Tired of Always Grinding: Black Womxn Faculty's Experiences During COVID-19

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The dueling pandemics of COVID-19 and racism brought to light the inequities Black womxn face in higher education in regard to service burdens. We argue Black womxn are overextended and suffering in their careers and lives as a result of this taxation. A sample of 191 faculty at a predominantly White university (PWI) in the Midwest United States responded to a survey about attitudes towards service obligations, sense of belonging, and community culture, centering on race, ethnicity, and gender as well as the impact of COVID-19 on service obligations. Due to the limited number of Black womxn participants, their characteristics are only reported in the overall data based on their identity or race. Gender, race, and feeling a part of the community were found to be significant predictors of voluntarily taking on student-centered service related to identity and being asked to take on service related to identity. Black womxn faculty were approximately 78 times more likely than White male faculty to volunteer for identity-based service. Black womxn faculty were approximately 473 times more likely than White male faculty to be asked to participate in identity-based service. The COVID-19 pandemic and racism have had a significant impact on everyone's lives, but it has been especially difficult for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and Black women. They have faced emotional, spiritual, and physical challenges. Therefore, it is crucial for higher education institutions to create safe spaces where Black women can live their best and most productive lives.

Keywords: Black womxn, higher education, service, support, racism, COVID-19, dual-pandemic, dueling pandemics

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020; and by March 13, 2020, the Trump Administration declared COVID-19 a

nationwide pandemic (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.). Thousands of K-12 schools and universities/colleges shuttered their doors and switched to virtual formats in an attempt to maintain a sense of normalcy. In addition to the virus, the United States was also grappling with the longstanding pandemic of racism. Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) teachers were now faced with the daunting task of managing extremely difficult learning environments while also dealing with the trauma of racism, both for themselves and their students.

Starks (2020) argues the interconnectedness of the novel coronavirus and the anti-Black and anti-Asian racism exacerbated historical inequities, resulting in a dual pandemic of COVID-19 and racism. Early days of the pandemic showcased the anti-Asian sentiment that was amplified by Western global leaders, such as former President Donald Trump, who referred to COVID-19 as the "China virus," "Kung Flu," and the "Wuhan virus." This resulted in the Federal Bureau of Investigation issuing warnings to local law enforcement about the potential increase in anti-Asian hate crimes (Lantz & Wenger, 2022; Lantz et al., 2023).

While the viral pandemic is fairly recent, African Americans have been facing another longer standing pandemic of racism in the United States. The advent of social media has allowed audiences to view user-generated content from citizen journalists, as well as body-cam footage of police officers committing brutality against Black Americans, at unprecedented speeds. High profile cases like those of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, whose death reignited the Black Lives Matter Movement and sparked the largest racial justice protests since the Civil Rights Movement, forced the world to recognize the intolerance and injustices Black people face in the United States and globally.

Leider and Dobbs (2022) captured the essence of the dual pandemic via a duoethnographic method (Norris & Sawyer, 2016). As two womxn of color and academics during a global pandemic and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement, this method allowed the researchers to share their experiences while working at a PWI. Leider and Dobbs (2022) argued their experiences as academics of color who focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) have been misaligned with their institution's DEIJ efforts prior to 2020.

This misalignment is often seen when BIPOC faculty, especially Black womxn faculty, are asked to "step up" to lead and manage DEIJ initiatives as part of their service loads. The additional labor (often without additional compensation) does not take into consideration the physical and emotional toll this has on BIPOC faculty as they navigate higher educational spaces while trying to maintain teaching and research obligations necessary for tenure and promotion. Porter et al. (2023) note intersectionality is key when it comes to understanding the experiences of Black womxn faculty. This is because focusing only on single issues like race or gender may end up homogenizing Black womxn and the experiences of all womxn of color, which in turn leads to erasure and oppression by pushing those varied identities to the margins (Porter et al., 2023).

