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## **Sis I See You!: Stories of Black Women Administrators – Lifting the Veil, Stories of Black Women Administrators at HWIs**

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# Chapter 11

## Sis I See You!

### Stories of Black Women Administrators – Lifting the Veil, Stories of Black Women Administrators at HWIs

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#### **ABSTRACT**

*Black women play a vital role in the success of higher education. However, Black women administrators are often successful in the profession without the necessary tools and support. Although Black women administrators experience several barriers in the profession, they still find ways to connect, engage, and find a sense of community. Black women administrators must have an understanding of how to navigate these challenges in the academy as reoccurring issues can become detrimental to their careers. This chapter focuses on the challenges and successes of Black women administrators in higher education at historically white institutions.*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

For decades Black women administrators have contributed an unwavering wealth of knowledge, and service to higher education. One of the most known Black women is Lucy Diggs Slowe who was the first Black woman to serve as Dean of Women at any American university. While serving as the Dean of Women at Howard University, she

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helped shape the experiences of Black students and women administrators (Miller & Pruitt-Logan, 2012; Perkins, 2017). Slowe faced many challenges and barriers while fearlessly advocating for Black students and educators. During her tenure as Dean, Slowe worked to prepare her female students for the modern world. Her role required that she advocate for the female students at Howard, this often caused a strain between Slowe and male faculty members during her time at Howard. Slowe's commitment to bettering the lives of Black women, while battling racism and sexism as she did her work is a story not unfamiliar to many current Black women administrators. Today little has changed as Black women administrators still face similar obstacles and challenges during their time as administrators. Black women administrators have been known to thrive at colleges and universities with little resources, access, and support to assist students and colleagues, while being asked to often work in sexist, racist, and unsupportive working environments.

While Black women administrators are bombarded with additional tasks and duties in the workplace, they experience unexpected challenges such as microaggressive behavior, unsupportive peers and supervisors, and a lack of professional development opportunities. A few examples of this are being told one is not a good "fit" (Turner, 2002), policing of hair (Patton, 2016), and lack of respect (Wilder, Bertrand, Osborne-Lampkin, 2013). Often these challenges are the result of others projected thoughts of Black women administrators that is deeply rooted in White supremacy. White supremacy is the historically based belief that White people are the superior race and oppress other racial groups. Black women administrators' experiences can also be connected to other challenges such as the double dilemma. The double dilemma says that Black women students and administrators are both Black and women resulting in issues surrounding racism and sexism (Howard Hamilton, 2003). Black women administrators recognize and understand the challenges that exist in higher education and have developed coping mechanisms to address these concerns.

This chapter discusses the experiences of two Black women administrators in higher education as they attempt to progress professionally and personally. A literature review will be shared to dissect and understand the experiences of Black women administrators. Personal stories and narratives will also be interwoven into the chapter to connect theory to practice. Finally, recommendations for practice will be provided to help support and uplift Black women administrators in higher education.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Theoretical Framework**

This book chapter was developed through the principles of Black Feminist Thought (BFT) and the Theory of Intersectionality. Collins (2000) and Crenshaw (1988) dissect the complex experiences of Black women and encourage a coalition building of women. BFT is used as a framework to conceptualize and center the experiences of Black women. It is used to understand the ways in which Black women navigate and experience the world. Collins (2000) stated, “Black feminist thought’s core themes of work, family, sexual politics, motherhood, and political activism rely on paradigms that emphasize the importance of intersecting oppressions in shaping the U.S. matrix of domination” (p. 267). BFT challenges White supremacy and speaks to the resistance that Black women must have to overcome oppressive behavior and systemic issues. Intersectionality is the intersecting of multiple identities such as social class, gender, race, ableism and more. Intersectionality is not only about race or identity politics. Black women can be Black and Queer, poor, and disabled. Black women are not a monolith and have varied experiences. Thus, creating a need to use a unique lens to view how they navigate higher education. Both frameworks are essential to understanding the experiences of Black women and the daily lives they live. These frameworks provide context for understanding the experiences of Black women administrators.

### **Literature Review**

The experiences of Black women administrators in higher education are complicated and complex. Black women have not always been welcomed into academia nor have they always sat at the same table as their White counterparts. At the beginning of the formal educational journey for Black women, education was pursued through native schools or historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) (Anderson, 1998). Native schools were established for formerly enslaved African people (Anderson, 1988). HBCUs served as a driving force educating Black people. Early leaders of HBCUs were often white abolitionists. Few universities such as Daytona Technical College and the Laney Institute were founded by and led by Black women. Visionaries such as Lucy Laney and Mary McCloud Bethune recognized the sense of urgency for Black women to be educated.

