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THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE LECTURES IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

A report on a study project presented to

The Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of Social Work

By

MBALI MASEKO

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ABSTRACT

With the call for transformation post 1994, major changes with regards to policies, leadership, diversity of staff and an increase in the number of Black students, have occurred in the South African institutions of higher learning to redress the inequalities of the apartheid era. Included in these changes is the call for an increase in the number of Black female lectures. This research project explored the experiences of black female lecturers in the Humanities Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand. A qualitative research approach was used. The research project was explorative in nature. The participants were 9 Black female South African lecturers. Purposive sampling was employed. Data was gathered using face to face conversational interviews and a semi-structured interview schedule as a tool for data gathering and. The data was analysed using thematic analysis From the information which I obtained from the Faculty of Humanities the percentage of Black female lecturers, of the permanent staff, in the Faculty of Humanities is 33 % currently. This is similar to the social work department where 6 out of the 9 female lecturers are black. The findings in the study were that the academic environment was not accommodating for Black female academics. The small amount of Black female lectures at the higher levels had very big representational roles to play and Black female lecturers in general were involved in a lot of service work. Black female lectures experienced racial attacks in the classroom where their qualifications were questioned. Lastly because of a perceived lack of support systems within the institution Black female lecturers reverted to external informal forms of support. This research will help with recommendations on how the work environment of the lecturers can be improved and how the lecturers can be empowered and perform at their optimum best. Furthermore most of the lecturers in the courses that Social Work students do are based in the Faculty of Humanities.

Key words: black women, lecturers, South Africa Higher Education, University of the Witwatersrand.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Higher education- HE

Tshwane University of Technology- TUT

University of Cape Town- UCT

University of Pretoria- UP

University of the Witwatersrand- Wits

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Post 1994 there has been a call for transformation in higher education institutions which was highlighted by the #FeesMustFall movement that happened in 2015 and 2016 and it beckoned for the increase of Black lecturers in these institutions (Naicker, 2016). This research project sought to describe the experiences Black female lecturers who have succeeded in occupying the Higher Education space in South African Universities, particularly in the Faculty of Humanities in the University of the Witwatersrand because it has a high percentage of black female lectures. From the information which I obtained from the Faculty of Humanities the percentage of Black female lecturers, of the permanent staff, in the Faculty of Humanities is 33% currently. The academics were divided into various categories and these percentages provided refer to academics who are employed on a permanent basis; senior lecturers which is comprised of 58% females of which 48% of them are Black females. This is slightly lower than the percentage of White female academics. The second category was that of principal tutors which is comprised of 55 % female academics of which none of them were Black female academics. The third category was lecturers of which 62% are females and 54 % of them are Black females, which means that there are more Black female lecturers at this level than White lecturers. The fourth category is that of senior tutors of which 95% of them are women and 52% of this are Black females. The fifth category is that of senior clinical tutor of which 100 % of them are women and 50% of them are Black females. The last category is that of Tutors 100 % of them is females and 100% of them are Black females (L. Ngubeni, personal communication, December 08, 2017). These figures indicate that Black female lecturers are well represented in most categories except in the area of principle tutors.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale for focusing primarily on women was because in a study about the movement of Black lecturers out of and in between tertiary institutions in South Africa Potgieter (2002) found the concentration of Black academics who were new to the academy was largely at the lecturer level staff or the higher ranks as managers and the number of Black female professors did not supersede that prior to 1994. Furthermore in a paper entitled “Employment Equity Challenges for Higher Education”, Loyiso Mbabane (2001 as cited in Potgieter 2002) highlights how large

numbers of Black lecturers are found in the higher ranks of management in the HE institutions that are historically Black and the number of Black lecturers in HE institutions that are historically White is less than 20%. Similarly it was found that there are fewer Black female lecturers compared to Black males and they mostly occupy the lower levels in the academy and very few of them possess doctoral degrees.

Therefore this study sought to describe the workplace experiences and perceptions of Black female lecturers who have succeeded in occupying the higher education space in South African Universities, post 1994 in the University of the Witwatersrand. This was to also try and unearth the reasons for the low tenure, retention and promotion rates of Black female lecturers in Higher Education (HE). It is hoped that the findings can be used to inform policy changes that can help create a conducive environment for the attraction and retention of black female lectures, which will also enhance their workplace experience.

1.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study a qualitative design and a case study approach was implemented to answer the aims and objectives of this study. A semi-structured interview schedule was used as a research tool to conduct interviews. The unit of analysis was 9 black female lecturers from the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand. I used purposive sampling to select the participants. Face-to-face interviews between 23 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes were conducted with the participants to collect the data. I used thematic analysis to analyse the data collected.

1.3 DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

The term Black is in reference to African, Coloured or Indian people who were born in the Republic of South Africa or obtained their citizenship by birth or are descendants of a South African (draft Code of Good Practice for public comments under section 9(3) of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003).

Teaching staff at the university is divided into different categories which is comprised of senior lecturers, principal tutor, lecturers, senior tutor, clinical tutor and tutor (L. Ngubeni, personal communication, December 06, 2017). For purposes of this research report the term lecturer refers to academics who both teach and do research in the university irrespective of their academic position or category.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research cannot be generalized to all the Black female staff at the University of the Witwatersrand as well as other universities in South Africa. In general, qualitative research often cannot be generalized. A limitation of the study was that of getting socially desirable responses which was countered during the interviews by the use of probes.

1.5 ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report is comprised of five chapters as follows:

This chapter discusses the background of the study and contextualized the area of this study. The summary of the methodology used in this study as well as the definitions of key concepts are also provided in this chapter. Lastly this chapter speaks about the limitations of the study. Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review and the theoretical framework that underpins this study. It reviews existing literature on the experiences of black female lectures in higher education institutions. The theoretical framework used in the study is the person-in-environment and this chapter discusses the relevance of this theoretical framework to this study. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology used in the study in detail. Chapter 4 is the presentation of the findings and an in-depth discussion of the findings that emanated from the research in relation to the pertinent literature and theoretical framework. The final chapter provides a summary of the major findings and recommendations arising from the study.

1.6 CONCLUSION

The chapter introduced the study, the definitions of key concept, the overview of the methodology, the limitations of the study and gave a brief overview of the other chapters in the rest of the report. The next chapter focuses on the literature review and the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter mainly focuses on the review of relevant literature that is related to the research study as well as the theoretical framework that underpins the study. In this chapter I discussed aspects that are pertinent to the experiences of Black female lecturers in universities.

2.2 LITERATURE REVEW

Historical depth

We are now in the twenty third year of the democratic dispensation in South Africa. The African National Congress government has brought about the symbol of possibilities, beginnings and introduced forms of liberation for previously marginalized groups in South Africa (Henson and Singh, 2010). There are a number of law reform and Affirmative Action measures that have been initiated in South Africa, with the aim of achieving greater social justice and equality to redress past unfair discrimination and privileges which were unearned in the workplace. These changes have marked dramatic changes to the Labour Relations Act of 1995, which became effective in 1996, the Basic Conditions Employment Act of 1997 and the Constitution of South Africa of 1996. These changes in legislation were followed by the Employment Equity Act of 1999, which has an anti-discrimination provision in it, the Skills Development Act of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999. The aim of the last two pieces of legislation was primarily not only to shift the focus from affirmative action but it was also geared at promoting recruitment, succession planning and development and training for Blacks and women, who were the designated groups and to redress the skills gap (Booysen 2007)

According to a report published by the Council on Higher Education in 2016 demographics at institutions of higher learning have changed dramatically post 1994, the representation of Black lecturer at faculty and in the high ranking levels within HE institutions has grown slowly and modestly, but inequalities persist, with 17 753 (40 %) Black academic staff members in 2013 compared with 26 847 (60%) whites (Council on Higher Education Report 2016).

In the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions of 2008 it was reported that in terms of academic staff, which was comprised of staff that both teaches and is involved in research, there seemed to be a marginal increase of 36% to 39% for Black staff in 2007. There was an increase of African lecturers from 23% to 25%. The trend was the same with executive and managerial staff, whereby there was an increased from 32% to 40% of the Black staff, and an increase of Black staff from 23% in 2003 which increased to 24% in 2007. The academic staff consisted of 43% women and 35% of this portion was part of the executive and management staff. It is important to note that as much as they constituted just a little less than 50% the female staff were mostly concentrated in the lower levels with a small portion of them who are professors.

Bhopal and Jackson's (2013) research on 'The Experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic Lecturers: Multiple Identities and Career Progression' was conducted in the United Kingdom on the universities there and according to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data in 2012/13 (HESA, 2014) out of a total of 17,880 professors, only 85 were Black (less than 1%), 950 were Asian (5%), 365 were 'other' (including mixed) and the overwhelming majority (15,200) were white (85%). As with South African universities the number of black lecturers were very low.

In the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion annd the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (2008), there were many submissions made, which were mostly of a structural nature as to why universities could not attract and retain black lecturers, especially in relation to black female lecturers. In exit interviews conducted at University of Pretoria (UP) in 2007 it was found that most of the staff members exited because of the workload pressure, culture was the reason for the departure of 10% to 15% of the staff members whilst only one staff member left because of an unsatisfactory salary. There was only one staff member who left for salary reasons, while 10% to 15% left for cultural reasons; which included family commitments such as moving closer to and taking care or elderly relatives. Exit interviews and climate surveys at the University of Cape Town (UCT) indicated that many left for promotion but are also not happy at UCT. This was ascribed to inter alia; a sense of not fitting in, lack of advancement opportunities which complemented their

capabilities, a sense of their presence not being recognised, students complaining about their ability to teach and the culture within the institution in general. Similarly in a study conducted by Bhopal and Jackson (2013), the findings were that a sense of not fitting into the environment, salaries which were not satisfactory and career trajectories which were slower than those of their White counterparts were some of the reasons of discomfort in HE for Black academics(Bhopal and Jackson, 2013).

In their study about the 'Experiences of Black Women Teacher Educators in the South African Higher education system' Maodza-Taruvinga and Divala (2014) argue that, even though the doors of HE institutions have been opened to South African Black female academics the importance of keeping track of their past and current experiences in this contested space still remains. Potgieter and Maleko (as cited in Maodza-Taruvinga and Divala, 2014) argue that Black women are not taken seriously within academia and are not given adequate support as producers of academic knowledge and that, and they further argue that these power relations that are gendered and racialised are so persistent that their ongoing interrogation becomes necessary. Maodza-Taruvinga and Divala (2014) further argue that it is imperative to weigh up the degree to which the HE environment has become supportive and enabling especially for women and that while the previously excluded are now being included, there seems to be a mismatch between this inclusion and the granting of sufficient resources as well as staff development for the women that complements their career growth and retention.

In the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (2008), the universities in their submissions agreed that they were aware of this and were making provisions in their policies to attract more black staff members. There are a number of initiatives that have been undertaken by universities in South Africa to tackle the issues of discrimination, promote staff equity and implement transformation. The University of Pretoria has Recruitment and Retention policies for black, female staff and staff members living with disabilities, and initiatives aimed at supplementing salaries, creating more posts and giving recognition to Black South Africans who display excellence as well as candidates with disabilities in whose case posts are always lagging in the post structure (Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions, 2008).

There is also a recruitment and retention fund established by the University of Johannesburg to attract black and female staff by providing salary supplements.

