Resilience Post Tenure: The Experience of an African American Woman in a PWI

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The purpose of this study was: 1) to explore the pre-tenure experiences of an African American female faculty member in a counselor education program; and 2) to compare the themes that ascended from a precursor study to the current one. By using critical ethnography and case study format, this research gave voice to the participant by prompting responses to questions of why and how. Evidence from this study reaffirms that female faculty of color are adversely impacted by racism and sexism in the Academy. Findings from this study support the notion that mentoring and across cultural affiliation with tenure-track faculty members from diverse backgrounds contributes to their professional achievement. Moreover, this study asserts that the milieu of research-intensive universities may foster psychic numbing, which has an intergenerational effect.

Educational institutions are believed to be places that practice the ideals of democracy. However, the Academy has often fallen short of providing equal treatment regarding career advancement and retention for culturally diverse faculty (West-Olatunji, 2005). An increasing body of educational literature focuses on the experiences of culturally diverse female faculty and presents a wealth evidence of the severe systemic disadvantages they face as a result of racism and sexism in gaining tenure and advancement in predominately White institutions (PWIs). Several factors adversely impact their career progression, such as: (a) isolation (McCray, 2011; Salazar, 2005), hidden rules, and supplemental but unspoken expectations during tenure review (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002), (b) less favorable judgments of their work compared to their White counterparts (Williams & Williams, 2006), (c) lack of or minimal opportunities for research collaboration (Patitu & Hinton, 2003), and (d) little or no mentoring (Alexander & Moore, 2008). Davies, Spencer, Quinn, and Gerhardstein (2002) presented evidence suggesting that the work of culturally diverse female faculty is more criticized than that of their White counterparts due to gender- and race-based stereotypes about their abilities. The threat of being personally reduced to a stereotype based on one's cultural affiliation can raise disruptive apprehensions among women who know they are being evaluated (Goff, Steele, & Davies 2008).

Such obstacles are often detrimental to the long-term success of culturally diverse faculty. Using positionality theory as a lens, this case study investigated the perspectives of a recently tenured African American female Counselor Educator. Positionality theory was employed because of its focus on power dynamics within relationships based upon social positioning (Cooks, 2003; Harley, Jolivette, McCormick, & Tice, 2002; West-Olatunji, Shure, Pringle, Adams, Lewis, & Cholewa, 2010). The outcomes of this study suggest that women and culturally diverse faculty may be targeted upon entrance into the Academy as unworthy of support by senior faculty due to misperceptions of their ability to contribute to the body of knowledge in their discipline. Suggestions for enhancing the mentoring experiences of culturally diverse faculty, especially women, are provided.

Background

The development of U. S. higher education parallels a social climate of race inferiority (Anderson, 2002). One leading factor that has contributed to the disenfranchisement of culturally diverse faculty has been their subjection to racist ideologies and racially discriminatory behaviors (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009). King and Watts (2004) posited that the Academy is a hostile institution exhibiting overt and covert racism. Frazier (2011) introduced the term, *academic bullying*, to describe the racial dynamics within the Academy. "Academic bullying is a concept…that looks at systematic long-term interpersonal aggressive behavior as it occurs in the academic workplace…in both covert and overt forms against faculty who are unable to defend themselves against the aggressive behavior committed by faculty in power…" (p. 2).

The underrepresentation of culturally diverse faculty in PWIs can make junior faculty more vulnerable to isolation that threatens their personal and collective identities (Garrison-Wade, Diggs, Estrada, & Galindo, 2012). In response to institutional racism, culturally diverse faculty have reported lower levels of job satisfaction compared to their White counterparts (August & Waltman, 2004). Outcomes of prior studies have suggested that job satisfaction, including the sense of community, is strongly connected to retention (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Therefore, for

culturally diverse faculty, integration into the Academy continues to be one of the most relevant factors in successful career advancement.

