbing the “ivory tower” despite limits or lack of access to opportunities, feelings of isolation, narrow

frameworks in scholarship, and minimization of resources and positions (Turner, 2002; Marbley, Wong, Santos-Hatchett, Laddo, Pratt, & Jaddo, 2011).

The United States population and business world are expanding racially and gender-wise (Colby & Ortman, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). The changing tides require recognizing discriminations, eliminating -or at least decreasing- dangerous pejorative stereotypes, and a need for communicating inclusion more than diversity to improve expectations and organizational performance (Gassam, 2019; Mukkamala & Suyemoto, 2018; Garcia, 2015; Wendy, 2014). An understanding of gendered, racial, and color biases helps create dialog and promote togetherness through transparency and a commitment to justice for all societally and in workplaces (Gassam, 2019).

Colorism Layered

White Colorism

In the age of colorblindness, the legacy of white homogeneity perpetuates ideas of white supremacy and preferred lightness (Herring, 2004) as demonstrated in Professor Lance Hannon's (2015) review of white interviewer bias. Hannon (2015) analyzed data from a 2012 American National Election study as an example of white's perception of minority respondent's intelligence and skin tone. The evaluation indicated that, "African American and Latino respondents with the lightest skin are several times more likely to be seen by whites as intelligent compared with those with the darkest skin" (Hannon, 2015, p. 1). Notably, Caucasians and African Americans judge skin tone differently (Hannon & DeFina, 2014a; Hannon, 2014), to the extent white observers perceived black skin darker than black observers do (Hannon & DeFina, 2014b). The findings revealed that people of the same race experience advantages and disadvantages pertaining to skin

gradients, ideologies rooted in oppressive majorization narratives from the dominant group, creating gaps in social justice (Hannon, 2015). White colorism reinforces tenets of social inequalities anchored in racial stratification based on stereotypes and misrepresentations of racially stigmatized communities (Hannon & DeFina, 2014b). Awareness and acknowledgement of historical amnesia and the nature of racism helps to understand and counter-attack consequences of white colorism (Hannon & DeFina, 2014a).

Gendered Colorism

Sociologists recognize complexion bias as a transnational phenomenon impacting other minorities, yet disproportionately affecting women (Thompson & Keith, 2001). Thompson & Keith (2001) examined how the importance of skin tone and gender yielded evaluations of self-worth and self-efficacy. Their findings indicate that, “although colorism affects attitudes about the self for both men and women, it appears that these effects are stronger for women than men” (p. 338). Keith & Herring (1991) identified skin color stratification as a more significant factor in determining marital, education, and occupational outcomes for women compared to men, but not personal income. Hersch (2006) added that skin tone effects the perceptions and reality of African Americans. Margaret Hunter (2005), one of the most systematic writers who study communities of color asserted that skin color stratification operates uniquely in women. She contends, “light skin tone is interpreted as beauty, and beauty operates as social capital for women. Women, who possess this form of capital, are able to convert it to economic capital, educational capital, or another form of social capital” (Hunter, 2005, p. 37). Researchers Joanne L. Rondilla & Paul Spickard (2007) further unpack these nuances by stating,

...women who are not White, much of the beauty issue is concentrated around the color and texture of their skin. The prime value is placed on being light and smooth and such qualities can affect one's life chances significantly. This is colorism (p. 1, para 3).

Human Resource Officer (HRO) Matthew Harrison (2010) emphasized that colorism plays a role in the workplace, media, and standards of beauty for women. He indicated a preference for fairer skin tones reinforcing its value in the U.S. and global society. He presupposed that less ethnic looking women report more job satisfaction and employment advancement than darker skinned Black women (Harrison, 2010). Internationally, light-skin women have more educational attainment, higher salaries, occupational positions, and report fewer incidents of discrimination in their profession (Mirza, 2003). Many darker-skinned women face negative stereotypes in employment and are exposed to exclusionary practices in their social development beginning in childhood (Muhammed, 2018).

Global Colorism

Preference for lighter skin extends beyond the United States and into Africa, Asia, and regions of Hispanic or Latinx origin (Wilder, 2015). Over the years, historical records chronicle the invasion of European colonizers across the globe and their legacy in captured nations. European armies created new ideas and perceptions of beauty, acceptability, status, identity, desirability, and sense of superiority (Berry & Duke, 2011). Historically, imperialists and white supremacist frameworks taught people that the colonizer represented the preferred culture (Berry & Duke, 2011). Inadvertently, some natives and slaves strove to reach levels of elevation internally and externally to find

worth, or at least assimilate even after they achieved their independence (Berry & Duke, 2013). Today, many African Americans try to shift the sense of internalized racial prejudice to a more positive sense of identity and belonging by considering dark skin good as echoed in the infamous chant, “the blacker the berry the sweeter the juice” (Berry & Duke, 2011). However, these short-lived moments of ethnoracial pride are overshadowed by a broader worldview of white supremacy in which “whiteness” and color approximation to whiteness is more valued domestically and internationally (Berry & Duke, 2011).

Colorism in India

In India and Southeast Asia, melanin, eye shape, and 'balanced features' profile beauty standards that contribute to women's life outcomes (Rondilla & Spickard, 2007; Parameswaran, R., & Cardoza, 2009). Researchers Cynthia Sims & Malar Hirudayaraj (2016) discovered a gap in research regarding colorism and Indian women career aspirations and opportunities. They found that the media and the multibillion-dollar skin whitening industry perpetuated the desire for cosmopolitan whiteness leading to an “expression of beauty standards, first experience with colorism, stifled career aspirations, and passive acceptance” (Sims & Hirudayaraj, p. 45). Popular skin-care companies like Vaseline (formally called Hindustan Unilever in India), Olay, Dove, Neutrogena, and L'Oréal peddle products in Asian-Pacific markets aimed at women claiming to suppress melanin (Rogers, 2016). Advertisers use catch phrases like “perfect” and “radiance” to aggressively promote whiteness as the beauty norm (Rogers, 2016; Abraham, 2017). Front cover gatefolds from Estee Launders “Cyber White” ads and skin-whitening billboards with slogans that read, “Skin of Innocence,” virtually and socially construct

emotional narratives in which there “exists a culturally ingrained hierarchy of skin tones that maintains systems of privilege” (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016, p. 50).

From birth, family members compare sibling skin tones (Abraham, 2017).

Textbooks and school literature, especially among girls, display photos of fair-skinned females labeled “beautiful” and her darker counterpart “ugly” (Abraham, 2017). Creative writer Mary-Ann Abraham of The Guardian News reports that in Indian culture,

A perfect life from perfect skin – but only for those of the right shade – is the message and mindset that’s being passed down. This has spawned a multibillion-dollar industry in cosmetic creams and invasive procedures such as skin bleaching, chemical peels, laser treatments, steroid cocktails, “whitening” pills and intravenous injections – all with varying effectiveness and health risks. It’s more than a bias, it’s a dangerous cultural obsession.

The rampant stigma of dark skin and the rigid correlation of beauty and personal success to light skin trickled from colonizers, globalization, and castes systems (Abraham, 2017). These perceptions “color” the political, financial, cultural, and societal landscape to the extent it adversely affects job and matrimony selection as well as perceived work satisfaction of darker women (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016; Abraham, 2017). In response to India’s complexion bias, activist Kavitha Emmanuel, founder of Women of Worth, an Indian NGO, and Bollywood celebrity sponsor Nandita Das, launched “The Dark is Beautiful Campaign” (Abraham, 2017). The campaign endorses a message of inclusive beauty beyond color margins (Abraham, 2017).

Colorism in Southeast Asia

The transnational territories of Thailand and Japan, amongst other Southeast Asian countries, engage in common practices of color stratification (Rondilla & Spickard, 2007). Men and women associate light and white skin with wealth, education, upper- or middle-class status, success, progress, beauty, and modernity, while spurning darker skin as the lower working class of laborer's and farmers (Rondilla & Spickard, 2007). Citizens frown upon the sun-kissed skin of the working class because outdoor activities darken their complexion and are considered peasant-like, therefore, undesirable (Rondilla & Spickard, 2007). Saraswati (2010) argues that the epitome of beauty and social mobility for transnational locations in Asia is negotiated through white preference but not necessarily Caucasian whiteness. Dark skin stigmas and white preference predates European colonialism for example, Dutch, Japanese, and western influence cultivated a pop culture saturated with marketing light-skin in Indonesia (Saraswati, 2010). The Dutch set a standard of whiteness, while the Japanese introduced a different level of beauty and pride that valued whiteness as color in mainstream imagery rather than the assimilation to the "white race." Saraswati (2010) postulates, "cosmopolitan whiteness" is a global currency maintained by adaptations to popular westernized characteristics rather than an emulation of Americanism. The distinction suggests that colorism is divided along cultural rather than racial lines.

In contrast, obtaining a demerara sugar complexion may be acceptable in the East, but many in the U.S. prefer a bronzed hue, believing they appear more even-toned, attractive, and desirable (Verghese, 2018). In American culture, a tan for a non-Hispanic white woman strikes as a social luxury gained during the summertime (Verghese, 2018).

Caucasian women control if they want to be viewed darker or remain white, weaving in and out of public environments without the backlash attached to brown or black skin (Verghese, 2018). Whites praise each other for their color transition without bearing the brunt of social consequences (Verghese, 2018). Meanwhile dark-skinned women come under scrutiny for their year-round natural complexion and endure criticism the moment they get darker (Verghese, 2018).

Colorism in Latinx America

Hispanics, an ethnic group that can belong to any race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017a), usually classify themselves based on hair, skin color, region, and the percent of black blood in their heritage (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2019). Slavery ushered millions of Africans into South America and the Caribbean, particularly Brazil, Mexico, Peru, & Cuba. They shared similar standards of beauty, acceptance, and life outcomes like those associated with Black Americans who valorize light over dark skin (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2010). Ideas of racism and colorism are engrained from childhood and reinforced by discriminatory practices in places like Mexico where a mixture of Afro Latino and indigenous people account for more than five percent of the population (Villarreal, 2010; Reeskens & Velasco, 2020). The Pew Research Center reported, darker-skinned Hispanics are more likely to experience discrimination than lighter-skinned Hispanics (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2019). Notably, half of all Hispanics identify as white, majority being of lighter skin tones (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2019). “About half of Latinos with darker skin (53%) say they have been subject to slurs or jokes, compared with about a third of those with a lighter skin color (34%) ...and been treated poorly in hiring, pay, or promotion” (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2019, para 5).

Stereotypes and racial amalgamation contribute to Hispanics identifying to the dominant social group. For example, researcher Lance Hannon (2014) noticed that during interviews examiners considered lighter Hispanic respondents more intelligent. Desmond-Harris (2015) later found that lighter skinned Hispanics and blacks looked smarter to whites. This creates discrimination in hiring practices, and unequal treatment in public school systems serving minorities (Desmond-Harris, 2015). Furthermore, a hushed history of anti-Latinx stories, motivated by racism, colorist ideas, and greed for land, stirred violent Anglo mobs to lynch Mexicans from 1848 to 1928 in Texas and Arizona (Bishop & Shu, 2016). Lynching's mirrored similar crimes committed against dark skin blacks in the 1900's Southern region of the U.S. (Smangs, 2017) for perceived Anglo disrespect (Hall, 2020).

In a national study of statistics and geography, investigators observed that skin color influenced the level of education and employment opportunities in Mexico (Reeskens & Velasco, 2020). Renowned social scientists Ronald Hall (2020) acknowledged that although Mexican Americans are the largest minority in the U.S., Anglo colorism keeps them as "a single member of the out-group Latino population" (p. 73). Nevertheless, organizations are launching campaigns to educate and raise awareness about colorism and racism in Mexico and its transference in American society (Reeskens & Velasco, 2020).

Colorist issues remain at the forefront of social discourse as America's population, educational system, and occupational demography shifts towards a more "colored" and diverse public (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017b). As aforementioned, a wealth of colorism scholarship exists regarding domestic and global intraracial interactions.

However, less is known about the degree to which colorism impacts current career outcomes and perceived fairness in higher education across leaders from a variety of ethnoracial backgrounds. Previous HRD initiatives typically addressed racism yet silenced the pervasiveness of colorism (Mirza, 2003; Sims, 2009). It is important to provide a deep perspective as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, 2017) receive and resolve an increase number of color-based charges in the workplace.

“Coloring” America

The United States of America stands on the precipice of the most culturally diverse point in history since World War II (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017b). Over the past two decades the U.S population grew exponentially (Espinosa, Turk, Taylor, & Chessman, 2019). Shifts in demographics increased diversity in communities, academic circles, and American occupations (Dewolf, 2017). According to two economists from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Mitra Toossi & Teresa Morisi (2017), women represent nearly 47% of the overall labor force and over half of the population, narrowing the gender gap to about seven percentage points since the year 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

Over three hundred million people call the United States home-327, 167, 434 and counting (United States Census Bureau, 2019). As of 2015, America holds the largest immigrant population in the world at over 13%, most of which are women (Connor & Lopez, 2016; Zong, et al., 2019). Over the last 20 years, changes in migratory patterns reflect significant racial and ethnic population increases namely among Hispanics, Afro-Caribbean’s, and Asians (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). Statistics note minority

populations on a steady incline and transitioning as America's new normal (US Census Bureau, 2017).

Currently, the 2010 Census reflects a less White more pluralistic nation, one where experts project the non-White Hispanic population will peak in 2024 and decrease by 2060 (Johnson, 2020). White resident numbers overall declined by nearly 11 percent from 1997 to 2017 although they remain the largest racial and ethnic group in North America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017; American Council on Education, 2020).

Meanwhile, Asians are the fastest growing population followed by Hispanics and people who are of Two or More Races (Cohn & Caumont, 2016; Colby & Ortman, 2015; Vespa, Armstrong, & Medina, 2018). Within the next half of the twenty-first century, analysts anticipate America will transform into a majority-minority by 2043 and people of color will constitute majority of the working class by 2032 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Blacks, Whites, Hispanics (those identifying as black or white), and Asians represent the largest racial ethnic groups living and working in the U.S. (BLS, 2019a; Radford, 2019). The sample size for American Indians and Alaskan Natives (AIANs), Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and People of Two or More Races is relatively small (Allard & Brundage, 2019). The government conducts fewer routine tabulations on their demographics and labor market characteristics and as a result recent studies reflect limited data (BLS, 2019a; Allard & Brundage, 2019). Nevertheless, an influx of minorities, foreign born immigrants, and women create a more dynamic, diverse labor force, and acts as a key ingredient of economic growth and prosperity (Long & Van Dam, 2019; Toossi, 2002; Zong, Batalova, & Burrows, 2019; Huang, Krivkovich, Starikova, Yee, & Zanoschi, 2019). Studying America's coloring and the extent of its

discriminatory practices in organizations serves as foundation for supporting underrepresented groups who help drive the economy. Research from the Migration Policy Institute (2017) quotes, “Immigrants tend to be in the labor force at rates higher than the U.S. population, as most who enter the United States are of working age” (p. 1, para 1). These subgroups help drive future economic projections nationwide (Dubina, Morisi, Rieley, & Wagoner, 2019).

Sociologist Herbert J. Gans (1999), speculated that the new wave of immigrants from Asia, Hispanic countries, and the Caribbean to the U.S. faded the color lines, creating a more diluted “black/nonblack” binary. Gans (1999) further estimated that blacks were more likely to remain at the bottom of the multiracial hierarchy, while whites at the top, and immigrants somewhere between. Nevertheless, each ethnoracial group practices its own form of shadeism isolating members personally and professionally (Hall, 2008). Social strategist debate on how to best integrate new members into society and the workforce to support diversity and inclusion (Schlesinger, 1991 & Yinger, 1994).

Assimilation vs. Inclusion

As the world turns ethnic relations remain a hot topic on the American national and global agenda. Scholars debate how to achieve intergroup and intragroup harmony amongst its diverse citizens, especially in the workplace. Persistent racial prejudice, gender discrimination, and controversy over immigration place social issues at the nucleus of public-policy and scholarship. Some theorists, like historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1991), purports that a united America is one with a shared sense of identity not an individual promotion of group self-esteem (Schlesinger, 1991, p. 99). Schlesinger’s ideas call for stronger assimilation practices throughout the country as

opposed to preserving fragments of “alien identities” (Schlesinger, 1991, p. 16). He focused on uniting the nation under common homogeneous principles of democracy. In his book, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, Schlesinger (1991) suggests deemphasizing social categories because,

Instead of a transformative nation with an identity all its own, America increasingly sees itself in this new light as a preservative of diverse alien identities. Instead of a nation composed of individuals making their own unhampered choices, America increasingly sees itself as composed of groups more or less ineradicable in their ethnic character.... Will the center hold? or will the melting pot give way to the Tower of Babel?” (p. 16)

In contrast, American social scientist, John Milton Yinger (1994) advocates for accentuating ethnic group differences. Yinger (1994) presupposes that major multinational events- such as natural disasters and civil wars causing refugee displacement- contribute to shifts in ethnic boundaries. Recognizing the significance of the ethnic factor as part of social life and its influences on the autonomy and aggressions of conflicting parties may aid in creating stronger communities (Yinger, 1994). Notably, Yinger (1994) views ethnicity as a resource rather than a societal problem demanding a solution. Yinger believes ethnic conflicts require negotiating less zero-sum outcomes, but rather “emphasize shared goals and interdependence, and to seek to optimize the quality of life” (1994, p. 326). Unlike Schlesinger and contemporaries, Yinger (1994) asserts that appreciation for cultural differences yields a better outcome than strictly “Americanizing” the nation. Such actions may further alienate underrepresented populations and possibly spark greater internal/external distrust between in and out groups.

In lieu of their differing opinions, it is fair to say Schlesinger (1991) and Yinger (1994) both posit that ethnicity draws attention and raises a hypersensitive social consciousness. Society cannot draw definitive conclusions or assumptions that ethnic lines will ultimately disappear or become a primordial fact of virtual in-destruction (Yinger, 1994). Instead, as Yinger states a wise nation comprised of diverse immigrants:

...creates an environment where the right to ethnicity is fully protected and mutual respect is strongly supported, while at the same time it works to strengthen those conditions (greater political and economic equality, low levels of prejudice and discrimination, universal human rights) that tend to make ethnic identity a relatively small part of a person's identities. That society is most fortunate where ethnicity continues as a minor melody, serving as counterpoints to major themes of individual identity on one hand and identity with the larger society and the world on the other (p. 334, para 3).

Multiethnic groups disenfranchised by skin color gradients or racial affiliation oftentimes look to education to increase their opportunities, even when those moments are scarce. Although Patton (2016) disagrees that higher education is a great equalizer, many researchers presuppose that at best it provides increased prospects for a better quality of life.

Minority Educational Attainment

The value of earning a postsecondary degree yields private, individual, familial, and civic benefits (Ma, Pender, Welch, 2016). Overall Census data show a correlation between post-graduation employment and earnings (Carnevale & Cheah, 2018). Higher levels of educational attainment increase the likelihood of economic opportunity, full-

time employment, income mobility, and lower unemployment rates (Turk, 2019). For example, master's degree holders averaged nearly \$13,000 more than those with bachelor's, and in contrast to professional degree median earnings of \$95,000 (Council of Graduate Schools, 2017). Therefore, the greater the educational attainment the more likely a person enters the workforce (Council of Graduate Schools, 2017).

As the population increases so does communities of color and their participation in educational and occupational arenas (Espinosa et al., 2019). The didactic system serves more than 18 million postsecondary students at over 4000 degree granting institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). In 2019, a quarter of African Americans ages 25 and older earned a bachelor's degree (26.1%), over half of the Asian population (58.1%), and under a quarter of Hispanics (18.8%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). The American Council on Education reported 45.2% of undergraduates were students of color, and 32% were enrolled in graduate programs (Vespa et al., 2018; De Brey, Musu, McFarland, Wilkinson-Flicker, Diliberti, Zhang, Branstetter, & Wang, 2019). Women ages 25 to 29 earned more bachelor's degrees than men between 1998 and 2018 - 25% black, 22% Hispanic, and 47% white women as compared to 20% (black), 17% (Hispanic), and 39% (white) men - respectively (Ma, Pender, Welch, 2019). Asians earned the highest levels of postsecondary education in 2017 (Espinosa et al., 2019) and hold the greatest number of full-time faculty positions at public and private nonprofit four-year and two-year institutions amongst minority women (ACE, 2019; NCES, 2019).

The number of colored communities earning degrees are entering the workforce more frequently. As a result, they earn more income, though still below their Caucasian counterparts (Griffin, 2017). WOC use educational advancements to help support them

when faced with challenges with joining higher education administrations (Griffin, 2017). Further consideration regarding barrier's to minority women's success helps produce synergy and strengthen the economy (OECD, 2017).

Increased Workforce Diversity

As the level of education rises, more women find themselves in the workforce (Espinosa et al., 2019). Workforce diversity draws awareness to cultural differences, and organizational opportunities for inclusion. In 2016, jobless rates for those who achieved a bachelor's degree were lower across all age groups, and they were likely to be employed full time (Espinosa et al., 2019). In 2017 and 2018, White and Asian women were more likely to secure higher paying management and professional jobs while Black, and Hispanic women were more likely to obtain lower paying service occupations (BLS, 2018).

Today, a national and global push commits to changing organizational climates, cultural norms, improved racial relationships, decrease gender inequalities, and close salary gaps (OECD, 2017; AAAED, 2019). Many companies concentrate on hiring and sustaining underrepresented groups. Previously published data seeks to continue the conversation on social inclusion and other key factors on women in higher education and various workplaces to promote dialogue on how to move the needle and increase the number of female leaders (OECD, 2017; Sims, 2006; Gasman, Kim, & Nguyen, 2011). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2017), on average, young women in OECD countries engage in higher educational attainment than men, yet are less likely to study in lucrative Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields, or engage in paid work (OECD, 2017). Women

are more likely to work in part-time positions, face more discrimination than men, and struggle to reach management status (OECD, 2017; BLS, 2018).

Women's employment rates trail behind men, nevertheless, the gender gap narrowed since 2012 (OECD, 2017). The second half of the twentieth century reflects a rapid and dramatic rise of about 20 percent in women's labor force participation from 1960 to 2017 (Toossi & Morisi, 2017; Toossi, 2002). Socioeconomic shifts changed women's involvement in the labor market. For example, women have outpaced men in educational attainment for the last 40 years (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011), nearly quadrupling their achievements from the 1970's to the 2000's (BLS, 2018). However, in 2017, women working full time earned roughly 82 percent of men's median weekly earnings (\$941) compared to 62 percent in 1979 (BLS, 2015, 2017). Although women earn more degrees than men, male leads, White men, and a growing number of highly educated Asians hold more top leadership positions and earn higher average wages than women (Hegewisch, & Hartmann, 2019; OECD, 2019; Toossi & Morisi, 2017; Klein, 2019). However, women have made several strides.

Female unemployment reduced to less than five percent since 2010 (BLS, 2018). Statistics showed an increase of women in professional and managerial positions specifically human resources, education, and social and community service (BLS, 2018; DeWolf, 2017). According to experts Ryan Nunn and Megan Mumford (2017) of the Brookings Institution, a public policy research organization, the earnings gap between the genders remain a concern as women continue to earn less. Some contributing factors include the disparity in working hours, spending habits, and women as primary family earners (Burke, 2017).

Working mothers of all racial and ethnic groups comprise about 70% of female employees, with nearly 40% serving as the primary or sole earner of household income (DeWolf, 2017). In every age group, women spend more time occupied with household activities, especially Black and minority women, in contrast to men resulting in less working hours and fewer potential earnings (BLS, 2017). Statistically, on average, American consumer expenditures are highest for food and housing (BLS, 2019b). Women spend more on food and shelter to maintain their households in absence of martial partners and other aid (BLS, 2017). Therefore, securing leadership positions and building wealth with limited time and resources present additional obstacles and widens the socioeconomic divide (BLS, 2017) in addition to colorism.

The helping and medical professions are transiting into female dominated careers in areas of speech-language pathology (98%), social work (82%), and pharmacy (60%). Nearly 71% are recruited for social and community service management positions, and 65% work in education, but only 27% comprise chief executive offices (DeWolf, 2017; BLS, 2018). Catalyst (2018, 2020) predicts, “women of color will be the majority of all women in the United States by 2060” (p. 1). Women entering the workforce builds diversity, which results in greater social goods, stronger firms, and a more robust economy (DeWolfe, 2017).

The Status of Women of Color in Higher Ed

The BLS (2018) reported an increased (still underrepresented) presence of women of color in the academy. However, according to a study headed by academics, Heilig, Flores, Souza, & Monroy (2019), little progress has been made in diversifying tenured professoriate and leadership positions. The article, published in the *Hispanic Journal of*

Law and Policy, examined federal data from 2013-2017 and identified largely minimal gains in respect to faculty diversity across the nation and university intellectual communities (Vasquez Heilig et al., 2019). Griffin (2017) of the American Council on Education noted, “the numbers of underrepresented minority faculty on college and university campuses remain small, and racial and ethnic diversity of the professoriate remains significantly out of alignment with the nation’s undergraduate student body...or even PhD recipients” (p. 273-274). Sociology professor, Aida Harvey Wingfield (2016) added, “Faculty of color are overrepresented in contingent positions that have less economic stability and job security than those on the tenure track” (para 5). This further confirms the benchmark completed by Colleges and University Professional Association for Human Resources stating, “women of color are disproportionately over-represented in lower-paid positions and underrepresented elsewhere” (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017, p. 9).

Data indicates that women earned 50% of all doctorate degrees since 2006, and half of all baccalaureate degrees for the last three decades although the percentage of degrees awarded vary by field (Johnson, 2017). For example, women earned at least 70% of educational degrees (Snyder et al., 2018). A surplus of female graduates qualified for leadership positions exists (Johnson, 2017). However, women are disproportionately in full and associate professor slots compared to their male peers (Johnson, 2017). “The data show that women are not ascending to leadership roles, given that they hold a greater share of the entry-level, service, and teaching-only positions than their male counterparts” (Johnson, 2017, p. 4). The differences are exacerbated for women of color in higher academic ranks (Spalter-Roth & Kalb, 2019). Women of color considerably

outnumber men of color in non-tenure positions, yet men of color hold more full professor positions than minority females (Johnson, 2017). Women's educational attainment levels are not reflected in their positions, ranking, salaries or prestige. Furthermore, on average, men out-earn women regardless of race or ethnicity and hold the most tenured track positions at public and private institutions (Institute of Education Sciences, 2020).

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges provided data benchmark on university presidents and chief academic officer (CAOs) presence in higher education (AUB, 2010). Women make up only 30% of all collegiate presidents and are more likely to have earned a terminal degree within a related field of education, humanities, or social science (Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, Chessman, 2019). Men, in contrast, are selected from fields further outside of higher education. Female vice presidents, provosts, and other chief academic officers (CAOs) declined in the early 2000's in public doctoral degree granting institutions (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017). Minority women account for less than half of all top executive positions (e.g., department head, administrative officer, assistant dean, senior officer, dean, and top executive) (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017). Men "outnumber women more than 2:1 among presidents and chief business officers (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017, p. 11).

Recently, the Fall 2016 National Center for Education Statistics survey revealed, 82% of all full-time faculty were white, (55% male & 27% female), minorities, though still grimly underrepresented, made up less than a quarter (Cody, 2016). By 2017 female faculty increased by eight percent (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals, not Asians

(Poon, Squire, Kodama, Byrd, Chan, Manzano, Furr, & Bishundat, 2016), constituted the least represented minorities in the professoriate “given their overall participation in higher education is less than the overall population” (Griffin, 2017, p. 273). Asians are the leading minority group holding the highest percentage (9.6%) of full-time professor positions at public four-year, private nonprofit four-year, public two-year, and for-profit institutions (ACE, 2019).

The American academe is dictated by a Eurocentric male framework in which women of color find it difficult to gain footing, and clearly find their place (Marbley et al., 2011). Catalyst reported Asian, Black, Latinx, and multiracial women experienced an emotional tax (Travis & Thorpe-Moscon, 2018), heightened exposure to stress based on gender/race/or ethnicity associated with detrimental effects on health, wellness, and ability to succeed at work (Travis, Thorpe-Moscon, 2018), as they seek to advance and contribute to organizations. Women of color describe feeling the need to constantly caution themselves against potential bias or discrimination based on their race or gender despite their drive to succeed and ability to utilize their talents for the progression of the company (Travis & Thorpe-Moscon, 2018). Pervasive and aggressive stereotypes towards minority women result in loss of talent and potential loss of revenue for organizations (Travis & Thorpe-Moscon, 2018). Most research for non-white groups, apart from African American employees, leaders, and academics, focus on gender and racial discrimination as opposed to manifestations of colorism within the academe or workplaces (Mirza, 2003).

Psychologists Shruti Mukkamala & Karen Suyemoto (2018) found that Asian women contend with myths of being the model minority with limited skills. Pejorative

stereotypes include viewing Asians as service working (i.e., nail techs and maids) foreign-born exotic looking Geisha girls possessing a special sexuality, quietly working the hardest in teams, but presumed as lacking the ability to lead because of their stature, docility, and submissive nature. In academic settings Southeast Asian women report being overlooked, ignored, excluded, or taken less seriously because of their size and youthfulness (Mayuzumi, 2008) while Indian Americans struggle in the academic job market because they are perceived as inexperienced (Khanna, 2020). In her book, *Asian American Women on Skin Color and Colorism*, Khanna (2020) quotes an Indian American participant,

Despite my brown skin, I struggle with being not “diverse” enough for jobs in my area of expertise, which is race and ethnicity. As an Indian American professional, I am often not seen as someone who has experienced discrimination and micro-aggressions. As a result, some people think that I am unqualified to speak, teach, or write on these subjects. In a racialized black-white social system that surrounds me, my very real experiences are often negated or trivialized—especially by whites (p. 86-87).

In contrast, mainstream American culture attribute characteristics of anger, ill temper, loudness, aggression, hostility, illogical, overbearing, and ignorant behaviors to Black women in the workplace (Wendy, 2014). These behaviors constitute a stereotyped called “the angry or mad Black women” syndrome (Wendy, 2014). Latinx women report being called ill-tempered or “spicy” (Garcia, 2015). One African American academic wrote,

Black women might write themselves into the narrative of research with the awareness that their work will be read and received as potentially ‘identity politics’ or, not do so because of the risks involved in not having their work published. This is because Black women are aware that despite how they might perceive themselves to be managing their emotions, that is, no matter how softly spoken, articulate, educated, light-footed or introvert she is, she may still possess features that are a little too angry, a voice that is a little too loud and a demeanor that is a little too Black for others (Doharty, 2019, p. 554).

Scholarship regarding color experiences with race and gender inequalities appear well documented, especially color-based incidents for African Americans in higher education. Colorism’s socioeconomic and personal consequences impact nearly all non-White groups (Hall, 2008), however, research on the effects of colorism on Asian, Latinx, and other minority communities in positions of power throughout the academe, beyond the confines of race and gender, are virtually nonexistent. Recently, the EEOC (2017) reported fewer than 10 race/color discrimination cases occurring in higher education from 1997-2019, none of which related to colorism (EEOC, n.d.). The gap in literature and limited data yields a need for greater attention to color-centricity in postsecondary education.

Scholarship reveal the identity struggle and overlapping minority narratives of WOC female leaders (Marbley et. al. 2011). In a male-dominated system resistant to change, women of color require strategies to counteract academic marginalization beyond race and gender (Fenelon, 2003; Sims, 2009). Conventional wisdom sheds light on White women’s experience, but a more radical approach moves the conversation from diversity

to the inclusion of minority females in the academe (Fenelon, 2003). Complexion privilege creates challenges in the self-efficacy and identity of women of color whether fair, brown, or black skinned and requires more attention (Fenelon, 2003). For example, Keleechi, a study participant from Washington, Maryland, recounts,

As a child growing up, I always had situations where the other girls had the perception that I had unlimited access because of my lighter skin color. I had people who wanted to fight me that I had never even exchanged words with, who perceived that I was stuck up, who perceived that I thought I was better, or you know, just come to all kind of conclusions of who I was based on that, without even getting to know me, so I always had this need to prove my ability to be down to earth, to know who I was, instead of what I was (as cited in Wilder, 2015, p.1).