Higher education relies on Black womxn's invisible labor. Speaking of her own experiences, Roberts-Crews (2020) wrote:

> I am expected to be unconditionally nurturing, understanding, hardworking, and mothering without an ounce of regard for my humanity or my emotional and mental health boundaries. This historical archetype constantly shows up when Black womxn insert themselves in predominantly White spaces. (para. 8)

However, the advent of the pandemic and heightened racial unrest forced people, including academics, to be more open with their experiences of exhaustion and burnout (Porter et al., 2023). Prior to the pandemic, higher education was already experiencing budget cuts, lack of staffing, and faculty fatigue, which in turn has led to significantly higher workloads for those remaining at their respective institutions. The higher workloads include larger amounts and types of service duties, in particular for BIPOC faculty who find themselves facing the challenging task of maintaining their teaching and research loads. In short, Black womxn are tired of always grinding.

Literature Review

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are buzzwords often used at institutions of higher education, which have become even more prevalent since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement, following the death of George Floyd. However, Leider and Dobbs (2022) found their institutions (like many others) had university wide DEIJ events that were led by White faculty or faculty of color who were asked to step into leadership roles to manage these programs. Furthermore, the work of womxn in academia has been displaced because of the COVID-19 crisis, as womxn have disproportionately been forced to balance all aspects of their jobs with their personal lives (Melaku & Beeman, 2022), which has magnified already existing gender inequalities in academia. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2022), only 2% of Black womxn faculty make it to full professor, in contrast to 51% of White male faculty reaching that status. However, an analysis done by Davis and Fry (2019) for the Pew Research Center found that while faculty remain largely White, student populations are becoming more diverse. Students of color often seek faculty who look like them for mentoring and guidance, which in turn adds additional responsibilities to the intense workload of teachers of color.

Institutional Support

Making the pivot to an online learning environment was a challenge for all educators. Much of the early focus of many institutions was to provide support for remote teaching and learning through improved learning module systems (LMS), providing online applications that enabled synchronous teaching such as Zoom and technical support (Nworie, 2020). Institutional support is often framed through the lens of enhancing faculty competence through learning opportunities to engage students both online and in the changed classroom environment (Singh et al., 2022). However, there is a dearth of research considering ongoing institutional support and the role it has in the overall well-being of faculty due to the emotional toll of the pandemic.

The already increased workload, coupled with the navigating of virtual teaching spaces has led to burnout for many faculty of color. Institutional efforts to provide support to faculty often overlook the specific needs of Black womxn faculty and instead, may perceive DEIJ efforts as evidence of support. Instead, faculty of color (especially Black womxn) are often left feeling tokenized and drained as a result of their universities' higher expectations of DEIJ initiatives, as well as the added issues surrounding teaching online. Leider and Dobbs (2022) argue that while their institution was DEIJ focused, it generally held one-off events that resulted in more harm than good. Institutional lack of support in light of COVID has contributed to increased feelings of isolation and loneliness among Black womxn faculty (Porter et al., 2023). These feelings of disconnect were further exacerbated due to the increased racial violence experienced during COVID that went largely unacknowledged by university administration (Melaku & Beeman, 2022).

Sense of Belonging

Schlossberg (1989) first explored the need for belonging in the context of higher education. While initially used to explore the experiences of students, this concept also applies to faculty and can be applied to Black womxn faculty as they navigate these White-centered spaces. Often Black womxn are marginalized in academia, especially those employed at PWIs, and may seek service opportunities/obligations which allow them to feel like they and the work they are doing matters. Mattering in the context of academia is often tied to productivity and measured through the visibility and perceived value of the work. Black womxn faculty experience university spaces with a perpetual sense that peers do not value them as colleagues or as humans with unique experiences different than their own (Porter, 2022). Black womxn in the workplace must constantly expend their energy on concerns about their performance, perceived ability, developing relationships, and stereotypes for being Black and a woman (Melaku, 2019).

Since the onset of COVID-19, many faculty have found their levels of productivity decreased due to outside pressures like family and personal obligations. Engagement on committees, DEIJ and research initiatives, and mentor-mentee relationships with like-minded colleagues and students provide some sense of belonging for Black womxn, but do not ease the intense emotional labor they perform and the lack of institutional support or recognition of their contributions. On top of all their other work obligations, Black womxn often are also managing an invisible expectation of labor as they spend their time navigating racial and gendered microaggressions in the workplace while attempting to legitimize their expertise and productivity (Melaku, 2022).

