THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK WOMEN NURSING FACULTY:
DISCOVERING THE MEANING OF “BEING BLACK” IN THE ACADEMY
by
ALFREDA HARPER-HARRISON
(Under the Direction of Juanita Johnson-Bailey)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the Career Development of Black Women Nursing Faculty. The two questions that guided this study looked at how Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education and the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty in institutions of higher education. A Qualitative Research design with a Black Feminist Theoretical Framework was used to examine the stories of the eleven Black women nursing faculty participants. Purposeful sampling using the maximum variation sampling technique was employed to select the participants. The primary data sources for this study were in-depth interviews with semi-structured questions, documents, and researcher notes. The major factors that assisted in the women’s career development in the academy were that the women needed to have nursing experience, advanced education, be willing to explore opportunities, have decreased family responsibility and a supportive network. The factors identified that support the retention of Black women nursing faculty were the commitment to nursing, having the ability to help Black students, flexibility and being a good fit
for the inner nurse teacher struggle. The factors noted to negatively affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty were implicit expectations and requirements for promotion, politics, racism, limited recognition, low salaries, workload inequities, lack of mentorship and family obligations. This study revealed two main conclusions: 1.) Black women nursing faculty are able to achieved advancement in institutions of higher education by deferring their careers and living out their personal lives first; and 2.) The factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty were multifaceted and grounded in the fact that the academy fit the women’s lifestyle.

INDEX WORDS: Adult Education, Black Feminist Theoretical Framework, Black Women Nurses, Black Women Nursing Faculty, Career Development, Nursing Faculty, Qualitative Research
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving husband Anthony and son Anthony “AJ” who endured many hours of neglect to assist me in fulfilling a lifelong dream. Your giving, patient, and unselfish nature is what has inspired me to continue and finish this journey. You encouraged me and when life seemed to place large stumbling blocks in my path; you helped me to climb over them, pick up where I left off, and press forward.

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Thank You So Much

I would like to personally give a well-deserved, “thank you”
For the wonderful blessing that you have dearly brought to me
Such thoughtfulness, kindness, and understanding from the heart
That many exceptionally, inspired students only wish to see

It means so much to have had your special presence in my life
During my remarkable educational experience I’ve had at UGA
With your consistent never-ending support backing me to succeed
I have confidence that there will be so much more for me each day

Your motivation for my success in life will never be forgotten
I shall forever be grateful with my heart for all you have given
It will continue to be inspiring to me throughout my future success
To follow my path with ambition and make sure I remain driven

Know that your hard work and dedication was recognized
By Alfreda Harper Harrison, whose life you have helped to change
As I continue to diligently press toward the mark for my destiny
Each time your name pops up, it will seem far from strange

LaKeisha Cole
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that there is a current national shortage of nurses. There are pages and pages of advertisements in the newspapers, professional nursing journals, and on the electronic job search engines that boast higher salaries and sign on bonuses for nurses willing to work for their agencies. The agencies offer flexible shifts, travel incentives, education reimbursements, retirement benefits and numerous paid holidays as enticements to join their company. However, even with the major recruitment efforts by national organizations, hospitals, and nursing programs around the country to encourage and promote nursing as a career, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that there will be more than one million vacant positions for registered nurses by 2010 (AACN, 2003). This shortage of nurses will likely persist because of the increasing demand for health care and the decline of interest in nursing as a career due to expanding opportunities for women in other professions with higher salaries (Staiger, Auerbach, & Buerhaus, 2000). That is why special efforts have been made by the recruiting agencies not only to increase the exposure of nursing as a career to decrease the nursing deficit; but also as Aiken (1999) suggested, agencies have also began to target both minority and male students to the field in an attempt to address the needs of the changing population with a workforce that is representative of the population.

Student recruitment efforts by hospital, universities, and various agencies have been successful. There has been a surge of new applicants applying to nursing schools across the country and according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing
(AACN) (2003), the number of racial and ethnic minorities enrolled in nursing schools increases each year. Unfortunately, the deficit of nursing faculty has reached critical proportions. As the current faculty workforce rapidly advance toward retirement, the pool of younger replacement faculty decreases (AACN, 2003). Nursing schools are finding that there are fewer qualified faculty available to teach. This shortage of nursing faculty limits the number of spaces available for potential students. Therefore, the schools are forced to turn away many of the newly recruited students due to filled classes and limited classroom space. This phenomenon supports the exacerbation of the nursing shortage by limiting the number of potential nurses available to serve in the workforce (Hassouneh-Phillips & Beckett, 2003). It becomes evident that not only is it important to increase minority recruitment and retention of nursing students to meet the workforce needs, but it is also essential to recruit and retain nursing faculty who will teach, mentor, and be role models for those students.

The National League of Nursing Update Report (NLN) (2003) provides a snapshot of the makeup of faculty in nursing programs within the United States. The NLN contends that the vast majority of both part-time and full-time faculty members in nursing programs are female. More than 90 percent are White, and approximately two thirds of all full-time faculty are between the ages of 45 and 60 years old and preparing for retirement. The colossal deficit of faculty is further explained in the NLN report stating that the estimated number of budgeted, unfilled full-time positions countrywide was 1,106, with 682 of these vacant positions in baccalaureate and higher degree programs and an additional 373 in associate degree programs. According to the NLN (2003), an average of 1.3 full-time faculty members per program left their positions in
nursing education. They indicated that on average, 36.4 percent of these departures were due to retirement, 20 percent came as a result of the faculty member wanting a career change, 14.4 percent were due to family obligations, and 10 percent were salary related issues. Although the NLN (2003) discusses the departure of nursing faculty from nursing programs yearly, it like most of the literature, does not speak to the issues of racism, positionality, or power. It does, however, identify retention as a problem in academia that affects not only the institutions but the community as well. It is because there are so few Black faculty serving in positions that role model and encourage the youth in the Black community to follow in their footsteps. These statistics suggest that there is a need for diversity in the faculty academic halls to mirror the student population it serves. The shortage of faculty in schools of nursing is a continuing and expanding problem because as the faculty workforce advances towards retirement, the pool of younger replacement faculty decreases (AACN, 2003).

Minority faculty contribute to nursing education in unique ways: influencing what is taught, how it is taught and what is important to learn (Daufin, 2001). Thus, diversifying higher education brings its own benefits to the classroom. It increases the quality of learning, fosters intellectual development, reduces students’ level of racial prejudice, increases their tolerance towards racial and gender differences, and facilitates students’ explorations of diverse perspectives (Staiger, Auerbach, & Buerhaus, 2003). Several factors have been identified in the literature that contributes to and affects the retention of Black faculty. Giger, Johnson, Davidhizar, and Fishman (1993) declare that this scarcity of Blacks in academia is related to a limited pool of
doctorally prepared candidates, patterns of interracial interactions, and institutional protocols and procedures.

Higher expectations being placed on nursing faculty in relation to that of conventional faculty in the academy is also a significant factor affecting retention. All licensed clinical healthcare professionals, including nurses, are expected to maintain their clinical expertise (AACN, 2003). This often includes attending routine clinical seminars and updates, reviewing updates on medical advances, and obtaining additional credentialing. In an effort to meet the requirement of staying abreast of new treatments and techniques used to care for patients, some faculty maintain part time or as needed staffing positions at local hospitals and clinics. In addition, nursing faculty are expected to instruct and facilitate learning experiences of students in clinical agencies (AACN, 2003). This may not sound demanding to the novice, but when the nursing faculty takes students into the clinical setting, they are accepting responsibility for the actions of each student. This means that the faculty assumes responsibility for their personal actions, the actions of the students and the care of the patients assigned to each student. The accountability of the nursing faculty is twice that of the nurse working on the unit if each student is assigned two patients. Furthermore, nursing faculty are expected to participate regularly in revising curricula to prepare graduates for entry level practice and to excel in a rapidly changing culturally diverse health care environment.

So what then persuades a people, particularly women, to enter into a career in nursing academia? Theorists have studied the process of career development for years in an effort to explain a method of how people evaluate themselves and the job market to choose an occupation or career that is best suited for them. Because traditional
career development theories were developed and tested by men, they did not take into account the procedural variations women encounter when they enter into the workforce. Theorist such as Parsons (1909) and Holland (1985) do not account for the socialization of women and how this phenomenon affects the choices women make. Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) suggest that considering career socialization issues, women tend to choose options dictated by gender, class, race, and cultural backgrounds; which end up being traditional service oriented fields such as librarian, teacher, social worker, secretary, and nurse (Schreiber, 1998). Combining nursing and academia would be a logical and appealing career options for many women because it presents a challenge, it offers flexibility and would be a “suitable” choice for women.

The academic setting mirrors the power structures and forces in society. When one thinks of the halls of academia, one tends to picture the face of the professorate as White and male. Because nursing is a female dominated field, the dynamics of the nursing professorate are shifted only by gender to be White and female. When Black women are afforded the opportunity to enter the system, there are specific areas regarding their career development that are of great concern. Themes such as personal identity, structural inequalities, the glass ceiling effect, and mentorship were recognized as specific issues Black women are faced with when pursuing their academic career aspirations (Bierema, 2001; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998; McNeal, 2003).

Work is a major force that shapes women’s lives and contributes to identity formation (Alfred, 2001). Both Black and White women tend to choose their careers around their perceived primary obligation to care for home and family (Cook, Heppner &
Obrien, 2002; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998; Schreiber, 1998). Multiple roles that women are expected to play can contradict and confuse identity. Identity as defined by Bierema (2001) is a measure of who women are and how they identify themselves and their self worth. If career interventions were aimed at changing the ideological components of the society, Black women may be encouraged to pursue more non-traditional careers. Although teaching and nursing are considered traditional gendered roles, the professorship is not. The academic atmosphere is typically male dominated and success for female faculty is dictated by assuming masculine attributes, stereotyping gender roles, and following a set of rules for success (Bierema, 2001). As the need for Black nursing faculty in the university system increases the opportunities for professorship become apparent.

For the Black nurse educator, the road to obtaining full professorship is an uphill battle with institutional policies and procedures in place to assist those who created them, the White male. Therefore Black female nurse educators must be aware of the intensive involvement required to establish career goals in an effort to make the journey fulfilling and rewarding. The “lucite” ceiling effect is one barrier facing Black women nursing faculty in academia. The “lucite” ceiling, as opposed to the glass ceiling that White women face, is transparent but cannot be easily broken (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). In the academy, Black women tend to be hired in and remain in lower level supervisory positions (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998) such as course leader and level coordinator. The “lucite” ceiling hinders Black women from advancing to senior executive status (Inman, 1998) which in academia would be deanship and the presidency.
Statement of the Problem

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2003) the shortage of nurses has many contributing factors, but having limited numbers of qualified student applicants is not one of them. One major factor that contributes to the shortage deals with the dwindling number of master’s and doctorally prepared nursing faculty available to educate the increasing number of students. Adult women who return to college are the fastest growing part of the college population. However, many of these women do not consider academia as a professional career option; possibly because they are unaware of the opportunities. (Nuby & Doebler, 2000) or have preconceived perceptions of inequality. Instead, the women look for careers that are perceived as financially and psychologically rewarding, more prestigious and more accessible to rapid career advancement (Nuby & Doebler, 2000).

Daufin (2001) suggests that minorities avoid academia because of perceptions of racism in educational institutions particularly in hiring, retention, tenure, promotion, workload, professional reward, acknowledgement and inclusion. Black faculty’s professional growth, development, and networking advances are often made extremely challenging due to strained racial relationships with White faculty (Giger, Johnson, Davidhizar & Fishman, 1993). Racism, often disguised as politics and policies of academy, is the most significant barrier to employment in academia for potential Black faculty (Daufin, 2001; Humphrey-Brown, 1997). This covert racism refers to the tenure process, budget allocation, and power relations being coded as institutional policies, procedures and expectations (Daufin, 2001). Humphrey-Brown (1997) reiterates the
significance of these findings and suggests that these practices hinder Black faculty from being successful in activities necessary for promotion and tenure.

Because the number of Black nursing faculty members has always been minimal, loss due to retirement and decreased numbers of Blacks entering into the field is extremely noticeable. That is why the identification of significant motivating factors that are exclusive to the retention of Black women nursing faculty is important to maintain and ultimately increase the diversification of faculty in nursing schools. By recognizing, understanding, and transforming the issues that are significant to Black women nursing faculty, institutions will be able to retain and provide faculty that will be able to offer mentorship, guidance, and role model for the diverse student population entering into nursing programs across the country.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the career development of Black women nursing faculty. Questions addressed by this study were:
1. How do Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education?
2. What are the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty?

Significance of the Study

This study identifies specific areas in which institutions of higher learning can increase exposure, educate and provide a more diverse faculty which in turn will enrich the scholarly culture of both undergraduate and graduate nursing schools. To achieve this, the study examined how Black women nursing faculty interact with and are motivated by their colleagues, family, community, and institution with regards to their
interest in education, recruitment, retention and advancement in their professional careers.

Multiple studies (AACN, 2003; AACN, 2005; Johnson, 2004; SREB, 2001; Yordy, 2006) have been produced that discuss the nursing shortage and the need to recruit and retain nurses to cover the increasing healthcare demand. The studies that discussed and focused on the retention of nurses in academia typically targeted the nursing student population as a whole or the nursing faculty in its entirety. The literature available on retaining Black women nursing faculty is extremely limited. Most often, when the discussion of issues that pertained to Black women nursing faculty were presented, they were lumped into the minority category. For this reason, I believe the adult education as well as the nursing education literature will benefit tremendously from the information brought forth from this area of research. It will fill the existing scholarly void with the investigation and documentation Black women nursing faculty’s experiences associated with their career development and retention. This study documents the journey of eleven Black women through nursing academia identifying significant factors that not only influenced their decision to enter into nursing academia but also those factors that ultimately led to their retention in academia.

Finally, it is anticipated that this study will be useful as a guide to career development and advancement of Black women in nursing who are interested in pursuing nursing education as a career option. For Black women, options for career opportunities are not afforded to them due to their socialization, their positionality and discriminatory institutional practices (Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Having a roadmap that identifies significant factors that encourage and
discourage success in the academic halls will not only help academia be better at recruiting and retaining Black women but it will provide Black women nurses with armor that they can use to fight against the odds and achieve advancement in nursing academia.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The process by which Black women develop and achieve their career aspirations is complex and incorporates multiple aspects. The purpose of the study was to identify factors that contribute to the career development of Black women nursing faculty. The research questions guiding this study were: how do Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education, and what are the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty? More specifically, this study investigated how race, gender, power, and positionality intersect to shape and influence the career development and aspirations of Black women nursing faculty. Knowing how and what influenced the career development of these women provided insight into identifying factors that are significant to their retention in academia.

This literature review provides a synopsis of education and nursing literature that includes an overview of the nursing shortage, a snapshot of the nursing faculty as a whole, and an appraisal of Black nursing faculty and their contributions. Next, it discusses women in higher education with focus on feminist theories, benefits of diversification, and challenges women face in the academy. Finally, it discusses the career development of women to include the associated theories and themes of concern regarding Black women in particular.

Sources for this literature search were identified through on-line searches via GALILEO, GIL, and Google through the University of Georgia. Primary databases searched included: Dissertation Abstracts, ERIC, Education Abstracts, Health Source: Nursing Academic Edition, CHINAL, and ProQuest.
Nursing Shortage

For many years, nursing has been a female dominated profession. This is in part due to the efforts initiated and developed by Florence Nightingale. Her image of the nurse being subordinate, nurturing, domestic, humble and self-sacrificing became prevalent in society but ostracized men (Hine, 1989). Through the years, there have been periods of increased demand with limited professionals to accommodate. As this gap between the supply of nurses and the demand widens, the shortage will become an even greater emergency (SREB, 2001). In a study conducted by the American Hospital Association, there are an estimated 126,000 vacant full time nursing positions at hospitals across the country with that number expected to triple by 2020 (Haug, 2002; SREB, 2001). Faced with an acute shortage of nurses and an aging nursing workforce, nursing schools and educators are challenged with the need to become more creative in recruitment efforts. The continued decline in enrollment of female students to basic nursing programs may be a result of an increasing variety of career choices for women that are outside the nursing field. According to the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, of the current 2.7 million nurses, minorities account for 13 percent and males (all races) account for only 5.4 – 7.4 percent. These statistics dramatically illustrate America’s urgent need to develop a more diverse work force that is able to provide culturally and linguistically competent care to our increasingly multicultural population (Gooden, 2002).

Nursing Faculty Shortage

The faculty shortage is nursing schools across the United States is a reflection of the nursing shortage as a whole. In fact, 75 percent of United States nursing schools
cited faculty shortages as the major reason for denying admission to qualified students (LaRocco, 2006). Unfilled faculty positions, resignations, projected retirements and the shortage of students being prepared for the faculty role are seen as the culprits of the problem and pose a threat to the nursing education workforce (AACN, 2004). According to the literature (AACN, 2005; Hinshaw, 2001; LaRocco, 2006; Sochalski, 2002) the decline in nursing schools enrollment is directly influenced by the increasing shortage of nursing faculty. The AACN (2004) indicated that the nurse faculty vacancy rate is 8.6 % with most of the vacancies, 59.8%, being positions requiring a doctoral degree. This is an increase from the vacancy rate of 7.4% reported in 2000 (AACN, 2004).

Practicing nurses as well as nursing faculty are aging and preparing for retirement. The fact that many nursing faculty enter academia at a relatively advanced age exacerbates the shortage problem (Larson, 2002). The average age for doctoral nursing faculty holding the ranks of professor, associate professor and assistant professor is 56.6, 54.2 and 50.5 years respectively (AACN, 2003). The average age for all faculty ranks prepared at the master’s level is 48.8 years (AACN, 2003). As the faculty age continues to climb, the number of productive years to teach decreases. According to information presented at an audio conference sponsored by the National League of Nursing Nurse Educator Workforce Development Advisory Council (NEWDAC), Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare organizations and the Southern Regional Educational Board, 784 nurse educators, about 6% are projected to retire between 2003 and 2006. This is particularly alarming because only 8% of the 2,837 graduates from master’s and doctoral programs were prepared as nurse educators (NEWDAC, 2003). AACN (2003) and Hinshaw (2001) states that as the
number of faculty nearing retirement increases, there are fewer individuals selecting
nursing education as a profession to take those slots. Although Hinshaw (2001) states
that as the number of nurses and faculty nearing retirement increases, there are fewer
individuals selecting nursing as a profession due to greater career opportunities
available to women, recent recruitment efforts have sparked the interest in nursing
again. At present there are far more applicants for nursing programs than there are
spaces available. The decreased number of spaces is due to the limited number of
Therefore, the decline in enrollments in nursing schools is greatly influenced by the
increasing shortage of nursing faculty. This phenomenon makes the shortage of nursing
faculty interwoven with the current national shortage of nurses.

Hinshaw (2001) identified and Yordy (2006) concurs that the following are
reasons individuals do not choose nursing academia as a career: (1) the increased
number of opportunities within the nursing profession, (2) non-competitive salaries in
academia (3) major financial investment of doctoral education and, (4) high
expectations for academic positions such as a strong commitment to teaching, research
and service.

Those who choose academia typically do so as a second career. They return to
graduate school after years of working as a nurse. This move to complete graduate
doctoral programs later in life reduces the amount of time they have to mature into the
valuable leaders and scholars needed to mentor those coming behind them. The AACN
(2003) documents only 50.2% of all nursing faculty teaching in baccalaureate and
higher degree programs being doctorally prepared. With the expectation of 179 nursing
faculty retiring in 2006, the demand for doctorally prepared nursing faculty will continue to exceed the availability (Glanville & Porche, 2000; SREB, 2001). Glanville and Porche (2000) contributes the existing shortage of doctorally prepared nursing faculty to the under representation of minorities in graduate and doctoral programs with Black students accounting for 8% of the total enrollment (SREB, 2001). Although schools of nursing have never been fully staffed with doctorally prepared faculty, it is important for those inspiring to become nurse educators to obtain a doctorate (Hinshaw. 2001). The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2003) proclaims that the doctoral degree should be considered the appropriate and desired credential for a career as a nurse educator and eventually, without a doctorate, nurse educators will be limited to teaching in associate and diploma level schools of nursing.

Black Nursing Faculty

Over the past decade, there has been a major demographic shift in the United States and according to Glanville and Porche (2000) it will continue to diversify so much so that the currant minority population will become the majority constituting a predicted 51.1% of the total population. With a total population shift of this magnitude, diverse health care professionals, both clinical and academic, are essential to meet the growing health care needs of the new majority population. For this reason, recruitment efforts aimed at increasing the exposure of nursing as a career to potential students have also begun to target both minority and male students to the field in an attempt to address the needs of the population with a workforce that is representative of the population (Aiken, 1999). Even with these statistics, the literature available on minority women nursing faculty is extremely limited. The literature found on the nursing shortage and the need to
recruit nurses to cover the increasing demand focused on the nursing student population as a whole or the nursing faculty in its entirety.

According to Daufin (2001), the greatest motivating factor for minority faculty to enter into academia was their perception of the contribution they could make to society followed very closely by the opportunity to educate students, the intellectual challenge of education, and the opportunity to serve as a role model to the students. To decrease the shortage of nurses and diversify the nursing workforce, the National League of Nursing (NLN) declares that having a diverse faculty population is one key factor in attracting more minority and male students to nursing schools (AACN, 2003). McNeal (2003) identified African Americans to constitute 6% of the nursing professoriate totaling fewer that 900 actual faculty nationwide. To recruit and retain minority nursing faculty the NLN suggests the universities provide adequate support (time, money, staff) for the recruitment process, a recruitment communications package, an environment of open communication among administrators and faculty, and mentorship both internal and external for recruited minority faculty members (AACN, 2003).

When Tucker-Allen, Steele, and Baker (1990) looked at how Black nursing faculty was faring in the halls of academe, they noted that Black nursing faculty are not been fully integrated or socialized into the academic milieu of higher education. The almost total lack of participation or inclusion in scholarly activities serves as a benchmark for academic success and provides evidence to these claims. In addition, faculty who choose to pursue advanced degrees typically worked full time and were generally socialized less in both the degree granting institution because they are unable
to attend full time and on the job because of their desire and necessity to attain the advanced degree (Tucker-Allen, Steele, & Baker, 1990).

Aiken, Cervero, and Johnson-Bailey’s (2001) study on Black women nurses who returned to school for an advanced degree, found that the desire of the participants to continue their education existed and could be achieved. Interpersonal factors such as their spiritual beliefs and determination, and cultural factors such as the potential for social mobility and previous nursing experience were identified as specific factors that encouraged their participation. Hassouneh-Phillips and Beckett (2003) identified the challenges the women face and described the cultural contexts of institutions as understood by the women. The pervasive influence of racism on the participant’s lives at personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural levels was overwhelmingly evident.

Issues related to the experience of “other” are “different when compared to the norm” and manifestations of racism such as intimidation, difference in treatment, silence, being ignored, and humiliation were identified as the strongest barriers to participation (Aiken, Cervero, & Johnson-Bailey, 2001; Hassouneh-Phillips & Beckett, 2003). The significance of these studies is that they identify reasons Black women are discouraged from continuing their education which inevitably decreases the number of qualified minority candidates to teach.

Currently, there is a push to encourage minority students to attend doctoral nursing programs in an effort to bridge this huge gap. Hassouneh-Phillips and Beckett (2003) attribute the high attrition rates among students of color in higher education to a lack of social connection, financial aid, faculty support and commitment which may be secondary to the student’s internal thought that completing a doctoral program is an
unattainable goal. There are a multitude of consequences that can be attributed to the scarcity of doctorally prepared minority nurses. Because minority researchers are more likely to study minority populations with the goal of improving available health care options, a decrease in the number of individuals to conduct the research and a loss of senior investigators through retirement could curtail the continuing development of the nursing knowledge base and contribute to the current disparity in health outcomes for minority populations (Hinshaw, 2001). This shortage will also limit the professional leaders who are able to shape health policy in the state, national and international arenas and without this presence at the table, minority populations are devoid of voice to advocate for their interest (Hinshaw, 2001).

Adult Education

What is adult education? Even the scholars in adult education cannot come up with a single condensed definition. Merriam and Brockett (1997) come close by incorporating the concepts of multiple definitions into one. They define adult education as “activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self perception define them as adults” (p. 8). Johnson-Bailey (2002) declares that adult education is a reflection of the society in which we live and that adult education has not succeeded in empowering those lacking basic skills and facilitating equal access and opportunity. This is in part due to power or the lack of power of the disenfranchised. Power, according to Cervero and Wilson (1994) is always being negotiated even in asymmetrical relationships. However, if those who are disenfranchised are unaware of their power, that power is of little use to them. When it comes to education, the issue of who has power to determine what counts as
knowledge is important because those in power produce knowledge based on their research agendas, and determine what research is “good, what research is published and disseminated and what is included in the curriculum (Johnson Bailey, Tisdell & Cervero, 1994). Colin (1994) concurs, illuminating the fact that journals whose major topics deal with Blacks such as *The Journal of Negro Education* and *The Journal of Negro History* are not recognized as primary refereed journals, which would add a prestigious status to the author’s work, even though these journals are refereed and predate journals in the adult education field that are considered primary.