Mentoring of Pre-tenured Faculty

Despite biased practices toward culturally diverse faculty, institutions have made attempts to expand the representation of this group. However, these efforts have been relatively unsuccessful (Hagedorn & Laden, 2000; Turner, Myers, & Creswell, 1999). To address barriers to success in the Academy, scholars have examined the socialization of culturally diverse faculty into PWIs by focusing on mentoring. Jackson (2004) presented convincing evidence that new faculty who are carefully guided by tenured faculty are more quickly socialized into the institutional culture. While a universal definition for the construct of mentoring in the context of higher education has yet to be articulated, several researchers have offered descriptions of this construct in regards to academia. Davidson and Foster-Johnson (2001) asserted that "mentoring consists of three components: emotional and psychological support, direct assistance with career and professional development, and role modeling" (p. 551). Crawford and Smith (2005) expanded the description suggesting that mentoring is the sharing of power, information, and self.

Mentoring is considered to be the most effective interaction in alleviating the racial barriers to tenure and promotion for culturally diverse junior faculty (Gay, 2004). While mentors can be critical for the development of both men and women of culturally diverse backgrounds, they are particularly beneficial to the career success of culturally diverse female faculty. Generally, scholars have examined the influences of psychosocial and developmental components of mentoring. Faculty who are mentored frequently experience increased job satisfaction, earn higher salaries, and gain upward mobility (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Smith, Smith, & Markham, 2000). In exchange, faculty mentors can receive recognition and personal satisfaction (Dedrick & Watson, 2002). The absence of mentoring for culturally diverse junior faculty leaves these academicians responsible for their own intellectual development and career success often within a hostile environment.

Cross-cultural Mentoring Dynamics

Cross-cultural mentoring in higher education is an intricate dynamic that can be influenced by the institutional culture as well as an individual's personality and competencies (Zafar, Roberts, & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). Due to the underrepresentation of culturally diverse faculty in the Academy, it is likely that White faculty will formally or informally serve as mentors to new culturally diverse scholars. In Barker's (2007) content analysis of the factors that impact cross-cultural relationships across the institution, he recognized that a major disadvantage to this association is the power dynamics within PWIs. The author explained that White faculty at PWIs work and serve in institutions where the race and culture of those in senior leadership positions are similar to their own. As a consequence, the mentor-mentee relationship can bypass the racial dynamics and misperceptions often evident in cross-cultural relationships that frequently lead to lowered expectations. Thus, White faculty who are mentored typically have privilege over culturally diverse faculty.

Current literature surrounding the experiences of culturally diverse faculty often employs a deficit model that focuses on ways the faculty can improve the experience rather than the system and people who contribute to the experience (West-Olatunji, 2005). Kendall (2006) offered guidance to overcome this issue, positing that increasing cultural competence is necessary for White mentors in the Academy. Specifically, White mentors need to gain an understanding of the origins of White supremacy and engage in self-reflection in order to build authentic relationships with culturally diverse faculty. White faculty who partake in these relationships can

recognize their own biases, work to overcome them, and thereby actualize goals for diversity among tenured faculty (Johnson, 2007). The development of one's cultural competence is vital for the manifestation of effective cross-cultural mentoring relationships.

A considerable amount of literature centered on cross-cultural mentoring provides guidance for faculty who are exploring these relationships. Zachery (2000) explained that four factors are needed to develop effective cross cultural mentoring relationships, including: (a) the mentor's cultural competency, (b) flexible cultural lens, (c) proficient communication skills, and (d) a genuine desire to comprehend how culture influences the relationships for mentor and protégé. Later, Johnson Bailey and Cervero (2004), an African American junior faculty and a White male full professor, detail their association to show the successes and challenges of cross-cultural relationships. They posit that scholars involved in these relationships should be resilient in facing the following issues: (1) establishing trust between mentor and protégée, (2) acknowledging racism, (3) monitoring visibility and risk pertinent to minority faculty, (4) articulating power and paternalism within the institution, (5) highlighting the benefits to mentors and mentees, and (6) discussing the unacknowledged racial dynamics in mentor relationships. The intercultural interactions between faculty in mentoring relationships are an area where more can be learned. Nonetheless, a growing body of literature continues to affirm that mentoring relationships are vital to the advancement of culturally diverse faculty, particularly in research-intensive universities.