Community Culture

Prior to the pandemic, womxn faculty of color, staff, and students built spaces where they could be together for social justice causes like Black Lives Matter, anti-Asian hate, and the events leading to the 2020 election and after the January 6th insurrection—but moving to virtual spaces has mostly eliminated these. Perceived social support has been found to be a contributor to reducing faculty burnout in an emerging post-COVID-19 landscape (Taylor & Frechette, 2022), and these supports can be integral to a successful career in academia (Butner et al., 2000). Black womxn faculty intentionally seek out support through colleagues within the institution and colleagues at other institutions (McCray, 2011). However, it is often the burden of BIPOC faculty, specifically Black womxn faculty, to create these supportive spaces, which only adds to their work burden, stress, and burnout (Breeden, 2021). Collaboration, collegiality, and community are essential for Black faculty to maintain their identity and reach tenure (Butner et al., 2000). Additionally, when faculty and students of color are asked to collaborate to do DEIJ work, it is often seen as public and performative (Leider & Dobbs, 2022), while also acting as a community for these same students and faculty. Because collaboration is primarily referred to in reference to research in higher education, our focus on service will center on better understanding collegiality and community among Black womxn faculty.

Service Burden of BIPOC Faculty

Service obligations, specifically those considered caregiving or emotional labor, increased for Black womxn faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic (Porter et al., 2023). Black womxn faculty in particular are asked more often than their male colleagues (Berheide et al., 2022) to take on emotional labor, such as advising, for all students, regardless of race or identity. COVID-19 and increased stress from the pandemic have brought to light inequities in the distribution of labor in academia, especially service (Turner, 2002). Black faculty may believe they have a special connection to BIPOC students, particularly their Black students, who may have similar cultural experiences, thus driving the desire to mentor, advise, and uplift these

students (Griffin, 2013; Reddick, 2004). These relationships may be emphasized for faculty and students who work and study at PWIs due to the isolation of having smaller numbers of BIPOC at these institutions.

Identity-related Service

There is an expectation that BIPOC faculty will take on service without question or protest (King-Jordan & Gil, 2021) when it relates to their identity (Walters et al., 2022). Universities often defer DEIJ work to BIPOC faculty, which adds to any expected service burdens such as faculty and department meetings. Calling on individuals of color to speak for all people of color is exploitative and oppressive (Sanders & Gallindo, 2019), as time spent in service activities, which are essentially invisible in tenure, promotion, and CVs, takes away from time dedicated to other more highly valued activities (Domingo et al., 2022). This invisible service burden is higher for racially underrepresented and/or womxn of color faculty (Wood et al., 2016). Additionally, students intentionally seek out BIPOC faculty, especially if they too are from an underrepresented identity, adding service burden in the form of informal mentoring, advising, and problem solving at much higher rates than their White colleagues (Harper, 2013). These issues are often overlooked or not given as much weight as other more expected faculty activities, such as teaching and research. These dynamics create a system where BIPOC faculty are invisible to their White colleagues while simultaneously being hypervisible in DEIJ spaces (Settles et al., 2021).

Theoretical Frameworks

The experiences of womxn, especially those of Black womxn in higher education, are complex. While we understand that no study will encompass the experiences of all Black womxn faculty, intentional use of the following theoretical constructs to interpret the findings will contribute to the existing literature.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality provides a framework to better understand relationships within and between the social and cultural context of gender, race, and class, and how each of these identities interact (Crenshaw, 1991). Higher education research often focuses on better understanding the factors that contribute to student success, but faculty face the same discriminatory structural issues. Therefore, intersectionality should be explored through gender and race in the role of faculty, particularly Black womxn, in a PWI in the context of groups of power (Walby et al., 2012). The use of intersectionality as a theoretical framework enables the exploration of the social identities of faculty and how they interact with university systems (Danic, 2015; MacKinnon, 2013). There continues to be a gap in the literature around exploring the binary relationship between gender and race of faculty in the context of higher education by region (Nichols & Stahl, 2019), specifically in PWIs.