Clark declares that “the world of academia in many respects is a man’s world controlled by traditions, language, and social mores of men who have grown up together as both competitors and teammates” (1998, p. 84). Although adult education has made strides to exhibit professionalism, reproductions of inequalities along the racial and gender lines are still present (Johnson Bailey & Cervero, 2000). In view of the socio-demographic changes projected for the twenty first century, the professoriate must become more knowledgeable about the cultural milieu and eradicate institutional practices that expect Black faculty and students to commit to the Eurocentric view, value system, and behavior (Colin, 1994).

**Educational Inequality for Black Women**

Guy (1999) says that every aspect of adult life is shaped by culture, and that education serves as a vehicle for defining the cultural values that people hold. As a culture, Black women place value on education. Collins (1990) maintains that “African American women have long realized that ignorance doomed Black people to powerlessness” (p. 147). Therefore, education is seen as a connection among self,
change, and empowerment in African American communities. Historically, education was not seen as an individual gain but for “race uplift” in an effort to assist in the economic, political and social improvement (Collins, 1990). To succeed in what is considered the man’s world, Black women have accepted what Hull, Scott & Smith (1982) identify as the “Black woman’s role”: (1) to be better qualified, (2) more articulate, (3) more aggressive, (4) have more stamina to face inevitable setbacks, (5) have more patience due to slower advancement, (6) be better than White women, all while (7) remaining feminine and non threatening. To add to this, Black women have been forced to accept what some call the role of matriarch; I choose to call it the role of Black motherhood. Due to societal imposed restrictions and demands, Black women are forced to become the head of their households. In addition to her various roles on the job she must return home to a family where she assumes the role of mother and father, wife and husband, provider, and disciplinarian. All for which she receives no pay, excessive criticism and little recognition.

Collins (1990) purports that there is a continuous effort to examine the connections between race and gender oppression in analyzing Black women’s work in capitalist political economies. Although women enter college at rates equal to and often surpassing men, men tend to fare better in the economic world gaining rank and promotion faster, getting paid more, and possessing more power which continues to perpetuates this cycle of oppression towards women. Hull, Scott and Smith, (1982) proposes that “Black women have usually had the greatest access to the worst jobs at the lowest earnings”.

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The Black women’s oppression in the paid labor market interlocks with that of their unpaid family labor. For this reason, Black women have made major contributions in keeping families together and teaching children survival skills. According to Collins (1990), women who are confined to underpaid, demanding, menial jobs resists passing on to their children externally defined images of Black women as mules, mammies, matriarchs and sexually denigrated women in an effort to foster their self-valuation and self-reliance. For these women, teaching becomes an arena for political activism whenever it occurs (Collins, 1990).

As for educational advancement, although Black women comprise the largest number of students of color at the graduate and undergraduate level (Johnson-Bailey, 2004) they, according to Hull, Scott and Smith (1982), are the most isolated subgroup. Black women have neither race nor gender in common with those who are typically in power, White males. The problem starts with access to educational institutions. It is the policy of many institutions to have a coordinator or committee to review applicants for admission. Johnson-Bailey (2004) discussed how rejection due to perceptions of those in power blocks access to educational institutions. After crossing over the hurdle of access, Black women in particular find themselves isolated in the academic environment. The experience of “otherness” (Aiken, et al. 2001; Collins, 1990; hooks, 1989; Lee & Johnson-Bailey, 2004) is noted throughout the literature as a barrier or discourager which can perpetuate educational inequality with regard to men and White women. Although Black women possess the intelligence to score high on entrance and placement exams, they often feel as though they have to validate their presence in institutions of higher education. They constantly have to overcome the stigma attached
to affirmative action quotas, and the notion that they are inferior in intelligence to Whites (Colin, 1994; Johnson-Bailey, 2004).

Faculty in Higher Education

In the professorate as a whole, women make up around 33% of the faculty at institutions of higher education and Black female faculty make up less than 2.3% of those percentages (Clark, 1998). Job satisfaction, salary differentials, mentorship, faculty development and role expectations have been identified in the literature as factors that produce the hostile atmosphere for women likely contributing to the decreased number of women in adult education (AACN, 2003; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Glanville & Porche, 2000; Hinshaw, 2001; Jackson, 2002; Lee & Johnson-Bailey, 2004; McNeal, 2003 Murray, 1998; Nuby, 2000; Plata, 1996; Sochalski, 2002; and Snarr, 1996). In addition, Giger, Johnson, Davidhizar and Fishman (1993) declare that the scarcity of Blacks in academia is related to a combination of factors to include a limited pool of doctorally prepared candidates, patterns of interracial interactions, and institutional protocols and procedures. Tucker-Allen, Steele, and Baker (1990) found that Black nursing faculty are generally not fully integrated or socialized into the academic milieu of higher education. Allen, Steele, and Baker (1990) provide as evidence to this phenomenon the almost total lack of participation or inclusion of Black faculty in scholarly activities with their White coworkers which serve as a benchmark for academic success and professorial advancements (Tucker-Allen, Steele, & Baker, 1990).
Job Satisfaction

Dissatisfaction with workplace was listed as a reason for the loss of younger faculty from academia. According to the literature, the dissatisfaction stems from the limited opportunities to serve in leadership positions (Clark, 1998; Daufin 2001; McNeal, 2003), excessive workload in the form of committee assignments (AACN, 2003; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal, 2003), lesser professorial and prestigious faculty ranking (Clark, 1998; McNeal 2003), biases in the tenure process (Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003), lower salaries (AACN, 2003; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal, 2003), lack of mentorship (McNeal, 2003), and trivialized or discounted research initiatives (Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003). Murray (1998) adds that the feelings of isolation is common, citing the lack of contact with other Black faculty as a factor contributing to their diminished job satisfaction. Until institutions take notice and responsibility for their actions, recruitment initiatives aimed at increasing the number of faculty will not succeed if faculty are not satisfied and retained (AACN, 2003; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003; Murray, 1998; Sochalski, 2002; and Snarr, 1996).

Salary Differentials

Salary is an influential factor in the employment decisions of those completing graduate education. Salaries for gendered professions such as social work, teaching and nursing vary according to the sector in which one is employed. The devaluing of women’s work is often seen through the ever prevailing wage gap. According to Bierema (1998) White women on average earn seventy-six cents for every dollar men earn where as Black women are at an even greater disadvantage earning...
approximately fifty cents to every dollar men earn. This is seen in academia more times
that not where faculty in female dominated professions such as nursing and education
tend to receive less funding with lower salaries than those in male dominated fields
such as math and science.

For this reason, there is a tendency for professionals to work in the private sector
as opposed to academia due to salary differentials. Nudy and Leland (2000) suggests
that Black females have migrated from the teaching profession to fields perceived to be
more financially and psychologically rewarding, more prestigious and more accessible
to rapid career advancement. Accordingly, the American Association of Colleges of
Nursing (2003) noted salaries for clinical positions are much higher than those for
faculty positions. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the median salary for assistant
professors with doctoral preparation was $56,291. For those without doctoral
preparation, the salary was 48,240 (Yordy, 2006). Accordingly, the American
Federation of Teachers (2005), salaries of advanced practice nurses working in the
private sector was $72,400, and for those in nursing administration it was $67,100. A
registered nurse can work in a patient care facility or private sector for fewer hours and
generally earn more money depending on her education, experience and area of
expertise without the added responsibility of advising, mentoring students, service to the
institution, and pressures to publish for tenure and promotion (AACN, 2003). Because
wage increases for faculty do not mirror those who work in the private sector, minorities
consider the lower salaries a reason to avoid academia and therefore tend not to
consider academia as a viable career option (Nudy & Leland, 2000; Weems, 2003).
Weems (2003) suggest that many qualified Black faculty identifies do not choose to
enter or stay in academia because of the combination of decreased salaries and hostile work environment.

Mentorship

Aiken, Cervero and Johnson-Bailey (2001) identify determination as an “interpersonal factor” Black women possess that encourages participation in educational institutions in an effort to gain educational equality. But with this self-motivation, women need support from their family and others as well. The African adage that “It takes a village to raise a child” can be correlated to the experiences of Black women. It takes mentors and role models to assist in not only the completion of educational programs but to advance in the world of academia as well. Johnson-Bailey (2004) concurs that providing information suggesting mentorship between faculty, staff, and peers is vital to success. However, it is well documented throughout the literature (Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982; Jackson, 2002; Johnson-Bailey, 2004) that routinely there are not enough Black professors in education to adequately accommodate Black students; therefore, staff such as secretaries, graduate assistants and peers become lifelines, offering support and information that is not generally provided to Black students such as the significance of class scheduling and professor selection. Black women need someone to introduce them to the ins and outs while helping them learn and negotiate the rules in academia (Johnson-Bailey, 2004). In the words of Angela Davis “We must strive to lift as we climb….We must climb in such as way as to guarantee that all our sisters, regardless of social class, and indeed all of our brothers climb with us” (Collins, 1990, p. 159).

Looking at mentorship from the other end of the spectrum, Black women instructors and professors in higher education are also isolated due to limited access to
role models and mentors being underutilized and often demoralized (Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982). Hull, Scott and Smith (1982) suggest that this lack of role models and mentors leaves the Black female faculty with no one with which to share experiences, gain support, identify or model. This phenomenon makes being a mentor to students and other faculty an even greater challenge. Because feelings of loneliness and of being an outcast are common, institutions should develop a mentoring program as a way to provide support, offer suggestions, advocate for newly recruited minority faculty. Institutions should not force minority faculty to adjust to the system’s established standards, and inevitably learn to cope with the demands and requirements of the university with little or no guidance placing them in a “sink or swim situation” (Plata, 1996, p. 221). These findings provide evidence that Black faculty have limited access to mentorship across their educational and career trajectory starting during their graduate studies and reaching far into their tenure in the academy.

Mentorship programs can be highly beneficial in retention of minority faculty. Tucker-Allen, Steele and Baker (1992) advocated for the institution to have a systematic means for integrating new faculty into the department, complete with a mentoring program where the new faculty would be able to choose their mentor. AACN (2003) agrees, offering the suggestion for institutions to initiate mentorship programs that are both internal and external for recruited minority faculty members. Carriuolo (2003) adds additional value to the mentoring process by suggesting that the institution “show majority faculty how to become terrific cross-cultural mentors” (p. 24) and to ensure that the “chairs and deans are also trained as mentors” (p. 24) in an effort to show the minority faculty they want them to thrive.
When recruiting minority faculty, very careful selection should go into the placement of a search committee with both women and minorities present. According to Carriuolo (2003) the search committee members are important gatekeepers. These institutional gatekeepers have the ability to prevent advancement of Black applicants to full employment (Giger, Johnson, Davidhizar & Fishman, 1993). Gatekeepers are “the faculty who are perceived as the ruling class and who have a tendency to open their mentorship to only those persons whom they deem worthy” (Giger et al., 1993, p. 145). Plata (1996) argues that institutions should create a teaching learning environment that reflects hope and opportunity for minority students and faculty and affirm that criteria for recruiting and employing do not exclude minority faculty based on factors that are irrelevant to job performance such as the amount of research one has done or the number of publications one has.

*Faculty Development*

The literature (Glanville & Porche, 2000; Jackson, 2002; Plata, 1996) suggests that institutions pay close attention to the faculty development component that encourages the faculty to grow and become more committed to academia if they want to retain recruited minority faculty. However, overloading faculty with committee assignments, task force assignments, and heavy workloads diminishes their opportunity to engage in activities regarded as essential to achieving tenure and promotion (Glanville & Porche, 2000; Jackson, 2002; Plata, 1996).

Jackson (2002) states in order to provide minority faculty with the tools required for success in academia, institutions should be committed to faculty scholarly development by providing allocations for travel to professional conferences, recognition
and bonuses for outstanding accomplishments, reduced workload for tenure-earning faculty, and mentorship for junior faculty. Plata (1996) went on to say that institutions should encourage minority faculty to become more involved in both research and teaching which in turn would help them to become leaders and develop their own database for decision making. Institutions should also encourage the minority faculty to capitalize on their experiences and encourage them to use the many situations confronted in their daily lives as a catalyst for research and other instructional endeavors.

Role Expectations

In general, there are many satisfying opportunities afforded those who choose academia as a career such as variety, flexibility, collegiality, opportunity for service and the ability to provide leadership (Hinshaw, 2001; Nuby & Leland, 2000). In addition, those who choose nursing education may find the ability to improve health through student education and research and to shape health care policies on professional and scholarly expertise just as rewarding (Hinshaw, 2001). However, with these satisfying reasons, multiple extra demands are placed on faculty in higher education as opposed to those who work in nonacademic roles. Faculty are required to: (a) obtain extramural funding, (b) conduct research, (c) produce scholarship, (d) offer community and university service to fulfill tenure and promotion requirements, (e) update curricular, (f) develop new courses, and (g) remain current on trends and issues (Hinshaw, 2001; Nuby & Leland, 2000).

For Black faculty, the load is even greater due to the tokenism effect (Reyes, 1988). Often being the sole minority in their department, Black faculty find themselves
constantly being called upon to serve on committees and assist with projects to represent and bring in the minority perspective. This increased request for service makes devoting adequate time to complete requirements for tenure and promotion such as scholarship, research and teaching challenging. In addition, for Black faculty in nursing education, the assumption of duty is even greater. When nursing faculty take students into a clinical setting, the students are able to work with clients under the apprenticeship of the nursing faculty. Therefore, the nursing faculty is responsible not only for her actions, but the actions of the students and their assigned patients. In most clinical settings, the faculty to student ratio can be as high as one faculty to ten students (NLN, 200). This load is double the load of the private sector nurse whose only responsibility is that of herself and her assigned patients.

**Discriminatory Practices**

Overt and covert discriminatory practices are felt throughout the academy. Daufin (2001) suggests that many minorities with terminal degrees do not choose academia or remain in academia because of perceived discrimination especially in hiring, retention, tenure, promotion, workload assignments, professional reward, acknowledgement and inclusion. For Black faculty, their opportunities for professional growth, development, and networking are often hampered by the strained racial relationships encounter with White faculty (Giger et al, 1993). Daufin (2001) also noted that African American and Latino faculty reported overt racism as the most significant barrier to employment followed closely by the politics and prejudices of the academy disguised as covert racism with regard to the tenure process, budget allocation, and power relations being coded as institutional policies, procedures and expectations. Humphrey-Brown (1997)
agrees and suggest that these practices hinder minority faculty from being successful in activities necessary for promotion and tenure.

McNeal (2003) noted that under-representation of minority faculty and their scholarly productivity has been a long-standing problem in the academy. In a study by Hassouneh-Phillips & Beckett (2003) the participants stated that racism was ubiquitous. The study illustrates the need for faculty and students to develop and cultivate a critical awareness of the significance of racism at all levels and expresses the crucial need to increase the number of diverse faculty to serve as mentors.

Unfortunately, racism is not isolated to the academy and minority faculty. Aiken, Cervero and Johnson-Bailey (2001) identified factors that encouraged and discouraged participation of Black women to continue their education in nursing. Interpersonal factors such as their spiritual beliefs and determination, and cultural factors such as the potential for social mobility and previous nursing experience were identified as specific factors that encouraged participation. On the other hand, issues related to the experience of “other” or “different when compared to the norm” and racism such as injustices manifested by intimidation, difference in treatment, silence, misdiagnosis, being ignored, and humiliation were identified as the strongest barriers to participation. The significance of this study is that it recognized reasons Black women are discouraged from continuing their education which inevitably decreases the number of qualified minority candidates available to teach.

Career Development Theories

The term career development, formally known as vocational guidance, was coined in the late 1960s. The traditional career development theories such as the Trait-
Factor Theory, the Social Cognitive Theory, and the Life Span-Life Space Theory, were based on information gained from White males samples rather than samples representative of populations across the racial, gender and socioeconomic spectrum (Bierema, 2001; Cook, Heppner, & O’Brien, 2002; Niles & Harris-Browlsbey, 2002). Since then, career development principles have evolved to better incorporate women and their journey to reach their career aspirations (Hartung, 2002; Niles & Harris-Browlsbey, 2002). In general, career development describes two sets of conceptual categories, one that explains the development of career behavior across the life span and the other that describes how career behavior is changed by particular interventions (Herr, 2001).

Parsons’ (1909) three-step paradigm steered the development of vocational guidance which provided the foundation for the career development theories to build upon (Herr, 2001; Herr & Shahnasarian, 2001). According to Parsons’ three step design, the person should have a clear understanding of themselves, know the requirements and conditions for success, and have “true reasoning or decision making ability” to marry the two in an effort to choose a career (Cook, Heppner, & O’Brien, 2002; Herr, 2001; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). This model was developed in light of social, economic and scientific changes resulting in the need to place workers in jobs requiring specific skills (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). It focused on the individual being able to self analyze to come to an understanding about jobs they were able to do through knowledge of job specifications and those that were available to them (Herr, 2001). This process formed the basic elements of what is now considered the “Trait-and-Factor” approach. The Trait-and-Factor approach emphasizes the identification of a
person’s relevant traits or characteristics, usually through the use of standardized tests or inventories, and ultimately matching them with factors or requirements of a specific occupation (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

The Theory of Work Adjustment developed in the 1960’s mirrors the Trait-and-Factor approach in that it focuses on the connection between the individual’s abilities and needs and the environment (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). The Theory of Work Adjustment purports that both the worker and the work environment have needs and requirements that must be satisfied. When these requirements cannot be met, the degree of flexibility of both the worker and the work environment then becomes an issue. Adjustment is achieved when the person and the work environment are co-responsive to each other’s needs (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). Hartung (2002) describes this theory as the “unfolding of capabilities and requirements in the course of a person’s interaction with environments of various kinds (home, school, play, work) across the life span” (p. 17).

Holland’s (1985) Theory of Types and Person-Environment Interactions offers a useful framework for understanding and predicting individual behavior because it provides a link between personality characteristics and corresponding jobs (Farmer, 1997; Herr & Shahnasarian, 2001; Holland, 1985; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). The fundamental underlying premise of this theory is that people will have the most job satisfaction in occupations that match their personality type, characteristics, and interests (Wilson, 2004). Holland’s theory contends that career interests are an expression of the individual’s personality (Farmer, 1997; Holland, 1985; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). The career interests that Holland refers to are the complex measures
that reflect things such as personality, preferences, values and self-efficacy (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). He categorized personality types and environments into six categories: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional noting that a person’s behavior is determined by an interaction between their personality and the characteristics in the environment (Holland, 1985; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). Holland believed when individuals search for a career, they look for environments that allow them to exercise their skills and express their values. The four theoretical concepts used to linked this theory to practice are: 1) congruence which describes the degree of “fit” between the individual’s personality type and work environment, 2) differentiation which tries to distinguish a specific category the person or environment most resembles, 3) consistency refers to the degree of relatedness within the various personality types and vocational identity which is the knowledge of one’s goals, interests, and 4) talent (Holland, 1985; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

Super’s (1990) life-span, life-space theory purports that various determinants such as a person’s needs, values, abilities, peer groups, family and the labor market influence career development and places work in the context of the multiple life role demands of the person (Herr, 2001; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002, Super, 1990). His theory is based on the assumption that all individuals travel through the stages of career development in a linear fashion. Super describes the process of career development over the life span by dividing it into five categories: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement (Herr, 2001; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002, Super, 1990). In the growth stage, children seek information about various careers through occupational fantasy and general environmental exploration. As the child matures into
adolescence, they fall into what Super terms the exploration stage. In this stage the adolescence begins to plan for the future crystallizing an occupational preference. The establishment stage begins in young adulthood when the person becomes more stabilized in an occupation with focus on consolidating and advancing. As middle age approaches, the person is faced with the choice to either keep up with the advancements in their field to maintain or improve their performance or change occupations and is appropriately termed the maintenance stage. Disengagement is the stage which occurs when the person’s interest in work activities begins to dwindle and thoughts of retirement begin to loom. In this stage the person’s actions become focused on deceleration, retirement planning and retirement living.

Gottfredson’s (1996) Theory of Circumscription and Compromise describes the process leading to the formation of occupational aspirations and focuses on issues of social identity, orientation to sex roles, and social valuation (Hartung, 2002; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). The theory highlights the importance of providing career development intervention in the early stages of life addressing the fact that women and men regardless of social class and race tend to differ in their occupational aspirations (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). According to Gottferdson (1996), the circumscription portion of the theory involves the process of eliminating unacceptable occupational alternatives based primarily on gender and social class which leads to what is considered the compromise that involves the process of modifying career choices due to limiting factors such as the availability of jobs (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

Krumboltz’s learning theory of career counseling is based on the application of Bandura’s (1969) social learning theory which “assumes that people’s personalities and
behavioral repertoires can be explained on the basis of their unique learning experiences while acknowledging the role played by innate and developmental processes” (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002, p. 58). There are two distinct parts to this theory. The first part focuses on describing factors that influence a person’s career choice such as genetics, environmental conditions, learning experiences and economic factors (Farmer, 1997; Lent, Brown & Hackett 1996; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). The second part focuses on the importance of career counseling and intervention providing an eight step process that provides a framework for full exploration of career options (Farmer, 1997; Lent, Brown & Hackett 1996; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

Social Cognitive Theory highlights three concepts: self efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and personal goals (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). It is similar to Krumboltz’s theory in that it builds upon the assumption that cognitive factors play an integral role in career development. However, it focuses more on how learning experiences guide career behaviors, how interests, abilities, and values interrelate and how the person and contextual factors influence career outcomes (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). According to the model, four sources shape self-efficacy beliefs: (a) personal performance accomplishments, (b) vicarious learning, (c) social persuasion, and (d) physiological states. If one follows this model, the outcome expectations would then be specific beliefs about extrinsic reinforcement, self-directed consequences, and outcomes derived from the process of performing a given activity (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). Plainly stated, outcome expectations are the imagined results of what would happen if specific behaviors were performed. Personal goals then relate to the determination of the person to engage in
certain activities to produce a particular outcome (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002). According to the model, these three elements interact with each other to influence personal career development.

Farmer (1997) offers a Conceptual Model for Understanding Inhibited Academic and Career Motivation in Women. Academic and career motivation rests in the center of the model to signify that other factors have the potential to facilitate or hinder women’s incentive to achieve their academic and career aspirations. Farmer (1997) contends that those personal and situational factors such as home and career conflict, sex role orientation, self-esteem, fear, motivation, discrimination, access to resources and family socialization influence women’s motivation achievement and career commitment. Personal variables relate to sex role socialization and self concepts that typically affect women’s achievement and career motivation in different ways than they affect men whereas situational variables relate to parental expectations, family support or lack of support, and community socialization that provide perceptions of economic conditions in the workplace (Farmer, 1997). This model provides an explanation of how these variables can affect the achievement of women’s career aspirations both positively and negatively. It explains that women are socialized differently than men with respect to the development of their academic and career aspirations. The socialization or lack of typically encourages women to choose careers that are gendered which historically are service oriented fields that offer more flexibility and less pay.

Alfred (2001) streamlined the career theory concept and conducted a study to identify factors that are significant to the career development of Black female faculty. Her Bicultural Life Structure Theory discusses the phenomenon of double
consciousness. Double consciousness initially described by Du Bois (1903) as looking at one’s self through the eyes of others is now termed biculturalism which signifies living in two worlds (Blake, 1999). Alfred (2001) purports:

The bicultural life structure is the nucleus from which Black women derive the power to contest their marginal location, to articulate their world views, and to continuously renegotiate their elusive culture and identity to meet career expectations in White-dominated institutions (p. 113).

In her study, Alfred (2001) found the following to be significant in contributing to a thriving career for Black female faculty: a) creating a positive image while rejecting stereotypical images, b) finding a safe space where they could reaffirm themselves as Black women, c) knowing the academic culture and its role expectations, d) becoming visible within their disciplinary and institutional cultures and e) maintaining a fluid life structure from which they could draw the power necessary to negotiate White-dominated cultures. With these findings she developed a model of career development for Black Women in White-dominated institutions that may prove to have great utility to the career development of Black nursing faculty. In this model there are three layers. The bicultural life structure is the core surrounded by the internal career consisting of the psychological dimensions (positive self definition, identity, safe space and bicultural competence) which facilitates management of the institutional expectations of the academic career. The outer layer is the external career consisting of the structural dimensions (knowledge and professional visibility) which represent the expectations of the institution and constitute the structural components of the career.
Application of Career Development Theories to Women

Although all of the theories have some application to minorities and women, most of them are based on men’s careers and are therefore insensitive to the multiple roles and responsibilities of women. Hartung (2002) asserts that the central problem with the majority career theories is their lack of cultural validity for racial and ethnic minorities.

The trait-and-factor theories assume that women in general have equal opportunity to explore matches between their personalities and work environment. The reality is that these theories do not take into account the social contextual obstacles that many women must incorporate in their career choice nor do they account for the unequal access that many women face (Bierema, 2001; Farmer, 1997). Women are socialized to aspire what is considered gender appropriate career options. This type of selective career socialization contributes to the continuation of traditional career selections by women. With career socialization issues taken into account, women tend to choose options dictated by gender, class, race, and cultural backgrounds (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998, p.87). In this frame of thought, nurturing careers such as teaching, counseling and nursing would be considered more logical choices for women. According to Thomas (2004), this is particularly true for African American women whose “interests have been limited by environments that foster and support dominant culture stereotypes” (p. 38).

