A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF WORKING CLASS BLACK WOMEN'S LIVED EXPERIENCES WITH RACE AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE WORKPLACE

by

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ABSTRACT

TAMMY LEWIS WILBORN. A phenomenological study of working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. (Under the direction of DR. SEJAL PARIKH FOXX)

The purpose of this study was to understand the phenomenological experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. A comprehensive review of the existing literature reflected a void in the inclusion of working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Thus, this study sought to fill a gap in the counseling literature by using a phenomenological research design with a Womanist theoretical framework to examine the lived experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace.

From a sample of 12 Black women, data collection included demographic questionnaires and 60-90 minute video-recorded interviews during which participants were asked semi-structured questions about their experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Methods consistent with phenomenological inquiry were used for data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). The data revealed three major themes related to experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work: a) cheap and disposable labor, b) unjustified changes in work status, and c) perspective shifting. Results from this study provide implications for counselor practice, counselor education, and recommendations for future research.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to Ginger, Faith, Felicia, Jasmine, Keisha, Libby, Lisa, Olivia, Stacey, Tomeka, Trish, and Yellow-Bone; the 12 participants of this study whose voices have collectively spoken to increase knowledge about a very important topic. This research is also dedicated to my grandmother, Alma Marie Jordan. Your strength and wisdom are unmatched. Finally, this research is dedicated to my mother Alma Marie Rosemond who taught me to never be afraid to go after my dreams.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Race and gender stereotypes of Black women in the workplace are rooted in the history of female slavery in the United States (Bacchus, 2008; Collins, 1990; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; White, 1999). While there is a dearth in the literature regarding the impact of these stereotypes on Black women, some have highlighted the pervasiveness of these stereotypes which range from institutional barriers (e.g., limited career mobility) to individual barriers (e.g., mental and physical health complications) Catalyst, 2004; Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2007; Hall et al., 2012; Hughes & Dodge, 1997). However, a current review of the literature yielded that most of the research in this area illuminates the experiences of middle and upper class Black women in leadership, academia, or other high status occupations (Bacchus, 2008; Bradley, 2005; Bryant et al., 2005; Hall et al., 2012; Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008). As such, little is known about working class Black women's experiences of stereotypes in low-income occupations (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Hughes & Dodge, 1997; Reid, 1993; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). Thus, this study sought to add to the literature by offering the voices of a group of working class Black women employed in lower status positions and their lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011), Black women represent the largest female minority group in the workplace in the United States,

constituting 6.1% of the total labor force with projections to increase to 6.3% by 2020. While their presence in the labor force is on the rise, race and gender stereotypes create unique challenges for Black women that impact them both professionally and personally (Bacchus, 2008; Catalyst, 2004; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008). Stereotypes of Black women have been associated with experiences of discrimination at work (Catalyst, 2004; Packer-Williams & Evans, 2011). A report that tracks women of color's employment in the private sector from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC; 2003) found that compared with other women, Black women were more likely to file discrimination charges than women in any other group. In fact, discrimination charges filed by Black women comprised 5% of the charges in the private sector, compared with 1.4% for White women, and 3% for Hispanic women. Some have suggested that historical work roles of Black women as slaves and domestic workers and negative depictions of them in contemporary media have led to negative stereotypes of them as Mammies, Jezebels, Strong Black Women, and Welfare Mothers which affect Black women's experiences at work (Reynolds et al., 2008; Stephens & Phillips, 2003; Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombé, 2010).

Much of the research to date on the effects of race and gender stereotypes has investigated Black women in academic and professional roles (Bacchus, 2008; Bryant et al., 2005; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; King & Ferguson, 2001). Bryant et al. (2005) highlighted the impact of stereotypes on Black female counselor educators. These authors purported that negative stereotypes may leave some Black female counselor educators feeling alienated, devalued, invisible, or in some cases hyper-visible.

The researchers further noted that Black female counselor educators may feel the need to alter their appearance and behaviors to reduce negative stereotypic perceptions of colleagues, administrators, and students. Consequently, altered behaviors in response to perceived stereotypes have been linked to adverse mental health for Blacks in general and Black women in particular (Department of Health and Human Services, 2007; Hall et al., 2012; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). For example, Hall et al. (2012) found that Black females who frequently alter their behavior at work to cope with perceived stereotypes may leave many Black women psychologically and mentally taxed. Although the implications of these findings are important, limitations of this study's findings represent an overall dearth in the existing literature on understanding the effects of stereotypes of Black women at work. First, the exploration of race and gender stereotypes as separate constructs fails to address the intersecting ways in which race and gender for example, converge to shape Black women's lived experiences. Second, professional Black women constituted the majority of the sample thus excluding the lived experiences of working class Black women. Therefore it is critical for researchers to include the voices of working class women to explore the intersection of race and gender stereotypes on their work experiences.

As race and gender minorities, Black women's experiences cannot be separated as simply Black or female because for them race and gender are not mutually exclusive; rather, they intersect and create a *double jeopardy* for Black women (Beal, 2008). Furthermore, the addition of social class to race and gender is salient to understanding Black women's lived experiences because together they create a triple threat for Black women particularly in social contexts such as the workplace (Department of Health and

Human Services [DHHS], 2007). Specifically, the impact of lower social class status on their work experiences (i.e., defined in this study as working class), has received limited scholarship (Thomas, 2004). Understanding the impact of social class status on the work experiences of Black women is especially critical as stress related to race and gender stereotypes at work is likely to be exacerbated by the effects of poverty which may place them at greater risk for adverse health outcomes (DHHS, 2007; Latkin & Curry, 2003; Williams, 1999). While the existing literature provides clear links to the cumulative effects of racism and sexism on the mental health of Blacks, there is paucity in the literature about the effects of race and gender stereotypes in the work place on Black women's mental health in particular and even greater paucity of the impact of working class status as a mediator on the effect of stereotypes in the workplace (Catalyst, 2004; DHHS, 2007). Furthermore, a number of issues related to methodology examining working class Black women's experiences of stereotypes based on race and gender as it relates to class have yielded limitations in the literature around these experiences (Pellerin, 2012; Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2008).

One of the major limitations in the existing literature relates to the exclusion of working class Black women's voices to describe intersecting experiences of racism and sexism (Cole, 2009; Pellerin, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2008). Previous studies that employed quantitative methodologies to understand Black women's experiences with racism and sexism exposed the difficulty with parceling out whether respondents were responding to instances of sexism or racism or both which seemed to support the notion that Black women's experiences are intersectional and cannot be sufficiently explained by attending to race or gender alone (Beal, 2008; Cole,

2009; Thomas, 2004; Thomas et al., 2008). Thomas et al. (2008) found that one of the limitations of their findings was the use of quantitative measures that, while established in previous studies as reliable and valid, still raised questions about whether participants' responses to items were actually based on intersectional experiences of racism and sexism. They concluded that qualitative studies would fill the gap in understanding this complex phenomenon by adding subjective accounts of Black women's intersectional experiences. Additionally, the inclusion of social class status of Black women in the literature on the lived experiences of Black women has been sparse (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Collins, 1990). Empirical studies that parcel out race and social class as mere demographic variables to be controlled for do so at the risk of losing the salient contribution those factors have on the daily lived experiences of working class Black women (Latkin & Curry, 2003). For example, Latkin and Curry (2003) found that negative perceptions of poor neighborhood conditions significantly predicted depressive symptoms in low-income Blacks. The authors concluded that poor neighborhood conditions can be a chronic stressor for its inhabitants which can trigger or exacerbate adverse mental health conditions.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to fill a void in the literature as this study was the first of its kind to understand the phenomenological experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. As such, Chapter One provided an introduction regarding the significance of an in-depth understanding of working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. While there is emerging literature on the experiences of professional Black

women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace, there has been no research on the lived experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Consequently, little is known about working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace.

Furthermore, traditional positivist methodologies have excluded or limited Black women's ability to participate in describing the problem and identifying solutions to their problems (Pellerin, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). As such, research designs that utilize theoretical frameworks that call for the voice of its participants to elucidate the essence of Black women's experiences have been suggested. This study sought to fill a void in the literature about the lived experiences of working class Black women as sources of knowledge about their lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. The findings in this study will be critical in helping counselors to increase their awareness of the ways in which race and gender as it relates to social class perpetuate stereotypes of working class Black women at work and to develop culturally sensitive assessment and treatment approaches that help these women cope with race and gender stereotypes at work.

Significance of the Study

Multicultural counseling requires the training and practice of counseling to understand and be aware of how race and gender stereotypes exist and operate in society and affect the lives of its members, particularly minority members (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). As such, experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace have been identified as a chronic stressor for Black women with adverse effects on their mental and physical health (Browne & Misra, 2003; Catalyst, 2004; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Adverse mental health outcomes such

as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse have also been linked to chronic stress due to experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work (Hall et al., 2012; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Epidemiological studies have also linked adverse physical health outcomes such as high blood pressure, fatigue, poor reproductive health, and cardiovascular disease to chronic stress from experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work (Latkin & Curry, 2003; Rosenthal & Lobel, 2011; Williams, 1999). Relatedly, chronic stress from experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work is further exacerbated by class related environmental stressors such as impoverished neighborhoods, limited resources and support, neighborhood violence, and prevalence of drug abuse (Department of Health and Human Services, 2007; Latkin & Curry, 2003; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Thus, this study sought to contribute to the discourse in multicultural counseling by specifically investigating race and gender stereotypes as they relate to a small sample of working class Black women. Furthermore, it adds to the counseling literature by illuminating how race and gender as it relates to social class can intersect to affect the daily lived experiences of working class Black women who experience race and gender stereotypes at work (Beal, 2008; Cole, 2009; Reynolds & Pope, 1991; Settles, 2006). The significance to mental health practice, counselor education, and research in light of understanding their subjective experiences will be discussed in the following sections.

Significance to Mental Health Practice

Racial and ethnic disparities in diagnosis and treatment of mental health create challenges for minorities accessing and receiving mental health services (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health [2008]). One possible explanation for these disparities is the underutilization of mental health services

due to minority experiences with stereotypes and bias within the mental health system and by counselors in particular (Snowden, 2003). Specifically, unchecked counselor stereotypes and biased beliefs about minorities may affect counselors' ability to make clinical judgments that are informed by awareness, knowledge, and skills that address cultural factors that contribute to adverse mental health outcomes (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Snowden, 2003; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). It is imperative then that counselors be aware of the stereotypes and biases they hold about working class Black women and the potential impact these stereotypes have for proper assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. Thus, this study can provide practitioners with increased awareness of the implications that race and gender stereotypes as it relates to social class may have on the mental health of working class Black women and the need to develop culturally sensitive approaches to assessing, diagnosing, and treating this client population.

Significance to Counselor Education

Findings from this study are significant for counselor education. Particularly, findings from this study suggest the need for counselor educators to promote multiculturally competent counselors by emphasizing the social justice implications of engaging in clinical practice informed by an understanding of the ways in which intersecting identities influence the treatment needs and treatment behaviors of Black female clients (e.g., help-seeking, treatment compliance). Specifically, findings from this study informs counselor education training programs on how environmental stressors may be both barriers to and the foci of treatment when working with working class Black women who experience race and gender stereotypes at work (DHHS, 2007; Windsor,

Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Particularly, since it is likely that new counseling professionals entering into the profession will work in school and mental health settings that serve minority clients, it is critical that counselor trainees learn that treatment issues in this population may fall outside the scope of treatment as usual and instead may require social advocacy on the part of the counselor to address issues of race, gender, and class discrimination (Constantine & Sue, 2005).

Significance to Future Research

Finally, this study contributes to the literature in this area by allowing working class Black women's lived experiences to be added to the epistemology about their experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). The literature is sparse in this area and the existing literature available employed quantitative methodologies that measure racism and sexism separately (Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). However, Black women's experiences are not the product of being Black or female rather their experiences exist at the intersection as that of Black female (Beal, 2008; Collins, 1990; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). Qualitative methodologies are useful in this way by offering the voices of marginalized groups who traditional positivistic methodologies have silenced or ignored (Creswell, 2013; Thomas, 2004; Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2008). Black women's experiences intersect and necessitate exploration that expands the lens for understanding the factors affect their experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the work place (Browne & Misra, 2003; Cole, 2009; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Settles, 2006).

Research Questions

The primary research question for this study was: What are Black working class women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? There were three sub-research questions that guided the research: (a) what kinds of race and gender related stereotypes do Black working class women experience in the workplace?, (b) how do experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace affect working class Black women?, and (c) how do working class Black women cope with experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace?

Theoretical Framework

Traditional scientific inquiry has ignored Black women's concerns, examined genetic determinants to explain social inequality, and/ or failed to examine the intersection between their multiple social identities and the socio-cultural and political contexts in which they exist (Collins, 1990; Settles, 2006; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). In response, theoretical frameworks that highlight the importance of intersecting identities have received cross disciplinary attention in the existing literature: (a) counseling (Reynolds & Pope, 1991), (b) Black feminist theories (Banks- Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990 and (c) critical race theories (Crenshaw, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Parker & Lynn, 2002). Womanism, a theoretical framework that emerged out of Black feminism examines the multi-layered and overlapping ways in which multiply oppressed identities mutually construct and simultaneously shape the lived experiences of Black women (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Womanist theorists contend that traditional scholarship and prior civil rights movements have ignored, silenced, and misrepresented Black women' experiences. It is critical then

that studies of Black women utilize research methods that examine the lived experiences of their intersecting identities. Thus, a Womanist theoretical framework was used for this study to address the limitations in the existing literature where previous studies have narrowed the scope of analyzing, understanding, and describing the complexity of working class Black women's unique experiences of stereotypes in the workplace.

Delimitations

The study was delimited by the following: (a) participation was limited to mothers or female caregivers who met enrollment eligibility criteria for their child to participate in a federally-funded preschool program in a large Southeastern city and (b) who met inclusion criteria for the study.

Limitations

The use of small sample sizes in qualitative research limits the generalizability and transferability of the findings. Therefore, the findings based on the 12 participants of this study should be read with caution. Further, the use of a convenience sample of Black mothers and/or caregivers means that their experiences may be inconsistent with Black females who may not have caregiving obligations. Relatedly, the sample was recruited from one preschool in a southeastern city. Therefore, findings from this study may not generalize to working class women in cities outside of the southeast. Finally, the researcher's personal experience with RGS in the workplace may be considered as a limitation. However, several verification methods were used to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. Additionally, a peer reviewer was used to provide an external check of the data analysis to facilitate credibility and trustworthiness of the data.

Assumptions

There are a number of assumptions in this study. The first assumption was that working class Black women experienced race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. The second assumption was that there was a shared experience of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace for working class Black women. Third, it was assumed that working class Black women were aware and able to articulate experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the work place. Fourth, it was assumed that experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work impact working class Black women.

Research Design

A qualitative phenomenological interview was used to capture the participants' lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes as it relates to social class in the work place. Phenomenological research methods are useful when attempting to describe the common meaning of a phenomenon that is shared by a group of individuals who have experienced it (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). This research method illuminates the subjective lived experiences of individuals and seeks to objectively connect these experiences with that of others who share those lived experiences with a particular phenomenon. In qualitative inquiry, saturation occurs when no new themes have emerged in the data analysis as such sample sizes can be adjusted as necessary to ensure saturation however saturation occurred in this study with a sample size of 12 participants (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). A semi-structured interview protocol was used to facilitate each interview which lasted 60- 90 minutes. All interviews were video-recorded and the data were collected and analyzed using methods consistent with phenomenological inquiry. Additional detailed information regarding the methods of this study are provided in Chapter Three.

Operational Definitions

Operational definitions for important terms that were used in this study are as follows:

Black Women

Black Women was operationalized for this study as a self-report of participants' personal perception of their racial identity as Black or African-American.

Working Class

Working class for this study was operationalized as Black women who met enrollment eligibility criteria for their child to attend a federally funded childcare program in a large southeastern city. Specifically, enrollment eligibility included women who: (a) had low incomes (i.e., according to state poverty guidelines), (b) had no higher than a high school education or a GED, (c) lived in substandard housing, and (d) had inadequate transportation (Retrieved from http://www.tlccharlotte.org/eligibility).

Race and Gender Stereotypes

Race and gender stereotypes were operationalized for this study as participants' self-report of stereotypes that pertain to Black women.

Workplace

Workplace was operationalized for this study as participants' self-report of current or past paid employment.

Summary

Chapter One provided an introduction regarding the significance of an in-depth understanding of working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Existing literature highlights how race and gender

stereotypes work may pose significant challenges to Black women's mental and physical health and thus warrants the need for counselors and researchers to engage in multiculturally-informed practice and research that seek to eradicate these challenges. However, the existing literature reflects two key limitations to understanding this phenomenon: (a) a dearth of research that includes the voices of Black women's lived experiences of the intersection of race and gender (b) the lack of inclusion of working class Black women's experiences in studies investigating race and gender stereotypes at work. This study sought to fill a void in the literature on understanding how race and gender stereotypes as it relates to social class affect the lived experiences of working class Black women.

Organization of Study

Chapter One provided an overview and purpose of study, significance of the study, the research questions, theoretical framework, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, research design, and operational definitions. Chapter Two will provide a comprehensive review of the literature. The literature review will be organized into the following main sections: (a) historical overview of Black women's work roles, (b) contemporary race and gender stereotypes of Black women, and (c) theoretical framework. Chapter Three will detail the methodology used for this study. This section will be organized into the following main sections: (a) subjectivity statement, (b) research questions, (c) research framework, (d) methods, and (e) summary. Chapter Four will report the findings of the study. Three major themes emerged in the data that organize the main sections of the chapter: (a) cheap and disposable labor, (b) unjustified changes in work status, and (c) perspective shifting. Finally, Chapter Five will provide a

discussion of the findings which is organized into the following sections: (a) discussion of the findings, (b) implications of the findings, (c) limitations of the study, (d) recommendations for future research, and the (d) conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter will review the existing literature related to the impact of race and gender stereotypes of working class Black women in the workplace. A comprehensive literature review search was conducted using the EBSCO Host database with the following key search words: Black women, African-American women, stereotypes, work, employment, mental health, stress, Black Feminism, and Womanism. The literature review will be organized into the following main sections: (a) historical overview of Black women's work experiences, (b) contemporary race and gender stereotypes of Black women, and the (c) theoretical framework.

Historical Overview of Black Women's Work Experiences

An accurate understanding of Black women's work experiences in the United States (U.S.) begins with the arrival of Africans to the U.S. (Collins, 1990; Smith, 1985; White, 1999). The institution of slavery in the U.S. established a framework of White male power and dominance over ethnic and gender minorities that left a residual impact on the perception of the social position of Blacks in general and Black women in particular (Allport, 1954; Peterson, 1992). As such, stereotypes of Blacks as a monolithic group who are socially, intellectually, and professionally inferior have been critically examined in the literature (Allport, 1954; Collins, 1990; Devine, 1989; Peterson; Sue et al., 2008). However, little attention has been paid to the ways in which slavery may have affected Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace

(Bacchus, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008). Because negative stereotypes of Black women are rooted in their roles as oppressed workers, some have purported that they continue to experience racism and sexism in the work place that leads to personal and professional disadvantages. Therefore, understanding the contemporary work experiences of Black women requires an examination of the historical context of their work roles upon their arrival to the United States as enslaved persons (Bacchus, 2008; Hall et al., 2012; Reynolds-Dobbs et al., 2008; White, 1999).

Early Years of American Slavery

The first twenty Africans transported to the American colonies came in August 1619 as free indentured servants. As free indentured servants, first generation African men and women could purchase their freedom once their contract expired. However, new laws emerged that placed Africans in servitude as demands increased for cheap, dependable, and skilled laborers, (Smith, 1985; White, 1999). The fact that enslaved women and girls were cheaper to purchase and the fact that children born to slave women were born into slavery made Black female slaves more profitable (Collins, 1990; Smith, 1985; White, 1999). Furthermore, the absence of rape laws to protect slave women placed them at constant risk of rape by White slaveholders which cemented their roles as readily available sexual conquests. Thus, as breeders and concubines the reality of slave women cemented their inferiority both as Blacks and as females (Collins, 1990; Etter-Lewis, 1993; White, 1999). As such, the nexus of slave status, race, and gender intersected to create a unique multiply oppressed social location for female slaves (Beal, 2008; White, 1999). Consequently, by highlighting the oppression inherent in their

historical work roles, the residual effects of multiple oppressions of Black women in their current work experiences become more evident (Bacchus, 2008; Bradley, 2005; Bryant et al., 2005; Collins, 1990). Furthermore, understanding the historical work roles of Black women and their connection to two of the most pervasive stereotypes of them as Jezebel and Mammy is critical to understanding Black women's contemporary work experiences.

