Spring 4-26-2022

Female African American Deans' Rise to Success: Navigating and Conquering Self-Sabotaging Behaviors by Taking Back Their Power

Davina Bailey
University of Massachusetts Global, dbailey2@mail.umassglobal.edu

Female African American Deans' Rise to Success: Navigating and Conquering Self-Sabotaging Behaviors by Taking Back Their Power

A Dissertation by

Davina Marie Bailey

University of Massachusetts Global

A Private Nonprofit Affiliate of the University of Massachusetts

Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

April 2022

Committee in charge:

Myrna Cote, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Marilou Ryder, Ed.D.

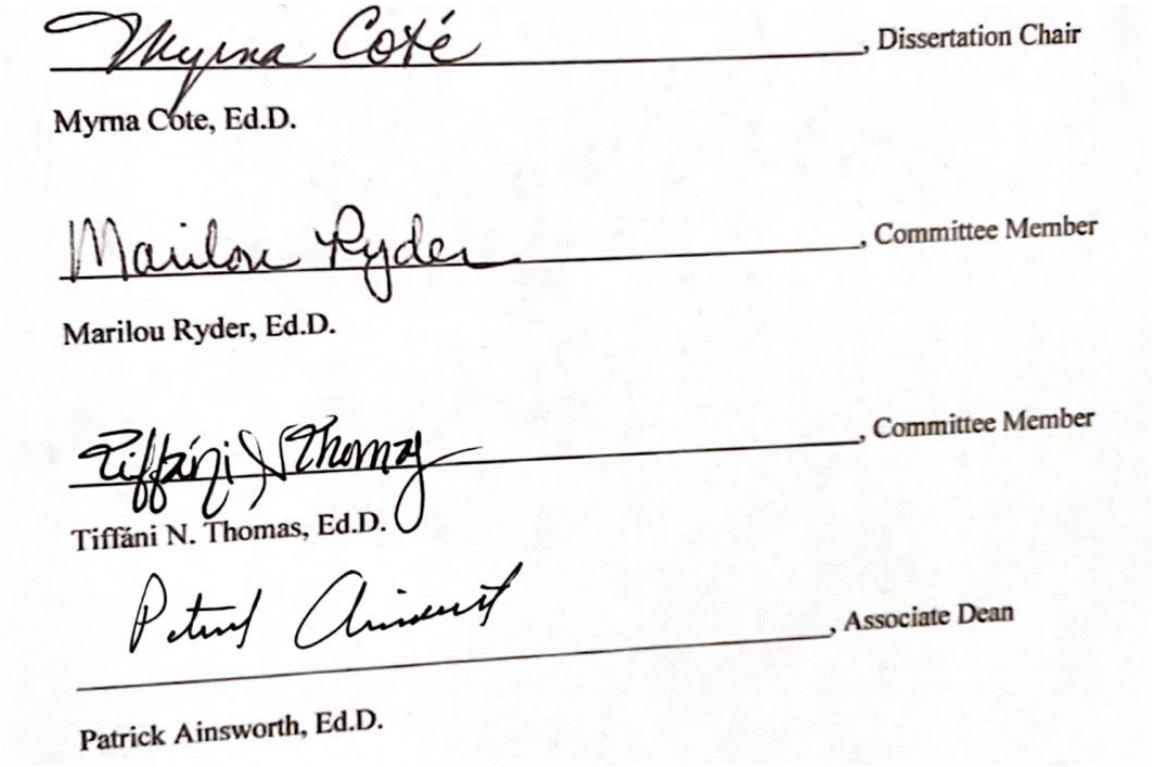
Tiffáni N. Thomas, Ed.D.

University of Massachusetts Global

A Nonprofit Affiliate of the University of Massachusetts

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

The dissertation of Davina Marie Bailey is approved.



April 2022

Female African American Deans' Rise to Success: Navigating and Conquering Self-Sabotaging Behaviors by Taking Back Their Power

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my best friend and most incredible support system, my husband. Ryan, thank you for picking up the slack and taking on additional responsibilities to support my professional development over the last several years. I know I may not say it enough, but I appreciate your support, dedication, and unyielding encouragement. Thank you for putting up with my mood swings and unwarranted outburst throughout this program. Without your faithfulness, I would not have progressed. I have overcome and conquered so many things with your support, and I love you, heart and soul, for that.

To my children, you are my world and my motivation. Everything I do is to ensure that you live a comfortable life with access to all the resources to be successful in life. Daiyah, my beautiful daughter, I know that you think mommy is always hard on you, but that is because you are a bright and shining star, and I don't want you ever to let anyone dim your light. My sweet boy Ryan Jr., I didn't know that I would be the student when I had you, and you would be the teacher. I have learned to love unconditionally because of your beautiful and intuitive lessons. You both have made me want to be something to look up to, and my goal is not to let you down. You are my inspiration, and I know you will have exceeded my expectations when you grow into mature adults.

Thank you, Dr. Greenberg, for your guidance, motivation, and sense of humor. Your continued support and mentorship are greatly appreciated. My cohort family, John, Ashley, Stephanie, Elizabeth, Jeyan, Tara, and Christina, thank you for your constant support. These last few years have been challenging, and I could not see myself doing this with no other group of exceptional individuals turned lifelong friends. I have learned so much from each of you, and I am forever grateful for having met you all. Dr. Cote,

Dr. Ryder, and Dr. Thomas, you are all phenomenal women, and I would like to say thank you for your unwavering support, guidance, invaluable feedback, and encouragement. I could not have done this without you. You all are the epitome of reaching back and bringing others along. Lastly, to all little Black girls that aspire to be successful and influential women, you can, and you will. All you have to do is speak it into the universe.

ABSTRACT

Female African American Deans' Rise to Success: Navigating and Conquering Self-Sabotaging Behaviors by Taking Back Their Power

by Davina Marie Bailey

Purpose: The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American Deans in higher education and to explore the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies employed by female African American Deans in higher education to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Methodology: This sequential explanatory mixed-method study explored the lived experiences of nine female African American deans who acknowledged they had experienced self-sabotaging behaviors throughout their careers. The researcher distributed an electronic Likert scale survey to the participants to identify the most prevalent self-sabotaging behaviors, followed by an open-ended interview to collect in-depth data on the self-sabotaging behaviors participants experienced and strategies employed to overcome them.

Findings: Examination of the quantitative and qualitative data from the nine female African American deans participating in this study indicated a variety of findings. Female African American deans engaged in nine self-sabotaging behaviors throughout their leadership careers. The self-sabotaging behaviors negatively impacted women's career advancement efforts and their physical and mental well-being, and personal relationships. All female African American deans used the following strategies to

overcome self-sabotaging behaviors: *building a power web, owning all of oneself, empowering other women,* and *acting with confidence.*

Conclusions: The study showed African American women engaged in self-sabotaging behaviors throughout their leadership careers. The internalization of maintaining racists beliefs passed on from generation to generation and stereotypes contributed to women developing self-sabotaging behaviors. African American women used various strategies to counteract the top self-sabotaging behaviors. *Building a power web* was the most identified strategy female African American deans used to counteract self-sabotaging behaviors.

Recommendations: Further research is recommended to identify the self-sabotaging behaviors and their impact on female teachers, school counselors, and site-level administrators striving to rise to the ranks of educational leadership. It is also recommended research be conducted to identify strategies female African American deans at historically Black universities use to counteract self-sabotaging behaviors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

PREFACE

One faculty researcher and seven doctoral students discovered a common interest in exploring specific self-sabotaging behaviors of women and gay males in leadership and the strategies used by these leaders to overcome self-sabotage. Through their shared interest, a thematic study was conducted by the seven doctoral students to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female leaders and gay males and to explore the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of the study was to identify strategies employed by female leaders and gay males to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods study was developed using a theoretical framework adapted from H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003) to group female self-sabotaging behaviors within nine overarching domains of women's personal power.

To ensure thematic consistency and reliability, the seven doctoral students worked in collaboration with one faculty member to develop the purpose statement and research questions. The survey instrument, interview questions, and study procedures were used in previous thematic research studies by Pianta (2020), Thomas (2020), and Crews (2020). All instruments were compiled through collaboration and research of the thematic group, and alterations were supported through alignment with Ryder and Briles (2003) theoretical framework. Each researcher administered an online survey to female leaders to identify the self-sabotaging behaviors they experienced and the impact they had on their career development. Following the survey, the researchers individually interviewed their study participants to explore the impact the self-sabotaging behaviors

had on their career development and to identify the strategies that study participants employed to overcome them.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Two hundred years ago, higher education was considered dangerous for women, and the first established colleges accepted men only (Silverstein, 2000). Although advancements have been made in the United States, diversity and inclusion in educational institutions have had ongoing challenges (Phillips, 2016, as cited in Luster-Edward & Martin, 2018). In 2019, women made up about half (51%) of all administrators in higher education institutions but only held 20% of the top five highest-paying dean positions (Pritchard, Li, McChesney, & Bichsel, 2019). Previous research suggested regardless of the substantial progress in attaining gender equality, women continued to fall behind their male counterparts.