Issues in Counselor Education

Culturally diverse faculty comprise only about three percent3% of faculty employed in research institutions and female faculty account for just 24.4% of all full professors (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 2006). While White female faculty often encounter sexism, many female culturally diverse faculty have additional layers of oppression to combat and resolve (Shields, 2008). In Counselor Education programs, in particular, the barriers to tenure and promotion for African American faculty have strong racial implications. Specifically, African American female faculty are given fewer opportunities for collaborative research than their White female counterparts (Bradley, 2005).

In a study that examined the career experiences of African American Counselor Educators in programs qualified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy (2004) found that African American faculty believed that they had immoderate service obligations related to diversity from their department and college. In addition, they asserted that prior studies found that White colleagues articulated a lack of appreciation for culture-centered research. Furthermore, the research showed that African American faculty in Counseling Education programs often characterized their promotion and tenure process as having racist elements.

Resilience and Coping. Culturally diverse female faculty often cope with the stress within the Academy by engaging in expressive acts of resistance, such as testifying (defined as asserting, affirming, and reclaiming one's sense of humanity while resisting oppression) (Burke, Cropper & Harrison, 2000). It has been suggested that testifying allows women to: (a) name the oppressive forces, thus making them explicit and (b) bear witness to pervasive acts of inequality. Other ways that culturally diverse female faculty are resilient is by creating a network of support within, and beyond, the walls of their institutions.

Positionality Theory

The theory of positionality suggests that the amount of power an individual has is determined by their social position; this position is situated in relation to an individual's networks of

relationships (Cooks, 2003; Harley et al., 2002). Such positioning determines whether or not a person is, "privileged, resourceful, powerful, and thus able to navigate and succeed within the dominant social structure" (Cooper, 2005, p. 175). Positional factors can also impact the construction of knowledge in one's work setting and power relationships (West-Olatunji, in press; West-Olatunji et al., 2010). Thus, it is important to understand that while positioning may change due to multiple factors and context, one cannot completely step out of it.

The purpose of this study was to give voice to a recently tenured African American female faculty member within a Counselor Education program in a predominantly white institution (PWI) and explore her experiences. Using a qualitative paradigm, this study asked the question, "What were the salient pre-tenured experiences of a recently tenured African American female counselor educator?"

Method

This investigation is a follow up to a prior study that explored the participant's experiences as a pre-tenured assistant professor (West-Olatunji & Behar-Horenstein, in press). The outcomes of that study identified key obstacles and coping mechanisms that affected the participant. A secondary purpose of this study was to compare the themes that emerged from the previous study to the current one in the participant's ninth year at her current institution. For this study, we used critical ethnography as a framework because this work represents a dialectic conversation between the researcher and the participant. Additionally, this framework is transformative and focuses on the empowerment of the individuals (Kincheloe & McClaren, 2000). The researchers employed a case study format in order to go beyond descriptive questions, such as who, what, when, how much, and how many, to answer the questions of how and why (Yin, 2009). We chose a single subject case study to explore this experience in depth.

The first author (LBH), a female, Jewish full professor and divorced mother of two teenagers, interviewed the second author (CAO), a female, African American associate professor, to explore her experiences in a counselor education department following her promotion and having earned tenure. The interview lasted 120 minutes. Both authors coded the interview transcript line-by-line and developed emergent themes. The fourth author, a female, Afro-Caribbean American doctoral student, independently coded the transcript and verified the themes identified by the first and second author. The third author was a male, African American doctoral student. In the spirit of full disclosure, LBH and CAO had been colleagues for nine years. During this time, they frequently collaborated and published together. LBH was an informal and internal mentor to CAO.

Data Sources and Protocols

The participant for this study was a mature, tenured African American female. She came into the Academy after having experienced several careers in Higher Education Administration in Student Support Services. She is of working class parents and grew up in a multi-ethnic neighborhood in the Northeast. Of her four siblings, one other is a faculty member (also at a very high intensive (VHI) research institution), another is a licensed clinical psychologist, one is a mechanical engineer, and the other is a computer specialist. The participant, CAO, is divorced with two adult children, both of whom have graduated from private colleges.