Historical Black Women's Work Roles

Historical work roles of Black women have led to negative race and gender stereotypes that continue to affect their work experiences (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Catalyst, 2004; Collins, 1990; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Sexual and labor exploitation of Black women during slavery created unique work roles that were inextricably defined by the intersection of race and gender. Therefore it is critical to understand the intersection of race and gender on Black women's contemporary work experiences (Beal, 2008; Cole, 2009; Hamilton et al., 2012; Settles, 2006). Thus, the following sections will address the connection between Black women's historical work roles as field slaves and domestic workers with two of the most prevalent race and gender stereotypes of Black women: Jezebel and Mammy.

Field Slave

The conditions of field work led to an experience of slavery and ultimately womanhood unique to female slaves that was predicated on their social location as slaves, Black, and female (Harris-Perry, 2011; White, 1999). Social conventions about proper womanhood placed Black womanhood on the periphery of proper and respectable expressions of being a woman. Proper womanhood hinged on demonstrations of civility and morality most notably expressed in White women's concealment of sexuality

(Collins, 1990; Harris-Perry, 2011; White, 1999). However, the working conditions on the plantations afforded female slaves no such privacy as scant clothing was necessary to manage extreme work conditions. Moreover, public whippings in partial or total nudity, forced nudity during slave auctions, and commoditization of enslaved women's bodies created opportunities for "White moral superiority by justifying the brutality of Southern White men" (Harris-Perry, 2011, p. 55). Thus, the conditions under which slave women were sold, worked, and punished put their bodies on public display to be exploited and objectified (Collins, 1990; West, 1995; White, 1999). As such, it was important for White slave owners to fashion a new image of Black female field slaves to justify a social status that allowed these women to be exploited both sexually and economically. That image is Jezebel (Stephens & Few, 2007; White, 1999).

Jezebel. The stereotype of Black women as Jezebels first emerged when Europeans went to Africa to purchase slaves and European slave traders' lack of understanding about African culture and climate led to misrepresentations of African people in general and depictions of African women as lewd and hypersexual in particular. Consequently, these early appraisals of Africans were maintained to justify sexual exploitation of African women in their new roles as slaves in America (Collins, 1990; White, 1999). Particularly, the historical depiction of the Jezebel stereotype of Black women was used by White slaveholding societies to justify the increasing numbers of light-complexioned slave children population. To disguise the reality that the increasing light-complexioned slave children population was a result of sexual and labor exploitation of Black female slaves, Black women were instead depicted in White public

and private spheres as lascivious and hypersexual, and thus responsible for their sexual exploitation.

White (1999) noted that public and private discourse about slave women's reproductive abilities by default placed their sexuality at the fore of public scrutiny. In White society, childbearing became synonymous with the stereotype of Black women as Jezebels (Smith, 1985; White, 1999). Additionally, concubinage was both reprieve for some females slaves from the harsh reality of field work and yet further justification for Jezebel. Some female slave concubines were able to receive monetary benefits for sexual favors with White slave owners. Others were granted opportunities to use sexual favors to pay for their and their families' freedom. Hence, beliefs regarding Black women's sexuality and lascivity and the image of them as Jezebels, were firmly entrenched in their work experiences. Consequently, associations of Black women as hypersexual, hyper-reproductive Jezebels continue to permeate dominant ideologies which have real implications for Black women (Brown, White-Johnson, & Griffin- Fennell, 2013; Collins, 1990; Townsend, Thomas, Neilands & Jackson, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011).

Empirical Research. Researchers have examined the negative effects of the Jezebel stereotype on the self-perception and overall well-being of Black women (Brown, White-Johnson, & Griffin-Fennell, 2013; Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). For example, Townsend et al. (2010) found that the effects of the Jezebel stereotype start as early as adolescence and was a strong predictor of engagement in future risky sexual behaviors such as early and/or unprotected sex. The authors concluded that high rates of sexually transmitted infections and the

increase of HIV contractions in Black adolescent girls' highlights the significance of examining the implications of negative stereotypical messages on their sexual health. Brown et al. (2010) examined the effects of endorsement of Jezebel stereotype on Black women's racial- ethnic esteem with 249 Black women, aged 18-34 who completed online self-report questionnaires to measure whether racial-ethnic esteem predicted Jezebel endorsement. The authors found that Black women whose racial-ethnic esteem was high, in other words, who felt good about being Black, were less likely to endorse the Jezebel stereotype. The researchers purported that their findings underscore the importance of examining the potential for internalized negative stereotypes about Black women to have deleterious effects on their individual self-esteem and well-being and ultimately coping skills for managing prejudice and discrimination. Thus, they concluded that counselors working with Black women must implement assessment and treatment interventions that adequately address the ways in which race and gender intersect to shape Black women's daily lived experiences.

In another study, Windsor, Dunlap, and Golub (2011) conducted a qualitative study to examine the effects of stereotypes on the lived experiences of impoverished Black women. The study examined qualitative data on a sample of six Black women from two larger ethnographic studies in which participants were interviewed every six months from 1995 to 2007. The authors found that evidence of the impact of the Jezebel stereotype was not only present in internalized messages of the participants but was also evident in others treatment towards them. Similar to the historical context of Jezebel as justification and normalization of the sexual exploitation of Black female slaves, Windsor et al. (2011) found that the absence of the belief of legal protection led many of the

participants to accept and justify repeated rape and sexual abuse as a normal aspect of life thus providing evidence for the internalization of the Jezebel stereotype. Consequently, the authors noted that many of the participants experienced challenges with depression, substance abuse, homelessness, and poverty. The authors suggested that it is critical that professionals working with Black women are educated about the effects of stereotypes on Black women and engage in culturally informed research and practice that meet the unique needs of this population.

Domestic Worker

Black domestic women organized and maintained the overall operation and function of the slave owners' homes. As domestic workers, Black women worked frequently in caretaking roles as cooks, nurses, housemaids, laundresses, and dairywomen often to the neglect and/or detriment of their own families. Black women also served as mid-wives and nurse maids utilizing their knowledge in obstetrics and gynecology from Africa to deliver, treat, and care for the children of slave owners. Unlike working in the field, domestic work was often viewed as a preferred alternative to the inhumane working conditions of field work (White, 1999). However, like field slaves, domestic slaves were often subject to sexual, physical, and psychological abuse, demands, and whims of their slave owners in addition to serving a number of roles to the wives and children of slave owners (Smith, 1985). It was critical then that a counter image of Black women be put forth by slave owning societies to justify the racial and gender oppression of these women. That image is Mammy (Collins, 1990; White, 1999).

Mammy. The image of Mammy emerged during slavery and is one of the most pervasive and deleterious stereotypes of Black women (Harris-Perry, 2011; White, 1999;

Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombe′, 2010). The stereotype of Mammy socially depicts Black women as maternal, asexual, loyal, uneducated, and obedient women who are physically depicted as dark-skinned obese women with African features. The original image of Mammy, primarily associated with Black domestic workers, was initially conjured up by Southerners to justify slavery and race relationships. The image of Mammy was critical in reflecting two traditions Southerners viewed as positive: ideal slave and ideal woman. As the ideal slave, images of Mammy as loyal, obedient and pious defied commonly held beliefs about slaves as immoral and aggressive savages. As the ideal woman, Mammy's ability to love, nurture and care for White families better than her own conferred upon Black female domestic workers a position of womanhood only granted in her position as caretaker of White families. White (1999) stated that Mammy was "a woman completely dedicated to the White family, especially to the children of that family. She was the house servant who was given complete charge of domestic management. She served also as friend and advisor. She was, in short, surrogate mistress and mother" (p. 49). However, research has provided evidence that endorsement of the Mammy stereotype has negative implications for Black women (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombe′, 2010).

Empirical Research. Researchers have studied the impact of the Mammy stereotype on Black women (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombe′, 2010). For example, Woods-Giscombe′(2010) found that an obligation to help meet the needs of others was a prevalent theme expressed by the participants. The author further noted that while most of the participants expressed

satisfaction with multiple obligations, participants also expressed significant emotional, psychological, physical, and financial challenges associated with assuming multiple roles and responsibilities. West (1995) suggested that the strain of multiple roles is more pronounced in Black women particularly since these multiple roles are performed out of necessity rather than choice. Consequently, balancing the needs of others while neglecting their own needs place Black women at increased risk for depression, stress, and hypertension.

In another study, Windsor, Dunlap, and Golub (2011) found evidence of the Mammy stereotype expressed in participants' discussion of challenges they experienced in obtaining quality education that could lead to gainful employment. The authors reported that participants expressed often being treated as if they were " stupid" (p.300) and incapable of performing advanced tasks which created challenges for advancing academically and professionally and ultimately contributed to the participants' dependence on the welfare system.

Evidence of the effect of Mammy stereotype is found in studies that examine the work experiences of Black women (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Hughes & Dodge, 1997; Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). Hughes and Dodge (1997) found that Black women were likely to have wage disparities, limitations to training and advancement, and limited flexibility in job assignments which others have suggested illustrate the parallels of the contemporary Mammy stereotype to the historical image of Mammy that emerged from slavery (Bryant et al., 2005). Hall et al. (2012) found that stereotypes of Black women as incompetent or intellectually inferior created barriers for hiring and promotion as well as differential treatment of Black women in the workplace. The authors further

noted that participants frequently expressed engaging in code-switching, which is altering one's behaviors to avoid confirming negative stereotypes, to manage prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. This act of Black women shifting their behaviors to be deemed socially desirable underscores the myth of Black women as Mammies who put the needs of others before their own to the detriment of their own well-being (Harris-Perry, 2011; Shorter-Gooden, 2004).

Summary

The previous sections provided a historical overview of Black women's work experiences on the emergence of the Jezebel and Mammy stereotypes; two of the most pervasive stereotypes about Black women that continue to have deleterious effects on their work experiences. While the research on Black working class women's experiences of stereotypes in the workplace is sparse, some have found that Jezebel and Mammy stereotypes can create a number of individual and institutional challenges (Brown, White-Johnson, & Griffin-Fennell, 2013; Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). It is important to note that although a number of stereotypes of Black women exist in the existing literature, addressing all of these stereotypes is beyond the scope of this literature review. Rather, the stereotypes that are salient to understanding working class Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes as it relates to social class in the workplace will be addressed. As such, in addition to the two stereotypes previously discussed, the following sections will review the existing literature on two contemporary stereotypes that are critical to the current study: the Strong Black Woman and the Welfare Mother.

Contemporary Race and Gender Stereotypes of Black Women

Strong Black Woman

Another stereotype of Black women receiving growing attention in the literature is the stereotype of the Strong Black Woman (SBW) also referred to as the *Superwoman* stereotype, which depicts Black women as strong, independent, and selfless caregivers (Collins, 1990; Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Yet, a review of the existing literature suggested that different viewpoints exist on the origin of the SBW stereotype and its positive and negative attributes on the well-being of Black women (Collins, 1990; Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Some have argued that the myth of Strong Black Woman emerged during the Civil Rights Era as an attempt by Black women to articulate and resist the prevailing myths of them as Mammies and Jezebels (Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Others have suggested that the source of the myth of Black women as strong is evident in their historical roles as slaves (Smith, 1985; White, 1995). Regardless of the origin, the SBW stereotype which suggests that Black women possess a "seemingly irrepressible spirit unbroken by a legacy of oppression, poverty, and rejection (Harris- Lacewell, p.3)" and who are willing and able to do whatever needs to be done for everyone else to their own detriment, is an emergent theme in the existing literature (Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Harris-Perry, 2011; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombé, 2010).

Empirical Research. Researchers have examined the multifaceted impact of the SBW stereotype on the well-being of Black women (Harris-Lacewell; 2001; Walker-Barnes; 2009; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). One seminal

study that investigated the myth of the SBW on political attitudes, Harris-Lacewell (2001) examined the effects of the SBW stereotype on Black American political attitudes. The results of the study found that 70% of participants perceived Black women as strong but not happy. Another significant finding from the study showed that participants who were primed with the SBW stereotype were likely to express harsh political and legal consequences for Black women who fit other negative stereotypes such Crack or Welfare Mother. The findings from these studies suggest that counselors who perceive working class Black women in stereotypic ways may be less inclined to engage in social justice efforts that challenge discriminatory policies and practices that restrict Black women's access to fair and equitable resources (Constantine & Sue, 2005).

One of the challenges with examining this stereotype has been the lack of empirical studies to identify the SBW as a measurable construct that exists among Black women (Harris-Lacewell, 2001, Woods-Giscombé, 2010). To address this limitation, Woods-Giscombé (2010) conducted a qualitative study to develop a preliminary Superwoman schema conceptual framework. Since the Superwoman role has been established in the existing literature as conceptually synonymous with the SBW stereotype (Collins, 1990; Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011) a review of the findings from Woods-Giscombé's (2010) study, may help to elucidate the implications of the SBW stereotype on Black women's lived experiences.

Woods-Giscombé (2010) found that the participants reported a number of stress-related health behaviors related to the SBW stereotype. Emotional eating, sleep deprivation, and postponement of self-care were prevalent among the group of

participants. Other participants reported a number of health issues related to the SBW such as migraines, hair loss, panic attacks, weight gain, and depression. Other studies have reported similar stress-related findings of weight gain, hair loss, and stress associated with the SBW stereotype (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2003; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Thus, the findings from this study highlight the need for counselors working with Black women to assess the ways that internalized societal and maternal messages about the myth of Black women's strength and independence create challenges for Black women both mentally and physically.

Others studies have examined the implications of the SBW stereotype on interpersonal relationships of Black women (Gillum, 2002, 2007; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Gillum (2002) explored the link between stereotypic images and intimate partner violence (IPV) using a sample of 221 Black male participants. The author found that endorsement of stereotypic beliefs regarding Black women was a significant predictor of beliefs regarding the justification of violence towards women. In another study, Windsor et al. (2011) also found similar challenges with the implications of endorsement of SBW stereotypes on the violence towards Black women. Their study found that although many of their participants had chronic histories of physical and sexual abuse as children and adults, the fact that many of the participants equated strength with silent endurance of abuse triggered depression, anxiety, and addiction in many of the participants. It is apparent from Windsor et al.'s study that these participants internalized societal messages that help seeking and pursuit of justice for these abuses were signs of weakness. While this notion may have credence for some, the previous studies' findings suggest that the SBW stereotype may not only create health risks for

Black women but may also create opportunities for them be victimized. Thus, the implication of the SBW stereotype yields the need for counselors working with this population to engage in culturally sensitive assessment and treatment interventions that highlight the cultural underpinnings of these deleterious beliefs and identify strategies that promote the safety and health of Black women.

As the next section will highlight, stereotypes of Black women as Welfare Mothers underscore, the challenges of images of Black women that exist at the intersection of race, gender, and class (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Social class has been established as an important aspect of how Black women are perceived and treated and thus how they view themselves which when the conditions of a lower social class status is factored into the discussion, creates numerous challenges for their lived experiences (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Windsor et al., 2011).

Welfare Mother

The Welfare Mother stereotype emerged during the late 1970s as the updated notion of Black women which socially depicts them as lazy, promiscuous, and irresponsible single mothers of multiple children born out-of-wedlock who depend on welfare assistance to support their households (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Furthermore, the addition of social class into the discussion of the Welfare Mother stereotype is critical to understanding the research implications for Black women. Particularly, because traditional scholarship has often used convenience samples largely comprised of middle class Black women to study phenomena related to Black women, the needs of working class Black women are less well-known (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Reid, 1993). As such, dominant beliefs that attribute adverse life

experiences of working class Black women to individual and personal deficits without regard for the historical, political, cultural, and social contexts that have oppressed them do so at the risk of understanding how these contexts continue to shape and influence working class Black women's lived experiences (Allport, 1954; Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Collins, 1990; White, 1999). As such, the Welfare Mother stereotype is salient to this study because it underscores the unique ways in which race and gender intersect with social class to shape and perpetuate negative stereotypes of working class Black women in places such as the workplace (Beal, 2008; Cole, 2009; Settles, 2006).

Empirical Research. A review of the existing literature revealed that there is a dearth in the literature on the Welfare Mother stereotype. Empirical studies investigating Black women have mostly used convenience samples of middle class, college educated Black women (Bacchus, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). Unlike their White middle class counterparts, studies of working class Black women may be viewed as applied research and irrelevant for testing or building theory, scale and measurement development, or understanding daily life functioning (Reid, 1993). However, some have been able to investigate the Welfare Mother stereotype on the experiences of working class Black women (Monahan, Shtrulis, & Givens, 2005; Windsor, Benoit, & Dunlap; 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 201l).

One study in particular that directly examined the Welfare Mother stereotype was a study conducted by Monahan, Shtrulis, and Givens (2005). The researchers sought to investigate whether exposure to stereotypic portrayals of Black women would yield subsequent stereotypic-consistent appraisals of different Black women. Using a sample of 76 Black women, the researchers primed the stereotype by asking the participants to

view one of three 2-minute movie segments that portrayed Black women in stereotypic images (i.e. Mammy, Jezebel, and Welfare Queen). Next, the participants watched a 3-minute videotape of a male interviewing a Black female for a sales position. The results yielded two notable findings. First, there was a significant effect for the Welfare Queen factor which suggested participants rated the interviewee as more suitable for jobs consistent with the welfare stereotype than any of the other two stereotypes (Mammy and Jezebel). Second, those participants primed with the welfare stereotype chose adjectives consistent with that stereotype more quickly than the other two stereotypes. These two findings suggest that exposure to stereotypic images of Black women in media may lead to stereotypic perceptions of them in real-life contexts.

These findings are significant for several reasons. First, they suggest that exposure to stereotypic images of working class Black women can affect how they are perceived and treated by others. This can have implications for counselors working with working class Black women. Lack of exposure to a wider range of positive images of Black women may lead counselors to hold stereotypes about their clients that hinder their ability to implement culturally sensitive assessment, treatment, and aftercare interventions that facilitate client wellness. It is an ethical imperative, then, for counselors to engage in ongoing efforts to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills to work with culturally diverse clients (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Second, the findings highlight the salience of media portrayals on perpetuating stereotypes of working class Black women.

Media Influences on Stereotypes of Black Women

Although the original economic and political conditions of slavery that generated controlling images have disappeared, the use of stereotypical images of Black women in media continue to maintain interlocking and intersecting systems of racism, classism, and sexism (Boylorn, 2008; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Given, 2005; Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens & Few, 2007). Additionally, although positive media representations of Black women have increased over the years, stereotypical images that portray Black women as Mammies, Jezebels, Strong Black Women, and Welfare Mothers reflect ideological values that disguise the true reality of Black women by attempting to make racism, sexism, and classism appear to be natural and inevitable (Collins, 1990; Fuller, 2001; Stephens & Few, 2007). Media affects both social constructions regarding Black women's reality as well as their psychological and emotional development (Fuller, 2001; Stephens & Phillips, 2003). Consequently, negative, offensive, and stereotypical images in media have deleterious implications for beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that shape Black women's lived experiences (Boylorn, 2008; Stephens & Phillips, 2003; Tyree, 2009). Therefore, understanding the relationship between media and race and gender stereotypes of Black women is critical. It is important to reiterate that while several stereotypes of Black women have been discussed in the existing literature, only those stereotypes salient to understanding working class Black women's experiences will be discussed here.

Empirical Research. Researchers have begun to investigate the influence of media on stereotypic portrayals of Black women (Boylorn, 2008; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Given, 2005; Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens & Few, 2007). Particularly, researchers

have investigated how the various mediums of television (Boylorn, 2008), movies (Chen, Williams, Hendrickson, & Chen, 2012; Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Given, 2005); music (Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens & Few, 2007; Tyree, 2009; Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2009) and advertising (Baker, 2005; Fuller, 2001; Frisby, 2004; Plous & Neptune, 1997) have all contributed to the production of stereotypic images of Black women.

Researchers have investigated the role of television portrayals on negative stereotypic images on Black women (Boylorn, 2008; Coltrane & Messineo, 2000; Fujioka, 1999). Fujioka (1999) found that television portrayals of Blacks were significantly associated with stereotypes of Blacks when direct contact was limited. In other words, the study suggested that when direct and ongoing contact is limited or absent, individuals may be more likely to attribute negative stereotypes depicted on television to Blacks in real life contexts. Coltrane and Messineo (2000) investigated television advertising influence on social and cultural beliefs about race and gender. The researchers found that 11% of the actors in television commercials were Black compared to 80% of Whites in commercials and when the characters were female, White women were more than twice as likely as Black women to be shown as sex objects, more likely to be shown as spouses, and more likely to be shown as parents. Recent literature suggests that while there has been an increase of Black women in advertisements, they continue to be underrepresented and when they are represented they are often portrayed in racially specific gender stereotypes (Baker, 2005; Boylorn, 2008). Thus, it is critical to understand that the limited presence of positive images of Black women can shape dominant beliefs about their place and value as women, mothers, and potential partners

which call for more research that challenge these distorted images (Stephen & Few, 2007; Tyree, 2009; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011).

