

**"Voices from Within: The Academic Experiences
of Minority Scholars at a Midwest Research University"**

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Abstract

The climate and culture within academic institutions has become a topic of conversation among scholars. This article focuses on the inclusion of historically excluded groups of people in academia, particularly black and Latino/as. Minority scholars' presence had been limited due to past discriminatory policies and practices, but policies have changed, and minority scholars are gaining entry into academia. Using critical race theory (CRT), this study adds to scholarship by having black and Latino/as faculty members "name their own reality" as they provide narratives about their experiences in a predominately white urban research university, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). Using a 15-question, open-ended interview guide, an online survey, and personal interviews, data was collected from 30 minority faculty members. How do department climate, area of research interest, and tenure status affect the workplace experiences of black and Latino/a faculty at UWM?

Results indicate that some minority scholars at UWM experience tokenism, isolation, and marginalization within their departments. Minority faculty discussed negative interactions with peers and department chairs. The proportion of other minorities in a department affects the way faculty view the academic climate. The more diverse a department the higher the comfort level for minority faculty. Doing research on racial or ethnic issues is not held in high regard in some departments, and minority scholars' research methods are questioned. In addition, racial microaggressions (subtle verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual insults) have been witnessed or experienced by minority faculty on campus.

The Latino/a faculty in the study seem to have a closer relationship amongst their group than the black faculty members. Senior Latino/a faculty are mentoring junior faculty and collaborating on research together. Junior black faculty question what they view as a white hegemonic culture and climate at the university as well as the lack of perceived mentorship from tenured senior black faculty at UWM.

This study makes recommendations to university officials and senior faculty about how to alleviate the negative climate at the university. Diversity initiatives have been implemented by UWM, but a continued negative institutional climate exists.

“Booker’s goal was to provide African Americans with opportunities to learn vocational skills and obtain an education. He thought former slaves would gain acceptance through education and financial independence” (Washington, c1901).

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) is located in southeastern Wisconsin. Milwaukee is home to a diverse population; the latest census (2000) reported that close to 50% of the population of the county consist of minorities, black (37.3%) and Latino/a (12%) combined account for 49% of the population. Even though the city statistically speaking is diverse, as far as housing is concerned, Milwaukee has been in the headlines for being one of the top five most segregated metropolitan areas in the United States. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is located on the East Side of town and is known for its trendy, bohemian-type culture.

The setting for this study is UWM, which is home to over 28,000 students, both undergraduate and graduate. Within the University System of Wisconsin, UWM is recognized as having the most diverse student population, even though less than 15% of the entire student population is comprised of African Americans and Latinos (see Table 2), which happen to be the largest minority groups in Milwaukee (UWM Fact book 2006-07). Students’ who are from Africa or South America are considered and counted by UWM as international students: therefore, they are not counted in the percentages above.

Over 800 faculty members are employed by UWM, with less than 10% being of African American (black) or Latino descent (Multicultural Student Center, 2008). More than 70% of faculty members at UWM are Caucasian. Similar to other universities, the University System of Wisconsin has a diversity policy that recognizes the potential contributions minority scholars

have to make within an academic environment. “The Board of Regents has made the presence of diverse faculty, staff, and perspectives a high priority for UW System institutions. The Board defines diversity broadly to encompass race, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, socioeconomic status and age” (UWM Web site 2008). Perspectives are shaped by lived experiences that are directly related to religion, color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ancestry, age, etc.

Scholars continue to document the different lived experiences of minorities, women, immigrants, and others in America and abroad who are deemed different than the majority, that is, those who yield the economic and political power (see Alba & Nee, 1999; Foner, & Fredrickson, 2004; Kanter, 1977; Massey & Denton; and Wilson, 1978).

Due to sexist and racist policies in America’s past, colleges and universities receiving federal funds are required each year to demonstrate that they have made a good faith effort to increase the number of women and minority faculty members on campus (Menges & Exum, 1983). With diverse personnel come diverse perspectives. Since the 1960s diversity and multiculturalism are standard terms heard within the academy due to the civil rights movement and the implementation of affirmative action policies.

In October 2002 the then-Chancellor of UWM, Nancy Zimpher, organized a Task Force on Race and Ethnicity at the request of UWM African American Faculty and Staff Council. Recognizing that the campus workforce was becoming more diverse, the task force was given the job of assessing the state of diversity issues on campus as well as developing recommendations for creating an organizational culture that reflects the diversity of university employees’ (Memo from Chancellor Zimpher, October 29, 2002). In 2003 the Task Force arranged for public and private hearings to be held on the campus of UWM. Employees’ also had an opportunity to complete two surveys (Personal Reflections Survey, and Campus Survey,); one was composed of close-ended questions, and the other allowed respondents to answer questions in their own words.

In its report, UWM Task Force on Race & Ethnicity Final Report (Martin, 2005) the Task Force concluded that racial and ethnic minorities at UWM experience a “chilly” climate. The campus climate marginalizes People of Color, who also happen to be underrepresented among UWM

faculty and staff members (Martin, 2005). The leadership at UWM lacks diversity. Having minority representation on faculty at universities shows the institutions support to multiculturalism, respect for different perspectives, and ideologies. “The presence or absence of minority faculty members in graduate and professional schools is a good informal indication of an institution’s overall commitment to equal opportunity for minorities in higher education” (Epps, 1998). The different experiences and perceptions that racial and ethnic minorities described in the *UWM Task Force on Race & Ethnicity Final Report* (2005) are reflective of our society, which continues to be stratified based on class, race, gender, etc. Diversity initiatives are being tracked by Access to Success and the Equity Scorecard, which were put together by UWM to monitor progress toward achieving a multicultural institution. Other universities have developed similar organizational units to address the increase in diversity amongst both the student and faculty populations in hopes of developing a multicultural institution that is conducive to learning.

