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Published online: 09 Mar 2016.

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Assistant professors of color confront the inequitable terrain of academia: a community cultural wealth perspective

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study adopted Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) framework to examine how 16 assistant professors of color (APOC) drew upon various forms of capital (navigational, aspirational, social, resistant, linguistic, familial) to deal with racism and marginalization in academia. Findings revealed how APOC: dealt with students' stereotypes of them, maintained their authentic selves to make academia more accessible and relevant, persevered with integrity despite hostility or marginalization, self-advocated for quality mentorship, and engaged in strategic service while avoiding cultural taxation and tokenism. Findings highlighted the positive cultural assets APOC enact within the academy while reiterating the need to address racist and marginalizing policies and practices in higher education. Variations in experiences based on gender and international status that can be explored further in future research also emerged. Working at a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) also did not eliminate or lessen racist or marginalizing experiences for participants.

Recruiting and retaining faculty of color (FOC), or faculty who identify as Hispanic/Latina/o, black/African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or Alaska Native, in higher education remains a challenge nationwide (Diggs et al. 2009). While the numbers of FOC in academia have almost doubled over the last 20 years (12% in 1991 to 21% in 2011), this growth has been slow and incremental when considering the proportion of FOC among all faculty (Snyder and Dillow 2013; Snyder and Hoffman 1993). As of fall 2011, approximately 80% of faculty whose race and ethnicity were known identified as white (Snyder and Dillow 2013). During this same time only 7% of faculty were black, 7% Asian, 5% Hispanic, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 1% identified as bi- or multiracial, and less than 1% were Pacific Islanders. These statistics represented faculty at all institutional types. When comparing this data to 1991, the gains FOC have made are minimal and reflect only a 9% increase overall (Snyder and Hoffman 1993). Among faculty in 1991, 5% were black, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2% Hispanic, and 0.3% American Indian/Alaska Native.

The underrepresentation of FOC in higher education is especially concerning in light of the increasing diversity among the American college-going student population and the US population in general. It can be argued that to effectively prepare American college students to live amongst and work with

individuals from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds and effectively compete globally, the demographics of higher education institutions should more closely reflect the students they serve and the larger US citizenry (Garrison-Wade et al. 2012). However, from 1976 to 2011 the percentages of Hispanic (4% to 14%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2% to 6%), black (10% to 15%), and American Indian/ Alaska Native (0.7% to 0.9%) college students have been steadily increasing, while the white student population (84% to 61%) has been decreasing (Snyder and Dillow 2013). The diversity in the US population has shown similar growth patterns. From 2000 to 2010 the proportion for all communities of color except American Indians and Alaska Natives (which remained at 0.9%) rose while the white population decreased: 12.5% to 16.3% for Hispanics, 12.3% to 12.6% for blacks/African Americans, 3.6% to 4.8% for Asians, 0.1% to 0.2% for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, 5.5% to 6.2% for those identified as of another race, 2.4% to 2.9% for bi-or multiracial individuals, and 75.1% to 72.4% for whites (Humes, Jones, and Ramirez 2011).

Research on the underrepresentation of FOC in academia has increased over the last 25 years as a means to further understand and address the issue; however, gaps in the literature remain (Turner, González, and Wood 2008). Turner, González, and Wood (2008) found that additional research is needed on the experiences of FOC working at minority-serving institutions, as well as private colleges and universities. This study attempts to address this gap by examining the experiences of 16 tenure-track assistant professors of color (APOC) working in varying disciplines within four-year universities across the country, seven of which worked at Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) and two of which worked at private institutions. We utilize a community cultural wealth (CCW) framework (Yosso 2005) to examine the various forms of cultural capital FOC drew upon to navigate the inequitable terrain of academia. CCW has not been utilized for this purpose previously and may provide a distinct perspective on the issue. This study also purposely draws on the experiences of FOC who are on the road to tenure, as opposed to those with tenure status, to capture these experiences as they are occurring and not as reflections of the past. We also recognize that the experiences of APOC vary depending on their discipline, institution, and racial/ethnic background. However, we wanted to examine how a diverse group of APOC might similarly engage various forms of cultural capital to deal with the unique challenges they face in academia.

Selected literature on faculty of color in academe

Turner et al. (2008) provide great insight into the common positive and negative factors that impact the experiences of FOC within and across the departmental, institutional, and national realms. They also identify common recommendations made within existing literature. At the departmental level, FOC found teaching gratifying but also found service rewarding when they were engaged with or meeting the needs of their communities (Baez 2000). At the same time, too much service could overburden FOC and impede their progress toward tenure, especially if they have additional responsibilities placed upon them because of their racial/ethnic background (i.e., cultural taxation [Padilla 1994]). Moreover, FOC's research interests and methods were often questioned or undervalued (Delgado-Bernal and Villalpando 2002). FOC also experienced resistance and/or hostility from students who doubted their professional credibility (Johnsrud and Sadao 1998). Thus, research highlights how FOC often struggled in developing their academic identity while maintaining their cultural integrity and identity (Diggs et al. 2009; Sadao 2003). FOC at times experienced feelings of isolation, marginalization (Stanley 2006), and job dissatisfaction (Aguirre 2000) due to discrimination because of their accents from their country of origin and/or exposure to inequitable work expectations (Baez 2000). The difficulty in publishing and finding funding for scholarship was also considered an impediment.