Although there is a dearth in the literature on the overall effects of media images on Black women, there is emerging literature that highlights how advertising and mass marketing maintain and perpetuate subtle and sometimes blatant forms of prejudice against people of color in general and Black women in particular (Baker, 2007; Fuller, 2001; Plous & Neptune, 1997). In one study, Plous and Neptune (1997) conducted a content-analysis of 1800 fashion advertisements of magazines geared towards White women, Black women, and White men. The researchers found that Black women continue to be underrepresented in magazine advertisements and when they are represented they are presented in clothing (e.g., animal prints) thought to evoke sexual stereotypes of Black women as licentious Jezebels. Baker (2005) also found that Black women continue to be underrepresented in magazine advertisements and when they are represented they are usually shown in negative stereotypic images. The study found that White women represent 88% of images of women in mainstream magazines compared with 6% of images of Black women. The study also found that Black women continue to be represented in stereotypical images in mainstream magazine advertisements. In another study, Fuller (2001) found that participants who watched television commercials of Black women selling household cleaning products were able to identify covert and overt messages of Black women as Mammies in the advertisements whereas the association with Black women and cleaning and the actress's appearance (i.e., overweight) was indicative to participants of negative stereotypic images of Black women.

Other researchers have investigated the role of movies in shaping and perpetuating race and gender stereotypes of Black women (Chen, Williams, Hendrickson, & Chen, 2012; Givens & Monahan, 2005; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Givens, 2005). Monahan, Shtrulis, and Givens (2005) found that movies that depicted Black female characters in negative stereotypic images could prime participants to make stereotypic appraisals of Black women in other social contexts, a finding supported in a similar study done by Givens and Monahan (2005). Chen, Williams, Hendrickson, and Chen (2012) conducted a study that investigated the role of Black male actors portraying them as "exaggeratedly" overweight Black women on the self-perception of Black women (p. 115). The researchers found that images of Black men dressed essentially as male Mammies negatively led to negative self-perceptions and perceptions of Black women.

Finally, researchers have also begun to investigate the impact of rap music and music videos on stereotypic images of Black women (Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens & Few, 2007; Tyree, 2009; Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2009). Ross and Coleman (2011) found that participants' endorsement of messages about Black women in rap videos reflects the danger of rap music's influence on the transmission of messages that Black women's sexuality can be commoditized and objectified which can have implications for the development of a healthy self-concept. Stephens and Few (2007), in a study conducted with Black male and female adolescents aged 11-13 to examine the effects of images of Black women in rap videos on early adolescent attitudes towards physical attractiveness and interpersonal relationships, found that Black adolescents' endorsement of stereotypical images of Black women in rap videos may place Black adolescents at risk for premature and risky sexual behavior. Finally in another study Tyree (2009)

conducted a textural analysis to investigate whether misogynistic language and negative stereotypical representations of Black women is used in Black male rappers' songs about their mother versus the mother of their children (i.e., baby mamas). The author found a dichotomy in rap lyrics used to describe their mothers versus rap lyrics about baby mamas. Unlike positive expressions in song lyrics of love and respect for their own mothers, baby mamas were depicted in song lyrics as "sexual conquests…worthless, unethical disrespectful gold diggers and freaks "(p. 54). The researcher argued that rap song lyrics that negatively depict Black women (i.e., baby mamas) may lead listeners to believe that Black women are worthy of the "centuries of oppression, hatred, and racist condemnation experienced at the hands of the patriarchal male social systems in America" (p. 56). Therefore, it is important to understand the role that rap music/videos may have on the perception and treatment of Black women.

Effects of Stereotypes on Black Women

Stereotypes not only influence how information is processed and interpreted about individual members of a group, but they also influence both the behavior of the perceiver and the individual that is being stereotyped (Allport, 1954; Devine, 1989). For members of marginalized groups then, stereotypes can have significant implications for the daily interactions and lived experiences of individual members of these groups. Black women as members of two historically oppressed groups, Blacks and women, continue to experience challenges in their daily lived experiences as a result of their double minority status. While some have investigated race and gender stereotypes on the experiences of Black women, the inclusion of social class has not received adequate attention despite its inverse relationship to mental and physical health (Department of Health and Human

Services [DHHS], 2007). As such, the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA; 2014) which describe the professional and ethical responsibilities of professional counselors and the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992) which describe the professional and ethical responsibilities for multiculturally competent practice, mandate that counselors working with members of marginalized groups increase awareness, knowledge, and skills to work with clients who are members of marginalized communities that facilitate culturally sensitive assessment and treatment approaches.

Mental Health. Researchers have begun to investigate the effects of race and gender stereotypes on the mental health of Black women (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2003; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Some have suggested that understanding the effects of race and gender stereotypes on the mental health of Black women is critical since there is growing evidence to suggest that these effects are associated with more severe mental health problems as compared with Black men with similar experiences (Greer, 2011). A number of mental health issues have been associated with Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes.

Empirical Research. Several authors have investigated the role of race and gender stereotypes on the mental health of Black women. Particularly, stereotypes have been associated with eating disorders (Talleyrand, 2006), intimate partner violence towards Black women and challenges within Black intimate partner relationships (Gillum, 2002, 2007), stress (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Woods-Giscombé, 2010; Woods-

Giscombe´& Lobel, 2008) and depression and addiction in Black women (Windsor, Benoit, & Dunlap, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011).

Several qualitative studies have yielded the salience of understanding the association stereotypes with Black women's mental health (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Woods-Giscombe, 2010; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). Woods-Giscombe´(2010) conducted a qualitative study that was the first to develop a preliminary conceptual framework for the Superwoman stereotype, also known as the Strong Black Woman. The author found that participants who endorsed the Superwoman stereotype (i.e., the belief that they have obligations to others to the exclusion of their own needs) expressed a number of mental health challenges related to: (a) depression, (b) anxiety attacks, (c) nervous break downs, and (d) stress. In another qualitative study, Windsor et al. (2011) investigated the coping strategies impoverished Black women used to cope with negative stereotypic images. The authors found that the participants expressed a number of mental health challenges associated with their experiences of coping with negative stereotypic images (e.g., Jezebel, The Welfare Queen, and Mammy). Specifically, the authors found that participants expressed struggles with: (a) alcohol and drug addiction (e.g., alcohol, powdered and crack cocaine, heroin, and marijuana), (b) depression, (c) stress, and (d) safe and healthy intimate relationships. Thus, the findings from these studies seem to provide evidence that stereotypes can have pervasive deleterious effects not only on Black women's mental health but also other domains of daily functioning.

Physical Health. While there is a dearth in the literature on the role of stereotypes on the physical health of Black women, a review of the existing literature reveals that

there is growing evidence to support that stereotypes can create significant challenges for physical well-being of Black women (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Perry, Harp, & Oser, 2013; Williams, 1999; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). However, many studies have investigated the association between race and gender discrimination rather than race and gender stereotypes on the physical health of Black women (Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Yet, there is support for the role that race and gender stereotypes play in the discriminatory actions of others towards Black women, thus the inclusion of related research that examine the role of race and gender stereotypes on physical health is befitting to the current review.

Empirical Research. Empirical research has investigated the association with stereotypes and the physical health of Black women (Beauboeuf-LaFontant, 2003; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Talleyrand, 2006). Hall et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative study with Black women from three states to investigate workplace stress and coping. They found that the participants in the study reported a number of physical health challenges such as: (a) sleep deprivation, (b) hair loss, (c) severe hypertension, (d) diabetes, and (e) weight gain. Others have also noted similar physical health outcomes related to diet and disease rates (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2003; Talleyrand, 2006). Woods-Giscombé (2010) conducted a qualitative study to establish a preliminary framework for the Superwoman stereotype found that participants who endorsed beliefs and behaviors associated with the stereotype led to a range of health issues including: (a) migraine headaches, (b) hair loss, (c) weight gain, and (d) adverse birth outcomes. Other researchers have also made associations between experiences of discrimination and adverse birth outcomes for Black women (Rosenthal & Lobel, 2011).

Pascoe and Richman (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of 134 studies to examine the link between perceived discrimination and health. Racial discrimination and gender discrimination comprised 66% and 17%, respectively of the studies included in the meta-analysis. Thirty-six studies were included in the analysis for the relationship between discrimination and health. Their analysis found that 42% of the analyses showed that increased levels of perceived discrimination are related to poorer physical health. Findings from these studies highlight the need for counselors and other helping professionals to be aware of the implications of stereotypes on adverse physical health outcomes of Black women and the identification of assessment and treatment strategies to promote overall well-being.

Effects of Stereotypes of Black Women in the Workplace

Stereotypes of women in the workplace can create challenges in hiring, retention, and promotion opportunities (Kennelly, 1999; Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). One pervasive stereotype that extends beyond race to create challenges to women's career trajectories is the stereotype of all women as mothers (Employment Equal Opportunity Commission [EEOC]; 2007; Kennelly, 1999). Particularly, it is often assumed that women in the workforce are not only mothers, but also that their familial obligations will supersede their work obligations. As such they are viewed as less dependable, less promotable, and more deserving of lower wages (Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). Furthermore, traditional stereotypes of women as passive, sex objects women may force employers to relegate women to lower status positions (i.e., women's work) that provides little autonomy, power, and flexibility (EEOC, 2007; Kennelly, 1999). A double-standard

exists however as characteristics typically deemed acceptable for men at work, are viewed less favorably in women who exhibit similar characteristics.

Social Class and Stereotypes of Black Women. Although it is documented that Black women encounter negative race and gender stereotypes in the workplace, the impact of negative stereotypes on working class Black women has received limited attention in the literature (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Yet, the impact of race and gender stereotypes on Black women is nowhere more evident than in the workplace (Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2007; Hall et al., 2012; Kennelly, 1999; Woods-Giscombé, 2010). Particularly, the relationship of race and gender stereotypes with discrimination has been identified as a chronic stressor for Black women in the workplace (Hall et al., 2012). Furthermore, working class Black women's position in lower social class statuses may expose them to additional environmental stressors that exacerbate work place stressors (DHHS, 2007; Latkin & Curry, 2003; Williams, 2006).

Empirical Research. A review of the existing literature yielded a dearth in studies that examined the impact of race and gender stereotypes on working class Black women at work. Instead where workplace issues for Black women are the focus, the Black women under investigation were middle class, professionals who worked in high income occupations (Bacchus, 2008; Bryant et al., 2005; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). For example, Bacchus (2008) found that professional Black women who reported working with prejudiced co-workers and being treated differently than Whites co-workers had higher stress appraisals. Qualitative studies investigating professional Black women have also identified discrimination on the basis of race and gender stereotypes as a major

issue facing these women in the workplace (Hall et al., 2012; Packer-Williams & Evans, 2011). Packer-Williams and Evans (2011) conducted a qualitative study to understand the experience of six Black female professors participating in a peer mentoring group. The authors found that one of the primary benefits of a peer mentoring group was to help Black female faculty combat experiences with stereotypes in the professoriate. Hall et al. (2012) conducted a grounded theory qualitative study of Black women to investigate experiences of workplace stressors and the strategies they use to cope. One interesting theme that emerged from the participants was code-switching. Code-switching, the act of Black women shifting their behaviors to avoid confirming negative stereotypes about Black women, was not only been identified as a type of coping strategy but also a source of psychological stress for the participants, a finding supported in the existing literature (Shorter-Gooden, 2004). Findings from these studies suggest the need for counselors to incorporate assessment strategies that directly assess for experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work and implement treatment strategies that integrate current coping strategies with new strategies to combat those experiences.

In a study that was one of the first to examine White employer beliefs about working class Black women, Kennelly (1999) conducted face-to-face qualitative interviews with 78 White employers to investigate the subjective opinions of White employers regarding Black working class women. The participants fell into one of three job roles: (a) agency president or CEO (35% of responses), (b) human resources representative (37% of responses), and (c) supervisors (29% of responses). The author found that 24% of the participants identified Black women as single mothers. Particularly, these employers associated being single mothers in three distinct ways that

highlight the intersection of race, gender, and class on the realities of working class Black women at work. As such, working class Black women are single mothers who: (a) are poor because of family distractions, (b) are desperate for their paychecks, and (c) are dysfunctional parents with dysfunctional families. An interesting paradox emerged in the employers beliefs about Black women; work ethics that were valued in other groups were criticized in working class Black women. For example, working hard was not seen as evidence of work ethics rather it was seen as necessity of Black women to work to get a paycheck.

There is some evidence for this belief. The Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (2007) suggested that unlike White women, work for Black women is not a choice; it is a necessity. It is critical then to be aware of stereotypes that White employers may hold about working class Black women and the potential such stereotypes may have on hiring, retaining, and promoting Black women in the workforce. Faced with limited opportunities to advance through improved work opportunities, the cyclical effect of daily life stressors with experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work may lead to significant risk of health challenges.

The findings suggest that counselors need to be aware of the effect of race and gender stereotypes on the work experiences of working class Black women. They also need to be aware of the potential effects that living in environments with limited access to adequate community resources, educational, and work opportunities may pose a greater risk for working class Black women when experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work are also present. Thus, counselors must be prepared to advocate as well as encourage self- advocacy in clients to challenge the various systems of institutionalized

oppression that affect the daily lives of Black women (Romano & Hage, 2000). Also, further research is needed to continue to explore the ways that stereotypes affect working class Black women at work since much of the literature is on Black women in professional and academic settings. (Bacchus, 2008; Bradley, 2005; Bryant et al., 2005, King & Ferguson, 2001).

Summary

Thus, while differences in social class may affect how Black middle class and Black working class women are treated at work, the previous studies suggest that the shared experience of being Black women can still influence their experiences of race and gender stereotypes in each of their workplace experiences. Further, as the previous studies suggest, experiences with race and gender stereotypes in relationship to social class can lead to significant mental and physical health challenges. However, a review of the existing literature reflects the omission of working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Thus, this study sought to fill a gap in the literature by examining working class Black women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes at work.

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Traditional scholarship has omitted the experiences of working class Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work (Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006; Thomas, 2004). As such, their voices have been omitted from the dialogue about the problems of race and gender stereotypes at work and solutions to overcome these stereotypes at work. Thus, research designs that incorporate Black

Feminist frameworks have been postulated to fill the void in the literature by highlighting the lived experiences of working class Black women's with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace (Collins, 1990; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004).

Overview of Black Feminism

Black feminist theories are grounded on assumptions that lived experience is a source of knowledge and that there are commonalities in Black women's lived experiences, perspectives, and social realities that form a collective Black female identity (Collins, 1990; Hamlet, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Black Feminism challenged early social movements and traditional scholarship that singularly focused on White oppression of Blacks or male oppression of women. As such, Black Feminism emerged in response to a need for Black women to "define their own realities, shape their own identities, hear their own voices, and find inner peace" (Hamlet, p. 422). Black feminism, then, is the power of self-definition to challenge negative stereotypes that have demeaned, objectified, and relegated Black women to the lowest social status as Black and female. These stereotypes, perpetuated in media and other social institutions, have relegated Black women to images that mask the effects of oppression on their daily lived experiences as multiply oppressed individuals. The centrality of self-definition to Black women's experience is captured in the following quote, "For Black women, constructed knowledge about of self emerges from the struggle to reject controlling images and integrate knowledge deemed personally important, usually knowledge essential a Black women's survival" (Collins, p. 95).

Within the context of this study, a Black Feminist lens was necessary in understanding the complexity of race and gender stereotypes of working class Black women in the work place amidst the backdrop of oppression occurring in other social

domains that is exacerbated and moderated by lower social class status. Failure of practitioners, counselor education programs, and researchers to understand and highlight the deleterious effects of multiple interlocking forms of oppression of lower income Black women perpetuates the suppression of their unique realities in ways that have grave implications for clinical practice, counselor training, and research (American Counseling Association, 2014; Beal, 2008; Bethea-Whitfield, 2005). The following sections will discuss the core components of Black feminist epistemology.

Concrete Experience as a Criterion of Meaning. Black Feminism values everyday experiences as sources of knowledge. For Black women, knowledge (i.e., knowledge in this sense is akin to wisdom) that comes from those who have lived the experiences about which they have claim to know have more credibility than those who merely study and make such knowledge claims (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). The importance of wisdom passed down from foremothers or other mothers has been cited as critical to the gender and racial socialization of Black girls and women, and ultimately critical to survival, has been supported in the existing literature (Packer-Williams, 2009; Thomas & King, 2007). Thus, the inclusion of the experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes to the existing literature can be instrumental in passing on knowledge about their experiences and coping strategies to other Black women with similar experiences.

Use of Dialogue in Assessing Knowledge Claims. The importance of dialogue in Black feminism is based on African oral traditions in which language is instrumental in building connections and passing down important cultural messages that nurture a unique Black culture and promote resilience and survival (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990).

As such, researchers who attend to the language used by Black women can gain valuable insights into their lived experiences and the ways in which the reality of ongoing struggles with simultaneous race and gender oppression may continue constrain them in places such as work (Bacchus, 2008; Banks-Wallace, 2000; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012).

An Ethic of Caring. Three interrelated concepts comprise the ethic of caring: (a) emphasis on individual uniqueness, (b) the appropriateness of expressing emotions, and (c) capacity to develop empathy (Collins, 1990). First, central to the notion of emphasis on individual uniqueness is the need to challenge prevailing notions of Black women as a monolithic group that act in negative stereotypic ways. It is important to note that while Black feminists acknowledge the collective identity of Black women with a shared history of race and gender oppression, they also acknowledge the salience of individual variations (i.e., race, gender, social class, sexuality, ability) that shape lived experiences. Second, central to understanding the appropriateness of expressing emotions in Black feminism is the notion that emotional expression represents Black women's belief in the validity of her argument (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990). The legitimacy of emotions in validating the lived experiences of Black women challenges prevailing Western ideologies that view the expression of emotion as "antithetical/inferior to logical or rational thought" (Banks-Wallace, p. 40). Herein lays a potential problem, since stereotypic images of Black women as irrational, aggressive, and angry permeate the American psyche, any claims on the part of Black women to justify emotions in response to oppressive forces that affect their daily lives may be quickly dismissed by persons of power (Collins, 1990; Harris-Perry, 2011; West, 1995). The third and final component of

the ethic of caring, capacity for empathy is the notion of connectedness between the knower (i.e., Black woman) and the individuals who seek/want to know about the knower's experiences (i.e., researcher). In this way, researchers studying Black women are obligated to take great efforts to engage in ethical research practices that promote a sense of trust and community between the researcher and the participants to facilitate honest and genuine participation. Related to this is the expressed commitment of researchers to use the results from their studies to promote improvement to counseling practices and future research efforts to improve the social conditions of Black women individually and collectively (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Phillips, 2006).

An Ethic of Personal Responsibility. The final tenet in Black Feminism, an ethic of personal responsibility, is the notion that lived experiences lead to concrete knowledge claims (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Phillips, 2006). As such, knowledge claims based on the personal experiences of individuals who are "morally and ethically connected to their ideas carry more weight (Banks-Wallace, p. 42) than knowledge claims made by those in power who have the material and social means to distort, disguise, or ignore the realities of marginalized individuals on society (Collins, 1990). Therefore, knowledge gained from participants can be used to improve counseling practice, counselor education, and future research.

Overview of Womanism

Alice Walker, in her book titled, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens (1983)* is universally cited for coining the term *Womanism* (Collins, 1990; Hamlet 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Womanism is a theoretical framework that integrates philosophical and cultural tenets present in both Afrocentric and feminist theories. As such, Womanism emphasizes the collective experience of racial oppression of Blacks and

gender oppression of women, respectively (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Like Black Feminism, Womanism holds that knowledge regarding Black women exists at the center of their daily lived experiences (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Pellerin, 2012). Additionally, Hamlet (2000) extends this notion by suggesting that "Womanist scholarship positions [Black] women at the center of their own experiences and in doing so connects the everyday lives of Black [sic] with the intellectual positions held by [Black] academicians and others in the academy " (p. 421). Thus, Womanism emerged to validate Black women's lived experiences as worthy of inquiry (Hamlet, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). As such, including Black women's articulation of their lived experiences lend more credence to them as experts of their own lives rather than academics who assert knowledge claims on the basis of empiricism (Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Herein exists the conundrum between Black feminism and Womanism and begs the question: Which framework accurately represents the collective yet diverse experiences of Black women?

Black Feminism vs. Womanism

Although some have argued that Black Feminism and Womanism because of their primary focus on Black women, are nothing more than interchangeable with similar philosophical tenets, there are conflicting viewpoints in the existing literature that espouse differences between Black Feminism and Womanism (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Collins (1990) explored the theoretical implications of the two terms in her manuscript, *What's in a name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond* in an attempt to highlight the obscurity that emphasis on which is the more appropriate label over the more important task that highlights the ongoing daily challenges that Black women continue to face. The author suggested that central to

proponents' claim to Black Feminism is the notion that inserting the adjective *Black* onto feminism highlights the relevance of issues central to Black women and the belief that traditional feminism failed to address concerns of the interactive effects of racial oppression on experiences of gender oppression for Black women.