Cultural Taxation

Amado Padilla (1994) coined the term cultural taxation to describe situations where the administration expects academics to take on service obligations due to their ethnic/cultural background. Service can be related to spearheading and managing DEIJ initiatives on campus, working as cultural translators, mentoring students of similar backgrounds, and more. Often these obligations are outside the scope of what the faculty person has been hired for and may result in the supplanting of career goals and hindering academic research, which is paramount to getting tenure and promotion. Examples include expectations to represent diversity, teaching courses that focus on race or diversity, advising students of color (Guillame & Apodaca, 2020),

and teaching colleagues about race/racism (Hirschfield & Joseph, 2012; Mohamed & Beagen, 2019; Ridaeu, 2021).

Critical Black Feminism

A critical Black feminist framework emphasizes the importance of understanding the interconnectedness of those responsible for the care and those receiving said care (Collins, 2000). This ethic of care shows up in the ideologies of those inserting care within their labor practices, making space for freedom and choice within this work, and interrogating notions of traditional authority and power (Roseboro & Ross, 2009). Therefore, service is another form of care for Black womxn faculty. This silent economy of service (Hogan, 2012) centers the gendered narrative of service and the intersection with race as faculty of color are left doing the most unrecognized work.

Critical Black feminist mentorship (Logwood, 2020) builds upon the work of Huff (2019), by emphasizing the importance of mentors understanding intersectional identity development and the significance of mentorship grounded in a Black feminist ethic of care (Collins, 2000; hooks, 1984). A Black feminist ethic of care creates an understanding of the importance of connection as a means of survival and humanization. In White, patriarchal and capitalist societies and social institutions, engaging in reciprocal care is not seen as significant and is often questioned as being unethical and unprofessional. However, mentorship, advising, and wholistically addressing student needs necessitates this type of care and understands it as an act of resistance. Black students often seek out faculty who they can identify with, and Black womxn faculty are more likely to engage with students in general because they feel a greater sense of responsibility beyond their own needs. (McCray, 2011; Umbach, 2006).

Research Question

Service looks different for each individual, depending on the community and institution they are working with. For some, service involves mentoring or working alongside students, while others serve on department or university committees. Service obligations are also influenced by the intersectional identities of faculty and students, and service burden is higher for some groups, specifically for Black womxn faculty. To gain a better understanding of how intersectional identities impact service burden, this study compares service obligations by gender and race.

This exploratory research aims to answer the research questions: (a) What differences are there between Black womxn and other faculty groups and their perceived service burden, sense of belonging, and community culture? (b) What role does institutional support play in predicting being asked and volunteering for service related to identity for Black womxn?

Methods

Population and Sample

In February 2023, a survey was administered through REDCap, a survey management tool, to all faculty at a PWI in the Midwest United States. This survey specifically asked about attitudes towards service obligations, sense of belonging, and community culture centering on race, ethnicity, and gender and the impact of COVID-19 on service obligations. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to 553 tenure-track and tenured faculty with N=227 responses received for a response rate of 41%. After removing incomplete survey responses and data cleaning, a final sample size of N=191 (non-tenure-track faculty, n=2; tenure-track faculty, n=47; tenured faculty, n=142) was utilized for this analysis. Because of the small sample size of Black womxn, participant characteristics are reported only in the aggregate by gender identity or race (see Table 1). IRB approval was received by the university IRB board.

Table 1

Participant Characteristics (N=191)

Variable	n	%
Gender Identity		
Female	107	57.2
Male	72	38.5
Prefer not to say	8	4.3
Race & Ethnicity (not mutually exclusive)		
White	151	79.1
South or Southwest Asian	11	5.8
Black or African American	9	4.7
East or Southeast Asian	7	3.7
Hispanic	5	2.6
Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)	2	1.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1.6
Disability with notable impact on daily life		
Sensory impairment (vision or hearing)	25	13.4
Learning impairment (ADHD, dyslexia, etc.)	21	11.3
Long-term or chronic medical condition	28	14.8
Mobility impairment	11	5.9
Mental health diagnosis	24	12.9
Temporary impairment (injury, post-surgery, etc.)	13	7
Discipline/College		
Arts, Sciences, & Humanities	69	50.7
Health & Social Sciences	38	19.9
Education & Library	32	16.8
Business	13	6.8
Engineering and Technology	11	5.8