Super’s (1990) model falters when it is applied to women because it “assumes linear, uninterrupted career trajectories and ignores the fact that women’s careers tend to be nonlinear, characterized by interruptions as women move in and out of the workforce” (Bierema, 2001 p. 56). Due to “societal expectations of women assuming
primary responsibility for homemaking and childrearing they experience more complexities in their career plans and choices” (Wilson, 2004, p. 16). In addition, Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell (1998) suggest that this theory “discounts how limited exposure to role models, gendered societal expectations and attempts to balance these two fundamental concerns affect a women’s career development” (p. 86).

Gottfredson’s (1996) theory is ineffective in women’s development because it eliminates occupational alternatives based primarily on gender and social class forcing women to modify or limit their career choice aspirations due to role expectations. According to Wilson (2004), this theory narrows the visions of adolescent girls because it leads them early on to “constrict their career choices and compromise their career potential due to its observation of sex role socialization” (p. 16) and this vision extends throughout adulthood.

Farmer’s (1997) conceptual model for understanding inhibited academic and career motivation in women theory and Alfred’s (2001) bicultural life structure theory may be better applicable to women and minorities because they take into account the uniqueness of learning styles, abilities, family and career socialization, and environmental factors. Because women are socialized into traditional roles in childhood, acknowledging the external variables as well as their learning styles provide a better assessment for career counseling. The strength of these career development theories is that they address both the environmental and the individual variables that impact women’s career development.
Career Development Concern for Black Women in the Academy

In reviewing the literature, themes such as personal identity, structural inequalities, the glass ceiling effect, and mentorship were recognized as specific issues of concern with regard to Black women. The academic setting mirrors that of the power structures and forces in society. Similar to the power structures in society, the adult education atmosphere is typically male dominated. Therefore, the success for Black female faculty would be dictated by, according to Bierema (2001), assuming masculine attributes, stereotyping gender roles, and following a set of rules for success.

Because work is a major force that shapes women’s lives and contributes to identity formation Black women tend to choose their careers around their perceived primary obligation to care for home and family (Alfred, 2001; Cook, Heppner & Obrien, 2002; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998; Schreiber, 1998). The multiple roles that women are expected to play can contradict and confuse how they view themselves and their self worth (Bierema, 2001). If career interventions were aimed at changing the ideological components of the society, Black women may be encouraged to pursue more non-traditional careers.

Although teaching and nursing are considered traditional gendered roles, the professorship is not. The increasing need for Black nursing faculty illuminates the opportunity for professorship. However, the road to obtaining full professorship continues to be challenging because institutional policies and procedures are geared to help the majority stakeholders. Simply stated, the professorship is a White male dominated field and if Black women nurse educators aspire to succeed, they must be aware of the exhaustive efforts required to establish their career.
Time is a precious commodity. Because of the multiple roles women assume such as primary care provider for home and family in addition to career demands, women typically choose occupations that are highly traditional, less prestigious and lower paying because they offer more flexibility with regards to work hours (Cook, Heppner & Obrien, 2002; Farmer, 1997; Schreiber, 1998). As noted by Bierema (1998), technology has the potential to break down geographical and social barriers and provide greater flexibility to workers. This may be particularly useful to nurse educators because there are courses that can be taught via distance learning providing flexibility for both the instructor and students. Conversely, Schreiber (1998) argues that telecommuting is “a new form of oppression” (p10) suggesting that it strengthens stereotypical perspectives that women and not men who must find creative ways to balance work and family responsibilities.

As a group, women are oppressed, a circumstance that is aggravated by their various positionalities (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell 1998). In reality, Black women are at a double disadvantage. They are marginalized both economically and socially because they fall victim to both racism and sexism (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1995; Blake, 1999). To create a level playing field and provide equal opportunity to all affirmative action plans and programs were designed to ensure that discrimination was eliminated as a component of the labor market (Glanville & Porche, 2000). As Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) speak to the structural inequalities that exist in this society, they emphasized the fact that “women of color earn significantly lower wages than white women while maintaining higher unemployment rates and achieve disproportionally low educational attainment.” (p. 88).
It is thoroughly documented in the literature (AACN, 2003; Bierema, 1998; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal, 2003) that women in general tend to have lower salaries and wait longer for promotion than their White women counterparts. Lower salaries provide less incentive for Black women to pursue careers outside of the home because it limits access to required resources such as child care and transportation that are necessary for them to function in the occupational setting. It must also be noted that the lack of educational and career opportunities often reduce the extent to which minority individuals are able to fully develop their abilities and talents (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1995; Tucker-Allen, Steele, & Baker, 1990). Because Black women faculty tend to research topics that have greater significance to their community and population, they tend to have greater resistance from promotion committees because their interests and contributions are not seen as valuable. Even when Black women are compensated economically for their efforts, hooks (1984) suggests that this compensation, if not identified and accepted as valued by those in power, does not “lessen the extent to which (Black females) are psychologically exploited” (p. 104). Johnson-Bailey (2004) provides an example using workload. She states that generally, Black women faculty are likely to have greater workloads but tend to receive the least amount of recognition. This leaves these women to constantly struggle with the issue of whether or not their work is as good as their White counterparts. Therefore, “career counseling must take place within a cultural context, which includes not only knowledge of and respect for the values of other cultures, but comfort with the knowledge with one’s own values and ethnicity” (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 263).
The glass ceiling is an invisible barrier that prevents women from moving beyond middle management into positions of senior executive status (Inman, 1998). Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) assert that once women are employed in their chosen profession they linger at the lower echelons, occupying positions of the workers and lower-level supervisors. This phenomenon transcends to the world of academia in which the literature contends that female minority faculty tend to be employed in lesser professorial and prestigious faculty ranking, (Clark, 1998; McNeal 2003) and deal with biases in the tenure and promotion process (Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003). However, it is the obstacle of the “lucite ceiling” as opposed to the glass ceiling that Black women experience more often. While glass is breakable the “lucite ceiling” is so strong that although it is transparent it cannot be broken (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998; p. 89).

To assist women in preparing for occupational opportunities and success in their career pursuits, role models and mentors are needed (Cook, Heppner & Obrien, 2002; Blake, 1999). Mentors perform various duties such as coaching, counseling, and supporting the personal and psychosocial career development of the person being mentored (Blake, 1999; Tucker-Allen, Steele, & Baker, 1992). Due to the assortment of issues women face during their career development multiple mentors may be required to meet specific needs (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Choosing multiple mentors, both formally and informally, helps to strengthen the areas that are essential to individual development. Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) suggest that with regard to mentorship, although not an intentional exclusion of others, people tend to be most comfortable with members of their own groups. Black women especially may have
difficulty finding multiple mentors of their group because of limited accessibility.

Therefore, extra effort is required by mentors of the majority group when mentoring across cultural lines to counteract the assumed discomfort and unfamiliarity with “others” (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998).

Another important theme extracted from the literature is the aspect of power and the culture of power (Hartung, 2002; Johnson-Bailey, Tisdell & Cervero, 1994; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). When addressing the rules of the culture of power with regard to a particular career, Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) explain:

The more one is similar to those in power, the more one is likely to know the rules of the culture of power. Therefore females, persons of color and those from a working-class background are less likely to have access to the knowledge of the unspoken rules for career development and advancement (p. 91).

Thus, identifying who has power and knowing how to extrapolate knowledge from those individuals in an effort to gain privileged information useful to success becomes extremely important.

Feminist Theories

“We must strive to lift as we climb….We must climb in such as way as to guarantee that all our sisters, regardless of social class, and indeed all of our brothers climb with us. This must be the essential dynamic of our quest for power” (Collins, 1990, p159).

In order to understand Black feminism, an overview providing a brief definition and explanation of how feminism, Black feminism and critical theory are similar but
different is essential. Critical research designs such as critical theory, feminism, and Black feminism are characterized by four things: (a) they explore more interactive, dialogic and shared research methods that work toward transformative actions and equal participation; (b) they connect meaning to broader structures of social power, control and history; (c) they work toward open, flexible theory building grounded in both confrontation with respect for the experiences of people in their daily lives and profound skepticism regarding appearances and common sense and (d) they foreground the tensions involved in speaking with marginalized groups (Lather, 2004). Rather than speaking to or for those struggling for social injustice, the goal of critical research designs is to work against the fundamental hazard of “emancipating people in a way that imposes a researcher’s agenda” (Lather, 2004, p. 209).

**Critical Theory**

With regards to adult education, critical theory emerged around the 1960’s in the writings of Freire (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). It is characterized as a blend of practical philosophy and explanatory social science, sharing and radically reforming the intentions of both (Schwandt, 2001). The critical perspective suggests that change can best occur when the existing system is abandoned and replaced with a different perspective (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). According to Merriam and Brockett (1997), Freire believes

…that the oppressed lack critical consciousness of the forces that control their lives, and lacking that consciousness, they are powerless to reduce the oppression that dominates their lives... Once learners become
conscious of the forces that control their lives they become empowered, and empowerment leads to action (p. 43-44).

Tisdell (2004) states that the ethics that arise from critical theory focus on special obligations to oppressed populations and those actions of advocacy are considered right actions. In addition she proposes:

In the research setting, this ethical orientation reminds researchers that in allowing themselves to be studied, a subject population has the right to expect from the field researcher something more substantial than bourgeois respect, curtsey and honesty; they have the right to the social power that comes from knowledge (p. 17).

**Feminism**

Historically, the voice of women and their stories have been lost or discounted as extraneous and unempirical knowledge stored in the traditional ways women record personal and private information through journals, diaries and letters. According to Crotty (1998), feminists argue that utilizing narratives in qualitative research has universal appeal because stories make sense of the world in numerous ways and bring differing and even conflicting assumptions to the research presented. Because women know and theorize the act of knowing in a way fundamentally different from men, they express concerns, raise issues and gain insights that are not generally expressed, raised or gained by their male counterparts (Crotty, 1998). Essentially, the feminist movement is a struggle to reduce the “injustices and unfreedom” that women experience (Crotty, 1998).
Tong (1989) contends that the feminist perspective is not one but a collection of theories or perspectives that attempt to describe women’s oppression, explain its cause and consequences and to prescribe strategies for women’s liberation. Crotty (1998) and Tong (1989) suggest that the majority of feminist thought can be connected with one of the following approaches to feminism: liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, existentialist and postmodern. For example, liberal feminism supports the autonomy of the person and encourages self fulfillment. “Sexual equality”, also known as “gender justice” is according to Tong (1989) the single most important goal of liberation (p.28). It is through this liberation, that women will be freed from the oppressive roles that have perpetuated and offered justification for gender stereotyping and exclusion with regards to career selection. The egalitarian liberal goes a little further and concentrates not only on the rights of women but more on women’s basic needs and welfare to include sexual equality, economic reorganization, and resource redistribution. On the other hand the Marxist feminists are concerned with the equality of workload for women who work in and outside of the home. Equal pay for equal work is the sentiment, noting that value should be placed on the work produced in addition to and not just the work product.

Radical feminism then deals with gender and sexuality oppression. These feminists express the view that this oppression of women is “one which causes more suffering than any other form” (Crotty, 1998, p. 164). According to Tong (1989), a male control of the public and private worlds is what constitutes patriarchal ideology. Thus the neutralization of masculinity and femininity with respect to role expectations will provide an avenue for women’s liberation. The major issues of concern with this frame of thought are with reproduction, prostitution, rape, pornography and battery. It is through
these acts that women are dominated and extremely oppressed by the male influence. Conversely, the psychoanalytic feminist grounds women’s oppression in the depths of the female psyche (Crotty, 1998). Tong (1989) suggests that in order for a woman to have “space to think herself anew and become who she has the power to be… she must do more that fight for her rights as a citizen; she must probe the depths of her psyche in order to exorcise the original primal father from it” (p. 172).

Socialist Feminism attempts to overcome the limitations of the Marxist, radical and the psychoanalytical thought by bringing the strands together and drawing on the strengths of each of them in an effort to unify feminist under one banner and have them speak with one voice (Crotty, 1998). The existentialist feminist distinguishes between “self and other”. This thought identifies man as “self” and women as “other” and according to the existentialist feminist, the “other” is a threat to self (Crotty, 1998). Finally, postmodern feminism is linked to deconstruction, characterizing this as a process that is universally and radically critical, anti-essentialist and fiercely committed to breaking down traditional antinomies and the conventional boundaries between established disciplines (Crotty, 1998).

Black Feminism

Feminist thought was initially a fight for equal rights for all women, but it emerged instead as a fight for the equal rights of White middle class women in America, neglecting to place emphasis on the needs of minority women. Hence Black feminism emerged. As with feminist thought, the major systems of oppression are interlocking thus race and sex cannot be separated to generalize a frame of thought to a particular set of people (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982). Johnson-Bailey
(2003) essentially defines Black feminism as a women’s movement that addresses the issues of racism and sexism as they oppress African American women while taking into account issues of class. Collins (1990) agrees defining Black feminism as specialized knowledge created by African American women which clarifies a standpoint of and for Black women encompassing theoretical interpretations of Black women’s reality by those who live it. Thus, Black feminist thought reflects the interests and views of Black women, and gives voice to those who have been silenced in one manner or another and validates their experiences.

As the literature suggests (Collins, 1990; Hooks, 2000; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982; Johnson-Bailey, 2003) all women are oppressed by men. However, Black women differ from White women in their oppression due to their positionality and lack of power. As Johnson-Bailey (2003) so eloquently explained, although the allocation of power can be based on race, class, sexuality and gender it is the “hierarchy of race, White over Black, that lies at the heart of the struggle” (p. 12).

Historically, Black women have portrayed the image of being strong. The literature suggests (Collins, 1990; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982; Johnson- Bailey, 2003) that since slavery the Black woman’s role has been masculinized. Due to socially imposed restrictions and the constant confrontation of racial and class oppression, Black women have been and continue to be forced to assume roles that are atypical to those of their White counterparts for survival (Collins, 1990; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982; Johnson-Bailey, 2003). Johnson Bailey warns that this image of Black women being “superwomen is an excuse all of society uses to abuse African American women” (p. 9).
Collins (1990) suggests that there are specific core themes associated with the Black woman’s standpoint. She identified the legacy of struggle to survive in two contradictory worlds simultaneously, one White, privileged and oppressed and the other Black, exploited and oppressed as a major theme. She also touched on the need for a collective self-defined standpoint encouraging a forge of the various individual, unarticulated, powerful expressions of everyday consciousness into and articulated, self-defined collective standpoint which is key to the Black woman’s survival.

Although it was devised for African American Women, Black feminism is by design “an all purpose battle plan against racism and sexism” that seeks to eradicate all forms of oppression (Johnson-Bailey, 2003, p. 4). This frame of thought should not isolate Black women but according to Johnson Bailey (2003), should put Black women in the center of it all.

Chapter Summary

This review has presented an overview of the literature that will inform this study. A comprehensive synopsis of the career development theories was provided paying special attention to issues of concern with regard to Black women such as mentorship, power, and socialization. It is helpful to understand the road women travel to reach their career aspirations. Because this study is looking at Black nursing faculty, an introduction into adult education with specific attention to concerns of Black women faculty in higher education is essential. The adult education literature illuminates the concerns of women and explains the hostile atmosphere they endure to succeed in the academy. Issues such as racism, sexism, alienation, isolation, and social marginalization were highlighted. The higher concentration of women faculty in less
Due to the impending nursing shortage, a quest for a diverse nursing faculty that reflects the increased racial, cultural and even gender diversity of the student population will create unprecedented opportunities for minority educators interested in shaping the future of the next generation of nurses. Understanding and recognizing the importance of increasing the connection between a culturally diverse instructional team with that of the diverse student nurse population will greatly impact and improve the quality of care provided to the patient population.

In an effort to recruit and retain minority faculty, institutions should be mindful of: 1) the particular influences of the individual, 2) the need for flexibility and financial security 3) the need to reduce the overt and covert racism that is embedded in the institutional policies and procedures and 4) the need to ensure that mentorship is an ongoing part of the process (AACN, 2003; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal). Institutions of higher learning who exhibit commitment, creativity and cultural sensitivity will increase the chance of providing a culturally diverse population of faculty that represent the students they teach and the population they serve. Unless institutions are committed and make a conscious effort to recruit and retain minorities we may find ourselves on the “endangered species list” (Weems, 2003,
Washington (2001) sums up the keys to recruiting and retaining minority nursing faculty as the 4 C’s – commitment, concern, collaboration and creativity.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to identify significant factors that contribute to the career development of Black women nursing faculty. This chapter addresses how the study was conducted employing a qualitative research design to answer the following research questions: 1) how do Black Women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education; and 2) what are the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty?

A qualitative research design was used to explore the life history of Black women nursing faculty to determine how sociocultural, professional and institutional influences affect their career choices. It was through the stories that the women told about their lives and their experiences that the salient issues regarding their career development path to include their retention in the academy was illuminated.

This chapter will provide a description of the methodology that shapes the study’s investigation of the research questions. The blueprint of the study and relevant discussion will be organized in the following sections: Research Design, Sample Selection, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Validity and Reliability, Researcher Stance, and Summary.
Research Design

According to Punch (1998), the research design is the basic plan for a research project that includes the strategy, the conceptual framework, questions to be studied and the tools and procedures used to collect and analyze the phenomenon. The researcher identifies the type of research to be conducted that will most effectively evaluate the identified problem. I chose a qualitative research design because the purpose and research questions of this study were best answered by examining the experiences of Black women nursing faculty. The qualitative research design provides the freedom to study the phenomenon in detail because the data collection is not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis (Patton, 1990). Essentially, the qualitative research design provided the avenue for words, emotions, and artifacts rather than numbers to be used in conveying how and what influence the career development and what affects the retention of the women in this study.

When embarking on a qualitative research project, the researcher usually applies one of the five qualitative research designs identified by Merriam (1998) and Bogdan & Biklen (1998) as basic or generic qualitative study, ethnographic study, phenomenology, grounded theory and case study. I chose the basic qualitative study which is considered the most common form of research in education. It focuses on the discovery and understanding of a specific phenomenon, process or the perspective and worldviews of the people involved (Merriam, 1998). To inform the study, it draws upon concepts, models, and theories from several social service disciplines such as educational, developmental, and cognitive psychology and sociology.
All qualitative research designs require similar data collection and analysis procedures. For this study I used participant interviews as the major data collection format. I also utilized observation, since an important part of communication is not actually what is verbalized but what is reacted. I met with the participants in an environment of their choosing to increase their comfort level. Archival data was also collected for analysis. Items such as resumes, sample writings and tenure and promotion profiles were reviewed to support the information collected during the interviews.

Theoretical Framework

Historically, the voice of women and their stories have been lost or discounted as extraneous and unempirical knowledge stored in the traditional ways women record personal and private information through journals, diaries and letters. This study is bound by the experiences of Black women nursing faculty. Therefore, a Black feminist theoretical framework was utilized to discuss the phenomenon of how Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in the academy and what factors contribute to their retention. The benefit of employing a qualitative design using the Black feminist lens is twofold. The qualitative design and Black feminist lens helped to reveal common factors that contribute to the successful career development of Black women nursing faculty through interviews, observation, and archival data. In addition, it provided voice to Black women nursing faculty who traditionally have been voiceless to the masses. Black women for so long have had to scream with their mouth shut. This study offered a platform for the participants to shout their comments, concerns, complaints and suggestions to those who will listen.
Feminist thought was initially a fight for equal rights for White middle class women in America. This process neglected to place emphasis on the needs of minority women, hence the emergence of Black feminism. In order to define Black feminism, one must take into account an array of external factors. As with feminist thought, the major systems of oppression are interlocking therefore race and gender cannot be separated to generalize a frame of thought to a particular set of people (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981; Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982). In essence, Black feminist thought reflects the interests and views of Black women, it gives voice to those who have been silenced in one manner or another and it validates their experiences.

By using Black feminist thought, the researcher is able to capture the essence of the women’s experiences in their natural habitat using life histories, semi-structured interviews, and observations in an effort to uncover the nonverbal responses that are often missed or misinterpreted when data is gathered. This type of research gives preeminence to displaying data in its original state which Johnson-Bailey (2004) acknowledge as a trustworthy way of giving voice to the participants. However, the researcher must be sensitive to power differences that are ever present when utilizing Black feminist thought as a research frame (Johnson-Bailey, 2004). In doing so, Johnson-Bailey (2004) suggest that the researcher “attend to the special nature of how women relate information through silence, code words, and communication patterns” (p. 125). Placing precedence on positionality, which is an important factor in how these women will relate to and are seen by the majority race, offers value and insight into their perception of achievement.
In addition, as the researcher, I had to be mindful of how positionality can affect data collection and analysis. Wolf (1996) asserts that “one’s biography, politics and relationships become part of the fabric of the field (positionality) must be confronted and considered in a conscious manner” (p. 34). This is particularly true when Black women research Black women. Although they we are bound by two commonalities, gender and race, I had to take into consideration my positionality with regards to power, and education to minimize conflicts that may arise from perceptions due to historical influence.

The insider concept has been argued in the literature as having significant relevance when it comes to interviewing subjects. Each view has both positive and negative points. As an insider, Wolf (1996) suggests that those who study groups to which they belong “have an advantage that leads to a privileged or more balanced view of the people or society under study” (p. 15). The argument she holds is that a native or indigenous researcher may balance distortions presented by White researchers, creatively use their special standpoint or double consciousness, and be privileged to a more intimate consciousness. Zavella (1996) concurs reporting that insiders are more likely to be cognizant and accepting of complexity and internal variation, and are better able to understand the nuances of language, avoid being deceived by and are less likely to be distrusted by the participants.

My research interest of Black women nursing faculty suggests that I would be working from an insider perspective because this is a group of which I am a member on three levels; I am Black; I am a nurse; and I am a faculty member. Although there are many challenges to gaining the insider status, the reward is having an unspoken
understanding of cultural norms as expressed through commonalities such as communication, and behavior help to create an environment that feels safe and comfortable for open, honest, and mutual exploration (Wolf, 1996). During the interviews, I believe I gained the insider status with the participants. There were several times when the participants would tell a story then say, “You know what I mean” as a statement rather than a question. This implied that I knew the meaning of what they were saying as opposed to just understanding the words that they spoke.

Trust is another challenge of achieving the insider status. To be privy to this status, I utilized self-disclosure to share power during interaction. I found that the participants would answer a question posed in the interview then question if I had experienced something similar. Few, Stephens & Rouse-Arnett (2003) purport that Black women researchers “who reveal little information about themselves run the risk of being mistrusted by their Black women informants” (p. 208). I found very early in the interviews that if I was evasive in my response to their questions, they would become less verbose in their future responses to my questions. There was even a time when a participant stopped mid sentence stating, “I’ve said too much, I am disclosing a lot of information here. Are you going to make sure I won’t be recognized?” To confront these issues, I kept keep the participants informed of the study and was truthful in my dealings with them. I took a self inventory prior to conducting the fieldwork by questioning: “What do I see when I look at me?” and more importantly “What will they see when they look at me?”
Sample Selection

When looking at the setting, the participants, and the process of data collection, Punch (1998) purports that the sampling plan and sampling parameters should line up with the purpose and the research questions of the study. This study took place in the Southeastern United States and consisted of multiple public institutions with nursing programs ranging from the associate level to the doctoral level within the university system of one state. Public university system institutions as opposed to private institutions and technical schools were selected because public institutions offer more variation in student and faculty population as well as degree programs offered. In addition, more minority students are likely to attend public institutions where the programs and tuition are generally more accessible, affordable, and accommodating to allow for part-time commitment and flexible scheduling. With this in mind, these schools are in greater need for minority faculty balance to role model and provide mentorship to the growing numbers of minority students.

There are a combined total of 35 nursing programs accredited by the National League of Nurses in the state (NLN, 2006) where the study was conducted. Of the 35 programs, 23 were in the state university system. Because my study is looking at a small population with specific qualities, much of the criteria for participant inclusion in the study were preset.

Initially, I made telephone contact with each Program Chair or Director of the 23 schools of nursing in the state to obtain permission and assistance with the identification of possible participants. To be considered for inclusion in the study, the participants had to: 1) self identify as Black, 2) work in an accredited public school of nursing, 3) be
employed full time in a tenure-track position, and 4) be willing to participate in interviews as necessary to obtain adequate data. During the telephone conversation with the program chair or director, I discussed the purpose and implications of the study then, I obtained the names of potential participants at their institution. When the gate keepers were evasive and would not assist in the process I used the internet to search for photographs of Black women among the nursing staff on the university website. After gathering names and address for the potential participants, I mailed each of them an information packet with instructions (Appendix A). Each packet contained two consent forms (Appendix B), one for the participant to keep and one to be returned in the self addressed stamped envelop provided in the packet. The consent form contained pertinent information outlining and explaining the purpose of the study, how the interview will be conducted, and their rights as a participant of this study.

The information packet also contained a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C). Because this questionnaire would be used to assist in the selection process, a three digit code on the questionnaire was placed to correspond with a three digit code on the consent form for identification purposes. Each participant was asked to complete the questionnaire and place it in a separate envelope labeled questionnaire to be returned with the consent form in the self addressed and stamped envelope.