The more accessible higher education became for Black women there was an increase in Black women educators and advocacy. This allowed for Black women to venture out into non-HBCU institutions. Lucy Diggs Slowe a well-known and respected educator, broke barriers in higher education for Black women administrators. She did not have an easy path in higher education as she was underpaid, undermined, and denied faculty recognition during her tenure as Dean (Miller & Pruitt-Logan, 2012). Slowe recognized that her presence would start a legacy that would empower women to aspire to be an academic leader. Mary Church Terrell, Anna Julia Cooper, Mary McCleod Bethune, and Sojourner Truth were leaders who were champions for social change, opportunities, and knowledge for Black women (Collins, 2000). Additionally, with education came other opportunities for Black women such as National Association of College Women (NACW), NACWAC, and the founding of Historically Black Sororities, of which Slowe completed. Social and service organizations provided an avenue for Black women to mobilize, strategize, and change the negative trajectory of other Black women (Collins, 2000). These are only a few of the ways that college educated women connected both in and outside of the classroom. Even in the toughest of circumstances Black women create opportunities for learning and used multiple pathways for success.

Often it is hard being a Black women administrator in higher education. They face great challenges navigating historically white higher education institutions. Such challenges as the expectation of working additional hours, service, and other duties as assigned adds a lot to the professional workload for Black women. In addition to their roles and responsibilities, Black women often find themselves other mothering college students, stepping in to take care of students in absence of their parents and home support system (Griffin, 2013). Specifically, practiced at HBCUs as a rite of passage or connected to Black Debt (Flowers, Scott, Riley, & Palmer, 2015). Other mothering has been a practice in the Black community since slavery (Collins, 2000; Griffin, 2013). Othermothering is just one of the many ways that Black women contribute to the success of students.

Today, Black women administrators continue to endure obstacles to breaking barriers in higher education as early Black women educators. The challenges are no longer getting access to higher education as a professional, but it is now advancing, and keeping your position without the tools that you need for success. Black women administrators often lack mentorship (Bertrand Jones & Lampkin, 2013; Paitu & Hinton, 2003), sponsorship (Brown, Haywood, McClean, 2010), and support (Brown, Haygood, McClean, 2010). Additionally, Black women experience racist behavior at high rates, and it contributes to burnout or leaving the profession.

Racism is displayed in various forms for Black women administrators. “Under scientific racism, Blacks have been construed as inferior, and their inferiority has been attributed either to biological causes of cultural differences’ (Collins, 2000, p.

77). Racism is not a foreign concept for Black women. Racism can show up in any form for Black women. Within the higher education field Black women have been overlooked for promotions because of their race (Brown, Haygood, McClean, 2010). Another form of racism that Black women administrators face is microaggressive behavior. Microaggressions that Black women face in the workplace are being mistaken as a secretary. Collins (2000) talks about the various images of Black women. Collins shares three images that Black women are often viewed through which are the mammie, sapphire, and the jezebel (Collins, 2000). “The mammy is typically portrayed as overweight, dark, and with characteristically African features—brief, as an unsuitable sexual partner for White men” (Collins, 2000, p. 84). The jezebel is viewed as a whore, hoochie, or hot mamma (Collins, 2000; Donahoo, 2017). The sapphire image is not concrete and displays the Black woman as angry, emasculating to men, and a threat to White society (Donahoo, 2017). These three images are often the result of the misunderstanding and ignorance of people who do not connect with Black women.

Oftentimes, Black women administrators can be mammified in their everyday roles. Like othermothering, a mammy has a familial component as well. A mammy is seen as a caregiver (Brown, Haygood & McClean, 2010; Collins, 2000; Donahoo, 2017). Black women administrators can be seen as the office mammie because they are viewed as strong and always helping others (Brown, Haygood & McClean, 2010). Although Black women have advanced beyond being “the help” they should be respected and not minimized to others’ limited divisive images of them (Collins, 2000). It should not be the role of Black women to take care of everyone in their department or divisions (Brown, Haygood & McClean, 2010).