Similar narratives exist in the workplace and higher education industry as African American women navigate the ranks (Hunter, 2007).

From Theory to Practice

In response to intraracial discrimination, and disparities in sociodemographic groups at colleges and universities, institutions and national organizations have developed interventions to increase the number and quality of potential candidates of color (Griffin, 2017). Previous strategies focused on earning graduate degrees to boost marketability, and the navigation of tenure to promotion process (Spalter-Roth, Shin, Smith, Kalb, Moore, Cid-Martinez, & Toney, 2019). Interventions typically addressed career ladder deficits and/or the myths regarding a slender pool of scholars of color (Spalter-Roth et al., 2019). However, Griffin (2017) proposes refocusing efforts on recruiting, hiring, and cultural climate of higher education environments. Graduate

students, particularly Black, Latinx, and Native Americans, lose interest in faculty and education administrative career tracks due to negative racial climates, heavy workloads, limited personal time, pressure to publish, and earn grants, deficiency in mentorship, and limitations to intellectual exploration (Griffin, 2017). Building student training programs that teach and reinforce career satisfaction for educational leadership markets a more attractive package for future professionals (Griffin, 2017). “One solution is to rethink whether and how institutions recognize the importance and value of multiple forms of scholarly and other contributions to make faculty positions more appealing, and to address the issue of work-life balance” (Griffin, 2017, p. 275).

It is critical for institutions to consider how potential candidates are recruited and selected considering implicit bias can infiltrate the selection process (Mirza, 2003). Multiple studies reject claims of stiff competition, bidding wars, and not enough qualified candidates as an excuse for the lack of diversity (Tuitt, Hanna, Martinez, Salazar, & Griffin, 2009; Harris Brown, Alvarez McHatton, & Frazier Trotman Scott, 2017). Instead, scholars assert that recruitment for women of color in intellectual communities falls short because faculty of color do not feel sought after and or in high demand, instead they feel overlooked or undesired in academic searches (Harris Brown et al., 2017; Marbley et al., 2011; Vargas et al., 2018). Experts suggest institutional leaders and committee members go beyond general affirmative action plans and job descriptions to reach more minority women. Some strategies include hiring a group of faculties at one time to increase diversity, advertising in more ethnically assorted communities, fostering a more welcoming atmosphere, and offering support and career development resources beyond the campus (Tuitt et al., 2009).

Experts urge search committees to critically consider the characteristics and criteria they value in the hiring process. Harrison (2010) recommends that hiring managers pay attention to how implicit bias manifests during application reviews and selection. To eradicate colorism, organizations must be more cognizant of the prevalence of colorism as it may relate to many of their human resource-related procedures. Given that colorism is a global phenomenon present in every racial group where there is skin tone variation, training (with an emphasis on skin-tone preference) should be paired with diversity recruitment, selection, and employee development efforts (p. 70).

In homogenous environments like PWI's search committees (often White males and/or females) may unconsciously align themselves with applicants who they are more comfortable with and attracted to. These applicants may receive preference while other's qualifications are more critically assessed (Harrison, 2010). Other common practices of search committees are hiring from within their personal networks of individuals educated at the same or similar institutions as them therefore, reinforcing homogeneity and maintaining the status quo, and favoring academic pedigree (Tuitt et al., 2009). Recruiting from solely top-ranked selective institutions and well-published faculty pools overlooks practice and community-based scholars seeking to mentor and solve social problems like that of diversity and inclusion in higher education. Implicit bias training that incorporates an anti-bias checklist can move the needle in the hiring process (Tuitt et al., 2009).

Department and campus culture matter in building faculty diversity particularly among women of color who possess two stigmatized identities in the form of race and gender (Harris Brown et al., 2017). A growing body of research has documented some

faculty of color describing higher education as a revolving door due to hypersensitive experiences of microaggressions, negative stereotypes, colorist jokes, and racist comments (Hall & Crutchfield, 2018; Gasman et al., 2011; Harris Brown et al., 2017). Minority faculty subjected to subtle and covert behaviors of racism, such as questioning their legitimacy as scholars and exclusion from informal social networks, experience vulnerabilities that curtail their ability to thrive and result in their premature departure (Harris Brown et al., 2017). Organizational benchmarks and diversity programs like the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) aims to improve relationships between sociodemographic groups (2017). The NCBI (2017), amongst others, help to cultivate a valuing of multicultural competencies and partnerships. Once hired, attention to distinctions in professor and administrator experiences are necessary to increase satisfaction and success, lower departure rates, and reduce intergroup conflict (McChesney, 2018).

The next chapter describes the study design and method of data collection for the analysis. The study seeks to understand the relationship between non-White women leaders' experiences with colorism in their higher education careers, the concept of social justice in relation to these challenges, an investigation of which attributes are more associated with skin tone discrimination, and how members of that group cope.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

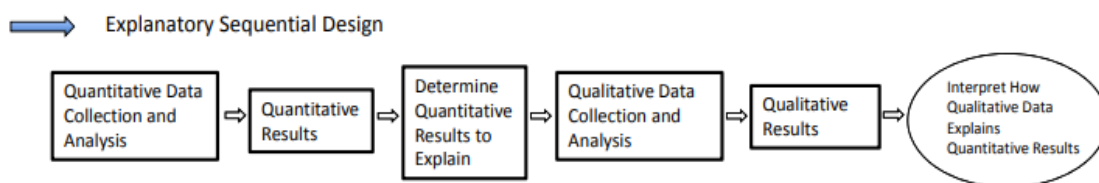
The researcher applied a triangulated mixed method approach which integrated quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies for analysis. This mix-methods study addresses the colorism experiences of non-White women leaders in positions of power within the higher education industry. An explanatory sequential design was applied, the process of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, then conducting separate analysis and using the qualitative data to explain the quantitative results (Creswell, 2013). The study tested the degree to which colorism effects the career outcomes of WOC, their perceptions of social justice in postsecondary arenas, the demographic most associated with aspects of skin tone bias, and interpreting the meaning making process of coping. The biggest takeaway is awareness, understanding, and challenging marginalization in institutions otherwise believed to promote diversity, inclusion, and fairness within society. The research design allowed the investigator to answer the following research questions:

1. To what degree has colorism been a factor in the careers of women of color who are in power positions?
2. To what degree are experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education?
3. What demographics of women of color are most associated with experiences of colorism (age, sex, skin tone)?
4. Exploratory Question: How have you coped with and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences?

A mixed-methods approach to research incorporates both operationalized data that explains the relationship, influences, determinants, and effects between variables and uses textual data that explores the personal meaning making process of experiences in a single study. (Creswell, 2013).

Figure 1

Explanatory Sequential Design



The purpose of the study is to investigate the correlation between colorism experiences of non-White women leaders in academic positions of power, their perception of fairness in the higher education industry, and to report on participant coping mechanisms in relation to their experiences. The findings intend to support intellectual communities in diversification, inclusion, and improved decision making otherwise thwarted by unconscious implicit bias in the academe.

Participants

Based upon a power analysis (G*Power 3.1), with an estimated moderate effect size (.30), power of .80, and an upper limit of five predictors, the estimated sample size needed for this study is 45 participants. However, because of the potential for dropouts, failure to meet inclusion criteria, and incomplete surveys, the investigator recruited at least 100 women in positions of power within higher education. Upon completion of the study 107 total respondents were included in the analysis.

The initial sample population focused on non-White female leaders across all institutions of postsecondary learning in the United States. Recognizing this research seeks to identify experiences and perceptions of colorism in the higher education industry the scope was broad to include all WOC from public, private, two-year and four-year degree granting, for profit and non-for-profit schools. Due to nature of the global pandemic (Coronavirus) access to far reaching respondents was stifled as employment plummeted, and higher education restructured its operations. Conducting research during unprecedented times broadened the sample to include professionals currently or having previously served in institutions of higher learning. Recruitment was conducted via social and professional media sites such as LinkedIn, Instagram, Sage Social Science Space, and organizations that could reach women who presumably fit the inclusion criteria. One hundred percent of the sample size were female of color with the majority earning \$100k or more annually, having attained a graduate degree.

Procedure

The data collection process used RedCap online survey software. To examine the colorism experiences of non-White women leaders in higher education respondents were directed to an encrypted link embedded in the recruitment flyer. Participants could access the link via their cellphone, PC, or tablet using the internet. Volunteers viewed a welcome message showing the statement of the problem, the research objectives, disclaimer of the voluntary and confidential nature of the study, and three screening questions. The data intended to capture the target population of only women of color currently or having previously served in a leadership role in academia. Positions of power was defined as any role of professorship, department chair or co-chair, any level of

deanship, president or vice president, chief academic officer-provost or vice provost, supervisor, manager, team or course lead, governing board member, or any position with one or more subordinates. Demographic data collected include socioeconomic status (income, educational attainment) and sociodemographic information (race, Hispanic origin, leadership role, years of service). Participants could select one of eight racial categories: Black (African American), Black (Caribbean), Asian, Southeast Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian/Indigenous, or Alaskan Native, Two or More Races, Middle Eastern or of Arab descent, or Other (not listed). Mixed race constituted as “Two or More Races” and therefore eligible to complete the survey. The order of the scales included in the measurement tool were intentionally organized.

Data collection first focused on the degree to which colorism has been a factor in the careers of women of color specifically regarding hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Next, the measures assessed the degree to which experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education and important work-related outcomes such as intentions to leave higher education, job satisfaction, and engagement. Thirdly, demographic information was collected to determine what group of WOC are most associated with experiences of colorism based on age, sex, and skin tone.

This study utilized three different recruitment techniques for gathering potential candidates. The researcher solicited the assistance of a gatekeeper to gain access to a larger pool of prospective respondents from at least one postsecondary institution in Florida. A gatekeeper serves as a representative of the organization and can provide a list

of contact information to assist the researcher in reaching a greater number of candidates. Additionally, the researcher implemented a snowball convenience sampling method, a process of gaining one or more participants that meet the inclusion criteria and relying on word of mouth to gain traction for recruiting (Creswell, 2013). A purposive sampling technique helped to boost participation by intentionally recruiting the sample population who met the criteria of the experiment.

Measures

Experiences with Colorism/Role of Skin Tone. This study adapted a subdimension of the Ingroup Colorism Scale developed by Harvey, Banks, & Tennial (2017). The subscale, “Upward Mobility” assessed the degree to which respondents believed that skin tone effected their ability to progress in academia (e.g., “Even if you work really hard, your skin tone matters most in higher education”). Based upon previous evaluations, “analysis yielded a single unidimensional factor that accounted for 77% of the variance, with all four loadings above .78.... and a [combined] reliability coefficient alpha of .90 (Harvey, Banks & Tennial, 2017, p. 748). The scale assumed colorism played a role in the lives of people of color interpersonal and professional relationships (see Appendix 1, p. 146).

1. The responses to questions:

- Even if you work hard, your skin tone matters most in higher education.
- Skin tone plays a big part in determining how far you can make it in higher education.
- Skin tone affects how much money you can make in higher education.

- If you want to get ahead, you must be the right skin tone in higher education.
- Lighter complexion individuals tend to be more successful than darker complexion individuals in higher education.
- Upward mobility in the workplace has nothing to do with the lightness or darkness of skin complexion. (*With scale reversed*) were added and assigned the name “ROLE OF SKIN TONE”. The values were on a scale from 6 to 42 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 6 and 100% represents a 42.

Instances of Colorism. This scale was designed to measure the degree to which participants felt as though their skin tone has had implications on their career in terms of eight dependent variables: hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace, (see Appendix 2, p. 147).

2. The responses to questions: *Instances of Colorism*

- Being hired or denied a job
- Work assignments
- Training and development opportunities
- Leadership opportunities
- Performance appraisals
- Pay
- Promotions
- Interpersonal relationships in the workplace

- Mentoring opportunities were added and assigned the name “INSTANCES OF COLORISM”. The values were on a scale from 0 to 36 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 0 and 100% represents a 36.

Intentions to Leave. The intent to leave higher education was measured using the “Turnover Intentions” scale adapted from Christ Bothma & Gert Roodt (2013) “Turnover Intention Scale” (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). The adapted scaled referred to leaving “higher education” rather than a specific institution (e.g., As soon as I can find a better career I’ll quit”). A prior estimate of the reliability and validity from a single factor of the Turnover Intentions Scale was $\alpha = .80$. Confirmed validity resulted from statistical significance distinguishing between leavers and stayers revealing actual turnover, (see Appendix 3, p. 148).

3. The responses to questions: INTENT TO LEAVE JOB

- As soon as I can find a better career I will quit.
- I will probably look for a new career, in the near future.
- I intend to continue working in this industry for some time.

Were added and assigned the name “INTENT TO LEAVE JOB”. The values were on a scale from 3 to 21 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 3 and 100% represents a 21.

Social Justice Perceptions. Social Justice Perceptions of higher education was measured using the “Social Justice Scale” adapted from Torres-Harding, Siers, and Olson (2012). This scale assessed the perceptions of higher education as an industry rather than a particular institution. Prior estimates of the reliability and validity of the Social Justice Scale are a Cronbach’s alpha of .83, and a test-retest reliability of .84, indicating internal

consistency among the items. Furthermore, the total subscale scores positively associated with estimated outcomes, (see Appendix 4, p. 149).

4. The responses to questions: “SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER ED”.
 - I believe that all individuals and groups have a chance to speak and be heard, especially those from traditionally ignored or marginalized groups regardless of skin complexion in higher education
 - I believe skin tone makes it harder to talk to others about societal systems of power, privilege, and oppression in higher education (*With scale reversed*)
 - I believe it is more difficult for individuals and groups to pursue chosen goals in higher education because of their skin tone (*With scale reversed*)
 - I believe higher education supports and promotes the physical and emotional well-being of groups and individuals regardless of skin tone
 - I believe lighter-skinned individuals and groups have more meaningful input into decisions affecting their lives in higher education (*With scale reversed*)
 - I believe I have been discriminated against because of my skin tone in higher education (*With scale reversed*)
 - I feel I have been treated fairly in spite of my skin tone in higher education
 - I feel I have been able to advance in my career in higher education regardless of my skin tone
 - I feel my skin tone impacts how I advance in my higher education career (*With scale reversed*)

Were added and assigned the name “SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER ED”. The values were on a scale from 9 to 63 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 9 and 100% represents a 63.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using the “Female Faces Scale” (Dunham & Herman, 1975). The Female Faces Scale consists of 11 faces that span from extreme negative sentiment expression to extreme positive sentiment expression. Participants were asked to choose the face (and expression) that best reflects how they feel about their job. Prior estimates of the reliability and validity of the Female Faces Scale showed moderate discrimination among the five areas of job satisfaction, work, pay, promotion, supervision, and co-workers, and “very good discriminant and convergent validity when compared with factors for the 72 Job Descriptive Index items,” with a .75 correlation for the total sample (Dunham & Herman, 1975, 629). (see Appendix 5, p. 151)

Engagement. Engagement was measured by the Schaufeli Work and Well-Being Scale (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002/2003). This scale measures the energy, involvement, and efficacy of employees within a position. The survey was adapted to focus on the higher education industry as opposed to any position. Prior estimates of the reliability and validity of the Schaufeli Work and Well-Being Scale measured Cronbach’s α internal consistencies using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to see if the model was a good fit. The hypothesized models fit the data using absolute and relative indices (see Appendix 6. p. 152).

5. The responses to questions:

- I am bursting with energy working in higher education

- I find the work that I do in higher education is full of meaning and purpose
- I feel strong and vigorous as a higher education professional
- I am enthusiastic about my career in higher education
- My career in higher education inspires me
- When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work in higher education
- I am proud of the work that I do in higher education

Were added and assigned the name “JOB HAPPINESS”. The values were on a scale from 0 to 42 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 0 and 100% represents a 42.

Burnout Scale: Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) is a three-dimensional scale that measures the stressors related to work dissatisfaction (physical lack of accomplishment/happiness/satisfaction, negative mental attitudes towards the population being served, and emotional exhaustion). The “Emotional Exhaustion” subdimension was adapted for the purpose of this study. The items present statements regarding professions that work directly with people regarding rare or problematic issues. Consequently, strong feelings may ensue due to the nature of the work and present itself in emotional duress leading to professional burnout. Prior estimates of the reliability and validity of the Maslach Burnout Inventory are a reliability coefficient of .79, standard error of measurement as 3.80, test-retest coefficient of .80, and higher mean scores associated with higher extents of burnout. (see Appendix 7, p. 153)

6. The responses to questions:

- I feel emotionally drained from my work in higher education
- I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day in higher education

- I feel burned out from my work in higher education
- I feel frustrated from my work in higher education
- I feel I'm working too hard in my career in higher education
- I feel like I'm at the end of my rope in higher education.

were added and assigned the name “JOB UNHAPPINESS”. The values were on a scale from 6 to 42 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 6 and 100% represents a 42.

Qualitative Data

Below are the responses to the exploratory question: How have you coped with and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences? The answers are grouped in color relevance.

If you have experienced colorism in the workplace how have you responded, reacted, or coped internally and externally?
I feel discouraged, overlooked, and undervalued
Numb
I ignore it
I ignore it, because psychologically I am better than the way my skin looks.
Suffered in silence
Thought about quitting; cried; extreme anger
I have experienced Nepotism of hiring practices due to a change in leadership although I was extremely efficient.
I've bitten my tongue. A controlled calmness, sometimes an inner rage. But I keep my thoughts to myself.
I feel silenced. And being token means you can't open up to your peers about the situation. It's like being cornered and your white counter parts don't understand.
I usually internalize my emotions and don't respond at all!
I feel that I witnessed colorism mostly in the interpersonal relationships. I wondered why my white colleagues seemed to get together and get with each other so easily. They seemed to 'gel' together so easily, and I seemed left out though I tried to be inclusive of them in the things that I do. I could not pinpoint what it was for a while until I realized that the only variable that I was not accounting for is the fact that I was black and of a different ethnicity while they were mostly white. It is

not a definitive conclusion but having undergone a great deal of introspection at my own behavior, it is the only one that makes sense to me.

I cope internally by just trying to ignore it because there is a lot of retaliation where I work. I have been bullied in the past for speaking out.

I responded by finding a better career. I've been passed up for multiple promotions while being well qualified. However, when a Caucasian counterpart applied for the jobs they were closed. Internally, I found ways to keep my peace. Externally, I moved on to an opportunity that allowed me to be more impactful in other's lives.

Switched positions or organizations instead of addressed it at the HR level.

I quit! Living in an inherently racist society and often met with systemic prejudice, I have learned to move in silence and complete the work that I am tasked to do. Because the system is bigger than me, I sometimes feel helpless to fix it. However, if I'm in a situation where I feel uncomfortable, unworthy, unrecognize, I have the power to remove my self from that situation. So, with prayer and internal power, I was able to resign from a position that no longer served my needs. In fact, I've entirely switched careers-no longer in higher education.

Usually, I look for another position where I would most likely grow and feel wanted

In defiance, I have made a point to look more African in my clothing selection and hair styles.

I have observed it and benefited from it as a light skinned biracial woman.

Colorism has gone both ways in my career. I certainly make white people more comfortable with my light skin, so I've worked to use that privilege to benefit others to the best of my ability. I've also had racial harassment from a colleague of color, who insisted I was effectively white and undermined me repeatedly. That was a harder situation, because my awareness of institutional colorism kept me from reporting through official channels. Even as I'm harassed, I tried not to throw around complexion privilege, despite the person being more senior to me. This has led to feeling like I'm constantly absorbing hits at work, but also to feeling like I'm aligned with my larger values, despite one horrible person.

Preferential tokenism for being person of color though light. Not being dark enough for colleagues who are darker than me

Not colorism - I have been the only black person in my division for the past two years

It has changed the longer I've been in it. Very outspoken at first, now I just lay low, chose my battles, and build relationships with other POC. At one point I had to take a WW to HR, and that did not go well for me.

I have spoken to my colleagues, spoken up and raised awareness

I tend to connect with other people of color in the workplace. Sometimes I tend to cope alone and just go home.

Confided/discussed with a senior-level African American professor.
Discuss with peers to normalize my feelings.
Talking with friends and colleagues
Venting to others with the same situation.
I think the whole survey only works if your higher ed institution has more than one brown person with which to compare treatment. At my last institution which was a PWI, The 6 black faculty in our College were all dark. At the HBCU I'm at, there are a lot of us and most of us are middle brown to dark brown and dark people do well here. It might be more of a racism issue here with White faculty being more valued or treated with kid gloves by Black administration. My light skinned colleague has experienced colorism though where she thinks the darker superior who hassles her might be jealous because she is light.
To be honest I love the diversity and inclusion of education. I don't think people in corporate feel this ease.
I have persisted with my work and allowed it to move my career forward.
I have typically ignored as I do not want to invest my energy and feel upset. I usually channel my energy in working at multiple levels and feel valued.
It's frustrating but energizes me to work harder and press forward.
I've coped by working harder to exceed standards
I've decided to work harder to prove that the work can be done by a minority.
I try to be my best self despite how others try to treat me.
Experienced it over the life course. Try and control as much of my life as possible and keep striving.
I have learned to be patient and hope that my kindness will weaken their agenda. It's tiring but it less draining than fighting all the time.
try to be as professional as I can on the outside
I have kept my cool and responded with intelligence and facts.
I try to be calm and rational.
I do not take the comments and/or actions of others too seriously or I tend to be dismissive. My defense mechanism is to try to be empathetic. I try to remember that the person's lack of understanding is why he/she has said what they say. Also, that their actions are more discriminatory because they may not know that it is offensive or inappropriate.
It helped me be a better person. At first it was difficult because it made me second guess my worth but when I learned it had nothing to do with me, it made me strong.
I have always strived to do my work with integrity and speak up whenever I feel I am being treated unfairly.
It depends on the situation. I assess whether I can respond. If not, I find someone to help me express the issue.

Found other peers who experienced the same and figured out allies in the office at the same time to speak up against discrimination in an organized fashion. It didn't necessarily work given that (white) leadership didn't care retaliation took places in different forms against those who spoke up. Some left on their own accord, while others didn't have their contracts renewed. Those who were silent and nodded along with administration got perks like special invitations, trainings abroad, etc.

My personal experience is that the color of my skin (being a person of African descent) is the primary focus of my responses to the survey. My skin tone is somewhat in the mid-range, I'm a sort of golden brown--dark tan if you will. However, I have noticed that women whose skin is dark, say chocolate or dark chocolate are seldom in position of power, regardless of the professional field. For me colorism and racism collide in higher education so that being a person of color is challenging. My response is that I have attempted to have open conversations about the problem with those in leadership. My understanding is that I know who I am, and I know the systemic problem of color in this country. I speak my truth knowing that there is a need for a change in how high education as a field responds to issues of color (and 'race'). Not very hopeful, I am.

Spoken to HR

I went to HR but got nowhere and left feeling even worse. It didn't help that the HR people I spoke to were MUCH younger (looked like they just got out of college).

When I experience macro and micro acts of colorism, I make my feelings overt and address them as such. For example, being made the head of a diversity committee because I had the darkest complexion amongst leaders which I then began a conversation about how it was possible I was the only person with a darker complexion sitting at the table in the first place.

I am a light skinned Latina therefore it is not an issue of color - the issue of light skin vs dark skin; but of ethnicity and what is valued in terms of race/ethnicity - it has been a difficulty journey

Total Respondents: 5

Chapter 4: Results

General Analysis

To facilitate the analysis of the more general research questions, scores on specific survey question sections were aggregated and scaled as a percentage of their range. This was done to create continuous variables with less discrete outcomes that will better smooth out any individual question irregularities, and which are comparable rather than being on different scales. The values were on a scale from 6 to 42 and were scaled so that 0% represents a 6 and 100% represents a 42. The descriptive statistics for all variables are represented below followed by the analytics for each response.

The first research question is answered using descriptive statistics regarding experiences of colorism in WOC personal and professional relationships. The data shows an average of the overall responses in percent ranges and averages of individual answers for those who answered low, moderate, to high on a Likert scale. Although GPower was used to determine the sample size, the survey was underpowered to support comparative analysis between groups to generalize populations. However, some patterns were found in the responses to scales regarding the role skin tone plays in the experiences of WOC in higher education, and its impact on social justice perceptions. The research questions are numbered and results that accept or disprove the hypotheses are provided below.

Research Question #1:

1. To what degree has colorism been a factor in the careers of women of color who are in power positions?

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis stated, Women of Color (WOC) will report moderate to high experiences with colorism in their hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. The results presented in Table 1 & 2 and in Figures 1 & 2 suggest that this hypothesis was supported. Well over 50% of the participants believed that skin tone played an especially important role in career success. Furthermore, over 50% reported having moderate to strong experiences with colorism in work outcomes like pay, performance, appraisal, being hired, training, etc.

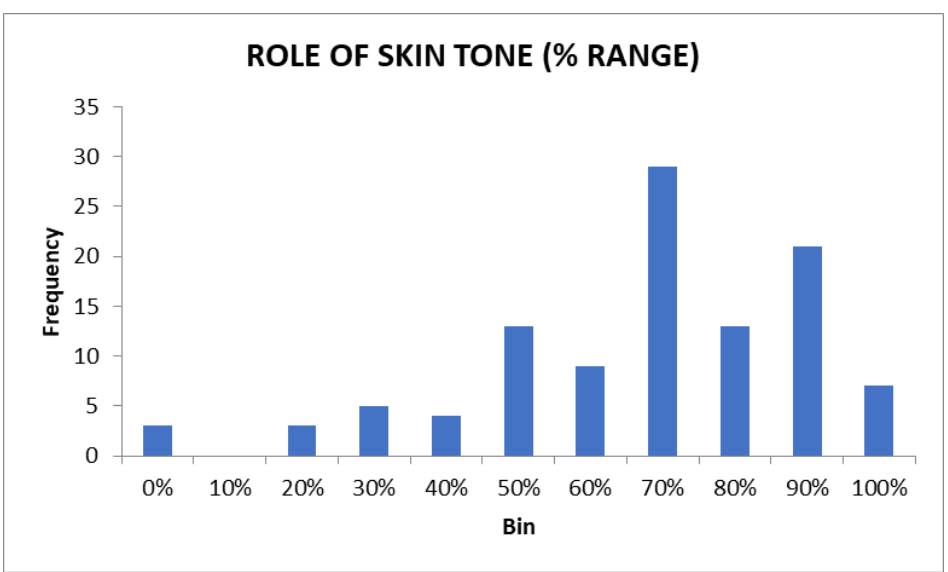
Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for all Variables

METRIC	Q1	MEDIAN	Q3	MEAN	StDev
ROLE OF SKIN TONE (% RANGE)	50.0%	66.7%	80.6%	63.1%	22.4%
INSTANCES OF COLORISM (% RANGE)	22.2%	47.2%	75.0%	46.4%	30.5%
INTENT TO LEAVE JOB (% RANGE)	11.1%	44.4%	66.7%	42.9%	31.5%
SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER ED (% RANGE)	27.8%	40.7%	51.9%	42.3%	20.5%
JOB HAPPINESS (% RANGE)	52.4%	69.0%	83.3%	67.1%	21.6%
JOB UNHAPPINESS (% RANGE)	25.0%	47.2%	77.8%	51.3%	29.4%

Figure 2

Role of Skin Tone



Explanation: Greater than 50% of the participants believed that skin tone played a very important role in career success.