Upon return of the forms, selections were made for the one on one interviews using purposeful sampling. Maximum variation sampling was used as the method of selecting the participants for the study. The aim of maximum variation sampling as described by Patton (1990) is to capture and describe the central themes or principle outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation. Interest and
value are placed on the common patterns that emerge from the data collected which capture the core experiences of the participants.

In order to gain maximum variation with a small sample, Patton (1990) suggests that diverse criteria be constructed. This would include identifying and seeking out participants who represent the widest possible range of the characteristics of interest for the study (Merriam, 1998). In this case, the demographic questionnaire was used to place participants in specific categories from which selections were made. Because the demographic questionnaires did not have personal identification information on them, selections were based specifically on the identified criteria without bias to person or location. Categories such as years of teaching experience, tenure status, level of education, and type of program currently teaching was used to ensure a diverse participant population.

Patton (1990) also declares that the use of maximum variation sampling with a small sample will produce two kinds of findings: 1) high quality detailed descriptions of each case which are useful for documenting uniqueness, and 2) important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity.” (p. 172). Knowing that the findings from a study using maximum variation sampling can not be generalized to all people in all groups, the sample for this study was selected to represent a diverse population so that the data collection and analysis would yield an eclectic view of the phenomenon.

To obtain the “information rich cases” Patton (1990, p. 169) describes as essential for an in depth study with a small sample size, my plan was to target at least 10 nursing instructors for interviews who could be placed into multiple categories. My
goal of at least ten participants was to ensure that data saturation was reached. Data saturation is the “point of data collection where the information you get becomes redundant” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 62).

Twenty eight information packets were sent to Black faculty identified in the university system. Fourteen packets were returned with the requested information. Thirteen of those who responded met the requirements of the study and were selected to participate. The participants were contacted and interviews were set up according to their schedule. One woman phoned the day of our interview to resend her interest in participating and another had schedule conflicts that required her to cancel the interview three times before she chose not to participate in the study. Therefore, eleven Black female nursing faculty participated in the study.

Data Collection

Data was collected through one on one interviews with the participants. According to Merriam (1998), interviews generally fall into three categories: 1) highly structured which follow a questionnaire format where each participant is asked the same question in the same sequence, 2) semi-structured where pre-determined questions are used as a guide and the format of questioning is highly flexible, and 3) unstructured usually used for exploratory purposes where there are no preset questions.

For this study, I utilized the semi-structured interview format. The semi-structured interview is a process by which the researcher and the participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to the research study (deMarrais, 2004). The
structure of the interview is loose, highly flexible and variable but focused enough to produce a guide to the key issues and types of questions intended to be discussed.

Field notes were taken using the descriptive format during the interviews. Field notes are the descriptive and reflective aspects of what is seen, heard, experienced and thought about by the observer during the observational session (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 1996). My field notes contained interaction identification information such as the date, time, place, environment description, people present, social interactions noted, and activities that took place during the interview. Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) encourages the researcher to document their own activities, circumstances and emotional responses because they shape the process of observing and recording the lives of others. Therefore, I began compiling my field notes prior to entering the field and concluded each interview with a summarization of the experience immediately upon leaving the site. My field notes contained personal reactions, feelings and reflections of the experience and the meanings attached to each. Observations of nonverbal interactions were also noted to coincide with the verbal interactions noted the transcripts. I distinguish my comments and reflections in the transcript by using parentheses (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990).

Before conducting the interview with the participant, I reviewed the consent form again and provided an explanation of the purpose of the study, how the interview would be conducted, and her rights as a participant of this study. In an effort to capture the actual words, expressions and behaviors of the person being interviewed I got permission from each participant to audio tape the interview to supplement the field
notes taken during the interaction. Each audio taped interview was transcribed into a Word document with each line of data numbered sequentially.

Interviews of one and a half to two hours were conducted with each participant in a quiet, safe, familiar environment where the participants felt comfortable sharing her information. I traveled to meet with participants at a mutually agreed upon time and place. All but three of the women chose to meet in their office. I met two women in their home and one in the park located on her campus.

A list of semi-structured questions was used to channel the interview (Appendix D). While meeting with the participants I was able to gather materials and artifacts from the participant’s surroundings for analysis to help provide a more in-depth examination of their life experiences. I reviewed items such as the participant’s resumes, tenure and review portfolios, course syllabi, articles and books written by the participants. This data helped supplement field observations and interviews by providing information about specific items that could not be observed during the interview session.

Data Analysis

Data from this study was investigated using inductive analysis through a feminist lens. Data that is analyzed inductively builds abstraction, concepts, hypotheses, or theories from observations and intuitive understanding gained in the field rather than testing existing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam, 1998). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) compare the process of inductive analysis to a funnel. They state that “things are open at the beginning (or top) and more directed and specific at the bottom” (p. 7). By using the feminist lens I was able to pay close attention to how
gender, race, class, and positionality intersect and the roles each play when analyzing the documents.

The audio tapes were transcribed and the written field notes were integrated into the transcript. The transcripts were then reviewed line by line for common threads to generate categories. LeCompte (2000) refers to this process as finding items. The data that represented the identified threads were highlighted on the transcript using consistent colors with each participant’s response. Preliminary labels were then extrapolated from the color coded patterns and placed in a word document. The word document served as a safe place to sort, organize, and formulate the categories used to answer the research questions. I was able to sort and resort, organize and reorganize the data with ease using the cut and paste function. This allowed for easy viewing and was a way of archiving each step of the analysis process.

According to Hays (2004), in the analysis and interpretation phase, the researcher searches through the clues or data to follow threads of evidence or patterns of consistency to a final decision. The sorting, resorting, organizing, reorganizing, labeling and re-labeling of data should lead to a set of categories that answer the research questions in a meaningful, thick description that provides a summarization (Hays, 2004). With this in mind, I continued matching, comparing and contrasting the labels until I was able to condensed them into categories. Under the constant comparative method, the initial observations undergo continuous refinement and continuously feed back into the process of category coding comparing the phenomena across the categories in an effort to discover relationships and generate a hypothesis (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Therefore, the categories were then reorganized and
relabeled to constitute stable sets of items that formulated relevant categories. Another word document formatted into two columns using the research question as a header was used to sort the categories and formulate the themes that answered the research questions. This process was laborious and continued until data saturation was reached.

The final analysis produced an interpretation of the identified themes and factors that emerged from the data gathered. The analysis was presented in a descriptive manner using examples from the data to support the recurring patterns. As suggested by Hayes (2000) a research advisor was solicited to review the coding process and conceivability of preliminary themes to ensure that the coding and analysis processes was accurate.

Validity

It is important to establish validity for qualitative research because it legitimizes the research findings. There are two approaches to ascertain validity, internally and externally. Internal validity determines whether research findings are congruent with reality (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Merriam (1998) purports that one of the underlying assumptions in qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional and ever-changing. Therefore, to enhance internal validity Merriam (1998) suggest the implementation of these six basic strategies: triangulation, member checks, peer examination, long-term observation, participatory or collaborative modes of research and identification of researcher biases.

To increase the trustworthiness of the research findings multiple strategies were used. First, the researcher utilized triangulation, which is the use of multiple investigators, multiple sources of data or multiple methods to confirm the emerging
findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam, 1998). The participants were interviewed and their stories analyzed taking into consideration data from artifacts and documents to help validate findings.

The member check method was used to see if my perceptions and the conclusions of the data were plausible (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam, 1998). Before the interviews were conducted, the participants were made aware that a copy of their transcript would be provided upon request for review and feedback. Only one of the women requested a copy of her transcript. She read the transcript and the associated categories identified during the analysis process. The participant agreed with the findings and offered further explanation of responses to support the research findings.

A peer review process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam, 1998) was used examine the data and plausibility of the emergent findings and accuracy of coding methods. A Pilipino woman nursing faculty, who is currently in a nursing doctoral program, was asked to review the analysis process and offer comments on the findings that emerged from the data. After her review of the data, we discussed the findings and coding method to clarify any incongruence.

And finally, as the primary data collector, my sensitivities, biases, and freedom to probe during the interview affect what data is collected and how it is interpreted. For this reason, I divulged my subjectivities, biases, assumptions, and theoretical orientation upfront. I clarified my assumptions about the study prior to entering into the field. In addition, I identified my biases associated with being both a Black woman and a nursing faculty at the onset of the study.
External validity refers to how generalizable the study results are to other situations (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Gay and Airasian (2000) advocate that the key to generalizability is replication. This study’s sample size of eleven cannot be representative of the entire population of Black women nursing faculty. Therefore, to enhance external validity, the researcher used rich thick description to describe the research situation and findings. To maximize diversity allowing for greater reader application potential, the researcher used the demographic data form to assist in the selection of participants based on criteria aimed at ensuring diversity among the participant population. In addition, the participants were from multiple cites, with varied backgrounds, and taught on multiple levels which increases the generalization of the findings. Gay and Airasian (2000) also suggest that confidence in generalizability is increased when responses from the participants yield essentially the same results. Therefore, categories and themes were identified if over half of the participants in the study verbalized similar experiences.

Reliability

Reliability on the other hand is a central concept that basically means consistency (Punch, 1998). Merriam (1998) made several suggestions to enhance the reliability of a study. She suggests that the researcher divulge their subjectivities, biases, assumptions, and theoretical orientation up front, employ the triangulation approach by using multiple methods and sources to collect and analyze the data, and use an audit trail to describe in detail the data collection process, data categorization process, and the decisions that were made in each area.
As the primary data collector, I recognize that my sensitivities, preconceived notions, and ability to manipulate the interview with participants to cover topics that are greater interest to my personal agenda can affect how data is collected and how it is interpreted. For this reason, in order to increase the reliability of the research findings, I have made full disclosure of my subjectivities, biases, assumptions, and theoretical orientation. In addition, triangulation through data collection procedures and analysis of data was employed as well as the utilization of an audit trail to ensure that the data collection procedures and analysis processes were replicated with each participant.

Researcher’s Stance

As the primary instrument for data collection I came to this research project with both personal and professional interests in the career development of Black women nursing faculty. Thus, my outlook and inquiry of this subject affected the research process. In view of the fact that my research interest is the study of Black nursing faculty, I felt as though I was in the position to gain insider status during the data collection phase because I am Black, a nurse and a faculty member. The insider status however is not automatic; there are challenges in achieving this status. Both the participants and the researchers make active observations of behavior and identity cues during the interview process (Few, Stephens & Rouse-Arnett, 2003). For this reason, Black women researchers like me must be aware of how color, class, gender, linguistics, nationality, power, sexuality, and physical attractiveness may affect the interactions with the informants and thus must be negotiated throughout the research process (Few, Stephens & Rouse-Arnett, 2003).
As recruiting efforts increase to attract more minorities into nursing, I feel it is equally important to have role models and mentors there to assist them in their journey. However, the reality is that the ratio of Black nursing faculty does not typically mirror that of the population it serves. I recognize, as a nursing faculty member, that the percentage of Black nursing faculty dwindles as opposed to increasing each year. It is my assumption that the lack of power, racism and job dissatisfaction are the primary reasons many Black nurses tend to leave academia. I understand that my passion to change this trend by identifying significant factors that persuade Black nursing faculty to remain in academia is important to this research and my attachment to this study may lead me to data that support my own hypothesis.

Finally, it is my stance that identifying who they are, why they want to teach, the influences that led to their decision to teach and the political issues they face when working at the university level will greatly impact the recruitment and ultimately the retention of minority nursing faculty. I believe that in an effort to recruit and retain Black nursing faculty, institutions need to be mindful of specific career altering influences both positive and negative of the individual. If institutions of higher learning exhibit commitment, creativity and cultural sensitivity they will increase the chance of providing a culturally diverse population of faculty that represent the students they teach and the population they serve.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the methodological process that will be used to investigate issues related to the retention of Black women nursing faculty in public institutions of higher education. The usefulness of employing a qualitative research
design using a Black feminist lens as a theoretical framework was discussed. The sample selection and data collection methods described present a roadmap to depict the process of the study. The analysis plan and method for achieving validity and reliability described how the final analysis was achieved. Finally, the researcher’s stance discussed the researcher's interest, beliefs and desires for this study.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the career development of Black women nursing faculty. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How do Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education?
2. What are the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty?

This chapter identifies the themes and factors that emerged through the stories of eleven Black women nursing faculty. In addition, this chapter also describes how the identified factors intersect to shape and influence the career development of these eleven women. The selection of participants stretched across eight schools of nursing in a university system of a Southeastern State in the United States. All of the women were in tenure track positions but only eight were tenured. Although one participant was the Dean, one an Assistant Dean and one the Division Chair of their nursing program, neither of them were full professors. Seven of the women were assistant professors and three were associate professor. Only one of the eleven participants had achieved full professorship, the highest rank awarded to academicians.

Each individual participant brought with her multiple years of teaching experience. Three of the women had one to ten years of teaching experience, two of them had eleven to twenty years of experience and six had greater than twenty years of teaching experience. Of the eleven women, five of them were planning to retire within
the next five years which is a phenomenon that further adds to the shortage of Black
nursing faculty.

All levels of nursing programs represented in the state’s university system were
used for the study. Six institutions housed baccalaureate and higher degree programs
while five of the institutions started with the associates nursing program. All of the
participants had a Masters degree in nursing, meeting the minimal educational
requirements for being a nursing faculty. However, in keeping with the philosophy of
lifelong learning, four of the participants succeeded the minimal requirements and were
doctorally prepared; one participant was in pursuit of a Doctoral degree and one was in
pursuit of additional certification as a nurse educator.

Participant Description

Before sharing the stories of the women a brief description of the eleven
participants in the study is warranted. A snapshot of the participants from this study is
located in Table 1.

Alberta is in her sixties. She dresses very professional and speaks eloquently,
projecting her voice and uttering every syllable as she spoke. She is a medium framed
tall woman with a medium tan skin tone. Alberta began working at her historically Black
institution over twenty years ago. She started as an instructor and was promoted to her
current rank as a tenured assistant professor of nursing. Although Alberta has an
earned master’s degree and several courses towards her doctorate, according to her
institution policies, she is not eligible for promotion to associate professor. She started
online courses towards her doctorate but decided not to continue to pursue it because
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Highest Degree Earned</th>
<th>Years in Academia</th>
<th>Current Position</th>
<th>Tenure Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Director of Student Health, Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belinda</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Not Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Masters/ in Doctoral School</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Interim Chair of Department of Nursing, Associate Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joann</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Assistant Dean of Nursing, Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Not Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillian</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Dean, Associate Professor</td>
<td>Not Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lovon</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheryl</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Clinical Coordinator, Associate Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winifred</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Tenured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the course work and electronic messaging became too cumbersome. Instead, Alberta took a lateral move to become the director of the student health center at her university. She is up for post tenure review next year but is contemplating retirement instead of preparing for her review. Alberta is married with an adult daughter who lives several states away. Alberta’s nursing history is in critical care. She spent several years after completing her baccalaureate degree working in the local hospital in their critical care units. From there she attended school for her master’s and went into academia.

Belinda, also an assistant professor, is the newest member to the academic world. She has been in academia less than five years but is planning for tenure. She has two earned Master’s degrees and has plans to enter doctoral school in the fall. Belinda school is in a predominantly White associate’s degree college. Unlike most predominantly White institutions, Belinda is one of three Black nursing faculty on staff. Belinda is married with a son who has special needs and lives about forty five minutes from her school when there is no traffic. Belinda is also one of the youngest members of the participants. She is between thirty five and forty. She has a medium brown complexion and a heavy build. She described herself as being “outspoken and different” and said that she is often seen as being “difficult” when dealing with “Whites” in authority.

Jennifer, a tenured associate professor who works at an associate’s degree program, has been appointed the Interim Chair of her nursing department. Jennifer’s entrance into academia was atypical. After receiving her masters in nursing, Jennifer was working and living with her husband and two small children in a small town in the South. During that time, racial tensions were very high. The technical school there was
being reviewed for exhibiting racial discrimination towards Black students. At the time the school had no Black faculty and needed to add some diversity to its faculty. Jennifer, a petite, bright skinned, soft spoken woman was solicited to come teach at their institution because the director of the program knew Jennifer’s mother. This was not Jennifer’s first time dealing with discriminatory practices. Jennifer went to a newly integrated predominately White university to obtain her baccalaureate degree. After completing her degree at a university with a class of only five Blacks, Jennifer was up to the challenge of working at an institution that was willing to make some changes. She stayed at that institution for fourteen years. She completed her master’s degree while working there in order to get more monetary compensation. Jennifer later moved with her new husband and two children from the small city to a larger city in the South and sought an academic appointment at a predominately White associate’s degree granting institution. Because the first school was not in the university system, Jennifer had to start earning rank from the beginning. In all, Jennifer has been in academia for over twenty years and is currently working on her doctorate.

Ginger is the only participant who has earned both tenure and full professorship. Ginger is a small framed bright skinned pleasant woman. Like Alberta, Ginger spoke very fluently about the experiences she has had in the over twenty years she has been in academia. Ginger began her baccalaureate nursing program in 1963 which makes her a little different from others who went into nursing at that time. According to Ginger, “In that given time that I went into nursing, diploma programs were replete, and there were not a lot of baccalaureate programs.” Ginger continued her education earning her master’s before entering into the academy. Ginger obtained her doctorate while working
in academia many years later. Ginger is married and has two children, both of whom were out of high school when she started teaching in academia. At that time, one child was graduating college and the other was entering college. Ginger is currently looking towards retirement within the next five years.

Joann is the Assistant Dean of Nursing at her predominantly White institution. She is an assistant professor who is currently working on tenure. Joann entered the world of academia with her master’s degree. She pursued her doctorate while working at a large university in the South. She was faced with multiple barriers to completing her degree during that time. All of which she claims stems from prejudices and politics in the academy. Joann is a short, large framed, medium brown skinned woman in her late forties who was very candid during her discussion about her experiences in the academy. Joann has a very colorful academic career. Over the past twenty years, she has worked at one predominately White associates program, two historically Black universities in different states, and three White universities, two of which were in the same state but different cities. With all that time spent in academia, Joann has never been tenured. Although Joann was actively seeking her doctorate degree and had written several nursing textbooks and lab manuals, she worked at one institution almost fifteen years before she earned permission to enter a tenure track position. After completing her doctorate Joann moved once again with her husband and son to her current university, which is also a predominately White institution, where she was hired in as the Assistant Dean.

Kimberly, a tenured assistant professor at her institution has recently earned her doctoral degree in nursing. She is a young, soft spoken, small framed, medium brown
skinned woman with a bubbly personality. She presents herself very professionally and is very confident in her abilities. Kimberly asked to meet in the park area on her college campus. The area was quiet with only an occasional disruption of geese playing, students walking by and an airplane flying over head. Kimberly appeared comfortable and open during the interview. Kimberly was asked by the dean of her nursing school to try academia as a career upon graduating from her master’s program in 1999. Kimberly is recently married with no children.

Lillian is an assistant professor who, like Joann, is currently working on tenure. Lillian is married with two school aged children. Lillian is a tall medium framed brown skinned woman with an infectious smile and laugh that welcomes conversation. Lillian started her nursing education in a newly integrated White institution in the South and is very vocal about the injustices she has had to endure in her academic career. Like Joann, Lillian has written several nursing textbooks and has held multiple positions in the academy at five institutions over the past twenty years but has never been tenured. Lillian was met with an abundance of resistance at one predominately White institution where she was employed. At the time for her tenure and promotion, someone from the promotion committee told her that she had too many research agendas and needed to narrow them down to one that serves the public and concentrate on it. Lillian voiced being appalled by the misrepresentation of the institutional policies and subsequently left the institution in search of a place where her talents would be recognized. She served as a curriculum consultant to several universities before being recruited for her present position. Currently Lillian is the Dean of her nursing program that is housed on the campus of a Historically Black College & University (HBCU). Our interview took
place in her office which had a stately presentation. She had frames with her degrees and book covers strategically placed around the room. For the interview she placed the phone off the hook and asked the secretary to hold all interruptions.

   Lovon is an assistant professor with an earned Master’s degree. She has worked her entire academic career at the same HBCU. She was tenured and promoted to assistant professor within the first seven years of employment and she has maintained that rank. She has been in academia for over twenty five years and is planning for retirement within the next five years. Lovon asked to meet in her office which was a small room with one window looking onto the parking lot. Her office was in disarray at the time of our appointment with her desk, bookshelf and extra chair covered with books and student papers. Lovon is a fair skinned, medium build, outspoken woman who is married with one adult son. She graduated from the same university where she is employed and spoke openly about the racism she endured as a student. Lovon recalls having to go out of the city and sometimes out of state to complete her clinicals because the local hospital would not allow Blacks to study and practice in their hospital. Lovon was teaching when she started her master’s program but the toll of completing her master’s degree was equally as draining as that of her baccalaureate. Lovon voiced a desire to complete a doctoral program but with a school aged child and a husband working evening and nights in a factory out of the city, that desire became bleak and eventually non-existent.

   Sheryl is a fair skinned, medium build, middle aged woman who is also verbose, and blunt but easy to talk with. Sheryl is from a small town in the South where her father was on city council for many years. She ran for his seat on city council after he died and
won and has maintained that responsibility in addition to her academic load. Sheryl is a recently tenured assistant professor at a predominately White institution. She holds a master’s degree and has been working in academia about ten years. Sheryl requested that we meet in her home. We settled in her living room for our interview. The room was filed with old family pictures of her nieces and nephews which led to the discussion of children. Sheryl is married but has no children. She claims she got married late in life and it was too late for her to have children of her own so she loves her nieces and nephews like her own. Sheryl’s climb up the academic ladder has been anything but smooth. She was denied tenure the first time she applied. She travels forty five miles to a satellite campus to teach when the main campus is less than ten miles from her house, and she is the only Black full time faculty on staff.

Virginia holds a master’s degree and is the Clinical Coordinator at her institution. She has worked in academia for over twenty years and has accomplished both associate professor rank and tenure. Virginia is fifty years old but appears much younger than her stated age. Virginia and I met at her home which was quiet and had a soft and calming aroma of rose potpourri. She has a small frame and is of medium height. She gives the impression that she pays extra attention to her appearances in that her clothes are coordinated with jewelry, her shoes are clean with no worn spots on the heels, and every hair appears in place. At work, Virginia is extremely professional and admits to speaking, walking, dressing, and behaving as though she were constantly on an interview. Her interaction with both faculty and students is concrete. She is a stickler for rules and is known to voice her opinion and concerns when rules are bent or
broken. This consistent behavior emits confidence with her abilities and has gained her both respect and criticism over the years.

The last participant is Winifred. Winifred holds a master’s degree and is a tenured assistant professor in an associates nursing program. She has worked in this program which serves predominantly White students her entire academic career of almost twenty years. We met on campus in her office. Winifred initially appeared to be passive and afraid to discuss racial issues during our conversation. However, after she closed her door she began to speak in a low tone as if to keep others from listening to her as she discussed her experiences. Winifred is married with two children. Winifred’s husband was not very supportive of her attending school that would take her away from the family for multiple hours. His desire to keep her close hampered her pursuit of her master’s because the nearest program was about 100 miles away. She waited ten years before a program was instituted in her town. At that time, she enrolled in school. Winifred expressed the desire to attend a doctoral program but is hesitant because of her advancing age and the amount of commitment it would require.

The stories of these eleven Black women were fascinating and although the women originated from different geographic areas, different schools, and different nursing service areas they all voiced similar experiences when discussing their career development. Self-actualization in their career and career-life alignment were the two themes that emerged from the stories to answer the question regarding the advancement of Black women nursing faculty in higher education. To answer the question regarding the retention of Black women nursing faculty, three themes become apparent. Lifestyle advantages, resonation with the profession, and racialized
subjugation seemed to flow through each of the participants stories in one fashion or another. This chapter will discuss the five themes and their associated factors in detail.

**Advancement of Black Women Nursing Faculty**

Two themes emerged from the data during the discussing of events that helped to mold and prepare the participants for their chosen career field. These themes were self actualization and career-life alignment. Figure 1 illustrates these themes and a list of the associated factors that contribute to the advancement of Black women nursing faculty.

Figure 1. Factors that Contribute to the Advancement of Black Women Nursing Faculty
Career Self Actualization

Being self actualized helped the women to stay focused and achieve advancement in the chauvinistic world of academia. According to the data, two factors contributed to the self actualization of these women in their careers. These factors were: (a) being prepared by having prior experience in their field of expertise and advanced educational degrees or certificates to support their knowledge, and (b) being willing to explore opportunities that would position them to achieve the career trajectory they have set for themselves.

Being Prepared

The participants in this study described the importance of being prepared when they entered academia as a monumental necessity to their advancement. All of the participants articulated having prior nursing experiences ranging from specialized and critical care areas in nursing to the public health arena in the community. These experiences along with their advanced education were essential components for entering into and advancing in nursing academia.

Prior experiences.