On the other hand, Womanist proponents suggest that central to espousing the experiences of Black women is the inclusion of experiences from everyday Black women rather than those in the ivory towers of the academy (Banks-Wallace, 2000, Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). However, as Collins (1990) suggested the importance of which label is more important is beyond the scope of this review rather the important task is to identify a relevant theoretical framework by Black women and for Black women that highlights the unique ways that race and gender intersect and subsequently race and gender stereotypes, to affect their experiences in places such as work (Bacchus, 2008; Beal, 2008; Hall, Everett, Hamilton-Mason, 2012).

Relevance of Womanism to Understanding Black Women's Experiences

Role of Oppression

Womanism frameworks recognize the centrality of the history of oppression on the collective identity of Black women (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Hamlet, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). The history of Black women's work roles as slaves and domestic workers on the commoditization and objectification of Black women's bodies left a legacy of negative stereotypes and controlling images that continue to shape the perception and treatment of Black women. As such, Womanists acknowledge the role of oppression within contemporary institutions such as work on discriminatory practices that

affect Black women on the basis on race and gender (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Hamlet, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006).

Intersecting Oppressed Identities

Crenshaw (1989), a Black feminist legal scholar and critical race theorist, is credited with coining the term intersectionality which both challenged single-axis frameworks that viewed socially constructed identities as mutually exclusive and early social movements that focused primarily on the most privileged among oppressed groups which consequently excluded the experiences of certain groups such as poor Black women (Cole, 2009). Black feminist theorists contend that although the persistence of negative stereotypes of Black women as members of two oppressed groups is endemic to American society their experiences have failed to receive adequate attention in the literature (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). In response, intersectionality emerged out of Black feminist, critical race theories, and counseling literature and has received attention in the existing literature (Beal, 2008; Cole, 2009; Reynolds & Pope, 1991; Settles, 2006).

Intersectionality describes the process of how multiple social categories mutually construct meaning and simultaneously work together to shape life experiences of marginalized populations (Beal, 2008; Cole, 2009; Reynolds & Pope, 1991; Settles, 2006). Intersectionality examines the multi-layered and overlapping forms of oppression that are mediated by race, gender, class, and sexual identity and challenges practitioners, academicians, and the research community to consider the additive and interactive effects of multiple oppressed identities on the personal and professional functioning of individuals (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989; Settles, 2006). For Black women, understanding the intersection of race and gender in relationship to class is important

because of the complex socio-cultural and political context in which they live (Settles, 2006).

Lived Experiences as Sources of Knowledge

Positivist traditions separate the experience from the participants in an attempt to yield objective constructions of reality that remove the knower from the experience (Collins, 1990). Womanist frameworks underscore the importance of lived experiences on the constructions of Black women's reality and highlight the salience of shared experience in promoting the well-being of Black women (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Implicit in this assertion is the power of self-definition. Thus, when working class Black women get to share their lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace, they "challenge public discourse about [Black] women by presenting themselves as they know themselves to be and not as others choose to see them " (Hamlet, 2000, p. 422).

Summary

Thus, while differences in social class may affect how Black middle class and Black working class women are treated at work, the previous studies suggest that the shared experience of being Black women can still influence experiences of race and gender stereotypes in each of their workplace experiences. Further, as the previous studies suggest, experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work can lead to significant mental and physical health challenges. Therefore, it is critical for counselors, counselor educators, and researchers to be aware of the interlocking effect that race and gender as it relates to social class can have on the health of working class Black women and engage in training, practice, and research efforts to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills

that promote their quality of life (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Collins, 1990; Sue, McDavis, & Arredondo, 1992). Furthermore, previous studies have highlighted the lack of inclusion of the voices of working class Black women's lived experiences of their intersecting identities is another critical limitation in understanding Black women's work experiences (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Hamlet, 2000; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). In response, qualitative methods have been suggested to fill this gap (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Phillips, 2006; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). Thus, this study sought to fill a gap in the literature by using a phenomenological method to examine working class Black women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Qualitative approaches are considered appropriate and necessary when conducting research with marginalized populations who because of racism, sexism, and classism have been absent from traditional methods of scientific inquiry purposed to understand and describe human behavior (Creswell, 2013; Sue et al., 2008; Thomas, 2004). Previous researchers have postulated that a dearth in the literature on working class Black women's experiences and the limitations of quantitative methodologies to capture the lived intersection of race and gender on their lived experiences suggest the need for qualitative methodologies to study Black women's experiences (Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). Qualitative methodologies are useful in this way by offering the voices of marginalized groups who traditional positivistic methodologies have silenced or ignored (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Creswell, 2013; Reid, 1993; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). This study fills a void in the literature by using a phenomenological design that incorporates a Black Feminist theoretical framework to investigate the lived experiences of working class Black women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. This chapter describes the methods and procedures that were used for this study. Details of the subjectivity statement, research questions, research framework, methods, and conclusion are discussed in the following sections.

Subjectivity Statement

As a Black female who hails from a working class background, I have personally experienced race and gender stereotypes in both personal and professional settings. Personally, as a Black female born in the South to a single-teenaged mother, discussions in my family abound about what it meant to be Black and poor and the need to be hypervigilant of the possibility of racism and prejudice rearing their ugly heads in any potential social situation with Whites. This hypervigilance has served both as a protection and a hindrance that I continue to grapple with to this day. Professionally, I have worked in leadership positions where I supervised and was supervised by primarily White females and experienced racial and gender stereotypes both as a supervisor and as a supervisee. So as a member of the group that this work is intended to help, I am an engaged voice in this discussion, informed by those I am speaking to, with, and about (King & Ferguson, 2001). Because I have personal membership in and experiences with the participants and foci of the study, respectively, attainment of advanced degrees and employment in professional roles has allowed me to pursue and live a middle class life despite my working class upbringing that might impact the research process and interpretation of its findings. To address this issue, methods were used during the data collection and analysis process to bring a critical eye to the data.

Research Questions

The primary research question that guided this study was: What are Black working class women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? There are three sub-research questions that guided the research: (a) what kinds of race and gender related stereotypes do Black working class women experience in the

workplace?, (b) how do experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace affect working class Black women?, and (c) how do working class Black women cope with experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace?

Research Framework

Phenomenological Analysis: A Brief Overview

Semi-structured phenomenological interviews were used to capture the participant's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Phenomenological research methods are useful when attempting to describe the common meaning of a phenomenon that is shared by a group of individuals who have experienced it (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). This research method illuminates the subjective lived experiences of individuals and seeks to objectively connect these experiences with that of others who share those lived experiences with a particular phenomenon. Additionally, participants of phenomenological research methods are asked two general questions: (a) what have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? and (b) what contexts have typically influenced your experiences of the phenomenon? Further, the role of the researcher is salient to the discussion of the experience in phenomenological inquiry as the researcher's personal experiences with the phenomenon are ideally bracketed out to create a fresh perspective of understanding gained through the participants' eyes (Creswell, 2013). As such, phenomenological interviews were befitting for this study to understand the experiences of a particular group of working class Black women who have been silenced, ignored, and misrepresented in the literature.

Justification for the Use of Phenomenological Analysis

Traditionally, phenomenological research was mostly pursued by Interpretivist scholars who heavily emphasized the use of purely inductive approaches to inquiry.

However, phenomenological inquiry's emphasis on individual experiences as knowledge compliments tenets of the Black Feminist theoretical framework that guides this current study. The complementarity of phenomenological inquiry to the Black feminist framework is salient as scholars who have investigated various social phenomena regarding Black women's experiences have highlighted limitations in the literature regarding the omission of their voices from the construction of their realities (Collins, 1990; Reid, 1993, Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). As such, scholars have articulated the need for research designs that regard knowledge claims on the basis of Black women's lived experiences as valid and relevant (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Pellerin, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Phenomenological inquiry with its emphasis on knowledge derived from individual accounts of life experiences is a possible amelioration of the limitations of literature on Black women's experiences (Moustakas, 1994). To further articulate the goal of phenomenological inquiry, Moustakas (1994) stated:

> The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essence or structures of the experience. (p. 13)

The shared tendency towards individual experiences as criteria of knowledge may be more obvious to the reader however upon further inspection, phenomenological inquiry's complementarity to other tenets of the Black Feminist framework warrant further illumination.

Phenomenological inquiry's emphasis on the role of the researcher mirrors other tenets espoused in Black Feminist theory. Particularly, the process of bracketing in phenomenological inquiry posits that while the role of the researcher is critical in understanding the phenomena, researchers must also engage in the process of putting

aside previous judgments, biases, and preconceptions about the phenomena of study, so that constructions of knowledge are based on the individual experiences of the participants and not expert knowledge of researchers (Moustakas, 1994). The ethic of care makes similar claims in that the connectedness and commitment of the researcher to the integrity of the research is critical and yet it is important that the uniqueness of individual participants be preserved in all phases of the research from the recruitment of participants to the report of the final results (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Phillips, 2006). Finally, the importance of dialogue in Black Feminist frameworks is similarly critical to and inherent in phenomenological inquiry data collection methods such that dialogue in face-to-face phenomenological interviews serve as a primary vehicle for meaning making and knowledge claims (Banks-Wallace, 2000; Collins, 1990; Phillips, 2006; Moustakas, 1994).

Methods

Research Context

To solicit working class participants, the recruitment site for this study was chosen based on the enrollment criteria for a federally-funded preschool program. Specifically, enrollment eligibility included parents who: (a) had low incomes (i.e., according to state poverty guidelines) (b) had no higher than a high school education or a GED, (c) lived in substandard housing, and (d) had inadequate transportation.

Participants

The 12 participants of this study were mothers whose children met enrollment criteria for their child to attend a federally funded preschool program designed for low income families. The researcher informed participants that inclusion criteria for this

study were: (a) they must identify as female, b) identify as Black or African-American, (c) be at least 18 years old, (d) current or previous work experience, (e) experience with race and gender stereotypes at work, (f) English speaking. Participants who: (a) were less than 18 years old, (b) had no previous work experience, (c) did not have previous experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work, and (d) who were non-English speaking were excluded from participation in the study. All participants self-reported that they met the inclusion criteria for the study at recruitment.

Furthermore data from demographic questionnaires yielded the following: (a) age range from 23-52, (b) highest education completed as GED (n = 1), some high school (n = 2), high school diploma (n = 1), some college or AA degree (n = 7), and B.A. or B.S. degree (n = 1); (c) current employment status as employed working full- time (n = 3), employed working part-time (n = 3), unemployed seeking work (n = 4), unemployed not seeking work (n = 1), and self-employed (n = 1); (d) current job or usual occupation as service or support jobs (n = 8), (e) approximate household income as less than $14, 999 ($n$ = 5), $15,000-$25,999 (n = 6), and more than $26,999 ($n$ = 1); (f) relationship status as married (n = 2), divorced (n = 1), single, never married (n = 7), and partnered (n = 2); (f) sexual orientation identified as heterosexual/straight (n = 10), bisexual (n = 1), and lesbian (n = 1); (g) number of children ranged from 1 to 6, and (h) religious/spiritual affiliation as Christian (n = 6), no religious/spiritual affiliation identified (n = 4) and belief in God (n = 2).

Sampling and Recruitment

Convenience sampling was used to invite participants who could provide in depth descriptions of their experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. In

phenomenological research, convenience sampling is used to intentionally identify participants who have experienced a particular phenomenon and who can provide descriptions of the phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, 5 to 25 participants has been identified as an acceptable range in phenomenological inquiry (Creswell, 2013). For this study, 12 participants were invited.

Data Collection Procedures

To solicit working class participants, the recruitment site for this study was chosen based on the enrollment criteria for a federally-funded preschool program. Following approval from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Institutional Review Board and the Family Intervention Specialist, the researcher attended weekly parent meetings to give a 5 to 10 verbal script (see Appendix D) at the beginning of each meeting to identify the researcher as a doctoral candidate in the Counseling department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) who was recruiting participants for a study as part of degree completion. As such, the researcher: (a) identified the research topic, (b) discussed the significance of the study, (c) discussed the inclusion criteria for the study, (d) discussed compensation for their participation, and (e) collected contact information of prospective participants to coordinate a later phone meeting.

Next, the researcher contacted prospective participants by phone and the first 12 participants who met all criteria were selected to be interviewed at a date, time, and location that was mutually convenient for the participant and the researcher. As such, interviews were conducted at the preschool, public libraries, and participants' homes. Prior to the beginning of each interview, the researcher reviewed informed consent (see

Appendix A) which stated the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, anonymous and confidential participation, inclusion criteria, data collection and storage procedures, risks and benefits of participation, compensation, and verification procedures with each of the 12 participants. Once informed consent was obtained, each participant completed the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) and participated in a video-recorded face-to-face semi-structured interview (see Appendix C) which lasted approximately 45-90 minutes.

Instrumentation

All of the proposed recruitment and data collection activities began after proper Institutional Review Board approval was obtained by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Details regarding the specific measures used in the data collection are discussed below.

Demographic Questionnaires. Participants completed demographic questionnaires adapted from The Racism and Life Experience Scales (RaLes; Harrell, 1997) to provide a comprehensive description of the participants (see Appendix E for demographics summary). As such, participants answered questions regarding the following eight areas (a) race, (b) age, (c) gender, (d) income, (e) current or usual job or occupation, (f) education, (g) number of children, (h) marital status, (i) relationship status, and (j) religious/spiritual affiliation. The demographic questionnaires were completed at the beginning of each interview and lasted approximately 5-10 minutes.

Semi-Structured Interviews. A semi-structured interview protocol was used to explore the primary the research question guiding this study: What are Black working class women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace?

Moustakas (1994) suggests the use of semi-structured interview protocols to facilitate a rich and thicker description of participants lived experiences with a phenomenon of interest. During the study, video-recordings were locked in a file cabinet to ensure confidentiality of the participants and deleted at the conclusion of the study. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and a pseudonym was identified by the participants on the demographic questionnaires. De-identified transcripts were emailed to participants who provided email addresses to ensure the accuracy of experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work were captured.

While phenomenological inquiry is premised on an informal and interactive dynamic, researchers may opt to identify questions in advance to facilitate in-depth descriptions of participants' experiences. Therefore, the interviews in this study were facilitated by a semi-structured interview protocol developed with the input of an educator and researcher familiar with qualitative research and guided by the following format (see Appendix C): (a) rapport building, (b) experience of race and stereotypes at work, and (c) conclusion. The rapport building questions were intended to facilitate participants' comfort with the interview process. The experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work question was intended to address the research questions for this study: (a) what kinds of race and gender related stereotypes do working class Black women experience in the workplace?, (b) how do experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace affect working class Black women?, and (c) how do working class Black women cope with experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? The conclusion questions were identified to invite participants to inform

counselor practice on effective ways to help working class Black women who experience race and gender stereotypes at work.

Data Analysis

Methods consistent with qualitative phenomenological research designs were used to analyze data from the interviews to find the essence of experiences with race and gender stereotypes at work (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) identifies four general methods of phenomenological data analysis: (a) bracketing of researcher's experiences, (b) horizonalization, (c) imaginative variation, and (d) synthesis of meaning. First, researcher bracketed her own experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace to increase credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The researcher identified her experience with race and gender stereotypes in a subjectivity statement prior to the data collection and maintained a reflective journal of personal reactions to each participant's interview that was reviewed with the peer reviewer during peer debriefing meetings. Second, the researcher used horizonalization to develop a list of significant statements which involved a line by line review of the transcriptions to condense the data into themes which created textural descriptions of the participants' experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Third, imaginative variation was used to further condense the data by identifying emergent codes that highlighted representative themes of the phenomenon under investigation. Fourth, the researcher wrote structural descriptions of the contexts of participants' experiences and synthesized their experiences into themes that concluded in a descriptive passage that illuminates the essence of participants' experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace.

Verification Procedures. One of the major criticisms of qualitative research is the argument that qualitative research designs compared to quantitative research designs lack the ability to produce data that are accurate and trustworthy (Creswell, 2013). However, qualitative researchers have used a number of verification procedures to increase the accuracy and trustworthiness of their data. Several methods were used to increase the trustworthiness of the data for this study. First, the researcher bracketed past experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the work place and any resultant biases or assumptions based on this experience was identified in a subjectivity statement and personal reactions to the data were recorded in a reflective journal and reflected upon throughout the data analysis. Second, the researcher triangulated the data by corroborating data from transcriptions with the researcher's interview notes and reflective journal entries. As such, researcher reactions recorded in interview notes and journal entries were reflected upon and examined against the transcription data to facilitate an objective analysis of the participants' experiences. Third, a Black female doctoral student in the researcher's department was employed as a peer reviewer to provide an external check of the data analysis process. After the first and last six of the interviews were conducted and transcribed, the researcher and peer reviewer met during debriefing sessions to review transcriptions and the emergent themes identified by the researcher to develop a consensus on the themes. Finally, member checking is a critical aspect of increasing accuracy and credibility of qualitative studies, consequently, participants who provided email addresses were emailed their transcriptions to ensure the accuracy of the transcription (Creswell, 2013). Seven of the 12 participants provided email addresses and one participant provided feedback that no revisions were necessary for her transcript.

Summary

Chapter Three provided a detailed description of the methodology guiding this study. Because the two theoretical frameworks guiding this research, Black Feminism and phenomenology, both postulate tenets that highlight the importance of participants' lived experiences as valid sources of knowledge construction and meaning-making, this study sought to fill a gap in the literature about the lived experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the work place. Participants were mothers whose children met eligibility criteria for their child to attend a federally- funded preschool program. Participants who met eligibility criteria (i.e., female, Black or African-American, at least 18 years old, paid work experience, experienced race and gender stereotypes at work, and English speaking) were invited to participate in a 60-90 minute face-to-face semi-structured interview at a mutually agreed upon location. Demographic questionnaires and a semi-structured protocol were used to collect data. Methods consistent with phenomenological data analysis were used (i.e., bracketing of researcher's experiences, horizonalization, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meaning).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes (RGS) in the workplace. Although there is emerging research on the experiences of professional Black women with RGS in the workplace, very few scholars have investigated the lived experiences of working class Black women's experiences with this phenomenon. As such, this study was designed to fill a void in the literature by adding the voices of working class Black women and their experiences with RGS in the workplace. Semi-structured phenomenological interviews were conducted with 12 participants to facilitate in-depth descriptions of their experiences with race and gender stereotypes at work. The primary research question guiding this study was: What are working class Black women's experiences with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? To answer this question, three sub-research questions were identified: (a) what kinds of race and gender related stereotypes do working class Black women experience in the workplace?, (b) how do experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace affect working class Black women?, and (c) how do working class Black women cope with experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace?

Themes related to each sub-research question emerged from the data and will be described in this chapter (see Appendix E: for summary of themes). A total of three

major themes emerged from the data: (a) cheap and disposable labor, (b) unjustified changes in work status, and (e) perspective shifting. The first theme, cheap and disposable labor associated with sub-research question one, captured the kind of race and gender related stereotype experienced at work by seven of the 12 participants. This theme captured subthemes of global context of RGS and workplace context of RGS which highlights the settings in which participants were treated as cheap and disposable labor. The second theme, unjustified changes in work status, was associated with sub-research question two and emerged as a universal theme for all 12 participants which captured how race and gender stereotypes affected participants. This theme reflected the use of RGS in the absence of objective criteria to make changes in the work status of working class Black women. This theme also captured subthemes of exclusion in the workplace, experienced confusion and self-doubt, and disruption in fulfilling family obligations. The third theme, perspective shifting, was associated with sub-research question three and emerged as a universal theme for all 12 participants which reflected how shifts in thinking led to emotional and/or behavior coping responses for experiences with RGS in the workplace. This theme captured subthemes of avoidance or withdrawal, finding greater purpose, self-advocacy, and receiving and providing support.

The following sections will discuss the themes by sub-research questions using quotes from the participants. Hesitations and filler words will be omitted from quotes to facilitate clarity and understanding. Also, pseudonyms assigned during the interviews will be used to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

Cheap and Disposable Labor

The theme of cheap and disposable labor described the kind of RGS experienced in the workplace. The theme also captured subthemes of global context of RGS and workplace context of RGS. Relatedly, these subthemes captured additional subthemes of impact of appearance and position in workplace hierarchies, respectively. While cheap and disposable labor was not universally expressed by the participants, it was expressed by seven of the 12 participants. A quote from Faith articulates this point, "They're not even paying [me] no money… [I] was making $12 an hour…you want to work [me] like a dog and you not paying [me]…" This theme captured the kind of RGS that participants experienced as reflected in others' perception and treatment towards them based on lower status positions in the workplace hierarchy, inadequate compensation despite increased work responsibilities, and the participants' overall expressed sense of being cheap and disposable labor.