The researchers conducted a 120-minute interview. The interview took place off campus in the home of the participant where the sessions were audio taped and subsequently transcribed

and analyzed resulting in interview data that was compiled into 16 single-spaced pages (7699 words) in the final completed transcription.

The interview was guided by questions the researchers developed based upon a review of the literature. The participant shared in the data analysis process allowing the researchers and the participant to co-construct the conceptualizations.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved reviewing the transcript for accuracy and then highlighting phrases that were descriptive of the participant's experiences. Subsequently, key phrases were highlighted and organized into summary statements in the margin of the transcript. Finally, domains of meaning were created from the summary statements and then paired with related quotations. To ensure credibility of the investigation, peer examination, member checking, and confirmatory analysis were used (Creswell, 2008). For peer examination, three of the four researchers separately reviewed the data set to extract themes. The team then met to reach consensus regarding common themes and outliers. Verification of results was also attained through on-going member checks. A confirmatory analysis was used to compare what researchers had explored in the literature to the findings in the study.

Findings

Based upon a review of the literature, we anticipated that the participant would focus on mentoring, either the existence or lack of this experience. Additionally, we expected that there would be some representation of cross-cultural relational dynamics that articulated some degree of conflict. Both of these issues where present in the data as well as a discussion of the overall environment in the Academy, leadership development, and resilience. Our analysis elicited five major themes (see Table 1): (1) nature of the Academy with two sub-themes (mentoring and, the system -- make it or break it), 2) effects of toxic system (psychic numbing), (3) social positioning, (4) Academy's potential needs (especially for leadership), and (5) participant's experiences, successes, and career. Representative examples that support each theme follow.

Table 1
Emergent Interview Themes

Themes	Conceptual Definitions
Nature of the Academy - mentoring	The potential of the university to foster community and to support new colleagues.
Nature of the Academy - the system-make it or break it	The binary nature of one's success in the academy via the tenure process. Specifically tenure-accruing professors either attain tenure and promotion or they are given a terminal appointment for an additional year.
Effects of toxic system	Individuals' lack of authentic awareness of what others and they actually experience within the organizational academic culture.
Social positioning (psychic numbing)	A process where, other professors, place form opinions about whether or not African American individual African American faculty are seen as potentially successful or not in the

	academy.
Academy's potential needs, especially for leadership	A vision for and the attributes of a functional, optimal academy as institution including the role of leadership and administration in a highly functional academic environment.
Participant's experiences, successes, and career	How the participant achieved success without formal mentoring or support from more senior colleagues and administrators.

The Nature of the Academy

Mentoring. According to CAO, one of the virtues and vices of the Academy is that "it's a mentoring environment so what people know is inculcated, it's passed on, from mentor to mentee."

> [Thus, even] bad attitudes get passed on as a reality for people. And I've seen that…I've seen people come in and then have some senior faculty member fill them with perspectives on what's happening, on another person's research, and here's this person who is one or two years in and they're already entrenched in outdated perspectives.

CAO stated that this lack of community tended to foster negativity in the workplace whereby "…people are not lauded for their work; they're not appreciated because at any time they want to feel comfortable to let people go, even for reasons that have nothing to do with their accomplishments."

CAO believed that there seems to be an overriding lack of stability, due to diminishing state allocations that has resulted in budgetary exigencies and now, "…because of politics [the university] can dissolve departments and, they can get rid of people and do whatever it is that the university deems necessary." She stated that there seemed to be a diminished capacity for fiscal solvency and grant awards, low morale, and concern for the future that is further exacerbated by Academy systems that do not address a practice in which "…people decide when you walk in the door whether or not you're going to make it or whether someone else is not." CAO pointed out what she perceived as the irony of working in Counselor Education,

> I think it feels worse when you're in a department that is supposed to be a helping profession that my department is acting no differently than any other department in the Academy. It just, I think, feels worse because you think: 'counseling, these people should be touchy feely, they should be aware, they should be responsive etcetera etcetera because of the nature of the discipline,' but, in fact, when I think about it more objectively, they really they act like everybody else.