Measures

Questions specifically referenced experiences in either the past year or in the past 2 years. Fourteen questions were asked about perceived service burden, sense of belonging, community culture, and service experiences related to identity. Seven Likert-type scale questions (1=strongly disagree; 6=strongly agree) were asked about perceived service burden, three questions asked about a sense of belonging, and two asked about community culture. Two questions asked about service experiences related to identity; those who agreed with the question responded "yes," and if not, responded "no" (0 = no; 1 = yes). All questions can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Survey Questions

Service Burden (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

1. I feel there are supports (at any level) that enable me to successfully complete my service obligations.
2. I feel the need to step in when other people don't fulfill their service roles and obligations.
3. I am asked to take on service obligations more often than my colleagues.
4. I have been on committees that have generated outputs that were ignored or not acted on.
5. I feel that the service I perform is meaningfully acknowledged by colleagues in my department.
6. I am invited to join committees because of my expertise in a specific academic or administrative area.
7. I feel I have little choice in service obligations due to promotion/tenure requirements.

Sense of Belonging (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

8. I feel like I am a part of the community at (the university).
9. My colleagues, for the most part, view issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as important to address.
10. I feel issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are important to address.

Community Culture (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

11. I have withdrawn from or not joined a committee because of harassment, bullying, or other behaviors by a member or members of the committee.
12. I have stayed on a committee that was hostile due to tenure/promotion concerns.

Professional Experiences in the Last 12 Months (Yes/No)

13. In the last year, I have supported students in ways specifically related to my identity (i.e., the above work but specifically because you have a marginalized identity).
14. I take on service because I am asked to represent an underrepresented group.

Analysis and Findings

Because this was an exploratory study, it was important to understand the relationship between variables and, specifically, the differences in perceptions of service burden, sense of belonging, and community culture between Black womxn, White womxn, Black men, and White men. This statistical analysis is intended to intentionally explore the complex intersectionality of Black womxn faculty (Hollis, 2018). Therefore, three distinct analyses were performed: multivariate correlation between variables and with support, mean score comparison by race and gender, and a binary logistic regression. Statistically significant results will be discussed, and statistics related to the analysis can be seen in tables 3, 4, and 5.

Correlation With Support

This analysis found both positive and negative correlations between the feeling a sense of support and the constructs measured. There were positive correlations between whether or not respondents felt support to successfully complete service obligations, service performed being meaningfully acknowledged by colleagues in their department, feeling they were a part of the community at the university, and their colleagues, for the most part, view issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as important to address There were negative correlations between whether or not respondents felt support to successfully complete service obligations, feeling the need to step in when other people did not fulfill their service roles and obligations; being asked to take on service obligations more often than my colleagues; had worked on committees that generated outputs that were ignored or not acted on; feeling there is little choice in service obligations due to promotion/tenure requirements; and having stayed on a committee that was hostile due to tenure/promotion concerns (See Table 3).

Mean Score Comparison by Gender and Race

Our sample size of Black womxn faculty was small; therefore, we examined mean scores for the constructs of service burden, sense of belonging, and community culture construct by gender and race (Black female, White female, Black male, and White male). Results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Mean Scores of Variables for Service Burden, Sense of Belonging, and Community Culture by Gender & Ethnicity

	Variable	Black Female (n=5)		White Female (n=84)		Black Male (n=4)		White Male (n=56)	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
1	Supports	4.00	1.23	3.19	1.32	2.75	2.06	3.33	1.43
2	Step up	3.80	1.10	4.57	1.37	5.25	.96	4.31	1.22
3	Asked	3.20	1.30	3.95	1.66	4.25	2.06	3.75	1.32
4	Outputs	4.54	1.12	4.88	1.27	4.50	1.91	4.68	1.48
5	Acknowledge	3.80	1.30	3.82	1.53	2.75	2.06	4.36	1.41
6	Expertise	3.80	1.10	4.12	1.28	3.75	2.06	4.09	1.28
7	Little choice	3.00	2.00	3.17	1.69	4.00	2.31	2.73	1.31
8	Belong	4.40	1.95	4.04	1.47	4.25	1.50	4.24	1.22
9	Share views	5.20	.45	4.41	1.31	3.25	2.63	4.77	1.16
10	DEI important	6.00	.00	5.43	1.10	6.00	.00	4.91	1.30
11	Withdrawn	4.00	2.00	3.75	1.68	4.00	2.65	2.90	1.86
12	Stayed	2.25	1.23	2.70	1.50	4.00	2.65	2.14	1.30