Based on African American females' involvement and degree completion in higher education, Black women seem to be achieving significant advancements. The American Council on Education (2016) reported 62.2 % of African American undergraduates and 70.2 % of African American graduate students were women (as cited in Espinosa, Turk, Taylor, & Chessman, 2019). Although degree attainment for African American women has been high, representation of African American women in leadership roles in comparison has been relatively low (Bahn, 2014; Bartman, 2015; Espinosa et al., 2019; Glazer-Raymo, 2001; Parker, 2015; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Zamani, 2003). According to Glazer-Raymo (2001), as "more women earn professional degrees for entry into traditionally male professions, women experience isolation, exclusion from informal networks, and systemic discrimination" (p. 145).

Research evidence suggested gender and race-related matters make impartiality, shared regard, and overall participation in academia difficult for African Americans to

achieve (Glazer-Raymo, 2001; Holmes, 2004; Jackson, 2004; Smith, 2020). There are deep-rooted negative beliefs about African American women's abilities to perform specific tasks (Gardner, Barrett & Pearson, 2014). A topic of concern is women often suppress their intense motivation for success, leading to the absence of self-confidence in their capability to carry out challenging obligations (Bahn, 2014). Inadequate confidence can create detrimental outcomes because individuals without self-confidence may avoid leadership roles. An action of avoidance is one form of self-sabotaging behavior which might adversely impact job prospects (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). If statutes and laws no longer demote African Americans to a substandard position, other societal and inner limitations are to blame for these social disparities (Bahn, 2014). Much of the research on this topic has analyzed the external considerations about African American women's disparity in top leadership roles. Minimal research has examined the possibility that African American women have an unconscious psychological contribution to this persistent gap.

Furthermore, African American women face unique impediments linked to their race and gender harming their successes and vivacity in the academe (Jones, Wilder, & Osburne-Lampkin, 2013). Racism, sexism, and other interconnected oppressions create an outsider-within status for African American women in many predominately White institutions (P.H. Collins, 2000). The outsider-within phenomenon occurs when gender and ethnicity relegate African American women to the margins of society; yet, they have the status and privilege to occupy the same space as their White counterparts (P. H. Collins, 2000). Even when African American women reach the higher leadership ranks, they often feel like they do not belong. In the 21st century, African American women

continue to confront discrimination and inequalities in higher education institutions. Recognizing the dual oppression issues African American women face is essential to effectively identify those barriers that lead to the underrepresentation of female African American deans.

In this study the terms "African American" and "Black" will be used synonymously. "Female" will also be used interchangeably with "woman."

Background

Most of the African American population was prohibited from learning to read and write for most of American history. According to Zamani (2003), "by the time of the Civil War, the literacy gap between men and women was bridged only in the increasingly urban Northeast, where middle and upper-class white girls were taught to read and write" (p. 7). An ex-slave known as Catherine Ferguson came to be the first recognized female African American teacher and administrator after acquiring her freedom and launching the Kathy Ferguson's School for the Poor in 1793 (G. Lerner, 1993). In the last 200 years, African American women have made significant contributions for Black and White people in education even though there is a lack of historical references to their role (Mosely, 1990).

Over time, schools for specialized groups and populations emerged, such as historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). HBCUs were formed prior to 1964 with the primary purpose of educating African Americans (Guy-Sheftall, 1982; Bonner, 2001; Zamani, 2003). These institutes were established and constructed in an atmosphere of legal segregation. By offering admission to higher education, they contributed considerably to African Americans' advancement in enhancing their status (Espinosa et

al., 2019; Glazer-Raymo, 1999). Although these institutions were developed to allow African Americans access to education, research has supported the claim that most HBCUs' faculties and student bodies were comprised of majority Whites and other non-African Americans by 1992 (Bonner, 2001).

The initial presence of women in higher education began in the late 1800s when the first Dean of Women, Alice Palmer, was appointed at the University of Chicago to assist female students' administrative responsibilities (Parker, 2015). This position ultimately helped set the foundation for women scholars' new profession and created a career pathway for women in higher education administration (Dina, 2008). Surprisingly, these achievements were disregarded by their male counterparts, and women faced discrimination, exclusion, and sexual harassment in the workplace (Bartman, 2015; Bonner, 2001). African American women experienced significantly unique dilemmas in the academe compared to their white female counterparts (Allen, Jacobson, & Lomotey, 1995; Guy-Sheftall, 1982; Mosely, 1980). Therefore, discussing the barriers African American women face and overcome is pivotal in encouraging African American women to pursue leadership roles.

Barriers Affecting African American Women in Higher Education

Historically, African American women have had the challenge of juggling family, work, and community obligations dating back to the slavery and post-slavery era. The Civil War era brought about significant change in legislation that allowed African American women increased access to higher education institutions. However, this access to higher education did not guarantee African American women would be afforded the same treatment as their White counterparts. Penny and Gaillard (2006) noted one thing

African American women in academia have in common with their White counterparts is the stress of being a female in a White male-dominated culture and African American women work harder than White women at fitting in because they have two cultural obstacles to overcome.

According to a recent study by Whitehead (2017), African American women have agonized the most as they have not explicitly established impartiality and chance in higher education institutions. Whitehead asserted African American women demonstrate the obligatory skill set but are afforded fewer opportunities to acquire leadership positions. Therefore, African American women are confronted with the reality that regardless of their education, class, or success, they are often challenged with unfair added pressures of holding a high-ranking role in academia.

Historically, the field of education has been male dominated and given current statistical data that continues to be normalized despite the women's movement in the 1970s. Although African American women's presence in the university setting seems to be increasing, they continue to experience challenges related to race and gender discrimination. Zamani (2003) stated, "The inequities faced by African Americans as a group have been particularly oppressive for African American women" (p. 7). African American women have had to live through discrimination and inequities imposed on African Americans and women. Further Zamani (2003) stated, "The American system of education is a microcosm of the larger society, reflecting and reinforcing its strengths and flaws" (p. 7).

Various terms have been used to characterize moderate advancement of women leaders concerning discrimination topics. The term glass ceiling has been the most

prevalent term used when discussing the barriers experienced by women due to sexism; however, the term concrete ceiling characterizes the discrimination of women of color due to sexism, racism, and class (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Thus, race and gender are essential concepts when discussing barriers and inequalities African American women face. Although gender discrimination impacts all women, African American women have an added burden of racial discrimination. As Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) mentioned, women of color face a multitude of discrimination in the workplace compared to White women.

Theoretical Considerations

Several theories have been proposed to emphasize female African American deans' experiences in higher education. Social reproduction theory examined the "how and why relationships of inequality and domination are reproduced through or within groups" (Macris, 2011, p. 25) concerning education. Critical race theory (CRT) highlights the relationship of race, racism, and power as represented in the American legal system and culture (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Pellar, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Lastly, the expectancy theory examines the relationship between African American women's behaviors, ability to attain the rewards they desire, and their professional ambitions (Allen et al., 1995). These theories provide a critical lens to examine the subtle sexism and racism in society and how those experiences evolve into self-sabotaging actions unfavorably affecting career progress.

Social Reproduction Theory

The social reproduction theory argues educational institutions are not gateways for equal opportunities but tools propagating social disparities (J. Collins, 2009).

According to seminal authors Bourdieu and Passerson (1990), social reproduction is the societal practice in which culture is duplicated across generations, particularly through the socializing guidance of higher institutions. The concept was applied specifically where public organizations, such as colleges, are used as gateways to pass along traditional ideas eliciting and motivating the advantaged point of the prevailing or superior rank. Furthermore, this theory suggests social division is reproduced in schools grounded on assets, opportunity, and authority through interaction of three sources of capital: economic, cultural, and social (J. Collins, 2009).

CRT

In education, the CRT framework focuses on the research and history of race and racism built into laws and American institutions (Solórzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2000). CRT challenges the typical patterns and legal barriers currently in place. It narrows in on the inherently racist social and economic constructs developed over time with the most impact on people of color (Solórzano et al., 2000). CRT urges African American women to describe their encounters with racism and apply their unique perspectives to assess societal norms and rhetoric (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory suggests an individual will exhibit a particular manner or act in a specific way because they are motivated to choose a certain demeanor over others according to what they assume the effect of that desired behavior will be (Allen et al., 1995; Thomas, Love, Roan-Belle, Tyler, Brown, & Garriott, 2009). Therefore, using the expectancy theory to examine the extent to which motivational attributions contribute to

and predict academic advancements may provide critical insights into African American women's academic persistence in higher education (Thomas et al., 2009).