Key aspects that contributed to a positive work environment for FOC at the departmental and institutional levels included: positive relationships with colleagues, strong allies and networks, student diversity, professional development and research/teaching enhancement programs, and a supportive administration (Turner, González, and Wood 2008). Alternatively, racism, sexism, classism (Diggs et al. 2009; Garrison-Wade et al. 2012; Turner 2003), tokenism (Aguirre 2000), a lack of student and/or

faculty diversity (Maynard and Watts 2006), and a perceived lack of effort in recruiting and retaining FOC (Stanley 2006) contributed to a negative workplace for FOC. Unfair or biased recruitment and hiring practices (Fenelon 2003; Kayes 2006) and inequitable access to mentoring (Williams and Williams 2006) were additional obstacles that spanned across contexts. Yet, when tenure and promotion policies recognized and valued the contributions FOC made to improve diversity, FOC found the tenure and promotion process to be less of a challenge (Turner 2003). Similarly, while mentorship has often been limited or lacking, FOC deemed this critical to their success (Stanley 2006).

Overall, FOC have solidarity in that they experience marginalization within higher education institutions; however, differences based on race, ethnicity, language, nationality, gender and sexual identity, social class, and their intersections must be acknowledged. A few studies examine the experiences of Latinas/os (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Delgado-Romero et al. 2007), Chicanas/os (Solórzano 1998), black and African American faculty (Griffin and Reddick 2011), and the intersection of gender with race/ethnicity (Baxley 2012; Jean-Marie 2011; Mayuzumi 2008, 2015; Reddick and Sáenz 2012; Warde 2009). However, limited research presents Native American (Calhoun 2003; Fox 2005; Nunpa 2003) and Asian faculty's (Mayuzumi 2008, 2015) perspectives as well as FOC who identify as LGBTQ (LaSala et al. 2008). As such it is the very social, cultural, political, and historical differences among FOC that must be considered in how they use marginalization as a source of reclamation for empowerment, build supportive networks, receive mentoring, and are successfully recruited and retained in academia (Baxley 2012; De Luca and Escoto 2012; Mack, Watson, and Camacho 2013; Warde 2009).

Critical race theory

Grounded in critical race theory (CRT), this study draws on Yosso's (2005) CCW framework to examine the various forms of cultural capital that APOC utilized to navigate the workplace. We adhere to the CRT tenet that racism and 'isms' related to intersectional identities, such as gender, language, national origin, and class, are endemic within institutional structures and particularly poignant in academia. While our participants' narratives relay individual instances and experiences with various 'isms,' these experiences are but a few expressions of the larger embedded infrastructure of white supremacy and hegemonic ideology around non-dominant peoples.

CRT scholarship has its roots in the critical legal studies movement, with the groundbreaking work of Derrick Bell (1980), which established itself as an intellectually sophisticated and ideologically left movement in legal academia. While CRT is rooted in the complex understandings of law, racial ideology, and political power, it also provides a practical theoretical vocabulary for scholars invested in contributing to and theorizing around socially just scholarship. As a tenet, CRT rejects the notion that scholarship can or should be neutral or objective. Crenshaw et al. (1996) note, 'Scholarship – the formal production, identification, and organization of what will be called "knowledge" – is inevitably political' (xiii). Its task is to expose the deeply seated issues of racial ideology and power that continue to matter in numerous contexts of American life. CRT maintains that race is both socially constructed and a real, lived experience.

We use CRT to theoretically ground our study and engage in FOC counter-stories in an effort to expose, analyze, and challenge the majoritarian stories of racial privilege and to embrace the 'radical tradition of race-consciousness among … peoples of color – a tradition that was discarded when integration, assimilation, and the ideal of colorblindness became the official norms of racial enlightenment' (Crenshaw et al. 1996, xiv). By presenting the narrative knowledge of FOC, we position their experiences as legitimate forms of knowledge and relay the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (Solórzano and Yosso 2002), in this case, pre-tenure FOC. Within education, CRT scholars (Ladson-Billings 1995) assert that race continues to be a salient and largely untheorized notion in the US yet is a critical tool for understanding educational inequities and examining the dynamics, impact, and consequences of power and privilege in educational contexts. Racism remains endemic and engrained within American life and specifically within academia, challenging the mythological notion of meritocracy.

It is pertinent to describe the five tenets that undergird the use of a CRT perspective within education. According to Solórzano (1998), taking a CRT approach to education means challenging the 'dominant discourse on race and racism as they relate to education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups' (122). To do this, one must first acknowledge the pervasiveness, permanency, centrality, and intersectionality of race and racism. The second tenet recognizes the need to challenge dominant ideology, particularly as it pertains to the traditional notion that the educational system and its institutions are objective, meritocratic, and equitable to all despite race or gender. A commitment to social justice is the third tenet, whereby the ultimate goal is to eliminate racism and other forms of subordination. In the fourth tenet, the experiential knowledge of communities of color is deemed 'legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination in the field of education' (122). Historically, research in education has privileged the experiences of dominant groups providing a white male-centric, middle-class perspective that provides a deficit view of communities of color, deems their experiences illegitimate, or excludes their experiences altogether. Finally, a CRT approach to education is interdisciplinary in nature and draws on literature and methods from varying fields like gender and ethnic studies, law, history, and sociology to understand and account for current and historical contexts within education.