The recruitment and retention of a multicultural student body, faculty, and administration is on most universities’ agendas’. Another study conducted at UWM in 2005 focused solely on the School of Education and assessed the diversity and overall climate of the School. William G. Tierney, an outside consultant, conducted the study within the School of Education at the request of the Dean and Provost. Undergraduate and graduate students’ participated in focus groups, while faculty and staff who participated did so with personal interviews, email, or telephone interviews, 26 people took part in the study. At the time of Tierney’s visit, the *UWM Task Force on Race & Ethnicity Final Report* (Martin, 2005) had been completed and was reviewed by Tierney before he began his study. Examining the effectiveness of the organizational structure of the School using four variables (Quality, Diversity, Cultural Integrity, and Engagement) Tierney found that five issues arose during interviews. Some of the most glaring issues that were consistent with Martin’s (2005) findings were the low percentage of Students of Color in the School, low morale of faculty, lack of faculty leadership, and Faculty of Color finding them selves defined in a climate that they perceived as antagonistic (Tierney, 2005). Tierney concluded with recommending structural changes and for the academic climate within the School of Education to be addressed. Not only is Tierney's report significant because

of his findings but also because historically many blacks majored in education due to the segregated school system in America; they could secure teaching positions in school designated for black students (Gasman et. al., 2008; Trotter, 1985; Clark, 1965); this trend continues as more blacks have secured degrees in education than any other area since the end of the Civil War (Gasman et. al., 2008).

Educational institutions have to be prepared to educate our next generation of scholars, who are more multicultural than any generation in our country's past. Having a postsecondary education generates social and economic mobility in our post-industrial society and enables people to compete in a free market. Educational institutions are a central site for the construction of social and racial power (Roithmayr, 1999). Historically, minority scholars' and students' presence in traditional universities in the United States has been limited due to past discriminatory policies and practices. Even in the 21st century, minority students and faculty continue to find themselves underrepresented in traditional universities' and colleges' (see Turner, 2003; Allen et al., 2000; *The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac*, 2007; Parsons & Plakhotnic, 2006; *The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac*, 2003-2004, 2007).

Affirmative action has been in existence for three decades now, and current research from the U.S. Department of Education shows a substantial gap still remains between the proportion of minority students participating in higher education and the proportion of full-time minority faculty (Epps, 1998). At UWM the above statement holds, as minority students (including Native American and Asian American) account for less than 15% of the student body and minority faculty (including Native American and Asian American) are less than 10% of faculty members (Multicultural Student Center, 2008). Research shows a positive correlation between the number of minority students and the retention rate of minority faculty (Kimenyi, 1991). With Students of Color on campus, minority faculty members are not isolated.

Researchers also conclude that the most persistent, statistically significant predictor of enrollment and graduation of African American graduate and professional students is the presence of minority faculty members (Epps, 1988; Allen et al., 2001 & Dixon-Reeves 2003). Minority faculty members are more likely than their white counterparts to serve

as mentors to graduate Students of Color, assisting them with the academic socialization process and professional development (Dixon-Reeves 2003; Gasman et. al., 2008).

Previous research documents a relationship between minority student participation and graduate rates in higher educational institutions and the retention and recruitment of minority faculty.

Workplace Experiences

Having representatives of different ethnic, racial, and gender groups on college campuses prevent People of Color and woman from being isolated in a system that has been dominated by white male ideology and culture. Recognizing that UWM has the most diverse student population within the University of Wisconsin System, this paper, explores the workplace experiences of black and Latino/a faculty at UWM. The narratives contained in this paper are excerpts taken from a larger study conducted by the author. Perspective, or the way one sees the world, is due in part to the past experiences, attitudes, and beliefs that are relative to the way we experience the workplace.

UWM has women's studies department, an Africology department, and an urban studies department, all areas that research some aspect of life as a minority in America. It could be said that a good faith effort has been made by UWM to diversity its student body and faculty, but maybe that just is not enough. What happens to the faculty and students once they are on the campus of UWM? Advising centers have been set up to counsel minority students on academic issues, and there are centers on campus totally devoted to researching community issues such as discrimination in housing and jobs, thanks in part to the Milwaukee Idea. The previous reports reviewed (Martin, 2005; Tierney 2005) document that the racial climate at UWM is perceived by some minorities to be unfriendly and hostile.

A report published by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Equity Scorecard Team poses an important question: What is the perception of UWM among the minority communities on campus (Part 1: Access, 2006)? Another important question needs to be asked: What are minority faculty members' perceptions of acceptance amongst their

white peers at UWM? The Campus Survey conducted in 2005 indicates negative and problematic experiences for some racial and ethnic groups on campus; this indicates that serious climate issues exist at UWM (Martin, 2005). If minority faculty members do not feel accepted and respected by colleagues, administrators, and staff at UWM, it is doubtful that potential Students of Color will feel welcome on campus. Using critical race theory, this study sets out to describe how the workplace experiences of minority faculty at an urban research university conflict with the multicultural rhetoric so commonly heard within the academy walls.

Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) grew out of legal studies when liberal legal scholars developed a concern about the slow, incremental racial justice changes in America after the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Legal Scholars of Color, along with scholars of other disciplines within the academy, recognized the limitations of critical legal studies, and as a result critical race theory was developed (Bell, 1987; Delgado 1988; Matsuda 1993; Ladson-Billings 1993). "The consciousness of critical race theory as a movement or group and the movements intellectual agenda were forged in oppositional reaction to visions of race, racism and law dominant in the post civil rights period" (Lawrence, 1999).

CRT recognizes that minority voices in America have been marginalized, and it works to include the "other" perspective on American history and current issues. CRT challenges institutional elites, which in America continue to be dominated by white males, who claim to represent the best interests of all Americans. Critical race theorists demand that we recognize the experiential knowledge of People of Color and their communities. Critical race theory:

1. Recognizes that racism is endemic to American life
2. Expresses skepticism toward dominant claims of neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy.
3. Challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of institutional policies.

