Are Black Women Faculty and Women of Color Faculty Synonymous?

Abstract

Black women faculty in the professoriate are often lumped into broader women of color categories when examining their experiences in academia. However, women of color are not a monolith and their experiences should be examined with disaggregation. The current study examined the time allocation of Black women faculty in relation to other women of color faculty to assess whether narratives compiling all women of color faculty together are appropriate. Results showed that Black women faculty differ in how they allocate their time in relation to their women of color counterparts. Our findings suggest that studies conducted aggregating the stories of women of color are not portraying the unique experience Black women faculty are facing.

Black women play a pivotal role in shaping academia through their role as faculty, as they continually overcome adversity to increase their representation (Griffin, Bennet, & Harris, 2013; Kelly & McCann, 2013; Davis, Reynolds, & Jones, 2011). Examining Black women faculty experiences in academia is vital to further understand their experiences and how institutions can continue supporting them. Much of the existing literature on Black women faculty aggregate racial minority categories to report on the experiences of all women of color (e.g.; Ford, 2011; Turner, 2002). However, women of color are not a monolith and are not always having the same experiences in faculty roles. Therefore, it is important to reconsider the implications of the women of color faculty narrative in academia.

Women of color (WOC) is a term used to group women of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds different from White women. In research, WOC is a group used to highlight the marginalized experiences of faculty that navigate higher education differently from men and White women. The term encompasses intersections of race/ethnicity and gender. WOC can provide a space of empowerment because it is a culmination of many collective voices. However, research using information and data that aggregate WOC may be inaccurate to capture and highlight the unique stories of Black women. Research on WOC can make invisible the experiences, challenges, and stories of the women that fall under that category and minimize the opportunity to highlight them individually, which is why more disaggregated research on these experiences are needed.

The purpose of this study is to examine the time allocation of Black women faculty in four areas (teaching, advising, research, and service) to better understand the experiences of Black women faculty and whether their experiences align with other WOC faculty. We aim to uncover reasoning for why grouping WOC faculty together to conduct comparative analyses may

not be in the best interest of telling Black women faculty narratives. In particular, we are interested in knowing if their experiences are similar to American Indian or Native Alaskan women, Asian women, Latinas, and multiracial women faculty. The research questions guiding this study include:

- How are Black women faculty allocating their time in relation to other women of color faculty?
- How much time are Black women faculty allocating to teaching, advising, research, and service?

Positionality

The researchers conducting this study are higher education scholars comprised of doctoral students and a faculty member. We are a group of women interested in highlighting Black women's voices in higher education. None of the researchers identify as Black women faculty but two researchers identify as Black women graduate students who have aspirations to become faculty members and aim to give voice to a population they will join. Two researchers have a qualitative background with a focus on feminist methodologies and two researchers have a quantitative background with experience examining small populations. Our positionality is important to mention in this proposal as it has implications on our inherent biases and how we interpret our findings. We set out to be intentional about uplifting the voices of Black women faculty to center their narratives while adding to the existing literature on this population.

Theoretical Framework

To analyze Black women faculty's time allocation in relation to other women faculty of color, we are using Critical Race Feminism (CRF) and Critical Quantitative Methodology (QuantCrit) to guide our study. Critical Race Theory (CRT), which guides CRF and QuantCrit,

originated in legal studies and was designed to create spaces for engaging in critical race studies to address race and racism within the law. CRT "is a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p.3). Branches of CRT developed to fulfill the needs of scholars who felt that CRT fell short in critiquing other oppressive structures. CRF was created to approach race and racism issues in a multidisciplinary nature due to the intersectional focus on race and gender. Women of color legal scholars needed a theory and movement that could adequately address their issues. We use CRF in this higher education focused study to emphasize the importance of elevating Black women faculty's stories. The CRF tenets that frame this study include:

1. *Racism is essential*. All CRT research accepts the idea that "racism is permanent component of American life" (Bell. 1992, p.13). A realist perspective that racism is embedded in all structures, political, economics, and social dynamics (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). CRT focuses on the impact of racism on people of color and brings their unique experiences to light.
2. *Valuing experiential knowledge*. There is value and legitimacy in the knowledge people possess. CRT takes a critical analysis using this knowledge as valid in critiquing race in society. Lived experiences of people are used in methods of storytelling, providing a counter-narrative to the dominant society's portrayal of people of color (Yoss, 2006).
3. *Challenging dominant paradigms*. CRT challenged Whiteness and White privilege and entitlements that educational institutions provide in protecting whiteness. CRT challenges neutral and objective societal views with discussing issues of race. By challenging these strong held beliefs, CRT scholars provide spaces for people of color's voices.

Critical studies that aim to highlight the voices of marginalized populations often employ qualitative methodologies while quantitative methodologies can produce results that are thought of to be neutral, color-blind and further perpetuating racial inequities (Gillborn, Warmington, & Demack, 2018; Sablan, 2019). However critical scholars have worked to understand how critical perspectives can be applied to quantitative methodologies (Jang, 2018). QuantCrit (Gillborn et al., 2018) scholars aim to reconsider methodological and comparative decisions being made that can portray stories from dominant narratives to emphasize the need for racial equity and social justice. We use QuantCrit to guide our method by choosing to highlight Black women faculty voices through quantitative analyses without comparing groups through a deficit lens. We aim to show how an aggregation of women faculty of color experiences in academia can mask a different experience that Black women faculty are having and that using disaggregated information to analyze these experiences can produce more enlightening outcomes.

Data Sources and Method

The data come from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) 2014-2019 administrations. FSSE, a complimentary survey to the National Survey of Student Engagement, asks faculty about their use of education practices that are linked with student learning and development. More specifically, questions asked faculty about their perceptions on student experiences and interactions, approaches to teaching, faculty development and supportive environments, along with demographic information. The primary FSSE item used for the current study asked faculty about their time allocation in four areas: teaching, advising, research, and service (Table 1). Between 2014 and 2019, FSSE was administered to 1,574 Black women faculty at 299 four-year institutions.

To answer our research question about how Black women faculty spend their time in four time allocation areas compared to other women faculty of color, four regression models were examined to analyze the four time allocation areas. The dependent variable was standardized so that coefficients can be interpreted as effect sizes. Effect coding was used to code the multi-categorical race/ethnicity item so that comparisons of women faculty in each identity grouping could be made to the average score for women faculty of color as opposed to a reference group (Mayhew & Simonoff, 2015). To further examine our research question, results from chi-square tests were examined to analyze how much time Black women faculty and other women faculty of color were spending in the four time allocation areas. Differences with adjusted residuals greater than 2 or less than -2 were considered notable (Agresti & Finley, 2009).

Results

Among the 1,574 Black women faculty respondents, approximately 30% identified as adjunct faculty members, 27% as assistant professors and 22% as instructors. About 42% of Black women faculty respondents were not in tenure track positions but are employed at institutions that have tenure systems, while 26% reported being tenured and 18% were on the tenure track. For academic discipline, Black women faculty were largely in Health Professions (17%), Education (15%), Social Sciences (13%), and Arts and Humanities (13%). Black women faculty made of 35.6% of our study sample with smaller proportions of Asian (24.3%), Hispanic or Latino (19.7%), multiracial (17.7%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (2.7%). More demographic information can be found in Table 2.

How are Black women faculty spending their time in teaching, advising, research, and service areas in relation to other women faculty of color?

Black women faculty are allocating significantly less time toward teaching activities (B = -.175, $p < .001$), while Asian women faculty (B = -.111, $p < .001$) and Multiracial women faculty (B = .126, $p < .001$) are allocating significantly more time toward teaching activities compared to the average time for WOC in the model. Black women faculty (B = .117, $p < .001$) are allocating significantly more time toward advising students while Multiracial women faculty are spending less (B = -.121, $p < .001$). Additionally, Black women faculty are allocating less of their time to research (B = -.066, $p < .03$) while Asian women faculty (B = .211, $p < .001$) are allocating more. More results from the regression analyses can be found in Table 3.