Conceptual Framework: Women's Personal Power

The nine domains of women's personal power conceptual framework (Ryder & Briles, 2003) explores self-sabotaging behaviors in relation to the underrepresentation of female African American deans in higher education. In this framework, there are identified self-sabotaging behaviors and empowering behaviors offsetting penalties of those self-imposed destructive barriers that women create because the discrimination and oppression female African American administrators experience in relation to the social reproduction, critical race, and expectancy theories. There are nine self-sabotaging behaviors that include (a) thinking too small, (b) fear and worrying, (c) misunderstanding oneself, (d) dishonesty, I holding back, (f) not taking time to reflect, (g) isolating, (h) disempowering other women, and (i) infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Despite the prevalence of systemic discrimination creating external barriers impeding African American women's career development, internal walls can negatively impact self-worth. African American women internalize the damaging stereotypes and biases, causing them to lose self-reliance in performing challenging tasks (Bahn, 2014). This loss of assurance can have disadvantageous costs because individuals without self-confidence may avoid leadership roles. Lack of self-reflection and understanding of their skills and ability are forms of self-sabotaging behavior adversely influencing career opportunities (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). The nine domains of self-sabotaging behaviors can be unconsciously present in African American women and unknowingly

obstruct their career growth. To conquer self-sabotaging behaviors, African American women must exercise the corresponding domains of women's personal power that include recognizing their unique destiny, engaging in constructive preparation, owning all of oneself, having honest self-expression, acting with confidence, cultivating self-intimacy, building a power web, inspiring other women, and embracing one's sexuality (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Statement of the Research Problem

African American women have made small advancements in academia (Bahn, 2014; Bartman, 2015; Guy-Sheftall, 1982; Zamani, 2003). However, inequality and discrimination issues have continued to be at the forefront of keeping African American women marginalized (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Zamani, 2003). Understanding the history of African American women's journeys navigating racism and sexism in higher education is essential to the continued progress and growth of female African American deans.

Literature has explored a multitude of external barriers that African American women face in the United States. However, there has been limited literature about historical and present-day research exploring the rationale for the underrepresentation of female African American women in higher education leadership (Harris, Wright, & Msengi, 2011; Parker, 2015; Penny & Gaillard, 2006; Dina, 2008). The lack of documentation is indicative of the underrepresentation of female African American administrators and further exemplifies the disregard for African American women leaders in academia. Institutions of higher learning have a severe shortage of African American women in staff and faculty roles that significantly impact African American women's

experiences in these environments adding additional stressors and academic challenges (Bartman, 2015).

Research has suggested unconscious, self-imposed thoughts and feelings, often referred to as self-sabotaging behaviors, can deter a person's potential for achievement, eventually influencing each decision they make (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000). Limited studies have highlighted challenges African American female leaders encounter and whether the unconscious racial and cultural anxieties and hostilities harbored by African American women may act as barriers toward their career advancement.

Despite facing external and internal barriers, African American women have overcome those obstacles and made notable progress and advancements in this country. However, the history of oppression enacted through systemic and institutional racism and sexism has detrimental implications on the presence of African American women in higher education leadership roles (Gardner et al., 2014). A single explanation will not describe African America women's day-to-day experiences because they are compounded, and African American women are consistently confronted with multiple interconnected oppressions (Rousseau, 2013). Therefore, identifying self-limiting behaviors contributing to the underrepresentation of female African American deans through the lens of female African American deans is necessary to identify strategies to overcome them and increase the presence of African American women in higher education leadership.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans in higher

education. This study's secondary purpose was to identify strategies employed by female African American deans in higher education to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Research Questions

The research design of the study was guided by the following questions:

1. What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?
2. What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American deans in higher education?
3. What strategies did female African American deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?

Significance of the Problem

A report conducted by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (2020) suggested women represented 60% of higher education professionals, and racial minorities made up 23%. Yet, women and minorities held significantly fewer leadership positions than their White male counterparts (Bischel, Pritchard, Nadel-Hawthorne, Fuesting, & Schmidt, 2020). Bates (2007) stated:

> Although data implies that African American women in higher education have made enormous strides in leadership appointments, there remains a need for such women to attain these positions to close the racial and gender gap at institutions of higher education. (p. 375)

African American women at universities across the country have faced various issues not confronted by their White counterparts. Holmes (2004) asserted "that even when discrimination and segregation were not written in laws, they have embedded themselves

into the very infrastructure of higher education and other social institutions, thus continuing to impact people of colors numerous experiences" (p. 26). A study by Mainah (2017) showed highly educated African American women have continued to live with the historical and negative stereotypes and myths about how being a strong Black and resilient woman is considered threatening. Furthermore, thoughts of inadequacy have been reinforced through interactions with peers leading to judgments of being incompetent or noncooperative by their colleagues resulting in lowered self-esteem, poor self-concept, and feelings of isolation (Mainah, 2017). According to McManus (2013), individuals who doubt their abilities often retreat from challenging tasks and have insignificant ambitions and uncertain commitments to goals they wish to pursue. These types of self-limiting behaviors have detrimental implications to professional development and success of African American women.

Even with affirmative action, race and gender inequities have persisted at higher learning institutions in the United States. As society becomes more diverse, and if people are to become serious about having a diverse workforce, leaders who reflect diversity from a racial and gender standpoint are needed (Moore, 2000). Identifying encounters and challenges African American women face in higher education is critical in navigating the complicated intersection of race and gender in society and in the academy (McManus, 2013). This study explored how historical and institutional, systemic racism, and genderism may lead to self-sabotaging behaviors in African American women that negatively impact career success and identify strategies African American women can implement to overcome them. Additionally, this study stressed African American women must build their own pathway to leadership and develop the correct mindset to

thrive in spaces where they may not always be welcome (Toutant, 2017). Equally important, the phenomenological purpose of this study was the most powerful reason for its completion. Current data on female African American women reaching deanship roles in higher education are disparate. Likewise, this study provided insights into African American women's higher education experiences and offered suggestions to counter their marginalization in these leadership positions.

Definitions

Academia is the life, community, or world of teachers, schools, and education (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Administrator is an individual managing or overseeing a unit or organization.

African American is an individual that identifies as Black and lives in the United States.

Black woman is an individual identifying as Black and female used interchangeably with African American.

Barriers are hindrances keeping people from making advancements in life.

Dean/Deanship is an individual overseeing an educational institutions faculty and academic staff at the departmental level.

Educational institutions/Higher learning institutions are learning environments where people of different ages achieve an education (Meyer, 2009). For this study, the learning environment consist of universities.

External barriers are factors outside of a person's control taking place outside the body or mind preventing someone from achieving their goals.

Gender discrimination is the mistreatment of an individual based on their sex.

Higher education for this study, are 4-year degree-granting institutions.

Intersectionality is the connection of gender, class, and race addressing discriminatory barriers faced by marginalized individuals (Crenshaw, 1989).

Internal barriers is something within oneself preventing a person from achieving their goals.

Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults towards people of color" (Wing Sue et al., 2007, p. 271).

Oppression is long-lasting discriminatory treatment that is targeted at specific groups of people.

Predominately White institutions (PWI) are higher education institutions where Whites make up more than half or most of the student population.

Racial discrimination is a situation when a person is treated differently based upon their race.

Self-sabotaging behaviors are actions damaging or destructing an individual's personal or professional integrity, credibility, self-esteem, and confidence caused by oneself (Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Delimitations

Delimitations are controllable features of the study defining the scope of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This study was delimited to African American female deans in higher education in the United States. Participation in the study was limited to those African American female deans who (a) currently serve as a dean; (b) have served

in their current role for at least 2 years; (c) serve at a 4-year degree-granting institution within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions. To maintain the study's parameters, purposeful and convenience sampling was used to identify participants.

Organization of the Study

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduced the topic, background information, identified the research problem, described the purpose of the study, and stated the study's guiding research questions. Chapter II presents a review of the literature related to the history of African American women in higher education and challenges African American women experienced when engaged in upward mobility. Chapter III explains the study's research design and methodology. In Chapter IV, the researcher provides an analysis of the data results. Lastly, Chapter V provides a summary and conclusion to the study and discusses the researcher's findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Review of the Literature

There are a multitude of components to consider when attempting to understand the obstacles hindering female African American deans in higher education. Making connections between elements such as history, era, race, and gender is essential to recognize the relevance of racial and sexist issues that have and continue to plague African American women leaders in higher education institutions. This review of literature provides a historical overview of African American women's experiences in higher education. This chapter begins with a review of African American women's history in higher education. It is followed by the barriers and challenges African American women experience during their pathways to leadership. Finally, several theories are introduced and reviewed, including the theoretical framework supporting the importance of women's personal power.

Historical Overview of African American Women in Higher Education

Historically, African American students, including all genders attending higher education institutions, have been lower in number than any other group (Fourtane, 2021). Opportunities for African American women to gain access to higher education were limited, and the lack of research on African American women in higher education is evidence of the disparity (Bartman, 2015; Howard-Vital, 1989; Munden, 2015; Woldai, 2021; Zamani, 2003). Much of the research in the field of higher education has concentrated on African American males; and therefore, has excluded the experiences and influences of African American women (Howard-Vital, 1989). Furthermore, the existing research has failed to explicitly examine and identify the challenges and

successes of African American women in higher education (Howard-Vital, 1989). Recognizing the history of African American women in higher education is necessary to understand the plight of female African American deans.

Challenged with many obstacles in gaining entry to education, African American women have been innovators who pursued formal education to create a better life for their families and themselves. Before the Civil War, teaching African American slaves was illegal, although educational opportunities for African American slaves still existed (Simms, 2018). For example, slaves often sought education in secrecy, others were given opportunities to read and write based on religious exemptions, and some were allowed access to training to perform work duties (Jones-DeWeever, 2014). From the postbellum period to the 21st century, participation in higher education has gone through dramatic changes for African American women. Up until the 21st century, African Americans attended schools established to solely educate African Americans. This historical overview will provide a brief historical and current context on the conditions affecting African American participation in higher education.