Microaggressions and negative imagery are not the only issues that Black women face, Black women are stereotypes. “Stereotype threat is used to capture the idea of a situational predicator as a contingency of their group identity, a real threat of judgment or treatment in the person’s environment that went beyond any limitations within” (Steele, 2010, p. 59). Black women are stereotyped as being second class citizens, welfare mothers, lazy, and the demise of the Black family (Collins, 2000). Such stereotypes appear in the workplace through the identity and wealth questioning of Black women. Due to the increase in the Black women workforce, there are assumptions made that all women are single and are unmarried.

Black women deal with other nuances like hair policing (Collins, 2000; Patton, 2016), attitude, lack of respect (Wilder, Bertrand, & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013 and “fit” (Turner, 2002) that non- Black women administrators do not have to worry about. Such nuances show up in Black women’s self-confidence. Black hair is very political and Black women are familiar with the interest of their supervisors with their hair. Black women are told braids, afros, natural hair, and dreadlocks are unprofessional and should not be worn in the workplace. Dreadlocks are viewed as

threatening and lead to stereotyping. This is an example of respectability politics. Respectability politics are the unwritten rules that Black people are told to follow that are based on White supremacist standards of life. Often respectability politics has silenced Black women and dictated their career trajectory and personal daily living. Black women have been instructed on how to appear as women and what defines them as women.

## **MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER**

As Black women in higher education the authors have experienced polarizing workplace scenarios that non-black or people of color are subjected to such as racism, sexism, classism, and the glass cliff effect. Such experiences have created difficulty in upward career mobility and sparked a need to be resilient in their everyday roles. The authors will connect and center several stories of Black women voices. The authors will also make the connection of the experiences of Lucy Diggs Slowe to the challenges of Black women administrators today.

## **Historically White Institutions**

The term predominantly white institutions (PWI) are used to describe institutions of higher education in which Whites account for 50% or more of the enrolled student population and thought the majority of colleges and universities in the United States are considered to be predominantly white there are a group that are given the classification on minority serving institutions (Schnell, 2021). Many of those minority serving institutions (MSI) include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), but they also have institutions that might have been predominantly white at one point and time, but now with demographics changing, have minority populations as their majority enrolled students. The United States Office of Civil Rights identifies MSIs as not only HBCUs, but also as, but not limited Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISI), Predominantly Black Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) (OCR, 2022).

One would expect that Black women professionals working at non-HBCU minority serving institutions would have positive experiences to share because they are working at institutions where most of the students are minorities. However, in a 2016 study Henrietta Williams Picho found that both Black men and women shared that they experienced racism and expressed feeling isolated, lonely and discomfort in their area studies while students as an HSI. These feelings overlap into Black employee's

feelings as research has found that MSIs do not equal a better campus climate for the Black community because inequalities that exist systematically (Allen, 2008).

Career advancement is important to the authors of this chapter. Both have worked and strategically experienced career advancement at an HWI. The authors experiences were invaluable and memorable. Author, one has worked at mid and large sized universities. Author two has worked at small, mid, and large sized universities. Combined they have worked at 6 different HWIs. The author experiences have varied experiences working in multicultural affairs, residence life, student conduct, and academic affairs. Career advancement at HWI has provide the authors with difference perspectives on their place on college campuses. While working at their respective HWI both were exposed to overt and covert racism, microaggressions, sexism, ageism, glass cliff, hypermasculinity and overburden of unequal workloads just to name a few. In the next sections, the authors will share personal narratives of working at HSIs and navigating unique work environments.

## **Mirroring the Black Woman Student Experience**

When looking at the experience so Black women in higher education one must look at both race and gender, “fail[ing] to account for racism/white supremacy and gender/patriarchy when considering Black collegiate women’s experiences is nonsensical at least and absurd at best” (Patton & Croom, 2017, p.2). In a study of Black women’s experience of microaggressions at a HSI, Willis, Matthaies, and et.al (2019) found that their Black women participants found themselves experiencing stereotypes and microaggressions that were directed at their race and gender, that came with assumptions about their attitudes, behavior, and background. They found themselves very aware how they presented themselves so that they would appear professional and non-threatening to their non-Black campus historically white institutions community. “Both Laurie-Jo and Lenamarie expressed disappointed surprise when they had negative encounters with People of Color at their “diverse” campus, experiencing racial microaggressions (Willis, Matthaies, and et.al 2019)”. These feelings and experiences that they as Black women students felt is not unlike the ones that Black women administrators feel on their various campuses every day. Like the student participants from the study (Willis, Matthaies, and et.al 2019) Black women administrators in higher education must often silence themselves or make themselves small in front of their non-Black peers, colleagues, and senior leadership. They find support in other Black women on campus and the support provides them often with what they need to move forward and progress. However, not unlike the students in study, Black women administrators also look for connections on campus, so that they will have the support they need when they come across microaggressions and stereotypes. However, due to the lack of presence of other



Black women in leadership roles on their campuses they do not receive it and are often reminded that they are the minority among minorities.