Service Burden. Black female faculty (M = 4.0) most strongly agreed the university provided support to provide service, with Black male faculty (M = 2.75) most strongly disagreeing. White womxn most strongly agreed the output of committee work has been largely ignored (M = 4.88), and that they are asked to join committees due to their expertise (M = 4.12). Black male faculty most strongly agreed they have to step in when others do not fulfill their service roles and obligations (M = 5.25), are asked to do more service work than their colleagues (M = 4.25), and they have little choice in their service obligations (M = 4.0). Black male faculty most strongly disagreed that their service efforts are acknowledged by their colleagues (M = 2.75).

Sense of Belonging. Black female faculty agreed most strongly that they are a part of the university community (M = 4.40), their colleagues agree with them on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (M = 5.20), and addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion is important (M = 6.00).

Community Culture. Both Black female (M = 4.00) and Black male faculty (M = 4.00) most strongly agreed they have had to withdraw from committees due to the behavior of another committee member, while Black male faculty most strongly agreed (M = 4.00) they have stayed on a hostile committee due to promotion and tenure issues.

Logistic Regression

Regression analysis was used to determine if the constructs were predictive of voluntarily taking on student-centered service. Gender and race were also considered.

Voluntarily Take on Student-Centered Service Related to Identity. Both gender and race and feeling a part of the community were predictors of voluntarily taking on student-centered service related to identity. Black female faculty were approximately 78 times more likely than White males to engage in this type of service, controlling for all other factors. For each single point increase in feeling a part of the community, there was a 1.53 times greater likelihood of engaging in this type of service, controlling for all other factors (see Table 4).

Table 4

Logistic Regression Predicting Voluntarily Taking on Caregiving Tasks of Students Related to Identity

Variable	B	SE	p	OR
Acknowledged	-.12	.19	.53	.89
Community	.43	.19	.03	1.53
Supports	-.04	.21	.85	.96
Black Women	4.34	1.48	.003	77.99
White Women	.58	1.58	.71	39.41
Black Men	2.48	1.30	.06	11.91

Comparison Group: White Men

Asked to Take on Service Related to Identity.

Both gender and race and feeling a part of the community were predictors of being asked to take on student-centered service related to identity. Black female faculty were approximately 473 times and Black male faculty approximately 396 times more likely than White males to engage in this type of service, controlling for all other factors. For each single point increase in feeling a part of the community, there was a 2.71 times greater likelihood of engaging in this type of service, controlling for all other factors (see Table 5).

Table 5

Logistic Regression Predicting Being Asked to Take on Service Related to Identity

Variable	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*
Acknowledged	-.22	.39	.57	.80
Community	.99	.40	.01	2.71
Supports	.16	.42	.69	1.18
Black Women	6.16	1.91	.001	472.61
White Women	1.53	1.72	.36	4.61
Black Men	5.98	1.86	.001	396.47

Comparison Group White Men

Findings and Discussion

It is difficult to concretely identify what qualifies as support at a university, as each faculty member has different needs and experiences based on their roles, responsibilities, and intersectional identities. When looking at faculty, clear relationships were found between perceived support from the university and service obligations, sense of belonging, and community culture based on race and gender.

Impact of Support on Service Burden in an Emerging COVID Landscape

Our analysis showed that Black womxn, more than any other group, most strongly agreed they had withdrawn from or not joined a committee because of harassment, bullying, or other behaviors by a member or members of the committee. Hollis (2018) found 58% of Black womxn have reported bullying in their academic roles. Bullying behaviors fall under the category of microaggressions but can cause long-lasting damage as Black womxn faculty experience the impact at a deeper level due to their multiple marginalized identities. Additionally, Black womxn were second only to White men to have more strongly disagreed that they have stayed on a committee due to tenure or promotion concerns.