Although all of the participants had some experience working in the hospital setting prior to accepting a job in academia, seven of them suggested that it was their prior experience in the critical care areas of nursing that provided an evolution into academia and subsequently became beneficial to their career progression. This experience provided them the advantage of teaching higher level medical surgical courses. As Alberta put it, “You don’t have to have a whole lot, but it does help to have some experience.” Alberta asserts that she was recruited to academia because of her
clinical background in critical care stating, “They needed someone to work with senior
nursing students in a course called Senior Nursing and that person had to have a critical
care background to teach it.” Virginia agreed stating her time spent in the critical care
area in the hospital helped to prepare her for “teaching the upper level students” which
often represents status among the nursing faculty. Kimberly contends that her
recruitment came while attending her Masters program when her advisor approached
her with the opportunity declaring that “their career paths were similar.” Kimberly started
out working in the neonatal intensive care unit. Likewise, Lillian stated that after
receiving her masters in critical care, she was contacted by a “headhunter” to interview
for teaching positions because her “clinical background was in critical care.” Joann went
into the cardiac critical care area after completing her baccalaureate degree and
declares that she was “offered her first teaching position” partially due to her experience
in critical care stating, “I was able to walk right in and I was able to get the job.”

Two other participants, Jennifer and Ginger, reported having critical care
experience prior to choosing other specialty areas in nursing that catapulted their career
in academia. However, Ginger maintains that her focus and experience in public health
was the precursor to her academic success.

*Advanced degree.*

Scholarship and academic excellence became an overwhelming premise that the
women tended to function under when they discussed the world of academia. According
to Lillian, “The terminal degree is becoming an essential component for not only
advancement criteria, but entrance criteria as well for academicians.” Lillian taught full
time in a baccalaureate nursing program while she completed her doctoral studies. She
recalls wanting the opportunity to “teach some graduate masters courses and to get my feet wet in some doctoral courses, and a doctoral degree was necessary to be able to teach in those level of courses.” Consistent with her belief, Lillian declared, “Having the doctoral degree in hand when I moved to a majority institution allowed me to teach across the curriculum in some doctoral courses, master’s courses and some undergraduate courses.” Being of the same opinion, Ginger asserts:

There was a push to get a doctorate at the time that I took my first teaching position …as criteria for tenure and promotion. I had my Masters back then and I can remember being hired in as an assistant professor. It was clear that in order for me to be tenured, I would probably more than likely need the doctorate in hand. When you’re African American or when you’re non-white and the qualifications are there, you have to fit the qualifications to a tee or it will not happen. So, how I interpreted that was, if I had not made substantial progress on my doctorate, I probably would not have been tenured.

As Joann recalls, obtaining her doctorate took ten years. During that time she remained in a non-tenure track position. According to Joann, “You could not be placed in a tenure track unless you were pretty close to finishing your doctorate.” Upon completion of her doctoral studies, Joann was able to negotiate for a tenure track position with a promotion to the associate professor rank.

Kimberly, a new doctoral graduate, argues that scholarship and research are the areas that her institution focused on therefore, stating: “Getting my doctorate helped me in those areas. Since I’ve been in the doctoral program, I’m beginning to build that
scholarship… I went through the tenure process… got tenured last spring… it took five years.”

Jennifer who is currently pursuing her Ph.D. reports being offered the chair position at her institution. She purports, the catapult to her starting the doctoral program was the promotional opportunity and declares “Being in school helps. I probably should have done a doctorate years ago. I used to look at it and think I don’t know what this could do for me. But now that I am in the program I can see that it’s helped.” With regards to the time it has taken to advance, Jennifer declares that, “not having the education probably has been a hindrance.”

Belinda, who currently holds two master’s degrees one in psychology and one in nursing education, is actively pursuing a doctoral program. She believes that getting her doctorate in educational psychology will serve two purposes, “I really want to get into doing some consulting work and having the doctorate will also assist in promotion and tenure purposes in academia.”

Although Virginia, Lovon and Alberta did not pursue doctoral degrees, they assert that increased education and preparation is essential to career advancement in academia. Virginia an associate professor accredited her initial decision to attend graduate school to her desire to teach. She stated, “Basically I felt that teaching was a big part of nursing and I got into teaching plans with some of the patients and that sparked my interest to go on and further my education.” After entering into academia, moving up the ranks from instructor to assistant professor was uneventful, but her advancement from assistant to associate was a bit more challenging. Virginia acknowledged initially feeling uneasy about her portfolio. Her reservations stemmed
from thoughts of not appearing fully qualified. She recalls thinking, “I don’t have anything in here. I’m not going to school. I’m not working on my doctorate. I’m not taking any classes, and I’m not doing any research. In academia, you have to compete and prove yourself. They give you that recognition more now for having a doctorate.”

Lovon, who started teaching in academia with her baccalaureate in nursing, contends that she decided to go to graduate school to get her Masters after teaching in the academic setting for about a year and a half stating:

I could see early, you’re not going to be around if you don’t have the next degree. I was hired in after that as an Instructor. I was promoted in about four years to Assistant Professor, and that’s what I’ve been all the other years, because beyond that it requires the Doctorate to be promoted. Lovon went on to say “If there is anything that I regret, I guess it’d be that I didn’t go back and do further study. If I had known then in the early seventies what I know now, I probably would have continued to do that…I would be even more successful.”

Alberta, who has remained in the assistant professor rank for the majority of her academic career, agrees that the post graduate degree is essential to advancement. She asserts at her institution, “Before you move to an Associate level you have to have the Doctorate.”

*Willingness to Explore Other Opportunities*

Of the eleven participants six women reported that being in a place where they were able and willing to seek, apply, and accept new positions was instrumental to their success in academia. Lillian remembers her first “real break” in academia came when “headhunters” initially started calling her home for her roommate. At the time, Lillian was
single and had no children. Because her roommate no longer lived there, the headhunters offered Lillian the opportunity to teach in a baccalaureate program that was in another state. Since that time, Lillian has established her career in academia, holding five different positions at five different institutions by “choosing wisely” and “taking chances.” Lillian explained:

I didn’t really care about the tenure part of it. Tenure to me is something if you’re going to be here for twenty years you need to get the tenure. It’s some kind of security and I never had that longevity look at it. Because my thought is I’m going to be here, I’m going to contribute and I’m moving on.

Joann’s story was very similar to Lillian’s. Joann accepted five nursing faculty positions before settling in as the Assistant Dean of Nursing of a predominately White institution. She shared this story:

I started in the spring time looking on the web for what was available. I interviewed for this position because I knew this school had a decent reputation. About that same time the department chair [who constantly marginalized Joann during her stay at the institution where she was currently employed] vacated her position. I just made up my mind since we were talking about coming back this way [Southeast] anyway, I could do one of two things, I could pursue that [apply for chair position at current school] and see what happen in the next few months and stay there or I could move on. It just so happen that I had to make a decision about this job before I could even deal with that one. And I made the decision to go ahead and move. It was my first real opportunity to go ahead and have a
real administrative role because I was not going to be given that
opportunity there and I knew it.

Alberta, who is a masters prepared nursing faculty, reports her advancement
came after many years of teaching in the classroom. According to Alberta, at the time of
her post-tenure review, her institution required a doctorate degree in nursing or related
field for promotion to associate professor. Although she was ineligible to be promoted to
associate professor, her grant writing abilities landed her a new position. Alberta
asserts, “I got promoted to the Student Clinic Coordinator position. It was a lateral move
but it gave me the time to research and write more grants.” This position took her out of
the clinical area on a daily basis which allowed time and opportunity to write more
grants to help the student population in her institution with Acquired Immune Deficiency
Syndrome prevention and other health concerns. Alberta explained:

I started writing grants and I found out I like to do grants. My first grant
check was for two hundred and sixty some thousand dollars from the CDC
[Center for Disease Control] and then another two hundred and some
thousand, so it’s been a total of probably about five hundred thousand for
the two years, for our HIV [Human Immunosuppressive Virus] testing
project. I also had one from DHR [Department of Human Resources], and
a lot of little ones. I get a chance to help the students in a different way
now. I got two [grants] pending, one with the National Institute Medicine
and one from the United Negro College Fund.

Virginia took a lateral promotion like Alberta and currently holds the title of
Clinical Coordinator. As one of two Black nursing faculty at her institution, Virginia took
the position when it was initially developed. At that time, the Clinical Coordinator slot came with a nominal one time salary payment and no reduction in teaching load which made the position unattractive to the other faculty. Virginia was instrumental in getting additional pay and release time for the position. By assuming this role; she is responsible for coordinating all of the clinical placements for each course in her nursing program. This added responsibility provides Virginia with the opportunity to meet with and discuss clinical issues with hospital administrators, the Director of Nursing at the local hospitals, and the surrounding school’s Deans, Directors, and clinical placement coordinators. Virginia indicated “Now everybody wants this position… but when they [White faculty] need something related to clinical they have to come to me first.”

Jennifer began her academic career teaching in a licensed practical nurse program. She shared how being willing to accept opportunities as they came, set her up for advancement down the line:

I had 17 years invested and I didn’t want to leave but I said well sometimes you have to make sacrifices. When I moved, I thought ok I’m taking a break from teaching. I went to work for [an insurance company] when they realized that I had taught, I became their educator. After a while, I saw an ad for this job [faculty position at an associate degree nursing program]. It was a different type program [coming from a licensed practical nurse program to a registered nurse program]. I interviewed and they asked me if I would be interested in starting the night program; it would be me and another instructor. I was hired that day.
After two years of teaching the night program, Jennifer resigned for personal reasons. When the opportunity arose for her to re-enter academia she was told that the night program had been terminated and the only position available was during the day. Jennifer accepted the position and pointed out: “I was able to make tenure in five years and the next thing was promotion…I had done a lot of things that helped with promotion to associate professor and I recently got another promotion, I will be division chair as of July 1st.”

Ginger remembers being “at a decision point” when she completed her Masters. She questioned, “Do I want to go back into public health or do I want to do something else? And so I tried something else, I went into higher ed.” Ginger initially remained in academia for four years before deciding to leave for “an opportunity to be a Public Health Administrator in the private sector”. After relocating back to the area, Ginger reentered academia and boasts:

In terms of my position here, with my four years of previous experience and my familiarity with two previous curricula, I felt that I had a lot to offer, not only in terms of my public health expertise but in terms of what needs to be taught and how it should be taught in terms of community health nursing. When I first started, I started out as an instructor in my previous position, and in this position I came in as Assistant Professor…I’m a full professor now.
Career and Life Alignment

Having a balance between career and personal life was seen as an emerging theme throughout the data. Two majors factor surfaced and proved to be instrumental in helping to pave the road to academic success for the participants. The first was a decrease in family responsibilities and the second was to build a supportive network of family, peers and supervisors.

Decreased Family Responsibility

Advancement in academia was a struggle that seven of the participants report was made easier by having a decrease in family obligations and responsibility. After her children were grown, Jennifer explained that her career took on an upward path allowing her to come back into academia and work in their day program. She recalls reassuring the President of the college that she would be able to accept the day position telling him, “That’s ok my kids are gone. I'll work.” Jennifer further explained how the reduction of family responsibilities played a role in her career development stating:

My kids are grown now. If my kids were little, that would be a hassle [speaking of working multiple day hours and bring work home in the evenings]. If I had a three year old, I couldn’t do what I’m, doing now. But when you don’t have kids at home and your husband is watching the playoffs, you can do whatever you need to do.

Ginger, who stayed after hours with students to help them stated:

I didn’t have any small children. I would not have been doing that if I had small children. When I got into academe, I was on the other side of the curve with child rearing. When I came here, I had one son out of college
and another just going in. My husband is just so laid back. I’d tell him, ‘I won’t be home until nine o’clock’ and he’d say ‘okay’ and that’s the nice part about him. He complains sometimes but he pretty much lets me do what I want.

Sheryl and Kimberly, both tenured assistant professors, revealed that they did not have children. Sheryl attributes her ability to be so mobile in her career to “being a late bloomer…I was 38 when I got married.” Sheryl worked at several different hospitals in eight different positions gaining experience in multiple areas including house supervisor, emergent care, labor and delivery, and medical / surgical nursing area before assuming a faculty position at an associate nursing program. According to Sheryl:

Being course coordinator gets hectic and you incur a tab bit more work. It takes a lot of time. There is just so much that you are responsible for like: (a) you have to make sure that your team members are doing what they are supposed to do, (b) make sure the test are all there and everything is alright, and (c) make sure their [students] grades are up. As coordinator you gotta follow up on all of that. Then you are still responsible for preparing yourself for class, interdepartmental committees that you are on. Then you have college wide committees that you are on and depending on how functioning the committees are, dictates how often you meet. If I had kids, it would be difficult to meet all of these demands.

Kimberly, who is in her early thirties and recently completed her doctorate, admits to having extra time now before she has children to work on and complete some
of her career aspirations. “The next thing that I would like to do is apply for associate professor. Now that I have my PhD, I can go for that rank. I would like to get my dissertation published and possibly the go after the Chair of Family Health position.” Virginia acknowledged that having her daughter away in college and her husband working in the evenings several times per week allows her the time to accomplish the extra tasks her new position as clinical coordinator demands. “I can get a lot accomplished when I am home alone, and with just the two of us here, I don’t have to worry about cooking dinner every night. I can just pick something up.” Like Virginia, Alberta indicated that she was able to “spend more hours researching grants and working in the clinic” because her daughter was away from home and her husband was able to care for himself.

Unlike the other women, Lillian has two school aged children. When she and her family relocated to a small town in order for her to take on a Deanship position, her husband had a difficult time finding employment. She shared “With the transition the only negative thing was that the economy down here started changing and places started downsizing.” Lillian and her husband devised an arrangement for her husband to remain home and care for the children decreasing her family responsibilities which then allowed her to assume the multiple demands of being a Dean of a nursing program. When questioned about her decision, Lillian’s response to their arrangement was “We make it work.”

Supportive Network

A supportive network was helpful in assisting the women to achieve advancement in their career. This supportive system was multi-tiered and came in the
form of supervisors, peers and family. All of the participants shared their gratitude for the support that their families played during their career development. However, it was the support from upper management and seasoned peers that seemed to overwhelmingly catapult the career development of the participants who held or aspire to hold high positions at their institutions.

Ginger spoke highly of one of her supervisor who was a White woman. Ginger acknowledged that this woman was very supportive and suggested that because she was in an administrative role, the woman was very instrumental in Ginger’s career development. Ginger, who is a Distinguished Scholar for African American Health, proclaims:

I had a wonderful administrator that was pretty much hands off and if you came with an idea and she felt was doable, she’d let you have free reign. My point is, I couldn’t be where I am if I had not had supportive leadership in terms of trust and believing that I could do what I said I was going to do. To me the challenge is trying to keep all your balls in the air. At one point I was sitting on about five different boards. I was going crazy, too. I was way overloaded and she pulled my coat tail and she said, you need to get out of some of this stuff. This is way too much, and she was right.

Belinda’s experiences with faculty who were in administrative positions were similar Ginger’s experiences. Belinda believes that the support she receives from her allies will be beneficial to her career’s movement forward. As she commented about the support and guidance she receives from these women, Belinda smiled and leaned back in her chair as if to relax stating:
My mentor is African American. She is wonderful and like a second mama… she’s very protective of me, and if I need something, I’ll tell her and she’ll say it. She won’t get in trouble because she’s been here forever. There is also another Black faculty here who is in an administrative role and she tells me how to handle things and so forth, so I’ve got a lot of support with those two.

Virginia, the clinical coordinator of her program, has been in academia over twenty years. She discussed incidences with her peers and department chairs that she claims have been helpful to her career development. Virginia shared this experience:

My first mentor [a white woman] was once the director of the program. She knew the ins and the outs and shared them with me. I saw her as being a fair person but I watched her too. I can remember she saved my butt in a test review, [the students] were about to kill me with questions. She went to bat for me several times.

Virginia further elaborated about the support from and collaboration with her program chairperson:

I completed my first poster presentation at a major nursing conference because [her chair a White woman] kept pushing me to do it. It wasn't how you do something with someone and they’re doing it for their benefit as well as yours. She wasn’t like that; she just wanted me to do it. She just wanted me to succeed. Just like when she pushed and help me to go up for promotion to associate professor.
As Kimberly reminisced about her experiences, she admitted that having a supportive administrative and collegial faculty has been helpful in her career advancement. Kimberly went into the educator role straight from her master’s program. She believed having a prior relationship with the faculty as a student helped to make her transition into academia easier declaring “they never made me feel uncomfortable or intimidated, it was a welcoming experience… I’ve established some good working relationships here.” As she matriculated through her doctoral program, Kimberly recalled various faculty members assisting her with that process. She remembered one faculty [a White woman] helping with her assignments and dissertation by “reading and giving suggestions or edits and comments” and another faculty member [also a White woman] who “invited me to my first defense before I even started to say hey let me show you what it is like.” Kimberly’s department head also provided her with guidance through the tenure process by “answering questions and allowing me to look at her notebook.” As Kimberly discussed her career aspirations, she went on to say that her Chair person [a White woman] was mentoring her to “eventually assume the Chair position of Family Health when it becomes vacant in the near future.”

Two participants told stories of support coming from the institution’s administrative body. Lillian, who took on the responsibility of chairing the department of nursing at her institution, did so because of the professed institutional support for the program’s success. Prior to accepting the job she thought “it was just the fact that you not only had nursing but you had people from outside of nursing who were supportive of nursing. You’ve got the resources that you need to really turn things around.”
Jennifer, who will be assuming the chair position at her institution at the next school term, shared similar experiences. As she recalls, her first real career boosting networking experience began as she worked as a faculty member in the night nursing program. It was then that Jennifer claims “my past division chair [a White woman] would stay a lot of nights with me and we bonded. We learned that curriculum together and she was very supportive.” With that union, Jennifer found herself “being selected to participate on institutional committees such as the Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and chairing a National League of Nurses accreditation sub-committee.” Jennifer proclaimed “Our SACS chair [a White male professor from another department] was wonderful. Things that I didn’t understand because I hadn’t been involved, he was supportive and taught me a lot.” According to Jennifer, because of that exposure, when the nursing chair position became vacant, “The Dean of the institution called me and asked if I would consider chairing the nursing department. He suggested that I get my doctorate and shadow the current interim chair until I was ready to assume the role.”

Positive and Negative Factors Affecting Retention of Black Women Nursing Faculty

All of the women report being drawn to nursing because of the caring and compassionate nature of the profession marrying so well with their personal attributes. Many of women reported the positive factors that attributed to their tenure in academia closely correlated to this resonation with nursing and the lifestyle advantages the world of academia has to offer. Likewise, the women discussed factors that have caused them to contemplate leaving academia. These factors include concepts that are associated
with academic policies and racialized subjugation. Figure 2 offers a snapshot of both the positive and negative factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty.

As the women in the study discussed their retention in academia, all of them voiced specific concerns about experiences that have either hindered their success or at some point contributed to their personal struggle to remain in academia or leave. There were two major themes that seemed to resonate throughout each participant’s story; their lack of understanding with relation to the politics of the academy and racialized subjugation.

Positive Factors

There were two positive factors that affected the careers of the Black women nursing factors and two negative factors. However, the negative factors had several subfactors. However, the positive factors meant more to the women that the negative factors and were the deciding issues that kept them in their jobs. In sum, there were two main positive factors: The Resonation with a Caring Profession and Career Advantages.

Resonation with Caring Profession

A big part of the reason the participants remain in academia is their commitment to the academy and the opportunity to impact the nursing profession by helping Black students achieve their potential and producing good nurses. Having the opportunity to teach students to not only take pride in the profession but to also exhibit compassion when delivering care to the clients brought satisfaction to the women. Ginger provided several examples of how she has shown her commitment to academia by helping students
succeed. Ginger contends “It is just the kind of person I am. I’m committed to my students, and if my students need me, I’m there for them. I’ve gone the extra mile, giving a lot of my personal time in terms of investment in my students and that’s just me.”

Ginger provided this story as an illustration:

I was teaching health assessment and there were two students that were having problems with test taking. I brought them into my office, each individually of course, and I said “You’re really smart, what’s going on here? What are you having difficulty with?” And they said, “I really don’t understand these tests in terms of how they are worded and how to
choose the right answer." And I said, “Well it’s really critical that you learn this skill because we have a rule that if you fail two clinical nursing courses, you’re out of the program and your test scores can fail you because in each course, you have to attain an average of 75% on all the exams and it doesn’t matter if you have A’s in everything else, you’re still going to fail. You’ll get a D.” So what I did was I put together an exam and I brought them in and I give them the exam then we would sit down together and go over the questions and talk about why they chose the right answer.

Ginger continued, offering another example of how she gives of her time to help students succeed.

One summer I worked for free. There was student that had a major crisis in her family. The bottom line was that she was quickly becoming a single parent. She came to me because she needed to progress to the last capstone course, which is a precepted experience, so that she would be eligible to sit for NCLEX-RN (National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination for Registered Nurses). As it was, because of her family crises, she had to sit out spring semester, and our curriculum did not offer the course in the summer. If we created a way that she could complete the course as a solo student over the summer she could take her NCLEX in the fall. I went to the department chair and asked him to create a section for her as one student and one faculty. The good news is
she successfully completed the NCLEX and is now going to be coming back to graduate school this fall.

Ginger proudly pointed out: “You do it because you want to do it. It’s not an expectation. There’s no compensation, you just do it… because I think that somehow in some way I’m making a difference.”

Lovon also communicated that part of her decision to remain in the classroom was her “commitment to teaching and wanting to be there for the students.” Alberta passionately shared her idea of commitment to the profession:

I love nursing and I like for people to be taken care of. I don’t like sloppy nursing. That just really makes my blood boil and I am concern now about the quality of care that the nurses provide. I think students need to have some kind of structure, and you need to come in from the beginning realizing that you are going to be dealing with people’s lives. I think I’m a good nurse and I want people to give good nursing care. I always felt that there’s nothing you can do about being a black woman but you can control what kind of nurse you are going to be in the profession.

This commitment to the profession explains Lovon’s perceived obligation to be available to assist students. She explained, “We would be here [in the office] and then you would have to be up at night and on the weekend trying to [grade papers], because we felt we just had to be here because somebody might need us. A student may be looking for us or something.” Winifred communicated similar feelings stating:

I feel that I have the responsibility to help us obtain more Black RN’s, I think that we need more good RN’s period and I think that I do a good job
in helping students become good RN’s. You know you feel good when you meet an RN in the hall or in the mall and they say you know Ms. Winifred I’m so glad I had you as my teacher. I wouldn’t have made it in nursing if it wasn’t for you.

Lillian recalled a time where she would travel or accept a teaching overload to do clinical with the students. She proclaimed:

We had overnights in a [larger city] or other places to take the students for clinical. Then I would do clinicals sometimes back to back. I would do one group and then the next morning pick up another just to make sure we had all the students covered. Because you care, you just did what was necessary.

Alberta asserts her reason for accepting a position in academia at an HBCU was because:

The need was greater. I was really needed and I just felt I needed to. Of course being a graduate of the program myself, I just thought that maybe I could help somebody, and I wanted to see some good nurses. It was the pride for my program and wanted to help my program and wanted to see it prosper and still be here. I’d say ‘now these Black students need me.’ I just thought that they did. I think a school like this [an HBCU], and a program like this is needed. I think that we’ve gone a lot of miles and a lot of ways with students that people otherwise would not. I feel like now, I put a lot of blood sweat and tears in this program. Students think we are just being mean and hard. But when your students don’t do well it hurts, it
really does. I have lost a lot of sleep at night trying to come up with final
grades. I’d sit here [in the office] and I work on them and work on them
and then I say now let me go home and sleep on it and pray on it and then
just try to figure out well what to do and what can I see this in this person
and how are they going to make it. You don’t want to hinder anybody but
you don’t want to cripple anybody either. You see, we have to go on to the
next thing [more complex nursing topics], but you know what they have to
do before they can move there.

Kimberly revealed “I really enjoyed the students and felt like I could make a
contribution. My focus now is to get the students to be accountable for their learning,
getting them to be a participant in the learning process so I am always looking at the
best methods to get them to get to their outcome [becoming a registered nurse].”

Virginia, who admits to being “a student advocate”, concurred expressing her
commitment and love for the profession by not wanting to “put out any junk.” Virginia
stated, “When students are in trouble I take the time to help them. By making an impact
on students who have a desire to become a nurse, I would like to think that I have
contributed to the nursing profession as well as the students.” Sheryl maintains an
“open door policy” so that students will feel comfortable to approach her if they need
assistance stating, “I give them [students in her personal clinical groups] my home
number, we just have that kind of relationship. I want them to succeed; I want them to
be good nurses.”
Career Advantages

The presence of lifestyle enrichment components was a common theme that all of the participants identified as a major attraction to nursing academia. The two major advantages the participants noted were the flexibility that the academic setting offered and the ability to merge their love of nursing with their love for teaching into one career.

Flexibility.

Nine of the eleven women report flexibility being very instrumental component in their decision to remain in academia. When it comes to the flexibility that academia offers, Winifred conveyed the ability to arrange her work schedule is an asset. She stated:

I like the time off, I like the holidays, I like my work being somewhat flexible. For instance, if I had a doctors appointment in the morning and I’m not in class and I’m not in clinical, it gives me that time to go to my doctor’s appointment and if I don’t have a student scheduled to see me and I don’t have a committee meeting to be on, my boss don’t mind me going and I like that. I enjoy that, its things like that that keep me here.