At the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) an Academic Equal Opportunity Fund for black lecturers and a Vice Chancellor's Discretionary Equity Fund for Black female lecturers was a diversity initiative aimed at creating staff development projects which would translate to permanent posts. The University of the Witwatersrand reported that these programmes have been ""successful because of the insistence that appointees are seen as permanent staff from the outset and are guaranteed job security"" (Wits policy document, 2008, p.18 as cited in the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions 2008). While they may have been successful, the expansion of the programmes has been constrained by funding.

The National Research Foundation (NRF) Thuthuka Programme focuses on the development of researchers who are women, Black and living with disabilities. For every R2 that the HE institution gives, NRF gives R1. At the University of the Witwatersrand in 2008, R2 million a year was spent on 50 staff members enrolled on the Thuthuka programme (Wits policy document, 2008 as cited in In the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions 2008). There is also the Mellon Mentorship Programme and it supports Black lecturers who are women, especially those who are pursuing their masters and doctoral qualifications within a number of universities (2008).

University of the Witwatersrand

The University of the Witwatersrand is a historically White English medium university. The University of the Witwatersrand as a university granted access to select Black students in the 1940s. It was therefore termed an "open university" and it embarked on futile efforts to uphold this openness in the 1950s when the Extension of University Education Act was passed which imposed the apartheid system into university settings (Phillips, 2000). The "open universities" is the term that was used to refer to those universities in South Africa who sought to maintain an open-door policy towards admitting students without regard to race and academic segregation: they included UCT, Wits, Rhodes, and Natal (Radebe, 2009). This is how the University of the Witwatersrand acquired its persona as a liberal university because it was at in conflict with the

state which wanted to impose segregation within the university (Phillips, 2000). Radebe (2009) however disputes this "openness" and she offers a few assertions to support this argument. Radebe asserts that there is evidence in post 1994 of the absence of an authentic transformation agenda in these South African universities that are formerly known as "open universities. She argues that despite the dramatic increase of Black students within these universities post 1994, there are several sign that serve as a manifestation of "the continuing systemic disempowerment of Black South Africans within these institutions" (Radebe, 2009, p.32).

These signs include inter alia evidence of a low concentration of students who are Black in certain programmes in certain programmes because of the higher requirement which has therefore resulted in high numbers of Black students in programmes in Humanities as these served as depositories for students that were rejected in the other programmes. She also argues that "there is a massive cluttering of African females in the social sciences and humanities as well as education" who in most cases do not even end up graduating (Radebe, 2009, p. 33). She further argues that there are skewed patterns when it comes to staff appointments as well in that Africans from other countries in African were more preferred because they were perceived to be of a less threat to the existence of white lecturers in that and it was rare that they had any motivation to challenge the practices in these institutions which were racist (Mabaso, 2009). This is relevant to this study in that it gives an understanding as to why there are such high numbers of Black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities.

INTENSE WORKLOAD

Bezuidenhout and Cilliers (2010) identified challenging workplace conditions that are currently prevalent in South African universities- there is intense pressure on academics to produce even more research papers, the class sizes that they need to lecture have gotten bigger and the number of postgraduate students they are required to supervise have increased. The heavy workloads, insufficient resources at their disposal and little support within the institutions, meant that more time and energy is required from them. Female academics were especially identified as being the most susceptible to experiencing a myriad of challenges, receiving less compensation and recognition for their contributions in the South African HE environment which is very dynamic. Some of the challenges which resulted in female academics experiencing burnout included inter alia, conflict in role performance, the merging of HE institutions and first year students who

were ill-prepared for university because they came from high schools with poor learning infrastructure (Van Tonder & Williams, 2009).

In a qualitative study that was done by Bezuidenhout and Cilliers (2010) on Burnout, work engagement and sense of coherence in female academics in higher-education institutions in South Africa, the findings were that it was a challenge for female academics to understand the structures of organization and values upheld by the universities within which they were employed. Female academics found understanding the expectations of performance and advancement and coping with conflicting demands on their time as being highly stressful. The highest levels of stress were found to be experienced at the lower academic levels, which are predominantly composed of female academics (Bezuidenhout and Cilliers, 2010).

EXPERIENCES OF BLACK WOMEN ACADEMICS

The HE environment has been found to not be very accommodating for Black women.

> *the individual journeys towards becoming a black woman academic in the South African higher education come with their own share of having been undermined on the way, simply because of being a woman more so a black woman in an environment where white males have been dominant for years* (Divala, 2014, p. 2080).

Divala (2014) further asserts that the voices of black woman academics continue to be unheard and their multiple experiences which are comprised of being a scholar, a mother, an aunt, a wife and many other roles they take on continue to be systematically ignored under the universalization of what it means to be an academic.

Articulations of what it means to be a professional and an academic by black academics indicates that racial, cultural and ethnic identities are suppressed and are subordinated to the expected norms and culture of the university (Levine, Walker & Jackson-Booth 2013). In respect of race, Black academics find themselves being subordinate to the normative structures and power configurations that dominate in the institutions of HE. Since these structures have preceded the presence of the black female lecturers in the academy for years, it becomes difficult to change them and this then creates tension between the professional and racial roles of black women academics (Levine et al, 2013). There are norms and expectations which govern the way

in which things are done in academia and these do not always take into account the needs of black female lecturers.

Madileng (2014) in an article entitled Critical Reflections: Experiencing discrimination, disrespect and disregard; forming a professional identity, which is a narrative account of her journey as a black female academic speaks of the challenges which she has experienced. In her article Madileng (2014) speaks about her experiences at a university in South Africa where she was allocated first-year classes and her colleagues who came after her would get senior even postgraduate classes despite having similar qualifications and differing years of experience. This was owed to the fact that the criteria for allocating lecturers to each level was not explicit and transparent. It was only recently when this was questioned that she was allocated senior classes and postgraduate student s to supervise and she deems the allocation of research supervision as questionable because it seemed that the "respected few" got postgraduate students to supervise. She also speaks about how she has felt devalued, disrespected and disregarded in meetings with her colleagues where she would try to give her input and the colleagues would make it explicit that what she was saying was not important by not listening and they would continue with other discussions or do something else whilst she is still speaking. Such experiences require further study and consideration because they can help us interrogate why the presence and contributions of Black female lecturers in academia are undermined.

Several other black female academics who are currently in academia speak about their experience in South African institutions of Higher learning and these narratives were compiled in the South African Journal of Education 2014. Nkambule (2014) gives an account of how when she was in her first year towards her doctoral degree she was given a class to tutor on an academic literacy course and some white males made comments about how they were not going to listen to her because she did not know what she was talking about. She says that to her this meant that the knowledge of black academics may be questioned in previously white institutions and it is the same with black students who want to major in English. "I did not have a problem with them challenging my knowledge; the problem was racial stereotyping and undermining of my knowledge" (Nkambule, 2014, p. 2008). This speaks to the undermining of black female lecturers as carriers of knowledge and the questioning of their credibility of their qualifications.

Similarly many black academics have reported incidences inside and outside the classroom where their authority and expertise were challenged, they were on the receiving end of negative behavior and attitudes from students and students have complained to the superiors of those black academics about the way in which they teach (Bower, 2002; McGowan, 2000, Stanley et al, 2003 & Vargas, 2002 as cited in Stanley 2006)

Ndlovu (2014) in her article entitled "Turning adversity into opportunity: A black woman's journey into academia" speaks of how having a mentor helped her navigate her way in fields where she felt she was a novice and therefore felt challenged (Ndlovu, 2014, p.2041). This is an issue about mentoring and support for Black women in academia which will be discussed later on. Nyamupangedengu (2014) who is part of the Math and Science Education department at the University of the Witwatersrand speaks of her own struggles with proficiency in the English during her undergraduate and postgraduate academic career. She speaks about how these challenges in English motivated her to attempt to create a safe space for students in her lectures who were additional language speakers so that they can communicate with both her as the lecturer and fellow students without feeling ridiculed, yet still ensuring that they acquired their disciplinary knowledge and skills. There seems to be a strong sense within black female academics to give back, mentor, to be role models and create another generation of black academics and accommodate areas that are lacking in Black students as a result of poorly resources basic education backgrounds.

SERVICE WORK

Black academics are expected to provide service work to Black students as a result of their background and personal journey, which often emotionally and physically taxing. Service work is sometimes referred to as the invisible work which black female lecturers are expected to do but it is a lot of times not taken into consideration when it comes to promotions and reviews, because universities push research and publications (Potgieter, 2002). This work is invisible and sometimes recognized work includes providing students with guidance and individual social support, performing academic advising as well as serving on committees that address issues that affect the transformation of HE the minority groups on their respective campuses. Black academics recognize their role of sociocultural responsibility as they are well aware of the ethnic and racial inequalities experienced within higher education as well as outside in the broader

community (Allan et al, 2000 as cited in Louis et al). This responsibility is not placed on their white peers, which affects the quality and quantity of scholarly work productivity which they produce as a result of the many distractions and obligations. Service work results in taking up time that could be spent on research and publishing and engaging in research (Edwards & Ross, 2017). Thus service work has a detrimental effect on advancement opportunities and retentions of black academics in academia (Louis et al, 2016).

MENTORING

One of the biggest lamentations of black academics is that of mentorship from senior staff members. In instances where black academics received mentorship, this experience enabled their success (Stanley & Lincoln, 2005 as cited in Stanley, 2006). Mentoring contributes immensely to how successful black academics during the process of tenure and promotion. Tillman (2001 as cited in Frazier, 2011) did research on the experiences of black academics at institutions regarding formals and informal mentoring relationships. The finding were that black academics benefited from formal mentoring which utilized structured and planned activities. Mentoring involves guidance in managing the teaching workloads, guidance or review, promotion and growth opportunities and navigating the academic space for academics who are new in academia. All mentoring does not necessarily guarantee success however it enables the mentee to negotiate the field of higher education. There are certain aspects which contribute to the success of a mentoring relationship such as willingness from the mentor and availability. Other issues that were raised in the study included the scarcity of black academics that have succeeded in academia in these white universities. This was an issue in that black academics find it difficult finding mentors in their institutions with whom they could discuss feelings of isolation, acts of racism and experiences of macroaggresion in their departments as well as within the institution (Tillman, 2001 as cited in Frazier, 2011)

A HOSTILE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Racial macroaggressions can be defined as condescending brief every day messages that are directed towards people who belong to a minority group. Macroagressions take the form of subtle snubs, dismissive looks, gestures and tones and are often delivered unconsciously (Sue et al, 2007 as cited in Alabi, 2012). Louis et al (2016) did a study on experiences of black academics of macroagression in the workplace at a research university which has a majority of

white people, all of the participant expressed that they experienced macroagression almost every day which came in numerous forms. The examples which they reported ranged from snide remarks, condescending comments which were said jokingly, mixed massages regarding their work performance and sneaky actions to inhibit progression their jobs (Louis et al, 2016). Some of the respondents who were Black Americans reported on how they became self-conscious and tried to not to appear as African as possible by carrying themselves a certain way, not wearing traditional clothing on days too close together and one spoke about being self-conscious about growing dreadlocks. Macroaggresions have a detrimental effect on black people as they have a negative effect on their performance in a multitude of settings (Sue et al, 2007 as cited in Alabi, 2012).