4. Insists on recognizing the experiential knowledge of People of Color and our communities of origin in analyzing society.
5. Is interdisciplinary and crosses epistemological and methodological boundaries.
6. Works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression-Social Justice (Vilalpando & Bernal, 2002, p. 245).

Social Justice is "the fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural law that all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice" (retrieved on March 25, 2009 from www.businessdictionary.com).

Critical race theory (CRT) is a qualitative inquiry that begins with an explicit theoretical or ideological perspective that determines which conceptual framework will direct fieldwork and the interpretation of findings (Patton, 2002). Recognizing that racism is a part of American history that continues to plague groups deemed inferior or subordinate, CRT scholars put race and ethnicity at the center of the inquiry and provide voice to the "other." This research examines the workplace experiences of black and Latino/a faculty members at a traditional university, critical race theory (CRT) was the most logical theoretical perspective to use to study how race and ethnicity shape experiences in the academy. Giving minority faculty an opportunity to tell their "stories" about the academy can open up dialogue among university administrators and provide insight into the academic climate and culture.

Data Collection

For my research I collected three types of data. I personally interviewed faculty members using an open-ended interview guide designed to elicit information about their experiences at UWM. The interview guide (Attachment 1) covered the following four areas and the possible impact it has on how subjects experience the workplace (academy):

- 1) Other Latino/s or black faculty in department; length of time at UWM?

2) Experiences with peers, students, and administrators? 3) View of the promotion process in the academy. 4) If they think UWM is doing all it can to increase diversity on campus; if not what can be done? Interviews were conducted with 30 faculty members (subjects) but this article only contains excerpts from eleven subjects due to page limits.

The second data collection tool came from an online survey (Attachment 2) sent to all subjects who completed a personal interview except one retiree who took part in the study. The online survey was used to gauge information about the subjects' social capital (the type of area they grew up in, if they associate with any ethnic or race-specific professional organizations, and their parents' occupations, etc). Social capital, which is developed within the family and community, provides people with the tools and contacts necessary to accomplish their goals and objectives (Coleman, 1998). The third source of data comes from reviewing past (2005-2008) UWM documents that track the presence of minority students and programs that have been implemented by UWM to attract minority scholars (e.g. UWM's mission statement; UW System Institution on Race and Ethnicity; UWM Fact Book and the UW System Office of Academic Diversity and Development).

Literature Review

Universities and colleges are macrostructure institutions' are products of American society that cannot be understood unless viewed within the historical and cultural dynamics of that society (Epps, 1998). Before mass immigration took place in the early 19th century America, the nation already had a deeply rooted consciousness that had Anglo-Saxon and Protestant origins (Steinberg, 2001). To obtain a secondary education is not compulsory in our society and has historically only been attainable to the groups with wealth and power, which has not commonly, included minorities.

European American postsecondary educational opportunities (referred to throughout this paper as traditional colleges and universities) began in the 17th and 18th centuries with the establishment of Harvard (1636) and Yale (1701) Universities. To put the timeline into perspective, when affluent European-American (white) men began to obtain postsecondary education, both Mexico and Puerto Rico were under foreign rulers (Spain and France respectively), Africans were enslaved, and women were considered property. The historical

context under which the Latino and black educational situation has developed in the United States is rather different and is in sharp contrast to their white peers (Velez, 2007). The history of America's patriarchal white supremacy past is an issue in many workplaces in America, as the culture becomes more diverse.

With the establishment of women's colleges, historically black colleges and universities (19th century), American Indian colleges (20th century), and Hispanic-serving institutions (established by Higher Education Act of 1965), minorities began to gain a foothold in academia as both students and faculty. Since historically black colleges and universities' and women's colleges have been in existence for decades they have served as both the intellectual backbone for the education of minorities' as well as a major employer of minority scholars. Not until the 20th century, and then only on occasion, would European-American (white) women, and minority women and men be involved in teaching at traditional U.S. colleges and universities, at which time they held marginal positions and were viewed as anomalies (Kennelly et al., 1999). Educational opportunities for minorities continued to be limited due to educational cost.

Fast forward to the 20th century and we find that World War II brought about federal legislation that provided financial opportunities to attend college to previously economically excluded groups (Cose 1995, Durant, 1986; Loudon, 1986; Wilson, 1978). With the availability of federal funds colleges and universities saw an increase in enrollment of both women and minorities'. A hierarchy system within the higher education institutions developed with open access (i.e. the availability of federal monies to attend school). With a larger population of college students', colleges and universities began to recruit by cognitive ability, thus forming an elite group of universities that are still in existence today. By using various variables (e.g. average student test score, selectivity of admissions, etc.) colleges' and universities' are assigned prestige levels (Allen et. al, 2000).

Clark (1987) describes the academic hierarchy in American education as: Major research universities (especially Ivy League schools and similar institutions) are at the top of the hierarchy, followed by highly selective liberal arts colleges, public and private colleges that grant graduate degrees, nonselective four-year colleges, and community colleges (Allen et al., 2002).

The prestige rank assigned to postsecondary educational institutions is calculated by using a variety of variables; the analysis is undertaken by *US News and World Report* (USNWR) and published in an annual report. Melguizo and Strober (2007) describe the ranking process:

In general 25% of the ranking is made up of institutional performance on the retention and graduation of undergraduate, and 20% is based on faculty resources, including faculty compensation, the percentage of faculty with Ph.D.'s the percentage of the faculty that are full-time, the student/faculty ratio, and class size (the percentage of undergraduate classes with less than 20 students and the percentage with more than 50). Fifteen percent of the ranking is based on student selectivity (the acceptance rate of undergraduate, the yield number, the high school standing and SAT or ACT scores of incoming students), 10% is based on financial resources as measured by educational expenditures per student and 5% is based on alumni satisfaction, measured by the percentage of alumni who make financial contributions to the institution. Twenty-five percent of the prestige ranking is based on the much more ambiguous construct of academic reputation, which is measured by US NWR by surveying college and university presidents, provosts, and deans of admission and asking them about other institutions' reputation (p. 636-7).