Community cultural wealth

Yosso (2005) developed a CCW framework with these tenets in mind and specifically to counter deficit views of communities of color in education. Yosso's CCW framework challenges Bourdieu's notions that valuable capital is defined through the acquisition of the knowledge possessed by the upper and middle classes (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). Bourdieu's notions, Yosso notes, are often used to explain why people of color are generally less successful. The argument goes: if they only had access to this capital, they could achieve upward mobility. Inherent in this argument is the assumption that people of color (and specifically, students) are lacking in capital, positioning them as culturally deficient. Yosso utilizes CRT to challenge this deficit view by presenting an alternative concept to the Bourdieuean cultural capital theory.

Yosso's (2005) CCW framework validates the cultural assets communities of color possess by identifying six forms of capital: aspirational, linguistic, social, familial, navigational, and resistant capital. These forms of capital are not 'mutually exclusive or static, but rather are dynamic processes that build on one another' (77). Thus, they are not always clearly delineated because they cannot be separated from the contexts they are cultivated in or from the individuals with whom they are shared.

Aspirational capital is evident when future hopes are maintained despite the presence of real or perceived barriers. An example of this might be when APOC remain resilient despite challenges they experience or perceive within academia. Linguistic capital refers to 'intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style' (Yosso 2005, 78). This can be seen when APOC utilize storytelling, art, music, poetry, or various language styles to communicate with varying audiences within academia. APOC who navigate the academy by drawing on cultural knowledge that is learned and passed down through *familia* (kin) utilize their familial capital. This is evident when Latina/o faculty rely on *consejos* (words of wisdom) their parents shared with them as children to help them persist when dealing with racism and/or marginalization. Familial capital also 'engages a commitment to community well-being and expands the concept of family to include a more broad understanding of kinship … From these kinship ties, we learn the importance of maintaining a healthy connection to our community and its resources' (Yosso 2005, 79).

Social capital consists of the individuals and/or networks of people whom APOC rely on to assist them in confronting challenges in higher education. In turn, APOC often give 'the information and resources they gained through [navigating] these institutions back to their social networks' (Yosso 2005, 80) so that they become sources of social capital for others. Navigational capital encompasses the skills APOC possess or develop that enable them to maneuver within the academy, an institution

that was not designed to accommodate communities of color. This can include strategies such as remaining resilient or enacting agency in racially hostile environments. Finally, resistant capital refers to the skills and understanding utilized to oppose injustices in daily life that might include knowledge related to systemic inequities such as patriarchy, racism, and capitalism. For APOC, this might include exhibiting behaviors or attitudes that challenge inequitable practices in academia.

Methods

Data for this qualitative study were drawn from a larger, nationwide project that examined the experiences of APOC through individual interviews. A team of four female APOC and one female postdoctoral fellow of color conducted the project while working at different universities across the country (two in Texas, one in Louisiana, one in Illinois, and one in Wyoming). The researchers (two Latinas, two African Americans, and one identifying as multiracial of Guatemalan, Chinese, and Italian descent) became friends and colleagues while pursuing their doctoral degrees at a university in Texas. The researchers began the collaborative project once at their respective institutions.

The team developed the interview protocol, recruited participants, and collected data for the project. In this process, an effort was made to purposefully recruit and interview an equal number of participants across gender, racial/ethnic background, and region. Participants were recruited by email, phone, and in person via the research team's scholarly networks, through contacts made at research conferences, and through the snowballing technique (Patton 1990), where consenting participants identified other potential participants.

Three members of the team conducted this study to answer one research question: How do APOC draw upon various forms of cultural capital (navigational, aspirational, social, resistant, linguistic, familial) to navigate the challenges they face in academia related to racism and/or other forms of marginalization? We drew upon a random but diverse sample of data, with regard to race, gender, discipline, institutional type, and to a lesser extent region, from the larger project. We felt the CCW framework would prove useful if we were able to identify commonalities among the APOC in how they drew on forms of capital to deal with racism and issues of marginality in academe.

About the authors

As qualitative researchers, we recognize the need to be forthcoming about our identities and backgrounds as they contribute to our individual and collective understandings of participants' lives. The first author is a single, Mexican American female from South Texas who grew up in a middle-class household with parents who were educators. Her cultural, familial, and schooling experiences, both as a student and educator (teacher and counselor), shaped her understandings of the power dynamics, marginalization, and inequities that exist within educational institutions. She is a fourth-year assistant professor in educational leadership at a public university in Texas. The second author is a third-year assistant professor of teaching and learning at a private university in Illinois. She is single and identifies as multiracial, primarily as a Latina. Once an undocumented immigrant who attended one of the poorest school districts in the country, she attended highly prestigious universities. It was this experience that particularly influenced her desire to join the professoriate. Her academic acumen is both a refuge and a location of agency from which to draw power. In this respect, she sees her faculty life as an instrument of social justice. The third author is a fourth-year assistant professor in educational leadership and policy at a public university in Illinois. She is a single black female and first-generation college student. She grew up in a working-class, single-parent home, raised by both family and community members. As such, she has always used community support to help her navigate educational settings, and considers this sense of community a part of her black identity. Yet, she realizes the community assets that she once used to navigate educational spaces are typically not legitimized in the academy, given its competitive and individualistic nature.

Table 1. Demographic and institutional data for participants using pseudonyms.