The following quote from Faith captures the experience of being cheap and disposable labor shared by the majority of participants:

> They had me working like I was a coach supervisor and had me training but they didn't want to give me the pay…you're not promoting me but you're still using me and want to pay me chump change…but the people you're promoting don't even know the job. They just walking around and don't care…I think it was…probably because who I was…a Black woman.

Faith's quote reflects participants' experiences in which they often worked in lower status positions but were given increased responsibilities that were not matched with increased wages or promotion opportunities. In fact, several of the participants were given supervisory responsibilities such as training and developing new employees. Felicia

reported, "I didn't hold it against the people [I trained] 'cause I wanted to at one time…I just tried to tell them my pointers or different things." Similarly, Libby shared:

> They hired this girl…I was training her on my floor…probably about a month and a half...I didn't suspect that I was really training her because they knew they were [about to] fire me...I was training her on the floor with me teaching her everything...she was going to be my replacement…when they fired me she took over the floor....I mean I trained a couple of people before. I [was thinking] they put the trainers with the best people who can train so…I didn't think she was really there to replace me.

Libby's quote reflects the cheap and disposable labor stereotype in that she was used to train a new hire, without a pay increase, and when Libby was done training the new hire she was fired and replaced by the person she trained. Like Libby, the majority of participants were often overlooked or denied wage increases despite employer expectations for them to continue performing these responsibilities without proper compensation. Felicia reported:

> I got all these emails saying different things stating that I'm doing my job. I'm well capable of doing my job and look at my numbers. So I'm thinking they gone bring it to me like we gone hire her…but… [they went] through a temp agency so they can pay [me] less money….so I was feeling a little cheated.

Similarly, Faith put it this way:

> You make me train. You make me do things…I was so good at my job. I knew a lot. They would put me on new accounts just so I can help the new people who comes in that they hire but…you don't want to pay me nothing…what am I doing wrong?

Faith's quote reflects the challenge that other participants experienced where inconsistent messages regarding their performance left participants questioning their own self-worth. Lisa following her experience of RGS stated, "Everybody there loved my work. I was friendly. What reason did you have [to fire me]? I never got a reason why." Felicia provided an additional example of this experience:

> You're still doing all these things that you used to do before all these people came but they want to say that you're not a team player and you're not qualified for the job even though you've been doing this job but you're still not qualified [for promotion.]

Yet, in the absence of objective evidence to prove otherwise, participants ultimately concluded that it was RGS not performance that led to exploitation at work.

Jasmine's experience provides a different angle on participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor:

> I have a client—he's old and he's White. Like he don't ever call me by name. He always call me girl or Black girl. I really feel some type of way him calling me that….I might cook him breakfast at 8:00 in the morning but he want me to cook his lunch and his dinner 'fore I go and I'm like that's not on my thing and if I don't do it then he'll call my job or he'll threaten to call my job…I feel like he's racist. That's how I feel. I feel like he's racist—he's racist!

In Jasmine's case, the power differential between her as a Black woman and her White male client illustrates the presence of RGS in which the client exploited Jasmine for his benefit by threatening to report her if she did not comply with his demands. Thus, faced with the possibility that termination could have on her family obligations, Jasmine's quote represents an example of the silent endurance working class Black women like her may engage in when employer stereotypes of them as cheap and disposable labor may lead to unexpected changes in work status that impact the vitality of their families.

Global Context of RGS

Global context of RGS refers to participants' awareness of the pervasive historical and social contexts of RGS outside of work that shape their experiences of RGS at work. Global context of RGS was expressed by 10 of the 12 participants. Faith provides an example of the historical context of slavery on contemporary experiences of RGS, "I 'ma be real, we still slaves. They just give us a house and a car now. We just not

picking cotton [but] we still got to struggle." Like Faith, participants made the connection that slavery gave way to a social hierarchy that established Black women at the bottom of the totem pole, and thus inferior, which created conditions for experiences of RGS at work. Lisa shared, "I think what a lot of people don't understand is we [are] lower. No matter what, we [are] lower— Black women….because [that's] what the world [brought] to us….Slavery—we're the ones that experienced that." Additionally, Tomeka shared that despite the fact that slavery is a thing of the past, perceptions of Black inferiority is learned behavior that affects current experiences of RGS:

> I feel like [they] learned it and even though I feel like [White] people try to say it's not racism, it's not stereotypes—[they've] heard it. Maybe your great-grandmother said something. Maybe you're grandmother said something but it's a reason why you expect for me to get out of your way. It's a reason why you didn't speak. It's a reason why you're looking down on me. It's a reason why you feel like I shouldn't be at certain places when I'm there. Like I feel like that's from [our] past [with slavery]. I can't help but to feel that way. That's how I feel…

Libby expressed a similar belief that RGS of Black women is a learned behavior, "I believed they was raised that way….You don't come out and be [racist] without somebody explaining it to you or how to be as far as when you were small and growing up."

Participants also referenced how slavery has implications at work. Ginger provides a perfect example of the impact of slavery on her experience of RGS in the workplace as a light-skinned Black woman:

> A lot of what I experienced was assumptions that there had to be some type of sexual nature to my relationship with my immediate manager for me to be in the position that I was in….if I look across my experience I'll say specifically in work…there's a lot kinda going way back to the slave days and having lighter skin…you were in the house with the master and what was your purpose other than you know chores?... It was sexual in nature.

Ginger's quote reflects a common RGS of light-complexioned Black women as hypersexual meant to challenge the possibility that work status, particularly higher status positions, is based on merit and not hypersexuality. Ginger's quote also ushers in the salience of another important legacy of slavery which many of the participants suggested impacted the kinds of RGS they experience at work: appearance.

Impact of Appearance. While appearance was not universally associated with the cheap and disposable labor stereotype, there was notable mention by seven of the 12 women of its overall salience to experiences of RGS at work. A quote from Tomeka illustrates how RGS associated with appearance affected her experience at work:

> It was easy for them to say you know well we don't like your hair like this and we're grounding you by putting you back on the phone—pretty much demoting you with the same pay so you should shut up and be happy because you look like this.

Furthermore, participants expressed that appearance commonly associated with being Black were connected to experiences of RGS at work. Participants expressed that non-physical and physical appearance of Black can manifest in a number of ways to influence experiences of RGS in the workplace. For example, non-physical appearance of Black such as Black sounding names and place of residence and physical appearance of Black such as skin color and Black hairstyles were identified by participants as contributing factors to experiences of RGS at work. Quotes from Olivia and Lisa provide examples of non-physical appearance of Black on experiences of RGS.

Olivia stated:

> I think it starts with your name first of all…like my name…it's a common Black person name but say if my name was Judy or Elizabeth or something…they can't tell by reading the name what color my skin is. I think that plays a part…

Olivia's quote suggests that Black sounding names can create challenges for working class Black women beginning at the hiring phase where Black sounding names as opposed to White sounding names may be an unspoken factor that adversely affects prospective employers' hiring decisions about candidates' job suitability. Lisa's quote provided a unique example of non-physical appearance of Black where living in a Black neighborhood deemed as ghetto influenced RGS of her as ghetto which hindered hiring opportunities:

> I lived in the projects. I started my own businesses...and just because I live in the project I get discriminated [against]. I'm not the one for the job….They never call me for the job. So if it's not that way that's what I feel. I have heard that so many times—like three jobs turned me down because of where I live….They already look at me as like I'm hood.

Participants also highlighted physical appearance of Black on their experiences of RGS. Yellow-Bone provides an interesting angle where skin color influenced her experience of RGS at work. Yellow-Bone, a light-complexioned Black woman, worked in a supervisory position in a family-owned business where one of her employees, a White female, quit after a meeting with Yellow-Bone's sister and father confirmed that Yellow-Bone was Black. Regarding this incident, Yellow-Bone said of the employee:

> My sister stuck out her hand and she didn't shake it. My father stuck out his hand and she didn't shake it….she never gave me a reason as to why she didn't want to be there anymore. [Her] last check didn't even come to pick it up. I took that as okay you have a problem with Black people….that took me back to like slavery and all that…I feel like they took over us so I felt like in her mind somebody that controlled her was a Black man.

She further articulated:

> … to know that I sit here and you look at me totally different to me that's like a slap in the face because at the end of the day you're coming to me for a job. I'm not coming to you…but I guess now you don't need the job because I'm Black.

Another aspect of physical appearance of Black that participants related to experiences of RGS is Black hairstyles. Several participants highlighted the salience of Black women's hairstyles to experiences of RGS at work. Olivia stated:

> Your hair play a part. If you wear that loud weave…nobody gone hire you….somebody wear that loud weave that's hot pink…oh she got to be ghetto. That [don't] mean that…you can't tell by looking at these people hair….other races—Mexican, White, Chinese…they can have spiked hair and be in the corporate business…. we can't do that. Soon as you get a step up going towards that way they tell you tone your hair down…show it to me in y'all policy where it say I got to where my hair a certain way.

Olivia's quote reflects the notion that in the workplace, Black women are held to different standards of appearance than women from other racial groups particularly as it relates to hairstyles. Hairstyles worn by women from other racial groups that might otherwise be viewed as fashionable or trendy, and thus acceptable are viewed as unprofessional and unacceptable when worn by Black women.

Other participants articulated the role of hair in their experiences of RGS at work. When Yellow-Bone's employee quit after discovering she was Black, she questioned the role of her hair in her experience of RGS, "…I told myself that you need to change your hair color and straighten it out and see how she would react but I didn't have time to do that because she left." Similarly, Tomeka provided another example of how hair influenced her experience of RGS at work. Tomeka noted that RGS led to a demotion after she changed her hair from chemically processed straight styles to natural styles, "I don't know if I just scared them…it was little things that started from my hair—from me changing my hair." Tomeka's quote seems to reflect the notion that when she began to wear her hair in more traditionally Black styles, RGS from her co-workers as threatening

or intimidating emerged. Another quote from Tomeka further illustrated her experience of RGS related to her hair:

> I went out here and cut my hair off and I personally felt that stuff was stopping for me. It was like okay what's going on with this short hair. What's going with—you know you have Bantu knots this day. You have twists this day. You have all this sticking up this day with a headband on, like you know what's going on?

Tomeka's quote illustrates the challenges that Black women in the workplace face when they wear natural hairstyles that don't conform to White standards of beauty or what is acceptable in the workplace which influence the kinds of RGS they experience at work. While the choice to wear one's hair in a certain style can be viewed as a form of personal expression, for Black women hairstyles associated with appearing Black creates barriers for Black women and the kinds of stereotypes they experience at work.

The participants expressed that global context of RGS rooted in a history of slavery of Blacks and its resultant impact on appearance influenced how they were perceived and treated and ultimately the kind of RGS they experienced at work. The fact that cheap and disposable labor was the kind of stereotype experienced by the majority of women reflects a social hierarchy that as race and gender minorities Black women's position at the bottom mirrors their position in workplace hierarchies and thus their experiences as cheap and disposable labor. The following section will discuss workplace context of RGS and specifically position in workplace hierarchies on participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor.

Workplace Context of RGS

Position in Workplace Hierarchies. Position in workplace hierarchies was central to the majority of participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor. Particularly those work environments with a predominance of Whites in higher status positions led to

the likelihood that Blacks in general and Black females in particular occupied lower status positions. More specifically, high visibility of Whites or low visibility of Blacks in top levels of management created conditions for participants to be exploited. Tomeka reported, "The entire time I was there, there was never a Black supervisor....all of the supervisors were either White females or White males." Tomeka's experience further provides insight regarding this dynamic:

> Out of six supervisors in this whole place....I'm the only one on the phone and three months have passed and I'm still the only one on the phone….I was the only Black supervisor….they just made me feel so devalued.

Tomeka's quote illustrates how as the only Black person in a supervisor position, changing her hair to a natural hairstyle led to a change in her work role relegated for those at the bottom of her workplace's hierarchy. The employer's decision to make an adverse change to Tomeka's work status by placing her on the phone after Tomeka changed her hair to a Black hairstyle seems to suggest another stereotype of Black women as less professional or non-conforming if their physical appearance or hair in this case, does not conform to White standards of professionalism. Tomeka's quote suggests that despite the fact that her prior work performance warranted her move up the workplace hierarchy to a supervisor position, ultimately it would be RGS that forced her back down to the lowest position in the workplace hierarchy.

The following quotes from Libby and Stacey mirrored many of the participants' experiences where positions at the bottom of the workplace hierarchy left them feeling like they were cheap and disposable labor. Libby stated:

> Most of the Black girls worked delivering trays and getting all of the food orders. Most of the White people worked in the office…managers, the supervisors…the people in the main office was White…I think they really looked at us as slaves.

Similarly, Stacey offered:

> I'm a housekeeper. I guess they put the housekeeper's at the bottom or whatever. I noticed that as I was working there…they felt like we were lower than them…. co-workers would talk about it…they just felt like housekeepers were nothing really.

Libby and Stacey's quotes not only highlight the majority of the participants' experiences of RGS because of race and gender and their positions at the bottom of the workplace hierarchy but they also highlight the association made by participants that workplace hierarchies reflect the role of social hierarchies, established in slavery, on the contemporary experiences of working class Black women who experience RGS at work.

Unjustified Changes in Work Status

Unjustified changes in work status refers to a universal theme expressed by all 12 participants which reflected how RGS affected their experiences at work. This theme captured subthemes of exclusion in the workplace, experienced confusion and self-doubt, and disruptions in fulfilling family obligations. Unjustified changes in work status refers to participants' experiences of RGS in which RGS were used to make changes in work status in the absence of objective evidence. For seven of the 12 participants, RGS led to terminations and demotions for two participants. However, the participants' narrative data were replete with evidence that they maintained high work commitment to their work roles until an unexpected change in their work status was made. This finding along with the previous finding that participants were viewed as cheap and disposable labor suggests that changes made to participants' work status based on RGS were not only unjustified but was in fact unlawful and indeed a form of workplace discrimination. Consequently, the following sections will illustrate how RGS of participants as cheap and disposable labor ultimately affected unjustified changes in participants' work status that

also affected their exclusion in the workplace, experience of confusion and self-doubt, and disruption in fulfilling family obligations.

Exclusion in the Workplace

Exclusion in the workplace is a subtheme that was coded for the majority of participants (n = 10). This subtheme refers to participants' experiences that RGS led to exclusion from workplace management and communication which limited or inhibited participants' work status particularly in predominantly White work environments. A quote from Felicia illustrates an example of exclusion in the workplace:

> I feel like [management] already knew….if you already know these things, try and set me up for something else or tell me until we find something else [for you]…you shouldn't go back there because I don't think you're getting treated the way you should be treated.

Similarly, Libby's experience as one of only three Black females in her position, reflected how RGS associated with Black females as a monolithic group led to exclusion in the workplace that ultimately led to termination as a group:

> We all hung together…we all worked together…so they was doing an investigation on us as a group….How could you just fire us all at the same time and not tell us anything? You didn't even come talk to us to let us know what people was saying about us.

Furthermore, RGS of participants as cheap and disposable labor fueled frequent opportunities for exclusion from management and ultimately exclusion from communication regarding their work status. As such, workplace management and workplace communication are two subthemes related to exclusion in the workplace that will be discussed in the following sections.

Exclusion by Workplace Management. Nine of the 12 participants reported that they had been excluded either implicitly or explicitly by management in their workplaces.

Workplace management refers to participants' connection of experiences of RGS with their managers. Participants reported race and gender differences between them and management, changes in management, and conflict with management were all related to experiences of RGS which affected exclusion from the dominant culture of the workplace. Participants identified those dissimilarities in race and gender between them and management in work environments where Black females had the least power created barriers to hiring, promotion, and retention. Trish provided an example of how RGS created barriers to future hiring opportunities:

> I called them 'Oh you're not qualified for this job' and I'm like asking her like why am I not qualified for the job? I've—everything like I done worked with like cashiers. Y'all are hiring so why I'm not qualified for this job? Why am I not qualified for this job because I'm Black? Is it because I don't see no other Black person in this building right now?

Following her resignation due to experiences of RGS associated with her hair, Tomeka expressed similar concerns about RGS affecting future hiring opportunities:

> Before the reality of how am I gonna pay my rent came up it was what am I gonna do about my hair? 'Cause I felt like if they're treating me like this then the next job is not gone even hire me if I look like this.

Libby provided details regarding how exclusion based on RGS hindered promotion opportunities at work:

> I was trying to move up to a manager's position and another girl she was White…I was working there for three years…she might have been there a year…but she came in and they hired her for the manager's position instead of me….I was really hurt because I really knew everything there was to know as far as within that job….The company was White-owned…mostly White people working there. I think they try to keep it within.

Several participants expressed that race and gender differences between them and management particularly in work environments where Black females occupied the lowest positions and thus had the least power was associated with exclusion. Particularly,

participants shared that those work environments with a high presence of Whites or low presence of Blacks in management positions were likely to lead to them being excluded in the workplace. Felicia expressed, "My manager….I guess being an African-American woman… [I knew] he really didn't care for you being in management as African-American women because they only had one African-American there in the whole department…" Furthermore, participants expressed that White co-workers who had interpersonal relationships with management benefitted from such inclusion in the inner circles of power which participants ultimately believed contributed to their exclusion from advancement opportunities. Libby reported:

> [This] White boy….got his girlfriend a job there because the manager was his friend...she started working upstairs…at first she used to do what we do then she went in the office...she wasn't there longer than we was…they was moving up...like how she get promoted so quickly...I just seen how they moved up so quickly...how they get all the way up there and we was working there longer and we didn't even make it there?

Similarly, Ginger expressed a similar belief that race and gender differences between she and her manager led to exclusion in her workplace:

> …I don't think that he saw me as someone who would jump on the bandwagon and I don't even think he wanted me in his inner circle. I'm not the right mix…I see his inner circle as very small-- the same couple of White men…

Whites were not the only racial/ethnic group that evoked a sense of exclusion among the working class Black women in this study. Those who worked in predominantly Latino work environments also felt a sense of exclusion from their co-workers. Lisa reported:

> I was cleaning buildings one time and they always got a concept that Mexicans clean better [and] cheaper….I felt like it was racist because the person that was over everything was Mexican….I mean a lot of places I went to they make comments like they only deal with the Mexicans 'cause of their prices and they feel like they do better work.

Similarly, Trish reported:

> My last job that I worked at it was nothing but Hispanics there so like I felt uncomfortable…just because of the race that I am, they excluded me. They really excluded me....I noticed how they would treat each other and then would treat me differently.

The following quote from Trish not only provides further evidence of how race and gender differences in a predominantly Latino work environment led to exclusion from her co-workers and but also how her attempt to address her concerns of exclusion with her Latina manager led to her termination:

> I was cooking and trying to help somebody else because I didn't have anything else….I was helping somebody else and she was like 'No, no, no, no, no' and then another [Latina] lady came and helped her—no problem…. I felt some type of way…. I talked to the manager about it and she was like dada da okay. And before I know it I didn't have no job… I felt like I was being mistreated and I lost my job for that.

As such, Trish's quote reflects how her attempts to be helpful were not only shunned by her Latina co-workers but also how her attempts to seek redress from her Latina manager regarding her co-workers' actions were met with the ultimate exclusion: termination.

Additionally, changes in management that established new manager and employee relationships was also a precursor to the participants' experience of exclusion in the workplace. Felicia reported, "When this other department came in…my immediate manager she was a Caucasian lady-- she started acting funny." Libby similarly expressed how new management relationships led to exclusion in the workplace, "It didn't happen until that White man came in. I think before everything seemed fine until he came… people was complaining that the White man was firing people for no reason."

Felicia stated:

> The other department came in and I guess my manager started acting different towards me. She just really wasn't talking to me that much no more. You know [I was] trying to figure out what happened…

Similarly, Ginger reported:

> There was a reorganization and I no longer had the manager that I had initially.…this new manager of mine, a White male, started taking another direct report of his, one of my peers, to meet with my customers without me. He'd say I was not available. He started excluding me from things.

Thus, participants expressed that new management ushered in new attitudes and treatment towards participants that ultimately led to exclusion in the workplace.

Lastly, conflict with management also led to exclusion in the workplace. Felicia reported, "My manager….a lot of things we didn't see eye-to-eye on." Ginger also expressed that conflict with her manager ultimately led to her being excluded at work:

> I had a manager who we just philosophically we did not see eye-to-eye…I found that very difficult… [but] I kept asking him to engage. Let's sit down and strategize…then he'd turn around and have a strategy session with his guy, the White male.