Past and current inequalities in the educational system (less than standard schools in predominantly minority neighborhoods, tracking, etc.) hinder the educational development of minorities. Minorities continue to score lower than whites' on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and may have lower-than-average high school grades, which limits their ability to attend high-ranking undergraduate academic institutes, which can have a lasting effect (Epps, 1989; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Kennelly et. al., 1999). "In hiring new faculty, selection committees-typically composed primarily of white males-generally subscribe to the same set of culturally induced values as admissions committees, evaluating and ranking candidates largely on the basis of the prestige of the institution from which they obtained their principle degrees" (Epps, 1989). The demographic profile of the nation's elite institutions averages only 3 to 9 percent Black and Latino student enrollments (Gasman & Vultaggio, 2007).

When minorities attend universities' or colleges that are not considered prestigious, the cycle of inequality that began in elementary school continues. Low representation of minority students in prestigious undergraduate institutions leads to their low representation at highly prestigious graduate schools, which ultimately leads to low

representation of minority scholars among the faculties of major research universities (Allen et. al., 2000). UWM is striving to become a major urban research university. The low minority faculty representation at UWM, less than 10%, seems to be the norm at most research universities. Diverse faculty and staff will open up opportunities for different perspectives and research methods, which can assist UWM in becoming a premier, university. UWM's primary objectives are to expand the institution's research portfolio and provide higher education access to the broadest possible audience (Chancellor's vision, UWM Web site, 2008).

The tenure process in the academy is described by scholars' as a major obstacle for all faculties but particularly for minority faculty at research universities', who are more likely to research minority issues, hold dual appointments, serve on local community committees, and serve on campus committees' directed at diversity (Allen et. al., 2000, Epps, 1989, Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998, Menges & Exum, 1983). Tenure ideally is the goal of all faculty members at colleges and universities because it brings about job stability, flexibility, and respect from peers. But studies show that minority scholars are concentrated in two-year colleges or in non-tenure-track positions and have lower academic rank compared to their white counterparts (Turner et al, 1999; Allen et al, 2001; Mengue & Exum, 1983; Turner et al, 2008).

Research universities and colleges base the promotion of faculty on a variety of attributes, with research and publication being highly valued (Allen et al., 2000; Epps, 1998; Stanley, 2006). Tenure committees, typically comprised of white men, tend to give much weight to publications in core journals of the discipline a scholar belongs to. Success in the promotion and tenure review process depends on publishing in those core journals (Parsons& Plakhotnic, 2006). Early political and social theories excluded women and minorities and viewed civil society as a white male world. These research paradigms continue to influence contemporary theories in academia, as displayed by the choice of articles published in core journals (Parsons, 1999).

Newer research paradigms and topics, such as critical race theory, queer theory, and feminist theory, may not be considered legitimate theories by some editors and

reviewers, which limits opportunities for scholars' who use these research paradigms to be published in core journals (Gasman et. al., 2008). Many minority scholars research minority issues such as affirmative action, diversity, and institutional climate, all areas with potential to benefit higher educational institutions but the choice of topics selected is not always rewarded in the academy (Stanley, 2006).

In the academia hierarchy comparison research is also valued but many minority scholars' do not want to conduct comparative studies because they view cross-racial studies as scientifically meaningless and politically dangerous (Epps, 1998). The continued belief that research is only valid if compared against the norm, which in academia means White European male experiences, hinders opportunities to develop new theories and test new research methods (Brown et.al, 1999, Gasman et. al., 2008). The minority scholar is constrained by the culture of the major research university to select research paradigms, research topics, and publication outlets that conform to the traditions of institutions that have historically excluded minorities (Epps, 1998).

Another issue is diversity courses. Teaching diversity courses typically falls on the shoulders of Faculty of Color and leads to dual appointments. A dual appointment means those faculty members have to share their time and research efforts between two departments. Studies show that minority faculty members are more likely than their white peers to hold dual appointments, which may not necessary count toward tenure. Many women and minorities are appointed jointly in a traditional department and also in a program of women's or ethnic studies, which can lead to competing demands and expectations (Mengus & Exum, 1983). Joint appointments may add to the survival problems already faced by minority faculty. If it were not for women's studies and ethnic studies programs at some institutions, the percentage of minority faculty would be much lower. The highest proportions of minority scholars at UWM are located in the Africology department, which accounts for one percent of minority scholars' employed by UWM.

Brayboy (2003) contends that there is a hidden or suppressed agenda regarding service requirements for Faculty of Color. To secure tenure, Faculty of Color must

contend with serving on diversity committees, mentor Students of Color, and fight the diversity fight as well as publish in core journals (Brayboy, 2003; Allen et al., 2000; Stanley 2006). Institutions implicitly treat minority faculty as token hires by acting like they are the only people who can address diversity issues. Minority faculty members (tokens) are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals (Kanter, 1977, Sue D. W., 2008 & Steven et. al. 2008). Diversity should be on everyone's agenda within organizations to ensure equal access and opportunity.

Findings

The belief that there is meritocracy, autonomy, and the ability to research areas of interest draw scholars into the academic arena. Sadly enough, obtaining the highest educational degree in the land (Ph.D.) does not shield People of Color from experiencing institutional racism and racial microaggressions (subtle verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual insults) in a space (university setting) that should embrace multiculturalism. As Malcolm X noted, "It does not matter to a racist whether an African American is a professor or a panhandler, a genius or a fool, a saint or a criminal. Where racism is common, racial identities are compulsory and at the forefront of one's self-identity" (as quoted in Brym and Lie, 2007).