On multiple occasions Author one experienced microaggressions and assaults at HWIs. The first example of this was while serving in a mid-level manager role. Author two was supervising multiple full-time staff members. During a one-on-one conversation, one of author two's employees wanted to share his first when he used the N-word. Then proceeded to tell and use the N-word. The employee had no clue about why it was inappropriate and offensive.

The second experience was at another institution. Author one, was working in a mid-level leadership role and encountered great difficulty from their two White colleagues. While in this role, author two had a higher-ranking position than the other two leaders in the department. This made their colleagues uncomfortable, and they began to demand title changes upon author two's arrival. In writing and verbal communication, the two colleagues who attempt to chastise, embarrass, and challenge Author two. It was difficult to build collaborations while experiencing such a hostile work environment.

## **The Minority Among Minorities**

“Everyone, including marginalized group members, harbors biases and prejudices and can act in discriminatory and hurtful ways toward others” (Clay, 2017). Black women still find themselves experiencing discrimination and microaggressions even when they are employed at minority serving institutions. They often find themselves alone or one of few in many spaces. Asked to be the representative for the entire Black community or for all people of color, as administration and senior leadership do not always reflect that of the institution's demographics.

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2016) found that out of the 3,361 adults that participated in the online survey, almost seven out ten of them experienced discrimination, with 61% of them shared that they experienced day to day discrimination which included being treated with less respect than others, experienced unfair labor practices that included being unjustly fired or not being promoted when otherwise qualified and being threatened or harassed. A high number of African Americans in the study over 75% shared that they experienced daily discrimination. The study found that discrimination was linked to increased stress and poor health.

The discrimination that Black women administrators include microaggressions that vary in type (Sue, Capodilupo, and et. al., 2007). Micorassults, what occurs when an individual intentionally behaves in a discriminatory way while not intending to be offensive, often following up their comment with “I was just joking”. Microinsults, which is comment or action that unintentionally discriminatory, an example of

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this might be asking a Black woman how they got the job, implying that she got it because of affirmative action. Micro invitations, in when a person's comment invalidates or undermines the experience of a certain group a people, this is also called race lighting (Harris & Woods, 2021) and example when a white person telling a Black person that "I know that person and maybe you took that comment out of context". Many Black women administrators experience these things on a daily basis. These experiences may directly impact how they show up at work as well as create psychological distress such as anxiety, trauma, and depression. These feelings and experiences when they remain unaddressed can impact their productivity and therefore that may prevent them from being able to progress professionally.

Author two found that in some experiences that anti-Blackness was not just projected by White colleagues and upper administration, but by non-Black colleagues and administrators of color as well. One would assume that individuals of color, also being members of communities that are often marginalized, that there would be a level of solidarity amongst them, but that was not always the case. They came across non-Black colleagues of color who alienated them from larger groups, left them out of opportunities, regularly used microaggressions against them, and created work environments that had others questioning their work and credibility.

Both authors were forced to find create and co-opt save spaces while working at HWI's because of what was occurring at their institutions. In one of the authors roles, they decided to create a sister circle with other Black women on campus to discuss the campus environment and how to thrive on campus. Sista Circles are support groups that center on relationships of Black women (Collier, 2017). The sista circles that the author helped to create aided them and other Black women grow as professionals while mentoring each other. Informal peer to peer mentorship relationships were formed as well. Even with the creation of sista circles and peer to peer mentorship Black women still can face career roadblocks.