As the previous section highlighted, exclusion from workplace management influenced participants' experiences of RGS where racial and gender differences between participants and management, changes in management, and conflict with management spurred experiences of RGS which led to exclusion in the workplace. As an extension of that, the following section will discuss how exclusion from workplace communication based on RGS of participants influenced their experiences at work.

Exclusion from Workplace Communication. Exclusion from workplace communication refers to participants' exclusion from access to informal and formal communication vital to their work status. This subtheme was expressed by 10 of the 12

participants. The following quote from Keisha provides an example of this subtheme, "[The manager] told me he didn't see no perfection out of me… [but] I didn't know that I wasn't working right because we didn't really have too much training." Keisha's quote reflects experiences of other participants where exclusion from workplace communication restricted opportunities for corrective action from participants to resolve management concerns with performance or conduct identified as the basis for changes in work status. Specifically, Keisha's quote reflects the fact that communication regarding employer concerns that led to changes in work status often did not occur prior to said changes rather communication of concerns occurred concurrently when changes to participants' work status were being made.

Furthermore, exclusion from workplace communication about impending changes to work status along with the absence of objective evidence to justify changes created suspicions of institutional secrecy and outsider status. Subjective appraisals based on participants' self-evaluation of their performance and objective appraisals based on participants meeting or exceeding workplace measures of performance in the workplace was evidence to the participants that they were high achieving performers and thus valued and secure in their work statuses. A quote from Libby reflects the sentiments of participants who expressed subjective appraisals of their work performance, "I knew everything there was to know within that job." The following quote from Ginger represents an example of objective appraisals of performance, "…when I got the 5 rating….the conversation was okay we can only give this 5 to one person….I was the person who got the 5. Not anybody else…"

Despite these positive appraisals, changes in participants' work status made in the absence of both objective evidence that outweighed previous satisfactory appraisals and prior communication from management regarding performance concerns raised participants' suspicions regarding the validity of the changes in work status. Libby reported, "I think the [managers] really had people write these statements just because they wanted to get us out the door." Felicia similarly, stated, "The African-American lady that interviewed for my job when the manager came in-- she started being distant from me so I said okay I know something else is going on." Faith put it this way, "I knew what it was. You know when people stop speaking to you."

Furthermore, participants expressed a sense that management and in some cases co-workers were not only aware of impending changes to their work status but also conspirators in the decisions that led to the changes:

> The manager used to come out and smile in our face and be talking to us….the people who had been smiling in our face was the ones who fired us….one minute they'll be smiling in your face then we can walk in the room and they'll stop talking…what are y'all talking about? (Libby)

Similarly, Keisha expressed:

> My thing is you don't talk to the co-worker, you talk to the main person that you really need to talk to, to really get the job done. And that really offended me…. [It's] not fair. That's not fair to me because that's like y'all talking behind my back…. I don't know what else you gonna say.

Finally, Tomeka shared:

> [What my manager didn't know] is this person told me they had a conversation—what he [didn't] know is that I go and have a conversation with this person. And then they go and have this conversation together which I don't know [about]. He comes and brings it up...so you've had a conversation without me that I don't know about. And now I'm looking for stuff at this point…

Exclusion from workplace communication also referred to management excluding participants' from communication regarding performance or conduct concerns that would lead to unsuspected and ultimately, changes to work status. A quote from Olivia illustrates this:

> The lady called me back in the back or whatever so I'm thinking that she telling me I'm doing good…she talking 'bout I got to let you go. I just like instantly started crying. Like what? Like for real?

Similarly, Keisha reported:

> I was like what's the reason for you moving us to another store? He didn't really say. He just said because there's more hours at another store….I didn't understand that. To me I feel like that's [stereotyping] because you not really telling us why you're moving us to another store. You're just telling us that it was more hours at the other store.

Participants expressed that they were not privy to communication regarding concerns with performance and/or conduct until the moment when such changes were taking place. A quote from Libby illustrates this:

> We didn't know that a full investigation was going on….they told us at the time that we was fired and that they was doing an investigation on us--that people wrote statements on us….you suppose to tell us stuff like that….you don't suppose to do an investigation without us knowing.

As such, many participants were often unaware of the imminence of changes being made to their work status and ultimately confused when such changes occurred. Additional quotes from the participants further illustrate the current discussion of exclusion from workplace communication regarding unsuspected changes to work status. Faith shared:

> …you're listening to these people…who do not really care for me cause they intimidated by me…you know who I am. You know how I run so why you not promoting me to something that I can hold my position?

Similarly Ginger expressed:

> …this new manager of mine, a White male, started taking another direct report of his, one of my peers, to meet with my customers without me. He'd say I was not available. He started excluding me from things.

Finally, Tomeka shared:

> It started off with me—just being a hunch—me feeling like something—you know my hair was an issue. I receive the title of supervisor and the pay and I'm doing the job then they say we want you on the phone. That's strange. I have a desk and I have a team [but] I'm the only supervisor that you're asking to be on the phone.

In addition to exclusion from workplace communication regarding impending changes in work status, the absence of objective evidence to support such changes created further suspicion from participants that the changes were not only unjustified but were in fact unlawful. The following quote from Olivia summarizes succinctly this experience for many of the participants:

> Whatever evidence they have make them show it to you. If they ain't got none you take their ass to court. Show me what you got on me. Let me see. It's like it's a court of law. You said I did this. Let me see the evidence that you have on me doing this. Yeah cause if you ain't got none I'm gone have to see you in court because its discrimination.

Olivia's quote highlights the significance that changes made to participants' work status based on RGS of working class Black women and not objective evidence represents workplace discrimination. Whether consciously or sub-consciously, the fact that employers' excluded participants from access to vital communication to maintain their work status prior to changes in work status occurring along with the absence of objective evidence to justify said changes provide compelling evidence that RGS affected participants' experiences of workplace discrimination. The following section will discuss

the emotional responses participants' had in response to experiences of workplace discrimination reflected in unjustified changes in their work status.

Experienced Confusion and Self-Doubt

Experienced confusion and self-doubt refers to participants' emotional responses to unjustified changes in their work status. Participants' emotional responses was expressed universally by all 12 participants particularly since they all believed that they met or exceeded the performance standards in their workplace. Therefore when unjustified, and relatedly unsuspected changes in their work status occurred, participants were devastated and confused about the rationales given for such changes. Furthermore, the absence of objective evidence to outweigh prior subjective and objective appraisals of exemplary performance, turned confusion into self-doubt as participants grappled with whether changes in their work status were attributable to personal deficits rather than RGS.

Confusion. Confusion was an emotional response expressed by nine of the 12 participants. Participants expressed confusion about unjustified changes in their work status particularly because the occurrence of those changes, previous appraisals of exemplary performance, and knowledge of workplace policies challenged the justification and validity of said changes. Several participants' expressed that previous appraisals of performance outweighed justifications for changes in work status. Lisa shared, "I did an excellent job but…they fired me….so I'm asking them why 'cause everybody else, they're not complaining. Actually they done came up to me like you're doing a great job… [but they still] fired me." Similarly, Faith shared, "I went to everybody. 'You're not doing nothing wrong. You're perfect. You're doing very well.

You're doing very good.' So I said why [am I not being promoted]?" Additional quotes from Libby and Felicia further articulate this point:

> As far as I know my performance was good because our performance is really based on the floor's rating. They do the surveys on the floor….with the patients to see how our customer service [was] to them and each month they present us with the levels. My floor was always in the top 90th percentile so that was good and for [them] to fire me knowing I'm the best? (Libby)

> I'm like why they couldn't just hire me on if you said I'm performing? I got all these emails saying different things stating that I'm doing my job…. How I go from not being a team mate but then this thing y'all put out to all the stores saying all the team players and who getting recognition of the month…how am I on that but I'm not a team player? I was just confused. (Felicia)

For some, participants' knowledge of workplace policies and procedures regarding employee conduct and consequences for employer misconduct, respectively, yielded confusion about the validity of employer accusations of misconduct. A quote from Libby illustrates this point:

> They said they fired [me] for harassment…harassment is not tolerated period. Its grounds for termination period if you harass somebody….I [am] still trying to figure out why [I] got fired for harassment. [I] didn't harass nobody so how could y'all even put that...I still want to know 'til this day what the real reason for [me] getting fired…

Olivia also illustrates this point:

> The lady said somebody saw you put some money in your pockets so the lady was like we gone have to let you go. I told her roll the cameras and let me see. If just what y'all say happened and y'all got cameras on y'all registers as y'all say—let me see! Roll it back...If I knew then what I know now then I would have sued them. They fired me. They didn't have me on camera.

Stacey and Tomeka expressed their confusion regarding their employer's responses to their experiences of RGS. Stacey's experience led to her confusion when her employer failed to adhere to policies and procedures to terminate a co-worker who assaulted her at work, "Nobody in the building likes her. Nobody. So why you even keeping her?"

Similarly, the following quote from Tomeka reflects her confusion at her manager's response to her experience of RGS:

> And then he calls me an idiot. I wanted to know why. What am I am idiot for? Coming in early when you shouldn't have changed my schedule last minute? Am I an idiot for sitting on these phones when I know I shouldn't have been sitting on these phones? Am I an idiot for taking what you dished out? Or am I an idiot for letting you call me an idiot and not saying to you what I really want to say to you and leaving this office? What am I an idiot for?

The following section illustrates how initial emotions of confusion were followed by self-doubt following participants' experiences of RGS.

Self-Doubt. Self-doubt was the second most coded emotional response (n = 6) participants' experienced based on unjustified changes in their work status. Ginger shared, "[I was] beating up on myself like what could I have done better? What could I have done differently?" Self-doubt refers to the emotional response that developed after initial feelings of confusion following unjustified changes in work. Lisa shared, "You feel bad about that as a person when you're giving everything that you can give into this to make yourself work....You fall back a little 'cause you feel like am I worth it? Can I do it?" Similarly, Ginger reported, "I allowed that to seep into my psyche and I started doubting myself." Participants' expressions of self-doubt seemed to reflect a pattern of development in that initial feelings of confusion about unjustified changes in work status were subsequently followed by feelings of self-doubt in which participants began to question their self-worth and in some instances, their identity.

Yellow-Bone's experience of RGS provided a unique experience of self-doubt which led her to question her racial identity as a Black woman. In her case, skin color became salient to her experience of RGS when a White female employee she supervised

quit after a meeting with Yellow-Bone's family confirmed that she was in fact a Black woman:

> I was questioning myself because I was like okay what are you?...When I look at myself in the mirror I see a Black girl….but that's not what I'm seen as….After that happened I started asking myself like how do you identify with yourself?

Thus in Yellow-Bone's case, having skin color that was not visibly Black caused Yellow-Bone to doubt her racial identity as a Black woman.

Disruption in Fulfilling Family Obligations

Disruption in fulfilling family obligations is a subtheme that was coded for eight of the 12 participants. Here, participants expressed how unexpected changes in work status created disruptions in participants' familial obligations. Lisa shared, "It affected me dealing with my bills. My home. My children because now I gotta go and find something that fit this position because I already had everything set." Additionally, Keisha offered:

> It became a problem with my kids not really having no supervision around them….still [the manager] started putting me on the weekends and I tried to explain to her that I got a situation going on at my house and I couldn't really be at work…. I come into work one day and I wasn't on the schedule.

Because, termination was the most identified change in work status expressed by seven of the 12 participants, termination had the most obvious impact on participants' familial obligations since all participants were mothers and the majority heads of their households. Thus, terminations created significant disruptions in participants' ability to meet the basic needs for themselves and their families. Felicia shared, "…financially I wa s the help for just doing extra things in our household so I was thinking that's being taken away from me…" Trish also offered insight about the disruption of her termination on her family obligations, "I have no money. I can't do anything...My daughter goes to

the store. I can't get her nothing." Quotes from Libby and Olivia offer additional knowledge regarding this point:

> I just thought about my daughter like how am I going to support her and I don't have a job like what am I gonna do? Bills, car payment…how am I gonna take care of that and I don't work?…It was affecting me because I was wondering how it was going to affect my daughter… (Libby)

> They don't want to let me work and give me a job so I got to do what I got to do to survive. I got to resort to what I know. I'm not [about to] be without nothing--me or my kids. We have to eat. We need clothes. (Olivia)

Arguably, changes in work status and the ripple effects these changes had on participants' ability to meet the needs of their families impacted their emotional responses and ultimately how they coped. As such, the following section will discuss the final theme related to how participants coped with experiences of RGS at work.

Perspective Shifting

Perspective shifting refers to the universal theme expressed by all 12 participants which reflected the way they coped with experiences of RGS at work. This theme captured subthemes of avoidance or withdrawal, finding greater purpose, self-advocacy, and receiving and providing support. Perspective shifting refers to intentional cognitive shifts that facilitated emotional and/or behavioral coping responses for dealing with RGS at work.

Avoidance or Withdrawal

Avoidance or withdrawal refers to perspective shifts that led to psychological and/or physical avoidance or withdrawal to facilitate coping that was expressed by 11 of the 12 participants. Avoidance refers to participants' physical avoidance of situations, co-workers, and work environments and/or psychological avoidance of thoughts related to experiences of RGS at work. Withdrawal refers to participants' using psychological

withdrawal through denial, minimization, or rationalization or physical withdrawal through participants' physically removing themselves from work environments to cope with experiences of RGS.

Avoidance. Avoidance refers to perspective shifts that led to psychological or physical avoidance to facilitate coping with experiences of RGS at work. Psychological avoidance refers to coping evidenced by participants' avoidance of thoughts about experiences of RGS at work. A quote from Trish provides an example of the psychological avoidance she used to cope when RGS led to termination, "It's really frustrating and I try not to get myself so frustrated. I always try to think positive 'cause if I think negative then it's just gonna keep bringing me down and I don't want that." Felicia stated, "I just [tried] to stay upbeat even though my job is getting interviewed for in front of my face." Libby also shared:

> With me that's something I can look past...that's not something I'm going to keep dwelling on and let it get to me…I'm not gone let that happen because I'll start being stressed out, anything-- depressed, stressed out…it's just easy to let things go…

In this way, participants' cognitive shift in focus on their experiences of RGS reduced the actual impact of RGS in the workplace.

Avoidance also refers to coping evidenced by participants avoiding situations, co-workers, and work environments associated with experiences of RGS at work. Stacey's reaction to a White female co-worker's verbal and physical assault of her at work provides as example of physical avoidance, "I snatched my name tag back and stuffed it in my shirt. Still me being me I just turned around and just continued to do my job…I just brushed it off." Although Stacey's decision not to physically defend herself in the presence of physical threat to safety represents an atypical example of coping through

physical avoidance, the thinking behind her decision not to exposes not only her rationale for her decision but also the fact that similar actions from her towards the White co-worker would have been met with strict consequences, "If the shoe was on the other foot I would have got fired—kicked out. Locked up. Thrown away. Like they wouldn't be having it." Olivia's avoidance of future work environments because of her experience of RGS at work further illustrates physical avoidance:

> I could get me a cashier's job…I just don't even want it…I don't even want the problems…If I have a restaurant job put me in the back. I'll wash the dishes…I do not want to be on no register.

For Tomeka, a demotion in response to wearing her hair in traditionally Black hairstyles led her to temporarily avoid work altogether, "I have not met an employer who I feel has valued me since. So I opted to stay at home."

Physical avoidance also refers to participants' shifting to socially desirable behaviors to minimize perception of confirming RGS. Felicia shared how RGS of her outside of work as a Black woman having multiple children out-of-wedlock led to physical avoidance to minimize the same perception of her at work:

> I found out I was pregnant so I'm like okay how you gone hide this? Not saying [I was] trying to hide [my] daughter but trying to get to [my] position so [I] can get comfortable and keep on moving. I used to wear baggy clothes trying to see what I can do to guarantee 'cause you told me verbally but you never wrote it down saying that I got the position.

Ginger similarly shared:

> In business it's important to make and maintain eye contact but not everyone takes that professionally when you look a certain way or you're a certain race….I did have a situation probably three or four years ago where a vendor partner to our company was clearly attracted to me but was a married man--totally inappropriate…it was a dinner where he had me more or less cornered and its business so I'm trying to be professional. I didn't want to offend anyone. He seemed to have the impression that I was okay with what was going on so I really had to adjust the way I handled that situation...

Yellow-Bone's attempt to avoid having all Black staff at her business represents a unique type of physical avoidance where she altered hiring practices to avoid RGS of Black employees as threatening, "In the business I wanted to present something that was like a bunch of different races so that parents would come in and feel comfortable like okay it's not all Black people in here." The previous quotes illustrated how participants used avoidance to cope with experiences of RGS. Withdrawal, a type of coping response related to avoidance will be discussed in the following section.

Withdrawal. Withdrawal refers to perspective shifts that led to psychological or physical withdrawal to facilitate coping with experiences of RGS at work. Psychological withdrawal refers to participants' denial, minimization, or rationalization of their experiences of RGS at work. The following quote by Ginger captures the experience of psychological withdrawal to cope with RGS, "…I used to try to minimize what I brought to the table because I didn't want people to feel intimidated or uncomfortable… "The following quote from Tomeka offers additional insights about the use of psychological withdrawal to cope with RGS, "I kinda felt it but I'm kinda of sensitive so I was like this isn't happening because of my hair. This is happening because of my own insecurities."

Withdrawal also referred to participants physically removing themselves from work environments where they experienced RGS. For some participants, physical withdrawal was evidenced in their resignations. Faith reported, "I said…I'm resigning then. I cannot accept the next assignment." Similarly, Ginger expressed thoughts she had about resigning following her experience of RGS at work, "…at one point I was like I need to leave." Additionally, Tomeka shared:

> Two weeks later, I left because I was done with it. I was done. And I felt like the root of the problem was still there co-managing me. And I didn't want to deal

> with him because the puppet couldn't have done anything without somebody pulling his strings.

Physical withdrawal for one participant, Stacey, was forced termination to cope with her experience of RGS at work. Stacey believed that because she was a Black woman and a housekeeper the physical assault by a White co-worker towards her and the company's refusal to follow company policy to terminate the co-worker not only confirmed the influence of RGS but also that remaining would not be in her best interest:

> It was supposed to be an investigation….there was no action [taken]….It's in the handbook. I even went through and highlighted everything that she did. So I just felt like okay you're not supposed to touch anybody….and you not supposed to invade anyone's personal space, privacy—any of that. You're supposed to be fired. You're supposed to be terminated. No questions asked. I felt since she was White then it was alright [because I'm] a Black girl and… a housekeeper. That's discrimination. Don't throw me off like that 'cause I am somebody. Don't let this title fool you…this is not me....I didn't feel comfortable. I didn't feel like I belonged there. I felt like they was stereotyping. I felt like it was racist…. [So] I kinda made myself get fired….I just wanted them to fire me. I didn't want to quit because I didn't want it to look bad on me.

The previous section highlighted the subtheme avoidance or withdrawal expressed by 11 of the 12 participants as a way to cope with experiences of RGS. The following section will explore the second most coded subtheme of perspective shifting, finding a greater purpose, which was identified as a coping strategy for RGS.

Finding Greater Purpose

Finding greater purpose emerged as the second most coded subtheme of perspective shifting expressed by 10 of the 12 participants as a coping strategy for experiences with RGS at work. Finding greater purpose refers to a perspective shift in which coping with incidents of RGS was facilitated by external motivating factors. Libby shared, "I think it worked out for the best…I've figured like things always happen for a reason so if I got fired it must have happened for something." Participants expressed

that shifting their focus from their experiences at work to external factors facilitated healthy emotional responses which in turn facilitated coping with experiences of RGS at work. " Felicia similarly expressed, "…I was wallowing in myself for a while [but] something else bigger than that situation helped me to say okay come on back, come on back." External motivating factors were associated with belief in a higher power, family, or collective coping.

For some participants belief in a higher power was an aspect of finding greater purpose that facilitated coping with RGS. Belief in a higher power was expressed as belief that there was spiritual and/or existential meaning for their experience with RGS at work. Felicia shared, "I know you sent this for me God. You gone give me something better." Similarly, Faith expressed, "[I] thought about my life [and said] I 'ma start my non-profit. I 'ma work for myself…but I'll be here for a greater cause and I will be here to help people." In this way, coping was facilitated because the focus was shifted from the impact of the specific RGS experience itself to the experience having greater meaning.

Another aspect of finding greater purpose identified by participants was family. For this subtheme, fulfilling the obligations of their families superseded participants' focus on their individual experiences of RGS at work. The focus on family ultimately shifted their thinking from internal needs to external needs, namely, family. Lisa shared, "I'm a mother. I had no choice. One thing about what I went through—you have to keep your head up. You have to keep going." Similarly, Trish stated, "My daughter she's the one that keeps me going. Additionally, Felicia shared:

> It just took everything in me 'cause I was just so upset but eventually I found out that something was wrong with my daughter's heart and so eventually you know I

> was thinking Lord if I didn't get fired I wouldn't have been able to take care of my daughter for the time I did have with her. So I tried to turn my negative, even though it hurt, into a positive.