This research demonstrates that racial and ethnic minorities continue to deal with issues that are abundant both in the organizational structure and the climate of the academy. This research will leave you wondering how much education, more academic now than vocational, has to do with the acceptance (legitimization) of minorities in American institutes in general and at UWM in particular. Does Malcolm X's statement hold true today? Ideally, education brings about understanding and respect for other ethnic, racial, and religious groups (cultural relativism), but as Albert, one of the subjects in this study points out:

The assumption is increased education would entail enlightenment because you gained an extra education you became enlightened and so racism now is no longer, it doesn't make sense to be racist because you know better, but what if the opposite happens. What if because of your extra enlightenment, you have new and more creative ways to be racist. Therefore, you hide your racism now in policy. You hide behind policy because now you

know how to use institutions even better, to hide what you're trying to do or to alienate certain people or what not. So that's why a lot of us (minority faculty) may be kind of pessimistic in terms of when you have these kind of conversations because all these people have advanced education, that doesn't mean they're going to ethical or going to be fair. Matter of fact sometimes the opposite is true.

This study, which is part of a larger research endeavor, contains excerpts from interviews with black or Latino/a faculty members at UWM. All names used are fictitious to protect the identity of the subjects. Almost one third of the subjects are women, several subjects are Latino/a, with the vast majority of subjects being black (this includes African Americans, Africans, and Caribbean Islanders). The number of each ethnic and racial group in this study is representative of the groups' respective amounts at UWM; there are more black faculty members (African Descent (AD) in the table below) than Latino/as and more men than women.

The table below provides information about the subjects in this study that was obtained during the course of the interview or in the follow-up online survey, such as tenure status, ethnicity, and social class while growing up. Not all subjects listed below are quoted in this research paper due to page constraints. Social class was determined by using the online survey (Attachment 2) based on responses to a question about parents' occupation. If one or both parents' occupation required a college degree (e.g. engineer, nurse, school teacher, etc) then the subject's social status is identified as middle class. If neither parent held a job that required a four-year degree, then their social class is identified as working class. Not all subjects interviewed completed the online survey that dealt with parent occupation (social class); this is indicated by a question mark (?) in Table 1 below.

Table 1**Study's subjects**

Fictitious name	Tenured or non-tenured	Ethnicity	Social Class while growing up
Sarah	Non-tenured	AD	Middle Class
Reba	Non-tenured	AD	Working Class
Steve	Tenured	Latino	Working Class
Jody	Non-tenured	AD	?
Owen	Tenured	AD	?
Derrick	Non-tenured	AD	?
Corey	Tenured	AD	?
Eric	Non-tenured	AD	Working Class
Kendall	Tenured	AD	?
Wanda	Non-tenured	Latina	Middle Class
Josh	Tenured	AD	?
Sam	Tenured	Latino	Middle Class
Phil	Tenured	Latino	Middle Class
Chris	Tenured	AD	Working Class
Albert	Non-tenured	AD	Middle Class
Michael	Tenured	AD	?
Paul	Tenured	AD	Working Class
Bob	Tenured	AD	Working Class
Janet	Tenured	AD	Working Class
Nathan	Tenured	AD	Middle Class
Tracy	Tenured	AD	?
Monica	Tenured	Latina	?
Stan	Tenured	AD	Middle Class
Jim	Non-tenured	AD	Working Class
Cathy	Non-tenured	AD	?

Data Source: Qualitative interviews and online survey N=25

Because this research is a critical analysis of an urban academic institution, critical race theory is used to organize the data around the themes discovered while analyzing it. The literature review provided the basis for the questions asked of all subjects. Proportion of other Faculty of Color in the department, interactions with peers, and how their experience was with the tenure process are some of the factors involved in how minority faculty perceive their workplace experience at UWM.

The first question asked of subjects was how their experience had been within their respective departments at UWM. Kanter's theory of proportions (1977) states that being a

minority, quantitatively speaking, in an organization causes minorities to be at a disadvantage by being isolated and excluded from peer networks. This can be seen in responses from numerous subjects in this study. Subjects in very diverse departments such as ethnic, gender, or racial studies made it very clear that their department was not characteristic of others on the campus at UWM. Sarah stated that her experience has been:

Largely positive but my department is not characteristic of most departments and that needs to be very clear. Even my training as a doctoral student was in a department where being a minority female is not something that is uncommon or looked upon as an oddity, it probably is more common in my experience than uncommon. The best thing about my department is they are supportive and they mentor you, but they also leave you alone. It is not one of those departments with really strict academic rules about how you are supposed to behave and act and if you fall out of line with the *culture* of the place; then you're seen as some kind of person who is trying to shake things up. I have heard horror stories from some of my other friends I went to grad school with. They have to leave their door open and they don't even have control over their office space. Again, I have not had that experience in this department. My department is supportive. (Italics added by author)

Wanda states:

I have no complaints. Our department is very race/ethnic specific so most of my colleagues are researching areas similar to mine and so far I have been very well supported. I am very happy with the environment in my department.

Both Sara and Wanda have been at UWM less than six years. Responses from other subjects who have not been at UWM that long either but are not in departments that are ethnically or racially diverse are in sharp contrast to those noted above. Jody, who has not been at UWM long, less than three years is one of two minorities in her department, she has noticed racial microaggressions taking place within the halls of UWM. Answering the question, "How has your experience been in your department?" she states:

I would say that they've been good (colleagues). In terms of the interaction and all that, on the surface they've been good (ON THE SURFACE). But in my department there are lots of indications when I observe relations amongst other people of color and the individuals in my department there's a lot of issues of racism. I haven't personally, experienced it, but I've been able to observe just a lot of negative dynamics around people of color. And people don't come out and say that they are racist, but it's just the propensity of negative things to be going on with people of color is just disproportionate. So it just got to be some racism going on.