Figure 3

Instances of colorism in career outcomes

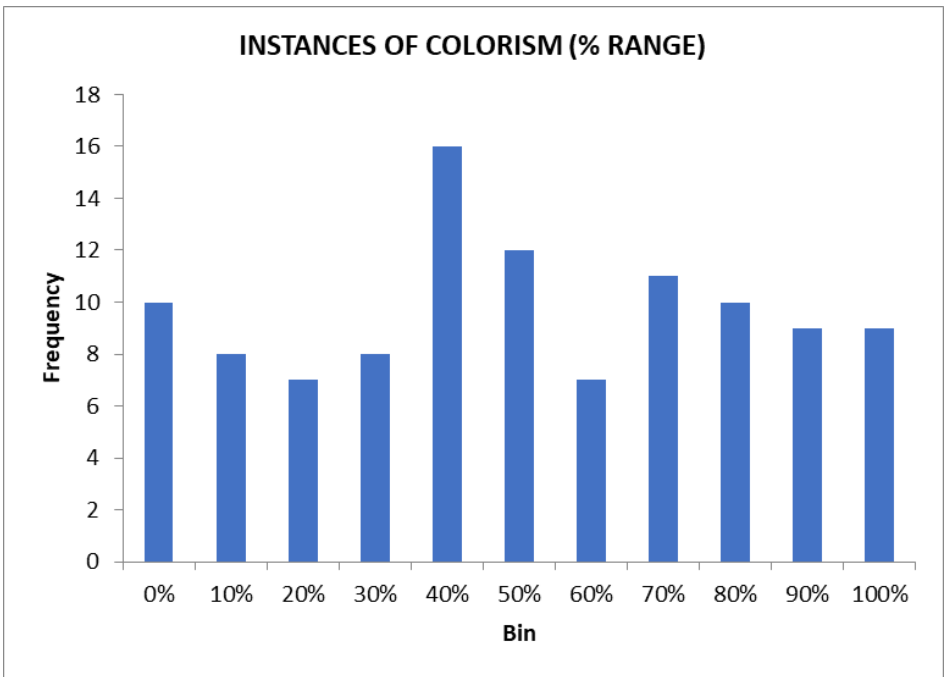


Table 2*Response as percentage of range for “Instances of Colorism”*

INSTANCE OF COLORISM	Q1	MEDIAN	Q3	MEAN	StDev
Being hired or denied a job	25.0%	50.0%	75.0%	44.4%	33.2%
Work assignments	0.0%	50.0%	75.0%	41.8%	34.5%
Training and development opportunities	0.0%	75.0%	75.0%	43.9%	36.5%
Leadership opportunities	25.0%	75.0%	75.0%	49.3%	36.4%
Performance appraisals	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	39.0%	34.7%
Pay	25.0%	75.0%	75.0%	50.2%	34.4%
Promotions	25.0%	75.0%	75.0%	49.5%	36.2%
Interpersonal relationships in the workplace	25.0%	75.0%	75.0%	52.6%	34.5%
Mentoring opportunities	0.0%	75.0%	75.0%	46.7%	36.8%

Figure 4

Instances of colorism impacting hiring outcomes, work assignments, training, development and leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, and pay

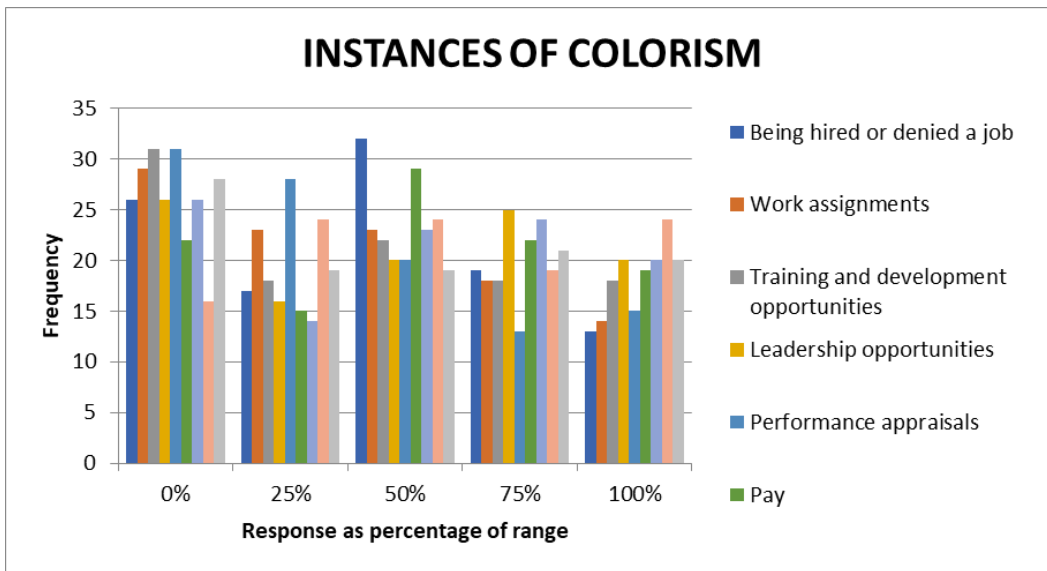


Figure 5

Colorism impact on the intent to leave higher education industry

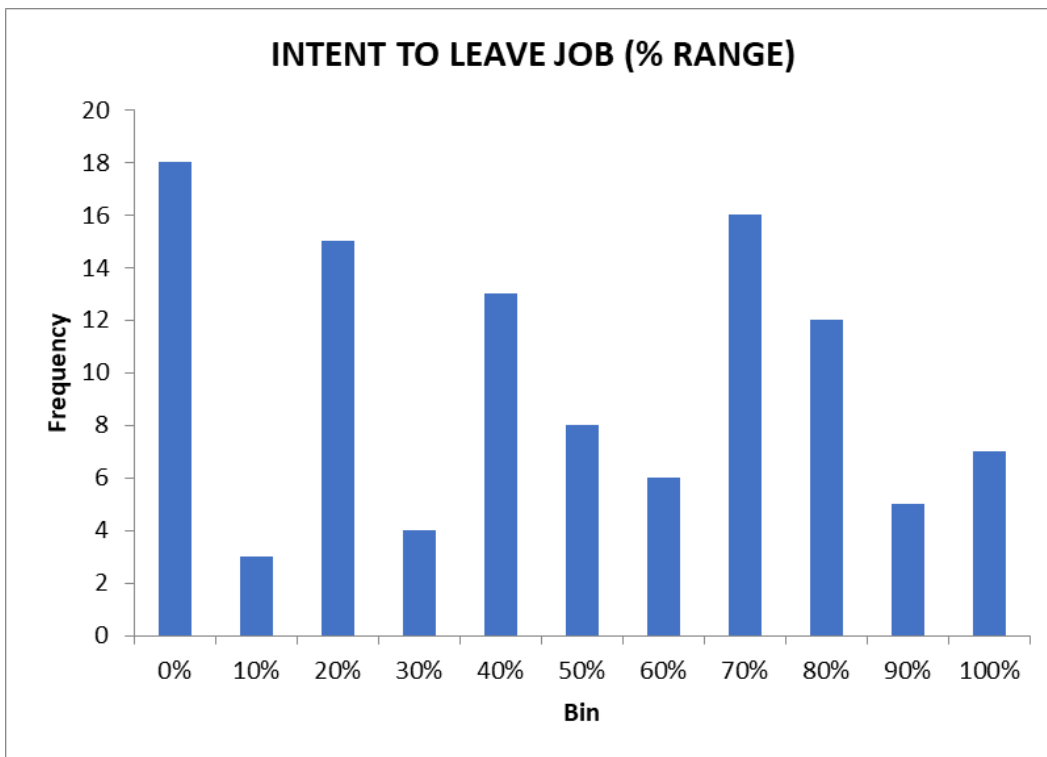


Figure 6

Colorism impact on the perceptions of social justice in higher education

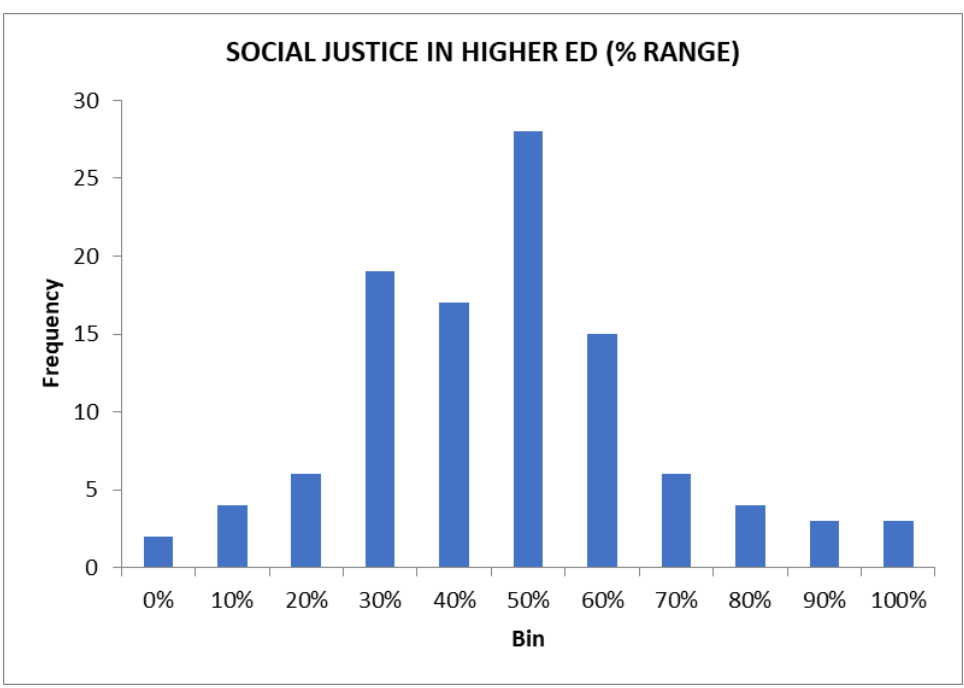


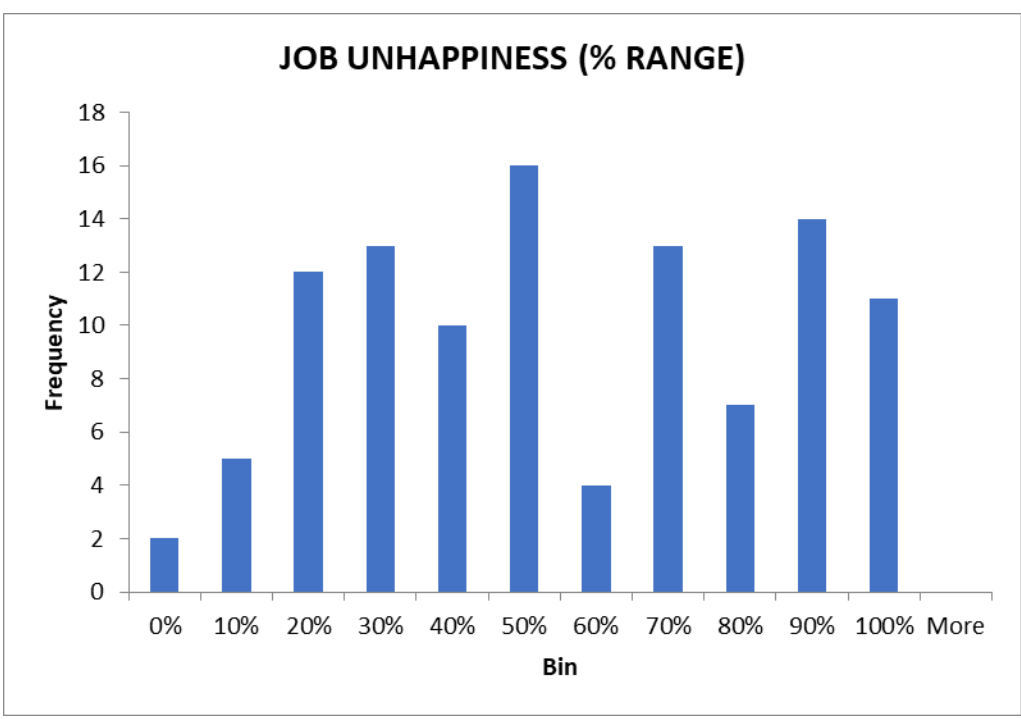
Figure 7

Colorism impact on job happiness



Figure 8

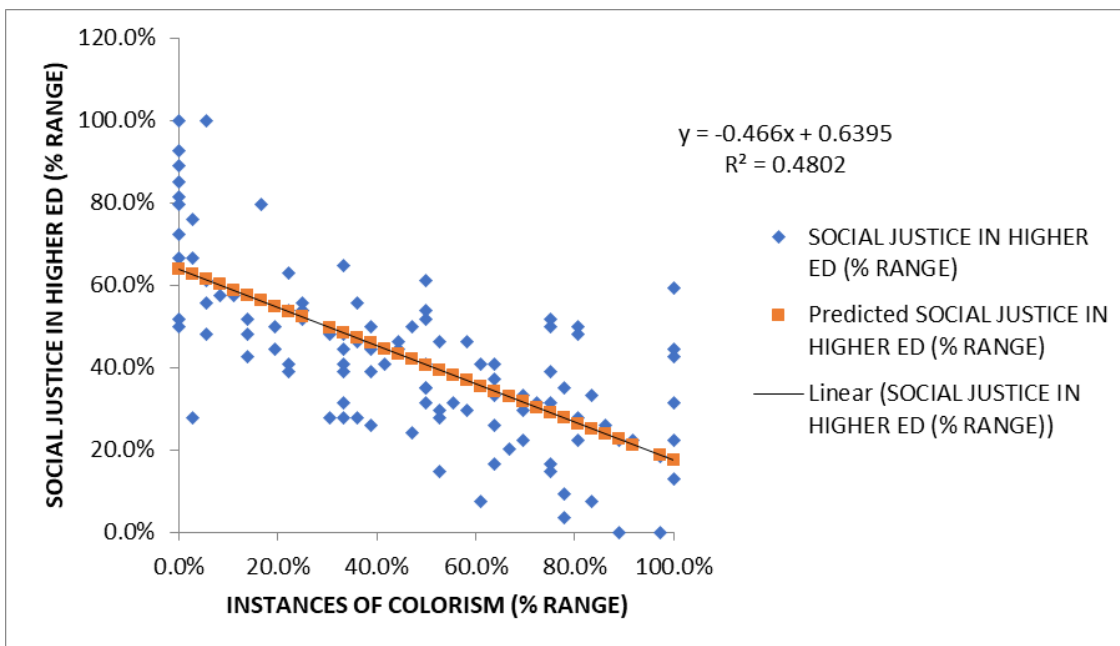
Expressed job unhappiness in higher education industry



2. To what degree are experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education?

Hypothesis 2a

This research questions seeks to assess if higher reported experiences with colorism in each of the areas listed above will be associated with lower social justice perceptions in the higher education industry. A simple linear regression was performed assessing the relationship between these variables:

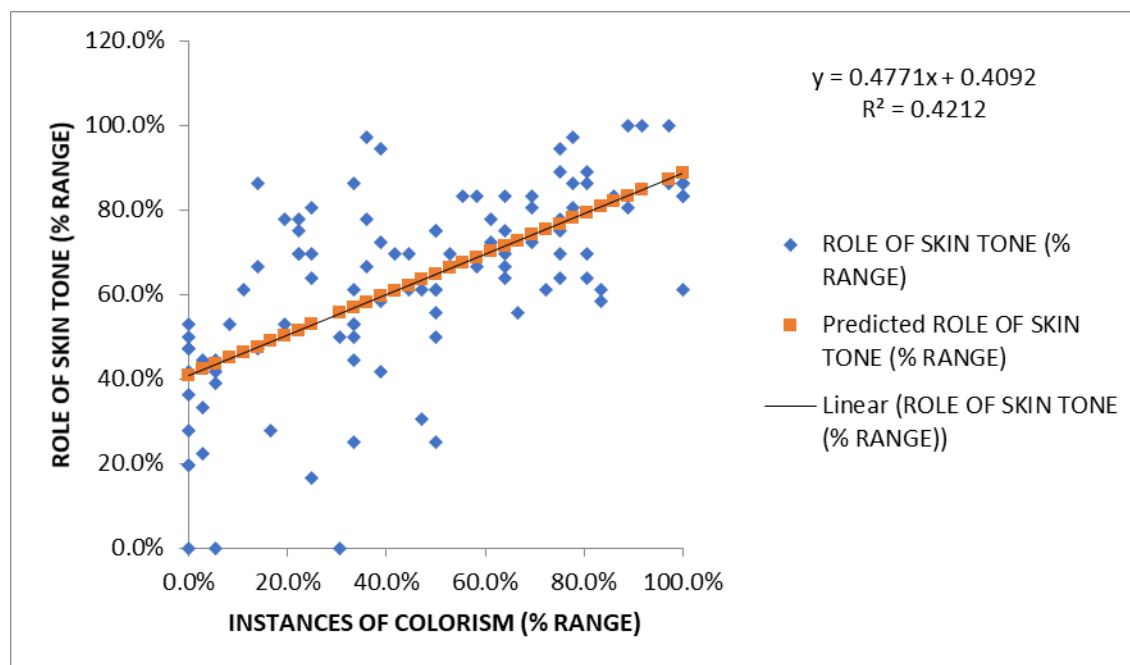
Figure 9*Relationship between variables*

The association was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$).

Approximately 48% of the variance in social justice perceptions among the surveyed group was explained by their reported instances of colorism. A 10% increase in instances of colorism was associated with a 4.6% decrease in perception of social justice in higher education. A related regression was performed assessing the relationship between perceived role of skin tone and instances of colorism:

Figure 10

Relationship between perceived role of skin tone and instances of colorism



The association was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$).

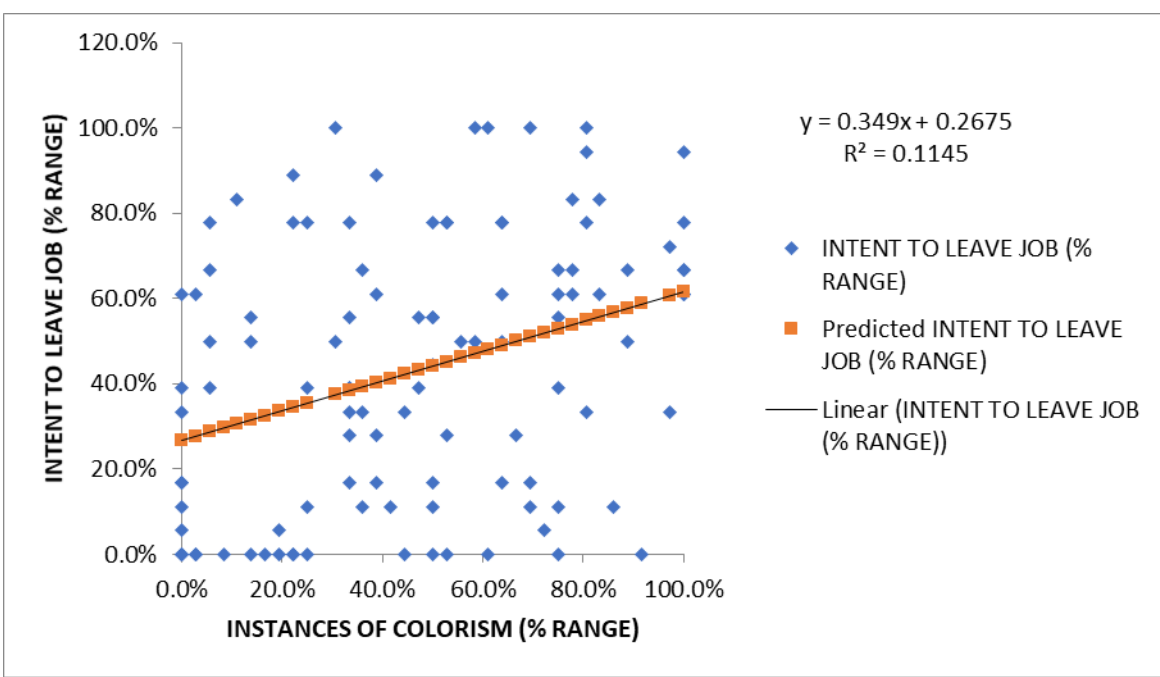
Approximately 42% of the variance in role of skin tone perceptions among the surveyed group was explained by their reported instances of colorism. A 10% increase in instances of colorism was associated with a 4.7% increase in perceptions of the role skin tone plays.

Hypothesis 2b

This research questions seeks to assess if higher reported experiences with colorism in each of the areas listed above will be associated with important work-related outcomes including higher intentions to leave higher education, lower job satisfaction, and lower engagement. A series of simple linear regression was performed assessing the relationship between instances of colorism and these various dependent variables:

Figure 11

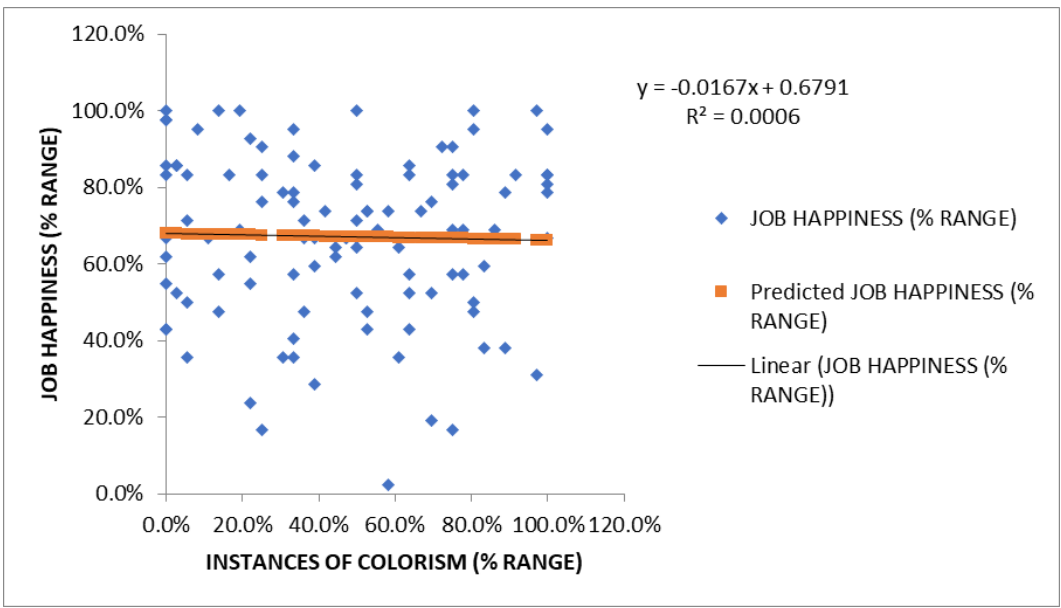
Relationship between instances of colorism and dependent variables



The association between intent to leave job and instances of colorism was found to be significant ($p=0.0004$). However, only 11% of the variance in intent to leave job among the surveyed group was explained by their reported instances of colorism. A 10% increase in instances of colorism was associated with a 3.5% increase in intent to leave job.

Figure 12

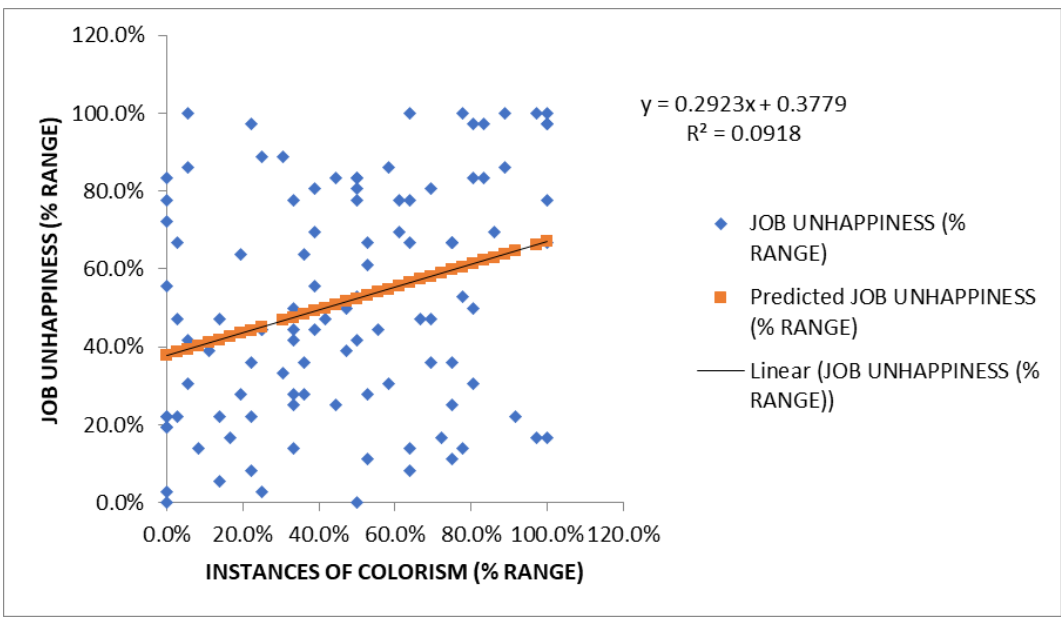
Relationship between instances of colorism and job happiness



No statistically significant association was found between instances of colorism and job happiness ($p=0.8098$).

Figure 13

Relationship between job happiness and colorism



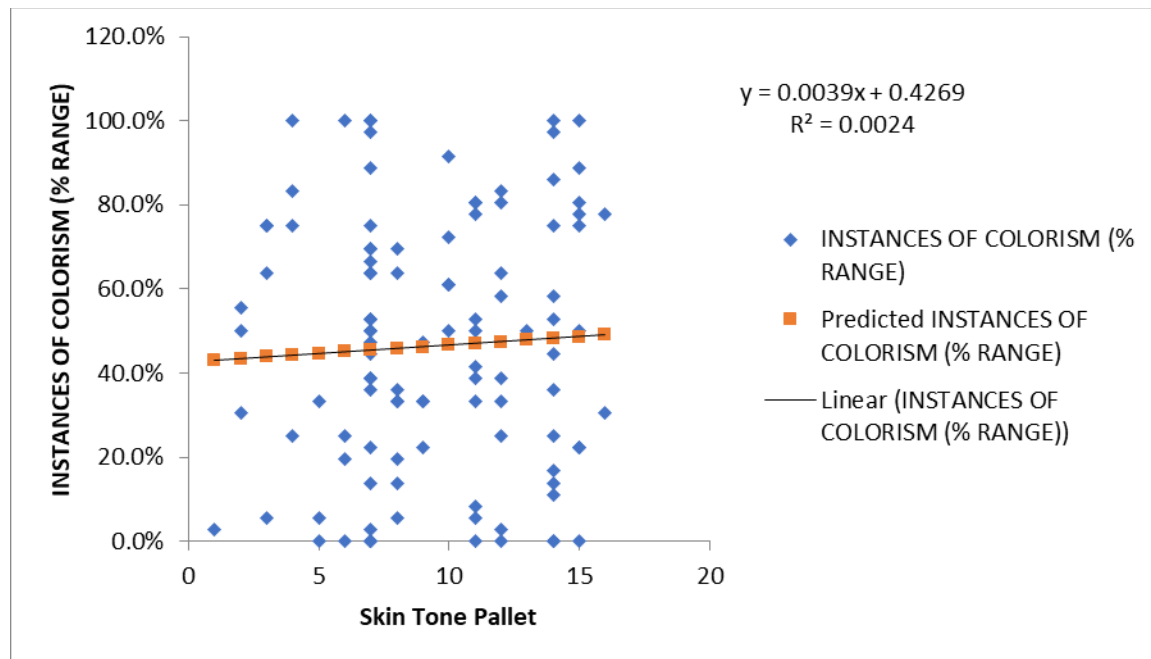
The association between job unhappiness and instances of colorism was found to be significant ($p=0.0015$). However, only 9% of the variance in job unhappiness among the surveyed group was explained by their reported instances of colorism. A 10% increase in instances of colorism was associated with a 2.9% increase in job unhappiness.

Hypothesis 3a

This research questions seeks to assess if darker skin tone women will report more experiences with colorism than lighter skin tone women. First, a simple regression was performed between skin tone pallet reported and instances of colorism:

Figure 14

Relationship between skin ton pallet and instances of colorism



No statistically significant association was found between instances of colorism and skin tone pallet ($p=0.6128$).

Next, Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA was performed on skin color, both self-described and perceptions of how others would describe it. In both cases, Light and Very Light were combined, and Dark and Very Dark were combined, due to low reported numbers.

Table 3

Self-Described Skin Color and median count

Self-Described Skin Color	Count	Median
Very Light/Light	31	38.9%
Medium	59	44.4%
Dark/Very Dark	17	75.0%

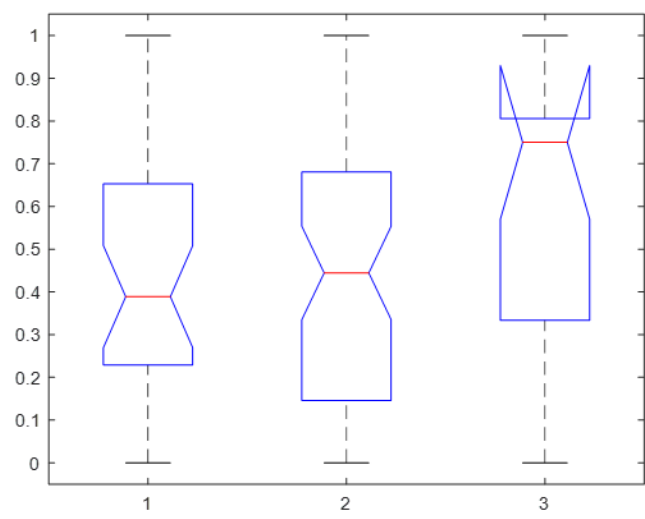
Table 4

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table					
Source	SS	df	MS	Chi-sq	Prob>Chi-sq
Groups	4710.7	2	2355.35	4.9	0.0862
Error	97139.3	104	934.03		
Total	101850	106			

Figure 15

Results of Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA



While we do see a numerical increase in median for the Dark/Very Dark group, the low response number resulted in no statistical significance in this difference (p=0.0862).

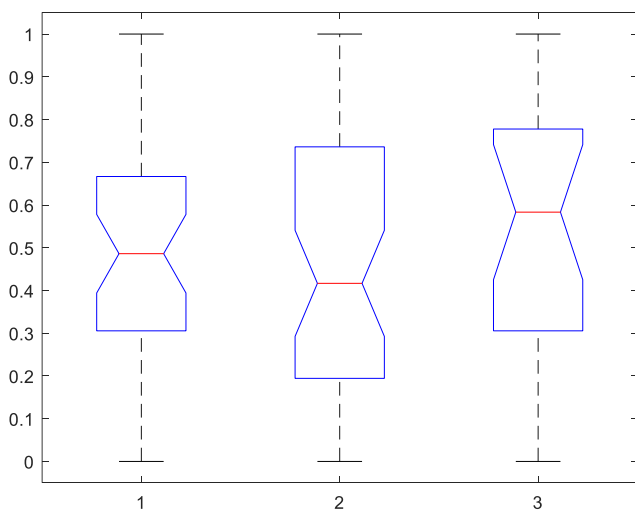
Table 5

Others-Described skin color and median count

Others-Described Skin		
Color	Count	Median
Very Light/Light	38	48.6%
Medium	47	41.7%
Dark/Very Dark	22	58.3%

Table 6*Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table*

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table					
Source	SS	df	MS	Chi-sq	Prob>Chi-sq
Groups	792.1	2	396.053	0.82	0.6622
Error	101057.9	104	971.711		
Total	101850	106			

Figure 16*Results of Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Analysis*

The effect is even weaker when comparing how others view the respondents'' skin tones. Again, no statistically significant difference was found ($p=0.6622$).

Hypothesis 3b

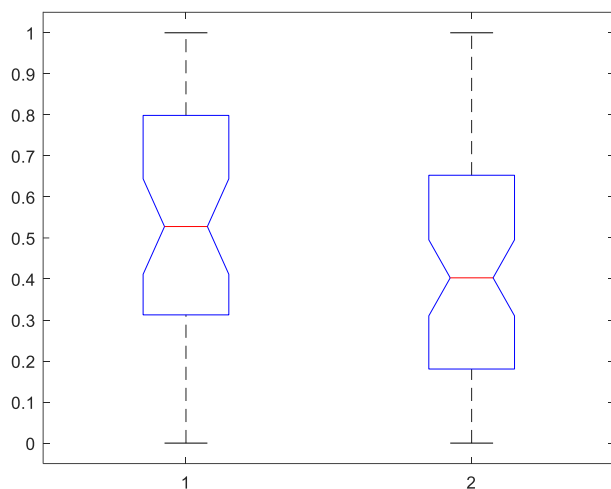
This research questions seeks to assess if older women will report more experiences with colorism. First, age ranges were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA. Due to low reporting numbers, ranges were pooled to be only 18-39 and 40+.

Table 7*Ranges of Age*

Age	Count	Median
18-39	43	52.8%
40+	64	40.3%

Table 8*Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table*

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table					
Source	SS	df	MS	Chi-sq	Prob>Chi-sq
Groups	2940.4	1	2940.36	3.06	0.0802
Error	98909.6	105	942		
Total	101850	106			

Figure 17*Results of assessing older women ages and instances of colorism*

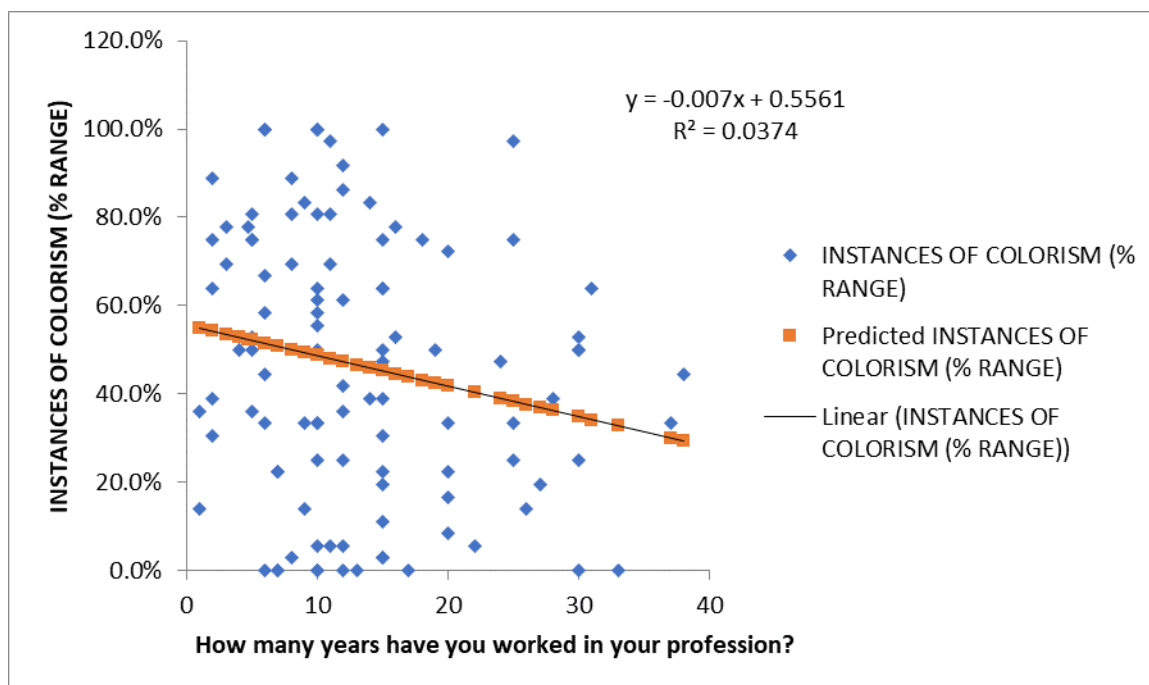
We see a difference in median values among age ranges, with younger individuals reporting higher instances of colorism. However, the difference was not statistically significant ($p=0.0802$). The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test is written e.g. $\chi^2(2) =$

3.06, $df = 2$, $p = 0.0802$. This result is the chi-square result. Chi-square distribution is used to approximate the p-value in the Kruskal-Wallis H test.

We also assess the related question of how many years the respondents worked in their profession versus instances of colorism:

Figure 18

Years of service in profession vs instances of colorism



Here, we find a statistically significant association ($p=0.0460$). However, only 3.7% of the variance in instances of colorism among the surveyed group was explained by the number of years worked. A 10-year increase in years of work was associated with a 7% decrease in instances of colorism.