A final aspect of finding greater purpose was collective coping. Collective coping refers to participants' coping where shifts from thinking about participants' experiences of RGS to thinking about their individual experiences as a source of coping for other Black women who may also experience RGS at work. The following quote from Felicia best captures this form of collective coping expressed by other participants, "I want to let somebody else know you can get through it even though it look crazy…you can tell the next person that don't let that stop them..." Ginger expressed it this way, "…no matter what my circumstances I will still bring others along." Thus, collective coping relates to participants viewing their individual experiences of and coping with RGS at work as testaments of strength and resilience for other Black women to draw strength from who may also be experiencing RGS at work. The following section will discuss the third most coded subtheme of perspective shifting: self-advocacy.

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy emerged as the third most coded subtheme expressed by nine of the 12 participants as a coping strategy for experiences with RGS at work. Self-advocacy refers to participants asserting their rights by challenging experiences of RGS at individual and/or institutional levels. At the individual level, experiences of RGS with co-workers or management were challenged by participants. Libby reported:

> …it was this one I can't remember what he said to me but he said something to me…I looked at him like he was crazy-- he looked at me-- I said don't talk to me like that no more…I told [him he] was racist.

Similarly, Tomeka expressed:

> ... So [it] don't matter what you worked, how much you worked—you're only paying me for 40 hours....based on what we know to be true--the facts of my job and my job title and what I'm supposed to be doing. And based on this crock of whatever you throwing me about supervisors getting on the phone and I'm the only one on the phone at this point, I'm not signing anything. So I didn't….The conversation escalated because…. I'm not signing anything…I'm not signing anything!

Other participants challenged their experiences of RGS at work at the institutional level.

Stacey reported, "I took it to court because she scratched me. [She] assaulted me."

Tomeka shared:

> I [came] in at 8:00 and speak to somebody at human resources and tell them what I feel and this time I bring up the hair…. human resources [says], 'We're gonna investigate this. We take this serious. This is a form of harassment. It's not sexual harassment but if this is what's going on it's a violation of our policy. No we don't have anything in here about hair but we do have something in here about people treating you differently.'

Similarly, Ginger reported:

> I went back to employee relations and I said I understand the case is closed but you did acknowledge that the how was wrong so with that I believe that I deserve some help and some support. I asked for support in terms of my career…if I find a program beyond the degree program...a certificate program whatever the case may be I want them to pay for it. They've agreed to do that.

Thus, self-advocacy relates to coping facilitated by shifts in thinking that led to individual efforts by the participants to challenge their experiences of RGS at individual and/or institutional levels. The final subtheme of perspective shifting, receiving and providing support, will be addressed in the following section.

Receiving and Providing Support

While receiving and providing support was the least coded subtheme for perspective shifting, it was identified as a subtheme expressed by six of the 12

participants. Receiving and providing support refers to participants receiving support and encouragement from family, co-workers, or other external supports as well as providing support to co-workers experiencing RGS at work. A quote from Jasmine illustrates receiving support following her experience at work with RGS, "I went home and said something to my son's dad about it and he was like I need to say something to the job." One participant in particular, Ginger, received emotional support from a professional counselor, "I ended up reaching out to our EAP organization and I went into counseling. When I talked to the EAP counselor the first conversation we had it was you're going through loss. You're grieving so allow yourself time." For the majority of participants, however, they received support from family which helped them to cope with RGS at work. A quote from Stacey illustrates this point, "[I talked] to my mom because my mom works there. My mom was mad. She wanted me to like beat the girl [up]." Yellow-Bone reported that having a White female employee quit after Yellow-Bone's racial identity as Black was confirmed following a meeting with the employee and the family led her to seek emotional support from her father to understand and cope with her experience of RGS at work:

> …me and my dad talked…I'm like dad I just can't believe that people are still like that. One thing that he taught me is you have to meet people where they are…let them go be who they are.

Other participants expressed receiving support from co-workers to facilitate coping with RGS. Participants expressed support received from co-workers following experiences with RGS to identify areas of growth as an attempt to avoid future experiences of RGS. A quote from Faith best captures this type of support:

> I said God there's something that I might not be doing right so I went to each individual coach not only my coach…I went to other teams' coaches too

> because they watching-- get everybody's opinion. I [asked] what am I doing to where I'm not being promoted so I can change it….and build myself up to where I won't make the same mistakes and I can do better.

For some participants, experiences of RGS affected family obligations and thus the ability to meet the financial needs of their families. Therefore, support was expressed by some participants as receiving financial assistance from family to maintain the needs of their immediate families. After RGS led to termination, Keisha reported the importance of family to support financial obligations to her family, "Just support from family and [my children's] daddies… help me to cope with what I need to [do]….It's a struggle!" While Trish acknowledged that she received support, she also acknowledged limitations in support, "I get help….but it's not enough. It's not enough help."

Receiving and providing support was also expressed as participants providing emotional support and encouragement to other Black female co-workers who were experiencing RGS at work. This type of support reflected a type of collective coping in which providing emotional support to other Black women experiencing RGS at work stimulated participants' individual coping with their own work experiences with RGS. Ginger shared, "…I told her don't back down …. I took a different route and I do regret that. I told her to continue pushing." Similarly, Felicia shared, "I would tell them don't let him say nothing to you to get the best of you…" A quote from Libby further illustrates this point:

> She would sit there and let them talk to her like that and I used to be like why don't you say nothing? ….You do a great job. You run this gas station…they don't know how to do nothing….they just work in the office….you supposed to let them know…I know how to work this....they were never giving her credit for anything and she just sat there and took it.

In these instances, encouraging other Black women who experienced RGS at work was in effect whether actual or perceived, encouragement to oneself. Thus the final theme, receiving and providing support, represented coping facilitated by participants receiving support from others such as family and co-workers as well as providing support to Black female co-workers who were also experiencing RGS at work.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes (RGS) in the workplace. To answer this question, three sub-research questions were identified: (a) What kinds of race and gender related stereotypes do working class Black women experience in the workplace?, (b) how do experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace affect working class Black women?, and (c) how do working class Black women cope with experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? Semi-structured phenomenological interviews conducted with 12 participants revealed three themes associated with participants' experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace: (a) cheap and disposable labor, (b) unjustified changes in work status, and (d) perspective shifting. Data revealed that the first theme, cheap and disposable labor, associated with the kind of stereotypes participants experienced was expressed by several participants (n = 7). Data also revealed universality amongst all the participants on the remaining two themes: unjustified changes in work status and perspective shifting. These themes reflected how RGS affected participants at work and how they coped with experiences of RGS, respectively. The following chapter will discuss the findings and implications of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender stereotypes (RGS) in the workplace. Semi-structured phenomenological interviews were conducted with 12 participants to explore the essence of how they experienced the phenomenon. Three major themes emerged in the data: (a) cheap and disposable labor, (b) unjustified changes in work status, and (c) perspective shifting. The remaining sections of this chapter will be organized into the following main sections: (a) discussion of the findings, (b) implications of the findings, (c) limitations of the study, (d) recommendations for future research, and (e) conclusion.

Discussion of Findings

Cheap and Disposable Labor

The theme cheap and disposable labor was expressed by seven of the 12 participants to describe the kinds of RGS participants experienced in the workplace. This theme captured subthemes of global context of RGS and workplace context of RGS. Participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor were reflected in others' perception and treatment of them based in lower status positions in the workplace hierarchy, inadequate compensation despite increased work responsibilities, and the participants' overall expressed sense of being cheap and disposable labor. Moreover,

slavery was expressed overwhelmingly by participants as the basis for both global and workplace contexts for experiences as cheap and disposable labor. Global context of RGS refers to pervasive experiences of RGS outside of work that influence working class Black women's experiences as cheap and disposable labor at work. Workplace context of RGS refers to work environments where participants experienced RGS as cheap and disposable labor.

The finding of cheap and disposable labor supports current literature as a kind of RGS Black women experience at work (Browne & Misra, 2003; Catalyst, 2014; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Weeks, Weeks, & Frost, 2007). Participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor supports Browne and Misra's (2003) finding that the intersection of race and gender influences this kind of RGS of working class Black women's in the workplace. Specifically, the authors suggested that racial and gender minorities who work in lower status positions and who simultaneously occupy positions at the bottom of social and workplace hierarchies are more likely to be exploited. In this study, working class Black women worked in lower status positions such as domestic or support roles that placed them in prime position to be exploited as cheap and disposable labor. Furthermore, the addition of employer expectations for increased work responsibilities without matched wage increases also contributed to participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor. Thus, the finding cheap and disposable labor in this study contributes to the literature by providing evidence of how race and gender can intersect to affect the kind of RGS working class Black women experience in the workplace. Furthermore, whereas previous literature identified general kinds of stereotypes of Black women (i.e., Mammy, Jezebel, Strong Black Woman, and

Welfare Mother), this study added to the literature by identifying a kind of stereotype of working class Black women that is connected specifically to race, gender, and their workplace environments (Bryant et al., 2005; Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011; Woods-Giscombé, 2010).

The role of global and workplace contexts on experiences of RGS as cheap and disposable labor has also been found in the existing literature (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Catalyst, 2004; Collins, 1990; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Specifically, the association of slavery on the global and workplace contexts on RGS has been explored (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Catalyst, 2004). However, previous studies found that it was media, not slavery, that contributed to global and workplace contexts where Black women experienced RGS (Boylorn, 2008; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Given, 2005; Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens & Few, 2007). Specifically, prior research found that stereotypic portrayals of Black women in television, movies, music, and advertising contributed to experiences of RGS in the workplace (Baker, 2005; Boylorn, 2008; Chen, Williams, Hendrickson, & Chen, 2012; Ross & Coleman, 2011). However, in this current study slavery was identified as the primary factor associated with participants' experiences of RGS as cheap and disposable labor. This suggests that working class Black women who experience RGS as cheap and disposable labor may be more likely to view their experiences as akin to the historical labor exploitation of Black women during slavery rather than the result of stereotypic portrayals of them in contemporary media.

The impact of slavery on experiences of RGS was previously identified in investigations of middle- and upper- class professional Black women (Catalyst, 2004). For example, a survey of 963 Black women in corporate management found that slavery

provides a unique context for their experiences of RGS in the workplace unlike that of any other group of women in the workplace (Catalyst, 2004). This finding has been supported by other researchers who argued that historical work roles of Black women based on sexual and labor exploitation continue to affect contemporary experiences of Black women as cheap and disposable labor (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Collins, 1990). Thus, the finding that slavery contributes to experiences of RGS support previous research with middle- and upper- class professional Black women. However, this current study extends the literature by adding the experiences of working class Black women with RGS at work.

Additionally, slavery's impact on appearance as a factor in participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor has also received support in the existing literature (Catalyst, 2004; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Similarly, hair, skin color, names, and place of residence associated with Black appearance were linked with participants' experiences as cheap and disposable labor. For example, one finding of the current study is associated with skin color. Four out of the five light-complexioned participants worked in supervisory positions as compared with the remaining seven dark-complexioned participants who all worked in domestic or support positions. This finding is supported by previous studies that indicated light-complexioned Black women are more likely than dark-complexioned Black women to have higher incomes and promotion opportunities (Catalyst, 2004; Hall et al., 2012). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Black women with more Black or non-White appearance are: (a) viewed less favorably, (b) least satisfied with pay, and (c) least satisfied with hiring and promotion opportunities (Catalyst, 2004).

Unjustified Changes in Work Status

The theme unjustified changes in work status was a universal theme expressed by all 12 participants. This theme captured how experiences of RGS affected participants which yielded subthemes of exclusion in the workplace, experienced confusion and self-doubt, and disruption in fulfilling family obligations. Specifically, unjustified changes in work status referred to participants' experiences that RGS were used to make changes to their work roles and responsibilities in the absence of objective evidence to support said changes. Thus, participants reported that evidence of satisfactory appraisals of their performance and the absence of objective evidence to justify changes in work status suggested that changes in work status were ultimately based on RGS.

Previous research supports this study's finding that RGS leads to unjustified and by definition, unlawful, changes in participants' work status (Bacchus, 2008; Cole & Secret, 2012; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). For example, Hall et al. (2012) found that participants in their study cited RGS as the basis of discriminatory treatment in the workplace related primarily to hiring and promotion. Given that previous research investigated middle- and upper middle-class Black women's experiences of RGS at work (Bacchus, 2008; Catalyst, 2004; Cole & Secret, 2012; Hall et al., 2012) this study addresses a gap in the literature by adding in-depth descriptions of how RGS were used to make unlawful changes in working class Black women's work status.

Another finding, exclusion in the workplace, is also supported by previous research (Bryant et al., 2005; Catalyst, 2004; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). For example, one study that surveyed 963 Black women found that one-third of its

participants reported that exclusion in the workplace created barriers to promotion and advancement. This current study found that RGS led to exclusion from workplace management and communication which led to unjustified changes in work status. This finding illustrates how RGS influenced restrictions in access to vital information that would allow participants to resolve management concerns regarding performance issues identified as the basis for changes in work status. Therefore, exclusion in the workplace led participants to believe that it was RGS, not performance that contributed to changes in their work status.

The subtheme, experienced confusion and self-doubt, is a unique finding of this current study that refers to participants' emotional responses to changes in their work statuses (Cole & Secret, 2012; Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2007; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012). Specifically, this study found that when unjustified changes in work status occurred, participants' initial emotional responses of confusion developed into emotional responses of self-doubt as participants grappled with whether changes in work status were in fact justified or based on RGS. As such, this study was the first to identify the development of an initial emotional response of confusion that then developed into a secondary emotional response, self-doubt, in relationship to experiences of RGS in the workplace. Previous studies found that experiences of RGS were associated with adverse mental health outcomes such as stress, depression, and addiction (Hall et al. 2012; Woods-Giscombe′ 2010). This study extends the literature on the impact of RGS on Black women's mental health by suggesting that experiences of RGS at work can contribute to the development of a pattern of emotional responses. Additionally, previous studies also found that adverse physical health

outcomes such as hypertension, diabetes, and weight gain were associated with experiences of RGS in the workplace, however, physical health outcomes were not identified by participants in the current study (Beauboeuf-LaFontant, 2003; Hall et al., 2012; Talleyrand, 2006).

Disruption in fulfilling family obligations, the third and final subtheme associated with unjustified changes in work status, refers to the overall impact that changes in work status had on participants' responsibilities to their families. While previous research has identified a relationship between middle- and upper- middle class Black women's experiences of RGS and family obligations, this study's emphasis on working class Black women provides insights through participants' voices regarding the financial barriers that working class Black women have in fulfilling family obligations after experiences of RGS in the workplace (Bacchus, 2008; Cole & Secret, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012).

Perspective Shifting

The theme perspective shifting was a universal theme expressed by all 12 participants which reflected how cognitive shifts facilitated emotional and/or behavioral coping responses to experiences of RGS at work. This theme captured subthemes of avoidance or withdrawal, finding greater purpose, self-advocacy, and receiving and providing support. Previous research has identified *shifting* as way of coping with RGS at work (Bacchus, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, 2004). Hall et al. (2012) found that participants used shifting to minimize perceptions and treatment of them in stereotypical ways. Shorter-Gooden (2004) further found that shifting was a subconscious process with deleterious effects on participants.

Unlike previous research, this study found that perspective shifting was a conscious cognitive shift that facilitated emotional and/or behavioral coping responses. Furthermore, although previous research found shifting to be deleterious for participants, perspective shifting was only expressed as detrimental by one participant in this study. Ginger, whose demographic information and interview data suggested that she was the most educated and higher paid of all of the participants, was the only participant to express regret for shifting to minimize experiences of RGS which seemed to mirror participants' experiences in previous research who were middle- and upper-class Black women (Hall et al., 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). Therefore, the finding of this study and previous research highlight an important difference. It could be that compared with working class Black women who are viewed as disposable because of their lower status positions, Black women in higher status positions who are unsuccessful at avoiding RGS at work may be more devastated by these experiences because their presumed importance in the workplace along with active attempts to avoid RGS did not safeguard them from negative consequences of RGS.

Avoidance or withdrawal was expressed as perspective shifting that led to psychological and/or physical avoidance or withdrawal. Participants expressed psychological avoidance as avoiding thoughts about their experiences of RGS whereas physical avoidance was expressed as avoiding behaviors, situations, co-workers, and work environments associated with experiencing RGS at work. Participants expressed psychological withdrawal as denial, minimization, or rationalization of experiences of RGS at work whereas physical withdrawal was expressed as participants removing themselves from work environments where they experienced RGS. Previous research has

identified avoidance as a coping strategy for Black women (Bacchus, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Thomas, Speight, & Witherspoon, 2008). For example, Shorter-Gooden (2004) found that participants reported avoiding "people, situations, or topics" (p.419) associated with biases and prejudices, a finding that is similar to the finding of physical avoidance in this study. Additionally, Thomas et al. (2008) found that participants were more likely to use avoidance over more "active problem-solving strategies" (p. 312). The findings of this study seem to support both Shorter-Gooden (2004) and Thomas et al.'s (2008) that avoidance is an adaptive coping strategy for dealing with experiences of RGS. However, this study advanced findings from previous research by adding the coping experiences of working class Black women and how avoidance and withdrawal are both psychological and physical processes. Additionally, the use of withdrawal as both a psychological and physical coping response to experiences of RGS, is a finding unique to this study as previous research has neither identified withdrawal as a coping strategy nor one that is used by working class Black women to cope with RGS in the workplace.

Finding a greater purpose was expressed as perspective shifting in which external motivating factors facilitated coping with experiences of RGS in the workplace. Participants expressed that external motivating factors were associated with belief in a higher power, family, or collective coping. This finding has some support in previous research (Bacchus, 2008; Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). While belief in a higher power has been expressed consistently as spiritual or religious beliefs in the literature, this was not a consistent finding of this study. In this study, two participants made specific references to spiritual

or religious belief in God as a form of higher power used to cope with experiences of RGS. Higher power also had non-spiritual and non-religious references in this study. In these instances, higher power referred to participants' belief that their experiences of RGS were catalysts for them to focus on a greater purpose. Another unique finding related to greater purpose is the focus on family as coping. Particularly, as working class Black women with primary caregiving responsibilities, experiences of RGS created disruptions in the financial stability of their families which made the focus on meeting basic needs of the family a form of coping. Lastly, the finding greater purpose as collective coping has received mixed results in the literature (Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2008; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombe´, 2010). In this study, participants expressed that helping other Black women cope with experiences of RGS in the workplace facilitated coping for their own experiences of RGS at work. Previous research has identified this type of collective coping as an element of Strong Black Woman, a type of RGS identified earlier in this study that is not only burdensome but also detrimental to the wellbeing of Black women (Harris-Lacewell, 2001; Thomas et al., 2008; Walker-Barnes, 2009; Woods-Giscombe´, 2010). This however was not identified in this study as participants seemed to identify collective coping as beneficial, if not necessary to their own coping.

Self-advocacy was expressed as perspective shifting that facilitated coping through participants asserting their rights and challenging experiences of RGS at individual and/or institutional levels. At the individual level, participants challenged encounters of RGS with co-workers or management. At the institutional level, participants initiated the involvement of third-party entities to challenge experiences of

RGS in the workplace (i.e., human resources, court system). This finding has been supported in previous literature (Bacchus, 2008; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Windsor, Dunlap, & Golub, 2011). However, unlike previous research, this study found that in its basic form, self-advocacy as expressed by the participants in this study is foundational in social justice advocacy efforts to challenge institutional structures such as workplace environments that perpetuate experiences of RGS. As such, the actions of these participants to engage in self-advocacy efforts reflected the type of outcome that counselors and other helping professionals alike would hope to facilitate in clients who experience RGS in the workplace (Constantine & Sue, 2005; Goodman et al., 2004; Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011; Thomas, 2004).

Finally, receiving and providing support, the last subtheme of perspective shifting, was expressed as support and encouragement received from family and co-workers as well as support and encouragement provided to other Black female co-workers who experienced RGS at work. The latter form of support reflected a type of collective coping in which support to other Black women experiencing RGS at work stimulated participants' individual coping with their own experiences of RGS in the workplace. This finding has received support in the literature (Bacchus, 2008; Bethea-Whitfield, 2005; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012; Shorter-Gooden, 2004). For example, Hall et al. (2012) found that family members and friends within participants' support system served as mentors, life coaches, and ultimately confidants to facilitate coping with adverse experiences at work. Shorter-Gooden (2004) found that this notion of external support reflected participants' *leaning on shoulders* of those in their network to cope with experiences of RGS.