Name	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Discipline	Year in Position	University Type and Region
Junta	F	Asian-International, Taiwan	Journalism	2nd	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South
Lori	F	Asian-International, China	Business	3rd	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South
Elisa	F	Pacific Islander	Social Science	4th	Small, private liberal arts university, Midwest
Fahim	M	Asian-International, India	Communication Sciences & Disorders	2nd	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South
Carly	F	Biracial (black/white)	Higher Education	3rd	Public Research I university, Midwest
Nicole	F	Black	Higher Education	Summer after 1st	Public Research I university, Midwest
Anna	F	Black-born in England	Family & Consumer Sciences	Summer after 1st	Public Research I university, Midwest
Nick	M	Black	Educational Leadership	4th	Public Research I university, Northeast
Roger	M	African American, Black, Jamaican	Educational Administration	5th	Public Research I university, South
Larry	M	Indian, White European, Black African	Higher Education	Summer after 1st	Public Research I university, Midwest
Pilar	F	Latina	Educational Leadership	5th	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South
Bianca	F	Mexican American	Social Sciences	2nd	Small, private liberal arts university, South
Laura	F	Latina-born in Venezuela	Fine Arts	5th	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South
Ernie	M	Mexican American	Educational Leadership	4th	Public, doctoral granting, high research university, South
Carlos	M	Latino	Educational Leadership	3rd	Public, doctoral granting, high research, Hispanic-serving university, West
Israel	M	Hispanic-International, Mexico	Biology	Summer after 1st	Public, doctoral granting, Hispanic-serving university, South

Note: Year in position accounts for years at or credited to participants at current institution.

Participant sample

Participants included 16 APOC with at least one year of experience working at a four-year public or private university in the US. Participants, referred to here by their pseudonyms, included three Asian/Pacific Islander females (Junta, Lori, Elisa), one Asian/Pacific Islander male (Fahim), three African American/black/or biracial (white and African American) females (Carly, Nicole, Anna), three African American/black males (Nick, Roger, Larry), three Latinas (Pilar, Bianca, Laura), and three Latinos (Ernie, Carlos, Israel). Four participants possessed international identities (Junta, Lori, Fahim, Israel). Participants work in various disciplines, including biology, communication science and disorders, anthropology, fine arts, journalism, higher education, family and consumer sciences, and educational administration. Some work at large, comprehensive public institutions that are research intensive, while others work at small, private liberal arts institutions. Seven participants work at HSIs. More than half (nine) of the participants' institutions are located in the southern region of the US, five in the Midwest, one in the Northeast, and one in the West. Additionally, some APOC had years of previous experience as tenure-track faculty at other institutions prior to their current positions (see Table 1). However, APOC were not always able to negotiate these years of experience toward tenure at their current institutions. Therefore, any tenure-track experiences of APOC were considered relevant.

Data collection and analysis

Participants were interviewed once, individually (Rubin and Rubin 2005), either in person or via an online video call. Interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and were semi-structured,

audio-recorded, and transcribed. Participants were asked questions related to their educational background, their journey to and in the professoriate, and challenges and successes faced as FOC. For this study, we each were assigned interviews to read and preliminarily analyze. We drew upon our conceptual framework to conduct a typological analysis (Hatch 2002), which is 'data analysis [that] starts by dividing the overall data-set into categories or groups based on predetermined typologies' (152). During preliminary analysis the six forms of capital became our typologies. Each researcher noted common themes (Creswell 2009) related to instances in which faculty drew upon CCW to successfully navigate and confront challenges related to race and/or marginalization.

Thereafter, the team reviewed, discussed, and compared preliminary themes. What resulted were five overarching themes that we wrote in the form of one-sentence generalizations, or phrases (Hatch 2002). These generalizations express a relationship between two or more concepts and are not intended to imply generalizability (Hatch 2002). Our five generalizations included: (1) addressing/resisting students' stereotypes of/challenges to APOC; (2) maintaining authentic self to make academia and work more accessible and relevant; (3) persevering with integrity when faced with hostility, racism, or marginalization; (4) self-advocating for and drawing upon varied and quality mentorship; and (5) engaging in strategic service work while avoiding cultural taxation and tokenism. We then individually combed transcripts to identify specific and detailed excerpts of data to support our findings.

Trustworthiness and limitations of study

To ensure trustworthiness of the data, several measures were adopted. First, transcripts were reviewed for errors prior to analysis. Second, peer debriefing (Creswell 2009) was employed throughout the analysis process as we met to discuss individual understandings of preliminary themes and our final thematic generalizations (Hatch 2002). We also acknowledged our positionalities (Merriam et al. 2001) as females of color working in academia, knowing our positionalities as insiders were not fixed, nor clearly delineated, because our social and cultural identities varied in relation to our participants. Admittedly, our positionalities shaped our access to and interactions with participants during the interview process and data analysis. We self-disclosed our identities as females of color in academia to our participants because as Lichtman (2007) suggests such self-disclosure, 'when carefully and appropriately offered, initiates authentic dialogue' (122). As 'insiders,' we also utilized cultural insight to make sense of the 'linguistic, cognitive, emotional, sensory and psychological principles of participants' (Chavez 2008, 479). Our insider status afforded us multiple advantages, such as quickly building rapport with participants, providing for the development of an equitable relationship between researcher and participant, and a nuanced perspective during the data collection and analysis process (Chavez 2008).