Our research showed that when considering faculty members as a whole, there was a positive correlation between faculty who have withdrawn from a committee and those who stay because of tenure concerns, which is consistent with the unfortunate norm of unwelcoming and isolating environments for Black womxn that do not promote professional growth (West, 2022). Black womxn faculty have a desire to be true to themselves and their communities while being role models for students, and tenure and promotion are often not their primary concerns (McCray, 2011). When examined as a whole, faculty will leave these uncomfortable situations. However, Black womxn are accustomed to being cast as outsiders and expecting punitive measures (Ahmed, 2007), especially in leadership roles (West, 2022), and therefore, they do not feel compelled to leave.

A seemingly contradictory finding was that Black womxn faculty most strongly disagreed that they are asked to take on more service obligations than their colleagues, second only to White men. Many Black womxn faculty do have a heightened sense of isolation due to being the only Black womxn in their department, and the pandemic making us all more isolated. Black womxn may not feel they are doing more simply because they are not connected to their peers or colleagues in meaningful ways. It's easy to presume others are doing work, especially when you do not see what they are and are not doing.

However, when comparing Black womxn with White men, there are stark differences between their perceptions of having their service meaningfully acknowledged by colleagues in their department. This highlights the expectation of increased service through cultural taxation that Black womxn faculty experience. This service is not often recognized by their peers or

given as much weight as other endeavors for tenure and promotion. Additionally, Black womxn faculty agreed most strongly that they are a part of the university community, their colleagues agree with them on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are important. These findings align with the work of Griffin (2013), as Black womxn faculty may not view tasks related to service as a burden, but rather as their responsibility; thus, reducing their perception of being asked more than their colleagues while also demonstrating that Black womxn find community in their service.

Of all the groups, Black womxn most strongly felt there were supports in place that contributed to successful service, followed by White men, White womxn, and Black men. Black womxn faculty also felt most strongly that they belong to the university community. These findings are noteworthy because of how Black womxn, in particular, may define support and how they define community. BIPOC faculty realize a personal benefit from engaging with students of color (Baez, 2000; Reddick, 2004), which may provide a sense of community for otherwise isolated faculty.

The Role Support Plays in Service Related to Identity for Black Womxn

While Black womxn and White womxn share the intersectionality of gender, no significant difference was found between White womxn and White men in relation to voluntarily taking on caregiving tasks of students or being asked to perform service based on their identity. Therefore, it is the intersectionality of gender and race that makes significant differences in both volunteering and being asked to take on service related to identity.

Significant differences were found between Black womxn and White men volunteering and being asked for service related to identity, which further illustrates the concept of cultural taxation of service. Identity-based service does not impact White men, and therefore they are spared this additional 'ask' that is reserved only for faculty from underrepresented groups. This further demonstrates the service burden of care and responsibility placed on BIPOC faculty. Black womxn and men are being asked to take on service related to their identity, with the qualifier that they are part of a community being the only significant factor.

Historically, the Black community views mentoring, educating, and uplifting the next generation as a shared responsibility (Guiffrida, 2005), which is likely the root of this difference. This research found that support from the university played a minimal, if any, role in the motivations of Black womxn volunteering or being asked to perform identity-based service. Therefore, the commitment to doing this work is likely due to the commitment Black womxn have as caregivers within the community (Roseboro & Ross, 2009) and the personal benefits of identity-based service (Baez, 2000). Additionally, because Black womxn faculty are often responsible for creating their own community (Breeden, 2021), university or departmental-level support may not be perceived as intended or able to help them, as Black womxn's voices are rarely if ever, centered (Collins, 2000) in the development of formal institutional initiatives.