Initial Presence of African American Women in Higher Education

For centuries, women experienced cultural adversity and were restricted to studying in fields such as education (Britton, 2013). Distinguished professions like medicine, religion, and law were inaccessible to women, and these hindrances oppressed women throughout the 20th century despite the notable progress women made in higher education (Britton, 2013). Since emancipation, education has been the catalyst of change and self-improvement for African American women. There have been notable African American women who were the first to achieve significant education accomplishments

(Cruz, 2013; Parker, 2015; Townsend, 2019). African American women like Mary McLeod Bethune, Lucy Craft Laney, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Charlotte Hawkins Brown were pioneers for African American women. They founded schools to offer secondary and higher education for African American adolescence (Perkins, 2015). As a result, colleges for African Americans expanded, and so did the number of African American women students (Perkins, 2015). For example, in 1933, Lucy Diggs Slowe was appointed as the first African American Dean of Women at Howard University (Perkins, 2015). In her role, she challenged the gender stereotypes that said women's responsibilities were restricted to the household and focused her efforts on expanding the opportunities available to women that sought degrees (Perkins, 1996; Slowe, 1933). According to Slowe (1933), women had a right to earn a college education to become independent and self-determining individuals. Lucy Diggs Slowe was a pioneer, advocate, and inspiration in African American women's higher education (Perkins, 1996; 2015).

In the late 1750s, a small number of higher education institutions admitted African American students. (Munden, 2015). More significantly, Oberlin College was the first institute to accept and award degrees to women of color before the Civil War (Munden, 2015). Oberlin College was founded in Ohio in 1933 by abolitionists (Simms, 2018). The establishment of this institution helped African Americans and women gain access to education. In 1862, the first African American woman to earn a degree from Oberlin was Mary Jane Patterson, the second was Fannie Jackson Coppin in 1865, and Mary Church Terrell in 1884 was the third (Munden, 2015).

The next critical era that had a significant influence on the admission of African American women in education occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. Supreme Court case, *Brown v. the Board of Education*, was won in 1954 (Munden, 2015). This case was a turning point for African Americans. The ruling "stripped away constitutional sanctions for segregation by race and made equal opportunity in education the law of the land," (Munden, 2015, p. 23) allowing for integration. Additionally, "the Higher Education Act of 1965 endorsed significant gains for African American women to access higher education and financial assistance" (Munden, 2015, p. 25). The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) advocated for other people of color and African American women to enter higher education during the 1970s (Munden, 2015). More so, "the NAACP filed a lawsuit against the Department of Health Education and Welfare that forced all public schools seeking federal funding to cease segregation practices within their schools" (Roebuck & Murty, 1997, p. 690). Because of this lawsuit, enrollment in predominately White institutions (PWIs) increased dramatically for African American women (Munden, 2015).

Impacts of the Civil War and the Progress Attained for African American Women

White women were the first allowed to attend higher education institutions at Oberlin College in Ohio in the year 1861. (Townsend, 2019). During this period, African American men were also allowed to enroll at institutions of higher education, but African American women were not (Parker, 2015). Prior to the Civil War, African Americans had few opportunities to receive formal higher education (Townsend, 2019). With the adoption of the 2nd Morrill Land-Grant Act in 1890, PWIs were required to open their doors to African American students or develop schools that welcomed African Americans

(Townsend, 2019). This mandate led to the development of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) that were meant to provide separate, but equal schooling practices (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013).

The Civil Rights period unfolded during the late 1960s and a portion of the early 1970s. Protests took place where the African American students enrolled at PWIs demanded educational institutions admit more African American students, expand African American study programs, and recruit more African American faculty (Roebuck & Murty, 1997). Shortly after the Civil Rights period, affirmative action followed, resulting in a rise in African Americans being appointed as faculty and administrators at all higher education institutions (Roebuck & Murty, 1997).

Over the past 50 years, Congress has passed several civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. Those statutes have included the following:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits race, color, and national origin discrimination;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 that prohibits sex discrimination;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits disability discrimination;
- Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits disability discrimination in public entities;
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975 that prohibits age discrimination (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

According to the U.S. Department of Education (1999), the civil rights laws signify the nation's commitment to end discrimination in education and deliver the promise that each individual has equal access and opportunity. African American women have made many advances in education since the changes made after desegregation and the Civil Rights period. However, many elements have remained unchanged and have acted as barriers to the successful advancement of African American women within many institutions (A. C. Collins, 2001).

Significance of HBCUs

African American women had few opportunities for enrolling in higher education institutions, except for colleges such as Oberlin and Minor (Munden, 2015). In 1890, 300 African American men and 250 White women had college degrees compared to 30 African American women (Faragher & Howe, 1988). The inequitable practice of not admitting African American women into institutions of higher education shaped the development of HBCUs (Munden, 2015).

In 1870, approximately 22 HBCUs existed in the United States (Munden, 2015). By 1880, there were 45 HBCU's in the United States, and in 1881, Spelman College was founded in Atlanta, Georgia, as the first HBCU for women (Munden, 2015). With the turn of the century, there were 78 Black colleges and universities in the United States in 1900 with over 2,000 African American men and women that had earned degrees (Munden, 2015). In 1994, there were 103 HBCUs with over 280,000 students enrolled (Bonner, 2001). HBCUs have continued to produce talent in the 21st century, with women being a disproportionate number of that talent. For instance, in 2019, women

held 56% of the bachelor's degrees earned and 53% of master's degrees or higher (Hanson, 2021).

HBCUs throughout history to the present day have elevated African American women and given them the tools to find their voice and place in society (Fourtane, 2021). African American women have graduated in record numbers and have entered traditionally male-dominated careers (Bartman, 2015). However, in 2021, despite the systemic changes implemented in the educational institutions for African Americans, work still needs to be done to fill the gaps and support those willing to become part of the educated future generations (Fourtane, 2021).

Current State of the Academe

African American women have been a historically marginalized group; yet, their graduation rates have continued to increase (Bartman, 2015). Although graduation rates have increased, research has suggested African American women continue to lag behind their White counterparts among other racial groups at various levels of leadership (Bartman, 2015; Holmes, 2004). Data from the American Council on Education (2020) showed in fall of 2017, 72.6 % of full-time faculty were White, 21.5 % were faculty of color, 5.7% were African American, 3.2 % were international, and 2.7 % were of unknown racial and ethnic backgrounds (see Figure 1). Approximately 3.9% of African American women faculty are tenured, and majority of those are likely teaching at HBCUs (Wilder, Jones, & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013). These gaps in representation of African American faculty have major impacts on career progression to the position of dean. Key findings in literature have supported the concept that negative experiences of race and gendered microaggressions have made assimilation into higher education challenging.

As Townsend (2019) said, “Because of this, women are rarely in the upper ranks of administration” (p. 70).

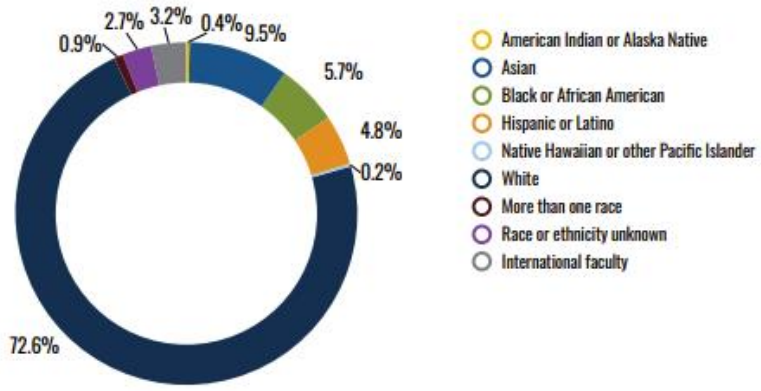


Figure 1. Race and ethnicity in higher education. Adapted from the American Council on Education (2020).

Barriers Affecting African American Women in Higher Education

The end of the Civil War created new opportunities for African American women; however, there were still barriers. African American women’s negative academic experiences have been shaped by racial stereotypes developed throughout slavery (Woldai, 2021). Although advanced degree attainment has appeared to be on the rise for African American women, few have reached the highest levels of leadership in higher education (Bartman, 2015; Hannum, Muhly, Shockley-Zalaba, & White, 2015). This lack of diversity in leadership roles at the highest of levels has implications on the overall success of the individual and institution (as cited in Hannum et al., 2015). During an individual’s educational experience with senior leadership levels, by only reflecting a

narrow array of social identity groups, a person can perceive limited options in that field (Hannum et al., 2015).

G. Lerner (1992) asserted "African American women have been traditionally preceded in importance and standing by White men, White women, and African American men" (n.p.). The education system in the United States is a small-scale version of the larger society. Zamani (2003) stated, "For the first two hundred years of the United States, the formal education of women was not universal. Despite increases in African American participation in higher education, formal and informal barriers to persistence still exist" (p. 18). African American women have continued to confront racial and gender bias and experience these barrier more prominently (Zamani, 2003). There have been over 300 racial and gender discrimination cases reported by The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Fair Employment Practices Agencies (Whitehead, 2017). Moreover, the American Association of University Women and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have reported various sexual harassment, discrimination, and disparities in universities and colleges (Mainah & Perkins, 2015). Unsurprisingly, the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) asserted the disparity of women resulted from numerous facets like fostering a White-dominated institute, societal issues, business barriers, and universities neglecting to adhere to the affirmative action laws.