Implications of the Findings

Multicultural counseling competency requires that counselors-in-training and practicing counselors increase awareness, knowledge, and skills to work with clients from diverse and marginalized populations (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). As such, it is an ethical imperative that counselors be aware of their own stereotypes and biases towards working class Black women, acquire culturally relevant knowledge regarding working class Black women's experiences, and implement culturally-sensitive clinical assessments and interventions to facilitate working class Black women's wellbeing. Furthermore, it is critical that counselors acknowledge and address the ways in which power, privilege, and oppression limit clients' access to equitable opportunities and resources which hinder clients' welfare in general and working class Black female clients in particular. As such, the findings of this study have several implications for counselor practice. It is important to note that while the findings of this study have implications for working class Black women, they are also transferable to other minorities whose social position as minorities make them susceptible to similar lived experiences of RGS at work as the participants of this study. The following sections will discuss implications for counselor practice and counselor education.

Implications for Counselor Practice

First, the underutilization of counselors to address experiences of RGS in the workplace is an important implication for counselor practice. Goodman et al. (2012) suggested that individual barriers such as costs of mental health treatment, lack of insurance, inadequate childcare, transportation, or institutional barriers such as culturally insensitive counselors, or inflexible appointment schedules create challenges for working

class Black women to access mental health services. Therefore, it is important for counselors to engage in efforts that increase working class Black women's access to mental health services.

For example, counselors need to engage in community outreach efforts to increase the visibility of mental health services in communities where working class Black women work and live (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005). Community outreach efforts such as providing workshops or training on topics such as RGS in the workplace and coping with RGS in the workplace in places such as community centers, places of worship, or preschool/daycare programs can increase visibility and access to resources for working class Black women who experience RGS in the workplace. Additionally, counselors can collaborate with primary care physicians or local community health centers that service working class Black women to establish a referral base for physicians and other healthcare providers to make referrals to prospective working class Black female clients who may benefit from counseling services. Furthermore, caregiving responsibilities and inflexible work schedules suggest that counselors recognize that counseling with this population may not be treatment as usual where clients show up to an office to receive counseling services. Thus, counselors need to have flexible appointment times and locations of sessions (e.g., in-home counseling sessions) that meet the needs of working class Black women.

Second, it is important that counselors have an understanding of the broader social, historical, and cultural contexts for RGS of working class Black women that exists outside of work to effectively identify therapeutic goals and counseling interventions that address their experiences of RGS at work. Thus, it may be helpful for

counselors to create therapeutic opportunities for working class Black female clients to explore thoughts and feelings about their experiences of RGS as cheap and disposable labor in the workplace. Furthermore, it may be helpful for counselors to establish therapeutic goals with these clients that empower them to self-advocate by challenging workplace dynamics such as exclusion in workplace management and communication that create opportunities for experiences as cheap and disposable labor in the workplace. Finally, counselors can work with clients to explore the benefits and risks of self-advocacy in the workplace to facilitate clients' knowledge about and preparation for the possible outcomes of their decisions.

Third, another possible goal of therapy with this population may be the use of career counseling interventions that explore the impact of appearance on experiences of RGS in the workplace. The fact that participants identified appearance may have an impact on experiences of RGS provides insights about the potential benefit of exploring self-perception of their appearance on their current experiences or long-term career goals. It might be helpful for counselors to not only explore with these clients' their perception of their appearance but also explore the congruence between clients' and co-workers' perception of their appearance at work. Doing so may provide a broader vantage point of self in relationship to others at work which may empower clients to identify changes they need to make in their appearance to reflect current or future career goals. On the other hand, this vantage point may also empower participants to challenge RGS associated with appearance or, in the least, widen coping responses to experiences at RGS.

Fourth, it may be important for counselors to facilitate working class Black female clients' knowledge regarding workplace policies and federal laws regarding their

rights as workers. On a very basic level, it may be helpful for counselors to explore with clients their knowledge of workplace policies regarding their work roles and responsibilities as well as the objective criteria on which their performance will be appraised. Additionally, it may be important for counselors to facilitate clients' awareness regarding the range of options they can pursue to challenge experiences of workplace discrimination that may be the result of RGS. For example, counselors can support clients who may choose to contact human resources or external supports such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to challenge workplace discrimination due to RGS. Additionally, counselors can help facilitate clients' decision-making process for challenging experiences of RGS by exploring the benefits and risks to involving a third-party. Thus, counselors can facilitate clients' learning, practicing, and demonstrating self-advocacy skills at the individual or institutional level to challenge experiences of RGS in the workplace.

Fifth, it may be important for counselors to utilize interventions that facilitate empowerment and positive self-perception to counter feelings of confusion and self-doubt clients may have because of experiences of RGS at work (Bethea-Whitfield, 2005). For example, counselors can facilitate opportunities in session for clients to explore self-affirming practices such as practicing positive self-talk or challenging thoughts that lead to negative feelings, which clients can then integrate into their daily lives to facilitate coping with unjustified changes in work status.

Lastly, because it is possible that avoidance of discussing experiences of RGS may represent barriers to therapeutic work, it is important for counselors to understand the importance of assessing for these experiences. Therefore, it is imperative that

counselors create safe and therapeutic relationships for working class Black female clients to express thoughts and feelings about experiences of RGS that they may be avoiding.

Implications for Counselor Education

The findings of this study have implications for counselor educators. Particularly, findings from this study yielded data regarding the ways in which race and gender intersected to influence participants' lived experiences in the workplace. As such, it is important for counselor educators to highlight the impact of intersecting identities on the lived experiences of clients particularly in institutions such as work. These findings also suggest that it is imperative that counselor educators prepare counselors to engage in clinical practice that recognizes that multicultural competence and social justice advocacy is a part of treatment as usual as the counseling profession mandates counselors to implement clinical inventions that target oppressive systems that restrict clients' access to fair and equitable resources and opportunities (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Constantine & Sue, 2005; Hays, Dean, & Chang, 2007; Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011). As such, one suggestion might be for counselor educators to engage in multi-modal instructional methods that include both didactic and experiential activities that promote multicultural competency and social justice advocacy (Burnett, Hamel, & Long; 2004; Coleman, Morris, & Norton, 2006; Fier & Ramsey, 2005; Hays et al., 2007). For example, in-class instructional methods such as small group processing have been suggested in the literature to promote safe classroom environments for counselors-in-training to explore, reflect, and receive feedback about issues related to the ways that power, privilege, and oppression operate in society to restrict opportunities for

marginalized client populations such as working class Black women (Parker, Freytes, Kaufman, Woodruff & Hord, 2004; Rapisarda, Jencius, & McGlothin, 2011; Rowell & Benshoff, 2008). Another suggestion for in-class learning opportunities for counselors-in-training to increase their competence working with working class Black women is through the use of case vignettes of hypothetical working class Black female clients to facilitate case conceptualization skills as well as techniques development through role play (Rapisarda et al., 2011).

Beyond the classroom, it is also important that counselor educators prepare counselors-in-training to meet the needs of working class Black women by providing practicum and internship experiences that serve this population. As such, clinical training experiences under the auspices of faculty and site clinical supervisors where students receive feedback regarding issues related to case conceptualization, assessment, and treatment planning can lead to valuable learning opportunities for counseling students to work and to promote the well-being of working class Black female clients. Hence, it is instructive for counselor educators responsible for coordinating clinical training experiences to be intentional about establishing partnerships with agencies and schools in communities that serve working class Black women and their families to not only provide students with access to working with this population but also as leaders of the profession, model the profession's commitment to serving clients from marginalized communities such as working class Black women.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of the current study must be considered within the context of several limitations. First, although the use of small sample sizes in qualitative research provides

in-depth descriptions of participants' lived experiences with the phenomenon under investigation, the sample size of this study limits the generalizability and transferability of the findings. Second, the use of a convenience sample of Black female mothers highlights the possibility that these experiences may be inconsistent with Black females who do not have parental obligations. Third, the recruitment of participants from one preschool in a southeastern city may also be considered as a limitation as the findings of this study may not generalize to working class Black women living in different cities in other regions. Fourth, the researcher's personal experience with RGS in the workplace may be considered as a limitation. However several verification methods were used to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. Additionally, a peer reviewer used throughout the data analysis process provided an external check of the process to facilitate credibility and trustworthiness of the data.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this research study offer suggestions for future research. First, one recommendation for future research is the exploration of social class with RGS on Black women's experiences at work. Although social class was not directly examined in this study, its influence is implicit regarding its contribution to participants' experiences of RGS as cheap and disposable labor (Browne & Misra, 2003; Weeks, Weeks, & Frost, 2007). For example, future research could examine the influence of social class on the experiences of race and gender stereotypes of both working and middle class Black women. As such, one research question could be to explore how does social class influence the experiences of race and gender stereotypes of Black women at work? Another possible area for future research is to investigate whether working class Black

women from other regions also experience RGS as cheap and disposable labor. Particularly, working class Black women in this study were recruited from one recruitment site in a large southeastern city in the United States that has strong roots in slavery which established hierarchies that position Black women at the bottom to be exploited as cheap and disposable labor. As such, one potential research question could be: Does social class and region predict working class Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes in the workplace? Therefore, future research with working class Black women from different regions is warranted to explore whether a relationship exists between social class and regional differences to affect the kinds of RGS they experience in the workplace. Finally, future research could also lead to the development of a quantitative assessment based on the themes of this research to investigate RGS in the workplace.

Second, future research could explore the experiences of other women from racial and minority groups with race and gender stereotypes. Particularly, participants in this study suggested that stereotypes of Latina women existed in certain work environments. Therefore, one future research direction could be to explore the lived experiences of Latina women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Furthermore, an additional line of research could also be to examine the relationship between the experiences of RGS of working class Black women with those of working class Latina women.

A third recommendation for future research relates to the finding of participants' experiences of confusion and self-doubt related to unjustified changes in their work status. There was a pattern of development in participants' emotional responses where

initial feelings of confusion regarding changes in work status later developed into self-doubt as these unexpected changes occurred in the absence of objective evidence to justify said changes. This study extends the literature by identifying the impact of experiences of RGS on mental health by being the first to identify a pattern to working class Black women's emotional responses to unjustified changes in work status. However, future research direction may seek to examine whether differences exist in development of coping responses for Black women who experience interpersonal prejudice at work due to RGS versus institutional discrimination such as unjustified changes in work status.

Fourth, the fact that conscious cognitive shifts facilitated four different types of coping responses (i.e., avoidance or withdrawal, finding greater purpose, self-advocacy, and receiving and providing support) for experiences with RGS highlights the importance of this phenomenon for future investigations. Therefore, future quantitative research could explore what factors influence the cognitive processes that facilitate coping responses for working class Black women who experience of RGS at work.

Fifth, the fact that the majority of participants experienced RGS in predominantly white work environments suggests another future research direction. Future research could investigate White employer's beliefs about Black working class women. Therefore, a possible research question could be how does race, gender, and social class relate to White employer attitudes regarding Black female employees?

Conclusion

Findings of this study suggest that RGS influence the lived experiences of working class Black women in the workplace. Particularly, this study found that RGS

was linked to: (a) experiences as cheap and disposable labor which reflected the kind of stereotype they experienced, (b) unjustified changes in work status which reflected how they were affected by RGS, and (c) perspective shifting which reflected how they coped with experiences of RGS in the workplace. These findings suggest implications for counselors to first be aware of the stereotypes they may have regarding working class Black women and to engage in intentional efforts to increase knowledge and multicultural counseling and social justice advocacy skills to effectively address how RGS influences the lived experiences of working class Black women in the workplace. Counselors are in a unique position to address the experiences that working class Black women have with RGS at work as the counseling profession is at the forefront of helping professions to engage in social justice efforts alongside clients to challenge the triple threat of power, privilege, and oppression to the well-being of clients from marginalized communities. Additionally, counselor educators, as gatekeepers to the counseling community and ultimately the community-at- large, are charged with preparing counselors through instructional methods and clinical training experiences rooted in multicultural counseling competency and social justice to meet the needs of culturally diverse clients such as working class Black women. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to continue this study's effort to include the voices of members from communities whose voices have been silenced, ignored, and/or under or misrepresented in the canons of knowledge. In closing, the findings from this study suggest that it is imperative that counselors, counselor educators, and researchers use their realms of influence to transform systems that continue to oppress members from marginalized communities.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted as part of the dissertation requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The purpose of this study is to understand working-class Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes at work. You are eligible to participate if you: (a) identify as female, b) Black or African-American, (c) are at least 18 years old, (d) have current or previous paid work experience, (e) have experienced race and gender stereotypes at work, and (f) speak English.

The researcher will invite twelve participants to participate in video-recorded interviews that will take approximately 60-90 minutes each. Interviews will consist of a short demographic questionnaire followed by an interview. The researcher will make every effort to protect your privacy. The interview will be video recorded however if you decline to be video recorded, you have the option to be audio recorded. The recording files will be kept on a password protected laptop in a password protected folder. To protect your privacy the recordings will be coded by the fake name assigned by you or the researcher on the demographic questionnaire. The recordings will be transcribed using the fake name and will be deleted at the end of the study. During the study, transcriptions will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. When the results of this study are published, participants will be referred to by the assigned fake names. You also agree that I may email your transcripts within 30 days of your interview to ensure that I have fully captured your experience of race and gender stereotypes at work. While I cannot guarantee confidentiality on email, I will email your transcripts using the fake name assigned on the demographic questionnaire.

The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. You will not be treated any differently if you decide not to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. However, if you decide to participate in the study you will receive a $20 Visa gift card after you complete your interview.

The benefits of your participation in this study include contributing to the current knowledge of working-class Black women's experiences of race and gender stereotypes

at work. The risk for participating in this study may be emotional discomfort associated with recalling your experience of race and gender stereotypes at work. While the researcher is a licensed professional counselor who is trained to address emotional discomfort in the interview you may withdraw at any time.

UNC Charlotte wants to make sure that all research participants are treated in a fair and respectful manner. Contact the university's Office of Research Compliance at (704)-687-1871 if you have questions about your rights as a study participant. If you have any questions about this project, please contact me, Tammy Wilborn at 901-550-8770 or Dr. Sejal Parikh Foxx at 704-687-8963.

I have read the information in this consent form and have been given the chance to ask questions about this study. By signing below, I agree to participate in this study.

_____	_____	_____
Printed name of participant	Signature of participant	Date

_____

Person obtaining consent

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Assigned name_____

1. **What is your race/ethnicity?** Black African-American

2. **Age:**_____years

3. **Highest Education Completed (check one)**_____GED
_____less than 7th grade _____some college or AA degree
_____junior high school _____B.A. or B.S. degree
_____some high school
_____high school diploma

5. **Current Employment Status:**
_____employed/working full-time _____homemaker
_____employed/working part-time _____student, working
_____unemployed, seeking work _____student, not working
_____unemployed, not seeking work _____retired

6. **Current job or usual occupation:** _____

7. **Approximate annual household income**
_____less than $14, 999
_____$15,000-$25,999
_____more than $26,000

8. **Relationship status:**_____married
_____separated
_____divorced
_____widowed
_____single, never married
_____partnered

9. **Sexual orientation: (Circle one)**

Heterosexual/Straight Bisexual Lesbian/Gay Transgender

10. **Number of children:** _____

11. **Religious/Spiritual affiliation:** _____

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The purpose of this research study is to describe the experiences of working class Black women with race and gender stereotypes in the workplace.

Warm-Up Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. What interested you about speaking with me on the subject of stereotypes of Black women and the workplace?

Stereotypes at Work

3. What kinds of stereotypes of Black women do you experience in your everyday life?
4. What kind of stereotypes of Black women do you or have you experienced at your workplace?
5. Tell me about a time when stereotypes of you as a Black woman affected a workplace experience.
6. How did that experience at work affect you?
7. What did you do to cope with that experience?
8. In what ways has this experience prepared you for handling future incidents of race and gender stereotypes at work?

Conclusion

9. What suggestions would you give to other Black women for how to cope with race and gender stereotypes at work?
10. What suggestions would you give counselors or other mental health professionals for how best to help Black women who experience race and gender stereotypes at work?
11. What question did you wish I had asked you that I did not ask?
12. Is there anything you else you want to share?

APPENDIX D: VERBAL SCRIPT FOR RECRUITMENT

Hello, my name is Tammy Wilborn and I am a third- year doctoral student in the Counseling Department at UNC Charlotte. Today I am here to recruit participants for a study that I am conducting as part of my degree completion. The research topic for this study is working class Black women's lived experiences with race and gender steretoypes in the workplace. I believe my study is signficant because most of the research in this area has investigated middle class Black women in professional work settings which has left out the experiences of working class Black women. To be eligible for this study you must identify as female, Black or African-American, that you are 18 years or older, have paid work experience, have experiences with race and gender stereotypes at work, and speak English. Your participation will involve being interviewed by me for 60-90 minutes here at the Learning Colloborative or at a location we agree upon. The interviews will be videotaped and destroyed after the completion of the study. I will email transcripts within 30 days of our interview to ensure that I have accurately captured your experience. You will receive a $20 VISA gift card as compensation for your participation. If you are interested, I am passing around a sign up sheet that will ask for your name, phone number, and email address. You will receive a phone call from me to review details regarding the study as well as to schedule our face-to-face interview. Thank you for your time and attention.

APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

Participant	Race/ Ethnicity	Age	Highest Education Completed	Current Employment Status	Current Job or Usual Occupation	Approx. Annual Household Income	Relationship Status	Sexual Orientation	Number of Children	Religious/ Spiritual Affiliation
Libby	African-American	25	Some college or AA degree	Employed/working full time	--	$15,000-$25,999	Single, never married	Heterosexual / straight	1	--
Felicia	--	31	Some college or AA degree	Employed/working part-time	CNA	$15,000-$25,999	Married	Heterosexual /straight	5	Christian
Faith	Human	31	Some college or AA degree	Unemployed not, seeking work	Writing a book	Less than $14, 999	Single, never married	Heterosexual /straight	3	A child of God the most High
Ginger	--	52	B.A. or B.S. degree	Employed/working full time	--	More than $26, 000	Divorced	Heterosexual /straight	1	Christian
Yellow-Bone	African-American	26	Some college or AA degree	Employed/working part-time; student, working	Library	$15,000-$25,999	Single, never married	Heterosexual /straight	1	Pentecostal/ Christian
Olivia	Black	37	Some high school	Unemployed, seeking work; Homemaker	--	Less than $14, 999	Single, never married	Lesbian/ Gay	4	--
Lisa	African-American	40	Some college or AA degree	Self-Employed	Home Improvement/ Cleaning	$15,000-$25,999	Partnered	Heterosexual /Straight	6	--

Trish	African-American	23	High school diploma	Unemployed, seeking work	--	Less than $14, 999	Single, never married	Bisexual	1	Christian
Jasmine	African-American	23	Some high school	Employed/working part-time	Home Health Care	Less than $14, 999	Single, never married	Heterosexual /Straight	3	--
Stacey	--	24	GED	Employed/working full time	Cashier at clothing store	$15,000-$25,999	Partnered	Heterosexual /straight	1	I believe in God
Keisha	Black/ African American	29	Some college or AA degree	Unemployed, seeking work	Cashier	Less than $14, 999	Single never married	Heterosexual /Straight	5	Christian
Tomeka	Black	35	Some college or AA degree	Unemployed, seeking work	Customer Service Rep	$15,000-$25,999	Married	Heterosexual /Straight	3	Christian/ Baptist

APPENDIX F: SUMMARY OF THEMES

	Participants											
Summary of Themes	Libby	Felicia	Faith	Ginger	Yellow-Bone	Olivia	Lisa	Trish	Jasmine	Stacey	Keisha	Tomeka
RQ1 Theme: Cheap and Disposable Labor	X	X	X	--	--	--	--	--	X	X	X	X
Global Context of RGS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	--	X	X	--	X
Impact of Appearance	_	_	_	X	X	X	X	X	_	X	--	X
Workplace Context of RGS Position in Workplace Hierarchy	X	X	X	_	_	_	--	_	X	X	X	X
RQ2 Theme: Unjustified Changes in Work Status	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Excluded in the Workplace	X	X	X	X	--	X	X	X	--	X	X	X
Exclusion from Workplace Management	X	X	X	X	--	--	X	X	--	X	X	X
Exclusion from Workplace Communication	X	X	X	X	--	X	X	X	--	X	X	X

Experienced Confusion and Self-Doubt	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Disruption in Family Fulfilling Obligations	X	X	--	--	--	X	X	X	X	--	X	X
RQ3 Theme: Perspective Shifting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Avoidance or Withdrawal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	_	X	X	X
Finding Greater Purpose	X	X	X	X	X	_	X	X	X	X	X	_
Self-Advocacy	X	_	X	X	X	X	X	_	_	X	X	X
Receiving and Providing Support	X	X	X	X	X	_	_	X	X	X	X	_