While efforts to ensure trustworthiness were employed, this study was limited. Findings are not meant to be representative of the experiences of all FOC, as our participant sample is not representative of FOC in all institutional types, all disciplines, or in all regions of the country. Findings may resonate with other FOC and may be useful to faculty and administrators in higher education seeking to utilize an asset-based approach to recruit and retain more FOC and to reduce inequitable and/or marginalizing practices in academe.

Findings

Narratives revealed some of the challenges that participants encountered related to racism and/or other forms of marginalization, as well as insights regarding how they utilized various forms of CCW to navigate these challenges. While the experiences that the APOC shared echoed those cited in previous literature, it was also revealed how both native-born and international FOC shared some similar challenges in navigating the academy, but challenges specific to an international positionality were also found. Furthermore, working at an HSI did not appear to lessen or eliminate instances of marginalization or discrimination for the seven APOC who worked at institutions with this designation.

Addressing/resisting students' stereotypes of/challenges to APOC

In previous literature (Turner, González, and Wood 2008), FOC often indicated that a primary reason for persisting in the academy was because of their love of teaching and the positive impact they had on students. However, FOC can also experience challenges at the hands of their students, who may exhibit resistance and/or racism and/or question their credibility (Sue et al. 2011; Turner, González, and Wood 2008). This was the case for seven of the eight female participants. Two male APOC mentioned concerns with students stereotyping them because of their accents from their countries of origin or international status.

Anna, a black female faculty member, shared some of the challenging experiences she had with students that began while she was a teaching assistant in graduate school. 'In the past when I first started out … my personality or my presence was interpreted as being confrontational or intimidating.' Students expressed this on course evaluations although she admitted, 'I could never understand why because I'm not trying to be confrontational. If you ask me can you turn this in late and the syllabus says no, you cannot turn it in late.' Anna described a more recent incident with a 'student who felt that she should be able to turn in an assignment late.' When Anna did not accept the late assignment, the student said, 'you're cold hearted, you're heartless.' Anna explained how she had 'been able to break through this stereotype that if I tell you no, I'm [not] being the hard, black teacher … [it's] because this piece of paper [syllabus].' Anna remained resilient and hopeful in the face of hostility by drawing on both navigational and aspirational capital as she continued to maintain her equitable and high expectations (resistant). Students eventually realized her approach was genuine and not a stereotyped performance.

Elisa also felt stereotyped by students, in 'being short, [and an] Asian [American].' 'Because I'm not a foreign professor right, there's two Asian professors who are also short, young looking but they get read in a very different way. Almost with this kind of more respect.' She felt, 'because I have this American accent … [Students approach me saying,] Hey Elisa what's up? … As if they are speaking to a peer.' In response, she reiterated that students address her as 'Professor.' In this case, Elisa enacted agency (navigational capital) and her resistant capital to combat students' disrespect. She also relied on a black female colleague for support.

Lori, who was an international Asian female FOC with an accent from her country of origin, shared her concerns with getting 'good teaching evaluations' because she felt as 'a female professor, petite, [and] foreign' she was at 'a disadvantage.' For her 'the language, the culture barrier was particularly a challenge.' She also felt that compared to her white male colleagues, 'they definitely have a teaching advantage,' perhaps because 'males tend to be more authoritative, so when they tell a student to do something the students tend to [be] more [likely to] obey.' For 'me not necessarily, they [students] try to challenge you in class.' She tended to rely on 'a male professor of color' within her department to vent her frustrations. 'He tries to give me advice on how to deal with all the situations … that has definitely helped a lot.'

Pilar, a Latina, had experienced students' resistance to her social justice and diversity-oriented pedagogy. 'The second year I was teaching [my program coordinator] called me in and said we're looking at your student evals and people are calling you, not everybody, just a couple in each class were calling me a racist.' To her, such resistance from her predominantly white students was inevitable: 'I was hired because of my diversity background. … I mean I would expect that because that means I'm doing something right.' As deKoven (2011) notes, 'White [college] students, in any field, are often the most resistant to engaging in critical conversations about race and racism,' and other forms of privilege and oppression that are part of a social justice and diversity-oriented teaching approach (155). Yet while students' comments were one thing, Pilar was further disappointed in her program coordinator's lack of support and validation regarding her teaching. However, she drew on support from colleagues and her navigational capital to persist. After several years, things changed: '[Now] students talk about me … that I've been one of the biggest changes in terms of how they change [in relation to diversity and social justice].'

As an international FOC, Fahim's experiences in the classroom were shaped by the cultural shock he experienced as a graduate student at a predominantly white institution in the Midwest. 'It was really scary because I was from a different country [India]. I had an accent and I was in a [predominantly white] town.' He learned how to approach race-related instances with students after seeing his professor/mentor handle a race-related argument in class. He felt, 'the sooner you learn that people are threatened when they see something that's not the same as them, different, the easier it gets to accept this stuff,' and 'building that ability to cope with it positively … [and] also help the person who is ignorant, be less ignorant, is really helpful.' Fahim used this approach to proactively connect with students both in an effort to educate them and as a self-defense mechanism against potential racism and xenophobia he might encounter in his own classroom. 'I make it a point to meet every student at the beginning of the year … it makes a classroom atmosphere much more manageable and easier because, I feel I can personally relate to the students.' FOC often utilized such strategies that took extra effort and time, that their white colleagues may not consider as essential, to proactively manage classroom-level incidents.