Because of these challenges, Mosely (1990) suggested women of color have become an endangered species, especially at institutions without a diverse population. African American women face barriers when seeking certain positions in all university settings, including HBCUs (Perkins, 2015). Mainah and Perkins (2015) argued most

studies have pointed out that most women in academic leadership positions, specifically women of color, have experienced marginalization, disdain, seclusion, dismissal, communication challenges, invalidation, and lack of recognition. These factors have promoted further hardships for African American women (Mirza, 2015).

Balancing Career and Family Commitments

Management of a college or school requires hard work, expanded work hours, and bureaucracy, which can provoke stress, particularly when home responsibilities such as childcare are added (Jackson & Harris, 2007). African American women have traditionally been the matriarchs of the African American family foundations for centuries. The role of caregiver impacts African American women's wages and how care work is perceived and accommodated on the job (Frye, 2021). Care responsibilities for women are considered personal obligations; and therefore, caregiving is often devalued unlike other forms of paid work (Frye, 2021). Without family and medical leave policies that allow workers to take the necessary time off for caregiving responsibilities, too many women would have to sacrifice their job, pay, or both to fulfill their family commitments (Frye, 2021).

In 2020, the Center for American Progress (Flood, King, Rodgers, Ruggles, & Warren, 2020) reported 68% of African American mothers are the primary providers for their families; therefore, having caregiving support is crucial for African American women as the economic engines for their families (Frye, 2021). Instead, African American women are expected to just go to work and be content in having a job regardless of quality, putting their work ahead of their personal, caregiving, or family needs (Frye, 2021). Frye (2021) emphasized these assumptions have been deep rooted in

the history of African American women as domestic and care workers, often with little pay and with a the expectation of putting others' needs before their own.

For African American women to succeed in the field of their choice, many feel they have to prioritize work over their families and work twice as hard as their counterparts to be half as good (Kachchaf, Ko, Hodari, & Ong, 2015). Despite experiencing tension between being financially secure and being physically and emotionally present for their children (Kachchaf et al., 2015), many African American women do not choose to stay home because they cannot afford to lose income (Barr & Simons, 2012). Therefore, African American women often experience varying levels of stress due to caring for their families and maintaining their careers (Powell, 2018).

Underrepresentation of African American women in Higher Education Leadership Roles

According to Zippia (2021a), in 2019, 51% of higher education administrators in the United States were women; however, only 10.6% were African American. The small number of African American women in leadership roles in higher education institutions in the United States has been a historically endured issue that has earned little recognition (Britton, 2013; Howard-Vital, 1989; Munden, 2015). Robinson (2012) conducted a study that explored the "institutional challenges that contribute to the under-representation of African American women in senior administrative positions and strategies used for leadership attainment in higher education" (p. 13). One of the key findings from this study was that African American women believed their success and growth in the academe were reliant on having the necessary preparation, mentor support, and information about the institution's culture and climate, so they do not sabotage their

success (Robinson, 2012). According to Robinson's (2012) analysis, several common barriers contributed to the underrepresentation of African American women in higher education administration. Those barriers included the organization's culture, disparities in African American women's expectations, absence of support from peers and superiors, subtle racism, negative perceptions of race and gender, White and male-dominated organizational structure, and feelings of isolation (Robinson, 2012). Furthermore, Robinson (2012) asserted these barriers directly contributed to the institution's role in the underrepresentation of African American women in senior administration and the progress in obtaining leadership positions in higher education (Robinson, 2012).

Findings from a recent report conducted by College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (2020) found women and minority professionals have been well represented in higher education positions overall yet have still lagged behind their White male counterparts. Furthermore, African American and Hispanic women remain underrepresented in higher education leadership positions (see Figure 2). The underrepresentation of African American women in leadership roles in higher education presents a constant challenge (Becks-Moody, 2004). African American women serving in administrative positions must deal with associated issues of racism and sexism due to the low numbers of representation at their respective institutions (Becks-Moody, 2004).

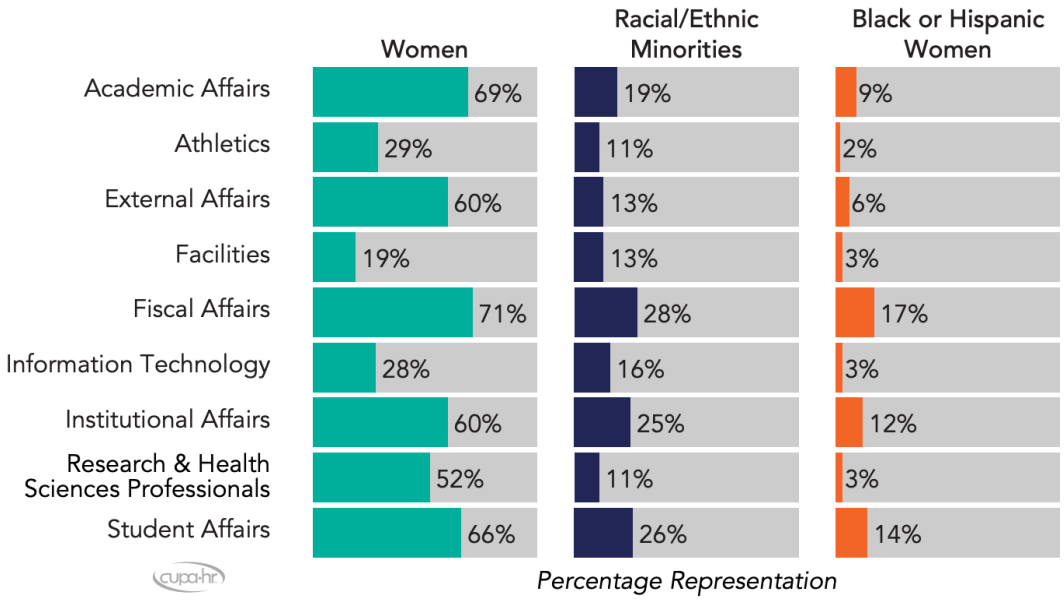


Figure 2. Representation of women in leadership positions by professional area. Adapted from College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (2020).

Recruitment and Promotion Problems of African American Women

University and college presidents, provosts, vice presidents, deans, and directors constitute the core of academic leadership in higher education and are charged with the daily management of sustaining efficient educational programs (House, Fowler, Thornton, & Francis, 2007). Jackson and Harris (2005) acknowledged African American women were present in the pipeline of education but did not exist throughout the ranks of higher education administration. Alexander-Lee (2014), stated "African American women make up the majority of women of color in positions in higher education institutions; however, they constitute less than 3% of full-time tenured faculty" (p. 23). Not to mention, more than half of those positions are held at HBCUs and less than 2% at

PWIs (Mosely, 1980). According to Glazer-Raymo (2008), female administrators are chosen from within the ranks of higher education institutions. The most common pathway for women to advance to senior-level positions is through faculty positions (Glazer-Raymo, 2008). To be considered for a dean's position, minority women must have held an associate professor, assistant professor, staff, or chair position (Roberson, 1998).

Additionally, a terminal degree is required for all women who aspire to obtain senior-level higher education administrative positions (Alexander-Lee, 2014). Furthermore, those African American administrators recruited to work at PWIs have short-lived experiences and ultimately find themselves leaving the university rather quickly due to microaggressions. These types of subtle insensitivities uttered towards ostracized groups can build up after a while, revealed in small events, ultimately creating an unwelcoming environment for people of color (Binkley & Whack, 2015).

Colleges with primary missions to educate African Americans, like Howard University, took close to 60 years to elect an African American president (Alexander-Lee, 2014). Higher education institutions tend to overlook African American women when hiring and promoting (Alexander-Lee, 2014). In 2017, Valerie Kinloch was named the first African American female dean of the school of education at the University of Pittsburgh (Piper, 2019). It took the University of Pittsburgh 230 years to appoint a Black woman as dean (Piper, 2019). According to Kinloch, colleges in the United States make assumptions about what individuals should hold certain positions and frequently think that those best qualified are not African American women (Piper, 2019). African American women have continued to overcome barriers; however, they have continued to

encounter obstacles when seeking leadership positions, and, as a result, they have settled for lesser positions in higher education institutions (Whitehead, 2017). According to Hughes and Howard-Hamilton (2003), "African American women experience psychological and physical tolls because of the obstacles they face on college campuses" (p. 99). Martinez and Renn (2002) stated, "Even those African American women who are sufficiently armed with the appropriate credentials are not being recruited to join the faculties of the highest-ranking institutions in the country" (p. 469). The environment is often unresponsive and unsupportive to those African American women that successfully secure faculty ranks (Martinez & Renn, 2002).