As CAO has discussed, the overall environment in the Academy, particularly at research-intensive universities, is one that is fraught with competitiveness and distrust where mentors tend to also serve as advocates and protectors for junior faculty. Thus, for culturally diverse faculty, the absence of a mentor can be devastating to their career and leave them unprotected.

The System-Make it or Break it. The nature of the system, a lack of monitoring and the freedom to speak freely has its limitations especially as it pertains to critiquing other's work. As CAO pointed out,

> One of the things I really don't enjoy … how critical scholars are with each other. I cringe all the time when I have to be in an environment where people are given license to do that because it's almost like it's an opportunity for people to direct a lot of their anger and frustration toward each other.

She stated that her observations were not unique to her institution and alluded to her conversations with other culturally diverse faculty, "I see it everywhere! I don't [think that] this is only at our university, I see it everywhere." However, she emphasized the potential power of providing critical feedback to one another and suggested that there is a "need to be helping other people to think critically, to make better choices, to be agents of change, because ultimately the system has to change."

Within the current context, CAO believed that competition in the university keeps people "just doing whatever it is they need to do to stay on top. And so that's what keeps the machine going, the system perpetuates itself." Within this frame of reference, and while

> Moving from untenured to tenured, untenured I would've said, 'Oh they're out to get me, they're being unsupportive of me' and 'there are issues of racism, classism, sexism that are part of it and I'm on the outside of it and I'm being marginalized etcetera.'

Admitting that those things are true, she confessed that now that, "I've become tenured [I am] able to look around and see other people who are experiencing marginalization for other reasons. I'm able to look at the big picture to understand that 'wow, this is bigger than me. Really, it's just the way the thing operates.'"

Again, CAO articulated an awareness of the overall environment in a highly competitive environment and was able to distinguish the unique aspects of her situation. She was able to ascertain the additional challenges that she experienced as an African American female faculty but also saw how other marginalized individuals experienced similar challenges within a hostile context.

Effects of a Toxic System: Psychic Numbing

CAO suggested that some individuals in the Academy appear insensitive to the experiences others are having, because of their own traumatic experiences.

> People almost have an attitude of, 'well I survived…they can survive…why should I help them?… I made it through on my own without getting assistance,' or 'I was able to make the cut and be competitive and so should they,' instead of thinking, 'I had a horrible experience, I am going to make sure that other people don't.'
>
> Rather, I think observing other's challenges in the Academy may be tapping into their own trauma and these individuals are really numb to it.

CAO highlighted the point that this kind of psychic-numbing may perpetuate a dis-awareness, allowing faculty to treat their colleagues without regard. For example, even when some faculty are producing good steady work, this often results in a lack of departmental support. Questioning the fairness of departmental decision-making CAO asked,

> Do they [i.e., productive faculty] get all this money and resources and everything? No! it goes to _____ why? Why do you think this person? So what is it that they [mainstream faculty] see or think that this person is or is not? And, they've been wrong on so many occasions and it's terrible!

Social Positioning

CAO stated that, long before the tenure and promotion votes are sought and recorded, opinions are formulated about which "people should make it, [and] then colleagues [find] other ways to evaluate and change the courses that the person teaches [or] do other things to help them along".

She believed that this often occurs without objectively evaluating the individual's research

and related contributions, "you have to think about things like federal guidelines, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EOC)guidelines, because [universities are required] to have some people of color [even though] they don't have to keep them."

At the participant's institution, culturally diverse junior faculty have been cycled in and out, some because they choose to leave and others due to failed efforts to receive tenure and earn promotion. She opined that,

> There isn't any real, genuine interest…I told you about the time where I was sitting with my formal mentor, and this person had never really listened to me -- never even just checked into my research, [although] this person was forced by leadership to sit down with me and spend time with me, just over and over [for the purpose of] having contact. After several weeks this person finally, and I can remember the day it happened, this person finally heard what I was saying and said, 'Oh my God, you know that makes sense' and I was like 'Oh my God, I been saying this for years,' but you don't hear me because you don't think I have anything to offer so you don't even listen; you don't bother; you don't anything. So you know, it's decided by the time you walk in the door whether you matter or not and then it doesn't matter what evidence you have, it doesn't matter you know.