These results generally run counter to the hypothesized relationship presented at the beginning of this study and may be the result of perception at different ages of what constitutes an instance of colorism.

Hypothesis 3c

This research questions seeks to assess if women with lower SES will report more experiences with colorism. First, income ranges were assessed using Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA. Ranges were pooled into three categories because of low responses in each category:

Table 9

Income ranges and experiences with colorism

Income	Count	Median
Less than \$50,000	19	58.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	55	50.0%
\$100,000 or more	32	38.9%

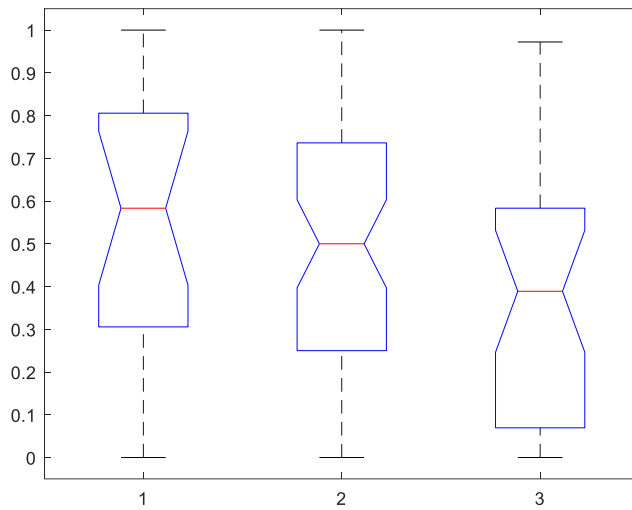
Table 10

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Table					
Source	SS	df	MS	Chi-sq	Prob>Chi-sq
Groups	3686.02	2	1843.01	3.91	0.1416
Error	95328.98	103	925.52		
Total	99015	105			

Figure 19

Relationship between instances of color and income



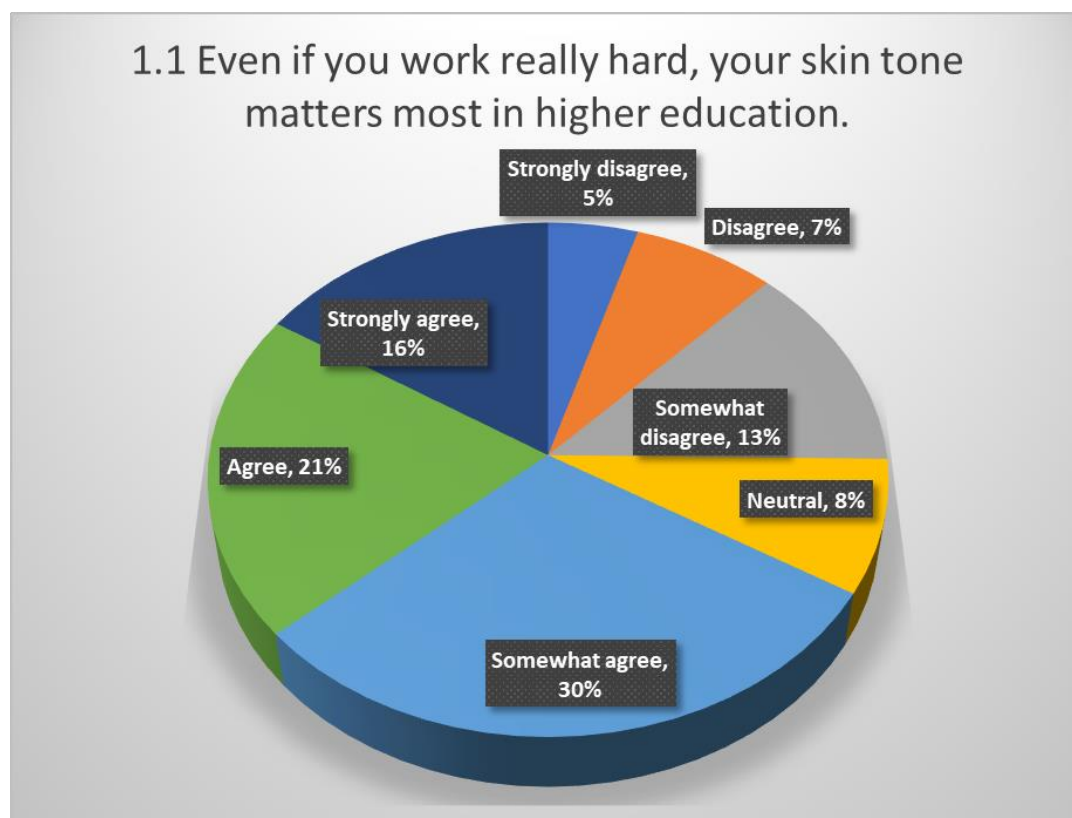
Although we do see a reduction in median instances of colorism by income, the differences are not statistically significant ($p=0.1416$).

Figure 20

Even if you work really hard, your skin tone matters most in higher education

1.1 Even if you work really hard, your skin tone matters most in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly disagree	5	5%
Disagree	8	7%
Somewhat disagree	14	13%
Neutral	9	8%
Somewhat agree	32	30%
Agree	22	21%
Strongly agree	17	16%
Total		107

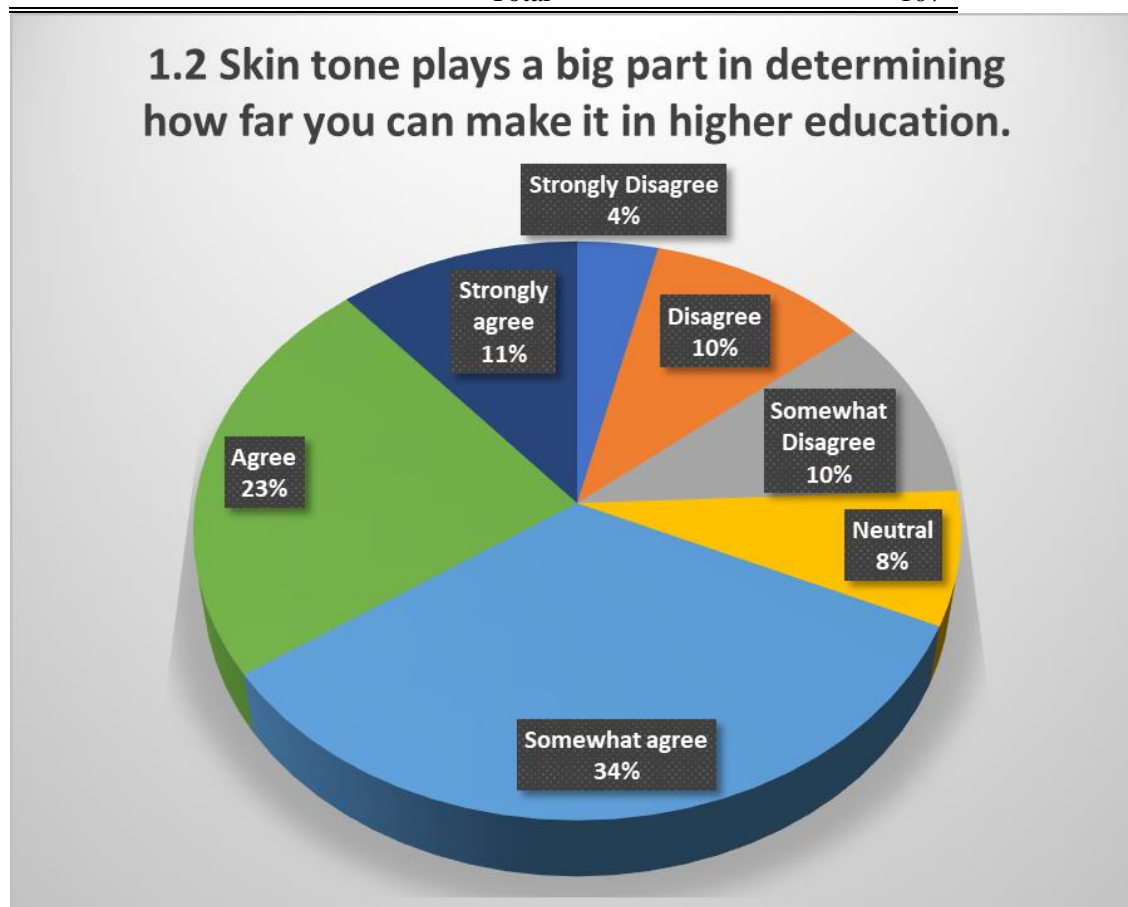


Explanation: More than 60% of participants showed some level of agreement that skin tone mattered in higher education even if they worked hard.

Figure 21

Skin tone plays a big part in determining how far you can make it in higher education

1.2 Skin tone plays a big part in determining how far you can make it in higher education			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	4	4%	
Disagree	11	10%	
Somewhat Disagree	11	10%	
Neutral	8	7%	
Somewhat agree	36	34%	
Agree	25	23%	
Strongly agree	12	11%	
Total		107	



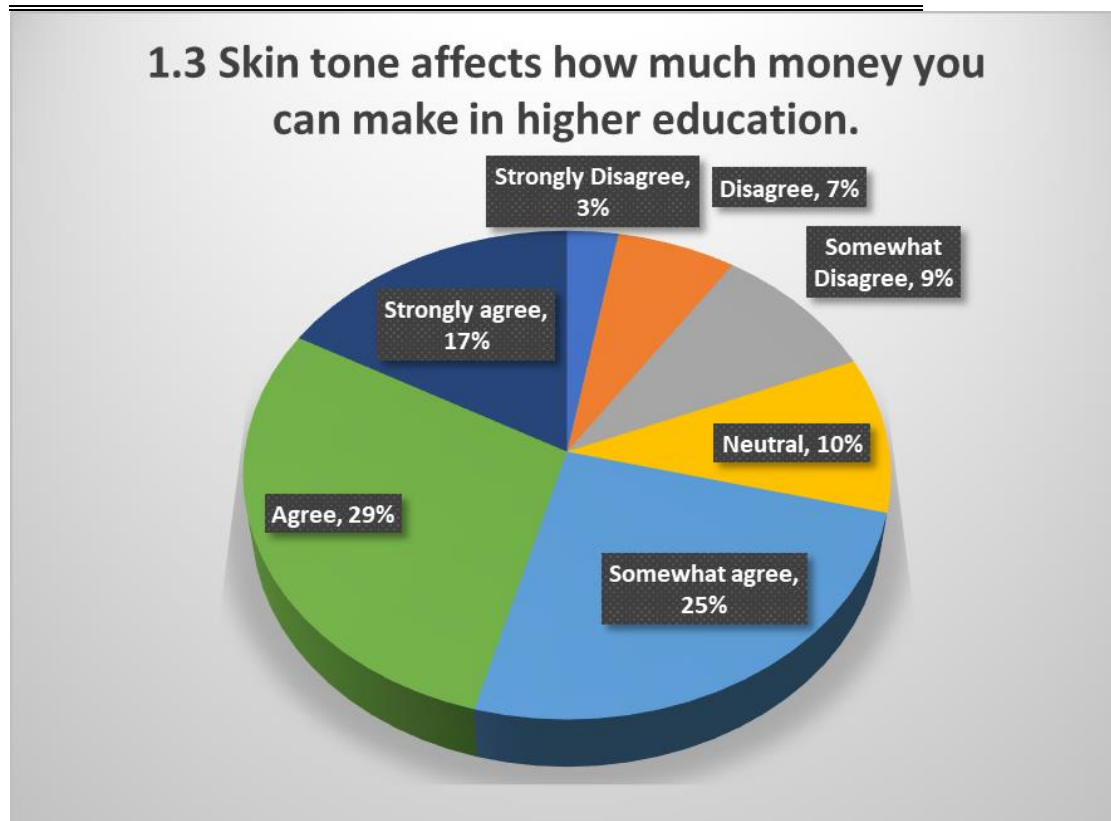
Explanation: Most participants (68%) believed skin tone affected their work outcomes in higher education.

Figure 22

Skin tone affects how much money you can make in higher education

1.3 Skin tone affects how much money you can make in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
Disagree	7	7%
Somewhat Disagree	10	9%
Neutral	11	10%
Somewhat agree	27	25%
Agree	31	29%
Strongly agree	18	17%
Total	107	



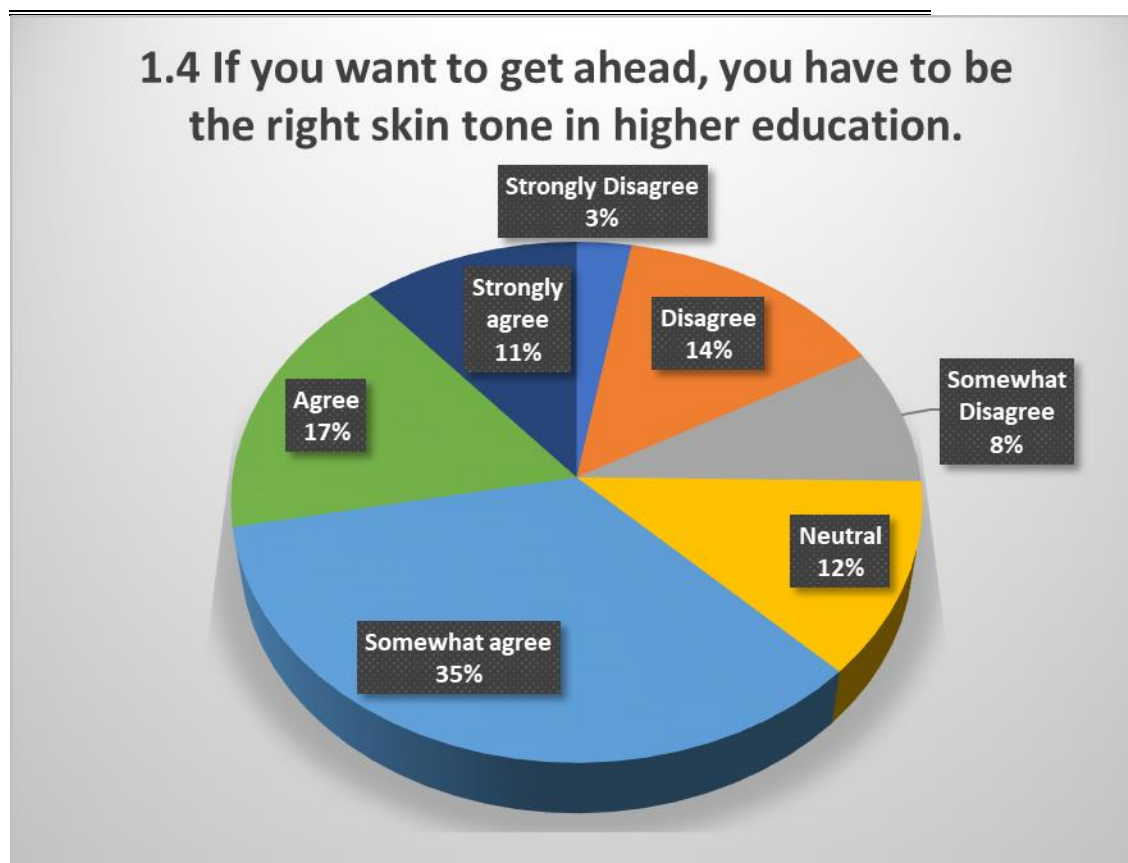
Explanation: Nearly 75% of participants believed that skin tone affected employee salaries.

Figure 23

If you want to get ahead, you have to be the right skin tone in higher education

1.4 If you want to get ahead, you have to be the right skin tone in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
Disagree	15	14%
Somewhat Disagree	9	8%
Neutral	13	12%
Somewhat agree	37	35%
Agree	18	17%
Strongly agree	12	11%
Total		107



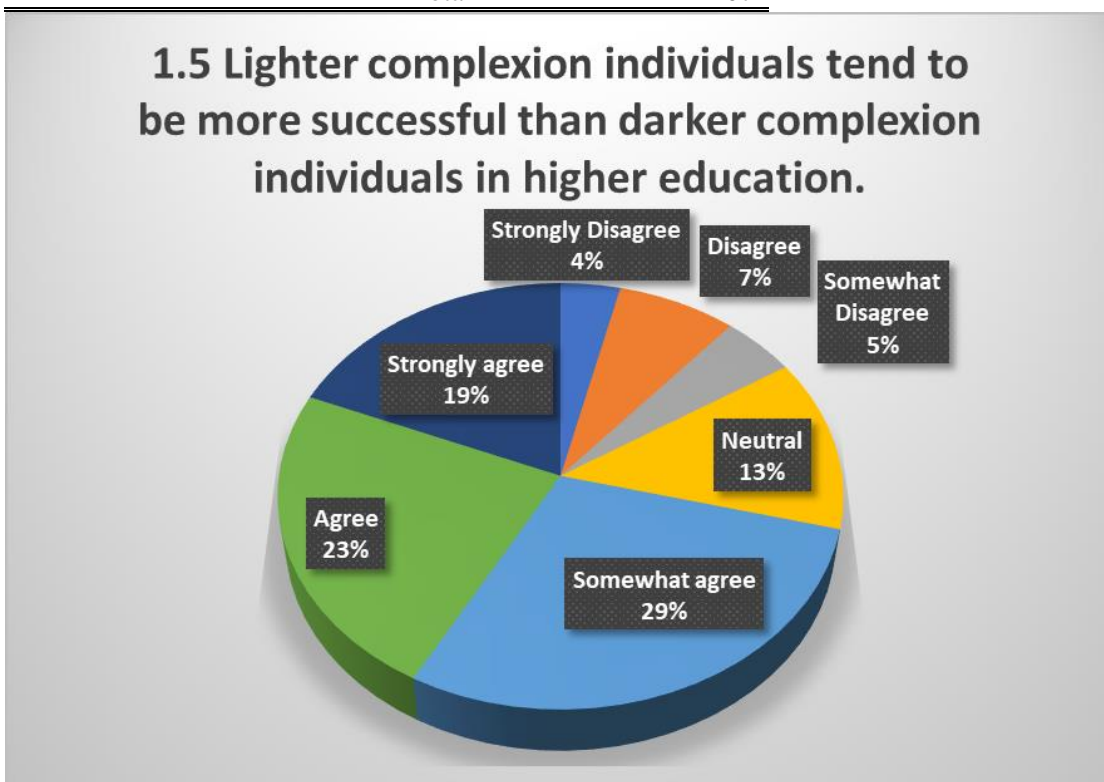
Explanation: Over half of the participants revealed that skin tone played a role in WOC advancement.

Figure 24

Lighter complexion individuals tend to be more successful than darker complexion individuals in higher education

1.5 Lighter complexion individuals tend to be more successful than darker complexion individuals in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	4	4%
Disagree	8	7%
Somewhat Disagree	5	5%
Neutral	14	13%
Somewhat agree	31	29%
Agree	25	23%
Strongly agree	20	19%
Total	107	



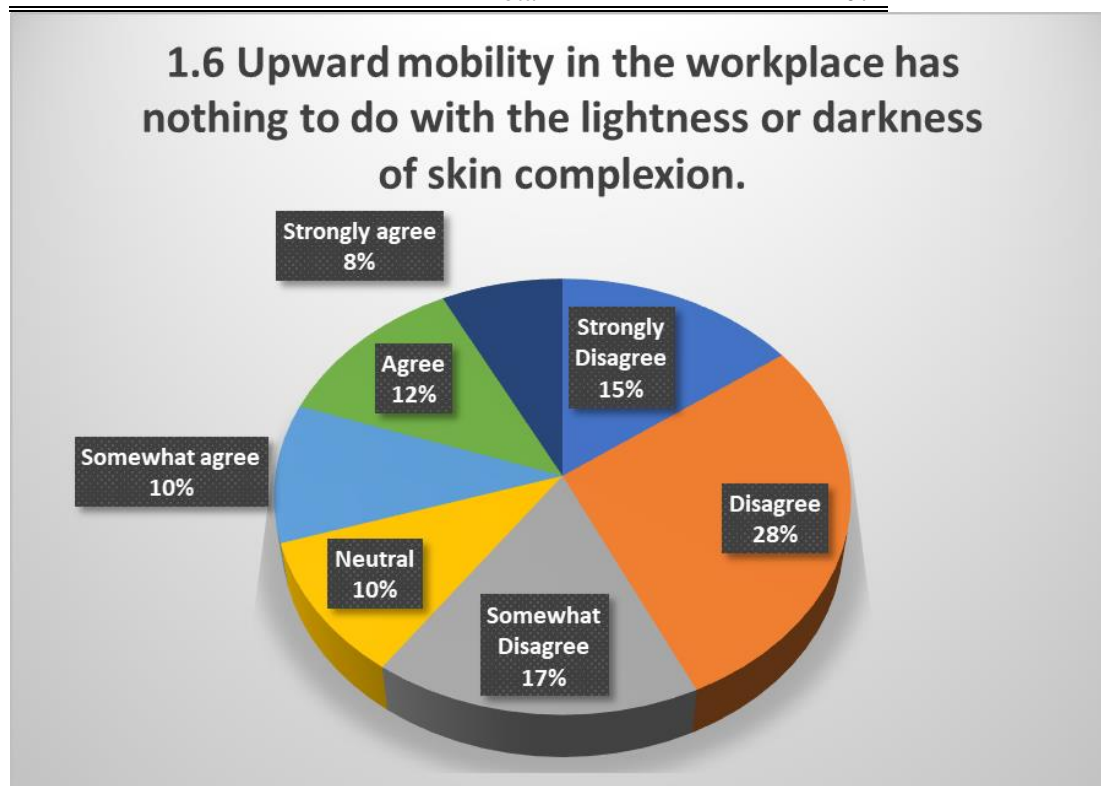
Explanation: Over 70% of participants believed that individuals with lighter skin experienced greater success.

Figure 25

Upward mobility in the workplace has nothing to do with the lightness or darkness of skin complexion

1.6 Upward mobility in the workplace has nothing to do with the lightness or darkness of skin complexion

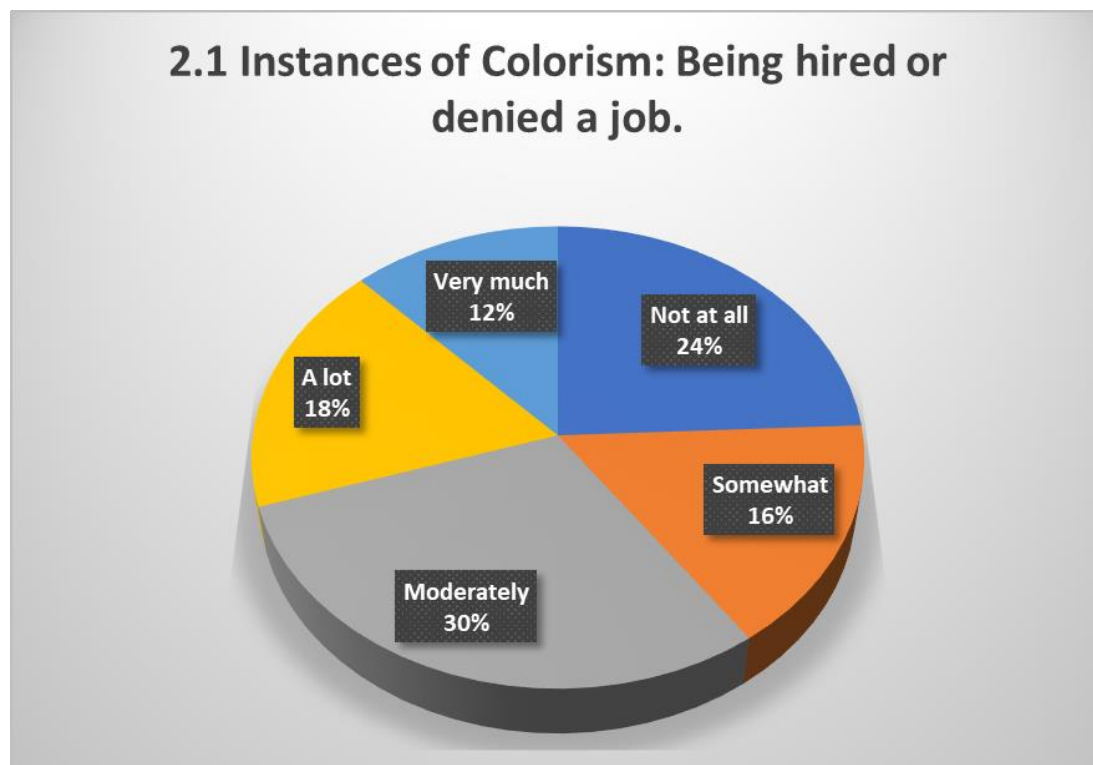
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	16	15%
Disagree	30	28%
Somewhat Disagree	18	17%
Neutral	11	10%
Somewhat agree	11	10%
Agree	13	12%
Strongly agree	8	7%
Total		107



Explanation: 60% of respondents believed skin tone impacted how WOC were promoted.

Figure 26*Instances of Colorism: Being hired or denied a job*

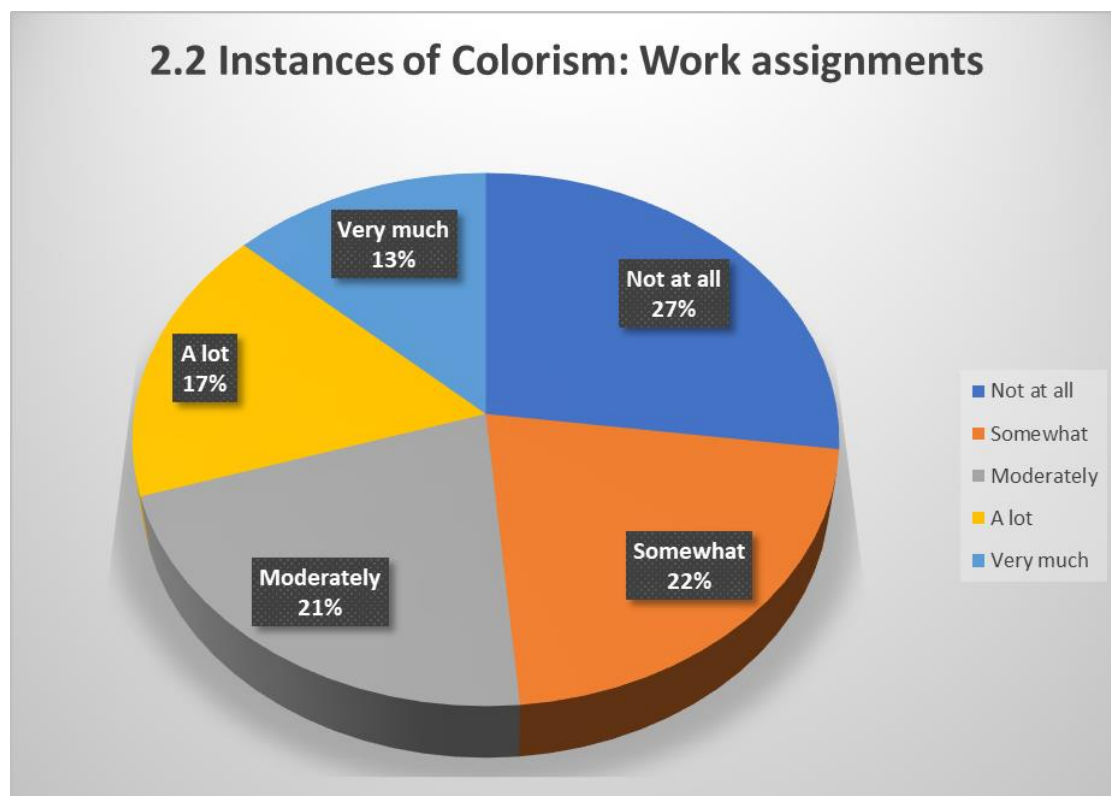
2.1 Instances of Colorism: Being hired or denied a job		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	26	24%
Somewhat	17	16%
Moderately	32	30%
A lot	19	18%
Very much	13	12%
Total		107

#2 Instances of Colorism Survey (9 items)

Explanation: Majority of participants (60%) believed skin tone played a role in the hiring selection process.

Figure 27*Instances of Colorism: Work assignments*

2.2 Instances of Colorism: Work assignments		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	29	27%
Somewhat	23	21%
Moderately	23	21%
A lot	18	17%
Very much	14	13%
Total		107

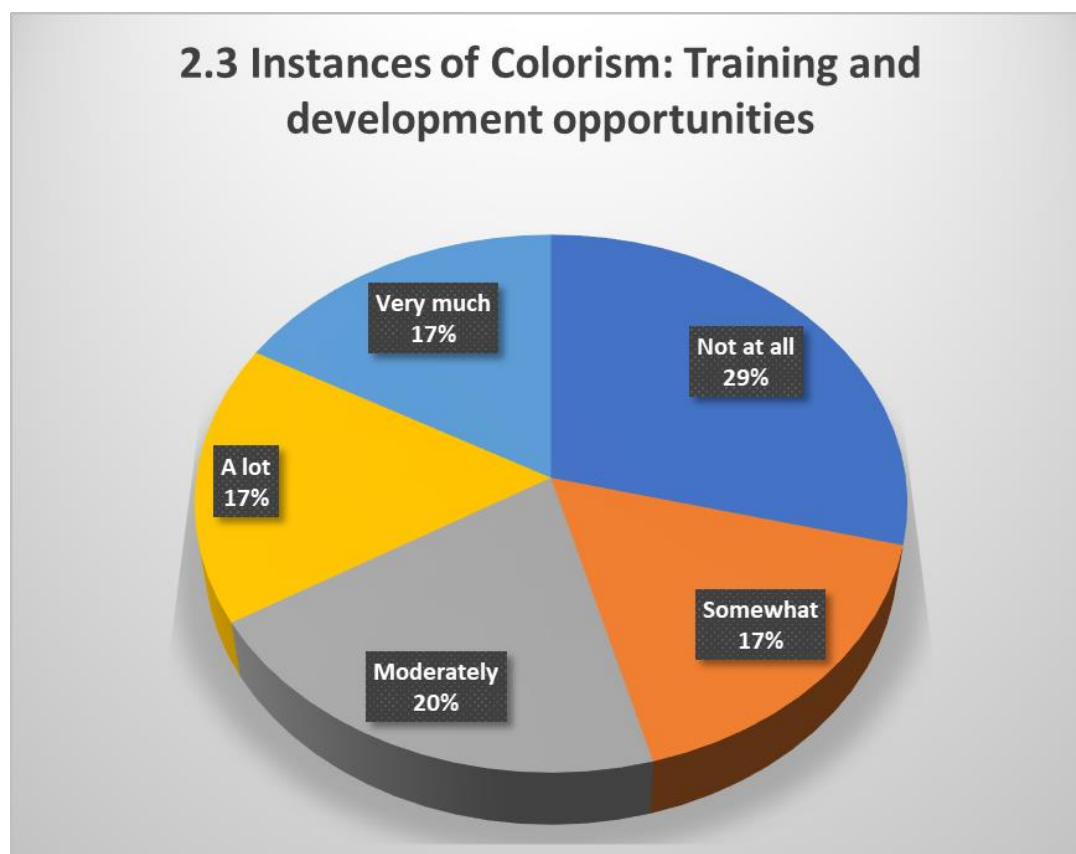


Explanation: At least half of the participants believed that colorism impacted their ability to attain work projects on some level.