When questioned why she stays in academia Joann indicated “the flexibility and the ability to stay on top of issues, whether it’s clinical or academia, I like that. The ability to have a little bit more variety in terms of what the career is itself. To me, it offers a little bit in terms of not having to do the same thing day in and day out.” Sheryl articulated, “It’s a lot of work but when you look at the flexibility that’s the plus. Because as school goes on, I still work [in the hospital] weekends and holidays and during the summer even though I teach.” Virginia agreed declaring “the flexibility is a reward. I have the
flexibility to adjust my schedule and be home on the weekends and in the summer with my family. Plus I didn’t want to work nights or holidays like I did in the hospital.” Alberta concurs reporting “I’ve just really enjoyed it [teaching in higher education] and I’ve liked the flexibility it offers.” Jennifer also spoke highly of the flexibility the academic setting offers. “You couldn’t ask for more flexibility in your job. As a faculty member there’s a lot of flexibility and people work with you. Having the flexibility to adjust your schedule and work from home was convenient and it really worked for me and my family.”

Kimberly acknowledges working in academia made the transition to doctoral school easier because of scheduling and the “release time I got in the Fall semesters.” Kimberly also discussed the academic freedom and autonomy that comes along with the flexibility that academia offers. She explained:

In the faculty role you work more independently. Unless you really have questions or someone is really complaining about what you do, you kinda have the freedom to develop what you do. You set up your own office hours, you’re more autonomous, and even though I do have a chair that supervises me, it’s a more collegial relationship. Not like she’s trying to watch and observe what I’m doing. I like that about it [academia].

Belinda who is actively looking into a doctoral program states “At this time, academia is the perfect place to be. It offers enough flexibility for me to complete school and work without being so overwhelmed”

Lillian offers another side of the flexibility that was allow when she had her first child. She shared this story:
I had pictures of her [daughter] in my lap with my book in front of me doing my lectures and every thing. I’d take her with me to work; they had a daycare onsite. She’d be there while I was doing lecture and then she’d be in my office for the rest of the time. And there were occasions when she was actually in the class with me. It was an environment where that was kind of conducive for that.

**Merging Nursing and Teaching Passions.**

Seven of the eleven participants proclaimed their love and admiration for nursing began in childhood and evolved into an equally passionate desire to teach. This struggle between wanting to be a nurse and wanting to teach has been the driving force in their quest for advancement in academia. When asked what brought them into nursing and subsequently into nursing academia many of the women would smile as they started to share their memories.

Virginia had some family involvement in her decision to become a nurse and ultimately a nursing faculty. She proclaims “at a very early age my grandmother always said I was gonna be a nurse. I was also very interested in science in high school and so I kept that up. When I went off to college that’s what I wanted to major in.” Later, as she worked in nursing, she realized “teaching was a big part of nursing and I got into teaching plans with some of the patients and that sparked my interest to go on and further my education to become a professor of nursing.”

Lillian, like Virginia liked science and acknowledged knowing as a child she was going to be a nurse. Her desire to teach started to evolve shortly after she completed her master’s program in nursing. Lillian shared this story:
Oh nursing has always been a career objective for me. Since I was a child and I don’t really remember an onset. I just always knew that that was what I was going to do. I knew I was going to be a nurse. I’ve always had an affinity for math and sciences and as I was going through high school I made sure I had the courses to support my education into nursing a nursing program… The teaching that I had an interest in and what I had gotten some preparation for was in-service teaching. I really wanted to teach nurses. And so I was prepared to teach nurses and that was kind of what I wanted to do at first. Then after I started my first teaching job, my very first class gave me a little picture and it had a big chicken under its arm. It was talking about being like a mother hen type of thing. From that moment on I was hooked.

Kimberly on the other hand remembers the spark for nursing starting when she was in high school:

I was about sixteen and there is a program called West Fifty Seventh Street or something like that. Anyway they did a profile and it was about four nurses and they followed them from their shift throughout that day. One was in the ER, one was in labor and delivery, and I guess it was like a documentary feature about what do nurses do and I just remembered after looking at that program thinking wow I think I can do that. I enjoyed hearing their stories and they were passionate about what they did, they were concerned about the care they gave, and I thought I can do that. I want to do that. I could identify with what they did, and that desire to want
to help people. But originally, I was either looking at going into journalism, psychology or teaching.

Jennifer asserts that she always wanted to be a nurse. The desire to become an educator came after she was nursing. Jennifer proclaims:

I wanted to be a nurse since I was five years old and I never wavered. That was just what I always said. I want to be a nurse. I started teaching because [the school] needed a Black instructor. A requirement for the job included taking four education courses within the first year of teaching. I’m glad they made me take those courses because that gave me a better understanding of education. Nursing gives us that foundation for teaching people how to do things that are nursing related but that don’t teach you how to teach. Now teaching is my second love.

Alberta’s desire to become a nurse also started at an early age. She remembers becoming infatuated by the professionalism nurses exerted when wearing their white uniforms. She stated:

When I was a little girl growing up, there was a nursing program nearby that had some dormitories and at that time they were segregated. I would see those nurses leaving the hospital going back to their dorms and they would have on these capes and caps and I’d just love it and I say, “Oh I want one of those capes” and that really made me think about it [nursing]. That was the proudest moment when I could get a cape. I thought it looks like they just has such prestige; you know walking in those crisp uniforms and the caps and capes and then you know you go to the hospital and see
them taking care of people and I’d think, that just seems like something I’d like to do. I think it’s a marvelous profession and I loved nursing. At that time, I had no intention of ever doing anything like teaching then I went on to get my Master’s degree. Now that I am in it, I couldn’t think of anything else I would want to do.

Winifred recalls struggling with her career decision as an adolescent. Initially wanting to be a teacher but also identifying with the image of a nurse. She told the following story:

All through high school I thought I wanted to be a teacher you know my entire life I had wanted to be a teacher. And for some reason when I got to the twelfth grade maybe about middle ways I decided I didn’t want to be a teacher I wanted to be a nurse. I remember seeing Julia; it was the sitcom that used to come on television. At that time she was a Black nurse all dressed in white. I thought this nurse looked so beautiful. After I got into nursing, I thoroughly enjoyed it and found out nursing involved a lot of teaching and that made me realize teaching really was my first love. So then I went back to school to become a nurse educator.

Ginger found that this was a difficult question to answer because according to her, at the time when she was making the decision about a career path “There were not a lot of options open to women.” She reports:

I saw the world through the lens of being Black in America. The options that I felt were open to me were in education, being a secretary or nursing. Nursing seemed to be the most logical choice because I like caring, taking
care of people and helping and that sort of thing so that’s a part of my personality. It’s a good fit. I went into higher education after I got my master’s because I wanted to do something else and I enjoyed it.

Negative Factors

There were two negative factors that affected the career retention of Black women faculty: the Misunderstanding of Academe Policies and Beliefs and Racialized Subjugation. However, these two negative factors proved to be more detailed than the positive factors in that they had more dimensions or subfactors.

Misunderstanding of Academe Policies and Beliefs

The misunderstanding and the lack of specific knowledge of the policies that govern the academy were stumbling stones for each of the participants at some point in their career. These hurdles included implicit expectations and requirements for promotion, office politics, and both overt and covert racism that were often tolerated because of traditional beliefs.

Implicit expectations and requirements for promotion.

Not having a clear picture of the expectations and specific requirements for which the women were being evaluated for tenure and promotion was a major concern of all the participants. The women reported having to show evidence of completing specific requirements before being granted promotion or tenure. They also explained the ambiguity of the written requirements and how the evidence of those requirements is interpreted by the committee granting the promotion and tenure status. Ginger argues, “Knowing what the expectations are is the most important part of planning to achieve the expectations.” All of the schools in this university system have tenure and promotion
requirements that include teaching, scholarship, service to the college, and service to the community. It is wise for faculty seeking academia as a career path to have a discussion about the expectations that are specific to the institution. According to Ginger:

Feedback regarding the fulfillment of specific tenure and promotion requirements are usually provided when faculty are being reviewed. That is not when the person needs the feedback. Nobody tells them way back at point zero that these are the kinds of things you need to think about. Faculty just kind of learn it after walking through the fire and in my estimation, that's not the place to learn.

For those planning to enter into academia, Ginger advises:

Get your hands on the copy of the faculty handbook of the institution. Read it. If you have difficulty interpreting the mumbo jumbo, then you go to another faculty or another colleague within the academy and get some explanation. Go to your department chair. Make sure that you have that conversation regarding expectations. Don’t accept global statements such as teaching, community service, and scholarship.

Kimberly agrees stating “You need to know what the expectations are so that you have a full understanding of what that commitment or what those responsibilities are.”

Although Lovon declares that when she went through the tenure process it was very different from the way it is today. She remembers having to decide what information to produce that would support her completion of university requirements, “I had to put in so many years as an Instructor and then I was eligible to apply for tenure.
After that a tenure committee for the university would review your application, service
time and vita and any work that you’ve done.”

Teaching was identified as one area of scrutiny. Ginger states, “The university administration says you should be an excellent teacher. Well what in the world is an excellent teacher?” She encourages faculty to ask the university administration to provide examples of what represents an excellent teacher because, “Sometimes [university administration] define it as course development, major curricular revisions, or serving on and chairing major committees like the curriculum committee to lead the department to the next level. That’s really what they’re looking at.” Ginger provided this example “Faculty will say, ‘I am an excellent teacher and my students love me.’ But when they put their portfolio together and go up for tenure, the [tenure and promotion committee] will turn around and say, ‘Well, they really don’t have any new course development. I don’t really see any revision. It looks like they’ve been teaching the same thing for the past five years. What is creative and innovative about what they’re doing?’”

Asking questions about what represents scholarship was another big area of concern with the participants when discussing expectations of the university. Ginger encourages faculty to “Have a serious dialogs very early on about what scholarship entails and how scholarship is defined. They need to ask what exactly represents scholarship?” because [university administration] “uses global labels and never tell faculty the real nuts and bolts about their expectations.” Ginger offered this advice: You read and hear things like get publications but what you need is to have at least three publications in a referee journal. You could get
something published but if its not in a referee journal, it doesn’t count. You need to find out because different institutions have different requirements and some institutions don’t want anything but referee journals and they even have some partiality of the referee, peer review journals they consider to be the most credible. Ask questions such as “How relevant is publishing a text book? How is it counted? Is a text book the equivalent of one or two referee journal articles? Is the chapter in a text book the equivalent to a referee journal article? You’ve got to get a feel for exactly what they’re looking for. What I have found after going through the tenure process and sitting on tenure and promotion committees, there is a lot of discussion around what behaviors really constitute scholarship. When it comes to community service, it is what the leaders of that area in the university consider to be creditable community service, not only in the community at large but within the university community as well. That is what they are looking for. What is written and verbalized to the faculty is that they need to engage in community service so faculty will join organizations. What administration is actually saying is you should take a leadership position in the organization. When the tenure and promotion committee and administration review the community service section of a faculty portfolio they’re not talking about service in your own little neighborhood. They’re talking about the state, national, and international levels, and not just a member but having a position like being on the board, and being like the chair or president of an organization. There’s no
release time. That’s the expectation but nobody’s going to carve off anything on your teaching loads.

Office politics.

Ginger, who is a full professor, stated she has enjoyed the academic life but had to learn the politics of academe to succeed. She described the academic politics as “a game that required a skillful art to maneuver.” Ginger termed that process “politicking.”

According to Ginger,

You have to understand this notion of tenure and promotion. I think most individuals that come into the academic environment are really naïve. The first thing you need to ask is what are the criteria regarding tenure and promotion in your interview and you need to acquire a copy of that if you do decide to take the job. Because clearly, that represents the template for which you will be judged in terms of tenure and promotion. The academy is a little more rigorous and as I see it a little stuffy in terms of formality. I think that that’s always a shock. It was certainly a shock for me as a new faculty member.

According to Kimberly, “Every university and school has its own unique culture and own unique dynamics as far as how their faculty work together and how assignments get made.” Ginger asserts that the school dynamics go further than assignments and faculty working together. She disclosed this example:

Each school has its own dynamics. When I first started [teaching], I started out as an instructor. In this position I came in as Assistant Professor. In the environment that I came from, when people came in and had no
previous academic experience, they were hired in as an instructor. Here, they [administration] felt that as a recruiting strategy, they [administration] hired people with no previous academic experience as an Assistant Professor. So I, with four years of experience in higher education, was hired in as an assistant professor and there were also people [White faculty] hired at the same time as an assistant professor with no previous academic experience. But that’s just the way that they did things here. I don’t think it was because of my ethnicity. I was told that they [administration] could not hire you as an associate professor if you didn’t have a doctorate. I found out later that wasn’t true. But it depends on whose politicking for you. I know of people that have been hired in as an associate professor with limited previous experience and no doctorate. So with that said, to me it depends on whose politicking for you, that’s my estimation.

When it comes to promotion, Ginger imparted her take on academic politics, “Administration gives promotions based on grants written. Administrators love research because they like the indirect funding that they get from it which allows them to spend for what they would like to spend. It is a discretionary fund for the administrators.”

Lillian voiced similar experiences declaring:

There are a lot of political issues in growth when it comes to academia. There are politics about who you align yourself with and whether or not you had favors in that particular area. To me if you give me the rules and I follow the rules, then I should get my prize in the end. But what I found out
is that the rules could change midstream and people interpret the rules the way they want to interpret them. And if they want you to progress, you progress and if they don’t want you to progress, you won’t.

Winifred reports when hired, she was in the final stages of her thesis for her masters. The practice at her institution was to hire new faculty with no experience and without a masters in as temporary instructors which is a non-tenure track position. According to Winifred:

I stayed in the temporary full time position a year maybe two. Then I was moved into a full time instructor’s position [also a non-tenure track position] because I did not come in with a Masters, you have to qualify and fulfill the requirements in order to be moved to [a tenure track] position. So I stayed in that track maybe four years because you had not been given a tenure position after five years you have to leave.

After climbing her way to a tenure track position, Winifred explained that her tenure process was even more challenging, “I was pretty hurt when I couldn’t apply when they [two White faculty that were hired around the same time she was] applied. My boss assured me that it was because they [administration] only accept so many [applicants] per year.”

Joann’s story resembles that of Winifred. Joann discloses she remained in a non-tenure track position for ten years because the requirement for a tenured position was to possess a doctorate degree. “At the time, you could not be placed on a tenure track unless you had or were pretty close to finishing your doctorate. I moved from clinical
assistant professor [a non tenure track position] to associate professor on the tenure track after I got my doctorate which took ten years.”

Lovon claims in her experience, academia was in the “good old boy”, or “good old girl” network. As Lovon put it, “I think [administration] should commit to doing the right thing, picking the best person for a job and paying them appropriately. Not just put a face that looks like they want it to.” She further asserts, “I have seen how there have been advantages for other people [White Peers] that were not offered to me because of who they knew or how well they knew each other. Now, did that hinder me? I could say it had some impact based on decisions that were made”

Lillian shared this analogy and experience when discussing her effort to get promoted:

My chair was wonderful. She and I got along very well but she was running into the same kinds of pressures. She was verbal and it’s just some things that you don’t do, you don’t buck the system. And just so happens that people who I tend to be friends with were ones that were just kind of outside the power structure. Some of the things that happened to me may not have been directed specifically at me. But it’s much like a bomb, when you throw it out you have a lot of ancillary loss. They may have been trying to hit somebody I was standing next to and got me too. I was trying to get promoted. They [university] have a system where you can’t go up for promotion unless you also go up for tenure. I didn’t really care about the tenure part of it. Tenure to me is something if you’re going to be there for twenty years you need to get the tenure. Then it’s some
kind of security. I never had that longevity look at it. Because my thought is, I’m going to be here, I’m going to contribute and I’m moving on. It might not even be in education so I wasn’t really married to the idea of tenure. But I wanted my promotion because that was the recognition for all the work that I had done. It was just very disturbing to me that someone could block that when it’s clear; to me it was just very unfair. I clearly meet all the criteria. What basis do you change the rules on? And then I realize that people do what they want to. Lots of times it doesn’t always boil down to fair, it boils down to favor. At that particular time I didn’t have favor. We had two levels for tenure and promotion review. I had recommendations for both promotion and tenure at our college and for promotion but not tenure at the higher level which was I think the Dean who had told me I had too many research agendas. That was never the direction before; but they said “well that is the direction now”. Of course, the higher level supported the Dean regardless of what the other committees said.

When speaking of issues related to power, Lovon stated “I think there were power issues, but I guess they came after I was tenured.” She then prefaced her next remark with the declaration that she was very happy being apart of the teaching faculty and had no desire to move into administration therefore she felt that she “wasn’t held back” because of her vocal nature but admits that “other people were seen more favorably.” She shared this example:

Unless they could present a real good case, I really wasn’t interested in the power that they had… I just disagreed with some decisions that were made
sometimes and I found that when you’re vocal and will express your opinions, you might not be liked as much as others. I would just raise issues that I thought were not quite right, were not fair, whether with students or other faculty. So I guess over the years, I’m sure I’ve been marked if you want to call it marked. I think in some instances I would say something or disagree with something and was looked at differently than if someone else with good grace would have voiced the same opinion.

Overt and covert racism.

When discussing racism, Kimberly initially boasts “Most of my experiences even though I am the minority person I haven’t felt like race was an issue.” However as the conversation continued she retracted that statement claiming “The issues that deal with racism now are so subtle that it’s not like kind of in your face.” This covert racism was seen in how salary allocations were handled in her school. According to Kimberly, “I’ve had issues related to salary that was a problem and trying to get my salary adjusted from starting off at a base line from where it was, was not an easy process. What was happening is that [White faculty] were coming after me making more than what I was and many of them had no experience.

Jennifer asserts that her early experiences with racism helped to prepare her for the racism experienced in the academy. She reports going to college right out of high school to a predominately White university that was newly integrated with about five blacks in her class. According to Jennifer, “It was a good learning experience. I wouldn’t trade it.” Jennifer claims her first job in academia stemmed from the institution being “caught up in all this discrimination stuff and they were told they had to get some Black
faculty.” It was there that she realized she had to initiate her career advancement because neither administration nor other faculty informed her of career advancement opportunities. Later Jennifer moved to another institution where she was faced with overt racism when her division chair neglected to inform her of the opportunity for promotion but did inform two others [White faculty] of the same opportunity. Jennifer discloses “She said it was accidental but it was amazing how she told two other people.”

Winifred described her workload declaring the intensity of her schedule may have been racially motivated:

I did three different roles the very first year I was here. For a while, the way it was set up, everyone would have a free quarter about every fifth quarter. She [the chair] said that it was our quarter to relax, update your notes and different stuff like that. For a long time I always had a teaching class, up until last year was the first time that I had a semester where I was not assigned a teaching class. I would always have something to teach. And I would always say, ‘my gosh it would be nice to have a free semester and not have something to teach. I haven't had one yet’. I don’t know if they just happen to need someone when it was my free time came around. I was always trying to scramble and learn something I never taught before. The thing was, other people were getting it and I wasn't [time off every fifth quarter].

Ginger believes that the covert racism causes great tension between faculty reporting “I’ve learned that there’s a lot of what we call academic jealousy and that even supersedes sometimes ethnicity. It’s just that people in the academy can be very vicious in terms of they won’t hurt you but they won’t help you. You quickly figure that out.”
Ginger provided the following example “You can go and ask [White faculty], and they’ll give you half [of the lecture or information requested]. They [White faculty] will say ‘I’m not giving them all of my lectures, let them develop it all own their own, or I can point [Black faculty] to some references, but would not share their lecture.”

Lovon discussed enduring racism all of her life and in academia there was little difference. “Most people my age encountered racism in terms of education, adequacy, funding, and equality.” Lovon boast that although the HBCU that she attended and subsequently built her academic career in was the only nursing program in the area, the public hospital in that area would not allow the students who attended the local HBCU nursing program to conduct any clinical practices there. The students had to travel to other cities and states to complete their clinical practice. Lovon recalls “You could not practice there. Oh sure, they want a finish product. They just didn’t want to help develop it.” According to Lovon, “There are still some very racial issues that are going on right now where they block certain schools or faculty from doing clinical on certain units of the hospital. That blocks us from gaining vital experiences.”

Like Lovon, Alberta who also teaches at an HBCU, asserts that the racism she has encountered has not been so much from her administration but from the clinical facilities. This covert racism then transfers to her evaluations which then affects her progression in the academy. Alberta proclaims:

“We still get a lot of resentment at the hospital and I didn’t like that. We really were not as accepted and I don’t you know if it’s the thing with the Baccalaureate [her university is a HBCU and the other facility there is a primarily White associates school] or that we were Black educated faculty
and students. I say, “Gosh, will we ever pay our dues in this town?”

Sometime we weren’t as accepted regardless of how much good stuff that we were doing or could do.

Gaining respect from faculty, administration and the students was a major hurdle the women who worked at majority White institutions faced. Winifred described her students challenging her as being racially motivated stating “There are a few that you want to say, now where did you get you masters in nursing? Or where did you get your RN from because they were so confrontational. It’s like they just argue about anything. I want to ask them did you forget what role you’re in, you’re in the student role and I’m in the professor role. I’m the authority here and not you?”

Belinda, who has been in academia for the shortest period of time, had similar experiences with bold and confrontational students. She shared the following incident that happened after a class. “One time I got called into the office because I had said in class that the reason a client wasn’t tested for a disorder wasn’t really because of the [medical condition], it was because of the color of their skin. Apparently it’s too sensitive for me to talk about in class.” Belinda later found out that a student had reported her to administration for “inappropriate comments.”

Virginia shared a similar experience, “If the students did not perform as required they would take you to the Dean. I had to be very skillful and organized and I realized quickly that documentation was important.” Virginia further elaborated “It was like I had to earn or gain their respect. Whites thought they were right and they didn’t mind letting you know.”
Like Virginia, Sheryl declared several times that “You are always having to prove
yourself simply because you are Black. So therefore you work harder.” Joann
concurred indicating “I had pretty much figured out that if you were African American
you needed to come on in and put your stakes in. Go in up front being as precise and
making the presentation that you would need for professionalism so that people
wouldn’t underestimate you by any means.

Lillian articulated her career mobility being slightly hindered because of racism
from the student population as she shared the following experience:

I found that students will sometimes evaluate you bases on the fact that
they don’t expect to be challenged by you. They may be expected to be
challenged by a majority faculty person but it’s like what nerve do you
have to challenge me. You’re not as good. I hear what your saying but I
don’t believe that as much as what [White faculty] are saying. I noticed
that my evaluations were lower even though I’m doing the exact same
thing. Why is it that I’m being perceived differently when I do it than when
they do it? I realize that’s how faculty tend to get eaten up.

Ginger sums up what Virginia and Sheryl were experiencing when she provided this
advice: “If you’re Black, there are certain things you just have to do in terms of
demonstrating your credibility or your expertise and you may have to do that a little
more than maybe your Caucasian counterparts.”

*Racialized Subjugation*

The women in the study discussed the racialized inequality that they have had to
deal with and over come being multi-faceted. Although they see themselves as strong
women who add value to the academy, they report being confronted with racialized oppression when it comes to recognition for their efforts, salary, workload and family obligations.

Limited recognition.

Ginger felt that she was one of the top contenders for a public health position based on my years in public health but declares “one of the things you have to contend with is when you’re new to academe, your past expertise that you bring with you is not considered. It may be considered as a plus to get the job, but once you get the job, you’re not necessarily an expert in public health. You’re an academician. And then the rules change.” She provided this example to further explain her stance:

In the academic environment, I was a novice because I only had two years of academic experience. You’re only seen as credible if you’ve taught for a decade. With coming into academe with fifteen years of public health experience to me, I felt I knew that I was competent. But as the academy viewed me, I was a novice, if that makes sense.

Ginger compared the academic setting to the private sector with regard to promotion stating “In the private sector, you get promoted based on performance. In academia, you may not get promoted based on performance. It just doesn’t tend to work that way.”

Lillian struggled with similar issues. Lillian was the author of a widely used nursing textbook when she was hired to teach at a predominantly White institution. When she was denied a promotion she believed was well deserved she voiced feeling hurt stating
I wanted my promotion because that was the recognition for all the work that I had done. I just wanted credit for what I’d done and was doing. It was a lot of work and I thought it was important that we were writing the book and it had been published but that was not the kind of publication they [university administration] were looking at.

*Low salaries.*

According to the participants, the financial compensation for the work that is required in academia does not equate to the financial compensation they would make in the private sector. All of the participants reported that the salaries in academia were too low. When discussing the salary compensation of nursing faculty, Jennifer stated:

> I think the sad part about higher education is you really don’t make a lot of money and things don’t even begin to approximate being decent until you get my age and it’s time to go. When we look at the national salary compensation for nursing faculty we’re way down, [southeastern state in the U.S.] is vastly underpaid.

Lillian agreed and adding, “After twenty years in academia, some of our new graduates start jobs in the private sector making as much and sometimes more than we make as Master’s prepared faculty members.” Winifred offered a similarly analogy stating, “In the hospital setting, I would make more money. The nurses around here, some of our students are making almost as much money as we are making. So money wise, I took a pay cut, a tremendous pay cut to come here.”

Lovon voiced her thoughts about nursing academia. “I think that it is a good profession; I just don’t think it pays enough.” Alberta concurs proclaiming, “I think that
it’s better than it was, but in academia, if you stay a long time you lose because you don’t move as well as you would [in corporate or hospital nursing].”