She believed it was, "simply social positioning, not based on the reality of the contributions" of a colleague. Positioning individuals on the inside or the outside typically occurs early in the tenure-accruing years. Colleagues may lack knowledge about critical pedagogies that are often represented in the works of culturally diverse faculty (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004) or fail to identify with diverse faculty's culturally embedded behaviors and expressions (Zachary, 2000). Any one of these reasons, among others, is enough for tenured faculty to subjectively reject a junior faculty. "Again I would say that it is the system -- that people decide, when you walk in the door, whether or not you're going to make it or…not."

Academy's Potential Needs, Especially for Leadership

CAO stated that the inconsistencies in overseeing policy and ensuring fair treatment for all faculty is an issue of leadership. When the leadership understands the importance and the value of people coming into the community and makes sure that there is space for them, show that they're valued, that they're supported and that they're heard, then it benefits the community as a whole.

> I have heard of some universities [that] really believe this idea that if you bring someone in, you truly believe that they should do well, and you're going to do everything; [are going to] give them the resources to do well. This practice shows that you believe in the people that you hire. You invest in them, you bring them [along] and [then] they actually are successful.

CAO proposed that faculty not forget who they are in the process:

> A system where we check on those things. My problem was that I was getting evaluated every year [and] they were just bad evaluations. [However, later] I found out from other people that they weren't getting evaluated. Retroactively, somebody was putting their evaluation letters together. Someone can lead you and not necessarily be this dictatorial person. But you can lead, you can direct, you can support, you can do all kinds of things and still recognize this person as an individual. [Moreover] it is important for us to see each other with personal lives. People get so entrenched with what they know, how many publications they have, and they think that's who they are. [Yet] it's what you do but it's not who you are.

Participant's Experiences, Successes, and Career

CAO indicated that informal mentorship was invaluable in helping her remain, "sane, and focused, and to not doubt myself when the experiences I was having would have certainly put me in that direction." However, she recalled how angry she felt during

> the pre-tenured [years]… for being marginalized, for not being supported; frustrated because I'm trying to get my voice out there, trying to figure out how to do that and it's like people having keys to the kingdom and they won't give it to you and it's like, 'how can I be successful if no one will tell me how to be successful because they already decided I'm not going to be successful?' So I don't get any mentoring to show me how to do this.

Coupled with the sense of alienation and isolation, she recalled feeling**,**

> hurt by the interpersonal interactions where I saw people having relationships beyond the sitting in a faculty meeting, or saying hello passing in a hall. And I saw that they had each other's cell phone numbers, they were referencing interactions they'd had outside of the Academy and certainly the whole deal of going to lunch without me and it was hurtful.

Despite the unhappy work environment she found herself trying to cope with, she also decided that she was going to,

> Carve some space out where I'm happy and that's what I did. And that continues to now, where yeah and they just left me alone—that's what's happened. And, whereas before, they were telling me 'no, not to do this and that', and 'that's not a good idea whatever', and then it's like 'OK well you can do that and you know, I guess', to 'Oh Yes! she does that', to 'Well you know what we're known for is _____.' And then it's really what I do so they've embraced it…and I still don't get—like for instance, my former chair has yet to come to me and say—of course this is my fantasy—and say, 'I was wrong. I discouraged you from going into this. And it's turned out that this is exactly where we should be as a department.'

Though her institution was not supportive of her growth, she had other careers where she became confident about her abilities. The university was not "the only place where my capacities are tested. You know I've done other things, I've been successful at other things." The experiences at this university do not "reflect who I am, no, it doesn't, it's just a very challenging environment. Having had other experiences helps me to see this in perspective." Her university experience does not singularly define her capacities.

For her, success came as she built a theory of knowledge and watched it advance. Now, with an established reputation, she explained,

> Sometimes I work with undergraduates, and to hear undergraduates say they've been talking with some faculty member across campus and mentioned that they were doing research with me and that faculty member say, 'oh yes, I've heard of her'.