Maintaining authentic self to make academia and work more accessible and relevant

One of the challenges FOC often face in the academy relates to their desire to maintain their cultural identity (Stanley 2006) and the values, norms, and ways of being that come with this identity that stand in contrast to those upheld in the academy. One common value among FOC is their tendency to engage in research or service that affords them the opportunity to give back or meet the needs of their communities (Garrison-Wade et al. 2012). Such work can be undervalued or discouraged in the tenure and promotion process (Diggs et al. 2009). Half of the APOC interviewed revealed how they were very cognizant and purposeful in maintaining their cultural identity to resist the individualistic, exclusive nature of academia. They intentionally gave back to communities of color by being sources of social capital to make academia more accessible and relevant to others.

As a black female professor, Nicole maintained her authentic self through her communication style. In this way, she could be considered bicultural in her ability to switch between her cultural and academic styles of communication (Sadao 2003). However, in exhibiting her agency, she also experienced resistance from some students. 'One of my students this semester said to one of her colleagues [peers] that she didn't like how I went from *ghetto* to professor in the classroom, and that got back to me.' Nicole was disheartened knowing this, and reached out to mentors. One was a black female tenured professor in another department. 'I told her about the whole *ghetto professor* comment, and she was like able to process that with me.' Nicole told her white colleagues about the situation as well, but they 'just weren't helpful,' as she 'had to explain to them how historically and socially the term *ghetto* has been socially constructed to mean black, female, and poor' while she 'didn't have to explain that to the others [mentors].' She shared such incidents with her students of color because she knew they were 'going to be able to take something from it.'

Carlos, Ernie, Roger, and Larry also spoke of the difficulty in maintaining their culturally authentic selves within the academy, specifically in their commitment to working with and doing research on communities of color. Larry shared advice for FOC:

> Be honest with yourself. Be honest with the field. Be honest with what it is that you hope to accomplish. Don't play to buzzwords. … One of the worst pieces of advice that I got from someone who also happens to be faculty was, 'Don't say anything black, don't write about anything black, because it will just pigeonhole you.' And I shook my head and I walked away.

Larry remained steadfast in pursuing his own line of culturally authentic research instead of falling prey to the more competitive and individualistic approach of the academy, by refraining from a research agenda for the sole purpose of productivity in publishing.

Persevering with integrity when faced with hostility, racism, or marginalization

Among the participants, 11 shared either their general perceptions of or specific experiences with hostility, racism, or marginalization within the academy at both the institutional and department levels. FOC dealt with such instances in different ways, but many relied on the support and guidance of mentors and advocates, or social capital, while remaining resilient, by drawing on their navigational capital and maintaining their hopes for attaining tenure and/or for utilizing their positions to improve academia for themselves and other FOC. Some also utilized what skills and agency they had to oppose such inequitable treatment.

Carlos, Carly, and Anna dealt with hostility in some form in relation to their race and/or ethnicity. Carlos, a Latino working at an HSI, faced hostility from some white colleagues during his first year that he perceived to be a result of political tensions surrounding his hiring. The hostility was not just about 'not getting support' but was about him feeling as if he had to 'watch' his 'back' with colleagues and his department chair. He was 'able to deal with that' because of his 'networks … support system.' He had colleagues 'outside of the department, throughout the university' who 'would not be happy if in fact something happens that I do leave to another institution.' He knew he played an 'important role of being a Latino professor' on campus. However, Carlos admitted the hostility isolated him.

Ernie and Elisa were among those who experienced racial microaggressions (Solórzano 1998). This emerged for Ernie, a Latino, as he spoke about his relationships with his predominantly white colleagues. 'The racial conversations and the racist remarks … and those microaggressions … that we talk about in the academy, I live them; I've had people make snide comments, kind of undertones.' He felt further marginalized when colleagues referred to his work as 'qualitative voodoo' and when they exhibited how 'uncomfortable' they were with discussions regarding 'social justice issues and equity.' Ernie's colleagues were also 'trying to out-do each other and outshine each other; it's so individualistic.' This drove some colleagues to 'be such jerks, or backstabbers.' Ernie enacted his resistant and navigational capital, realizing 'the community part that I was looking for has to be built and that's what I've been trying to do.' He did this by drawing on his networks of Latina/o scholars and mentors, what he considered his 'academic *familia*.' This was 'a survival strategy.'

Elisa's colleagues were more blatant in their racist attitudes. She explained how some would 'make a racial joke in front of me intentionally and it's a way for them to [I] guess pretend they are down [with] me, being like me, being Asian.' One of her colleagues noticed 'a student in our department who is white, he has an Asian girlfriend' and said 'oh he must have yellow fever, right?' She thought, 'Do you realize who I'm married to? You know I'm also married to a white person…. Are you going to say my husband has yellow fever, too?' She relied on social networks and academic literature and media for support and coping strategies. '*The Chronicle of Higher Ed* … I'm on like Ms. Mentor or the bulletin boards for navigating the academy. I'll just kind of read through it and like okay I'm not crazy, this stuff, yeah it's happening to other folks, too.' Junta, an international Asian female FOC, also referenced the bigger issue of white, male privilege in academia that ultimately marginalized her to an extent. 'Sometimes the older white males are a pain, in academic [arenas] … they talk as if they know everything, but sometimes [that is] not the case.' Her strategy was to 'pretty much just let them talk, then I can do whatever I want to.'