NO REVIEW/PROMOTION GUIDANCE

Patitu and Hinton (2003) in their study about the experiences of African American women faculty and administrators in higher education among the findings were concerns for the academics about the review/promotion process. The main concern that transpired comprised little to no mentoring throughout the process, information which was vague and contradictory about the review process, more being expected from them in comparison to their White counterparts and rules that were not written down pertaining to the process. Edwards and Ross (2017) state that black academics have a lack of comfort in managing the three areas in the academic space which are research, scholarly productivity, lecturing and service, which professors are likely to be evaluated on. The research of black academics are often devalued and marginalized as their topics of interest which are mostly on social issues affecting black communities are seen as self-serving. Black academics' areas of expertise and scholarship are often questioned and devalued. Their research needs to be part of what is regarded as the mainstream in order to be considered during reviews, which is where greater value is placed (Edwards & Ross, 2017).

COLLEGIALITY

"Collegiality is defined as the relationship that exists between colleagues and the university setting" (Frazier, 2011, p.6). Due to the lack of guidance by their colleagues who are acquainted with the academic environment and who could help them navigate the expectations, black academics have expressed that they feel invisible. This isolation induces so much stress and anxiety in black academics that in certain instances it causes the black academics to avoid the

office environment or interaction with their colleagues and such experiences cause black academics to distrust and distance themselves from their colleagues (Fries-Brit et al, 2011; Loius et al, 2016 as cited in Edwards & Ross, 2017). Some black academics have described unspoken rules and standards which dictate collegiality with their white colleagues. These unspoken rules included working twice as hard in order to earn to the respect and trust of white colleagues, speaking up more during faculty meetings as well as attending social gatherings which made them come across as interested or friendly (Stanley, 2006 as cited in Lois et al, 2016). This is also a contributing factor to black academics wanting to leave academia and hence the low retention rates.

CHALLENGES TO THE TENURE AND RETENTION

As much as there has been a concerted effort to increase the number of black academics in institutions of higher learning, the numbers are very low and one of the reasons is universities focusing me on the recruitment rather than the retention (Thompson, 2008; Trower & Chait as cited in Frazier 2011). Tenure and promotion play a critical role in the retention of black lecturers. There are some workplace issues that have been identified as barriers to tenure and promotion such as the review and promotion process, lack of personal time, the climate in the institution, the lack of mentors, marginalization of research and implicit discrimination (Frazier 2011). These factors affect black academics performing up to their role expectations satisfactorily and have a negative impact on their socialization towards promotion and tenure (Patitu & Hinton, 2003; Thompson, 2008 as cited in Frazier 2011).

According to Patitu and Hinton (2003) the lack of tenure and promotion opportunities for Black faculty at research universities can be reviewed in the context of their perceived satisfaction with the workplace. They further assert that the one other potential explanation could be that institutions are not aggressively seeking to recruit and retain Black faculty. Black academics have been forced into the revolving door scenario in academia. They are brought into previously white institutions where they become victims of little to no mentoring, institutional climates that are systematically racist and feelings of loneliness and isolation (Allen et al, 2000; Patitu & Hinton, 2003; Tillman, 2001 as cited in Frazier, 2011).

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Since support structures are scarce for black female academics many of them seek support structures outside the university setting many of which are informal support structures. In order to compensate for the shortcomings of the institutional climate black female academics stated that they sought out church, family and other African American organisations to provide a change to the institutional climate (Patitu & Hinton, 2003)

SURVIVAL SKILLS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

As a way to cope within the hostile institutional climate black female lecturers usually engage in what is known as John Henryism. "John Henryism is an active style of coping characterized by a belief that environmental events can be negotiated successfully via hard work and determination" (Clark, Adams & Clark, 2001, p.270 as cited in Louis et al, 2016). This happens when black academics work twice as hard knowing that the environment is hostile and unaccepting of black academics. John Henrysm occurs as a result of the macroaggression which black academic experience within the institution and unfortunately John Henrysm is associated with high levels of stress and increased blood pressure.

EXPECTATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Viljoen and Rothmann (2009) did a study to investigate the relationship between perceived organisational stressors and the levels of commitment and ill health of staff at the Tshwane University of Technology. From the study it was found that the biggest contributors of stress to staff members was were issues related to employment security and working under strict control which with very limited autonomy. There were certain factors such as working relationships which were complicated, time pressures, learners who were poorly disciplined, promotion policies which were vague, roles which were overloaded and insufficient resources which were found to contribute to psychological illness which showed themselves as burnout found at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). It was also found that the occupational stressors which staff members experienced resulted in staff members having low organizational and individual commitment and the levels physical and psychological health decreased.

Rothmann and Jordaan (2006) conducted a study to investigate the work experience of academic in selected South African universities as well as the impact of job demands and job resources on

their engagement. The results of their study indicated that vigor and dedication of the staff to the work was motivated by advancement and promotion opportunities and support from the organization. This resulted in them coming up with three recommendations that would encourage academics to be more engaged in their work within HE institutions and these included opportunities for growth in the job, support from the organization and opportunities for advancement.

The first suggestion that Rothmann and Jordaan (2006) came up with was for interventions to be made which comprised learning opportunities for academics which varied and self-determination in their jobs because these characteristics made the work to be psychologically meaningful (Rothmann and Jordaan, 2006). Secondly these interventions needed to ensure that the academics received support from the organization which included inter alia the clarification of their roles, dissemination of information to them, satisfactory relationships with their supervisors and the opportunity to participate in the making of decisions (Rothmann and Jordaan, 2006). Some of the suggestions included an active role played by leaders in academia by ensuring that there is support from the organisation by showing impartiality to the members of staff, mentoring them and having frequent interviews with them where they enquire about how they function personally as well as their professional and career development. The third recommendation was about a need in HE institutions in South Africa for advancement opportunities which included payment, training and the opportunities for promotion (Rothmann and Jordaan, 2006).

Coetzee and Rothann (2005) did a study and the objectives of this study were to identify the occupational stressors for staff members in a higher education institution; to assess the relationship between occupational stress, organisational commitment and ill health, and analyse the differences between groups based on language and years of experience. The recommendations that transpired was a need for an intervention from HE institution aimed at the reduction occupational stress experienced by staff members this intervention could be geared towards either the situation in which the staff worked or their coping capacity (Rothman and Coetzee, 2005). If the physical and psychological stressors are not countered they can result in various factors that can affect the organization negatively which include burnouts and employees missing work and a decrease in the levels of service. The suggested interventions included

explicit commitment from the organization, a change in the processes for making decisions and a system marked by an impartial distribution of rewards and resources.

2.3 THERORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The person in environment perspective is the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. The Person-in-Environment perspective in social work is a practice-guiding principle that highlights the importance of understanding an individual and individual behavior in light of the environmental contexts in which that person lives and acts (Kondrat, 2011). The person in environment theory has become the most prevalent approach for understanding the individual in his social environment (Kondrat, 2002). This is therefore relevant to my research in that it seeks to investigate the experience of Black female lecturers in the workplace. The aim of the study is to understand the contextual goodness-of-fit, mutual transactions between, and adaptations of individuals and their environment. This perspective is based on the notion that an individual and his or her behavior cannot be understood adequately without consideration of the various aspects of that individual's environment such as; social, political, familial, temporal, spiritual, economic, and physical (Kondrat, 2011). A person-in-environment perspective is said to provide a more adequate framework for assessing an individual, their challenges and strengths than an approach that focuses solely on changing an individual's behavior or psyche, or one that focuses solely on environmental conditions (Kondrat, 2011). The theory does however have its disadvantages. The first disadvantage is that the theory does not explain why things happen or give guidance about how to act to bring about change. The second disadvantage is that this theory tends to put overemphasis on the "bigger picture" at the expense of details. Lastly more value is placed on maintenance and integration over conflict which may result in it not challenging inequality explicitly. Does not encourage challenge of oppressive systems (Kondrat, 2011).

2. 4 ***CONCLUSION***

This chapter has provided a detailed discussion on the factors that affect the experiences of Black female lecturers in HE and the theoretical framework that underpins the study. Chapter Three will describe the research design and methodology applied during the research study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology that was utilized during the research process. Particular reference will be made to the sampling procedures, methods of data collection, and how the data was analyzed as well as the limitations of the research.

3.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research project was to describe the experiences Black female lecturers who have succeeded in occupying the Higher Education space in South African Universities, particularly in the Faculty of Humanities in the University of the Witwatersrand because it has a high percentage of black female lectures.

3.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study where to

3.1 To explore the workplace experience of black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities.
3.4 To investigate the highlights in their careers as lecturers.
3.5 To investigate challenging moments in their careers as lecturers.
3.6 To investigate what support networks are there for black female lecturers.

3.4 *RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN*

This study was qualitative. A qualitative research design is "a research paradigm that seeks to elicit participants' accounts of meaning, experiences or perceptions. Qualitative research generates descriptive data drawn from participants‟ spoken or written words" (Fouche & Delport (2002, p. 79). With the qualitative approach the researcher often makes claims based primarily on constructionist perspectives which is comprised of the multiple meanings that individuals give to their experiences, and their views that were socially and historically constituted and from that the researcher identifies a pattern (Fouche & Delport). This approach was appropriate in that it

enabled me as the researcher to explore the workplace experiences of Black female lecturers and through this approach they were able to describe their experiences to me in their context as well as their perceptions of their experiences especially because race and gender are socially constructed concepts. And because I wanted to understand this phenomenon in great detail and depth, this approach was the most appropriate.

The research design of this study was the case study. “a case study is an exploration or in-depth analysis of a “bounded system” (bounded by place and time) or a single or multiple cases over a period of time” (Creswell 1998, p. 61 as cited in de Vos et al., 2002). Thus the use of a case study enabled me as the researcher to provide both descriptive data as well as an in-depth exploration of the workplace experiences of Black female lecturers. The case study does have its disadvantages in that while it produces thick in-depth descriptions which describe and give an understanding of a social phenomenon, the information gathered cannot be generalized to other settings in a manner which is meaningful because the representation of the sample is a challenge due to the fact that a non-probability sampling method was utilized.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

According to Seaberg (1998, as cited in Strydom & Venter, 2002) a population can be defined a whole set from which the units or the individuals which the researcher wants to study are chosen. A sample is then a small portion of the whole set of units which make up the subjects of the actual study combined (Seaberg 1998 as cited in strydom and venter). The target populations was black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities. I interviewed a sample of 9 black female lecturers between the ages of 45 and 64. The original proposed sample was 13 participants however due to certain constraints such as sabbatical leave and busy end of the year schedules 9 participants were available for the interviews of the 33 that emails were sent to. I went to four departments within the Faculty of Humanities which are; the Department of Anthropology, Department of Speech Therapy and Audiology, Department of Psychology and the School of Education where I asked for contact details of the Black female South African lecturers in those departments, which I then used to send out the 33 emails. Interviews were conducted from 19 October 2017 to 03 November 2017. Pseudonyms have been used to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used as a method for the sample selection. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are targeted for a research study where the researcher wants to get a deep understanding of a particular context in society or a particular phenomenon (Neuwman, 2006). In this case the researcher chooses a sample of participants that contain elements that are most characteristic of the population (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 1998). I as the researcher chose this sample because it was the most characteristic and capable of producing the data which I wanted to collect. The inclusion criteria was that the lecturers must be Black, female, have South African citizenship and be full time lecturers at the University of the Witwatersrand. The participants were from the School of Social Sciences, School of Community and Human Development and School of Education in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand. I obtained the permission to conduct the study with the participants from the Deputy Registrar of the Faculty of Humanities attached as appendix C. I understand that this sample is not representative of the entire black female population in the Faculty of Humanities at the university of the Witwatersrand and that the results can therefore not be generalised. It should however be noted that, the primary objective of a researcher in qualitative research is not to generalize findings but rather to describe and understand the phenomenon under study.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION

I used a semi-structured interview schedule research instrument attached as appendix A to get the detailed and in-depth workplace experiences of black Social Work lecturers. Semi-structured interviews are more suitable when the researcher is researching a topic which is complex or where the issues are controversial or personal. According to Greenstein, Roberts and Sitas (2003) interviews are useful in qualitative research because they help researchers to gather in-depth data which gives the researcher insight into the feelings and experiences of the participants. This is what I sought to capture in this study. Semi-structured interviews have themes that guide the interviewer and the aspects which the interviewee speaks about or discusses (Greenstein, Roberts and Sitas, 2003). They also allow space for the interviewer to probe more about a particular aspect to get a better understanding of the participants' response. The interview schedule had 10 open-ended questions allowing for probing of certain ideas and a fuller discussion where

merited. This set of questions was designed to guide me as the researcher as well as the narrative of the participants. I ensured that the questions were attuned to answering the main question and the objectives. The main focus of these questions was on the experience of black female staff member, including feelings about themselves in the institution.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION

I used a qualitative method in the form of semi-structured face-to-face interviews to collect data. The advantages of using this data collection method is that communication was synchronous and that if afforded the researcher an opportunity to observe the social and the non-verbal communication of the participant which can reveal extra information, that could also be added to the verbal answers. The disadvantage in this regard is that the social cues can affect the direction of the interview especially if the interviewee is the subject of the research (Opdenakker, 2006). This however was curbed by the fact that since the research tool was a schedule of open-ended questions, this will allowed me to probe further into the responses of the participants. Data was collected through the audio recordings of interviews with the permission of the interviewees and notes for the non-verbal communication of the participants. An advantage of audio recordings is that it ensures accuracy of the data collected, a disadvantage however is that transcribing the audio interviews is time consuming (Opdenakker, 2006).

I resumed my data collection after I acquired my ethics clearance from the Department of Social Work attached as appendix B. The tool used was in the form of semi-structured interview schedule during each of the face-to-face interviews. It was in the form of ten open ended questions which guided the interview. This method of data collection gave me the opportunity to ask follow up questions on certain thoughts and feelings of the participants and I also could change the wording and the order of the interview questions whenever there was a need to do so in order to maintain the conversational style of the interviews. Lastly it gave me the room to explain what I meant regarding certain aspects or illicit clarification from the interviewees. The disadvantages of this method of data collection was that my social cues as the interviewee could have served to guide the direction of the interview (Opdenakker, 2006). In order to curb this I listened to the pilot interview and I picked up any personal triggers and I reflected on them and also did a reflexivity exercise and made a mental note to try and be as objective as possible. After each interview I would spend two hours on a reflexivity exercise to ensure that I had

processed my own thoughts and feelings so that they do not interfere with the next interview. The second disadvantage of this methods is that is that the in-depth interviews are lengthy and they take a lot of time to transcribe (Opdenakker 2006). I conducted 9 interviews and the length varied between 23 minutes to 1 hour 42 minutes, with 6 of the interviews being over 50 minutes. I renamed the interviews with uncanny titles and I enlisted the help of a senior fellow social work student to help me transcribe because she understood the issues of confidentiality.

Pre-testing of the data collection tool

The method of data collection was pre-tested using a black female lecturer who was not part of the actual study. Pre-testing was done to ensure that the questions are clear and facilitated the information required sufficiently. The pre-test was conducted 4 days before the day as opposed to the originally proposed two weeks before the official interviews which was to allow sufficient time for changes to be made to the interview schedule if necessary, due to time constraints. The aim of the pilot study was to ensure that the tool would elicit the relevant responses that would enable me to meaningfully explore, describe and understand the experiences of Black female lecturers.

Upon conducting the pilot study I became aware that within answering the first two questions, the respondents covered a lot of the aspects asked in the other questions. I then used the remaining questions as a guide to ask questions that were not covered when the participants answered the first two questions.

Interviews were conducted with the participants which ranged from 23 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes. The original data collection was designed at 1 hour long interviews using an interview schedule with 10 semi-structured interview questions. Each individual interview was audio recorded and transcribed. The data in this report is derived from the semi-structured face to face interviews. I also wrote notes on the non-verbal communication of the participants after the interviews because I did not want to interrupt the conversational style of the interviews.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Kawulich and Holland (2012) define thematic analysis as a form analysing qualitative data whereby the researcher identifies recurrent themes discussed by interviewees after which the researcher puts the data into categories with particular quotes that describe participant's experiences. I used thematic analysis for this research in order to make sense of participant's understandings and experiences and how these perceptions are constructed. Semi-structured interviews require organisation of data, transcription and analysis. Because I conducted all the interviews myself I was already aware of a few salient ideas and themes before I started with the thematic analysis. I listened to the interview recordings and read my notes and the transcripts and familiarized myself with them. The main aim was to analyze the answers to my main topic and the questions that I was trying to answer for the purpose of the research, after which I looked at the ideas and themes that emerged from the remaining data and looked at how they related to my questions. I identified salient themes, ideas that were recurrent or the choice of words and language uses as well as the patterns of thoughts and beliefs that seemed to create a link among the respondents in that setting. I then categorized these themes according to the objectives which they answered (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). I colour coded them as per each objective. In the findings I highlighted the themes that I did not envisage in the initial questions but they emerged from the findings and relevant to the study.

The disadvantages of this method is researcher bias. The researcher may be an amateur and have a very superficial view that can compromise the value as well as the validity of the thematic analysis which can result in the results presented in a manner desirable to the researcher (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). I employed reflexivity in order to curb this, by keeping comprehensive journal entries. After each interview I did reflexivity exercise and recorded this in my journal. Reflexivity is an important aspect in research and it is a process whereby the researcher reflects on how they could be influencing a research project is (Bourke, 2014).Bourke (2014) explains that this is a process whereby the researcher attempts to take an objective stance and have no influence whatsoever in the research findings. This is problematic because human beings are people with feelings and emotions and these could in one way or the other influence the research process. This argument brought up by Ruch (2002) notes that it is essential for researchers to be

aware of their emotional responses, as repressing them might also affect their findings due to the ignorance.

In order for the researcher to perform a thematic analysis which is good, there is a great necessity for the interpretation of the data to match the theoretical framework. Despite an analysis being good and interesting if it fails to explain its theoretical presumption or its purpose it becomes deficient of important information which then renders it defective (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). I used the theoretical framework as an eyepiece for analyzing the data. I discovered that the themes were strikingly similar to the issues in the literature review, however the experiences shared by the participants had more depth and detail.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I was very considerate of ethics for this research study. Participants in research in the social sciences usually divulge information which is comprised of personal details and their social context (Babbie and Mouton (2001). It is important that their participation is voluntary, they are allowed to withdraw from the study at any point they want and they have informed consent and confidentiality is guaranteed before participating in the study (Olgetree and Kawulich, 2012). A participant information sheet which entailed these aspects was emailed to each participant days before the interviews attached as appendix D. For this research study all participants interviewed were required to sign confidentiality agreements and permission for the recording of the interviews and use of data for future research as well as publishing and the participant consent form is attached ad appendix E. it was important that I observed issues of confidentiality to protect the respondents from any victimization or threat to their employment within the institution. Pseudonyms have therefore been used throughout the reporting of results. I as the researcher am a black Social Work student at Wits University and do acknowledge that my positive and negative experiences within the university setting especially as a first generation graduate may affect my interpretations of the findings. Some of the respondents came from department with very few female lecturers. I therefore ensured that I presented the findings without revealing the identities of the participants. In instances where this was a risk, I presented the findings collectively and did my best not to include any implicit identifying information. I obtained permission to interview the black female lecturers from the registrar in the faculty of Humanities attached as appendix C.

Trustworthiness

Validity is the strength of the qualitative study that aims to explore a problem or describe a setting, a process, a social group or pattern of interactions. This means that there has to be an in-depth description showing the complexities of the variables and interactions that are so imbedded with data derived from the setting, that it cannot help but be disputed (De Vos et al, 1998). To ensure for trustworthiness of the research report I have maintained a journal with reflexivity exercises after each interview. I also have my interview notes with the non-verbal communication of the participants. I also made comparison between the participants' responses. I wrote up verbatim reports of the interviews and the audio interviews are also available for my supervisor. Lastly I have explained clearly how I conducted the research and interviews and the steps that I followed in the thematic analysis.

Greenstein, Roberts and Silas (2003) point out that there are four principles in qualitative research that measure the quality of a research study and these are dependability, credibility, conformability and transferability. According to O'Leary (2004), research studies need to reflect truthfulness and authenticity of results gathered from data collected, as well as if the methods used in the study can be applied to other locations. For this research study, qualitative methods are the most suitable approach as the research seeks to gain in depth knowledge and understanding about the perceptions of black African students of being taught by black African lectures in 2017 at the University of the Witwatersrand. Validity is not of that much importance.
Data collection and analyses

An initial concern was that I am an African student and I will be interviewing African lectures and that there was a possibility that the lecturers may give socially desirable answers. The concern was that power dynamics may also be a factor as these lecturers are my seniors and that they may want to be perceived in a particular light. The participants however were very forthcoming during the interview and spoke as candidly as they could. The impression gleaned during the interview was that the interview was a cathartic outlet for the interviewees. This is why I had to maintain a reflexivity journal and to refer to it when interpreting the findings to ensure that I was not biased. The aim of the research project is to understand the contextual experiences, perceptions and feelings within the Faculty of Humanities.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are limitations to using qualitative research methods. To begin with, this research cannot be generalized to all the Black female staff at the University of the Witwatersrand as well as other universities in South Africa. In general, qualitative research often cannot be generalized. The other issue is that of getting socially desirable responses, which the best way to deal with this would be to probe to get a deeper understanding of the participants' answers. People tend to give responses based on their socialization or social construction of certain terms and experiences. The most important thing to note in this regard is that I would not be reporting on the lecturers' responses but the interpretations of these responses.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an in-depth outline of how the research was undertaken. The possible strengths and shortcomings of the research methodology and design have been clearly described. The ethical considerations were described in detail.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the research findings in relation to pertinent literature on the experiences of black female academics and the theoretical framework on the person in environment and in accordance to the research question and the objectives of the study. The findings of the study were categorized into salient themes and ideas and the different themes and ideas have been reported under the objective they were relevant to and which they responded to in the study. In writing up the findings I discovered that the themes that emerged were similar to and a confirmation to those in existing literature.