The hierarchical structure of the Academy is designed in a way that would allow for a mentoring environment where senior scholars inculcate junior scholars into professional standards, etiquette, and scholarly perspectives. Yet, as the findings point out, the weaknesses of this method can be the continuation of outdated perspectives and the perpetuation of a toxic environment. The absence of formal mentoring experiences that foster emotional and psychological support, assistance with career and professional development, or role modeling (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001) was evident in the relationships that CAO described.

For CAO, toxicity and negativity was exhibited at every juncture of interactions, including tenure reviews, during interpersonal encounters, and throughout the writing process. Many of her interpersonal interactions were alienating and hurtful, and covertly, if not overtly, hostile (King & Watts, 2004). Administrative decision-making, though ideally designed to ensure fairness and recognition of successes and suggestions for improvement, fostered a challenging work environment where this scholar's work continued to go unrecognized, unappreciated, and treated unfairly by her peers in her unit. As CAO pointed out, a lack of investment in scholars/scholarship due to the constant flux of academic budgets and politics fostered a competitive spirit among faculty who end up "vying and jockeying" for position and resources instead of developing a vision of research within the academic unit. Yet, despite unspoken expectations during the tenure-accruing process (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002), CAO not only succeeded, she thrived professionally. She attributed the success of her career development to the informal mentors and support that she received from other senior scholars at the university outside of her unit and others outside of the university.

As indicated by the participant, the trauma and other effects of career experiences are passed on from scholar to scholar. The work environment can be exclusionary and exclusive in ways that are hurtful. CAO's negative encounters echo the solitude and alienation that she experienced. Sometimes these attitudes were conveyed through malcontent, obvious disaffect (psychic numbing), and negative peer interactions. She described having experiences with scholars who directed negativity toward each other. As counselor educators, CAO believed that they should be aware of dysfunction within their own unit; however, this awareness was not evident. CAO also noted the marginalization of culturally diverse scholars who come in via mandates and are cycled through the system with no investment from their unit.

For CAO, social positioning moderated the internal method of building careers within her academic unit. As new scholars entered, existing faculty members and administrators decided who would succeed and help them as needed. Leadership supported some faculty members over others, despite lack of sufficient productivity.

Formal mentorship is, for the most part, rote, obligatory and useless. Ideally, the Academy would function as a community, with dialogue and support between scholars. Good mentorship and educative practices are possible. Such practices would require scholars to teach critical mindedness- making recommendations or suggestions regarding their colleagues' work, helping others make better choices and assisting them in becoming agents of change. Practicing the art of critical mindedness would require leadership that can direct, support, and help their faculty. Leadership should be nurturing and relationships in the Academy should be more horizontal allowing the whole person to be viewed and appreciated.

Fortunately, CAO was able to nurture personal success and resilience despite the toxic environment during her tenure process. Informal mentors provided support and guidance by acknowledging the realities of her lived experiences. Also, CAO's successful prior work experiences allowed her to feel capable rather than not internalize the toxicity around her. However, not all faculty who come into the Academy have previous work experience to employ as a buffer and the effect of the internalization can be devastating. CAO was able to draw upon her own intellectualism, external relationship building, and scholarship to generate a new theory of knowledge currently perpetuated by other researchers.

Discussion

The outcomes from this study support previous studies that assert the negative impact of systemic disadvantages they encounter due to racism and sexism in the Academy (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002; Alexander & Moore, 2008; McCray, 2011; Patitu & Hinton, 2003; Salazar, 2005; Williams & Williams, 2006). Additionally, the findings from this study confirm prior research that suggests that mentoring untenured faculty, particularly those from culturally diverse backgrounds, can be beneficial in aiding early career faculty toward professional success (Johnson, 2007; Johnson Bailey & Cervero, 2004). In addition to confirmations of prior knowledge, this study asserts that the overall environment within the Academy, particularly in highly competitive research universities, may foster psychic numbing that has an intergenerational effect. This psychic numbing in the Academy is characterized by a faculty members' insensitivity to the experiences of others because of their own traumatic experiences in a hostile work environment. Moreover, the authors suggest that new faculty are inculcated with negative dispositions by senior faculty that perpetuate the marginalization of culturally diverse scholars. Some of the themes in this study are similar to those found in the previous investigation, including CAO's *feelings of isolation in the academy*. While she remained isolated by her department, she continued to build a national and international presence that brought her visibility. The theme of *building trust* was somewhat relieved by the informal mentoring that CWO received. *Social positioning* continued to be an issue as evidenced in this study while the previous theme, *the impact of these experiences*, was addressed by CAO's proactivity in making changes, concentrating on building a new theory of knowledge and belief in herself. The initial theme of, *surviving this far*, was replaced by: (a) letting go of a desire to seek validation from department colleagues, (b) widely disseminating her research through conferences (on and off campus), book chapters, and refereed journals, and (c) taking on leadership roles in national organizations.