Double Jeopardy Experiences African American Women Face in Higher Education

Although African American women students have reached educational and academic achievement success at significantly higher rates than other students, they have still experienced unique barriers and challenges in their degree and leadership pursuits (Leath & Chavous, 2018). African American women identify as both African American and women, and having that simultaneity of compound identities often causes them to suffer from double jeopardy (Mayberry, 2018). According to Greenman and Xie (2008), "a substantial amount of literature argues for the acknowledgment that group characteristics such as race and gender cannot be understood in isolation from one another" (p. 1220). Intersectionality suggests the meaning of gender differs across racial groups, and race differs for women and men (Greenman & Xie, 2008). Intersectionality was introduced by Crenshaw "to describe how Black women's experiences of the unique combination of racism and sexism were obscured by treating race and sex discrimination

as separate matters in U.S. law and feminist and antiracist activism" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017, p. 502).

In a recent study, Davis and Maldonado (2015) researched the implications of race and gender for African American women in academia. Findings from the study confirmed race and gender informed African American women's development as leaders in academia. Explicitly, "the participants indicated the effects the intersection of race and gender had on their leadership development and career trajectories" (Davis & Maldonado, 2015, p. 58). Davis and Maldonado (2015) acknowledged although the participants experienced these barriers, they could perform proficiently even in a setting where inequities and negative assumptions and doubt were prevalent. The researchers found even through adversity, these women could carry out their responsibilities and persevere as leaders, all while having to prove themselves constantly (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). Too often, this scenario has been the experience African American women have faced as both African American and woman. According to research, "institutions of higher education are not as supportive of African American women administrators as they are of White men and women and African American males" (Becks-Moody, 2004, p. 24).

An earlier study conducted by Mosely (1980) investigated "the experiences of African American women leaders in higher education and asserted African American women leaders were 'endangered species' at PWIs" (p. 308). African American women have advanced academically, and this progress has resulted in their ability to obtain the educational requirements for leadership roles in higher education (Nickerson, 2020). Yet, they still experience barriers and discrimination based on race and gender that hinder

career growth regardless of being academically qualified for leadership positions in higher education (Nickerson, 2020).

Concrete Ceiling

As African American women rise to leadership positions in higher education, the obstacles to guarantee continuity and retention of the highest qualified talent have gotten more complicated (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). The current pipeline to leadership positions in higher education already lacks female leaders. Davis and Maldonado (2015) stated, "Supply and demand have long-term implications for women breaking through the glass ceiling" (p. 52). The glass ceiling has contributed to the ascension of women to leadership positions (Beckwith, Carter, & Peters, 2016). Yet, the concrete ceiling has been identified as a unique concept that describes barriers that African American women and minorities cannot break through (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). According to Beckwith et al. (2016), "the concrete ceiling creates a career-limiting factor for women of color that affects both the ability to ascend in an organization and the ability to co-exist" (p. 117).

Catalyst (2004) conducted a comparative discussion of the concrete ceiling against the glass ceiling. It revealed "the concrete ceiling is a barrier that is almost indestructible and adds additional complexity to upward mobility" (Catalyst, 2004, p. 5). In this research, Catalyst (2004) showed African American women have their credibility and authority questioned, encounter persistent and intractable negative race-based stereotypes, and do not receive institutional support. Furthermore, African American women have reported having to walk a fine line when trying to speak to their lack of connection with others in the workplace due to responses of scrutiny from coworkers and,

as a result, reveal little about themselves to others. Despite diversity programs, African American women still experience challenges regarding opportunities for advancement (Catalyst, 2004).

Theoretical Considerations

Social Reproduction Theory

Social reproduction theory provides a lens to view and understand why schools continue to perpetuate inequalities despite decades of reforms (Macris, 2011). Macris (2011) stated:

> The long-held notion of public education as the "great equalizer" and the most powerful instrument of social mobility that will bridge the chasm of opportunity that divides underprivileged children from children from more affluent backgrounds, has apparently, turned out to be nothing more than an enduring myth, riddled with false assumptions, inconsistencies, and half-truths. (p. 30)

Macris (2011) suggested institutions of education play a significant role in reproducing inequalities. One can argue that education may enable opportunities for ascending social or professional mobility; however, evidence has suggested public education reinforces the status quo by reproducing the existing hierarchy of social and economic relationships (Macris, 2011). For example, increased standardization such as SAT scores, grade point average, class ranking, and financial resources, to name a few, limits who has access to higher learning (Jean-Marie, 2006). African Americans have been traditionally underrepresented and underserved in institutions of higher education dating back to slavery, and social reproduction theory provides evidence to support why there is a need

to deconstruct those institutional structures and practices that oppress people (Jean-Marie, 2006).

According to the social reproduction theory, schools are mechanisms that perpetuate social inequalities rather than being institutions for equal opportunity. Even though many African American women have obtained deanships, most deans in higher education institutions are White men. Based on the social reproduction theory, to change the distribution of power and increase the representation of African American women in deanship roles at institutions of higher education, one must address gender, race, and class oppression in school systems (Booi, Vincent, & Liccardo, 2017). Otherwise, African American women will continue to be marginalized and overlooked for high-level leadership roles. By transforming traditional institutional practices, African American women will feel more capable and deserving of deanships, increasing their recruitment and retention in higher education.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) appeared during the 1970s. It was made up of activists, lawyers, and scholars that were frustrated over the slow progress of the Civil Rights movement that commenced in the 1960s (Robinson, 2012). CRT has become one of the prevalent frameworks in education to examine school climate, representation, educational opportunities, and pedagogy (Ledesma & Calderon, 2015). CRT investigates the experiences of historically underrepresented groups across the K–20 educational continuum (Ledesma & Calderon, 2015). Delgado and Stefancic (2017) stated "The theory considers many of the same issues that the conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up but places them in a broader perspective that includes

economics, history, setting, group and self-interest, emotions, and the unconscious" (p. 25). Research conducted by Delgado and Stefancic (2017) and Crenshaw et al. (1995) exposed "that people in power designed laws and policies meant to be race-neutral, yet they still perpetuated racial and ethnic oppression" (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. 63). According to the CRT theorists, ideas such as colorblindness and meritocracy systemically disadvantaged people of color and further progressed White privilege (Zamani, 2003). CRT suggests to reduce racists' acts in society, first, race and racism must be acknowledged and addressed (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

CRT explores the origins of racial oppression and seeks to awaken the consciousness of disadvantaged groups by exposing microaggressions, creating counter stories, and developing counter-spaces (Zamani, 2003). Delgado and Stefancic (2017) defined microaggressions as "conscious, unconscious, verbal, non-verbal, and visual forms of insults directed towards people of color" (p. 117). Counter stories are used in the form of personal testimonies or discussions so that these marginalized groups can tell their stories based on their experiences that challenge the narrative and beliefs of the dominant group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Counter-spaces are those academic and social environments where students of color can come together with people that look like them (Solórzano et al., 2000). The primary goal of these spaces is to find a comfortable place that is validating and supportive to get away from the daily torment of microaggressions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Solórzano et al. (2000) stated, "When the ideology of racism is examined, and racist injuries are named, victims of racism can find their voice" (p. 64).

Further, Solórzano et al. (2000) stated, "Those injured by racism discover that they are not alone in their marginality. They become empowered participants, hearing their own stories of others, listening to how the arguments are framed, and learning to make the arguments themselves" (p. 64). Through CRT, researchers have been able to recognize, document, and analyze racial microaggressions from the lens of African Americans and other students of color (Solórzano et al., 2000). Still, these experiences of African American students have demonstrated even at high levels of achievement where conditions may appear to be equal, inequality and discrimination still exist (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Howard-Vital, 1989; Ledesma & Calderon, 2015; Solórzano et al., 2000).

Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory concentrates on motivation and the mechanisms that connect intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to behavior (Allen, Jacobson, & Lomotey, 1995). The approach uses:

> three concepts to describe the process of motivation: (a) expectancy or subjective estimates of one's ability to engage successfully in a particular activity; (b) instrumentality or subjective perceptions of connections between behavior and work outcomes; and (c) valence, or the subjective attractiveness of the rewards. (Allen et al., 1995, p. 410)

Theorists of the expectancy theory determined the more attractive the reward is to an individual, the harder they will work to obtain it (Allen et al., 1995). Although, the individual will only work hard if they see a linkage between their actions and the likelihood of obtaining the desired reward. Research has shown that women have greater

motivation than men to avoid success because being competitive and successful means being disliked, mocked, isolated, and other acts of social criticism (Murray, 2015). According to the expectancy theory, African American women feel the incentive for working hard and competing for success comes with negative consequences and, as a result, contributes to the reluctance towards achieving greater levels of success.