4.2 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS (n=9)

Pseudonym	Position	Race
Naledi Makhethe	Professor	African
Bonolo Lehau	Professor	African
Kerishnee Naidoo	PhD in progress	Indian
Mathapelo Mofokeng	Just submitted PhD	African
Rose Nhlapo	About to commence PhD	African
Debbie Diale	Has obtained PhD	African
Vuyelwa Khanyile	PhD in progress	African
Nosipho Mkhatshwa	Yet to commence Phd	African
Seipati Mokoena	PhD in progress	African

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the workplace experiences of black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand?

4.3 REPORTING AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.3.1 Objective 1: To explore the workplace experience of black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities.

The Paradox of the Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD)

Having a PhD has become increasingly important at a research intensive university like the University of the Witwatersrand. In order to address the experiences of Black female lecturers, the participants were asked what their experiences have been like at the start of the interview. All nine of the participants spoke about the PhD and how it was compulsory for them to have the PhD qualification in order for them to stay relevant in a research intensive University like university of the Witwatersrand and also to maintain their jobs within the university. This speaks to the issue of poor job security. As much as having a PhD was marked as a great achievement, as it creates access into important decision-making bodies in some instances and eligibility for

promotion opportunities, it left 8 of the respondents aggrieved and they were resentful about the journey towards obtaining the PhD. It was a struggle for the respondents to work on their PhDs whilst having to do their normal teaching work and having to supervise postgraduate students at the same time. A lot of the resentment towards the PhD stemmed from the fact that they were previously not required to have a PhD, as emphasis was put more on the teaching. Following is how one of the respondents described her feelings upon completion of her PhD. For Mathapelo Mofokeng getting the PhD was about securing her employment and here is what she had to

> *I am completing my PhD now have recently submitted..it feels like a burden, when it is finally done you are actually just sad that it took so long.. it is just sad it is just another paper being added to what you already have there is nothing to celebrate except to those who have been waiting and expecting it for you to complete and it is like here it is you should be happy that I finally have it so what is next? Tell me what is next…. there is too much pressure on having a PdD….There was a constant tracking of when you are finishing this thing because really you must have it…so you see when it comes you just want to throw it at people's faces and say here it is leave me alone, and there is no leave me alone because where are your publications… Now that you have a PhD we want to see a long list of publications*.- [Dr Mathapelo Mofokeng]

The quote by Dr Mofokeng voices her own anger and frustration regarding the constant performance management tracking that was seen as almost punitive and seemed to results in greater stress being placed on her. Dr Mofokeng was not alone in expressing these feelings and these sentiments were echoed by another respondents who is about to commence with her PhD.

> *the thing is when you start doing PhD everything stops your life revolves around the paper, you do not have friends you do not have family no children all you do is look at the computer and work… so it happens that on Sunday I was talking to someone who used to work here and I told them I will get help from this lady and he says no that person is in hospital. She is doing PhD she is sick it is really bad because they push you and push you.* [Nosipho Mkhatshwa]

Nosipho Mkhatshwa also expressed her concerns about the amount of stress as a result of the immense pressure regarding the performance management and tracking that comes with doing

the PhD as she herself is about to commence on her PhD and how as a result of this one ends up being consumed by their PhD studies and compromising other areas of their lives.

Five of the respondents were of the perception that the university expected staff member to obtain their PhDs but does not put structures in place to help support them with this endeavor in the form of mentorship and alleviating the lecturing workloads. When the respondents had obtained their PhD qualification, they felt it created a revolving door of being expected to meet certain requirements in order to keep their jobs such as the pressure to publish in order to meet annual publication quotas set by the university and still teach and supervise postgraduate students, under the same circumstances in which they obtained their PhDs with what they deemed to be little to no support. With what was perceived to be the absence of the necessary support this meant for the respondents that they worked under a punitive tracking system which was comorbid with stress and anxiety. Although there are mentorship programmes, equity plans and NRF/Thuthuka that are available as support structures but according to the perceptions of the respondents these are not adequate and because only 2 respodents spoke about NFR/Thutukha perhaps some of the respondents were not aware of these structures because they did not speak about them. This would then speak to poor dissemination of information within in the university to its designated target.

Workload

Another theme that is related to why black female lectures do their PhDs is that of the immense workload that gets put on them. Black female lecturers were also motivated to do their PhDs because they get given all the work which the senior lecturers do not want to do, which is owed to their low status as lecturers, or which they cannot do because they the senior lecturers are busy with their PhDs or publications.

> *the reason I decided to so my PhD is that while I was not doing it, I got to teach all this incredible [sarcastic] courses that I was not always equipped and I had to work really extra hard for that and never felt confident because I was teaching content I was not comfortable with…. and when I spoke to my head of division she said it was because other's were doing PhD and I was not so I had to carry the burden then I decided I was going to do my PhD…. .I feel that was a bit unfair giving me a whole range of subjects to*

teach that I did not even have competency in. Was totally, totally unjustified I have expertise in a particular field". -[Kerishnee Naidoo]

This excerpt reveals that on top of the already heavy workload which academic staff are encumbered with, lecturers at junior levels have to take on the workload of senior lecturers who are deemed to be busier with more serious commitments even if they are not acquainted with the content as long as the workload of the latter is eased. A similar experience was shared by Seipati Mokoena who is doing her PhD. As part of recruiting and retaining black academics the University of the Witwatersrand started a programme which takes in associate lecturers who teach whilst doing their PhDs with the aim of a permanent position after the completion of the PhD. The contract stipulated that they are supposed to get a minimal amount of work in order to enable them to do their PhDs, in is however the case in practice. According to the respondents as was the case in most cases with low level lectures, all the work of the other Professors and senior staff members work thrust on her because those other academics were busy with their publications. Dealing with these additional workloads meant that they are delayed in working on their own PhDs. This speaks to the issue of power of position, the inability to say no to professors shows a limitation of agency, which is very career limiting because entails the possibility of not meeting track and tenure requirements and would therefore translate to low levels of retention of black female academics.

This experiences are similar to those found by Bezuidenhout and Cilliers (2010) about how in the light of an increase of the workloads (increased research outputs, bigger classes to teach and an increase in supervision work) of academics in South Africa female academics were at the biggest disadvantage and one of the challenges that they face being that of role confusion, whereas instead of doing work which they are experts in they end up having to fill in the gaps for senior staff who are publishing. This in itself is an issue that requires interrogation in relation to policies pertaining to workload allocation and issue which Madileng(2014) grappled with as a Black female lecturer at a low level, in her institution where the criteria for allocating lecturers to each level was not explicit and transparent and she would get the heavier workload despite having similar qualifications to and having been there

The other reason which were given by the respondents for doing their PhDs which is also related to the issue of position of power included not having a voice and being excluded from key decision making spaces.

> *Cause I was once in a transformation committee and then last year, I'm not sure either if it was last year, they decided that we need to get rid of everyone who does not have a PhD in the committee, and the committee should consist of people with PhDs….It was because you don't have so you can't be taking decisions if you don't have*.-[Rose Nhlapo]

Rose Nhlapo shared on how she had recently been excluded from a certain committee because she did not have a PhD and that even though she has no pressure to do the PhD because she was close to the retirement age, she wanted to obtain it so that she could have a voice. This excerpt gives the impression that key decisions get made on behalf of lower level staff without eliciting their consent or point of views and that these decisions may not always be in their best interest hence the felt need by the respondent to do her PhD

Poor job security

Another challenge that is closely related to the paradox of the PhD is poor job security for black females in academia.

> *so you do not get permanent employment till you have achieved all of this, she is right it is usually a 3 year turnover, in those 3 years they constantly check on your progress are you managing, how far are you towards finishing your PhD. Of the 3 years finishes and you are not done then you are out.* - [Dr Mathapelo Mofokeng]

This was the same experience shared by Debbie Diale who has been a contracted worker since 2009, she did her PhD with the understanding that she would get permanently employed however as she is reaching its completion she has been made aware that it is not a "therefore" that she will be permanently employed in that she now has to compete with other PhD holders from outside for her position, who are published. Debbie reported to having "lost [her] job three times this year" because she had her contract renewed on monthly basis and because she was not permanently employed she never granted a sabbatical leave whilst she was working on her PhD. During the interview this respondent cried when she spoke about this aspect because she had made sacrifices to obtain the PhD and circumstances which were precarious and even after

obtaining her PhD she is still precariously employed because she had to compete for the post with other candidates. I used the skill of empathy to uncover what this challenge meant for her, however she said that it was too painful to go into. She shared on some of the challenges during that period,

> *"My director would say I hope you are not doing your PhD during working hours…and what's so ironic my director is also your supervisor and …So you ask yourself what does this mean"*. – [Dr Debbie Diale]

What emanates from this statement is that the perceptions of the respondents are that the university is concerned about its work deadlines and bottom line being met, whilst the lecturers carry their workload whilst doing their PhD and if they do not meet these expectations they are disposable. What is concerning is also the perceived inconsistency in the policies whereas according to the respondents the university seems to renege on some of the policy agreements pertaining to job security and the impression that comes through is that the university is not concerned about the job security of its employees.

I spoke to an officer in the Humanities HR office and she told me that the university does not give permanent employment to anybody without a PhD qualification. She also asserted that as an initiative towards diversity and the promotion of more Black females doing their PhDs as in the case of Seipati Mokoena the university offered 5 year contracts to the lecturers however it was not guaranteed that they would get permanent posts after the completion of the PhD and that these staff members would need to compete with other applicants when a post is opened as per policy. According to Mrs Ngubeni since 2013 Wits University has operated on a principle of not opening new posts, because of issues of funding. She reported that the university has been forced to only replace staff members only when there is a resignation, retirement or death on a permanent basis (L. Ngubeni, personal communication, December 08, 2017).

She also outlined that most of the lecturers at the Wits School of education were not full lecturers but senior tutors/associate lecturers categorized as temporary staff, who were mostly appointed on a three year contract whilst they pursue their PhDs, as they were taken on by the university when it took on the former Johannesburg College of Education and that they also needed to obtain their PhDs because they are encouraged to operate on what they can the standard teaching track, which lecturing, where research is part of the expectation. These

contracts are extended where required and that is why there are individuals in the system with 5 years tenure on this track (L. Ngubeni, personal communication, December 08, 2017). What is prominent from the discrepancies here is perhaps the issue of misunderstanding of policies on the side of the staff members

Lease (1999 as cited in Bezuidenhout, 2010) reported that female academics found it difficult to make sense of structures within the organisation and of the values of the universities that employ them. Comprehending the expectations of performance and advancement and coping with conflicting demands on their time as being highly stressful. The lower academic rank, which is often occupied by female academics, was the most susceptible to stressful experiences. This indicated a need within the university for better induction programmes for incoming black female academics.

Being a woman in academia and cultural expectations

Seven of the respondents spoke about how challenging it was to be a woman in academia and still uphold your cultural expectations. One respondent spoke about how she had to choose especially if she is still at child-bearing age between building a family and embarking on getting a PhD and building their career in academics especially if there are cultural expectations to do so. 8 of the respondents described the academic institution as not being accommodating for women and the cultural commitments which they had as women.