Figure 28

Instances of Colorism: Training and development opportunities

2.3 Instances of Colorism: Training and development opportunities		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	31	29%
Somewhat	18	17%
Moderately	22	21%
A lot	18	17%
Very much	18	17%
Total		107



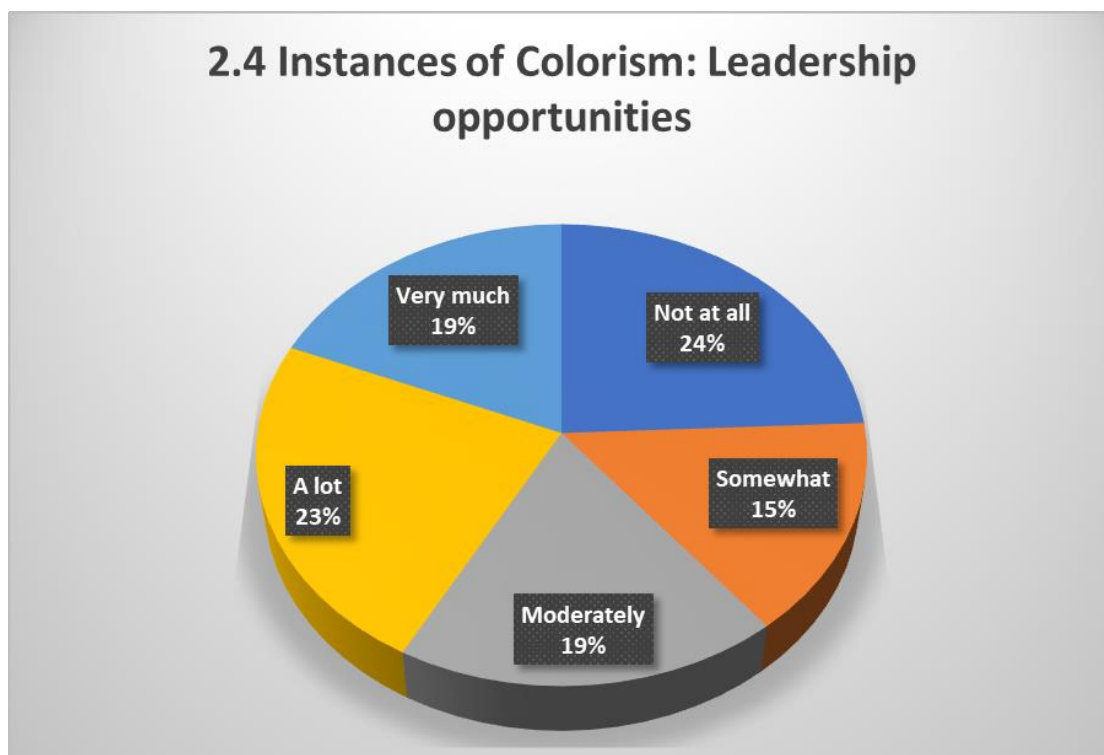
Explanation: Over 50% believed skin tone impacted their training and development opportunities.

Figure 29

Instances of Colorism: Leadership opportunities

2.4 Instances of Colorism: Leadership opportunities

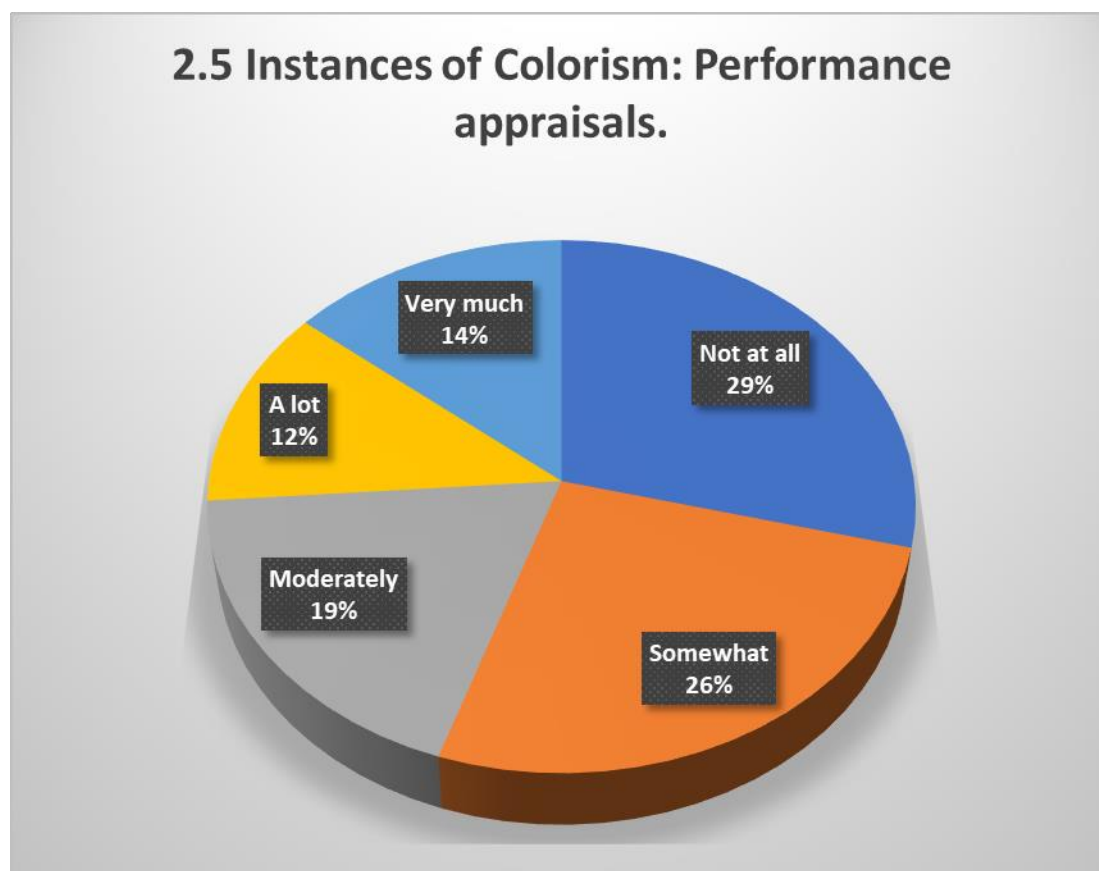
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	26	24%
Somewhat	16	15%
Moderately	20	19%
A lot	25	23%
Very much	20	19%
Total		107



Explanation: Nearly 80% of participants believed skin tone affected their access to leadership opportunities.

Figure 30*Instances of Colorism: Performance appraisals*

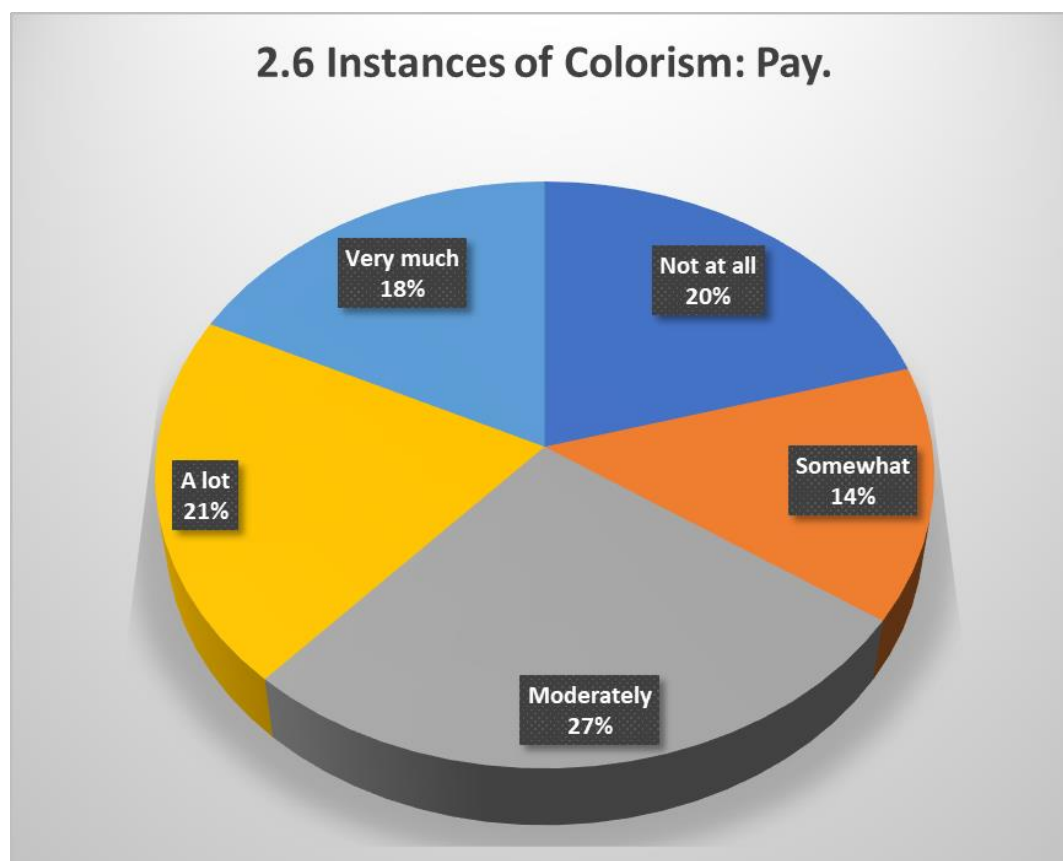
2.5 Instances of Colorism: Performance appraisals		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	31	29%
Somewhat	28	26%
Moderately	20	19%
A lot	13	12%
Very much	15	14%
Total		107



Explanation: About 60% of respondents believed skin tone impacted their work evaluations.

Figure 31*Instances of Colorism: Pay*

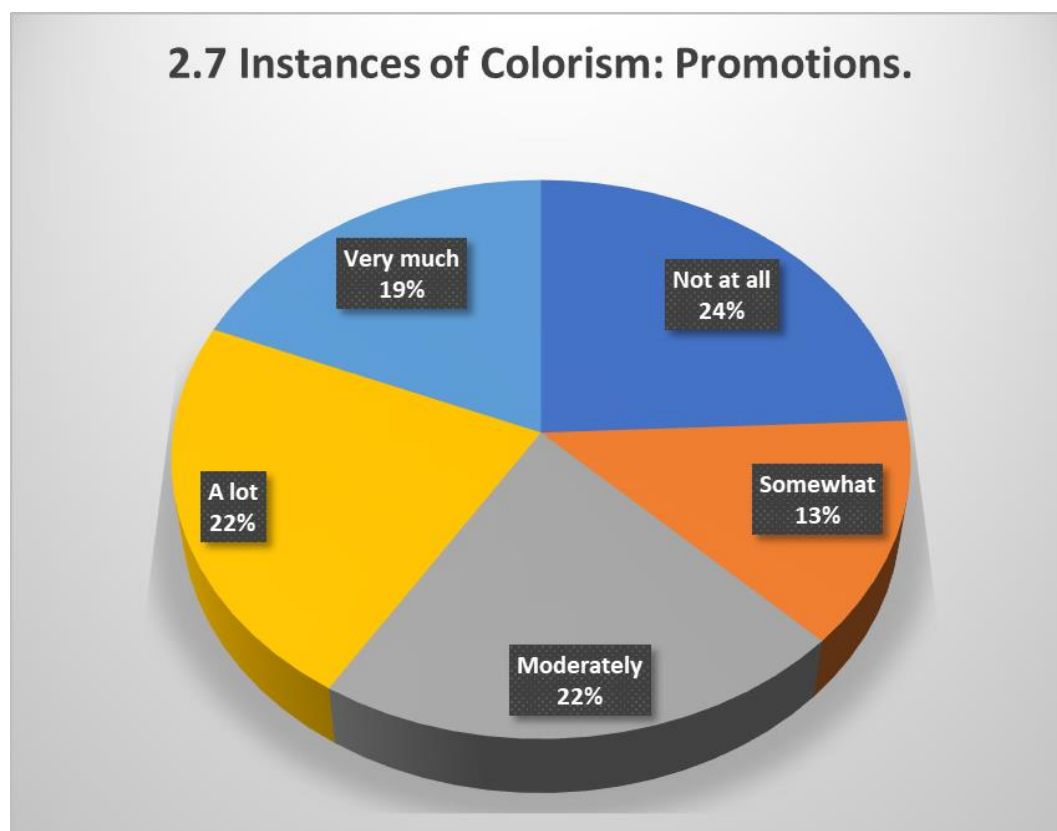
2.6 Instances of Colorism: Pay		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	22	21%
Somewhat	15	14%
Moderately	29	27%
A lot	22	21%
Very much	19	18%
Total		107



Explanation: Majority of participants (80%) believed skin tone impacted WOC pay scales on some level, even moderately.

Figure 32*Instances of Colorism: Promotions*

2.7 Instances of Colorism: Promotions		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	26	24%
Somewhat	14	13%
Moderately	23	21%
A lot	24	22%
Very much	20	19%
Total		107

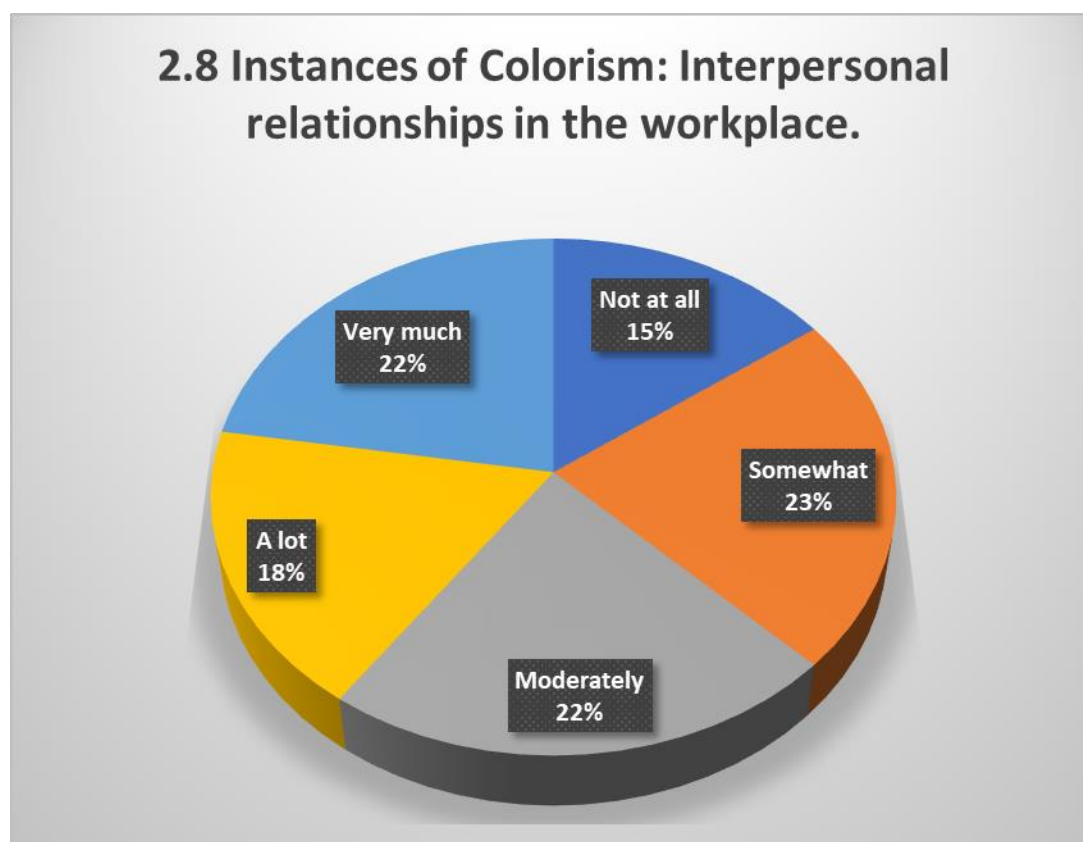


Explanation: Over 60% of WOC believed that skin tone played a role in work promotions.

Figure 33

Instances of Colorism: Interpersonal relationships in the workplace

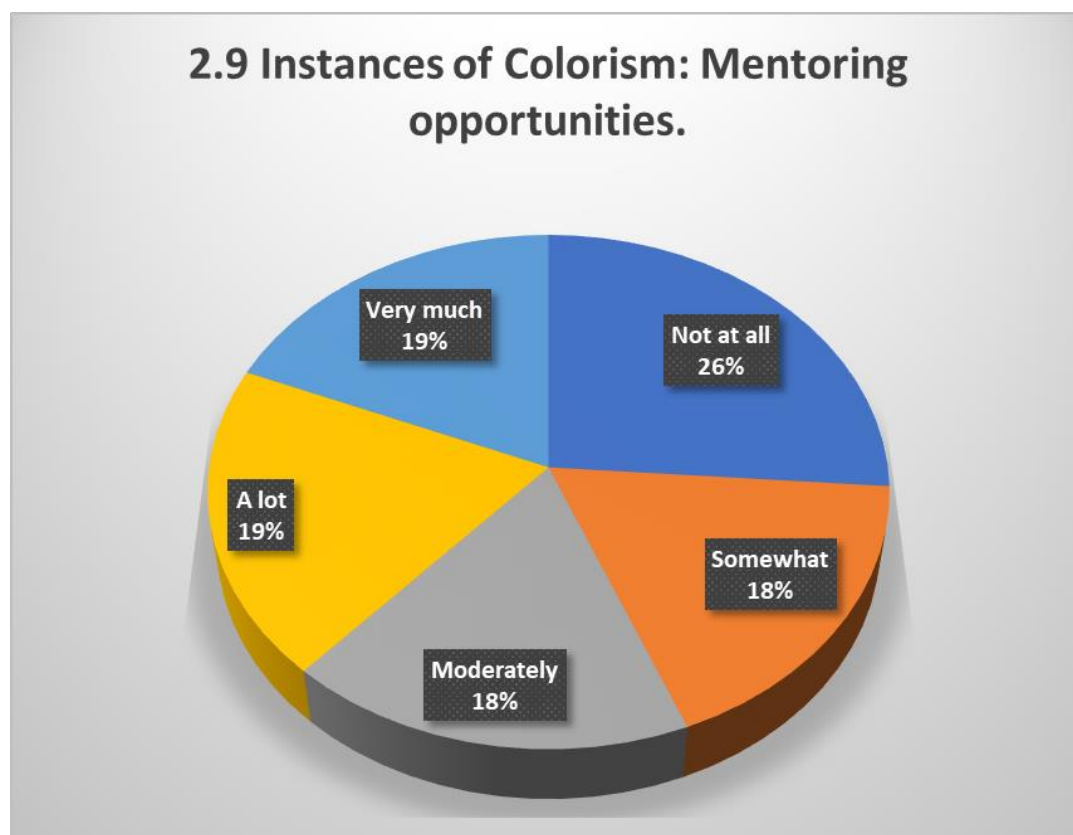
2.8 Instances of Colorism: Interpersonal relationships in the workplace			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Not at all	16	15%	
Somewhat	24	22%	
Moderately	24	22%	
A lot	19	18%	
Very much	24	22%	
Total		107	



Explanation: Over 60% of WOC believe that skin tone plays a role in interpersonal workplace relationships on some level.

Figure 34*Instances of Colorism: Mentoring opportunities*

2.9 Instances of Colorism: Mentoring opportunities		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Not at all	28	26%
Somewhat	19	18%
Moderately	19	18%
A lot	21	20%
Very much	20	19%
Total		107



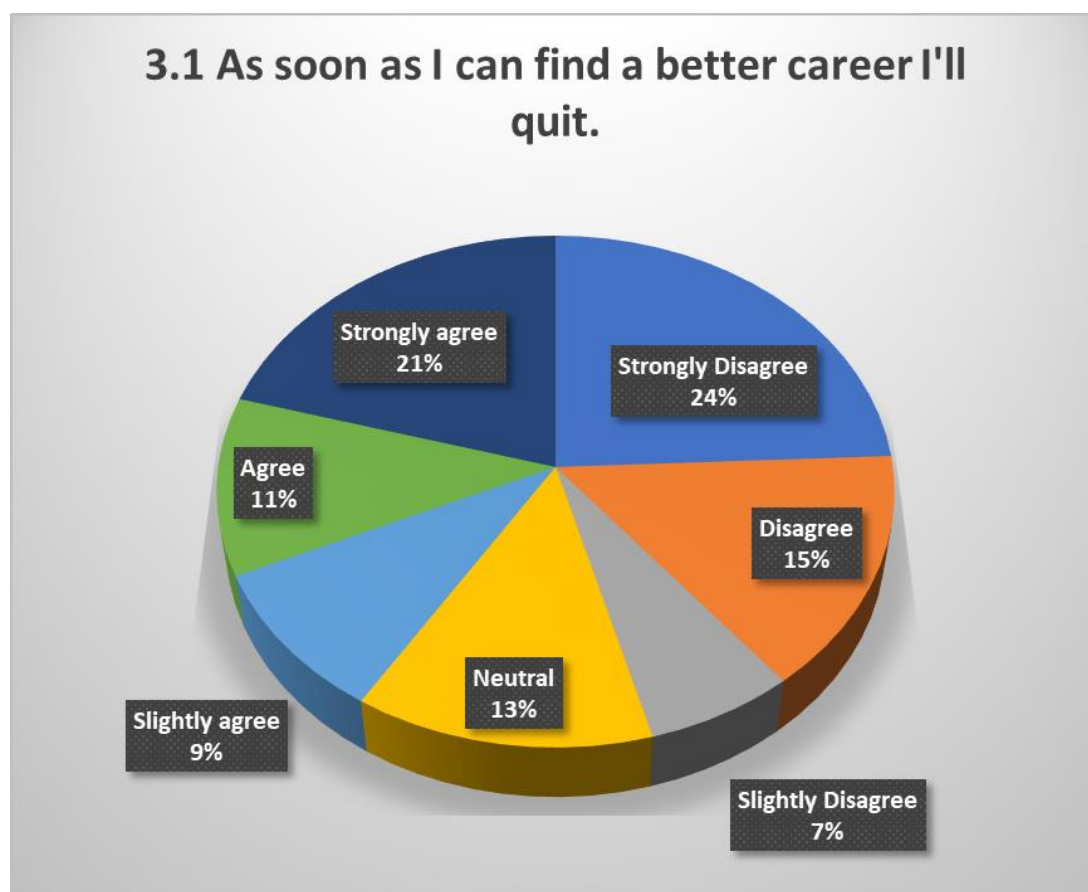
Explanation: Over 70% of WOC believed skin tone played a role in mentoring opportunities.

Figure 35

As soon as I can find a better career I'll quit

#3 Intent to Leave (3 items)

3.1 As soon as I can find a better career I'll quit		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	26	24%
Disagree	16	15%
Slightly Disagree	7	7%
Neutral	14	13%
Slightly agree	10	9%
Agree	12	11%
Strongly agree	22	21%
Total		107

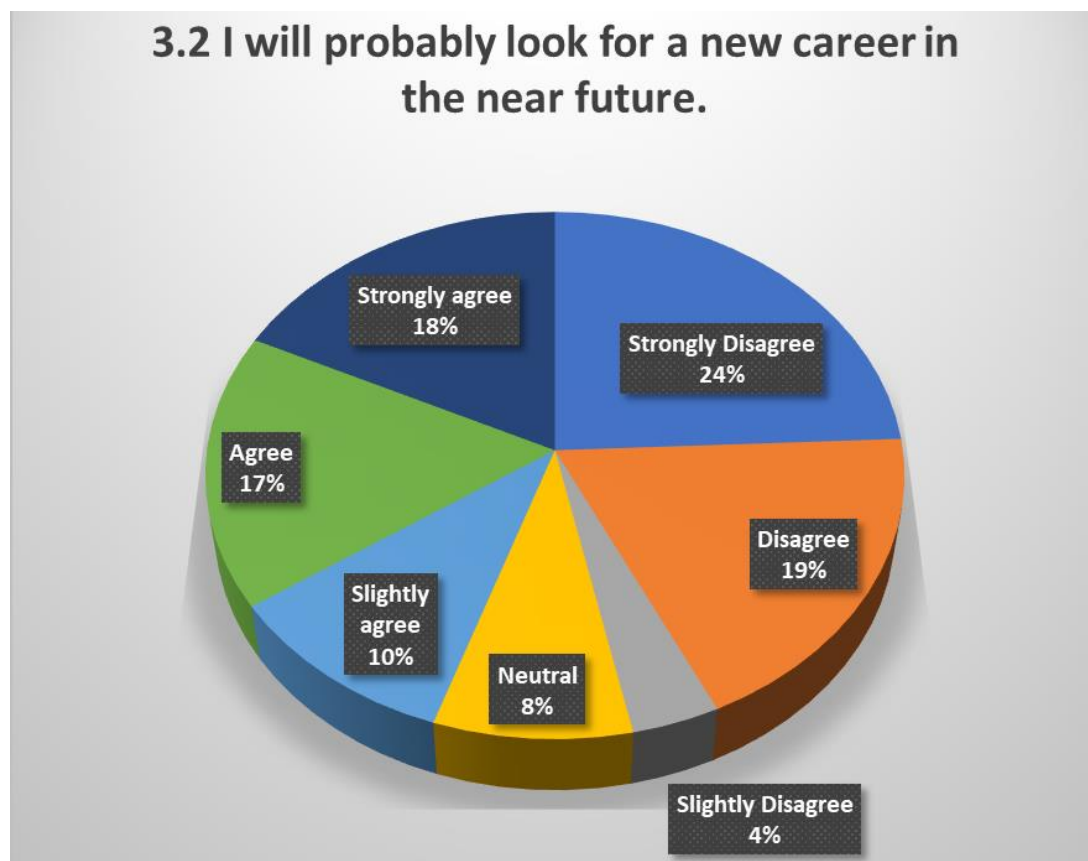


Explanation: More WOC were less likely to leave the higher education industry.

Figure 36

I will probably look for a new career in the near future

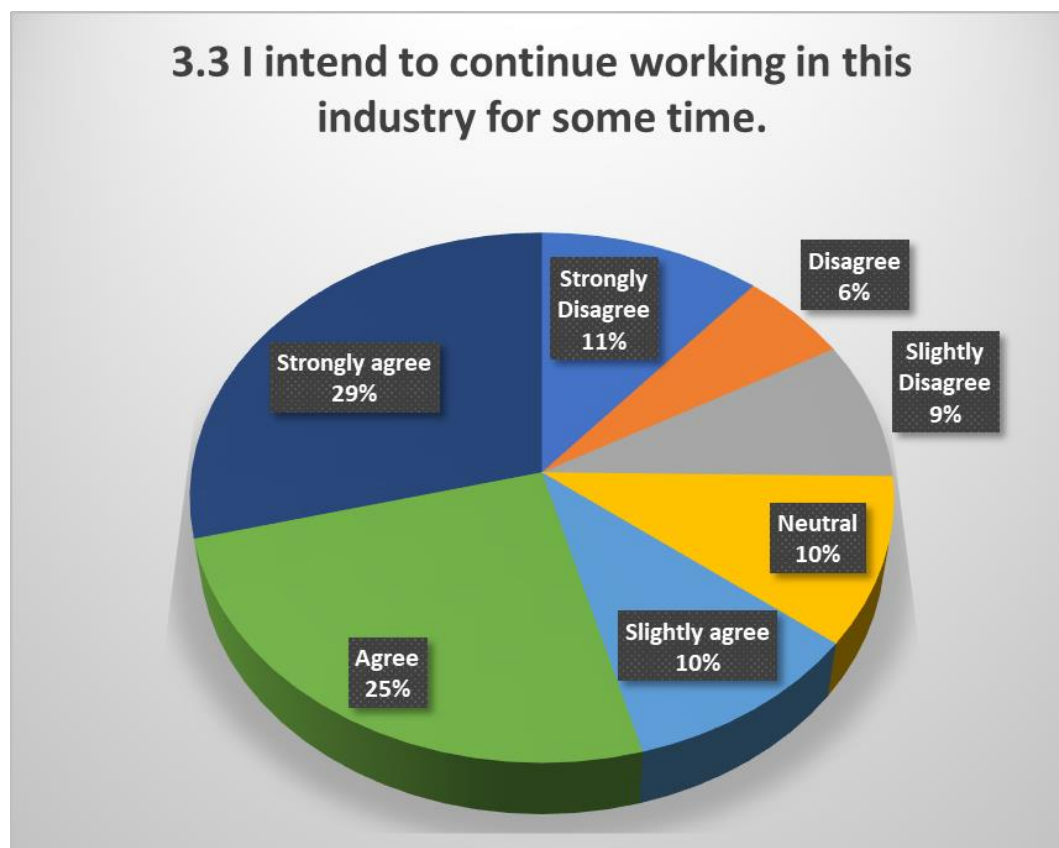
3.2 I will probably look for a new career in the near future			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	26	24%	
Disagree	20	19%	
Slightly Disagree	4	4%	
Neutral	9	8%	
Slightly agree	11	10%	
Agree	18	17%	
Strongly agree	19	18%	
Total		107	



Explanation: Fewer WOC planned to switch careers from higher education.

Figure 37*I intend to continue working in this industry for some time*

3.3 I intend to continue working in this industry for some time			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	12	11%	
Disagree	6	6%	
Slightly Disagree	9	8%	
Neutral	11	10%	
Slightly agree	11	10%	
Agree	27	25%	
Strongly agree	31	29%	
Total		107	



Explanation: Over 60% of WOC plan to remain in the higher education industry.

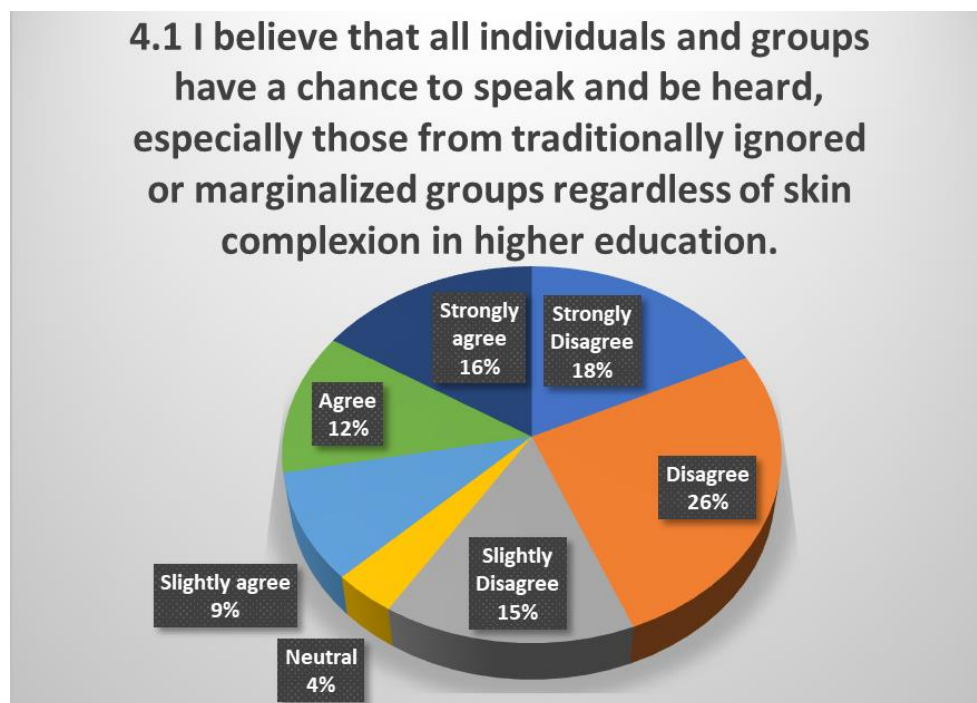
Figure 38

I believe that all individuals and groups have a chance to speak and be heard, especially those from traditionally ignored or marginalized groups regardless of skin complexion in higher education

#4 Social Justice Perceptions (9 items)

4.1 I believe that all individuals and groups have a chance to speak and be heard, especially those from traditionally ignored or marginalized groups regardless of skin complexion in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	19	18%
Disagree	28	26%
Slightly Disagree	16	15%
Neutral	4	4%
Slightly agree	10	9%
Agree	13	12%
Strongly agree	17	16%
Total	107	



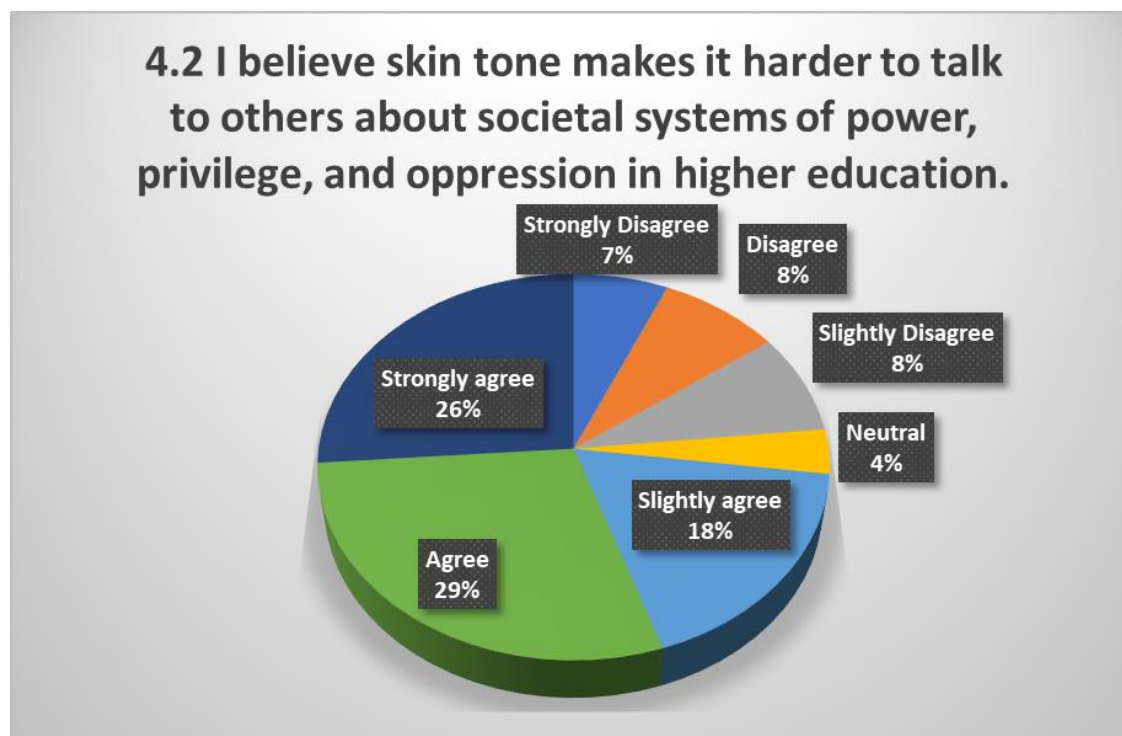
Explanation: Nearly 60% of WOC believed marginalized groups were not treated fairly or heard.