## **Glass Cliff**

The glass cliff is the intention of hiring women for roles in organizations that lack upward mobility and possibility for organizational success. Women who experience the glass cliff effect have taken roles where the organization is in turmoil, and they have been given impossible odds to lead change in their organization and department (Haslam & Ryan, 2008). This on the surface looks like the women leader has been asked to do more with little to no guidance, less resources, understaffed, and little institutional support but still expected to exceed role expectations, they're asked to step in and be miracle workers. This practice is extremely dangerous for Black women leaders, who are taking on these roles to advance their careers. For example, in 2016 there were four Black women historically Black college and university (HBCU)

President's fired or asked to step down from their role (For Harriet, 2016). One President noted that she was concerned about the university's finances, and another noted the difficult relationship with the Board of Trustees. The four Presidents had varying stories of no budgets, Board of Trustees issues, contract, and accreditation concerns. Such issues did not manifest during their tenure as Presidents but were heightened and exposed. These are only a few examples of top leaders hitting the glass cliff at an HBCU. Black women at HWIs have similar experience in entry, mid, senior, and executive level roles.

Both authors have hit the glass cliff in previous roles and at various institutions. Author one recalls a being in a role where it was extremely difficult to work and communicate with their colleagues. Their colleagues were intentionally creating roadblocks for them and their team. This continued for two years until one of the two cumbersome White women left the institution. It was at that time the Author one could begin to make departmental and institutional changes. The position expectations did not shift despite working in an intensive work environment. Author one also recalls working at an institution where there was not a budget in place, and they were expected to create community for students. The institution was in turmoil and did not provide departmental budgets. When there was funding for student initiatives that was shared. This funding model was stressful and not helpful for advancing Author One's unit. Author One left the role because there was a lack of resources, institutional support, and ability to change.

Author two as well encountered experiences where they were asked to lead areas and programs without the same number of resources and guidance other non-Black peers received. They often performed at a high level because they knew they were under a microscope and had very little room for failure, but found that the better they performed, the less support they would receive. This created pressure for Author two push through obstacles, so that they would not be seen as uncooperative and instead be seen as a team player when asked to do extra tasks and still left them feeling "like an outsider within" Collins (2000).

The glass cliff has detoured the authors and other Black women in higher education. Those in leadership positions in higher education should evaluate the position and environments that they offer to Black women. The impact of the glass cliff is not limited to just Black women; however, they experience higher workloads than their peers which needs extra monitoring.

## **Black Women's Labor**

Black women feel the burden of working long hours, unequal pay, and the need to otherrmother students, this results in them neglecting their own professional growth and personal well-being. There is a saying that" Black folx are taught you must

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work twice as hard to get half of what White folx have”. Black women work at least four times as hard. Collins (2000) Black Feminist Thought (BFT) is a thematic interpretive framework that is used to view the experiences of Black women. Collins (2000) discusses how Black women are dehumanized and objectified as machines and mules. Working in higher education, Black women are expected to outperform their peers, fix impossible work crises, and do it with a smile. How this plays out for Black women at historically White Institutions (HWIs) is through one’s service to the institution. Black women are known to serve on at least three university committees, and this does not include the “diversity, equity, and inclusion” committees. Students gravitate to Black women and ask them to advise various organizations. Black women are also asked to attend nightly events to show support at events because their colleagues will not show up. The service that is expected does not match the salary that is provided to Black women. The inequitable salary is something that both authors experienced. In their first full time roles in the profession, they made under \$35,000 while their peers were making more money. Despite the pay inequities the work continued to be completed.

Author one has consistently provided over the required amount of service to every institution where they worked. At one point, they advised 4 student organizations and attended up to two programs a night. There was little flexibility given for their work schedule. Author one continued to show up for the students. The department reaped the visibility and credibility from Author one but there was no monetary incentive given to Author one for going above and beyond. When Author one left this role, the students quickly realized that the department was run by Author one and the department leader would not be visible. This practice is extremely prevalent in higher education today and contributes to burnout and leads to quality Black women professionals leaving the profession.

The labor of Black women in higher education includes other duties as assigned, more students, cases, and less pay. Black women can be seen doing multiple roles at an institution and only get paid for one role. Such roles cause health issues, inequitable pay, low employee morale and stunted career growth. These are just a few outcomes of over taxation of Black women’s labor in higher education. These experiences from the authors and other Black women are a lack of leadership.