Recommendations

For culturally diverse female faculty in Counselor Education, finding a good mentor may be instrumental in solidifying future success as a scholar. Given the probability that a good mentor may be difficult to find within the immediate work environment, it may be necessary to locate an informal mentor beyond the borders of the academic unit. Searching for a mentor across the university or beyond the university may be of benefit. In this study, our participant was able to find informal mentors outside of her discipline who were able to provide the guidance and support that was needed to aid in her success.

Additionally, it is important to attend to the nature and quality of the mentoring relationship. Mentors should be culturally competent and have an awareness of the systemic challenges faced by culturally diverse faculty. By assisting untenured scholars in understanding the workings of positional dynamics in their lives, mentors can help early career faculty challenge and change their positionalities. Mentors can engage culturally diverse faculty in critical conversation about the mechanism of positionality and the systemic context that frames their own positioning. This conversation can facilitate an awareness that encourages faculty to question, challenge, and begin to change their positioning. The findings offer several suggestions for the Academy:

1. Offer workshops for deans and department chairs to provide them with a context for understanding the vulnerability and experiences of African American faculty.
2. Provide formal training to senior colleagues and department/college administrators who are willing to mentor others; it would be helpful to provide incentives by offering travel support or a stipend.
3. Encourage senior departmental colleagues to reach out to African American faculty by collaborating on research initiatives and publishing together.
4. Hold college- and university-wide forums to discuss the experiences of African American faculty to bring this information out in the open and challenge the existing cultural hegemony embedded in interactions within the Academy.

Future Research. Most evidence of cross-cultural mentoring is represented among exploratory research. In seeking to better understand the nature of cross-cultural mentoring from the perspective of Black women, Bova (2000) found that cross-cultural mentoring relationships allow for mentor and protégée to test stereotypes and attributions regarding differences and permit the development of effective cross-cultural communication. This notion can be held in high regard but could also be more strongly supported with empirical data that operationalize stereotyping and its impact on interracial interactions, particularly in mentoring relationships (Cole, 2007). This systematic investigation could yield implications about the perceptions of White faculty regarding junior culturally diverse faculty in research-intensive universities as well as attitudes of culturally diverse faculty towards their White counterparts.

In sum, this study explored the perceptions of a recently tenured African American female counselor educator to better understand her unique experiences as an outsider in the Academy. Major issues of isolation and marginalization were present. In addition, our participant articulated the presence of social positioning factors that served as barriers to effective mentoring and peer collaborations. Of interest, the findings of this study suggest that psychic numbing may cause senior scholars to behave insensitively to the needs of untenured culturally diverse faculty. Further, they may be perpetuating social isolation in their mentoring relationships with new mainstream scholars. The authors strongly urge senior faculty to increase their cultural competence by engaging in dialogue with untenured culturally diverse faculty about the nature of the work environment, how these junior faculty might be socially positioned, and coping skills that could be employed to ensure tenure. Thus, the success of untenured culturally diverse faculty may be due to their ability to secure a committed mentor, engage in difficult conversations about social positioning in the Academy, and create a sense of community to avoid social isolation.

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Postscript - Beginning in August 2012, Dr. Cirecie West-Olatunji assumed a new position as Associate Professor/Director of the Counseling Program and Director of the Center for Traumatic Stress Research in the School of Human Services at the University of Cincinnati.

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