Larry also perceived the continued existence of white privilege in academia and felt his white colleagues had 'some inside knowledge…. There's sometimes when they would just talk about something they're doing or something that's going on and I just have no clue about it, haven't heard about it, didn't get the email about it.' Consequently, Larry felt 'on the outside.' He explained how 'at one point, there were messages going out to faculty from the dean's office and I wasn't on the list.' He admitted, 'It could be an honest mistake, but at the same time, as someone who has experienced marginalization and discrimination, that comes up in my head anyway. I'm a new black faculty member and I missed the email?' Instinctively, Larry drew on his social network of FOC at other institutions to cope.

These participants illustrated the ways in which whiteness is supported by material practices such as outright hostility from white colleagues, racist remarks as well as behavioral subtleties and

microaggressions. They also affirmed what Leonardo (2002) notes based on Frankenberg's (1993) work – that, 'Whiteness is characterized by the unwillingness to name the contours of racism, the avoidance of identifying with a racial experiences or group, the minimization of racist legacy, and other similar evasions' (32).

Self-advocating for and drawing upon varied, quality mentorship

As previous literature indicates, mentorship was key to navigating the inequitable terrain of academia for participants. Many APOC like Fahim, Israel, Carlos, and Laura shared comments like Bianca's, in which she admitted mentorship 'has saved me,' and Nick's: 'I wouldn't be where I am without it [mentorship].' However, not all participants were afforded the opportunity to easily access varied or quality mentorship through their institutions and instead had to strategically self-advocate for support.

This was the case for Carly and Ernie. Carly had to 'step out' of her department for mentorship at her institution and subsequently found FOC who had formed their own support group after they 'felt marginalized' in the university setting. She also reached out to her mentors from graduate school and began networking more at professional conferences and organization meetings for additional mentorship. In this way, her navigational, social, and aspirational capital became key to persisting in search of mentorship. Similarly, Ernie 'didn't have a mentor … so I went and found my own.' Drawing on his navigational and social capital he approached 'the only Latina in my program,' who he said became his 'sensei … [his] academic mentor.' He also reached 'out to folks [in the university]; I have had very instrumental colleagues in the university, in this institution, helping me navigate.' However, he believed they were equally 'lonely, only like me out there in the college, so I reach out to them and we try to work on projects together and go to lunch…. It's been huge because I've had to look for it; it's not like it was provided for me at the university.' Consequently, it 'was very disappointing to talk to other faculty in other places … where it's not like the experience that I had, that they had mentoring.'

Roger spoke vehemently about the value of diverse and quality mentorship to FOC. Having examined mentorship for FOC himself, he stressed the need for 'constellation mentoring, the idea of bringing together different folks' to support you. 'I think mentors matter, and the mentor you have makes a difference.' One of his mentors was 'really positive, brings financial support, and I really believe if I had a problem and I said I need these things, he would probably do what he could to make it happen.' Admittedly, he said, 'I also know people who just have mentors in name, they don't really do anything. My mentor does do things, takes me to lunch, checks in on me, and the nature of my mentor is that he will help anybody, so it's not like I'm just getting this stuff … that is hugely important that has to do with my mentor as a human being and not the department.'

Engaging in strategic service work while avoiding cultural taxation and tokenism

Most FOC wanted to serve on diversity-related committees or projects both on and off campus as a part of their service, as this was often a means of enacting their own agency (social, resistant, and aspirational capital) to give back to communities of color. Yet they remained cognizant of not letting their institutions marginalize them by positioning them as the token FOC for their department or institution (Aguirre 2000), or falling victim to cultural taxation (Padilla 1994). Ernie, Elisa, Roger, Nicole, and Nick spoke to this struggle. Nick offered advice to FOC: 'Be comfortable telling people no. Learn to say you know I'd love to help you with this, but I was told I really need to focus on my research this semester. So be comfortable saying no. Be judicious in what you agreed to do.'

Elisa spoke of her personal experiences with tokenism, and how she 'still get[s] called upon to represent for you know the people of color right.' She was once contacted by someone in her department to meet with a Filipino biology professor who was on campus for an interview. As a social science professor, she thought, 'first of all I'm looking at the topic, like no I can't, second it's a very busy day, so I'm teaching you know class that day, followed by continuous meeting after meeting … so I said no sorry I can't.' After responding, she was still asked to meet with him for coffee, which she kindly refused.

The person who had contacted her was 'somebody who I've been told by other people right, don't burn your bridges with her because she is a person with power, she is somebody who is vital for you to get internal support for making tenure.' Yet Elisa stood her ground, and remained astounded: 'Here is somebody who is making these really, really racist assumptions about who I am, what I'm supposed to be,' given that 'white colleagues don't have the same kind of pressures … based on their identities.'

Roger also discussed the reality of 'cultural taxation.' While Roger was, in part, 'willing to pay … because I owe it for starters, and secondly it's necessary and important,' he admitted, 'it can be excessive at times, and that can be the tipping point when it is too much.'

> You have colleagues who meaningfully tell you say no to everything, well that doesn't work for people of color because we come from collective community, so if I tell a black or brown person or someone from my neighborhood that I can't be there … c'mon man what's up with that? … you can't talk to the kids in the neighborhood?, and I'm like I never want to be that person … you can't not do that, but you have to also temper it with if I can do [this], then I can't do this one thing … you tell people, because of where I am in my career, here is what I can do, but I can't do this, but it's a very delicate line, and a lot of these things are reasons you go into the academy.