> *But the lows are there too, being Black, it is a man's world a white man's world. White professors dominating in history it is dominated by white professors. It is structured that way it is a male package so you find it hard to fit in you must really make more effort. It changes who you are. So for me it has challenged me a lot. It does not recognise family values and the environment is like that…but if you are the kind of Black who extracts from those kind of values, you fit perfectly because you have just become westernised you do not see the value in visiting the family full time or for an extended period you just sleep alone and work hard and shut doors and work on papers. Producing pieces, one thesis after another and you travel and you go to parties with your professors you party all night long. And the next day you just rest and get on your computer and work again.* - [Dr Mathapelo Mofokeng]

What is evident here is that there seems to be a particular mold of what defines an academic. In order to survive in the field of academia one must subscribe to this mold. It would seem that the perception of the respondent is that as a woman in academia one needed to take on the characteristics of white male professor who do not seem to have the same commitments as women and enjoy the privilege of independence that allows them as much time as they can to write and publish, which is a challenge for women who have households to run and other cultural commitments. What the respondent was saying in essence was that Black female lecturers need to mold themselves into masculinity which enjoys white privilege in order to fit into this environment because it does not accommodates them. This mold does not seem to be malleable and does not make allowances for Black female lecturers. There seem to be certain accepted norms as Divala (2014) puts it of what defines an academic such as those described by the respondent to which the cultural and ethnic commitment of Black female lecturers are subdued.

These sentiments were shared by Professor Naledi Makhethe who said that policies within university need to be changed in order to accommodate the needs and responsibilities of black female academics who are often required to work extra hours to fulfill their academic requirements. She spoke about some of the discomforts which black female academics experienced such as having to do their work at home such as marking, lesson preparations and having to travel to conferences and attending fellowships at other universities for days and sometimes periods as long as a year (which are considered on your curriculum vitae when you apply for a promotion), whilst having to take care of children and elderly parents and there are also issues of single parenthood. Four of the respondents reported to instances where they will arrive on campus as early as 5:00 am and leave as late as 22:00, sometimes sleeping in their offices just so they can get their work done.

> *Right now I have blankets here …Where there are days where I feel ahah I won't waste time to drive home and come back…Now (laughs) it's hectic you you virtually live this life.*- [Vuyelwa Khanyile]

Similar experiences were shared by another respondent.

> *When I am under pressure like I was this week and have to take work home I do not cook and my husband understands that we will buy take always. But most of the time I do my*

marking here and rather leave late maybe around 22:00 I do not want to take work at home. - [Nosipho Mkhatshwa]

It was apparent that black female lecturers had to carry the burden of social production which also almost acted as a penalty when it came to building their careers in academia because it was not accommodated and that aspect of their lives needed to be sacrificed in order for them to advance in their careers in academia, They seem to have to sacrifice their home life and household commitments in order to survive in their career as academics. This again is a confirmation of the assertions by Divala (2014) about the continued systematic ignorance of the multiple experiences of black women as scholars, in institutions which have been dominated by white males. Racial, cultural and ethnic identities are suppressed and are subordinated to the expected norms and culture of the university (Levine, 2013). The speaks to the privilege of independence from cultural commitments which males especially white males enjoy, which enables them to advance much quicker in academia.

Institutional climate

The higher education environment does not take black female academics seriously are assertions which have been made in Potgieter (2002). Professor Naledi Makethe shared her experiences and perceptions in relations to the institutional climate for the 11 years that she has worked at the University of the Witwatersrand.

So it does not matter what I do as an individual it will never change the perception that people have of Black women seen as people who are incapable, people who are people who will not make it into academia or people who are going to sleep their way up in academia… So I started noticing this when I obtained my PhD for an example, people who were three doors away from my door but did not know that I existed started to greet me… And I got promoted to senior lecturer and people started to see me and then I got promoted to Associate Professor people stared to take me seriously that in fact she does have potential and maybe she must be involved more. - [Professor Naledi Makhethe]

Professor Naledi shared what according to her seemed to be held stereotypes about Black women in academia. It seemed according to the respondent that Black women were perceived in a demeaning manner and their capabilities in working hard and carving a career in academia on

merit were despised. What comes across is that there seemed to be a perception that black female lecturers would resort to underhanded ways in order to advance in academia.

It seemed like Black women had to prove themselves through their work and even then it was not until they have reached the highest echelons in academia that they are paid any heed. Potgieter and Moleko (2004) put emphasis on how women were not taken seriously within academia and are not given adequate support as producers of academic knowledge and this is owed to the persistence of unequal radicalized and gendered power relations and they argue that this needs to be interrogated persistently (Maodza-Taruvinga and Divala (2014). There seemed to be a need for the acknowledgement of Black female lectures as carriers and producers of knowledge that was due to them to be given to them and for the misconceptions held about them to be dissipated. .

Collegiality

"Collegiality is defined as the relationship that exists between colleagues and the university setting" (Frazier, 2011, p.6). Professor Naledi Makhethe shares her experiences on the lack of forming relations with her colleagues

> *the fact that we have got more Black students than previously does not mean that it has changed the white culture at Wits University and because the culture is still white in that sense it is very important for me to strategise as an individual around the Wits culture so one of the things that I quickly learned when I joined Wits was that I cannot count on my colleagues for support, I do not have peers here I cannot count on them , there is no way I can work with them….yes honestly that is why I do not expect white people to just think that I am just a professor at Wits, no I am Black first and foremost so when I walk into the tea room and I find my two white colleagues.* - [Professor Naledi Makhethe]

Professor Bonolo Lehau similarly shared on how every day she is constantly conscious of the fact that she is a Black female academic; more especially in every committee meeting she sat on. She was somewhat also the token Black woman. She also shared on how it bothered her how people sometimes saw her as a safe space, where they could make certain comments about women and think that she would not be bothered, implying that she was an exception from the

rest of them because she is a black female professor and was therefore above the rest of the other Black women.

There seemed to be an invisible line of separation and these racial relations persist in collegial relations between these respondents and their colleagues. It seems as though white colleagues were not accepting of their Black colleagues who were then left to their own vices when they entered this institutional environment. These experiences are examples of microaggression in institutions of higher education. In the case of the second respond collegiality lay on her position as a professor which seems to set her apart from the other black women in the institutions. These experiences speak to the findings by Stanley (2006 as cited in Lois et al) that some black academics have described unspoken rules and standards which dictate collegiality with their white colleagues which included working twice as hard in order to earn to the respect and trust of white colleagues, speaking up more in faculty meetings.

4.3.2 To investigate the highlights in their careers as lecturers.

Representing black female academics

Two of the respondents who are full professors and have held leadership positions within the university and are part of a very small minority of black female professors in South Africa shared their experiences on what this meant to be women of their caliber in academia. These women serve as symbols of possibility for black women especially their students in academia and other aspiring black female academics. Both academics have consciously taken up the role to help pave the way and create access for other black women in academia and other arenas and are very active in the emancipation of women and advancing the interests of women

Professor Naledi Makethe who is presently in a managerial position spoke about her position possibly changed the perceptions on what black female academics are capable of. Her position had also allowed her the opportunity to influence certain policies within the university in favor of woman academics. One such policy is about the coincidence of sabbatical leave and maternity and how this prejudices women because the policy of the university is that if you take six months off leave you have to work for six months to cover the time off, which then meant that if a woman is pregnant during that time, she forfeits her maternity leave because she has to work back the six months sabbatical time as per the university policy. This is also a factor that could

never prejudice men in that they can take parental leave at any time. In reference to this particular policy she said

> *Yes it is under review right now, I made that suggestion and it went all the way to the VC's office and they are going to review. And I feel that of the want to keep women they must not punish for being women.* – [Professor Naledi Makhethe]

Professor Bonolo Lehau has taken an activist role in many issues that affect black women both nationally and internationally. She however lamented the fact that because there were so few female academics especially in professorial positions throughout South Africa, the few of them that are there end up being spread too thin and this puts an immeasurable amount of pressure on them and it is for this reason that she tried to assist as many women as possible in accessing the filed academia and advancing into senior levels. This puts pressure on a single Black female professor to sit on several boards and committees for issues of representation. There seems to be a burden of representation on Black female academics in the higher levels and this is the other side that is not seen to what is often viewed as a prestigious achievement. The woman who have reached these echelons have to work even harder to pave a way for other black female academics.

Service work and mentoring the next generation of black female academics

Service work which is sometimes referred to as the invisible work is work which black female lecturers are expected to do, which includes providing students with guidance and individual social support, performing academic advising mentoring them (Potgieter, 2002). A highlight that was expressed by most of the respondents was the opportunity to mentor, encourage and create another generation of black academics. Professor Naledi Makhethe shared this as being part of the affordances that being a black female academic has allowed her

> *another thing that it has helped me do is to work with Black people especially young women in my researches and my post graduate supervision has always focused on Black women and this has allowed for people to change their perceptions about Black women but also that Black Women gain the skills so that they can contribute to Nation Building. So the young women that I work with in my project*

Similar sentiments were shared by Professor Bonolo Lehau on how she empowered her research assistants in honing their skills for research.

As is the case with many Black academics and as literature has indicated these endeavors are not only limited to the institutional environment, they also spill over to the greater community. Professor Naledi Makhethe shared

> *It has opened doors for me to work with communities before I joined Wits I already worked for a few NGOs so I already did some community work but I am doing more and it is quite interesting that as an academic I am doing more community work. Because out there our people look up to educated people as people who are going to help then with the problems that they experience, so I receive a lot of invitations to do one thing or the other.*

Similar to the burden of representation at leadership levels this type of service work demands a lot from Black female academics. This is work added onto their general workload, however there seems to be a sense of yearning to give back within them. Black academics recognize their role of sociocultural responsibility as they are well aware of the ethnic and racial inequalities experienced within higher education as well as outside in the broader community (Allan et al, 2000). This however serves as a double-edged sword in that as literature has shown many a times service work takes up a lot of time that can be used for scholarly activity. This also raises concern about issues of self-care and aspects such as burnout.

Classroom

Eight of the respondents expressed intense fervency for teaching and interactions with their students both inside and outside the classroom during consultation time. They expressed a genuine interest in the challenges which their students faced especially pertaining to socio-economic challenges as they understood how these challenges can affect them academically and their chances of completing their degrees because they could not always reach all the students due to the large class numbers they tried creative ways to cover the gaps and accommodate needs such as posting comprehensive lecture material on Sakai especially for those students that could not afford the costs of coming to class every day. Other contributions they made included mentoring their students and guiding them on personal issues. One participant stated that she

knows that there are students who sit in the class and do not understand what she is talking about due to deficits in their previous schooling and she was dismayed because she could not reach out to them because of the large and classes and because the students were too afraid to talk to her though she tried her best to convey her availability to them. The one participant who did not express this fervency said that she had become apathetic towards the students as a result of the stringent workload and deadlines, her main concern was with students doing the work on time.

As much as this service work is commendable it can take up a lot time which can be used for scholarly productivity. It is also sad that this type of service work is not taken into consideration during reviews and because at times it seems to outweigh the time that the lecturers spend in the lecture halls lecturing. This is in line with the findings in other studies that, service work causes scholarly work to be postponed or down shifted (Edward & Ross, 2017). This causes a delay on the advancement opportunities and retentions of black academics in academia (Louis et al, 2016).

Opportunity to travel

Some of the respondent spoke about the opportunity to attend conferences, going to other countries and learning.