Derrick, who is also one of two minorities in his department, describes his experience as:

Negative, well actually there is a total indifference and a sense of unjust here. That is because they have the quota philosophy at UWM and there are some people here that you can read right through the lines pretty much.

Derrick is discussing the climate within his department and at UWM in general. He does not feel like he is in a welcoming environment that supports his research or him as one of the two minorities in his department. Derrick left UWM shortly after our interview. Actually, the department he belonged to lost both minority faculty members to other universities.

In regards to his peers in his department Derrick states:

I am disliked by my peers. In appearance they act like they accept me but deep down you know what's going on: It is the way they talk to you, and the way they approach you concerning a specific issue.

Paul the sole minority in his department has been at UWM for more than a decade. He describes his experience within his department as:

I have been at UWM many years and it hasn't been smooth sailing but I guess it represents our society in terms of the same problems out there are the same ones we have here. Some professors in my department may not even speak to me. When I came here on my first day of work my area chair actually thought I was the janitor. I have had people from within my department call a journal and tell the editor that I was a minority in hopes of halting one of my publications.

The responses from the subjects above note racial microaggressions, which are subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual) directed toward People of Color, often automatically or unconsciously taking place within their departments (Solorzano et al., 2000). Other subjects, like Paul, experience blatant acts of racism. Working relationships among peers within scholars' respective departments is critical to the work life experiences of Faculty of Color (Turner, et al., 2008). Reba's interactions with white peers in her department are strained. When asked, "Do you feel your white colleagues respond to you differently than they do their white peers?" Reba stated:

I do. I see a lot of clear tokenism, so when there is a need for representation I feel there is a lot of conversation with me, to try and entice me to do things and be a part of a lot of things so that it looks good but then things that I have an interest in or like in the area of publication, with my mentor and other faculty I don't see a willingness to have me be a partner but there is when there is time to show a sign or show that we have representation. I have other needs that they could help me meet. So no I don't see a mutual satisfying relationship that forms when I can benefit the department or the school.

Reba who now finds herself as the sole minority in her department, states:

I have mixed feelings about my experience thus far in my department because when I came there was another faculty member of color, senior faculty of color in the department, so I felt support and camaraderie but that person is gone now, so this is the first semester I am feeling like I am out here on my own.

Reba's comfort level within her department has shifted since the other Faculty member of Color has left. Having a mentor who is a senior faculty member provides junior faculty with greater access to resources, advice, and collegial networks, which helps with the informal socialization process of the academic structure (Gregory, 2001; Epps, 1989; Kanter 1977; Avery et. al., 2007; McKay et al., 2007).

Chris, who is the only minority in another department at UWM, describes her experience as:

Tokenism at best-tolerance for the most part, it took them several years to take my scholarly work serious and I find that my experiences are shared by most of my Faculty of Color colleagues.

When minority faculty members focus on race-or ethnic-specific issues, they may find themselves working in a department with peers who don't understand the focus of their research. Not only do some peers not understand their colleagues' research agenda, but they don't even try to educate themselves on the subject matter. Minorities are taught mainstream culture (white) daily because of the society we live in, America. It appears that what continue to be valued are white Western norms and ways that do not leave much room for acknowledgement of the contributions made to this country by minorities.

On isolation and exclusion from peer networks Albert states:

You can find numerous instances in which another faculty member came on board and everybody is running up to him giving him opportunities. Asking him to be on various projects, you know, broadening social networks, all this kind of stuff, and access to information, all these kind of things that I hadn't had or I could have been even more successful. But for some odd reason I didn't get the information or I didn't get that invitation. But I am not surprised being a minority in America this long if you don't realize that racism is a permanent part of this society you have got a problem. You have to learn to adjust, adjust or perish.

Owen, who has been at UWM for over a decade, is in a diverse department, but when he first arrived at UWM, without tenure, he experienced exclusion. When he was hired, his department was recruiting for several faculty positions. One of the other faculty hires within his department besides Owen was a white male. Owen gives a detailed account of how from the very beginning, the white faculty member received informal socialization from their peers and he did not. Owen states:

Right from the start I noticed that I was not running on the same kind of track because the white male started showing certain kinds of forms of approval, mutuality even being invited to some of the homes of our colleagues and I wasn't invited. In fact at one time the chairman told the man that if he continued with his exemplary kind of service he could see him becoming the chair of the department.

When it came time for tenure, the informal socialization provided to the white male faculty member paid off for him in the way of a promotion. Owen states:

Never mind that our (Owen and another faculty member hired at the same time) publications were stronger than the white male but when we went through the first time around (tenure process) there were three of us from one department and we were in the same cycle-since we came in together. So in the first round only the white male got tenure.

Jody also notices the relationships that are formed between white peers in her department, ones that she is excluded from, she states:

I think that they (white colleagues) do a lot more interpersonal kinds of conversations and that they have relationships outside the department. That I'm sure will help them do whatever it is they need to do, that I don't necessarily have and actually, I don't think I want to have it. Because then you have to reciprocate and I don't want to do that.