## **Lack of Leadership**

Black women want and need effective leaders to help them advance their career. Effective leadership looks like someone who can confidently supervise and support Black women in their positions. A leader who has a deep understanding of the direction of the department and how to best position and utilize their skill set is needed. Effective leadership also looks like advocacy and positioning Black women

within the university. The lack of consistent leadership made it hard to navigate institutional cultures and effectively complete some tasks. Black women would like to have leaders who take the time to understand them, their culture, and ways of being. Unfortunately, the leaders that they are looking for are not at the university and must be sought out in other industries or different universities.

Both authors have encountered inexperienced supervisors who have nearly stalled their career advancement. This includes working with leadership who outwardly expressed that they did not know how to support or supervise a Black woman. The leaders that the authors needed and desired have come in the form of mentors at other universities. Mentors have been solidified from conferences such as ACPA- College Educators International (ACPA), National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA), and other regional organizations. Through these experiences the authors have learned how to navigate office politics, hostile work environments, difficult supervisors, and upward career trajectory. It has been said that professional associations for a moment however, both authors have benefited immensely from these organizations, often financing access to these organizations out of their own pockets. In addition to professional organizations, the authors have participated in various leadership institutes. The authors credit the following institutes to their professional success, Gehring Academy, Alice Manicur Institute, Dean of Student/ Assistant Vice President Institute, and Black women in Higher Education Summit. These institutes helped propel the authors careers in the absence of supervisor and leadership support at the university. Not unlike other Black women administrators looking to excel, attending these institutes have often come at the push and self-advocacy of the authors themselves.

Black women understand every assignment and test that they are given in their higher education roles despite the many challenges. Specifically, at HWIs the challenges are exasperated and intense. The women in these roles stay in higher education because they are committed to this work and making a difference. It is the hope of the authors that the reader will read, reflect, and recalibrate to improve the experiences of Black women in higher education. It is vital to the state of higher education for both Black women working and attending the university.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are three recommendations for consideration. First, pay Black women what they are worth at historically White institutions (HWIs) and beyond. Do not under pay Black women when negotiating salaries. Black women should be paid for the job that they are paid that matches the job description. The pay should also be a

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livable wage. Often when Black women ask for more, they are seen as being greedy or ungrateful for the opportunity that their employer is giving them and therefore, they should be willing to settle. This must change in higher education if we want to have Black women in the higher education. Pay them their worth and add tax!

The second recommendation is to provide adequate training for leaders who will supervise minoritized individuals at HWIs. This tends to be one of the institutional types that desperately needs supervisors. The training should be intentional, non-agenda seeking and helpful for everyone involved. These training should be ongoing and required. They should start from the moment the hiring committees are formed to ensure equitable hiring practices are in play. This is crucial to the success of Black women as they can be under supervised causing them to miss career opportunities or have unsuccessful work experience.

The third recommendation is to address racism and discrimination in the workplace for Black women. Both racism and discrimination contribute to a hostile work environment and depletes productivity. Often Black women use their voices to address such issues when no one else will and pay for it through the lack of promotion and career advancement. Institutions of higher education need to provide support to Black women through job protection when addressing racism in the workplace. By doing so it shows who and what the institution values.

Finally, invest in the professional development for Black women. Black women are leading professional organizations and bringing the information back to make institutional change. Often this can be a barrier for them to gain additional experiences. Institutions should what they value when they provide professional development to their employees. Black women benefit greatly from larger networks to the professional which could lead to career growth and advancement. Institutional commitment to professional development Contributing to the growth and development of employees is a retention tool not only for employees, but for students as well and therefore this is a great return on investment for the institution.

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter explored Black women administrators experiences in higher education with the hope of starting much needed conversations about equity and fairness. Black women would like to go to work without the added stressors of racism, being overworked, underpaid, and lack of professional leadership. It is important to listen to their stories and do something about it. The experiences shared in chapter are not isolated stories. Black women experiences either similar or more heinous situations. The experiences of Black women administrators at historically White institutions (HWIs), despite not being uncommon, should continue to be explored and debunked.

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## **KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Black Administrator:** An administrator who works in higher education who identifies as Black.

**Career Advancement:** The upward mobility of an individual’s career path.

**Hair Policing:** The act of scrutinizing a Black women’s hair to fit a standard cloaked in White supremacist beliefs of beauty.



**Mentorship:** Formal or informal investment in an individual's personal or professional growth.

**Mid-Level Professional:** An individual who has 3-10 years of experience working in higher education.

**Racism:** Discrimination against a person or group based on their race or ethnicity.

**Supervision:** The act of providing support and oversight of employees who report to someone.