How much time are Black women faculty allocating for teaching, advising, research, and service areas?

There was a significant relationship found between racial/ethnic identification and how much time was allocated to teaching activities ($\chi 2 = 82.03$, $p < .001$). Black women faculty were overrepresented in allocating low amounts of time (AR = 5.2) and moderate amounts of time (AR = 4.3) on teaching activities and were underrepresented in allocating very high amounts of time on teaching activities (AR = -5.8). There was a significant relationship found between racial/ethnic identification and how much time was allocated to advising activities ($\chi 2 = 77.03$, $p < .001$). Black women faculty were underrepresented in allocating low (AR = -5.1) and moderate (AR = -2.4) times on advising students and overrepresented in allocating no time (AR = 2.1) and high times (AR = 6.8) on advising. There was a significant relationship found between racial/ethnic identification and how much time was allocated to research activities ($\chi 2 = 74.66$, $p < .001$). Black women faculty are overrepresented in allocating low time on research activities (AR = 2.5) and underrepresented in allocating high time on research (AR = -3.7). Finally, there was a significant relationship found between racial/ethnic identification and how much time was

allocated to service activities ($\chi 2 = 24.16$, $p < .002$). Black women faculty were underrepresented in allocating low time (AR = -3.0) on service activities and overrepresented in allocating high time on service activities (AR = 3.6). More information on chi-square analyses can be found in Table 4.

Scholarly Significance

On average, Black women are spending less time than their women of color peers on teaching and research, but more on advising. This connects to narratives of Black women faculty as caretakers and nurturers of their students. Our results reveal however, that even these averages of disaggregated women of color don't tell the whole story. Black women are represented in all categories of time use on teaching, advising, research, and service showing us than even the grouping of Black women faculty of color have a range of experiences in academia. Results from this study highlight the importance of disaggregating data for women faculty by race and ethnicity. The allocation of Black women's time working towards academic endeavors is significantly different from women faculty of other minoritized racial and ethnic identities. Although the body of research on women of color has added to our general understanding of the experiences of diverse women, research that paints women of color faculty as a monolith erases the individual experiences of these women informed by their race or ethnicity. Policy and practice can be informed by sound research but when this research aggregates data, administration and leadership are only provided a small piece of the story to inform their decision-making.

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Table 1. Select Time Allocation Item Information for Black Women Faculty

1. In a typical 7-day week, about how many hours do you spend on each of the following?	
Response options: No time: Zero hours, Low time:1-4 hours Moderate time: 5-8 hours, High time: 9 or more hours	Min:1 Max:4
a. Teaching activities (preparing, teaching class sessions, grading, meeting with students outside of class, etc.)	Mean: 2.9047 SD: .9707
b. Advising students	Mean: 2.8804 SD: .9830
c. Research, creative, or scholarly activities	Mean: 2.91 SD: 1.0170
d. Service activities (committee work, administrative duties, etc.)	Mean: 2.7028 SD: 1.0110

Table 2. Select Black Women Faculty Characteristics

		N%
Rank	Professor	13.8
	Associate Professor	20.2
	Assistant Professor	27.2
	Instructor	21.5
	Lecturer	9.3
Adjunct	No	69.6
	Yes	30.4
Tenure	No tenure at institution	13.8
	Not on tenure track, but institution has tenure system	42.2
	On tenure track but not tenured	18
	Tenured	26
Academic Discipline	Arts & Humanities	12.8
	Biological Sciences, Agriculture & Natural Resources	3.6
	Physical Sciences, Mathematics & Computer Sciences	5.0
	Social Sciences	13.1
	Business	8.3
	Communications, Media & Public Relations	4.8
	Education	15.4
	Engineering	1.9
	Health Professions	17.4
	Social Service Professions	9.0
	Other disciplines	8.8
Racial/Ethnic Identification (of all women faculty of color in analyses)		
	Black or African American	35.6
	American Indian or Alaska Native	2.7
	Asian	24.3
	Hispanic or Latino	19.7
	Multiracial	17.7