Kimberly recalled the initial salary and explanation presented to her at the onset of her contract then described her incidence of salary inequity:

It was a little bit less than what I asked for but I was told that if you work in the summer that it would make up that difference. But it doesn’t necessarily work out that way because your raises and everything is based on that baseline price. When you get those raises in those small increments, your baseline doesn’t really increase that much and that was a problem.

Kimberly believed she was being undercompensated for her level of education and expertise. At the time, she was a doctoral candidate working on her dissertation when she questioned her compensation package. Being prepared to leave her institution if a suitable financial compensation package was not offered to her, Kimberly discussed her concerns with her supervisor who in turn completed a justification for salary adjustment with the Board of Regents. According to Kimberly:

It was argued that the nursing program did not want to lose their PhD faculty. They’ve invested this time and money in the faculty and then when they get their PhD if they are not making X amount the faculty will leave and go to another university. That justification helped boost my salary up a significant amount but it was not what I wanted it to be. Then I decided to post for another position which was another way that I could increase my salary because it had more in the baseline then what I was making. They
decided not to fill that position and they supplemented my salary. At that point, I really didn’t care what they had to do I just know I wanted it. I was really thinking if my contract didn’t come back with the figure that I wanted, I wasn’t going sign it. But they were able to work it out.

Kimberly offered this suggestion to those seeking academia as a career:

Do your research and try to find out what the going baseline is so that you know that you are not being offered something that is way below that baseline. Do not feel intimidated about asking for more money because it’s best if you get it up front. It’s very difficult to get any kind of increase once you get in a role because it’s all based on that budget.

When Ginger reentered academia after working in Public Health as an administrator, she found it difficult to negotiate her compensation package. She reports seeing the reduction in salary “just not a part of it.” Ginger proclaims:

I didn’t even want to negotiate it, that’s just my personality type. I’m not a true negotiator, so I just let it wash. I took the money they offered and I did the job and I’m not sorry. I’m just not a negotiator when it comes to that kind of thing. I think I would probably be more savvy now after all of these years. I was taking a huge pay cut to come to education, I was more unhappy about that. I was taking a ten thousand dollar pay cut, and there was no way they would be able to match what I was making in practice. Why negotiate, we’re talking about maybe five hundred or a thousand dollars. Forget it, when I’m losing ten.
Ginger did acknowledge getting monetary compensation after completing her doctorate. She reports being financially compensated with a five percent salary increase then added, “What are you going to do with that when you work like three years with no raise in the budget?”

*Workload inequities.*

Kimberly starting her doctoral program in Fall 2001 taking nine hours each semester, which is considered a full load, to finish the course work. Kimberly states:

Trying to balance work with school is very difficult, they [nursing administration] did decrease my workload a little bit to allow for the school classes. Most of the release time I got was in the Fall. I’m trying to find that balance. Balancing school with work, all while I’m trying to develop my teaching philosophy, changing it and developing it into the way I think is more appropriate and what fits me best, it’s challenging.

In Ginger’s institution, they practiced team teaching. However, due to the limited faculty in her area of expertise, Ginger asserts that her workload was “heavier than many of the other faculty. According to Ginger:

We had to manage more part time faculty, for us in community health, we tended to be one, sometimes in a good year we had two, and so that meant that if you had forty students, then you take work home at night. On paper it would probably say workload was equitable because fifty percent of my time is devoted to research and the other is to the classroom, but my teaching loads tends to be a little bit on the heavy side and we’re still trying to work that out where I’m really clearly getting a fifty
percent, because right now I am not getting fifty percent, and I’m not happy. I sat on various committees to complete service to college/community requirements for promotion towards professorship. I was the Board Chairperson of [a local health program]. I was on the Hospital Board, and I was a board member in the Nurses Association and the Chair of our district. I was out almost every evening. I look back now and I don’t know how I was doing it all. When I took this job my desire was to teach and I really believe I’m an excellent teacher. No matter what I do, I’m committed to it. It’s a fine balancing act in terms of your research projects, and giving the students the support and attention that they deserve. I thought I would come and I would teach. I don’t have to worry about all this other fluff stuff. You don’t think about things when you take on a teaching job like accreditation, visits, keeping records for every accrediting body, not only for your state licensure board but for your national accreditation and all of the responsibility and work related to that. You do all of that in conjunction with all your other teaching. So, for me, that has been extremely stressful. A lot of new faculty are just about to lose their minds. They can’t believe it’s this much work.

Lillian who once taught at a Historically Black University recalled:

At HBCU’s we do everything. At the institution I used to teach, there were not that many faculty and everybody did every specialty area. The only thing that I didn’t do was fundamentals but that’s because we had two people. We had a skills lab instructor and so they were able to handle most of that with the person
teaching on that level. We were expected to do the skills with our students, so you had to be a master of all. It was very comprehensive. We had large numbers. We would have classes that were sixty students. That meant you had care plans, you had stacks of papers that you took home all the time, it was a pretty intense load.

Lovon described the intensity of managing students in the clinical area.

It’s something to manage ten people in the clinical area. It is hard to manage ten students and patients with a high acuity which is what we get in the hospitals now. You really want to be with the students and be sure you’re giving them guidance; especially those that might not think like you want them to think quite yet. [Speaking of critical thinking skills being mastered] They’re operating on my licenses and that makes me think critically. It’s an awesome responsibility. You can teach in the class and teach about clinical, but you don’t ever know what your student is going to do or say. You have to get to know them and you have to trust them, you have to try to feel comfortable with what you think their decision might be because you don’t know. And then in the clinical area, you have your students that you’re responsible for, you have your patients that you are responsible for and your license, your livelihood, that you’re responsible for and you’re responsible to your school. So sometimes you want to grab one and just toss him out the window if you could. But you know you can’t do that. You just have to deal with them one on one and talk with them and try to help them understand, but some students don’t take things as
seriously and legally as you do. You see the whole picture and they don’t see the whole picture yet. The maturity is not all there in all students and they may even make good grades, but lack the maturity level.

When asked about her past and present workload, Alberta smiled as she rattled off her current workload which consisted of doing clinicals full time and then running the health center and staying up at night and on the weekend writing grants. She took a moment to reminisce about her past academic workload and disclosed these memories:

It’s a lot of work. Being in a HBCU, I think it is different from being any other place. You have a whole lot of hats to wear. I use to take work home with me, weekends were tied up doing work, but I’ve enjoyed it. You know you had to go to class, we had to lecture for classes, we had to prepare for clinical. We went through the whole gamete of lesson plans and having to do clinical instructions as well as well as doing clinical supervision. We were on numerous committees both college and division; we had to community service in addition to completing some kind of scholarship.

Ginger declares that there is limited support with regard to workload demands stating, “You have become your own secretary. If you don’t have good computer skills, you better go buy some and get some because the amount of work that you’re able to produce will be directly related to your competency in terms of computer skills and there are not a lot of people to help you. It’s hard to get people to sit down with you when you’re kind of clawing your way through a project and they give you an office and give you a computer and telephone and bye. You gotta kind of almost do it on your own.”
During the course of the interview Winifred spoke at length about her workload. She discussed how she felt mistreated and how being the only Black faculty in the program increased her advisee and mentorship responsibilities.

I wish that the workload was not quite as hectic outside of teaching, because we love teaching nursing. I wish we didn’t have quite as much committee work. With relationship to the additional requirements such as committee work, advising, lesson plans, etcetera I think I do it all well, but do I have enough time? I would say no. Sometimes you find yourself doing what needs to be done now. There isn’t enough hours in the day, we take things home to work on, we work on lesson plans, and lectures during breaks whatever it takes. Due to the fact that we are in clinical a good bit of the time we basically advise all the students. We have an open door policy that’s why you don’t get a lot of things done when you are in the office. They [students] see you sitting here and they just walk in and then you get involved with what they are talking about or listening to their problems, helping them study or figure out ways of taking test. The added responsibility of mentorship to the students is a big role for me. Even the Black students that are not my advisees, like pre nursing students, sometimes come in with a friend and they say “Oh I like you can I come back and talk with you?” So they come and they call.

*Lack of mentorship and collegiality.*

The lack of mentorship was a large factor in the career development of many of the participants. Sifting through the tenure and promotion requirements, as well as juggling the workload was a struggle that resonated throughout the stories shared by
the participants. Kimberly asserts that in her institution they have a formal mentorship program. Administration “assigns mentors for new faculty as they go through the orientation.” Kimberly found this process of having someone from another department, “do emails back and forth for a while but never really getting together,” not as helpful as her non formal nursing faculty mentors. According to Kimberly, “There was only one other Black nursing faculty” so the input she received came from White faculty who often “supplied information on a need to know or if you ask me basis.”

Ginger, on the other hand, said that there was no formal mentorship program in her institution. She admits to feeling “limited in terms of the number of colleagues” in her clinical practice area because only a small number of faculty are necessary to teach the content. “When you look at another area such as adult health, there are many more faculty, and when you talk to people from other academic institutions, the community health faculty all sing the same song – that they tend to be low in number on the faculty and so that’s kind of in and of itself isolating.”

Lillian acknowledged the mentorship she received during her first embark into academia at a historically Black institution was wonderful. “They had a mentor for me who said I could stay at her house until I found my own place.” However in stark contrast Lillian discussed the lack of mentorship she experienced at the predominantly White institution where she worked. “There were not many people who were going to show you how to do things or help you with your career mobility. So you had to seek out and find your own. I made those kinds of connections outside the institution but inside the institution it just wasn’t that kind of mentorship.” To receive career guidance and academic mentorship Lillian would return to the first historically Black institution where
she had allegiances. “I went back to the institution where my first mentor was. She [her mentor] had then taken the Dean’s position. I would get a chance to talk to people who had been educators for a while and they were able to give me insight or connections on certain things.” Lillian shared this story to illustrate the importance of mentorship:

When I went from a HBCU to the HWCU people made me aware of the fact that the HWCU was a public institution you could actually research what people were paid, the different ranks and perks to ask for. No one explained to me about salary negotiation until I was making the change. When I went for the interview, I knew at least to ask for a certain amount and to even hold out a little bit. So when the offer came, I wanted rank. I had just earned my associate at the HBCU and wanted to go in with my associate rank and a certain salary. I was quickly told that the criterion for the associate rank was not the same and that I would have to start as an assistant but that I could get credit in years for my previous efforts.

Lovon acknowledges that mentorship at her HBCU was lacking stating, “I survived and got through the best way I could, that’s the best way I can describe it.” Alberta articulated a similar story:

I didn’t have the mentorship that I needed. I think I was just naïve. I needed to work, they need the help, I know there are some other things, but I didn’t ask and they didn’t tell. For one thing, I’m missing two years of retirement that I didn’t realize at the time, I didn’t know about that and how the system worked.
Winifred’s account of her years working in academia prior to the tenure process sounds almost identical to Alberta’s. According to Winifred,

No one said to me now if you want to make tenure these are the things you need to do. You know you are sort of like on your own. I was on my own trying to figure out what it is I should have done. Now I’m sure if I had asked my boss she would have she probably would have told me. But no one just volunteered and came and told me say these are the things you need to do. No one took me by the hands; whatever I needed I had to ask for it.

As Ginger described the absence of mentorship in her program, she alluded to the fact that it was difficult to build collegial relationships because there was so few Black faculty in nursing. Ginger maintains:

One of the best ways to fulfill the scholarly research and community service requirements for tenure and promotion is to work with other colleagues in your area and to build bonds. It is difficult in terms of building relationships and collegiality in your particular academic department. It’s not always easy because fundamentally given that all things are equal, we all are different personality types. And you have to find someone that you can kind of pair yourself with that has kind of the same personality traits as well as similar interests. That certainly is important in terms of establishing a research agenda or trajectory. It doesn’t mean that you can’t go solo because I’ve done that while. But, I mean, it’s a lonely path. It’s always fun when somebody else is digging in the dirt with you.” Overall, some faculty
have been very open and welcoming and affirming and others have been standoffish. But I think that some of that is not necessarily about me being black in this academy. It’s about them.

*Family obligations.*

Faculty retention is often affected by family obligations which were noted as a major concern by these women when planning and implementing their career course and advancement in the academy. Although many of the participants reported that they had some family influence and support that encouraged them to enter into nursing and subsequently nursing academia, six of them also reported that family obligations depending on the timing became detrimental to their career trajectory by either holding them in one place or slowing down their advancement.

The experience gained from working in a specialty area such as pulmonary care in a teaching facility is extremely valuable in academia. Jennifer explained that while she was obtaining clinical experience as a nurse in a prominent teaching hospital on the pulmonary unit, she got married. Due to needs of her new family, she “moved back to [small town hospital] and worked as a 3 – 11 staff nurse on the medical/surgical unit”. Jennifer decided to enter into academia at a local technical school where she stayed for seventeen years because “it worked well for me and my family. It was convenient.” At the time she had two small children. As the years past, she subsequently became divorced. When she remarried, Jennifer was forced to make the decision to leave her job.

My husband lived in [a large city in a southeastern city in the United States] and I wasn’t going to convenience him to move to [a very small
southeastern city in the United States] so I decided if I am going to be married to this man then I guess I’ll have to move. The only thing that was keeping me there was that I didn’t want to leave my job. I had 17 years invested there and I didn’t want to leave. So I said “well sometimes you have to make sacrifices.”

Jennifer reentered academia this time as an assistant professor in an associate nursing program but left again due to family concerns.

By this time, my kids were in high school. Because they weren’t doing what they needed to do, playing in the evening, that sort of thing I decided to go home and be there for them; so I quit for two years. The president [of the college] said to me when I quit “usually when people leave we don’t hire them back.” So I said “well I’m sorry but I got to go see about my kids. I’ve invested a lot in their future and I’d like to see them finish high school. I quit for two years but I really did miss it.”

Jennifer was rehired at the same institution but was not given any years of service towards tenure or promotion. She had to start that process over from the beginning.

Lillian spoke of experiences that were similar to Jennifer’s. Lillian was working towards promotion at her institution when she chose to leave academia for a brief period due to family concerns. As Lillian put it:

I had another push or pull in my life. I had my daughter… but I was fitting it in. I had my little pouch thing that I carried her around with me all the time. She was not a very distractive force. But I realized I was fitting her into
everything as opposed to fitting everything around her…I was really sacrificing a lot to get the research done.

Lillian subsequently left nursing academia temporarily to become a consultant because “It gave me plenty of time to still be with the kids and have my household, my family, my husband and everything.” Before deciding to reenter academia fulltime and move family to another city Lillian explained her need to consider family:

My father was ill at the time and it wasn’t something I seriously thought was going to come into play. I discussed it with my husband and at that point he was like this is something we could do. And that was what let me know this was ok to do because he had been completely against it. And the fact that his heart had kind of turned a little bit, I felt it was a calling. Cause nobody changes hearts around but one source. So I thought well maybe that’s what I’m supposed to be doing. Even my father, who wanted everybody close by and the fact that I was going to be away and I was daddy’s girl and the only nurse in the family, understood. My daughter is into gymnastics and was on team and I thought that was going to be such a traumatic thing for her to have to give that up but she moved out of a position on team there and into a position on team here with very little interruption and we were able to find a place with a good school system.

Everything was falling into place, so I took the job.

Lovon’s story also described how life and the busy responsibilities of being a wife and mother caused her to negate graduate school which ultimately affected her career trajectory.
I got married and very soon after I had a son. Graduate school and teaching and everything else don’t always fit one hundred percent, with a child, with a family, with a husband. He [husband] was [working out of town] and I was still here with my job and my baby and I just could not break away to go to school and there was no graduate school in nursing locally, so that just took away the incentive and the opportunity to go to the doctorate level. I think I probably blame myself for not pursuing the next degree. I had to put my family first so, I did that.

Winifred took the same stance as Lovon. Winifred wanted to get into teaching at the college level but knew the entry level positions required a master’s degree. Winifred shared this story:

At this time I was married and I had one child and my husband didn’t think it was a good idea for me to commute back and forth or go and stay because [large city about 90 miles away] was the nearest area I could go and get a Masters at that time. So because of his not wanting me to go and because of my child I didn’t go at that particular time. It was about probably about between ten to thirteen years before a program came within commuting distance.

Winifred also admitted to a long time dream of getting her doctorate but feels family and age have been obstacles for her. Winifred realizes that advancement for her would come only after she receives additional credentials but finds herself making excuses for not going after her dream stating:
I can’t decide if I want to go back for a doctorate but my age keeps getting in my way. It was something I wanted to do at one point but because of my children being at the age that they were I didn’t do it at that time. Different things outside of work kept interfering. And now I’m wondering if I’m too old to do it.

After her divorce, Virginia moved to a city close to her mother who at the time was ill. Virginia had initially planned to spend a brief time in this city but due to family obligations, she settled down and accepted a pay cut, as well as a demotion in rank and made a long term career at an institution located in a small city where chances for advancement were slow. She shared, “I didn’t intend on staying here but my mom was sick and I fell in love so I knew I wasn’t going nowhere then.”

Chapter Summary

The data gathered during this study provided two major themes to answer the research question of how Black women nursing faculty maneuver within the academic system to gain advancement. These factors were achieving self actualization in their nursing career and having career and life alignment. The journey to becoming self actualized in their career began with the women being prepared to accept an academic appointment by having prior hospital experience within their chosen area. However, it was noted that having experience in the critical and specialized care areas made them more marketable to the academy. Experience in the critical care areas provided them the opportunity to teach higher level courses with upper division students.

Advanced education was another aspect of becoming self actualized. The women acknowledged that having advanced degrees in nursing or related fields opens
doors that were previously invisible to them. Entering into graduate school and obtaining a doctorate helped five of the women fulfill requirements to obtain rank, position, or tenure, which for some, had previously been denied due to university policy.

Being willing to explore opportunities was also seen as an important facet of self actualization. This action empowered the women to take chances and choose their course in order to position themselves for advancement in the academy.

The findings also support the need to have career and personal life in alignment. A decrease in family responsibilities, such as caring for children, offered the women more time to devote to accomplishing the requirements needed for advancement in academia. A supportive network was seen as an essential component to the career advancement of the participants. Although they all report that family support was helpful, it was the support they received from seasoned peers and those in supervisory positions that seemed to elevate their careers to the next level. Having the support of those in power provided an insider’s view and helped the women realize their potential. This alliance allowed the women to spend required time building and excelling in their career while maintaining a healthy personal life.

To answer the question regarding factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty, the data was split into positive factors and negative factors. The women liked the fact that nursing academia offered them a resonation with the caring aspects of the profession. The women in reported having a commitment to nursing and academia and wanted to be a part of ensuring that Black students who have a desire to become nurses reach their potential. Making a contribution to the profession by helping the students succeed was very rewarding. They also wanted to ensure that the students
who graduated from their programs were of superior quality. As one participant put it, “I don’t want to put out any junk.”

Academia also provided lifestyle advantages that the women felt were advantageous. The flexibility to arrange and rearrange their schedule was conducive to managing commitment to family. Many of the women had children and felt being home in the evenings, on the weekends and holidays was a fair trade off for some of the negative aspects the academic life had to offer. In addition, the women report being torn between wanting to be a nurse and wanting to be a teacher. Nursing academia offered a good merging of their teaching and nursing passions.

There were two major themes that emerged as negative aspects of academia that threatens the retention of Black women nursing faculty. They were the misunderstanding of academe policies and beliefs and racialized subjugation. The misunderstanding and lack of knowledge regarding academe policies and beliefs steamed from ambiguous explanations of the expectations and requirements for promotion and tenure. The culture of racism was supported at times by the politics played in the academy. Women in the study were unaware of how to play the game because the rules kept changing. As a participant in the study put it, “It is a game that requires a skillful art to maneuver.”

Racism was experienced by all of the women. However, because the acts were more covert than obvious, some women had difficulty articulating it as such. Many of the women saw the acts of racism as part of the system’s policies or random interactions with colleagues. Limited recognition, low salaries, workload inequities, lack of mentorship and collegiality and family obligations were identified as major factors that
make up the theme racialized subjugation. Receiving little or no recognition for the work the women had accomplished angered them. They expressed needing the same validation that was afforded their White counterparts. Low salaries and inequitable workloads were also discussed as major factors that have caused the women in the study to contemplate leaving academia. It was noted that with the education and experience of nursing faculty, working as nurses in traditional roles in the hospital and community settings were financially more accommodating and often required less time. The women spoke of having to take work home in the evening and on weekends which would not be the case if they worked in the private sector.

Because nursing is a gendered career, the lack of mentorship and collegiality in academia was not seen so much as a problem because of their gender as it was because of their race. Being the only Black women in their departments was often very challenging. The women voiced struggling with learning how to juggle completing the tenure and promotion requirements along with their workload without proper guidance. They voiced assistance mainly when they asked for it and the assistance often came with vital information withheld.

Family obligations were significant enough for the women in this study to place their career aspirations on hold or to change them altogether. Four of the women aspired to return to school to seek a doctoral degree but because of family life situations such as the need to care for their husbands and children, the women chose not to pursue the advanced degree. Three other women chose to leave academia for brief periods to raise their children. The choices made by these women had a profound affect on their careers. Three of the four women who chose not to pursue their doctorates
were promoted from instructor to assistant professor and has remained in that rank through their tenure in academia. The women who left academia and returned had to start from the beginning, building a portfolio to present for tenure and promotion. The scale weighing the positive and negative factors with regards to retention for Black women is steadily tipping to the negative side. This phenomenon correlates with the admission of several participants who have contemplated leaving academia.
CHAPTER V

“BEING BLACK” IN THE ACADEMY: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the career development of Black women nursing faculty. The research questions guiding this study were:

1) How do Black women nursing faculty achieve advancement in institutions of higher education?

2) What are the factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty in institutions of higher education?

This study revealed three main conclusions: 1) Black women nursing faculty experience an abusive relationship with their institutions, but that they are survivors who have carved out a better existence for themselves and others; 2) while the nursing profession is dominated by women, Black women nursing faculty’s experiences, regardless of their work setting, are punctuated by racism; and 3) Black women nursing faculty have created a two-tier mentoring system to fulfill their mentoring needs. As a finale to this study, this chapter will discuss the conclusions drawn from the data with relation to the research questions posed and relevant literature. In addition, this chapter will discuss how the study impacts the adult education, nursing, and career development literature. Finally, this chapter will present the implications of the study, recommendations for future research and concluding remarks.
The Abusive-Survivor Relationship With the Institution

Overall, it was observed that the Black women in this study are often treated differently by their institutions than are their White counterparts. For the most part, they take longer to achieve tenured positions, and are required to have more credentials to succeed. It occurred to me that this resembled the classic abusive relationship that is written about in the sociological literature. The women are: 1) lured into what is seemingly a wonderful relationship, 2) then the women face tension, in that they get decreased recognition for their contributions, are given lower salaries, are not nurtured, and are ultimately used by the system as “tokens”; and 3) the Black women nursing faculty are overtly abused by a system that requires more of them for promotion, tenure, and administrative positions.

Black women nursing faculty are able to achieved advancement in institutions of higher education by deferring their careers and by first living out their personal lives. The factors that affect the retention of Black women nursing faculty were multifaceted and grounded in the fact that the academy fit the women's lifestyle. In order to understand the career development of Black women nursing faculty, it was important to get an historical account of their experiences. Having the women articulate their story from the beginning to include the matriculation from nurse to nursing faculty, and from instructor to professorship provided insight into how the women were able to achieve advancement in the academy. The phenomenon of women deferring their careers is discussed in the career development literature that identifies women’s career development as non-linear.
It was noted that the women who held high positions and rank in the academy such as Dean and Assistant Dean of Nursing, Coordinator of Special Program, Associate Professor and Professor deferred the advancement process until they felt their responsibilities to family were reduced. Becoming self actualized and having a balance between their career and personal life were essential to their ability to seek advancement in the academy.

The necessity to become self-actualized as nurses equipped the women to be prepared to seek and accept academic appointments above the entry level. This study found that for Black women to consider themselves self-actualized in their careers they had to be armed with clinical experience, hold advanced degrees and have a supportive network to assist in their success. The women who had clinical experience in the critical and specialty care areas of nursing had the greatest opportunity to teach in upper level nursing courses and advance to mid level supervisory positions in the academy.

This study also found that the academy recognizes and accepts scholarship more readily than it does service. The women who were doctorally prepared proved to move through the academy with much greater speed than those who worked tirelessly for the university with their master’s. The women in the study agree that their promotions to tenure track positions and mid and higher-level supervisory roles came only after they completed their advanced degrees. They acknowledge that the process of completing their doctoral degrees was “worth it” because having the doctoral degree in hand opened doors to upper level management.

Historically, Black women did not view education as an individual gain but for “race uplift” in an effort to assist in the economic, political and social improvement
Times have changed, but the concept of “race uplift” through education remains fairly prevalent. The women in the study report obtaining a master’s and doctoral degree not just for personal gain but to position themselves to be able to provide a flexible but stable lifestyle for their families, and to offer mentorship to Black students.

Obtaining these higher-level degrees however, did not come without a price. The women in the study report working full time while they completed their master’s and doctoral studies. They also spoke of the adversities they overcame to complete their degrees such as sabotage with work schedules prohibiting them from taking scheduled courses, and increased workload when they were scheduled to take heavy theory content courses.