Conceptual Framework: Women's Personal Power

H. Lerner's (2012) and Ryder and Briles' (2003) combined theories make up the women's personal power conceptual framework. The women's personal power conceptual framework is the foundation for this study as it explores how women use their power to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. Table 1 provides representation of the nine self-sabotaging behaviors and corresponding domains of women's personal power. There has been an abundance of research that has focused on the external barriers that African American women have faced in higher education and strategies to overcome them (Alexander-Lee, 2014; Bartman, 2015; Becks-Moody, 2004; Davis & Maldonado, 2015; Howard-Vital, 1989; Jackson & Harris, 2005; Leath & Chavous, 2018; Mainah & Perkins, 2015; Mirza, 2015; Mosely, 1980; Murray, 2015; Nickerson, 2020; Whitehead, 2017; Zamani, 2003). External barriers that African American women face are often outside of their control. However, due to generations of cultural conditioning and experiencing external barriers, some women have repressed and internalized their assertiveness for success (Murray, 2015). These internalized feelings often cause uncertainty that result in self-imposed barriers that could explain the extreme lack of African American women in leadership roles (Murray, 2015). By identifying the

existence of the self-imposed barriers and the control individuals have over them, women may feel encouraged to take back their power.

Table 1

Domains of Women's Personal Power and Nine Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

Women's personal powers	Self-sabotaging behaviors
Recognizing women's unique destiny	Thinking too small
Constructive preparation	Fear and worrying
Owning all of oneself	Misunderstanding oneself
Honest self-expression	Dishonesty
Acting with confidence	Holding Back
Cultivating self-intimacy	Lack of self-reflection
Building a power web	Isolating
Inspiring other women	Disempowering other women
Embracing one's sexuality	Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace

Note. Self-sabotaging behaviors were adapted from "The SeXX Factor: Breaking the Codes that Sabotage Personal and Professional Lives" (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Women's personal powers were adapted from "In Her Power: Reclaiming Your Authentic Self" (H. Lerner, 2012).

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

Those who fear success sabotage their performance when confronted with the truth that they have the skillset and competencies to be successful (Murray, 2015). Individuals concerned and hesitant toward their success are likely to experience feelings of doubt and often lack confidence in their intellectual talents (Murray, 2015; Ryder & Briles, 2003). As a result, they often underestimate and avoid acknowledging their role in their successes by downplaying the importance of their competencies (Murray, 2015). African American women often experience self-imposed personal barriers based on their

morals and preferences (Martinez & Renn, 2002). The self-sabotaging behaviors women experience include thinking too small, fear and worrying, misunderstanding oneself, dishonesty, holding back, not taking time to reflect, isolating, disempowering other women, and infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). These self-imposed barriers are present in most women at some point in their lives, and if these behaviors become routine, they can lead to self-destruction (Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Thinking too Small

Thinking too small occurs when women cannot recognize that they have the competencies required to attain their personal and professional goals—consequences of thinking too small lead to loss of ambition and enthusiasm to reach their fullest potential. Women often think too small because they lack the courage to step outside of their comfort zones, dislike the feeling of being uncomfortable, and are unwilling to take risks (H. Lerner, 2012). Another consequence of thinking small is having negative thoughts take up space in your mind. As human beings, it is natural to evaluate and assess everything that we come into contact with, especially when trying to gain insight and direction from our evaluations of people (Green, n.d.). African American women often conform to the stereotypes in society that result in limiting their career opportunities. Hurwitz, Peffley, and Sniderman (1997) defined stereotypes as "cognitive structures that contain the perceiver's knowledge, beliefs, and expectations about human groups" (p. 31). These racial stereotypes constructed about African Americans have been historically negative, and African American women have developed their expectations based on beliefs and have often rejected opportunities inconsistent with those views (Jean-Marie,

2006). Furthermore, because so few African American women have been represented as deans in higher education, it has been easy for these stereotypes to perpetuate.

Women that think too small often have low self-worth and feel they are not worthy of their achievements. According to Rosenberg and Simmons (1972), self-esteem evaluates a person's self-worth and the extent to which they believe they are worthy. African American women often identify with other African American women mainly because they share a history and provide a basis for self-image (Byrd & Shavers, 2013). Early on, African American women in the United States were portrayed as the Mammy. Walkington (2017) stated, "This image of 'Mammy' was created to validate White people's commercial mistreatment of African American women during the slavery era that persisted even after slavery had ended" (p. 57). Shortly after, Sapphire was added as a label due to society identifying African American women as unintelligent welfare queens, the matriarch, angry, and threatening (Henderson, Hunter, & Hildreth, 2010). African American women internalized these negative images, causing them to feel incompetent enough to advance and comfortable filling in those less valued positions in higher education.

Fear and Worrying

The self-sabotaging behaviors of fear and worrying keep women immobile. Fear and worrying are defined as the response to a situation that is uncomfortable and causes a person to feel powerless (H. Lerner, 2012). Ryder and Briles (2003) emphasized fear of failure and fear of confrontation lead to failure. When women anticipate or lack self-confidence within themselves failure will happen; therefore, women avoid stepping out of their comfort zones (Ryder & Briles, 2003). African American women have historically

adjusted to a society where they had to remain silent about their views on injustices or abuse to protect themselves from scrutiny and personal attack. Even though African American women have been in the workplace for years, they still feel uncomfortable speaking up and fear the consequences of making a complaint about an experience they may have had in the workplace (Powell, 2018).

African American women also self-sabotage when they worry about what others may think of them. It is clear that although limited, there are African American women in administrative and leadership roles in higher education. As their participation is limited, there is the question of why they were hired at PWIs by African American women and their colleagues (Becks-Moody, 2004). It is suggested as a result of being the only African American woman, the token label was sometimes given to the African American woman by colleagues (Becks-Moody, 2004). This label has led African American women to feel they were only hired to meet a quota and not a valued asset to the institution (Allen, 1995; Brower, Schwartz, & Jones, 2019; Edwards, 1997), further exacerbating feelings of being uncomfortable and inadequate.

Misunderstanding Oneself

Misunderstanding oneself is another self-sabotaging behavior that women often exhibit. H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003) explained when women misunderstand themselves, they are reluctant to promote their professional accomplishments, have difficulty accepting compliments, and concentrate on their mistakes. African American women often downplay their achievements because they cannot determine whether things have occurred due to their minority status or other related reasons (Brower et al., 2019). As mentioned earlier, African American women in

higher education have to learn to navigate historical stereotypes such as the Mammy–Sapphire continuum of existence and being labeled incompetent, intellectually inferior, and hostile (Bell, 1992; Nickerson, 2020). These barriers are evidence that African American women have not been afforded the same privileges as their White counterparts, recognizing they live in two distinct realities making it difficult for African American women to overcome those barriers (Hannum et al., 2015; Howard-Vital, 1989). Consequently, those stereotypes and barriers have limited African American women to administrative and lower-level leadership positions, and still, they have been underrepresented in those positions compared to African American men (Burton, Cyr, & Weiner, 2020).

Moreover, Henderson et al. (2010) asserted the lack of representation and images of African American females as scholars is infused in the race and gendering of roles in capacities respected less and seen as insignificant to the academy. African American women have become the "maids of academe" (Grant & Taylor, 2014, p. 108). Therefore, African American women are valuable, and their primary role is to be a supportive agent existing only to help other marginalized groups (Henderson et al., 2010). Patton (2004) suggested the African American female faculty experience has been marked with disregard and subordination rather than privilege and domination. As such, African American women in the academy often find themselves outside looking in. Consequently, African American female faculty may find themselves confined to teaching and service tracks involuntarily and not seeking to advance their careers further or effectively use their skillset (Henderson et al., 2010). Without African American

women recognizing their self-worth, higher education institutions will continue to overlook and undervalue their contributions.

Dishonesty

Women who use rationalizations and unconscious reasoning to avoid expressing how they feel are exhibiting the self-sabotaging behavior dishonesty (H. Lerner, 2012). Being one's authentic self requires an individual to be honest, open, and genuine about who they are (H. Lerner, 2012). When faced with opposing ideas, staying true to personal beliefs is critical to using honest self-expression (H. Lerner, 2102). African American women must express their true feelings about their experiences in the pipeline of academia as anecdotes of the shared struggles; this is crucial for the future of other African American women that aspire to become university deans or even presidents. Additionally, dishonest women cannot admit their faults in situations they are unhappy about (H. Lerner, 2012). Women that cannot embody their faults and flaws are practicing self-sabotaging behavior (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2002). African American women often contribute to these very struggles by conforming to higher education's gender and racial biases. For example, when African American women experience seemingly benign comments deemed a microaggression, they fail to address the person commenting. Ultimately failing to express how that statement made them feel perpetuates this type of discrimination that eventually influences the advancement of women (AAUW, 2016).

Work in academia involves long hours, hard work, and house politics, and can become stressful, especially when children and household responsibilities are added (Jackson & Harris, 2007). Working more than a 40-hour workweek can cause conflicts

with family responsibilities. Yet, African American women routinely overlook their personal needs to meet the needs of everyone else, even if it means diminishing their mental health (Liao, Wei, & Yin, 2020). Romero (2000) stated:

> The "Strong Black Woman" is a mantra for so much a part of the U.S. culture that it is seldom realized how great a toll it has taken on the emotional well-being of the African American women. As much as it may give her the illusion of control, it keeps her from identifying what she needs and reaching out for help. (p. 225)

Taking on the Strong Black Woman mantra can lead to burnout, as doing so means a woman never takes time for herself because she is always seeking to please others. When African American women put up this façade, they are ultimately masking the internal struggles they may be experiencing (A. C. Collins, 2001).