Figure 39

I believe skin tone makes it harder to talk to others about societal systems of power, privilege, and oppression in higher education

4.2 I believe skin tone makes it harder to talk to others about societal systems of power, privilege, and oppression in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	7	7%
Disagree	9	8%
Slightly Disagree	9	8%
Neutral	4	4%
Slightly agree	19	18%
Agree	31	29%
Strongly agree	28	26%
Total		107

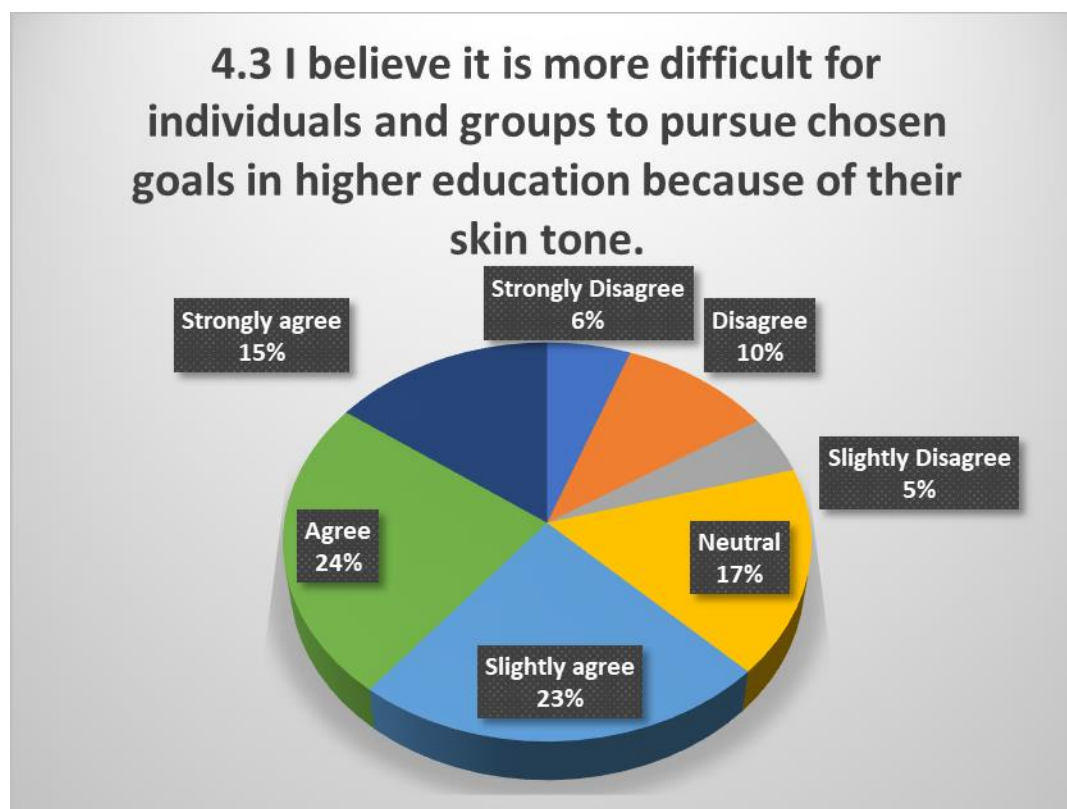


Explanation: Over 70% of WOC believe skin tone makes it harder to discuss systems of power and privilege in higher education on some level.

Figure 40

I believe it is more difficult for individuals and groups to pursue chosen goals in higher education because of their skin tone

4.3 I believe it is more difficult for individuals and groups to pursue chosen goals in higher education because of their skin tone			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	6	6%	
Disagree	11	10%	
Slightly Disagree	5	5%	
Neutral	18	17%	
Slightly agree	25	23%	
Agree	26	24%	
Strongly agree	16	15%	
Total		107	

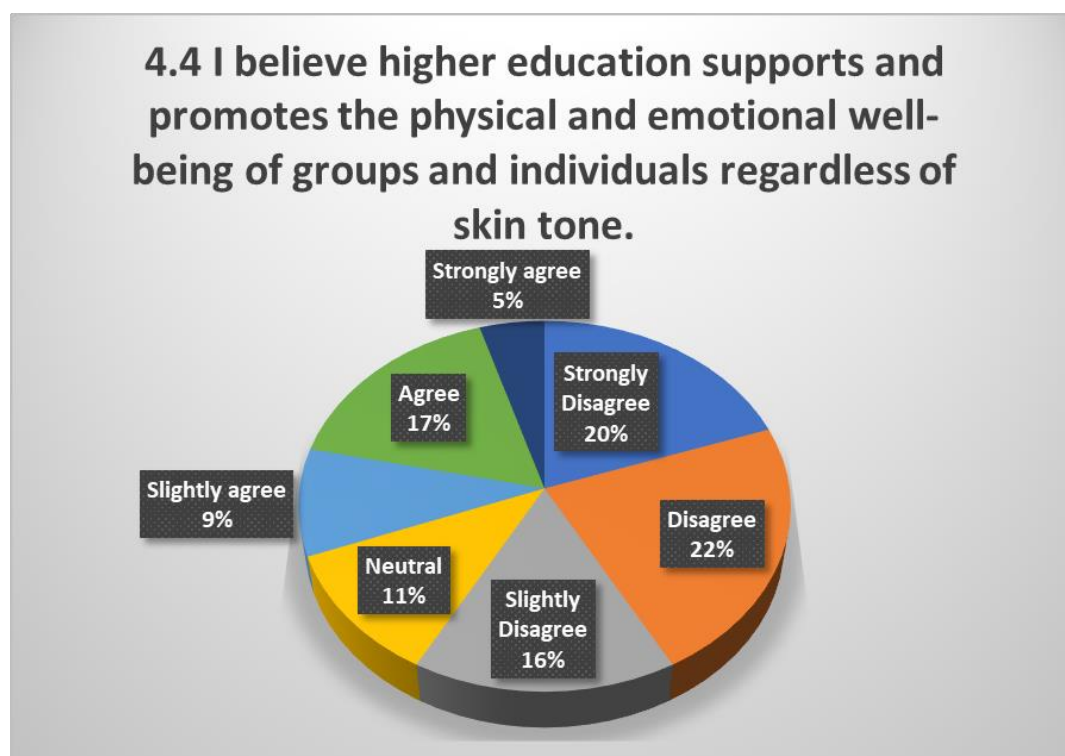


Explanation: Over 60% of WOC believe skin tone makes it difficult to pursue their goals in higher ed.

Figure 41

I believe higher education supports and promotes the physical and emotional well-being of groups and individuals regardless of skin tone

4.4 I believe higher education supports and promotes the physical and emotional well-being of groups and individuals regardless of skin tone		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	21	20%
Disagree	24	22%
Slightly Disagree	17	16%
Neutral	12	11%
Slightly agree	10	9%
Agree	18	17%
Strongly agree	5	5%
Total	107	



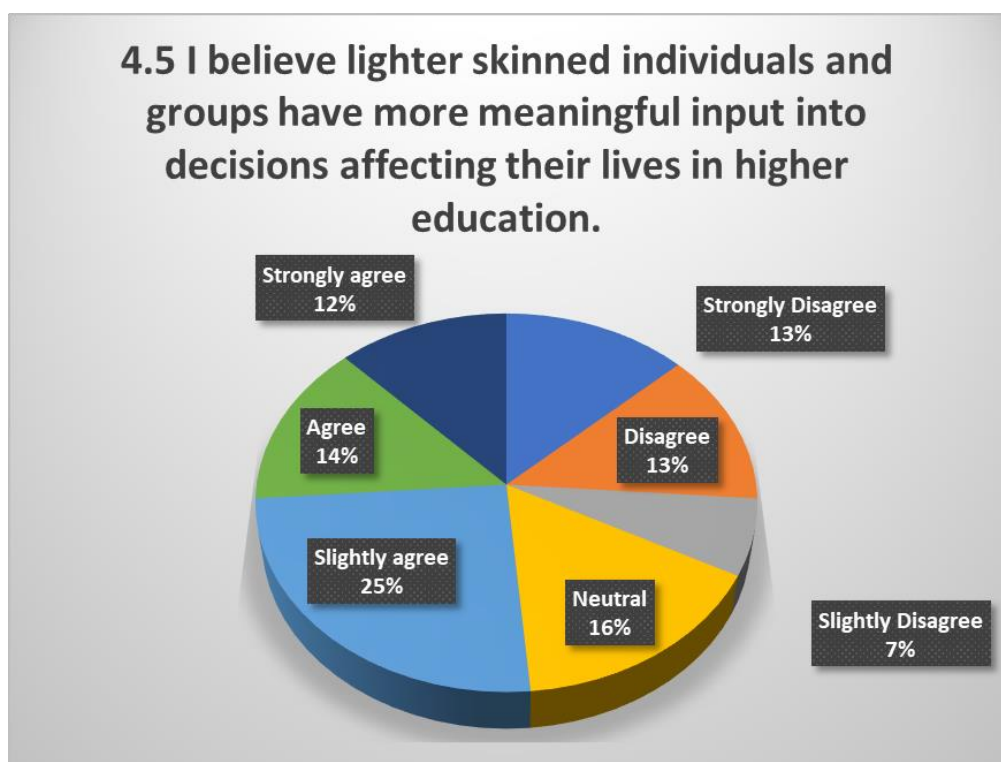
Explanation: Over half of WOC believe higher education does not support physical and emotional well-being regardless of skin tone. Skin tone plays a role.

Figure 42

I believe lighter skinned individuals and groups have more meaningful input into decisions affecting their lives in higher education

4.5 I believe lighter skinned individuals and groups have more meaningful input into decisions affecting their lives in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	14	13%
Disagree	14	13%
Slightly Disagree	7	7%
Neutral	17	16%
Slightly agree	27	25%
Agree	15	14%
Strongly agree	13	12%
Total		107



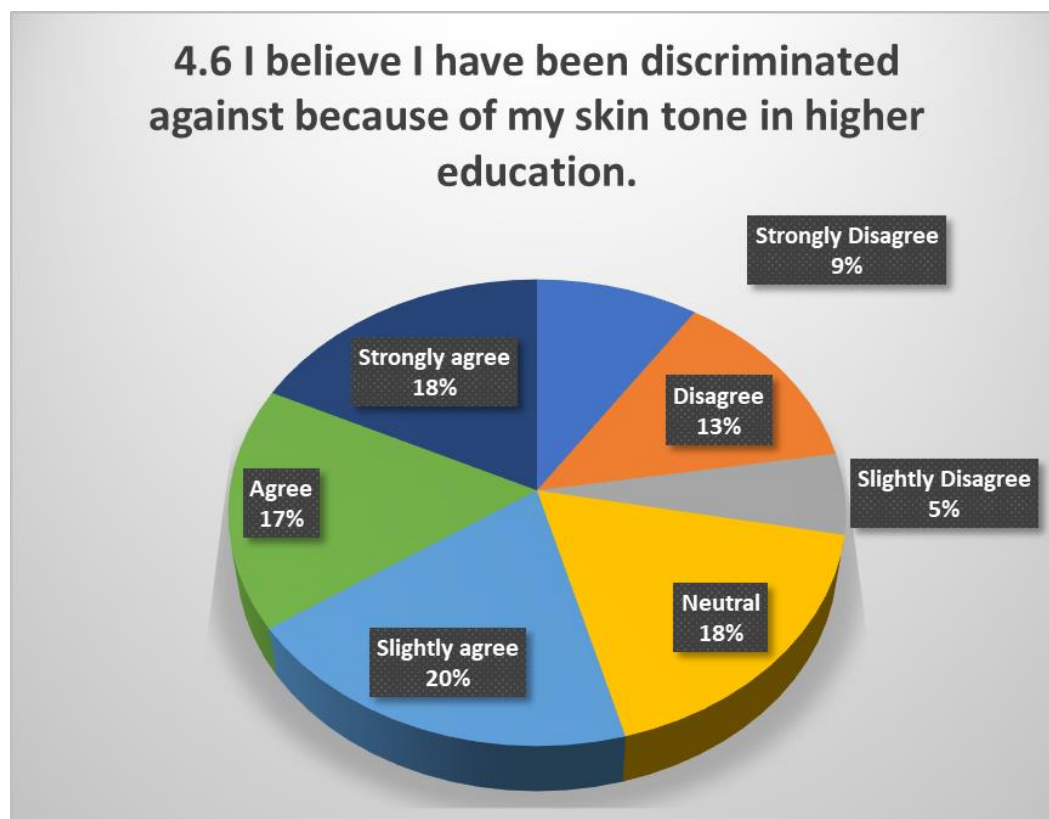
Explanation: 51% of WOC believe individuals with lighter skin tones have more input in the decision-making process.

Figure 43

I believe I have been discriminated against because of my skin tone in higher education

4.6 I believe I have been discriminated against because of my skin tone in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	10	9%
Disagree	14	13%
Slightly Disagree	6	6%
Neutral	19	18%
Slightly agree	21	20%
Agree	18	17%
Strongly agree	19	18%
Total	107	



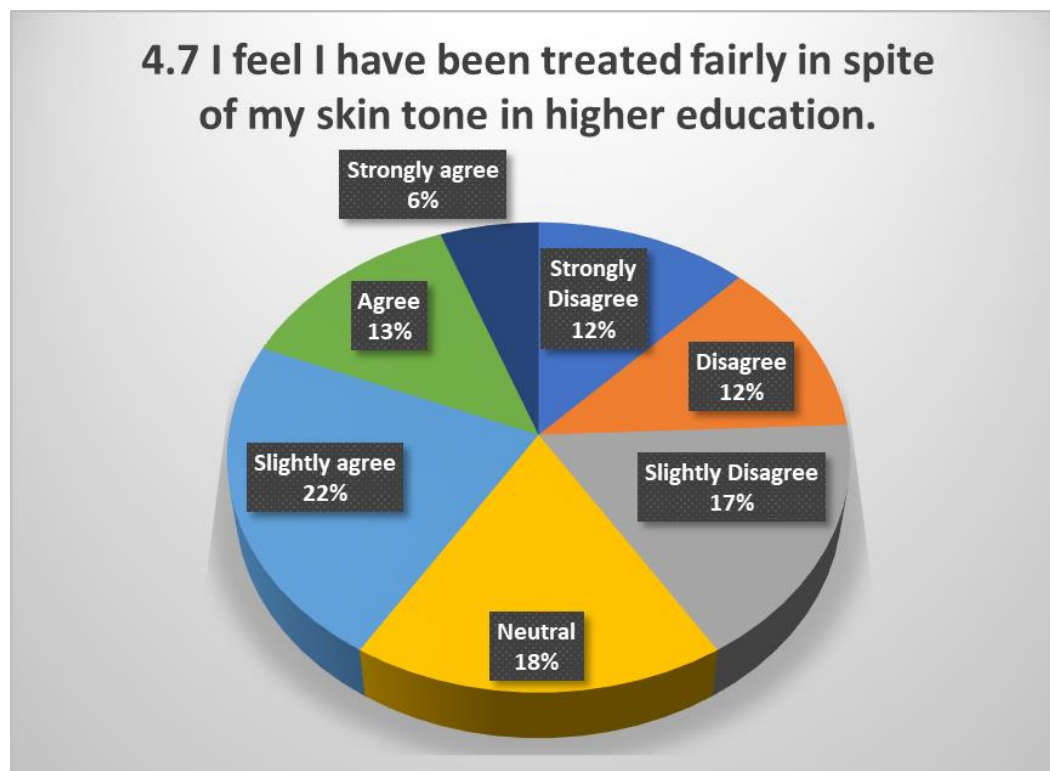
Explanation: Over half of WOC believe they have been discriminated against because of their skin tone.

Figure 44

I feel I have been treated fairly in spite of my skin tone in higher education

4.7 I feel I have been treated fairly in spite of my skin tone in higher education

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	13	12%
Disagree	13	12%
Slightly Disagree	18	17%
Neutral	19	18%
Slightly agree	24	22%
Agree	14	13%
Strongly agree	6	6%
Total		107



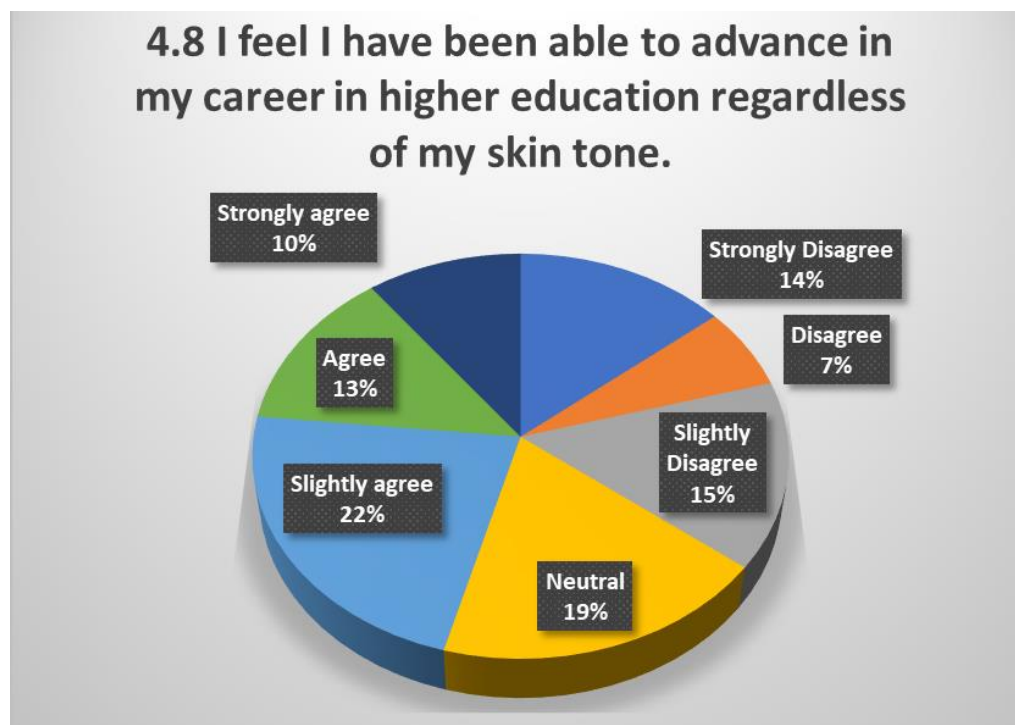
Explanation: More WOC feel they have not been treated fairly regardless of skin tone in higher ed.

Figure 45

I feel I have been able to advance in my career in higher education regardless of my skin tone

4.8 I feel I have been able to advance in my career in higher education regardless of my skin tone

Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	15	14%
Disagree	7	7%
Slightly Disagree	16	15%
Neutral	20	19%
Slightly agree	24	22%
Agree	14	13%
Strongly agree	11	10%
Total		107

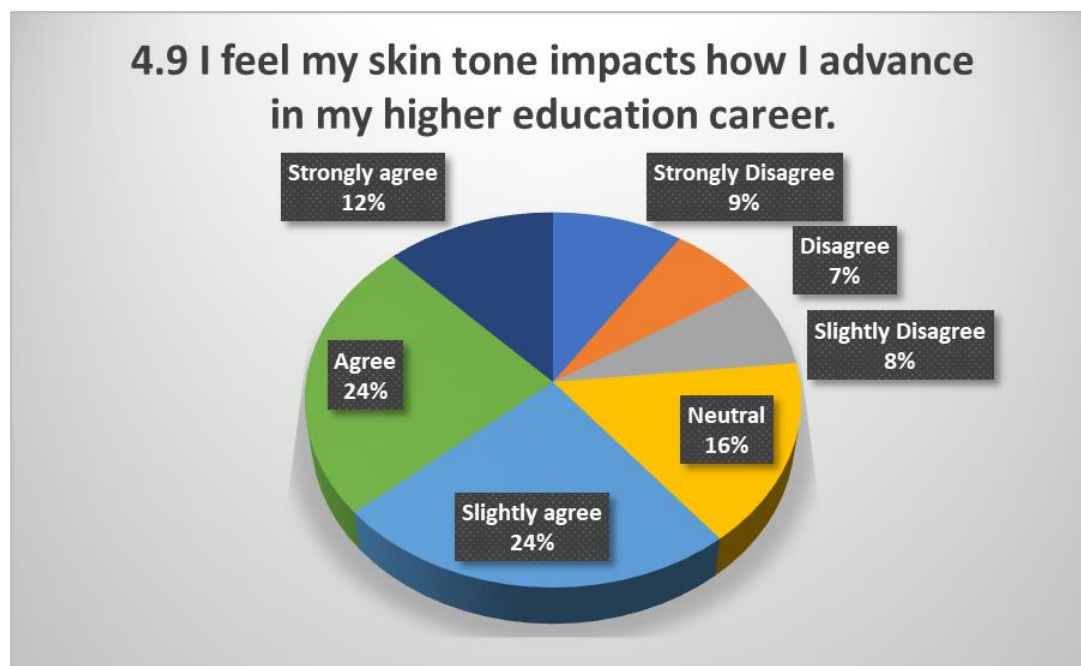


Explanation: More WOC believe they have been able to advance in their career regardless of their skin tone, although 60% believe skin tone plays a role in how they advance (upward mobility- 1.6).

Figure 46

I feel my skin tone impacts how I advance in my higher education career

4.9 I feel my skin tone impacts how I advance in my higher education career.			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	10	9%	
Disagree	7	7%	
Slightly Disagree	8	7%	
Neutral	17	16%	
Slightly agree	26	24%	
Agree	26	24%	
Strongly agree	13	12%	
Total		107	



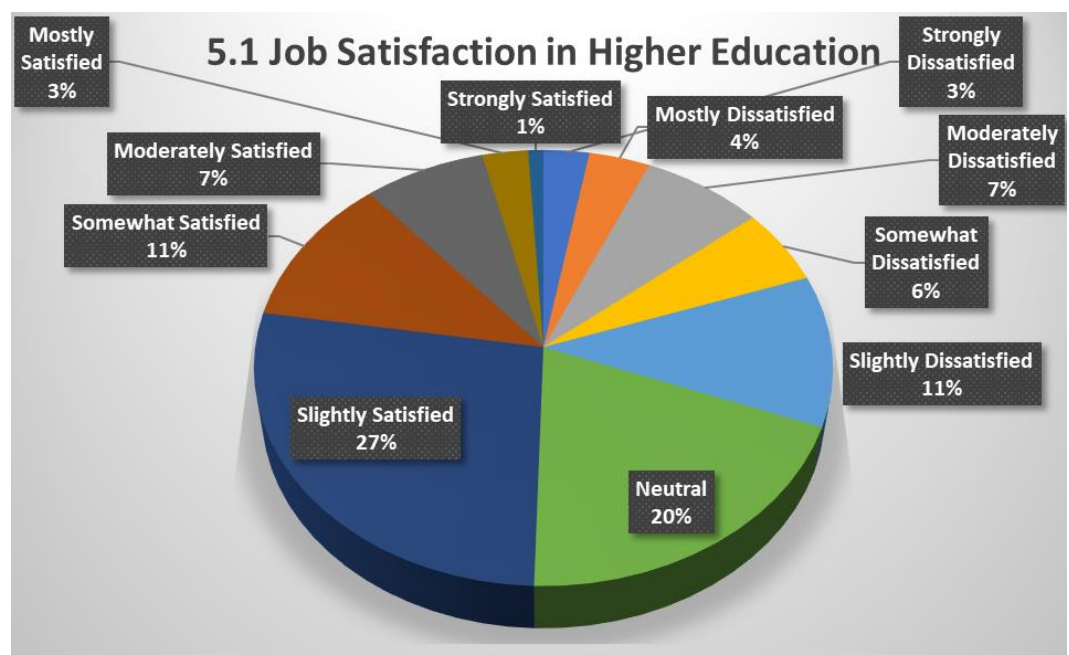
Explanation: 60% of WOC report skin tone impacts how they advance in their higher ed career. This aligns with question 1.6 where 60% of WOC believe skin tone plays a role in upward mobility. However, per question 4.8 majority of participants felt they were personally able to advance regardless of skin tone.

Figure 47

Job Satisfaction in Higher Education

#5 Female Faces Job Satisfaction (1 item) dissatisfied

5.1 Job Satisfaction in Higher Education			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Dissatisfied	3	3%	
Mostly Dissatisfied	4	4%	
Moderately Dissatisfied	8	7%	
Somewhat Dissatisfied	6	6%	
Slightly Dissatisfied	12	11%	
Neutral	21	20%	
Slightly Satisfied	29	27%	
Somewhat Satisfied	12	11%	
Moderately Satisfied	8	7%	
Mostly Satisfied	3	3%	
Strongly Satisfied	1	1%	
Total		107	



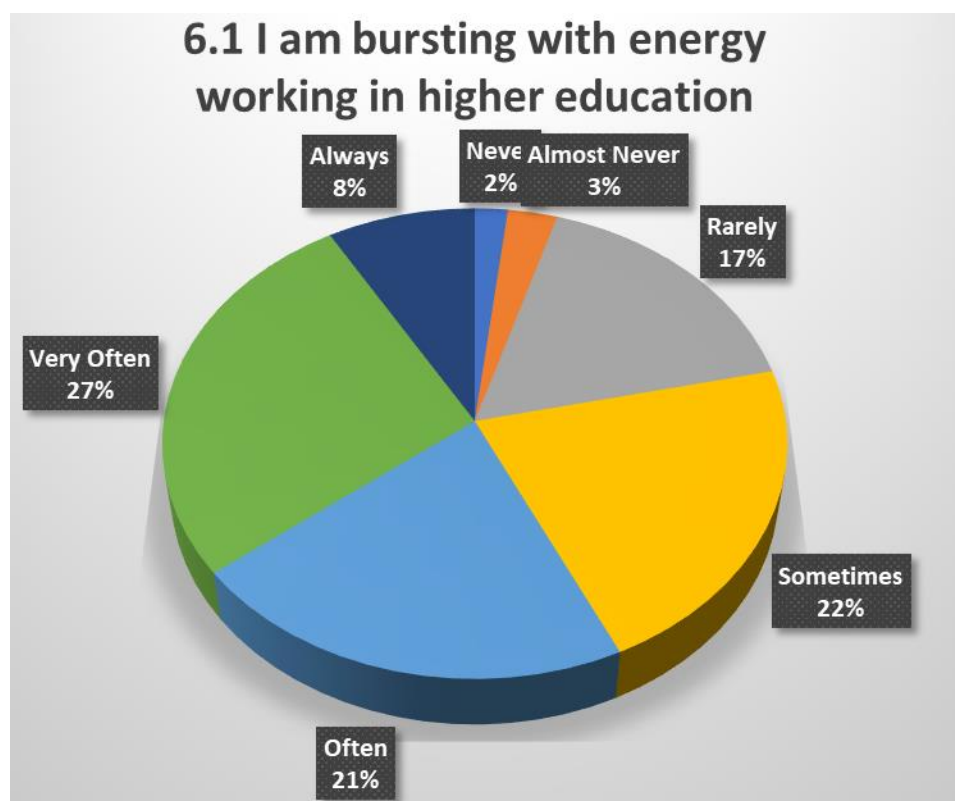
Explanation: Nearly 40% of participants are satisfied with their career in higher education.

Figure 48

I am bursting with energy working in higher education

#6 Engagement Scale (7 items)

6.1 I am bursting with energy working in higher education			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Never	2	2%	
Almost Never	3	3%	
Rarely	18	17%	
Sometimes	23	21%	
Often	23	21%	
Very Often	29	27%	
Always	9	8%	
Total		107	

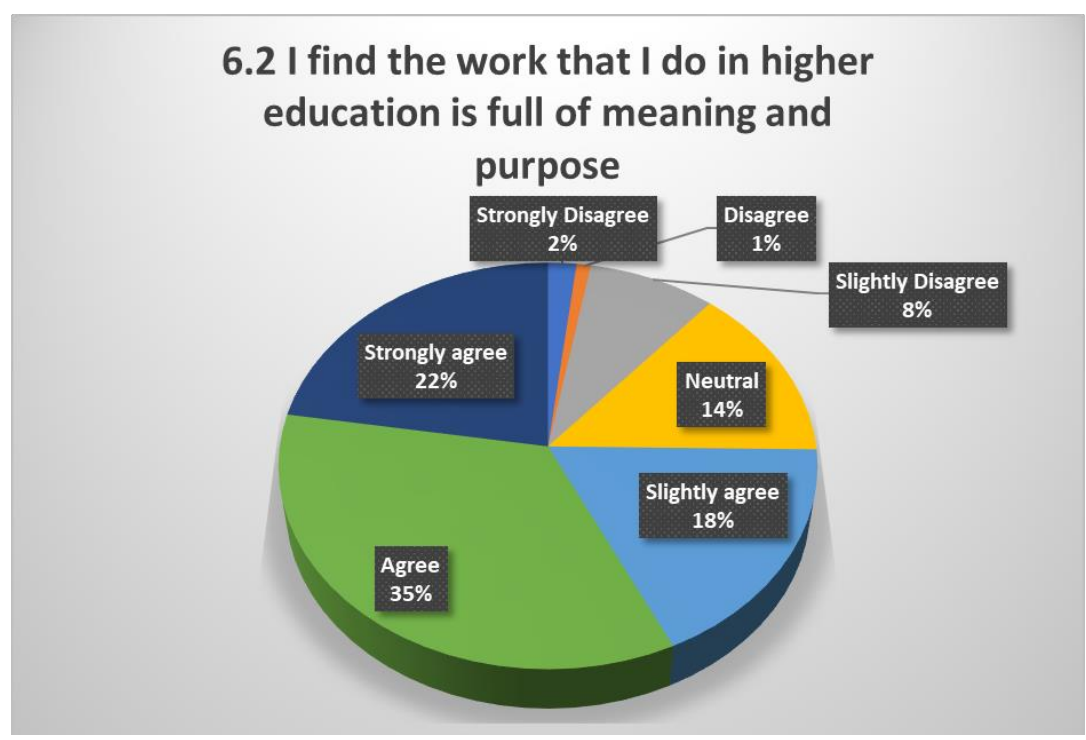


Explanation: Majority of participants (78%) responded they are energized working in higher education.