Jody may not want to reciprocate because of the treatment she has received thus far in the department. When asked if she felt accepted by her peers, Jody's response shows how the

informal socialization that she is lacking from peers in her department may make a difference in getting the information needed to be prepared to go up for tenure or contract renewal. Jody states:

I'm not really sure (about being accepted by peers). You know, like I said it's a superficial thing, like people and their language indicates I'm doing well. But when it comes down to it will they, when it comes down to a tenure decision, will that be the case? I'm not necessarily confident that that will be the case. Just because of the historical and the current issues I see around people of color. Not necessarily just faculty members, but other people of color like staff members and students. It just can't be chance that lots of these people (people of color) are having issues. You know it just can't be chance. Whether or not they're going to give me problems, I don't think, I mean I'm not going to give them a reason to give me problems. But I don't know if they're going to just make things difficult? I'm coming up for my contract renewal and it's not as clear of a process and when I try to get answers I kind of get the run-around a little bit. But I'm a forward thinker, so I'm not going to do this stuff at the last minute, so I know that whether or not it takes me a long time to get the information I need, I'm still going to get what I need to get, when I need to get it. But you would think that people would be trying to support you and come to you and say lets meet, let's talk through something's, you got to make sure you have this and that and the other. So while they're saying you're doing a great job they're not actually giving you real feedback, you know it's kind of like that pat on the back sense that I get.

The tenure process is known by most to be a difficult process that has great rewards if tenure is granted (flexibility, respect, etc.). Not all faculty members interviewed for this study had gone through the tenure process, but all were in tenure track positions. Several subjects did go through the tenure process during the course of this study (2005-2008), but I was unable to secure a second interview with them. Many subjects in this study realize that they have to exceed their peers' productivity level to gain creditability and tenure within their departments. Sam, who has not been turned down for a promotion, states:

No, but I always had equal or out-published everyone else in my school at the time I went up for promotions.

Corey, a tenured professor in a diverse department, states:

As an assistant professor, my job was to get tenure and try to help as many people along the way as I could. All the while getting strong enough that if I was to fight the fight (against discrimination) I could. You have to be patient and you have to be very very good

and better than the next person; I was taught that you have to be better than white folks. Whatever standards and criteria there is you have to understand what they are and you have to get out there and deliver more and better.

The climate in some departments toward minority faculty continuously reminds them that they are still seen as an oddity in academia. In November 2008 Rankin & Associates Consulting administered a Wisconsin System Climate Assessment Project that was conducted on five UW campuses including UWM. The 90-question survey contained both close-and open-ended questions. Almost 3,000 surveys were returned (N=2,947) with 366 faculty respondents and 537 People of Color (faculty, staff, and administrators) taking part in the survey from UWM. "The survey was designed for respondents to provide information about their personal experiences with regard to climate issues, their perception of the campus climate, employees' work-life issues, and respondents' perceptions of institutional actions, including administrative policies and academic initiatives regarding climate issues and concerns on campus" (Rankin, p. ii). Questions were asked about the perception of subjects' experiences with regard to the climate at the university. "The university climate has a profound effect on the academic community's ability to excel in teaching, research, and scholarship" (Rankin, p. i). Subjects discussed workplace environments that they perceive to be unhelpful and hostile.

The survey results found that People of Color are less comfortable than their white peers with the climate in their departments or work units, the classroom, and the overall campus climate at UWM. Over 30% of participants experienced or witnessed racial microaggressions on campus, which creates a hostile working and learning environment (Rankin, p. 7). "Compared with 22% of White people, 37 % of People of Color believe they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct that interfered unreasonably with their ability to work or learn on campus within the past two years" (Rankin, p. iv). The retention of People of Color will continue to be a problem at UWM as reported by Rankin and Associates; 65% of Employees of Color and 48% of Students of Color have seriously considered leaving UW-Milwaukee.

The quantitative data obtained by Rankin and Associates found that disparities exist based on race/ethnicity and the way people perceive the campus climate at UWM. Their study found

that more People of Color, 36% based on race and ethnicity, are aware of offensive behavior happening on campus. "Of Respondents of Color who reported experiencing offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct 53% stated it was because of their race" (Rankin, p. iv). Race and ethnicity continue to shape the way people experience the workplace (Brown et. al, 1999; McKay et. al., 2006; Roth, 2003; Sue, 2008).

The climate survey found that People of Color are more likely to indicate that their colleagues expect them to represent "the view-point" of their identity, believe their colleagues have lower expectation of them, and feel under scrutiny by colleagues (Rankin, p. 88). People of Color who took part in the survey also indicated that they believe they have to work harder to be perceived as legitimate. People of Color are aware of informal or unwritten rules concerning how they are expected to interact with their colleagues, and they are also aware that they are excluded from these relationships on purpose. Whites expect minorities to conform to their cultural ways; the university is viewed as a white institution. When People of Color fail to conform to white Western norms they are punished by being excluded; social networks and social capital are tied to white privilege. The statistical data obtained by Rankin & Associates during the 2008 Climate Survey supports the qualitative data (narratives) obtained in this research from Faculty of Color at UWM. The final results state that "several challenges with regard to diversity issues are present at UWM" (Rankin, p. 7). The climate at UWM has not improved much since Martin's survey in 2005.

The table below documents the number of minority students enrolled at UWM, the most diverse campus under the University of Wisconsin system, for years 2004-2007.

Table 2**Minority Student Representation**

Minority Students	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
African American	1,883(6.9%)	1,889(6.7%)	1,859(6.6%)
Latino/as	988(3.6%)	1,024(3.7%)	1,057(3.7%)
Native American	196(.7%)	219(.8%)	225(.8%)
Asian	571(2.1%)	588(2.1%)	653(2.3%)
Target Racial/Ethnic (TRE)	3,638 (13.4%)	3,720 (13.3%)	3,794 (13.4%)
Total student population	27,208	28,046	28,356

Source: UWM Fact Book, Years 2004-2007 (undergraduate and graduate)

While enrollment has increased each year for the total student population and Latino population at UWM, during the 2005-06 and 2006-07 years enrollments decreased for black students between 2006 and 2007. The increase in the Latino/as student population is less than 50 additional students per academic year nothing to brag about. In the Milwaukee Commitment, Appendix C, UWM defines target racial/ethnic (TRE) groups as those who are black, Native American, Latino(a), and Asian American. When I add the other TRE-defined targeted students, Native American and Asian, to the above table, UWM has still fallen short of achieving a 20% minority student body, a goal set by Chancellor Carlos Santiago.