4.3.3 To investigate the most challenging moments in their careers as lecturers.

Dehumanising the person at the expense of production

Building a career in academia seemed to come at a cost to the individual's welfare. Kerishnee Naidoo shared on some of these aspects

> *I am telling you, because it is so difficult to try find time because the workload itself is very heavy…. I know one of my colleague's child became a drug addict while she was busy, she was an absent mother, other people have lost family relationships the costs are enormous…what is there in place to help us in this thing that we absolutely need in order to retain our jobs…you could lose your husbands or wives…Or you can lose your health that is a very big issue…everybody I know the people I am talking about in our division every single one has got these morbid diseases… I can speak for myself, I have got high blood pressure as a result of it and somebody else can tell you of something that is*

happening to them. There is so much pressure you do not even have the time to exercise, the time to think if you are eating healthy. Because all you are thinking is I have this work to finish and you feel guilty and if you do not do it is because you are so exhausted you cannot even move.

It seems like a lot of sacrifices have to be made in order to say in the system. The challenge is not just with getting the PhD but also with keeping up with publications and our requirements that get considered for advancement and promotion opportunities. It seems that advancement for black females in academia comes at a price. Especially if one thinks of how masculine this institutional environment is and it has no sympathy towards the needs of women. These are some of the factors which affect the retention of black female lecturers within academia because the costs are immense physically, psychologically, socially and culturally. It seems as though in the end many are left with no choice but to choose between their careers as academics or their other social expectations. Literature has already identifies that it is women especially women at lower levels who bear the brunt of the heavy workloads and lack of resources in universities. Viljoen and Rothmann (2009) did a study to investigate the relationship between perceived organisational stressors and the levels of commitment and ill health of staff at the Tshwane University of Technology. From the study it was found that the biggest contributors of stress to staff members was were issues related to employment security and working under strict control which with very limited autonomy.

Attacks on their intellectual confidence and attempts to inhibit their intellectual performance

Despite South Africa removing apartheid for the past 23 years into the democratic dispensation it seems that it is still difficult for some students to accept authority and scholarly intellect when it comes in the body of a Black female. Some of the respondents reported to being challenged and their intellect questioned when they teach because they are Black women and one of the respondents even experienced a Fallist protest against her lecture.

Vuyelwa Khanyile shares her experiences

"once you step into their classroom in a science education class…or the science education of the university….they're expecting I suppose a white male professor…there

are times where I I have become so angry that…I've told them several times that I'm not here by default ..I qualified…so when I first came here I started in July and they had just written their mid-term exams…the lecturer, told me that mmm just make them aware that they need to pull up their socks…because they did badly in this exam… so I got to class and conveyed that message ..and they retaliated and they said "Ja how do you expect us to do our best" …the lecturer who was with them from January to June...was also a Black female…they said "how do you expect us to excel when we are taught by" I remember that so vividly…"when we are taught by people who are not qualified"…and I said ah interesting, how do you determine that a person can stand before you who is not qualified…and I want to warn you …That because English is not my first language I won't twang.

Another respondent reported that students went and complained to her head about being taught Afrikaans by a Black female lecturer whom they deemed as not qualified and it was only after she proved her abilities that she was never questioned about it again.

It seemed that as a Black female lecturer you first needed to prove your intellectual credibility before you could be accepted in some cases in the classroom. The level of their qualification has been judged by the colour of their skin. The black female academic's intellect has been dissected and judged on their proficiency of the English language and the accent that they had. There has also been the added burden of exerting their authority and taking back their power as a Black female lecturers when confronted with explicit disparaging behavior from the students. In her narrative Nkambule (2014) talks about this racial stereotyping and undermining of her knowledge that she experienced as a black female academic. This is also highlighted in other pieces of literature where their authority and expertise of black academics was challenged, they were on the receiving end of negative behavior and attitudes from students and complaints being made to senior staff and administrators about their teaching (Bower, 2002; McGowan, 2000, Stanley et al, 2003 & Vargas, 2002 as cited in Stanley 2006). There seems to have been a need for black female academics to prove their competence in the classroom, whilst there seemed to be an irrefutable presumptions that white professors were qualified and possessed intellectual dexterity especially in fields of study such as the sciences.

4.3.4 To investigate what support networks are there for black female lecturers.

Institutional support

There was vagueness on what constituted support structures, which enabled an efficient working environment which allowed them to reach their full potential as black females in academia among the participants.

> *In post-apartheid South Africa you get a lot support or what looks like support, so all this things are superficial but they do work well for you…even at their superficial state so you do get some support that says you are Black or you deserve funding more than anyone else because you are a Black female.* – [Dr Mathapelo Mofokeng]

What most of the respondents spoke about was the superficial nature of transformation and that Wits does not show any commitment to transformation and that it was just a drive which the university has taken on because it is a requirement from the department of Higher Education but there is no inherent commitment from Wits to transformation.

> *Aga transformation is just a concept, it's a rhetoric, it's a song, yes. Because when we are in transformation meetings it's so tense we fight over very little things…So you'll get out of that meeting more overwhelmed and discouraged. – [Dr Debbie Diale]*

The respondents felt that the increase of black female lecturers was driven more by policies of affirmative action and reaching race quotas. In the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (2008) it was found in a study conducted in the universities in South Africa it was reported that most of the institutions were not committed to transformation and that it was a top down process exerted on the universities. This can also explain why the environment is not conducive to the retention of black female academics.

Structural gatekeeping and vague criteria policies to suit political ends

There seems to be a need for formal support structures that can give guidance on the review and promotion process within the institution. Professor Bonlo Lehau sits on several committees spoke about some of the structural gatekeeping that comes in the form of funding, support for promotion and getting ratings which also affects the chances for promotion. She spoke about

how there was a lot of politics surrounding who gets funding, which junior lecturer or postgrad student gets funding; which is a very essential aspect of the scholarly career because funding enables them to do you research especially for ethnographic studies, it allows them to publish and to travel which are some of the factors that get looked at when they apply for promotion.

> *So promotion is incredibly political…..Uhm people who need to get promoted don't always get promoted. People who have ticked all the boxes don't always get promoted…..People are constantly told to postpone applying for promotion, people sometimes the there is… the criteria [is] not absolute I mean there's the…people can pretend to be questioning certain aspects of the person, even though the person has met all the requirements to a t. So there's there's room for flexibility so gate keeping happens there….but also sometimes people go to their line managers and they say, I want to apply for promotion and the line manager says "you're not ready"…The number of times you hear especially more junior staff telling you that, they've been dissuaded. Is is it happens a lot…so those are some of the gatekeeping things. It's very rarely kind of crude and explicit so, I mean gatekeeping works best when you are not able completely with absolute authority in the moment that it's happening to be able to say, this is about race and gender.* - [Professor Naledi Makhethe]

It seems that there are no clear guidelines about the process of promotion. The criteria is for promotion is vague and it is malleable to suit certain political ends. What is disconcerting is the shrewd manner in which gatekeeping takes place. In their study about the experiences of African American women faculty and administrators in higher education Patitu and Hinton (2003) found that one of the main concerns for the academics was that of the review/promotion process, unclear and conflicting information about the review process, being faced with higher expectations in comparison to their white colleagues and being subjected to unwritten rules about the process.

Mentorship

Considering the myriad challenges which Black female academics face in navigating the academy, mentoring can play a major role in enabling them to do so.

> *Another thing that I think is lacking in this place is lack of mentorship, where someone would sit down with you on a one on one basis and talk to you about your vision on this whole career path where would you like to go, and if you need to go in that direction this are the things that you have to do, and to also tell us this are the opportunities. You know I have heard from another person who teaches at another University she said to me that when the AU funding because available and they had one person in their university who knew that this money was available they called staff and said this money is available to improve foundation phase you do not have a PhD we will support you for 3 years or years go finish your PhD and that people finished their PhDs full-time in the minimum amount of time, here we had nothing like that nobody was told that. There was no guidance in how to fast track our studying most people on this campus we take 5 up to 7 years to finish a PhD.* – [Kerishnee Naidoo]

Another experience for the need for mentorship was shared by another respondent

> *I felt neglected remember we are from the apartheid system, that is most of us who have been lecturers in the townships…nobody helped us adapt to the new environment, teach us about research or how to use the Internet you had to learn as you go.* - [Nosipho Mkhatswa]

It seems that it much more difficult to navigate the academic space if you do not have a network especially one that creates access to information. The challenge is that the selected few that have information do not disseminate it. Considering the educational background of some of the black female lecturers some do need assistance. The lack of support and guidance causes the Black female academics to take longer to get to their goals and this translates to a delay growth and promotion. Mentoring plays and essential role in enabling the success of black female lecturers. Studies show that academics who have received mentoring in the form of planned structures have benefited from it. Mentoring involves guidance in managing the teaching workloads, guidance or review, promotion and growth opportunities and navigating the academic space for academics who are new in academia (Tillman, 2001 as cited in Frazier, 2011).

Informal support

Because of what was perceived as a lack of support structures within the institution the respondents found sanctuary in alternative forms of support structures. Most of the respondents spoke about getting support from external sources such societies such as groups formed by other black academics, Whatsapp groups, seminars outside the university where they would meet with other black academics and share their struggles which were usually once-off occasion. Some of the respondents spoke about gathering with other academics and supporting each other in academic writing. Most of the respondent spoke about getting most of their support from informal structures such as churches, family, having a housekeeper and social gatherings in their home communities. Seven of the respondents reported an overlap and enmeshing of their home and work life because their work life takes up so much time. Most of the respondents spoke about having either supportive spouse or children who could take care of themselves and understood that their mother had to work from home. It seems that most of the respondents had to get the buy in of their family members into understanding and adapting to their working situation. Mathapelo said that she had never belonged to any support structures for black female lecturers and did not know whether such structures existed. It seems like the support system currently rests on black academics within the system getting to know each other and forming support networks amongst themselves.

The findings were the same in other studies that, in order to compensate for the shortcomings of the institutional climate black female academics stated that they sought out church, family and other African American organisations to provide a change to the institutional climate (Patitu & Hinton, 2003)

The person-in-environment perspective informed the analysis of the findings. A person-in-environment perspective is said to provide a more adequate framework for assessing an individual, their challenges and strengths than an approach that focuses solely on changing an individual's behavior or psyche, or one that focuses solely on environmental conditions (Kondrat, 2011). The aim of the study was to understand the contextual goodness-of-fit, mutual transactions between, and adaptations of individuals and their environment. Aspects that came out from the study included the lack of agency or the limitations in Black female academics exercising their agency. The work environment for Black female lecturers within the Faculty of

Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand seem to be a regimented one. The findings also gave insight into why black female academics are mostly at the lower levels, the low retention rates and low promotion rates of Black female lecturers. The most salient characteristic of the participants was their resilience in the face of the challenges which they face within the workplace. Although all the respondents spoke about the workplace challenges which they have been facing none of them spoke about wanting to leave academia permanently. Those who spoke about leaving were those who are close to the retirement age but still spoke about exploring endeavors that involved the academy. Even under these circumstances the participants still expressed high levels of commitment to their students

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter the findings of the research study were presented and discussed in relation to the pertinent literature and the theoretical framework which underpinned the study. The discussion of findings was mainly been guided by an attempt to answer each of the four objectives of this research project and various themes emerged out of the thematic analysis. All four objectives of the study were answered and the answers were presented as the most salient themes and ideas categorised under each objective. The Final Chapter will now provide a summary of the major findings and conclusions drawn from the discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter, the summary of the major findings will be made based on the objectives of the study and conclusions of the research are presented as drawn from the presentation and analysis of data in Chapter Four. Recommendations and areas for further research are also suggested. The recommendations in this chapter are based on an attempt to provide possible remedies to some of the most pertinent issues that hinder the progress of black female lecturers in academia.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The summary of the study will be made based on the objectives of the study.