Limitations

While we were able to explore areas of service, some limitations did prevent a more thorough exploration of areas covered in this study. First, we intentionally left the definition of community up to the respondent rather than defining it for them. This question, although broad, played a significant role in our ability to reach conclusions utilizing a Black Feminist perspective. It allowed for a more nuanced interpretation of the potentially conflicting and complex dynamics between support and service burden. Gender identity demographic information was intentionally not as inclusive as it could have been, but this was a deliberate choice because the population of those who identify as non-binary or other gender identity is

very small at this university; therefore, anonymity could not be assured, and we wanted the survey to be perceived as trustworthy as possible. Lastly, we must acknowledge the role of mistrust in the survey process and eventual use of data that exists at the university level, and that this likely impacted our response rate.

Institutional Solutions & Recommendations

Support is not enough. DEIJ initiatives are not enough. University administrators must strive to establish and foster a culture that recognizes the service and contributions of Black womxn in caring for students. Administrators must take a system-centered approach to implementing meaningful change to learn how intersectionality shapes the social systems and, by default, shapes the entire system (Choo & Ferree, 2010). Black womxn are often expected to provide additional services without compensation or recognition, which exploits their sense of responsibility to their community. It is imperative that university leadership be held accountable for their actions in perpetuating an unjust expectation towards Black womxn faculty. Research has revealed that having a diverse faculty is critical to creating a more diverse student body; but to gain a better understanding of how service inequity affects access to education, it is important to prioritize strengthening and creating an equitable environment (Tyler et al., 2004). Creating an effective support system necessitates changing existing policies and providing designated financial resources for these efforts. We recommend focusing on the following five areas.

First, formal mentoring (Butner et al., 2000) should be compensated with time or financial compensation and should have weight when applying for tenure or promotion, to encourage BIPOC faculty to work together instead of in isolation. A reallocation of university funds and removal of barriers to access to support for research, faculty development, collaborative projects, and affinity groups could be used to enhance the overall well-being of Black womxn faculty.

Second, tenure and promotion policies should be adapted to acknowledge and account for the inequities in caregiving among faculty. While the COVID-19 pandemic did not start the caregiving issues for womxn, especially womxn of color, it did reveal the inequities that womxn often face when attempting to manage family and childcare. These disruptions impacted the scholarly pursuits of Black womxn and other non-White groups far more than their White colleagues due to family obligations, concerns for their health, and other non-work issues (Douglas et al., 2022). It is crucial for institutions to acknowledge the lasting effects on the careers of Black womxn faculty in the post-COVID-19 era.

Third, it is important to make necessary adjustments to support systems that offer flexible options for faculty members who are not male and/or White. To ensure adequate support, institutions must provide a range of teaching methods, grant additional time for publication, and fundamentally enhance working conditions to demonstrate compassion and equity. Offering flexible teaching hours (including evenings, weekends, and compressed courses) and opportunities to share the teaching load between faculty members, and to hire teaching assistants to provide grading and additional curricular support (Simien & Wallace, 2022), would acknowledge the ongoing additional work that is asked of Black womxn faculty. This would also provide more control over time and resources.

Fourth, financial compensation should be provided as meaningful support to offset inequities in teaching and service expectations. Offering additional compensation for faculty and students with children who teach in the evenings or on the weekends (Simien & Wallace, 2022) would demonstrate a financial commitment and acknowledgment to faculty with caregiving responsibilities outside of the university. Lastly, it is crucial to update tenure and promotion

procedures in a manner that recognizes and appreciates the emotional and invisible work that Black womxn faculty members perform daily.

Conclusions

Further research is needed to understand how Black womxn faculty define community and support. It is vital to recognize that BIPOC faculty members possess distinct individual experiences within the academic sphere. For universities, particularly PWIs, to effect meaningful policy alterations, they must take proactive measures to eradicate the gender and racial bias deeply ingrained in predominantly White-centered institutions of higher education. Black womxn faculty need the autonomy to prioritize their self-care instead of feeling pressure to conform to their institution's expectations, regardless of whether they work at predominantly White institutions or historically Black colleges and universities.

Ultimately, the goal is to understand and protect Black womxn's time, so that they may pursue their research and teaching objectives for tenure and promotion in higher education. While the dual pandemic of COVID-19 and racism has affected the lives of all people, BIPOC, and especially Black womxn bore the brunt of this impact—emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Thus, it is imperative that higher education be taken to task to provide safe spaces for Black womxn to live their best and most productive lives.

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