Although schools of nursing may never be fully staffed with doctorally prepared faculty, there is a push for the professorate to require newly hired faculty to be doctorally prepared before entering tenure track positions (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2003; Glanville & Porche, 2000; Hinshaw, 2001; SREB, 2001). This is a new hurdle for Black women who seek academia as a career option. Aiken, (1999) and Hassouneh-Phillips and Beckett (2003) completed studies on Black women nurses who returned to school in pursuit of a higher degree. Although the population of students was different, there were some similarities in the findings. When Black women return to higher educational institutions as students, they were subjected to racism such as injustices manifested by intimidation, difference in treatment, silence, being ignored, and humiliation. This mistreatment often discouraged participation and hindered the women from completing the advanced degree.
Women in the study, who were not doctorally prepared, voiced regrets of not completing their doctoral programs earlier in their career. The women attributed lack of time and support from family and peers as well as issues related to racism from the institution as the hindering factors. This is consistent with Hassouneh-Phillips and Beckett’s (2003) findings that attribute the high attrition rates among students of color in higher education programs to a lack of social connection, financial aid, faculty support and commitment being secondary to the student’s internal thought that completing a doctoral program was an unattainable goal. However, with policies in place to require terminal degrees as criteria for advancement, Black women will need to verbalize their concerns to initiate institutional change or endure this mistreatment to complete the programs and get the degree that becomes their ticket to the professorate.

The data indicated that once the women were ready to pursue their career aspirations they had to have enough self-initiation to seek out and explore opportunities for advancement. Advancement for these women was not automatic. They had to take chances, move to multiple academic settings, lobby for compensation, and accept appointments that were not initially appealing to them. Their experiences were significantly different and not as positive as their White counterparts.

Although their journey to becoming self actualized began with the decision to become a nurse, it was the actual act of completing their advanced degree and gaining experience in their specialty area of nursing that placed them in the position to accept the challenge of being in the professorate. Even when Black women are educated and complete the written requirements set forth by the university, they remained marginalized when it comes to advancement in the academy. The rules for
advancement are interpreted or changed to suite the candidate. Black women continue to work harder, longer, and endure more criticism and setbacks than their counterparts in an effort to achieve career advancement.

For this reason, Black women choose to place their career aspirations on the back burner until their responsibilities to family and home life are reduced. It is only after the women have a balance between their career and life that they become comfortable seeking personal aspirations. It takes an enormous amount of time and energy to complete tenure and promotion requirements. This was seen as time taken away from their families as opposed to time being devoted to their career advancement. This study revealed that Black women have to carve out time in their lives to devote to themselves and to work on their career aspirations and this time is typically before they have children or after their children are grown and away from the home.

The women in the study placed a significant amount of importance on maintaining a homogeneous lifestyle. During the interviews, the women did not offer overwhelming praise to the academy to indicate that they were happy with their career trajectory, but they did emphasize a continued desire to remain in academia. Because time is a precious commodity, the women in the study were very pleased with having nights, weekends, and holidays off which would not be an option if they were nursing full time in the private sector. They also acknowledged the importance of having the flexibility to adjust their work schedules to provide the ability to meet personal and family obligation. In addition, the academy offered the women a chance to give back to their community by helping Black students achieve their career aspirations. A sense of pride was felt when the students graduated.
Like the literature (Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003), the study supports the fact that Black women in the academy do not get the recognition for their scholarship efforts. The women in the study also described the need to have their scholarship viewed as a valuable contribution instead of being negated because the content is significant to their community and population.

Although career advancement was desired and valued, the cost of that advancement could not interfere with the expected cultural customs they held dear. Academia is seen as a profession that offers flexibility and prestige. Even though there were far more reasons identified for the women to leave the academy, they stay because the women see the academy as a way of being able to achieve career advancement without the penalty of unfulfilling the expected family and lifestyle obligations that the women felt were important. Ultimately, it can be said that the Black women nursing faculty in this study were survivors.

Experiences Punctuated By Racism

According to Hull, Scott & Smith (1982) to succeed in a career dominated by males such as academia, Black women have accepted and assumed their “role.” This “Black woman’s role” of having to work harder, perform better, question less, and accept more feeds into the idea that Black women are “superwomen” and can handle the constant societal and institutional imposed restrictions and demands. The women in the study spoke of how family responsibility often forced them to negate their career objectives until an appropriate time presented itself. This is consistent with the literature that suggests Black women tend to choose their careers around their perceived primary obligation to care for home and family (Alfred, 2001; Cook, Heppner & Obrien, 2002;
Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998; Schreiber, 1998). My stance is that Black women have had to accept the matriarch role, not always because the male figure was not accessible, but because they were seen as strong and capable. This burden transcends to the academy. The women in this study found themselves being placed on university and departmental committees serving as the token Black and to offer insight from the Black perspective. These additional committee responsibilities added to the women’s workload and took away time that could have devoted to items deemed necessary for advancement in the academy.

Data from this study support the thoroughly documented fact that women tend to have lower salaries and wait longer for promotion than their counterparts (AACN, 2003; Bierema, 1998; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal, 2003). In this study, the women voiced frustration with the low salaries offered by the academy. They report having to moonlight on weekends and during the summer to elevate their salaries to equal those in the private sector. The women expressed even more frustration when they disclosed the fact that some of their students make as much as faculty when they graduate. The devaluing of women’s work is often seen through the wage gap. The academy is guilty of using salary to place value on the professional fields. Female dominated professions such as nursing tend to receive less funding and have lower salaries than those in male dominated fields such as math and science.

Cook, Heppner and Obrien (2002), Farmer (1997), and Schreiber (1998) finding suggest that because women assume multiple roles they choose occupations that are highly traditional, less prestigious and lower paying because they offer more flexibility. With only three of the eleven women in the study in upper administration, this
phenomenon of women choosing careers that merge well with their lifestyle is supported by this study. While the women supported the lifestyle advantages of academia, they were very displeased and voiced disgust with the treatment they received while trying to maneuver within the halls of the academy. Findings reveal that unspoken expectations for promotion and tenure were manipulated to suit those in power. The women described experiences where expectations and requirements for promotion were interpreted in a manner that proved them ineligible and ultimately blocked their opportunity for advancement. These discriminatory practices and academic politics make it difficult for Black women to meet the expectations for advancement because the requirements keep changing.

Unfortunately, these experiences of covert racism and institutional politics shared by the women in this study mirrored those discussed in the literature. Daufin (2001), Giger et al (1993), Hassouneh-Phillips and Beckett (2003), Humphery-Brown (1997), Johnson Bailey and Tisdell (1998) and McNeal (2003) all assert that racism, in its covert form, is often disguised as academic policies, procedures and expectations which hinder the professional growth and development of Black women in the academy.

A Two-Tier Mentoring System

When looking at mentorship, Black women faculty are isolated due to limited access to role models and mentors (Hull, Scott & Smith, 1982). Findings from the study suggest that the lack of Black faculty to provide mentorship leaves Black women nursing faculty feeling isolated in the academy. Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998) purpose that with regard to mentorship, although not an intentional exclusion of others, people tend to be most comfortable with members of their own group. This is often not
an option for Black women nursing faculty. Eight of the eleven women in the study worked at institutions that were predominately White. Of them, five were currently the only Black faculty on staff and reported experiences of “other” (Aiken, 1999; Johnson Bailey & Tisdell 1998) with regard to inclusion in scholarship activities. Plata (1996) suggest that institutions should not force minority faculty into a “sink or swim situation” (p. 221) but should provide them with mentorship and guidance to increase success.

Moreover, it was observed in this study that the Black women nursing faculty developed an informal and secondary mentoring system that suited their specific needs. This consisted of getting to know other Black women nursing faculty at other intuitions and contacting them for support and advice. This sister circle often included former teachers and former colleagues.

In contrast, the findings from this study support the fact that White women in supervisory positions are beneficial to the career advancement of Black women nursing faculty. Several women in the study suggest that the support and encouragement they obtained from their White supervisors and peers helped them to obtain the advancement in the academy. Specifically, the women reported being sought out and encouraged to participate in select activities that were seen by the academy as scholarly. Women in the study purport that their supervisors did exactly what Johnson-Bailey (2004) suggest should happen; their supervisors introduce them to the ins and outs while helping them learn and negotiate the rules in the academy.

Relationship to the Literature

This study on the career development of Black women nursing faculty looked at subject areas that are situated in three bodies of literature: nursing, adult education, and
career development. The conclusions drawn from my study contribute to each body of literature by supporting, enhancing, or refuting the information already documented.

Adult Education

The adult education literature that discusses Black women in the academy is supported by the findings from this study. With regards to Black faculty my study found that the lack of mentorship, low salaries, biases in the tenure and promotion process, excessive workload and institutional politics play a significant role in the dissatisfaction the women in the study verbalized with the academy. All of these areas of concern were documented extensively in the adult education literature.

Hull, Scott and Smith (1982), Johnson-Bailey and Tisdell (1998), and McNeal (2003) suggest that the lack of Black faculty in the academy to serve as mentors leaves the Black female faculty with no one to share experiences, gain support, or identify with. The adult education literature also declares that wages for faculty is lower and do not mirror those who work in the private sector (Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; Giger et al, 1993; Hinshaw, 2001; McNeal, 2003; Nudy and Leland, 2000; Weems, 2003).

Excessive workload in the form of committee assignments, and clinical responsibilities were identified by Daufin (2001), Hinshaw (2001), and McNeal (2003). Clark (1998), Daufin (2001), and McNeal (2003) identified biases in the tenure process with regard to the use of implicit explanations to outline qualifications for advancement and the inconsistent interpretation by administration of those explanations suit the candidate.

However, the findings in this study refute the conclusions made in the literature that low salaries, the absence of mentorship and networking opportunities, excessive workloads and racism are factors that cause nursing faculty to leave the academy. This
study purports that Black women endure the negative aspects of the academy and remain in academia in spite of them because the academy conforms to a more homogeneous lifestyle for which the women place great value.

The results from this study will also enhance the nursing literature. It will address the void regarding Black women nursing faculty and their career development. Specifically, because the body of literature studying the experiences of Black women nursing faculty and their career development is limited, the findings from my study will provide new insight regarding the need for Black women nursing faculty to find a balance between work and life in order for them to be more productive thus increasing their opportunity for advancement.

*Career Development*

The findings from this study will support the career development literature with regard to understanding that the career development of Black women nursing faculty. A central component of women’s career development is that women move in and out of the workforce throughout their careers (Bierema, 1998). Without a balance between work and life, Black women will revert to the role of matriarch, caring for all around her. Not because she has to take on all the responsibilities but because she has been socialized to accept the she is supposed to do so. With each fluctuation in and out of the academy, Black women are forced to begin their climb towards tenure and promotion. These findings are congruent with the literature that discusses women’s career development as non-linear (Alfred, 2001; Bierema, 2001; Farmer, 1997).

Additionally, woman’s career patterns are a complex of social expectations that lead them to develop occupational credentials that are easily transferable between jobs
to support their non-linear career trajectories (Bierema, 2001; Herr, 2001). Some women in this study were socialized to believe in traditional career development theories that looked at social role and gender stereotyping as a method of matching a person’s ability and interest with a career (Bierema, 2001; Holland, 1985; Parson, 1909). The women believed their career choices were limited to female gendered roles and pursued these avenues early in life. However, when they entered in the academy their socialization proved wrong because although teaching has traditionally been a female gendered role the academy is not.

The findings are also congruent with the theories related to women’s career development. For the majority of the women, nursing became a viable option secondary to their socialization. The desire to become a nurse began at an early age. At the time of selection, the women believed their career options were limited. Participant disclosure of having her career options narrowed down to two that were “suitable for women” at the time, being a secretary and being a nurse speak to the socialization of women. Because they were able to identify with the caring aspects of the profession, nursing seemed to be the logical fit. These experiences are congruent with Alfred (2001), Hartung (2002), and Osipow and Littlejohn (1995) who suggest that the career experiences of women and of ethnic groups are directly shaped by contextual forces.

Implications for Practice

As Black educators, we must take on the responsibility to build bridges of success not just for ourselves, but for those crossing after us. The findings from this study will be useful in both the nursing and adult education practice. Because the shortage of nurses in the United States is perpetuated by the increasing shortage of
nursing faculty understanding the career development of Black women nursing faculty will be helpful in the recruitment and retention efforts of educational institutions. Knowing that Black women nursing faculty are pleased with the aspect of the academy fitting their lifestyles, institutions can work towards producing and supporting an environment conducive to Black women feeling comfortable helping students while continuing to offer the flexibility desired for the women to remain in the academy.

In addition, according to Healthy People 2010, the death rate among African Americans is significantly higher than Whites among major health disorders such as infant mortality, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and HIV/AIDS. This study revealed that the non-traditional research initiatives of the Black women are not valued and become hindrances to their advancement in the academy. Therefore, there is a need for more Black nursing scholars to study the issues affecting our community and for these efforts to be valued as worthy scholarship by the academy.

The institutions need to build formal and informal mentoring systems for Black women nursing faculty. The formal networks could assist the Black women nurses with learning the overt and hidden curriculum of academia. In addition, an informal mentoring system could consist of providing space for Black women nursing faculty to meet as a group and encouraging such alliances. In addition, this study implicates that Black women nursing faculty need to be proactive in voicing their concerns and needs in the workplace. In doing this, they should find a way to insert their needs into the larger mission of the institution.
Implications for Future Research

There is a need to replicate this study to include the experiences of other minorities because like Black women, their independent voices are not heard in the literature. When issues of race are discussed in the literature, all minorities are lumped into one category. This is unfortunate because the cultural backgrounds, which shape how we respond to life’s situations, for each group are drastically different. It would be interesting to see if the documented experiences of other minority women mirror the documented experiences of Black women.

Another implication for future studies is the fact that the women in the study choose to work towards their career advancement in the academy late in life. Because this phenomenon further feeds into the shortage of seasoned Black faculty, there is a need to identify ways of introducing Black women nurses into advanced degree programs that target nursing education earlier in their career. Introducing Black women into educational programs earlier in their career will increase the amount of productive service to the academy.

It is also recommended that a similar studies be conducted that would consider various settings. One study could look at historically Black institutions. It was noted in this study that the historically Black institutions did not differ significantly from the predominantly White institutions. And it was reasoned that this similarity between the two existed because even in the absence of a White power structure, the White power structure looms invisibly. In addition, a study could also be conducted that compares historically Black nursing programs to historically White nursing programs in an attempt
to dissect or isolate the positionality of race from the positionality of gender that
dominates most studies that focus on the gendered profession of nursing.

Chapter Summary

Contrary to the literature (AACN, 2005; Giger, Johnson, Davidhizar, & Fishman,
1993; Johnson, 2004; Tucker-Allen, Steele & Baker, 1992; SREB, 2001; Yordy, 2006),
the academy does not have sufficient strategies in place to attract and keep Black
faculty in academia. Although the women found contributing to the profession by helping
students succeed, the flexibility to manipulate their schedules and the ability to marry
the inner nurse teacher struggle rewarding, they were not enough to convince the
women to stay in academia. The data suggests that the women endured racism, gender
inequalities such as low salaries, and limited recognition for their contribution, work load
inequities, and being “the other” with regard to their positionality in the academy. And in
spite of feeling unwanted, devalued, and un-nurtured, the women in this study retain
themselves in academia because the academy fit into their lifestyle.

Concluding Remarks

My great-grandmother was a major influencing factor in my choice to help others. She
was an educator who cared for the children she taught. So much so, that she donated
land and contracted with the White school board to supply books and build a small
school building for the Black children to attend. My great-grandmother always had a
wise saying. We would sit on the floor by her feet in front of the fire heater as she
imparted wisdom into our eager ears. I can remember her saying, “You can do and be
anything you want to but you will have to work twice as hard just to get the bare basics
unless you get an education.”
Just as the women in this study, I fantasized about what I wanted to be when I grew up. By the age of six I had my choices narrowed down to a ballet dancer, a lawyer, or a teacher. My decision to become a nurse came through adversity. It all started when I was about eight years old. I had to spend most of the summer between the second and third grade in the hospital due to an unexpected orthopedic surgery. My dreams of becoming a ballet dancer slowly faded away as reality kept presenting itself. The nurses at the hospital were so kind. They not only took care of my physical needs but they also took interest in my emotional needs. In addition, they made my family feel comfortable. I don’t know what my mother was going through at the time, but I would imagine having a daughter in the hospital for two months must have taken a toll on her emotionally. That is when the revelation came to me, “I am going to be a nurse and help others just like these nurses helped me”.

I can remember entering into undergraduate school thinking, “In four years I will be a nurse.” I went to a predominantly Black college. The atmosphere there was homey with a sense of cohesiveness. The faculty was very caring and helpful. My training there prepared me for working in multiple areas in nursing such as emergency, orthopedics, pediatrics, medical/surgical and mental health. What it didn’t prepare me for was teaching in academia. I was well into my nursing career when I was presented the opportunity to become an adjunct faculty. It was one of my most rewarding professional experiences. I knew then, that academia was where I wanted to be.

During my interview for a full time faculty position, I was told that tenure and promotion could be achieved at the same time and that I would be eligible to apply after six years of service. While there I encounter a Black woman who had had been apart of
the faculty for over ten years and held the title of an assistant professor. I was puzzled by the fact that she was tenured but held the assistant professor title while most of her white peers were associate professors. In my opinion, she was doing all of the things the promotion criteria indicated, but she had not been promoted. She was course leader for two major courses, second level coordinator, chair of a major university committee, and was chair of her department admissions committee. They, White administrators, trusted her to run the department because she assumed the program director and division chair responsibilities whenever there was an absence. What else did she need to do to prove she was worthy of being an associate professor? It was like she was screaming asking me, “Who will tell my story? Who will let everyone know what I have had to deal with in this hostile land? Who will provide some legitimacy to my experiences?” There was a major wrong going on here that needed to be made right. Someone needed to tell the story.

We as Black women are different and our experiences are different from those expressed in the literature. Black women are not nurtured to understand the politics of the academy. Therefore, we spend unnecessary years in lower ranks, making lower salaries which perpetuate our dissatisfaction with the academy (AACN, 2003; Clark, 1998; Daufin, 2001; McNeal, 2003; Murray, 1998; Sochalski, 2002; and Snarr, 1996). My desire is to have the finding from my research encourages institutions of higher education to take notice and responsibility for their actions.
Reference


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APPENDICES
Appendix A

INFORMATION PACKET INSTRUCTIONS

July 22, 2007

Dear Participant,

My name is Alfreda Harper-Harrison and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia in the Adult Education Department. I am conducting a study entitled “The Career Development of Black Women Nursing Faculty” and would like to invite you to participate. This information packet contains two informed consent forms. The informed consent describes the purpose of the study and provides an overview of the expectations of both the participant and the researcher during the course of the study. The packet also contains a demographic questionnaire that will be used to obtain maximum variation in the selection of participants.

If you would like to contribute in this study, please sign the consent forms. Keep one for yourself, and return the other along with the completed demographic questionnaire to the researcher in the self addressed stamped envelope. The researcher will contact you to schedule an interview session. Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Alfreda Harper-Harrison RN, MSN, CLNC, EdDc
Assistant Professor
Appendix B

Interview Consent Form

I, _________________________________, agree to participate in a research study titled “The Career Development of Black Women Nursing Faculty” conducted by Alfreda Harper-Harrison from the Department of Adult Education at the University of Georgia (478-953-1809) under the direction of Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey, Department of Adult Education, University of Georgia (706/542-6600). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate and stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

I understand that the purpose of this study is for the researcher, Alfreda Harper-Harrison, to examine Black women nursing faculty’s career path and issues related to their retention in nursing academia.

If I volunteer to take part in this study, I understand that
- I will complete a demographic survey instrument that will be used to obtain maximum variation in the selection of participants.
- I will participate in a 1 to 1 1/2 hour long interview session.
- The researcher will ask me open-ended questions about my experiences related to my career development and nursing academia.
- The researcher will audio tape my responses.
- I may be asked to participate in one follow-up session.

I understand that the contents of my interview will be held confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent or unless required by law. It is my understanding that the researcher will create transcripts from my audio tapes. As a participant, I will be allowed to review the transcribed interview for accuracy. The researcher will send a copy of the transcription to me upon completion of the interview. I understand that pseudonyms will be used instead of my real name in all written notes, transcripts and audio tapes. The audio tapes will be kept in a secure fire safe box at the home of the researcher and will be destroyed one year after the completion of the project.

I understand that there are no foreseeable risks associated with my participation in this study. I also understand that I will not directly benefit from this study, but my participation may lead to information that will improve understanding of Black women nursing faculty’s experiences in the academy.

I understand that Alfreda Harper-Harrison will answer any questions about the research, now or during the course of the project. The researcher can be reached by phone (478-953-1809) or by email (nursemed@cox.net).
I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

Alfreda Harper-Harrison  Signature of Researcher  Date
Telephone: (478) 953-1809
Email: nursemed@cox.net

Name of Participant  Signature of Participant  Date

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to the IRB chairperson in the Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu
Appendix C

Black Women Nursing Faculty Demographic Questionnaire
Prepared by
Alfreda Harper-Harrison RN, MSN, CLNC, EdDc

This questionnaire asks specific questions about your background relative to your race and professional accomplishments. Note that the information shared in this questionnaire will be kept confidential. If selected to participate in the study, this information may be revisited by researcher to provide an opportunity for further discussion and elaboration.

Please...
- Use blue or black ink to complete the questionnaire (DO NOT USE A PENCIL).
- Place an (X) in the box next to the correct answer.
- If you make a mistake, completely color in the incorrect box then mark the correct box.
- Write legibly when required to do so.

Participant Identification Code: 

1. Race:
   - □ African American/Black
   - □ Caucasian/White
   - □ Asian/Pacific Islander
   - □ Native American
   - □ Multi-racial (Specify) ___________________
   - □ Hispanic
   - □ Other (Specify) ___________________

2. Highest Educational Level Obtained:
   - □ Associate Degree in Nursing
   - □ Baccalaureate Degree in:
     - □ Nursing
     - □ Other (Specify) ___________________
   - □ Master’s Degree in:
     - □ Nursing
     - □ Other (Specify) ___________________
   - □ Doctorate Degree in:
     - □ Nursing
     - □ Other (Specify) ___________________

3. Have you acquired certifications related to nursing? □ Yes □ No ___________________

4. Do you have additional credentials outside of nursing? □ Yes □ No ___________________

5. Are you currently in pursuit of additional degrees or certifications? □ Yes □ No Specify Type ___________________
6. How long have you been in academia?
- 1 – 2 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 5 – 9 years
- 10 – 14 years
- 15 – 19 years
- 20 – 24 years
- 25 – 29 years
- 30 – 34 years
- 35 years or more

7. Do you work in an accredited public school of nursing? ✔ Yes ☐ No

8. What is your current position?

9. How long have you held this position?
- 1 – 2 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 5 – 9 years
- 10 – 14 years
- 15 – 19 years
- 20 – 24 years
- 25 – 29 years
- 30 – 34 years
- 35 years or more

10. Are you in a tenure track position? ✔ Yes ☐ No

11. Are you tenured? ✔ Yes ☐ No

12. Have you worked in another institution as a nursing faculty? ✔ Yes ☐ No

13. Is academia your chosen long term professional career? ✔ Yes ☐ No

14. What other areas in nursing have you worked?

15. Are you willing to participate in interviews as necessary to obtain adequate data for this research project? ✔ Yes ☐ No

16. What is the best time and number to reach you to schedule the interview?
Appendix D

Interview Guide

I. Nursing Career
   a. Why did you choose nursing as a career?
   b. Who most influenced your decision to choose nursing?
      i. How did they influence your decision?
   c. Tell me about your past jobs in nursing.
      i. Describe what you liked most about this area?
      ii. Describe what you liked least about this area?
      iii. What led to your leaving this particular area/job?
   d. How do you feel about the nursing profession today?

II. Academic Career
   a. What led to your transition into academia? How did you make the transition from hospital nurse to academia
   b. Tell me the story of your career in academia. Or Describe your career in academia
   c. What are the T&P requirements for your institution?
   d. Tell me the story of your tenure process.
   e. Do you feel being a Black woman has helped or hindered your academic career? Describe.
   f. Identify specific events that have affected your career? (include power relations and positionality)
   g. Describe the promotional / career advancement opportunities in academia that you see in your future.
   h. How has power relations affected your career advancement?
   i. How do your working relationships in academia compare to those working relationships encountered in the non-academic workforce?
   j. Tell me about your academic workload and how it compares to others.
   k. What did your teacher to student ratio look like when you were in undergraduate / graduate school?
I. How does your faculty representation reflect the current student population?

m. How does advisement and mentorship fit into your workload?

III. Recruitment & Retention

a. What keeps you in academia?

b. What do you feel is needed to solidify your retention in nursing academia?

c. Describe the role mentorship has played in influencing your career?

d. What did you expect academia to be like?

e. How do your initial expectations of academia correlate with your current expectations of academia?

f. What are some challenges you have had to overcome in academia as a faculty/administrator?

g. What advice would you give to a new African American female who is coming out of graduate school and thinking about academia?