Just as small gains have been made in increasing the recruitment and retention among minority students at UWM, the same can be said about the recruitment and retention of minority scholars; there have been no large gains in either arena. The amount of minority faculty employed by UWM has increased each year, and according to data maintained in Access to Success Appendix C, the percentage of minority faculty at UWM is currently the highest in the 10-year time frame 1997-2006. The largest increase in minority faculty members has been brought on by an increase in the number of Asian American faculty members (Access to Success, 2007). Data available for 2006 documented that UWM employed 5.3% black faculty and 3.5% Latino/a faculty less than 10%. Currently (2009) UWM employees over 800 faculty members; blacks and Latino/as continue to represent less than 10%.

UWM has implemented Design for Diversity (1988-1998), the Milwaukee Commitment (1999-2003), and Plan 2008 (1998-2008), all initiatives that address the lack of diversity. The most current policy aimed at diversity is Plan 2008, a UW System Board of Regents initiative that seeks to remove any barriers related to race and ethnicity in the hiring process. The Chancellor's Council on Inclusion "monitors progress toward achieving our Plan 2008 and ensure there is accountability along the way" (UWM Chancellor's Council on Inclusion, Dec 2008). All three initiatives provide goals for the university to strive for in regards to diversifying faculty, staff, and the student body but the hostile academic climate at UWM needs to be addressed if any diversity programs are going to have a lasting effect.

Using Critical Race Theory (CRT), as the theoretical perspective this research gives minority faculty members "voice" which is heard in the narratives given and shares the stories of their experiences at UWM. This study and the study conducted by Rankin & Associates (2008) set out to examine the academic climate at UWM, one using primarily quantitative measures (Rankin & Associates, 2008) and the other more of a naturalistic (qualitative) inquiry, but the quantitative data alone does not provide the rich, detailed insights into the daily experiences of Faculty of Color at UWM. CRT is one qualitative method that allows administrators at UWM to hear the stories, gain insight, and begin to address the climate that is making People of Color uncomfortable at the most diverse campus under the University of Wisconsin System.

UWM is in the heart of a city (Milwaukee) that has some racial/ethnic climate issues that need to be worked out in order for the city to compete with other cities for economic growth, in particular that Milwaukee is in (one of the top five most segregated metropolitan areas in the U.S., Public Policy Forum survey 2006); UWM should help to make Milwaukee a better city "by enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of Milwaukee County" (Milwaukee Idea, 1998). The negative racial/ethnic climate in the city affects the climate at the university; both in turn affect how the university is viewed by community members, job candidates, potential students, and corporations looking to recruit recent graduates. Negative repercussions from a lack of diversity have potentially lasting effects.

Recommendations

Minorities and non-minority leaders at UWM should be active in defining what diversity means to the university and developing an all-inclusive multicultural organization that is appropriate for an institution of higher learning (see Sue, 2008). Non-minorities should be included in talks about diversity to ensure that they feel empowered in the decision-making process. A majority of subjects in this study stated that diversity courses should be required of all faculty, staff, and administrators so they can model a positive climate to those around them. One of the Access to Success initiatives located under Faculty and Staff Action is a requirement that the Human Resource office at UWM offer diversity training to new employees during orientation; I am not aware if this program is currently being implemented. Everyone has to believe in (buy into) the idea of creating a multicultural institution in order for any training to be successful

The pipeline has opened up and minorities are earning Ph.D.s at a higher rate than ever before. UWM needs to work hard to attract and then retain minority scholars using the "Target of Opportunity Program," which did account for eight new minority scholars gaining employment at UWM in 2006. Cross-racial/ethnic interactions need to take place more often between faculty members so that understanding and respect for different perspectives can be gained by all. More work needs to be done to ensure that postsecondary institutions are prepared to educate the very diverse generation of students that will soon be entering colleges' doors.

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Attachment 1

1. How would you describe your experience as a Latino/a or African American in your department?
2. How long have you been teaching at UWM?
3. Did you come to UWM from another academic institution?
4. So where you in a teaching slot?
5. Why did you choose to come to UWM?
6. Do you feel accepted by your peers?
7. Do you feel that white professors in the department respond to you differently than they do to their white colleagues? If so, how?
8. Have you ever been turned down for promotion? If so, was it at UWM? Did race/ethnicity play a role?
9. What position are you currently in; e.g. assistant, associate or full professor?
10. How diverse is the academic staff at UWM in your view?
11. How well does UWM do, in regards to programs, to diversify their faculty and staff, in your view?
12. How can UWM better diversify their faculty and staff in the future?
13. Where did you obtain your advanced degree; public academic institution or a private academic institution?
14. Do you feel that your colleagues consider speaking another language besides English as an asset? Only asked of Latino/a faculty that spoke Spanish.
15. Do you have any additional comments you would like to provide about your experience?

Attachment 2

Background Information

1. Where did you grow up?
 - a. Urban area
 - b. Rural
 - c. Suburb
2. How would you describe the area you grow up in?
 - a. Integrated
 - b. Segregated
3. Do you participate in professional associates that are specific to your race or ethnicity? Example the Association for Black Sociologist.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. How old are you?
 - a. 34-or less
 - b. 35-44
 - c. 45-54
 - d. 55 or older

5. What were your parents' occupations while you were growing up? Please differentiate between mother and father.

Attachment 3

1. Why did you choose to leave UWM?
2. How would you describe the workplace climate at UWM? Explain
3. Would you recommend any of your colleagues to apply for a position at UWM? Explain.
4. How was the racial climate at UWM while you were there? Explain