Table 3. OLS Regression Coefficients for Time Allocation

		B	S.E.	β	Sig.
Teaching	Black or African American	-.175	.030	-.124	***
	American Indian or Alaska Native	-.027	.074	-.012	
	Asian	.111	.032	.071	***
	Hispanic or Latino	-.035	.034	-.021	
	Multiracial	.126	.035	.054	***
Advising	Black or African American	.117	.030	.082	***
	American Indian or Alaska Native	-.029	.075	-.012	
	Asian	-.007	.033	-.004	
	Hispanic or Latino	.041	.034	.025	
	Multiracial	-.121	.036	-.052	***
Research	Black or African American	-.066	.030	-.047	*
	American Indian or Alaska Native	-.076	.075	-.032	
	Asian	.211	.032	.136	***
	Hispanic or Latino	-.065	.034	-.040	
	Multiracial	-.004	.036	-.002	
Service	Black or African American	.052	.030	.037	
	American Indian or Alaska Native	.128	.075	.055	
	Asian	-.105	.033	-.068	***
	Hispanic or Latino	-.008	.034	-.003	
	Multiracial	-.068	.036	-.029	

Note: *p < .05, ***p < .001

Table 4. Chi-Squares

	N (Adj. Residual)	N (Adj. Residual)	N (Adj. Residual)	N (Adj. Residual)	X^2 (df)	p-value
	Low Time	Moderate Time	High Time	Very High Time		
Teaching					**82.03 (12)**	**<.01**
Black or African American	123 (5.2)	449 (4.3)	446 (-0.5)	546 (-5.8)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	9 (1.1)	29 (0.0)	27 (-1.4)	52 (0.8)		
Asian	40 (-2.9)	219 (-3.9)	332 (1.6)	483 (3.3)		
Hispanic or Latino	42 (-0.9)	235 (1.6)	245 (-0.6)	350 (-0.4)		
Multiracial	26 (-2.9)	166 (-2.6)	225 (-0.1)	363 (3.7)		
	No Time	Low Time	Moderate Time	High Time		
Advising					**77.03 (12)**	**<.01**
Black or African American	163(2.1)	600 (-5.1)	319 (-2.4)	466 (6.8)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	10 (-0.3)	58 (1.2)	22 (-1.0)	27 (-0.3)		
Asian	86 (-1.6)	48 (1.2)	280 (3.3)	215 (-3.5)		
Hispanic or Latino	72 (-1.1)	386 (0.4)	198 (0.2)	210 (0.1)		
Multiracial	76 (0.5)	393 (4.1)	171 (-0.5)	138 (-4.6)		
Research					**74.66 (12)**	**<.01**
Black or African American	101 (1.6)	548 (2.5)	334 (0.7)	565 (-3.7)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	8 (0.5)	42 (0.7)	23 (-0.3)	43 (-0.7)		
Asian	48 (-2.0)	288 (-4.8)	186 (-3.3)	546 (-3.7)		
Hispanic or Latino	49 (-0.1)	252 (-0.4)	183 (1.9)	296 (-1.3)		
Multiracial	45 (0.1)	252 (-0.4)	183 (1.9)	296 (-1.3)		
Service					**24.16 (12)**	**.02**
Black or African American	140 (-0.5)	462 (-3.0)	354 (-0.5)	597 (3.6)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	7 (-1.3)	35 (-0.7)	29 (0.4)	47 (1.1)		
Asian	112 (1.6)	373 (2.0)	250 (0.3)	329 (-3.1)		
Hispanic or Latino	76 (-0.6)	283 (0.1)	204 (0.3)	30.2 (0.0)		
Multiracial	73 (0.1)	274 (1.7)	178 (-0.2)	253 (-1.5)		