5.2.1 To explore the workplace experiences of Black female lectures

The findings of the study were that the lecturers need to have a PhD in order to have permanent employment at the university. This is a finding that was unexpected. What came with this finding was that the constant performance management and tracking on the progress of their PhD studies that was seen as almost punitive and seemed to results in greater stress being placed on the respondents. Being given the workloads of senior professors and lecturers on their already existing heavy workloads and the quest to have a voice in key decision making spaces was also another motivation for some of the respondents to do their PhD, which spoke to the issue of position of power. Job insecurity was also an issue which came with some of the respondents doing their PhDs and thinking that their obtaining the qualification guaranteed them permanent employment only to be told by the university that that is not the case; this spoke to the issue of the importance of induction programmes for new Black female lecturers especially on institutional policies regarding their conditions for permanent fixed employment. The academic space was also not accommodating for Black female lecturers who either found themselves having to choose between their cultural expectations for social reproduction and building a career in academia and also having to work very long hours to in order to carve out a career for themselves in academia. The institutional climate in the institution was such that the respondents felt that Black female lecturers were not taken seriously as producers of knowledge and had to work twice as hard in order for them to get recognized in the institution. Lastly a collegial relationship between the Black female lecturers and their white counterparts according to some of the respondents was close to non-existent.

5.2.2. The highlights in their careers as Black female lecturers

The findings showed that the very small representatives of Black female professors took on several initiatives to advance the interests of aspiring Black female lectures as well as in other aspects to increase the representation of Black females in other sectors. There was however also the issue of the burden of representation where the Black female lecturers in higher positions had to be on several committees at the same time for issues of representation, because there was a

very small number of them. Service work in the form of social support for their students, involvement in community upliftment programmes as a result of their sensitivity to socioeconomic issues facing Black people in society and the mentoring of the next generation of Black Female academics resonated with some of the black female lecturers. The lecturers showed fervency for teaching their students in the classroom and marked this as an important aspect in their careers in academia with the exception of one respondent who said that the stringent deadlines and regimented environment in the institution made her apathetic towards her students. Lastly the respondents were appreciative of the opportunity to travel especially to conferences and other institution of HE especially overseas which being an academic afforded them.

5.2.3. To investigate the most challenging moments in their careers as lecturers

The findings showed that the respondents found themselves in a position of having to sacrifice their welfare in certain aspects of their lives such as socially, emotionally and physically at the expense of production and meeting university deadlines. The second issue were those of racial attacks in the classroom where students would question the qualification of Black female lecturers and instances where students would complain to senior staff member about being taught certain courses especially in the sciences by Black female lecturers.

5.2.4. To investigate the support networks that are there for Black female lecturers

The findings showed that the respondent felt that there was little to no institutional support for Black female lecturers and that the current increase of Black female lecturers within the institution was driven more by policies of affirmative action rather than the university's commitment to transformation. Structural gatekeeping and vague promotion criteria which seemed to suit certain political ends seems to be an issues which served as an impediment to the promotion opportunities. The need for mentoring in the form of career guidance especially pertaining to issues of reviews and promotions and guidance regarding the availability of funding towards PhD studies was especially highlighted by the respondents. Because of the perceived lack of support for Black female lecturers within the institution most of the respondents resorted to alternative informal systems for support such as forming Whatsapp groups for Black academics, study groups for Black academics pursuing their PhD studies, societies in their communities, family and church.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The academic space remains a contested space especially for Black Female lectures. Black female lecturers experience a devaluing of their scholarship and intellect, infringement on their time in having to carry the workloads of other lecturers, lack of mentoring and implicit and covert forms of racial macroaggression within the institution (Stanley 2006). As much as work is being done by the institution to recruit Black female lecturers, the academic workplace landscape still needs to be cultivated to accommodate Black female lectures, so as to increase the tenure, retention and promotion number. There is an increase in black female lecturers but usually at the lower levels. There is a turnover however this turnover does not seem to be sustained. The university need to start taking cognisance of the constraints to the increase of black female lecturers and start paying attention to circumstances that keep them out and causes them to leave so much. I have written some recommendations which can assist with these issues.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

To the university

1. The university needs to commit to transformation not just on paper but also in practice. It is important that it cultivates an environment that inclusive at a departmental as well as institutional level.
2. The institution should have a transformation office that keeps track of issues of transformation at grass root level and channels to which Black female academics can take their grievances to and get fair and objective mediation. The institution needs to create forums that address these issues and professional development opportunities especially for Black female Academics that are new in the academy
3. Policies pertaining to issues of workload allocation, tenure, funding and promotion should be unequivocal and transparency should emphasized
4. The institution needs to create mentoring programmes for Black female lecturers at a departmental level and this should be accompanied by periodical evaluations of the mentoring relationship to ensure that the strategies are implemented and foster the continued development of Black female lecturers.

To Black female lectures

5. I came across very little literature that speak about Black female academics advocating for themselves. I believe that Black female academics need to start being vocal about their challenges to their white colleagues and how these affect transaction with the environment and their growth in academia.
6. Since the Black Female academics are part of the institution, these are not Black female academics' issues but institutional issues because these conditions arrest the development of Black Female Academics. Courageous conversations about race need to take place within the institution.

To the Department of Social Work

7. Critical Social Work involves the promotion of social equality and challenging structures which are marked by prejudice and as a department in which 6 of the 9 lecturers are Black females it would be commendable for the department to start these courageous conversations about race and create support systems for Black female lecturers which could spill over to other departments and serve as a blueprint for the rest of the institution. They could conduct departmental study on challenges which they have faced as well as highlights in their careers in academia and write a paper on this which they can present to the Faculty of Humanities or the Transformation office.

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Appendix A

Schedule of Semi-structured interview questions

1. What is your view on the increase of black female lecturers within the University of the Witwatersrand?
2. What has your work experience been like as a black female lecturer?
3. What affordances has being a Black female academic allowed you?
4. What constraints have you experienced as a black lecturer?
5. What are your views on growth and promotion opportunities for Black female lecturers?
6. What support networks are there for black female lecturers?
7. How do you think that your students experience you in your capacity as a black female lecturer?
8. How do you manage to balance your work and home life as a female in academia?
9. What kinds of mechanisms have you put in place to help assist you in managing your work life and reaching your full potential whilst also performing at your optimum best in your home life?
10. If you were the vice chancellor of the university what changes would you bring about, especially pertaining to Black female lecturers?

DEPARTMENTAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SOCIAL WORK) CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW/2/17/8/14

ROJECT TITLE: The experiences of Black female lecturers in the Humanities Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand

RESEARCHER/S Mbali Maseku (880065)

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: SHCD Social Work

DATE CONSIDERED: 8 September 2017

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE: Approved

EXPIRY DATE: 30 November 2018

DATE: 26 September 2017

CHAIRPERSON: Dr E Pretorius

Cc: Supervisor: Dr Roshini Pillay

DECLARATION OF RESEARCHER(S)

To be completed in **DUPLICATE** and **ONE COPY** returned to the Administrative Assistant, Room 8, Department of Social Work, Umthombo Building Basement.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorised to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the committee. **For Masters and PhD an annual progress report is required.**

SIGNATURE

27/09/2017
DATE

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR

2 October 2017

Ms Mbali Maseko
Student number 880065
School of Community and Human Development

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

"The experiences of Black female lecturers in the Humanities Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand"

This letter serves to confirm that the above project has received permission to be conducted on University premises, and/or involving staff and/or students of the University as research participants. In undertaking this research, you agree to abide by all University regulations for conducting research on campus and to respect participants' rights to withdraw from participation at any time.

If you are conducting research on certain student cohorts, year groups or courses within specific Schools and within the teaching term, permission must be sought from Heads of School or individual academics.

Ethical clearance has been obtained. (Protocol Number SW/2/17/8/14)

Nicoleen Potgieter
Deputy Registrar

SOCIAL WORK
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4472 • Fax: 011 717 4473 • E-mail: socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Participant information sheet

Date 23 October 2017

Dear Ms

Re: request for your participation in a research project

I Mbali Maseko request your participation in a research project on **the experiences of black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand**. I am a Final year student in Social Work at the University of Witwatersrand. I want to explore the workplace experience of black female lecturers in the Faculty of Humanities; to investigate critical moments in their careers as lecturers, both the negative and the positive and to explore the changes if any that they would like to see transpire within the workplace.

As a Black female lecturer, you are ideally positioned to contribute to my research study. I would appreciate an opportunity to interview you regarding my study. Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary and there is no reward for participating or penalty for not participating. Involvement in this study requires your participation in an interview of approximately 30 - 45 minutes which will be scheduled at a time and place that is suitable for you. You will not be obliged to answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable and therefore have the option to decline to respond to any questions asked. You will also have the option of terminating your participation at any stage that you choose.

All data collected through the interview will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. If you decide to participate, I will ask for your permission to tape record the interview. No one other than the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications for six years if no publications emanate from the study. You will also have the

option of remaining anonymous in which case all transcripts and reports will be appropriately coded to ensure that your request is fully respected. A copy of your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used for academic purposes including books, journals and conference proceedings.You will also be provided with the transcripts to check for trustworthiness as well as the research report if requested.

It is my understanding that the study will not pose any risks or result in any benefits for you. However, if you feel that you have concerns regarding the study or if you require any additional information, please contact me on 078 433 0337 or on my email 880065@students.wits.ac.za, or my supervisor; Dr. Roshini Pillay on 011 717 4486 or email her on Roshini.Pillay@wits.ac.za if you have any questions regarding my study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability. If you have any concerns and complaints about the study, please contact Human Research Ethics, contact details; Chairperson: Jasper.Knight@wits.ac.za or the administrator: Shaun Schoeman: Tell: 011 717 1408 or Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ca.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Kind regards
Mbali Maseko

SOCIAL WORK
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4472 • Fax: 011 717 4473 • E-mail: socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Participant Consent Form

I hereby confirm that:

I have been briefed on the research that **Mbali Maseko** on **the experiences of black female lecturers in the Social Work department at the University of the Witwatersrand**

- I understand what participation in this research project means and the procedures which will be followed,
- I understand that my participation is voluntary,
- I understand that I have the right not to answer any questions that I do not feel comfortable with,
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw my participation in the research, at any time, I so choose,
- I understand that any information I share will be held in the strictest confidence by the researcher and that a copy of my interview transcript will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard or a password protected computer and may be used for future research,
- I understand that my responses will be used in the write up of an honours project and may also be presented in conferences, books chapters, journal articles or books.
- I give consent to tape record the interview,
- I understand that the recording will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed,
- When the data analysis and the write up of the research study is complete, the audio-recording of the interview will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study,
- The transcript with all the identifying information directly linked to me removed, will be stored permanently and may be used for future research and
- Direct quoted from my interview, without any information that could identify me may be cited in the research report or other write-ups of the research.

Optional clauses:

□ I hereby request a copy of the research report

Signed by_____on_____at_____

Signature_____