Figure 49

I find the work that I do in higher education is full of meaning and purpose

6.2 I find the work that I do in higher education is full of meaning and purpose			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2%	
Disagree	1	1%	
Slightly Disagree	9	8%	
Neutral	15	14%	
Slightly agree	19	18%	
Agree	37	35%	
Strongly agree	24	22%	
Total		107	

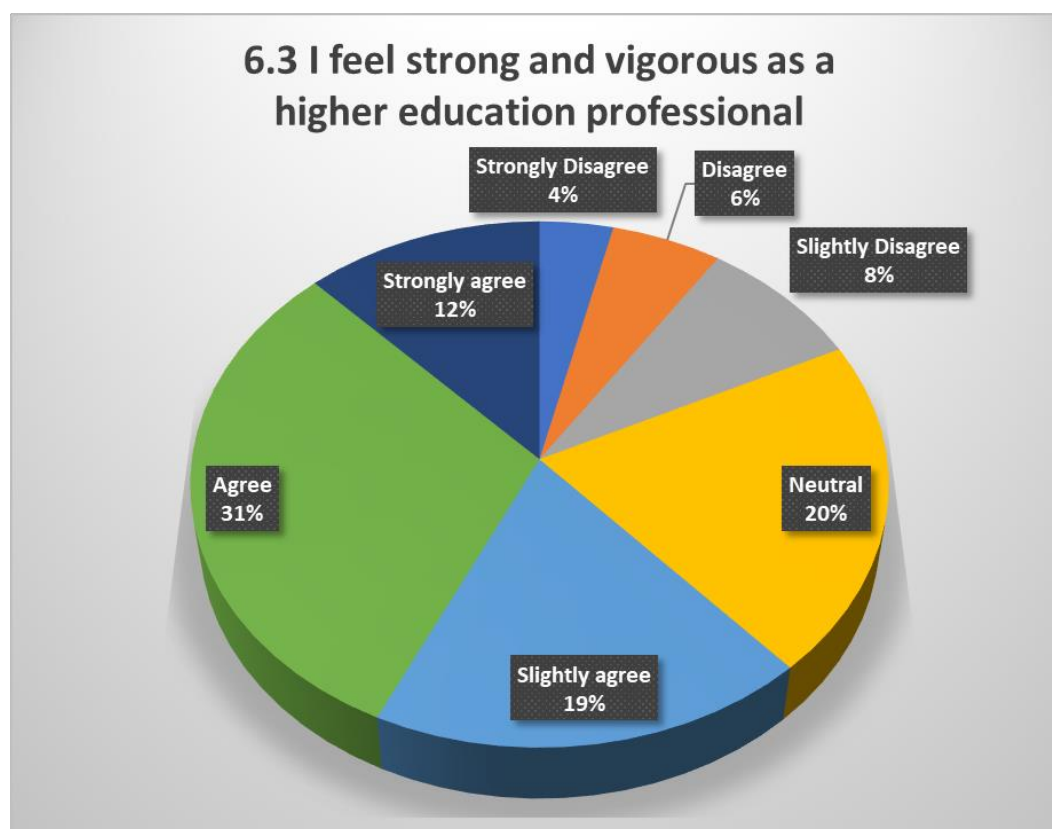


Explanation: At least 75% of participants believes the work they do is meaningful.

Figure 50

I feel strong and vigorous as a higher education professional

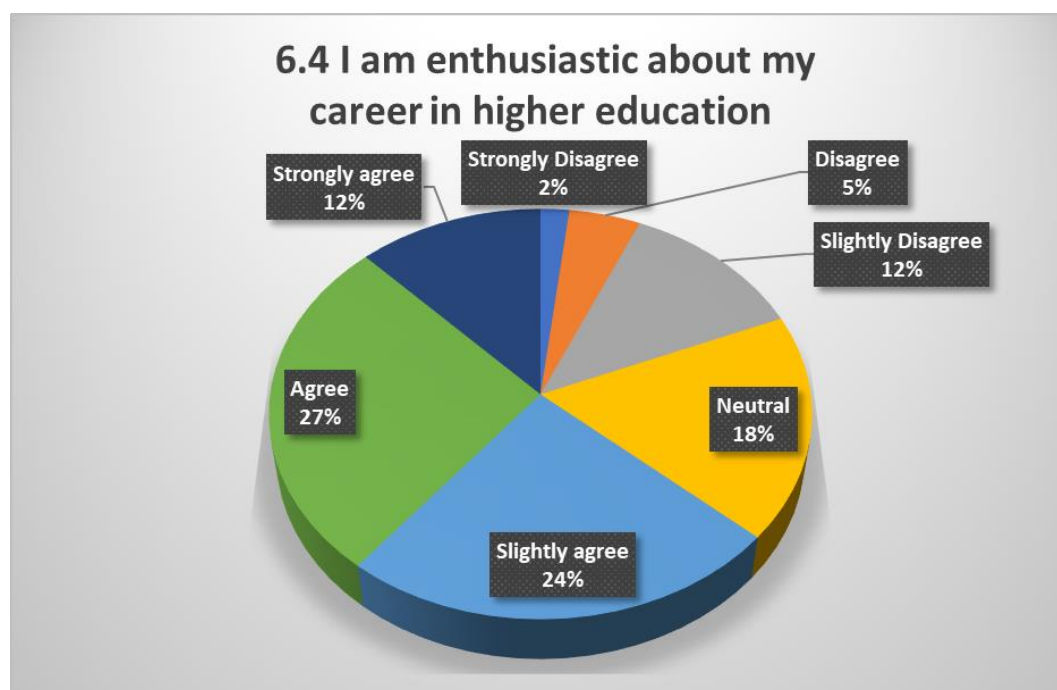
6.3 I feel strong and vigorous as a higher education professional			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	4	4%	
Disagree	6	6%	
Slightly Disagree	9	8%	
Neutral	22	21%	
Slightly agree	20	19%	
Agree	33	31%	
Strongly agree	13	12%	
Total		107	



Explanation: Over 60% of Women of Color responded they feel strong and vigorous in their career in higher education.

Figure 51*I am enthusiastic about my career in higher education*

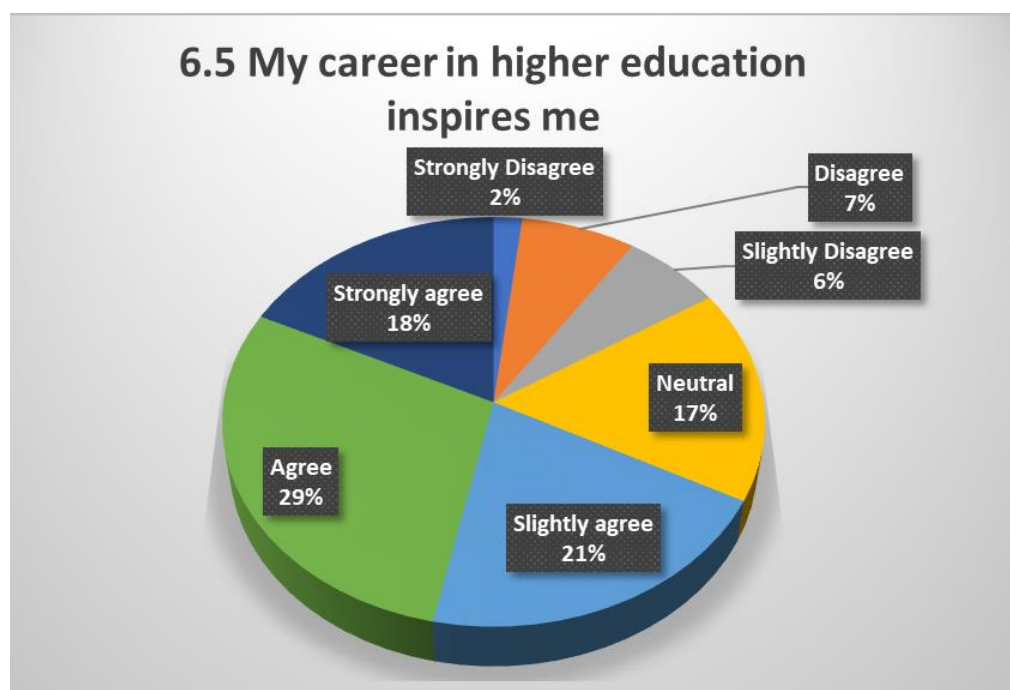
6.4 I am enthusiastic about my career in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	2	2%
Disagree	5	5%
Slightly Disagree	13	12%
Neutral	19	18%
Slightly agree	26	24%
Agree	29	27%
Strongly agree	13	12%
Total		107



Explanation: Sixty percent of participants are enthusiastic about their career in higher education.

Figure 52*My career in higher education inspires me*

6.5 My career in higher education inspires me			
Responses	# Responses per Category	%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2%	
Disagree	8	7%	
Slightly Disagree	7	7%	
Neutral	18	17%	
Slightly agree	22	21%	
Agree	31	29%	
Strongly agree	19	18%	
Total		107	

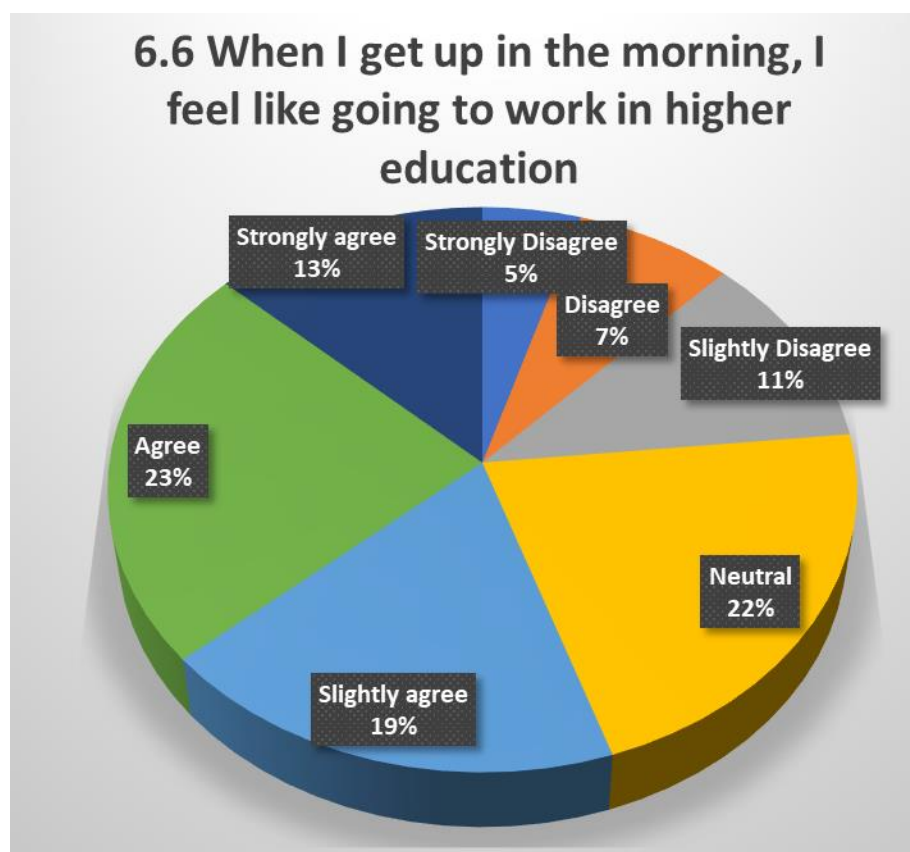


Explanation: 68% are inspired by their career in higher education.

Figure 53

When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work in higher education

6.6 When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Disagree	8	7%
Slightly Disagree	12	11%
Neutral	23	21%
Slightly agree	20	19%
Agree	25	23%
Strongly agree	14	13%
Total		107

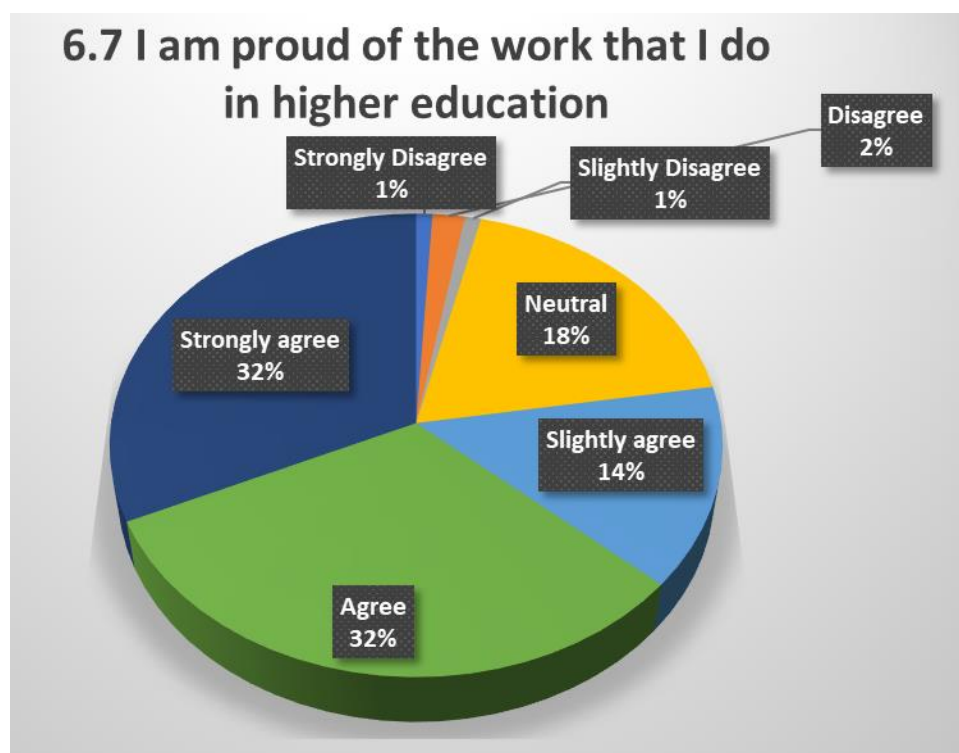


Explanation: More than half (55% exactly) of the participants wake up each morning feeling like going to work in higher education.

Figure 54

I am proud of the work that I do in higher education

6.7 I am proud of the work that I do in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1%
Disagree	2	2%
Slightly Disagree	1	1%
Neutral	20	19%
Slightly agree	15	14%
Agree	34	32%
Strongly agree	34	32%
Total		107



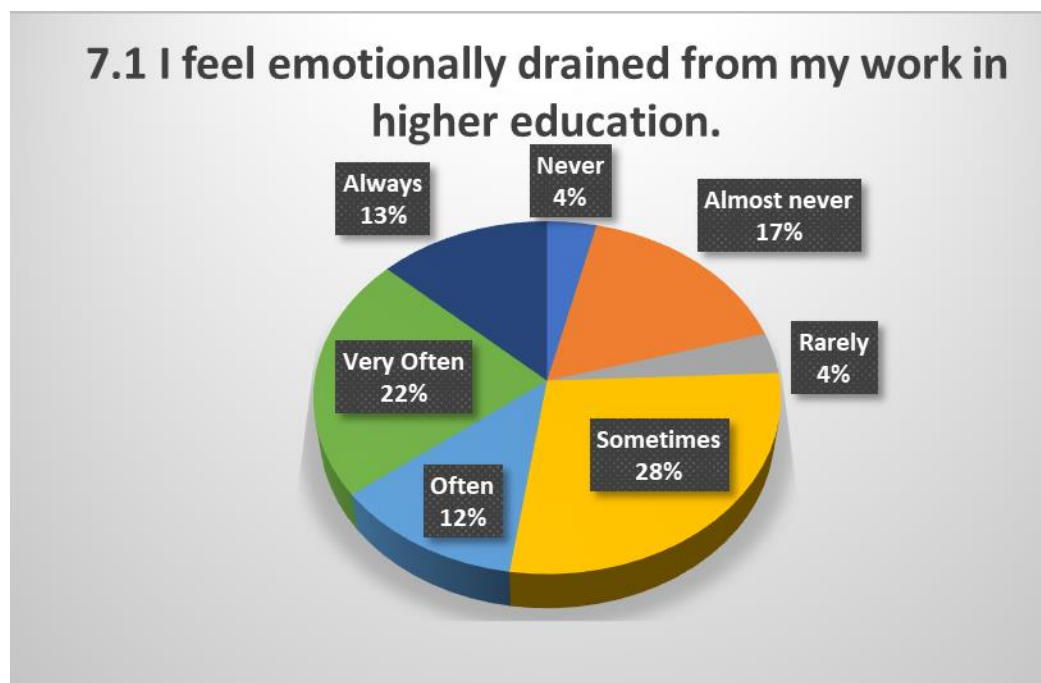
Explanation: 78% reported they are proud of the work they do in higher education.

Figure 55

I feel emotionally drained from my work in higher education

#7 Burnout Scale (7 items)

7.1 I feel emotionally drained from my work in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	4	4%
Almost never	18	17%
Rarely	4	4%
Sometimes	30	28%
Often	13	12%
Very Often	24	22%
Always	14	13%
Total	107	

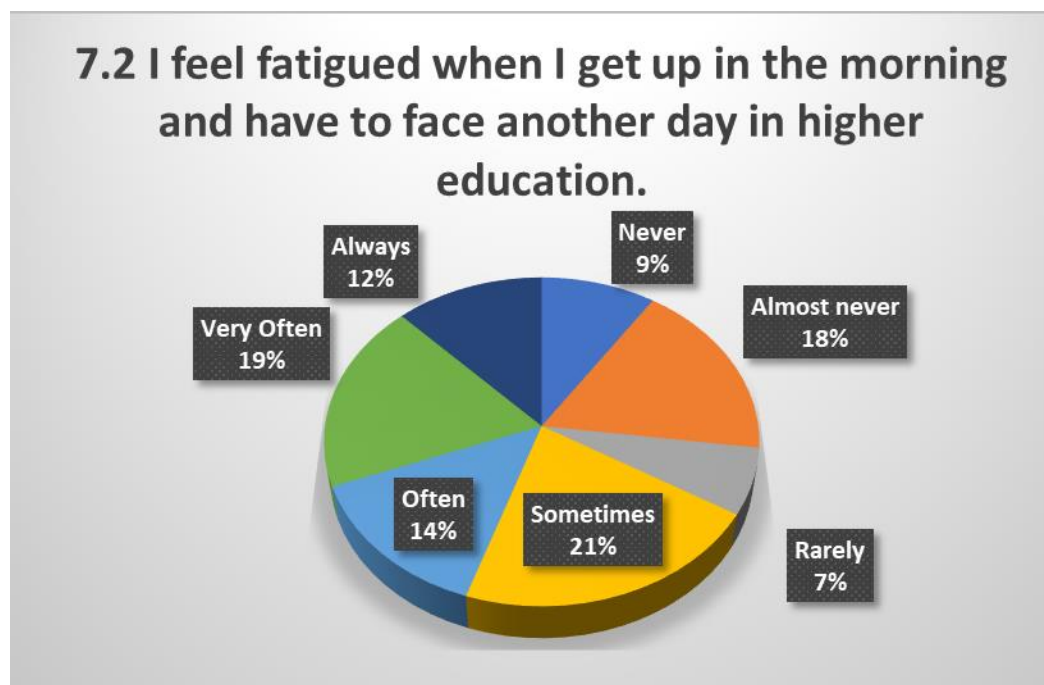


Explanation: Seventy-five percent (75%) of participants feel emotionally drained from their work in higher education.

Figure 56

I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day in higher education

7.2 I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day in higher education.		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	10	9%
Almost never	19	18%
Rarely	7	7%
Sometimes	23	21%
Often	15	14%
Very Often	20	19%
Always	13	12%
Total	107	

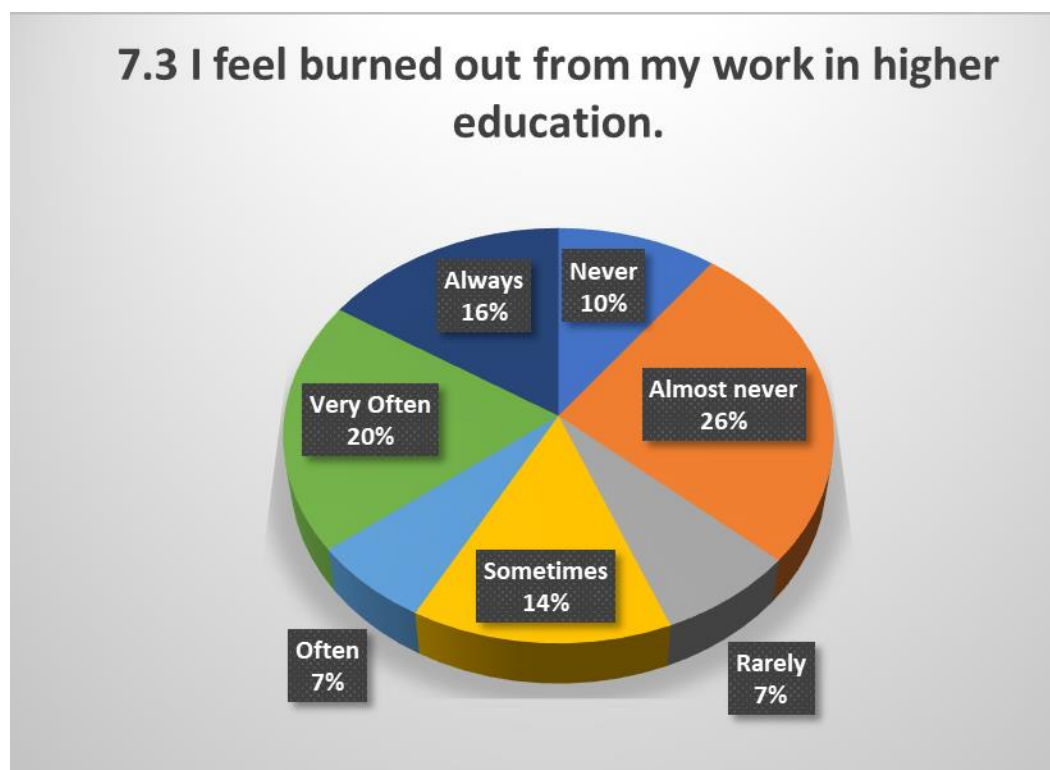


Explanation: Sixty percent (60%) of participants report feeling fatigue each day in higher education.

Figure 57

I feel burned out from my work in higher education

7.3 I feel burned out from my work in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	11	10%
Almost never	28	26%
Rarely	8	7%
Sometimes	15	14%
Often	7	7%
Very Often	21	20%
Always	17	16%
Total	107	

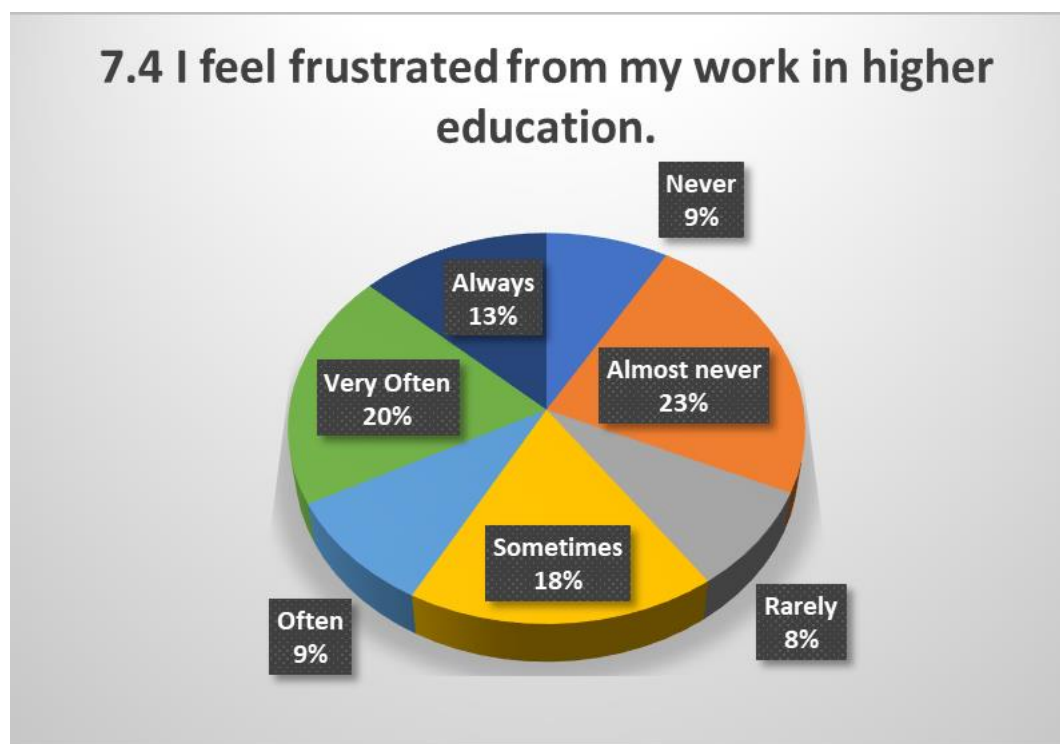


Explanation: Over half of the respondents (57%) feel burned out from their work in higher education.

Figure 58

I feel frustrated from my work in higher education

7.4 I feel frustrated from my work in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	9	8%
Almost never	25	23%
Rarely	9	8%
Sometimes	19	18%
Often	10	9%
Very Often	21	20%
Always	14	13%
Total	107	

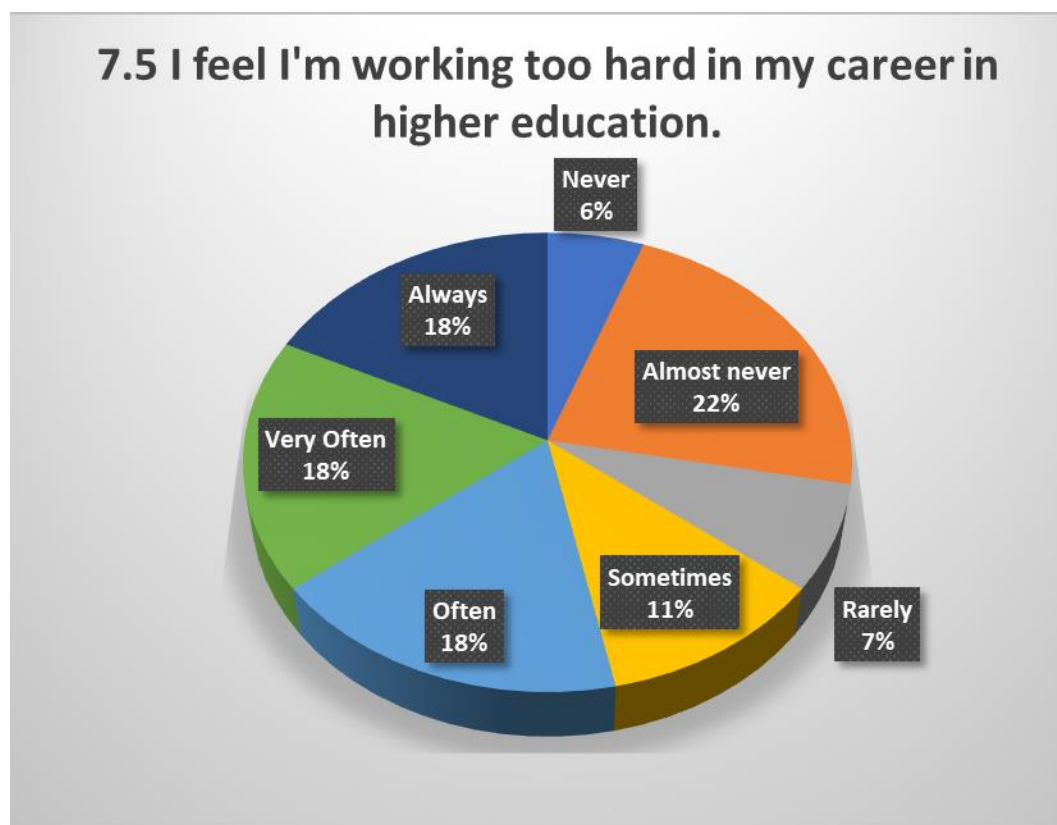


Explanation: Sixty percent of respondents reported feeling frustrated from working in higher education.

Figure 59

I feel I'm working too hard in my career in higher education

7.5 I feel I'm working too hard in my career in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	6	6%
Almost never	24	22%
Rarely	8	7%
Sometimes	12	11%
Often	19	18%
Very Often	19	18%
Always	19	18%
Total	107	

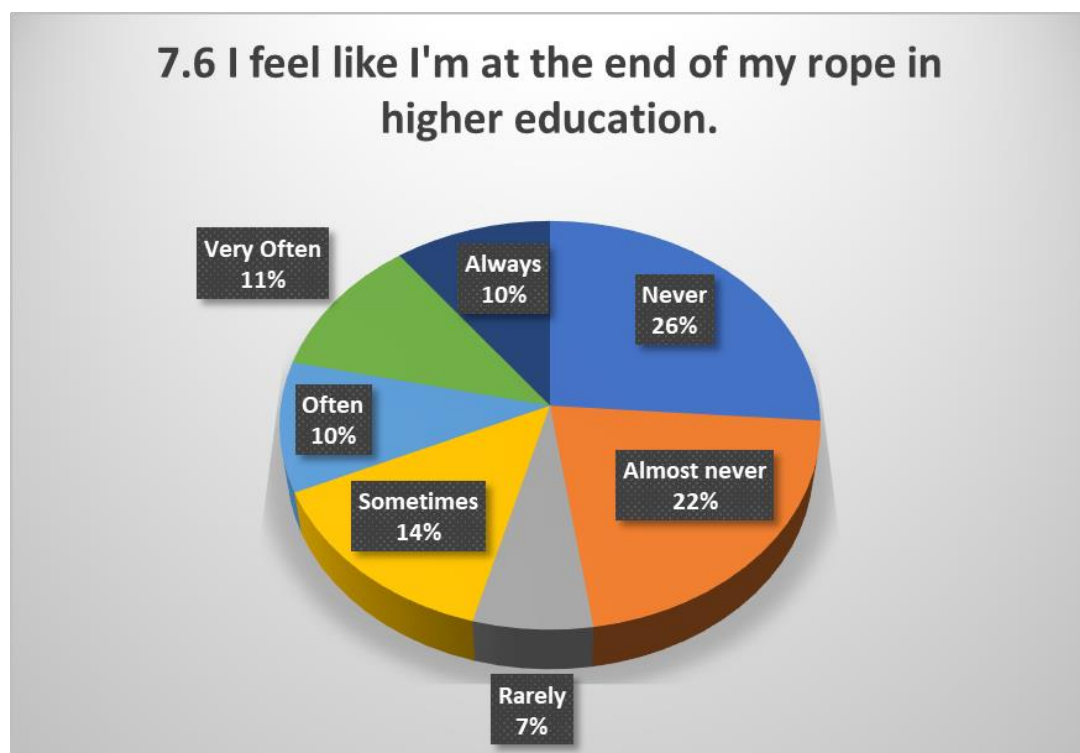


Explanation: Over 60% feel they are working too hard in their higher education career.