Yet Roger believed 'the academy is not going to change the requisite requirements, they are not going to start saying well you're black or brown so you can just [do this and it will count] … they are going to be like you have to do what you're going to do, so you have to be like twice as good to be considered as good.'

Discussion

Findings indicated some potential variations in experiences based on gender and international status that should be explored further in future research. For instance, almost all women experienced resistance or stereotyping. The racial microaggressions female participants experienced were primarily intersecting raced-gendered stereotypes that either hypersexualized them (e.g., 'yellow fever') or attempted to silence their voices by positioning them as angry (e.g., 'confrontational' or 'hard') or invisible and weak (e.g., 'young' and 'petite'). Students' expectation that female FOC would be lenient with their teaching also stems from the assumption that women should be caregivers (Griffin and Reddick 2011). Thus, Griffin and Reddick (2011) argue that women have a 'gender tax' that ties in with their cultural tax, suggesting that female FOC are doubly minoritized based on race and gender (see Chang et al. 2013). Although mostly females in our study experienced intersecting raced-gendered oppression, it is not to say that male FOC cannot face similar challenges. Two male FOC participants felt students and colleagues might question their capabilities because of their international status. In their work, Griffin and Reddick (2011) also capture how black male faculty specifically, are hypersurveilled and deemed dangerous, and these stereotypes may impact their interactions with students and colleagues. At the same time, we recognize that participants did not mention sexual identity as a factor negatively impacting their experiences in academia, although all either shared their being in a heterosexual relationship or referred to their heterosexual status in some way. Thus, our findings are limited in this regard, and future research that considers how the intersecting identities of LGBTQ FOC is warranted (LaSala et al. 2008).

There were also many similar challenges that native and international (Fahim, Israel, Junta, Laura) APOC described. Yet international faculty experienced linguistic and cultural barriers to a greater degree. The study also revealed that being FOC at an HSI does not necessarily eliminate or lessen racism or marginalization experienced by FOC. This is likely because the HSI designation does not necessarily reflect an institutional mission to serve the needs of diverse students/individuals or differences in attitudes and perceptions among faculty after HSI designation (Hubbard and Stage 2009). Examining a larger sample of FOC at HSIs is needed to determine this to be certain, as is scholarship that examines strides made in the recruitment and retention of FOC at institutions with a 'long-term, cohesive strategy' to create a more culturally inclusive and diverse campus (Tierney and Sallee 2008, 179).

As the challenges APOC faced reflect those in the literature, previous recommendations (see Sue et al. 2011; Turner, González, and Wood 2008) are still applicable to assist FOC in dealing with racism and marginalization in the academy. For instance, mentorship and opportunities for networking and collaborating with colleagues from diverse backgrounds and disciplines remained critical to navigating the professoriate and dealing with the challenges related to racism and marginalization. Connecting with other FOC and allies was particularly key to help build FOC's resistant and navigational capital. Therefore, postsecondary institutions must continue and/or increase support for such mentorship or networking at the departmental, institutional, and national levels. University administrators and faculty in particular must increase efforts to eliminate racist and marginalizing practices and policies that disproportionately impact FOC and hold those who partake in such practices accountable. This is key since many of the racist and marginalizing experiences that the APOC described were at the hands of their colleagues, administrators, and staff. This is where white allies can help enact systemic change, and utilize their own forms of capital to call for equity and social justice and help change the face of the professoriate through purposeful hiring and continued support of diverse faculty (Gasman, Kim, and Nguyen 2011).

Tenure and promotion policies must also be more inclusive and reflective of the cultural assets and ways of being of FOC. A majority of the APOC expressed that their strong commitment to their cultural communities, illustrated by their research and service, should be included within tenure and promotion standards validating the diverse paths to academic success. Thus, Yosso's (2005) CCW framework could be utilized to reanalyze how tenure and promotion policies, as well as other policies of practice, are written and applied so they are more inclusive of the ways FOC operate within academia. In the long term, universities must adopt a multi-pronged, long-standing approach to shift their culture so that faculty, staff, students, policies, and practices are more supportive and inclusive of FOC and other diverse and historically marginalized communities. This proactive stance toward FOC increases the odds that they will remain in academia (Tierney and Sallee 2008).

Conclusion

Yosso's (2005) CCW framework proved useful in highlighting the positive cultural assets FOC enact within the academy that need to be validated and further cultivated in higher education while reiterating the continued existence of racism and marginalization for FOC. Supporting FOC, from a CRT perspective, is complex. How do you mentor FOC in an inherently racist institution? What is the purpose of mentoring or 'making it' in a space that epitomizes white supremacy? Anthropologists Omi and Winant, whose work can be placed in dialogue with developments in CRT, held that 'race establishes the identity of human subjects, it structures social conflict and social cohesion, and it is deeply woven into other aspects of existence' (1986, 56). Additionally, they held that 'every state institution is a racial institution' linked in a network by 'history, mandate, internal composition, and constituency' to the prevailing racial order. Mentoring, then, within this context, must include a combination of strategic navigational supports in efforts to interrupt this prevailing racial order, alongside endeavors to radically alter the status quo requirements for earning tenure. We imagine an academic space where we disrupt the standards of knowledge production, pushing against normalized Bourdieuean perspectives of upper-middle-class values, and instead privilege the six forms of capital outlined by Yosso that remain invisible or even contrary to current conceptions of capital that academia values and deems legitimate.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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