Figure 60

I feel like I'm at the end of my rope in higher education

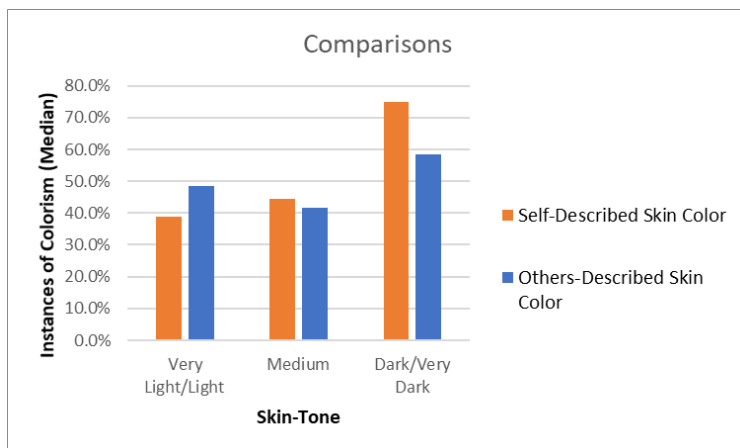
7.6 I feel like I'm at the end of my rope in higher education		
Responses	# Responses per Category	%
Never	28	26%
Almost never	23	21%
Rarely	7	7%
Sometimes	15	14%
Often	11	10%
Very Often	12	11%
Always	11	10%
Total	107	



Explanation: Nearly half of the participants feel like they are at the end of their rope in higher education.

Table 11*Surprising Data*

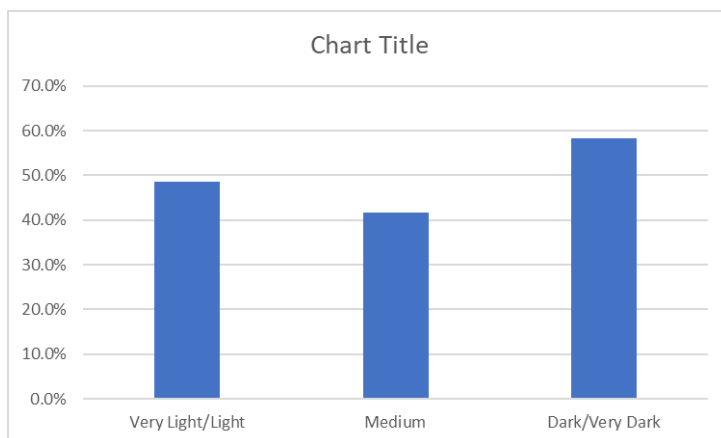
Self-Described Skin Color	Count	Median
Very Light/Light	31	38.9%
Medium	59	44.4%
Dark/Very Dark	17	75.0%



Explanation: Participants who self-described as dark/very dark reported higher instances of colorism.

Compared To:

Others-Described Skin Color	Count	Median
Very Light/Light	38	48.6%
Medium	47	41.7%
Dark/Very Dark	22	58.3%



Explanation: Majority of participants who claim others described their skin tone as dark/very dark reported higher instances of colorism compared to their exceptionally light/very light, and medium complexioned counterparts. However, this group reported fewer experiences of colorism than those who self-proclaimed their skin tone as dark/very dark.

Qualitative Analysis

Of the total sample populace of 107, nearly half of the respondents answered the open-ended exploratory question: How have you coped with and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences? A thematic analysis was conducted through a process of coding, a reduction of textual data into descriptive codes, categories, and themes to show the relationship among them (Creswell, 2013). Coding requires the researcher truncate the data into phrases, a series of sentences, or paragraphs then assigning the descriptive data a label for each word or phrase. Using the data set (52 responses) the researcher developed and defined a list of codes:

- Internal Response (IN)
 - Conflict avoidance (CA): acknowledgement of negative emotions without action to challenge the emotions (i.e., ignoring, feeling overwhelmed, conforming to status quo, loss of voice)
 - Resilience (R): finding inner strength to continue working within the field
- External Response (ER)
 - Support systems (SS): seeking internal organizational support through peers, colleagues with similar narratives

- Transition (T): quitting/moving on from a particular position or the higher education industry due to lack of job satisfaction
- Self-advocacy (SA): seeking organizational upper management support through Human Resource complaints
- Raising awareness (RA): recognizing discriminatory practices or microaggressions and educating others
- Reverse colorism: experiencing benefits/advantages such as “comfortable” interpersonal interactions with Whites due to light skin, while experiencing backlash from darker-skinned members with the same group.

Next, memoing, a note taking process of writing down the meaning of each assigned code attributed to units of texts, commenced. Several statements were assigned to multiple codes because they represented characteristics from each unit of data. For example, one participant stated,

When I experience macro and micro acts of colorism, I make my feelings overt and address them as such. For example, being made the head of a diversity committee because I had the darkest complexion amongst leaders which I then began a conversation about how it was possible I was the only person with a darker complexion sitting at the table in the first place.

This communication met criteria for both subcategories “Self-Advocacy” and “Raising Awareness.” During the first round of coding the labels were combined under the title “Taking Action,” but later separated and defined based on the context of the statement. In the previous example, the participant recognized and addressed unwanted behaviors of

microaggressions which viewed her as a sole representation of the entire black populace at her job. According to her statement, the committee did not support inclusion and diversity, but rather drew attention to a broader topic socially constructed stereotypes and stigmas relating to tokenism and group think behaviors that suggests all (people), in this case Blacks, think similar and arrive at the same conclusions. This ideology undermines diversity because it assumes that the person with the darkest skin color voices the needs of the larger community. In other instances, “Self-advocacy” related to addressing colorism through human resource channels, which were to no avail. Therefore, the new codes “Self-Advocacy” and “Raising Awareness,” emerged as separate terms used to summarize the overarching experience. This technique led to several reanalysis of coding textual information from the start of the data collection process. The researcher introduced rigor by carefully evaluating, comparing, reflecting, and reevaluation of each piece of text to ensure appropriate coding and analytical decisions were made. Once new codes no longer emerged because the essence of what was stated kept repeating the process reached a point of saturation.

An audit trail was created as a means of easy cross referencing between coded text and data. According to Chenail (2008), the audit trail serves as pathway back to the original coded statements, words, and phrases. Unique identifiers are then assigned to pieces of coded text so the researcher can toggle back and forth between the original text and the coded versions. Each response is given a line number, then labeled and defined based on its relevance to an analyzed topic. Multiple statements sharing similar characteristics are combined and labeled under the same heading each one having a unique identifier. For example, initially, PaTA51 was used to indicate that Participant A

expressed “Taking-Action” as a coping mechanism in her statement based on line 51. The researcher created a comprehensive chart to locate the coded text based on the line numbering. Other coded statements suggesting “taking action” as an external response to colorism experiences were also labeled with “TA.” The audit trail builds the foundation for categorizing- the process of clustering groups of similar coded text under one heading. Categorization helps to clarify qualitative analysis as the researcher analyzes codes and interprets the meaning making process of respondents (Chenail, 2008). The analysis yielded the following themes describing internal and external coping mechanisms in response to experiencing colorism that aligned with previous literature of marginalization and need for support:

- Internalization of negative feelings and avoidance behaviors
 - Feelings of withdrawal & dissatisfaction
- Unfair Job-Related Practices
 - Tokenism and being undermined
- Seeking organizational support systems
 - System unprepared to support WOC
- Resilience and Inner Strength

The themes further supported hypothesis 1 which was found to be statistically significant regarding colorism and its effect on the career outcomes of WOC in the higher education industry.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications

Discussion

The study sought to better understand the effect of colorism in the lives of women of color leaders in academia. Findings of the study suggest skin color plays a role in the career outcomes and coping mechanisms of WOC in higher education. The consequence of darker-skinned women feeling less preferred and experiencing constraints of their upward mobility due to skin tone aligns with previously mentioned studies having similar outcomes (Harvey et al., 2017). However, lighter-skinned Caribbean women qualitatively discuss stronger feelings of frustration when confronted with social aspects of workplace conflict from their darker-skinned counterparts, an area less researched.

The study answered four research questions and estimated several outcomes based on previous findings grounded in literature. The initial research question examined eight facets of career outcomes: hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. The research question stated: **Research Question #1:** To what degree has colorism been a factor in the careers of women of color who are in power positions?

The researcher hypothesized women of color (WOC) would report moderate to high experiences with colorism in their hiring, training and development opportunities, leadership opportunities, performance appraisals, mentoring opportunities, compensation, promotions, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

Evidence for this hypothesis was best presented by observing mean levels reported for the sample of each of the dimensions of colorism. The findings suggest that

this hypothesis was supported. The mean responses fell significantly above the midpoint of the scale suggesting that women reported moderate to high experiences with colorism along each of the dimensions. Well over half of the participants believed that skin tone played an especially important role in career success. Furthermore, over 50% reported having moderate to strong experiences with instances of colorism in work outcomes.

According to the qualitative exploratory question: How have you coped and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences, reports further validate the hypothesis as non-White women leaders explicitly described emotions of being enraged, undervalued, and overlooked in their careers. At times, the participants expressed internalizing perceptions of marginalization to the point of using the headline, “suffering in silence.” Participant expressed intense negative emotions associated with experiencing colorism in the workplace. They reported fear of revenge as a main factor when attempting to address any level of discomfort or vulnerability with human resources or upper management. One participant quoted, “I cope internally by just trying to ignore it because there is a lot of retaliation where I work. I have been bullied in the past for speaking out.” A large majority of respondents shared similar narratives of lacking support, intimidation, and microaggressions resulting in isolation and a coping mechanism of conflict avoidance. Another participant noted, “I feel silenced. And being token means you cannot open up to your peers about the situation. It's like being cornered and your white counter parts don't understand.” In a single rare instance, one female stated she counteracted negativity by showcasing pride for her color and culture and, “making it a point to look more African in my clothing selection and hair styles.”

Research Question #2 asked: To what degree are experiences with colorism associated with social justice perceptions of higher education?

Research Q2 held two predictions: **a)** Higher reported experiences with colorism in each of these areas listed above will be associated with lower social justice perceptions in the higher education industry and: **b)** Higher reported experiences with colorism in each of the areas listed above will be associated with important work-related outcomes including higher intentions to leave higher education, lower job satisfaction, and lower engagement.

Evidence supporting both parts of the hypothesis was supplied. Instances of colorism seems to be associated with perceptions of social justice in higher education. The association was found to be statistically significant by ($p < 0.0001$) because the p-values was less than 0.5. Approximately half of the variance in social justice perceptions among the surveyed group was explained by their reported instances of colorism. Higher instances of colorism are associated with lowered perceptions of social justice in the industry. Furthermore, statistics supported a relationship between the perceived role of skin tone and occasions of colorism. The association was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$). Approximately half of the variance in role of skin tone perceptions among the surveyed group was explained through self-reports. Participants believed skin tone played a role in increased color discrimination. No statistically significant association was found between colorism experiences and job happiness ($p=0.8098$).

Reports of increased colorism experiences were significantly ($p=0.0015$) associated with job unhappiness. Non-White women leaders report less job satisfaction

and happiness in their careers in association with skin tone discrimination. However, while the association was significant, the effect of colorism on the intent to leave the job and job unhappiness is quite minimal. There was no significant relationship found between instances of colorism and job happiness.

Qualitative data detected a similar pattern and reinforced the findings that supported the hypothesis. WOC cope with experiences of colorism by internalizing their frustrations, seeking a support system, addressing microaggressions through organizational channels, accentuate their cultural and ethnic expressions of their identity through clothing and hair styles, finding inner strength, or simply leaving the position/academia all together. Notably, those who reported filing complaints with HR were met with resistance and even retaliation. These points of contention showcase areas of improvement and further research. Social scientists, humanities, business, critical race theorist and law scholars should consider how to support marginalized groups when self-advocating.

For example, reports of experienced skin tone bias were associated with a strong urge and to leave higher education. One candidate recalled,

I responded by finding a better career. I've been passed up for multiple promotions while being well qualified. However, when a Caucasian counterpart applied for the job they were closed. Internally, I found ways to keep my peace. Externally, I moved on to an opportunity that allowed me to be more impactful in other's lives.

A second participant described,

I quit! Living in an inherently racist society and often met with systemic prejudice, I have learned to move in silence and complete the work that I am tasked to do. Because the system is bigger than me, I sometimes feel helpless to fix it. However, if I'm in a situation where I feel uncomfortable, unworthy, unrecognize, I have the power to remove myself from that situation. So, with prayer and internal power, I was able to resign from a position that no longer served my needs. In fact, I've entirely switched careers-no longer in higher education.

Research Q3# stated: What demographics of women of color are most associated with experiences of colorism (age, sex, skin tone)?

Hypotheses 3 predicted **a)** Darker skin tone women will report more experiences with colorism than lighter skin tone women; **b)** Older women will report more experiences with colorism; **c)** Women with lower SES will report more experiences with colorism.

Findings reveal there was no significant association found between instances of colorism and any of the three skin-tone related metrics. However, it is notable that self-described Dark/Very Dark survey participants did have a higher median instance of colorism that was almost twice as high as those who self-described as Light/Very Light. Too few participants self-described as Dark/Very Dark. So, it is likely the study was underpowered for detection of this effect, which is why it lacked statistical significance.

Hypothesis 3b also included age effects, with a significant but minor decrease with age. Findings did not support the hypothesis possibly because the perception of

what colorism is may have a different meaning to older versus younger generations. Older, darker-skinned women were not found to report higher cases of colorism. One reason may be due to limited categorical variations between skin tone pallets of light/very light and dark/very dark, and the lack of responses to observe an effect.

Finally, Hypothesis 3 also included SES, for which there was no significant effect but again for which the study may have been underpowered. Although we do see a reduction in median instances of colorism by income, the differences are not statistically significant ($p=0.1416$).

These findings are consistent with colorism scholarship describing the relationships between skin gradients and incidents of advantages and disadvantages attributed to skin tone. Literature reveals skin tone plays a factor in the professional, scholastic, interpersonal, and martial outcomes for communities of color (Russell-Cole et al., 2012). Research shows a significant margin of darker skin individuals stereotyped in the dominant culture, workplaces (Harrison, 2010) and higher education (Patton, 2016). Skin tone limits access to resources compared to whites (Patton, 2016). Critical Race scholars respond to inequalities of marginalized groups by challenging historical patterns of institutional racism which structurally subvert participation in civil liberties like access to good education and occupational opportunities (Gillborn, 2005). CRT seeks to rectify ideas of color-blindness in education from past to present (Gillborn, 2005; Dixson, Anderson, & Donner, 2017). Anchored in social justice, CRT challenges pejorative systems to “expose explicit methods of racism and racial exclusion... systems that... established the existing sociopolitical and economic hegemonic racial hierarchy in the United States” (Donner, 2017, p. 47).

Patton (2016) addressed the discrepancy in minority treatment at predominantly white institutions (PWI) of higher learning in which the educational system subjugates minority leaders through a recurring system of oppressive structures originally established during colonialism and still exists restricting resources for advancement. Like her predecessors Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), Patton preposes using CRT to challenge modern-day constructs of microaggressions that isolate blacks and underrepresented groups. She and her contemporaries, like social justice activist W.E.B. DuBois recommend acknowledging cycles of undermining voices and exclusionary practices like those witnessed by one participant in the study who recalled,

I feel that I witnessed colorism mostly in the interpersonal relationships. I wondered why my white colleagues seemed to get together and get with each other so easily. They seemed to 'gel' together so easily, and I seemed left out though I tried to be inclusive of them in the things that I do. I could not pinpoint what it was for a while until I realized that the only variable that I was not accounting for is the fact that I was black and of a different ethnicity while they were mostly white. It is not a definitive conclusion but having undergone a great deal of introspection at my own behavior, it is the only one that makes sense to me.

Challenging the status quo gives voice to those otherwise unheard in efforts of achieving a more egalitarian society. In the book, *Critical Race Theory in Education: All God's Children Got A Song*, author Jamel Donner (2017) argues that the white majority continuously thwarts efforts to level the playing field, preserving the majority status by obstructing access to education and private social networks that bolster success. Social

justice activists emphasize that covert racism remains prevalent because Caucasian claims of victimization from policies like affirmative action, aimed at the inclusivity, equity, and diversity of minority groups are unfair. However, research shows that such policies disproportionately favor particularly white women. The underlying system structures education, politics, and the economy in such a way that positions Whites to maintain the status quo and unite in solidarity to disrupt fragile race relations (Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008). As a result, color-blindness and claims of unfair practices function as a long-standing narrative in America prevailing colorism and colorist ideologies. If color is ignored, then microlevel inequalities such as skin tone gradients and their predictors of success are also denied and reinforced through a continuation of attributing advantages to light skin and disadvantaging dark skin.

Exploratory Question: What coping mechanisms have been deployed as a means of dealing with colorism was asked as an open-ended question: How have you coped with and/or responded to colorism in your workplace experiences?

Participant responses reinforced hypotheses showing lowered perceptions of social justice and associations with experiencing skin tone bias effecting career outcomes. The sample populace comprised of Two or More Races, Black African Americans, Black Caribbean's, Asians, Southeast Asians, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian/Indigenous or Alaska, Middle Eastern or of Arab decent or Other (not listed). Two or More Races, Black Caribbean's, and African Americans self-reported the highest number of experiences. However, lighter skinned Black Caribbean's described more intense experiences with skin color stratification presenting an area of further research.

Limitations

The sample population for this study was 107 participants determined through GPower software. One limitation to the study is the sample size was adequate but lacked variation among skin tone pallet categories. This may have resulted in fewer self-reports and therefore difficulties in running analyses to test some hypotheses. Consideration of skin gradient types may increase the effect of skin tone in areas otherwise found to be not statistically significant. Diversity in shades of color may help in providing stronger comparisons between groups on a color spectrum that includes more than very light/light and dark/very dark.

A second limitation was the anticipation of a low response rate due to the nature of the survey. The measurement tool was administered via the world wide web and participation was voluntary. Incomplete submissions were expected although the survey took about 10-miutes. The researcher suspects that the global pandemic hampered completion rates due to the need to survive the current climate. The response rate in certain subcategories was below expectations possibly due to lack of variation in comparative variables such as skin tone gradients, and as a result the survey was underpowered to those comparisons.

Lastly, the study primarily focused on the United States. Hopefully, this contribution generates interests in other sociocultural arenas and international domains where overt practices of discrimination preserve constructs of oppression. The study provided a theoretical framework for the historical context of colorism in America. However, less emphasis was placed on ethnic diversity within the Black race, for example, Black Caribbean's. The Caribbean islands experienced slavery and by extension

colorism as well. The qualitative data piece identified room for further exploration not otherwise addressed in the scope of this study.

This study did not intend to attribute findings to a larger populace based on the sample size. Instead, the intent was to raise awareness of an aged old practice that is oftentimes ignored though readily experienced silently, persecuting people of the same group and undermining their contributions. Global involvement can expand the project to engage, challenge, and discuss means of building better organizations and social structures that promote diversity and inclusion. Hopefully, this project encourages others to conduct comparative analysis of differing groups internationally and include the male perspective.

Although the study has some limitations, there are several areas of strength. The researcher recruited participants from a variety of backgrounds which provided a stronger context for exploring skin tone bias from multiple vantage points. The findings validated and further described the experiences and effect of colorism amongst WOC leaders in postsecondary institutions. As a result, participants identified points of contention in the industry, and acknowledge skin color stratification as a pervasive factor requiring intervention and new practices to ameliorate stressors associated with its consequences

Conclusion

This project contributes to the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution by examining colorism through a multilayered conflict lens of gender, ethnicity, organizational outcomes, and the meaning making process of such experiences. Research shows that skin tone bias- the preference, advantages, and disadvantages extended to individuals based on their skin complexion within and outside of the same race- fuels

discriminatory practices. This means individuals are treated positively or negatively based on how they look. For example, historically, lighter complexioned Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians have better access to education, earn higher incomes, and maintain a stronger marriage market than their lighter-skinned counterparts (Hunter, 2002; Goldsmith et al., 2006). Scholarship indicates instances where whites attribute intelligence to lighter skin tones (Hannon, 2015), and favor individuals with more Eurocentric features in the hiring process (Harrison, 2010; Powell, 2017). More recently, findings from the study suggest darker complexion women statistically face greater challenges in workplace promotion, career opportunities, pay, and lower perceptions of social justice in positions of power within the higher education industry. However, lighter skinned Caribbean women qualitatively report an increased frustration with reverse colorism in which other non-White groups, primarily those of African or Caribbean descent, pose opposition in the workplace creating organizational conflict and discomfort. In these cases, it's not uncommon for alliances to form between darker-skinned individuals or lighter skinned persons, which contributes to toxic work environments.

Colorism remains a pervasive discriminatory practice globally and domestically. Initially rooted in European colonialism, slavery in America introduced intraracial prejudice of applying advantages to lighter skin opposed to darker skin, namely among African descendants. Today, characteristics of shadeism go oftentimes undetected in higher education and organizations. Traditional social science literature ignored institutional racism by denying the effects of race and enslavement on the dominant discourse, choosing to maintain historical amnesia and color-blindness, traits that

dangerously slow the progress of equality in the educational system. Critical Race theorists galvanized around the topic of social justice in America to trace and challenge racism in cultural perceptions, expressions, beliefs, and practices that enable racism to persist. The vastness of multiculturalism in America and increased entrance of women in the workforce, particularly the higher education industry, has led to a push for equality, diversity, and inclusion, and redressing prejudices in organizations. Human Resource Developers, higher education professionals, sociologists, psychologists, experts in conflict resolution, litigators, and medical scientists collectively contribute to scholarship on the intersectionality of race, gender, orientation, class, etc. to emphasize the importance of shared experiences from diverse, predominantly alienated, groups.

Although hundreds, maybe thousands of studies exist on colorism this research contributes a conflict resolution perspective of addressing institutional racism that intersects with varying minority groups and gender in postsecondary education. This study supports Critical Race Theory presuppositions that emphasize social constructs engrained in colonial slavery remains pervasive in the 21st century higher learning system. Women who self-advocate are still subjected to retaliation and silencing of their voice and are overlook for positions in their career based on non-meritorious grounds of racially charged social perceptions of inferiority. Recommendations on sensitivity training and human resource development training during the recruitment and hiring process of minority faculty appears beneficial for challenging oppression and bring unheard voices to the forefront.

Recommendations for Change

Women of Color confront an ideology that utilizes post-colonial standards of beauty and acceptance as a determinant of their value, social capital, and career progression based on pigmentation (Hunter, 2002). Uncovering societal contentions and inequalities by pinpointing and openly discussing colorism is the first step to healing if not eradicating the problem. Forums or focus groups centered around diversity and inclusion could ask questions about how other cultures and ethnicities handle colorism in their country/organizations. The collective thought can bring about a fresh perspective and facilitate a sense of togetherness. Helping WOC explore coping mechanisms that teaches them how to redefine their strength through shared narratives enables them to reclaim power without feeling exploited.

This study supports the need for conflict analysis and resolutionists, academicians, human resource officers, and practitioners to examine and attend to concerns of industry hostility towards WOC leaders. Study participants from all Non-White backgrounds collectively identified skin shade, not just race and gender, as an issue challenging their goals, elevation, position, and inclusivity in the higher education industry. Providing a platform and safe space for WOC to be heard regarding their complaints of maltreatment based on race, sex, and skin tone may minimize the effects of colorism.

Imagery sends powerful messages of inclusion, acceptance, and belonging. Displaying portraits in the halls of colleges and universities of influential WOC leaders at the institution may communicate a stronger sense of welcome and unity. Predominantly White Institutions, especially where men occupy the top positions, can use this as a

starting point in their diversity and inclusion initiatives. Community Colleges with a predominantly large minority population can bolster these efforts by surveying the student body to recognize a WOC they consider as a leader. Rewards and recognition may improve workplace synergy.

Furthermore, WOC represent larger numbers in top administrative offices, and continue to earn more terminal degrees than men, but fail to occupy chief officer positions apart from diversity roles. Oftentimes, upward mobility is met with high risk situations where there's a strong potential to fail because the institution is in crisis. Less information funnels to the new leader and job functions come with unreasonable expectations, like cutting budgets in the first term. In other cases, WOC are assigned additional duties without compensation but denied elevation to full professorships suggesting they are not suitable candidates. Evaluating college-wide practices, and the efficacy of diversity programs or the lack thereof, and the implementation of inclusion initiatives can assist with better outcomes. This requires introspection, a willingness to be honest, and discipline to change in the right direction. Hiring an outside company with experience to assess organizational procedures, providing unbiased surveys to faculty, staff, and students to gain a consensus, conducting diversity trainings that specifically address gaps in behavior, and having a strong human resource component cognizant of skin tone discrimination and how to handle grievances appropriately and compassionately provide some foundational steps to mitigating the effects.

As the academy increasingly engages communities of color the need for cultural competent practices is paramount in the higher education industry as professionals become more cognizant of colorism prevalence in society.

Implications for Future Research

The study yielded a surprising discovery. According to the findings, individuals who self-described as having dark or very dark skin reported more experiences with colorism compared to those who reported others described their skin tone as dark or very dark. If skin tone perception leads to implicit bias and discriminatory practices, then naturally the level to which others view complexion matters. Therefore, if a person is perceived darker by others, like with the Hannon (2015) study, theoretically that person(s) should experience more instances of colorism. However, this study reflects the opposite of this presupposition, in which individuals who viewed themselves as dark/very dark showed higher reports than those whom others perceived as dark/very dark.

Most studies focus on the disadvantages of dark-complexioned individuals and the exclusionary practices within communities of color such as Historically Black College and University (HBCU) sororities and fraternities, and high society (Bryant, 2013). The brown paper bag test, one of several discriminatory acts serving as a means of separating the in-group from the out-group in upper crust organizations and clubs, based admissions on the shade of persons skin tone (Kerr, 2005). Candidates whose skin tone exceeded that of the paper bag were ousted. In these cases, perception is key to understanding privilege. Nevertheless, the study contradicts previous knowledge. Researchers should consider collecting a larger sample of participant responses to observe implications of self-descriptions vs others-described perceptions of skin tone and its effect on colorism outcomes.

Additionally, conducting research internationally would provide a richer perspective. Social scientists can enrich their understanding by drawing from a larger

pool of women of color participants. Scholars can use the data to draw conclusions regarding specific skin complexions and colorism outcomes beyond the scope of the 107 responses gathered for this study. The information can then be used by diversity and inclusion enthusiasts to create training programs that address colorism within colored communities across organizations.

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Appendix 1: In-group Colorism Scale

For each of the items below, please place the number beside each item to indicate the extent to which you AGREE or DISAGREE with that statement. Using the scale below, please be as honest as you can.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly	Disagree	Somewhat	Neutral	Somewhat	Agree	Strongly
Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Agree
_____	17. Even if you work really hard, your skin tone matters most					
_____	18. Skin tone plays a big part in determining how far you can make it					
_____	19. Skin tone effects how much money you can make					
_____	20. If you want to get ahead, you have to be the right skin tone					

Scoring:

Overall score can be calculated by summing and then averaging all 20 items.

Questions:

Subscales

17-20: Upward Mobility

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Appendix 2: Instances of Colorism Scale

Instances of Colorism: This scale was created based on (8) variables attributed to career outcomes. Respondents scaled the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement

This scale measures the degree to which you think your skin tone (darkness or lightness) has impacted you in the following areas throughout your career.					
	Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	A Lot	Very Much
Being hired or denied a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training and development opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance appraisals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpersonal relationships in the workplace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mentoring opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 3: Turnover Intentions Scale

Turnover Intentions (Bothma & Roodt, 2013) - This measure provides items regarding the degree to which a person intends to leave their current employer/career. For this study, the scale will be adapted to refer to leaving "higher education" rather than a specific institution.

Turnover Intentions

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

As soon as I can find a better job, I'll quit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I will probably look for a new job in the near future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I intend to continue working at this company for some time. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I am certain that if I try, I can have a positive impact on my community

Other people around me are engaged in activities that address social injustices

Other people around me feel that it is important to engage in dialogue around social injustices

Other people around me are supportive of efforts that promote social justice

Other people around me are aware of issues of social injustices and power inequalities in our society

In the future, I will do my best to ensure that all individuals and groups have a chance to speak and be heard

In the future, I intend to talk with others about social power inequalities, social injustices, and the impact of social forces on health and well-being

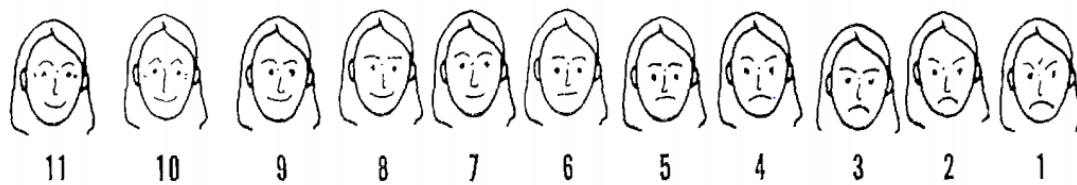
In the future, I intend to engage in activities that will promote social justice

In the future, I intend to work collaboratively with others so that they can define their own problems and build their own capacity to solve problems

Appendix 5: Female Faces Scale

Female Faces Scale (Dunham & Herman, 1975) - This is a global measure of overall job satisfaction

Instructions: Consider all the aspects of your job and select the face that best describes how you feel about your job in general.



Appendix 6: Engagement Scale

Engagement Scale (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, Bakker, 2002/2003) - measures the energy, involvement, and efficacy of employees

Employee Version*Vigor (VI)*

1. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
2. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
3. At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well.
4. I can continue working for very long periods at a time.
5. At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.
6. At my job I feel strong and vigorous.

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Appendix 7: Maslach Burnout Inventory

Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) - a scale that measures the stressors related to work dissatisfaction (physical lack of accomplishment/happiness/satisfaction, negative mental attitudes towards the population being served, and emotional exhaustion).

		A few times a year	Monthly	A few times a month	Every week	A few times a week	Every day
Never	How often:	1		3	4	5	6
	How strong:	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Very mild, barely noticeable			Moderate		Very strong, major

Table 1. Item factor loadings for the Maslach Burnout Inventory

	Frequency				Intensity			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV

Emotional Exhaustion

- 1 I feel emotionally drained from my work
- I feel used up at the end of the workday
- 1 I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
- Working with people all day is really a strain for me
- 1 I feel burned out from my work
- 1 I feel frustrated by my job
- I feel I'm working too hard on my job
- Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
- 1 I feel like I'm at the end of my rope

Demographic questionnaire

Skin Tone Color Pallet:

Which color square do you think is closest to your skin color? Please select from the choices below.



Skin Tone Pallet

Please select the choice that best describes your skin color.

- 1 Pale Ivory 2 Limestone
 3 Sienna 4 Umber
 5 Warm Ivory 6 Rose Beige
 7 Honey 8 Golden
 9 Sand 10 Beige
 11 Amber 12 Espresso
 13 Band 14 Almond
 15 Bronze 16 Chocolate

Skin Color Self-Identification

	Very Dark	Dark	Medium	Light	Very Light	Uncertain
In comparison to other women my age in my racial group, I believe my skin color can be best described as	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In comparison to other women my age in my racial group, other people would likely describe my skin color as	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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What is your age?

- 18-22
 23-29
 30-39
 40+

What is your race?

- Black (African American)
 Black (Caribbean)
 Asian, Southeast Asian
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 American Indian/Indigenous or Alaska Native
 Two or More Races
 Middle Eastern, or of Arab descent
 Other (not listed)

Are you Hispanic or Latinx?

- Yes
 No

What is your annual income?

- Less than \$30,000
 \$30,000 to \$39,999
 \$40,000 to \$49,999
 \$50,000 to \$59,999
 \$60,000 to \$69,999
 \$70,000 to \$79,999
 \$80,000 to \$89,999
 \$90,000 to \$99,999
 \$100,000 or more

What is/was your leadership role in higher education?

- Lead (team lead or course lead)
 Manager
 Assistant Director, Associate Director, Director
 Assistant Dean, Associate Dean, Dean
 Department Chair
 Governing Board Member or Chair
 Chief Academic Officer
 Vice Provost or Provost
 Executive Leadership
 President or Vice President
 Tenured or Full Professor
 Supervisor
 Other managerial position not listed

How many years have you worked in your profession?

What is your highest level of education completed?

- Some High School
 High School Graduate
 Some College
 Associates Degree
 Bachelors Degree
 Some Graduate School
 Graduate Degree