Holding Back

According to Ryder and Briles (2003), the need for security and the lack of confidence are two primary ingredients that hold people back. Self-sabotage exists when women hold back. Women hold back because they have lost faith and feel they are not good enough and lack the confidence to pursue their dreams because they fear that they have too much to lose (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Murray (2015) asserted when an African American woman leads with passion and shows they have invested in their role, they are often perceived as problematic and highly opinionated. To avoid those labels African American women hold back their hunger for achievement. African American women also have to deal with the perception of being difficult to work with because they have different mannerisms and personalities considered non-conventional and their male counterparts are unaccustomed to handling (Murray, 2015). African American women

are expected to tone down or take on a subservient, nurturing role when challenging a point of view or even expressing their opinion (Murray, 2015).

Moreover, African American women have to tone down their personalities with both White men and women, but they must also do so in their communities. According to Bell (1992), sexism is routinely put on the back burner of significant concerns and racism at the forefront within the African American community. To the African American community, racism is the root cause of the precarious conditions among African Americans (Bell, 1992). Therefore, racism must be addressed first before sexism can be addressed. The Black men's club is an informal club in the African American community where all African American males are members simply by being born in a racist society regardless of class and age (Bell, 1992). Bell (1992) stated:

> The Black Men's Club resembles that of the White Men's Club (or better known as the Good Ole Boys Club), in which it is implicitly accepted that some White men maintain a privileged position when it comes to power, prestige, and status. (p. 70)

Ryder and Briles (2003) suggested power is a player at the top, and men are typically the ones making the final decisions, and if there are things women do that annoy them, those factors are used to inform decisions. Ryder and Briles (2003) defined the power factor as actions taken by someone in a position of power and directed at another who is perceived to have less influence and authority. When women do not assert their power, it often holds them back (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Lack of Self-Reflection

Women not taking the time to reflect is another self-sabotaging behavior (H. Lerner, 2012). When women do not (a) allow themselves to take downtime or vacations, (b) mourn the loss of a loved one, (c) cry, (d) want to be wrong, or (e) accept the need for growth, or hold grudges, they are self-sabotaging (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). African Americans have an unconscious mindset that is complying with the social stereotypes of being inferior, irresponsible, and weak can be beneficial (Murray, 2015). As African American women enter leadership roles in higher education, they have only overcome one hurdle.

Numbers have been rising slowly for African American women in leadership roles in higher education; however, the atmosphere has proven to be less welcoming for qualified, well-educated, women of color in institutions (Mosley, 1990). Once African American women obtain these positions, they face criticism, feelings of discomfort, and invisibility (Murray, 2015). Naturally, African American women avoid showing signs of weakness and ultimately do not take the time to self-reflect. It is believed women are forced to lessen their femininity, as men feel that their emotional characteristics hinder their success (Andruskiw & Howes, 1980). Women think they must not take time off or show emotion because men or other women would question their capabilities.

The strong Black women attribute is believed to be a positive label that is beneficial for African American women (Liao et al., 2020). Benefits include "a positive self-image, a sense of self-efficacy, commitment to caring for families, survival of self, and the African American family and community" (Woods-Giscombe, 2010, p.111). However, African American women who keep up this persona have difficulties with

maintaining personal relationships and increased stress-related health behaviors like smoking and emotional eating (Woods-Giscombe, 2010). In addition, when African American women fail to self-reflect, they are more prone to develop depression, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness that will ultimately maintain their subordinate place in society (Liao et al., 2020).

Isolating

Feelings of isolation can cause African American women to feel insecure in their ability to compete with others on campus because they feel invisible or voiceless (Hughes & Hamilton, 2003). Townsend (2019) asserted as African American women attain academic and administrative positions on campus, they often lack opportunities to develop informal networks afforded to their white counterparts. African American women are marginalized and become outsiders, getting further behind in their career trajectory (Townsend, 2019). Subsequently, feelings of isolation are compounded by the lack of representation of African American women in higher education leadership roles that could help to create a sense of belonging among peers (Martinez & Renn, 2002).

Isolation is another barrier that keeps African American women from ascending to the deanship. Moreover, racism and isolation create an environment with a lack of trust (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003). When Black women are isolated, they often feel no one believes in their abilities and they lack support or encouragement. Men often get more encouragement and support to pursue leadership roles in higher education than women (Jackson & Harris, 2007). Jackson and Harris (2007) stated, "Even though women who earn their doctorates are more likely than men to aspire to an academic career, women lack encouragement" (p. 108).

One of the most harmful effects of isolation is burnout. Women experiencing burnout can result in them leaving academe to never return to higher education, and developing feelings of ill will and resentment toward the higher institution for lack of support (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003). Perceptions of African American women as strong and independent have caused them to feel they have to conform to this perception; however, African American women have been forced into this role due to inadequate support systems and isolation (Bell, 1992; Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Liao et al., 2020). Consequently, having to play the role impacts all aspects of African American women's lives and is stressful (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Liao et al., 2020). Jackson and Harris (2007) stated, "The lack of female formal and informal social networks, or being a member of a male club, results in the lack of recognition that often leads to advancement" (p. 122).

Disempowering Other Women

According to Ryder and Briles (2003), both men and women seek to sabotage others; however, women are more willing to disempower other women. Seeking to disempower other women is another form of self-sabotaging behavior. Some of the reasons women disempower other women are jealousy, lack of confidence, and low self-esteem (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Women that go out of their way to sabotage another woman may feel someone is after their job (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Furthermore, women who disempower other women are considered workplace bullies, as they target individuals with less power than they do, and can be influenced easily (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Women have experienced discrimination due to gender since they have been present in the workforce. Research has supported with the inclusion of women in the

workforce, they have been hired less frequently, experienced pay inequities, and have been promoted less often than their male counterparts (Aguirre, 2000; Jean-Marie, 2006; Sandler, 1986; Schmitt, 2016; Whitehead, 2017; Zamani, 2003). These gender biases often create conflict in the workplace among other women as they compete against each other for the limited positions available (Becks-Moody, 2004; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

African American women live at the intersection of racism and sexism in higher education, and this dual oppression is problematic (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003). Gendered racism can only be experienced and understood by those immersed in it. The experiences of African American women are isolated, and other women and men cannot relate. St. Jean and Feagin (1998) stated, "While solidarity with supportive White women can help alleviate some effects of gendered racism, Black and White women are often adversaries" (p. 207). African American women are discriminated against for being African American and for being women and have existed in both identities at all times. Being a responsible and educated individual does not rid one of being African American and a woman in America. Research has supported the idea that African American woman have a worse and harder experience than everyone else and, as a result, often participate in the disempowerment of other women.

Infusing Sex/Gender Role Confusion in the Workplace

Another form of self-sabotaging behavior is infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace. Women often take on male characteristics to assert themselves in a male-dominated workplace. Women engage in this behavior when they move away from traditional gender norms, become more aggressive, dress more masculine, and take on leadership characteristics men consider unfeminine (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Ryder and

Briles (2003) argued if women act a certain way in the workplace, they could hurt men's feelings towards women, limiting their access to power and successful interactions with men. Furthermore, men in positions of power often become uncomfortable in interactions with women because they are not familiar with those untraditional behaviors women may exhibit (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Women continue to fight for equality but often battle with what society expects of them and requirements of their role. Women want to maintain their feminine qualities but fear that they will not be taken seriously (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Engaging in the infused sex/gender role confusion perpetuates misconceptions about women in leadership roles, further creating barriers for women to make it to the top.

African American women are constantly battling what they perceive to be culturally socially appropriate. Again, the strong Black woman race-gender phenomenon "prescribes culturally specific feminine expectations for African American women, including unyielding strength, assuming multiple roles, and caring for others" (Liao et al., 2020, p. 23). African American women have experienced years of generational and cultural conditioning that causes some individuals to suppress and internalize their assertiveness for success (Murray, 2015). According to Murray (2015), women encounter internal conflict when exhibiting exemplary competencies, interests, and abilities against their stereotypical and internalized gender roles. This internalized conflict with stereotypical roles can justify the low representation of African American female deans in higher education.

The Nine Domains of Women's Personal Power

African American women's entrance into higher education did not come easily, and barriers to leadership still exist. Whitehead (2017) stated, "Breaking the glass ceiling in higher education is a major step in the advancement of post-secondary education and also offers African American women an equal seat at the table" (p. 177). It is critical women focus proactively on the tangible and intangible inequities still existing today (Jackson & Harris, 2007). Given the slow rise of African American female deans, it is evident they strive for excellence and refuse to let pressures of racism and sexism prevent them from attaining their goals. External barriers may be hard to overcome; however, women can eliminate internalized self-sabotaging behaviors.

By acknowledging self-sabotaging behaviors exist, identifying those behaviors, and the strategies women can use to overcome them, women can take back their power. H. Lerner (2012) defined "power as being able to act from a position of strength rather than react out of fear and limitation" (p. xv). The ability for African American women to achieve deanship relies heavily on their ability to come into their power and annihilate those internalized self-imposed barriers. This study explored the nine domains of women's personal power that includes (a) recognizing women's unique destiny; (b) constructive preparation; (c) owning all of oneself ; (d) honest self-expression; (e) acting with confidence; (f) cultivating self-intimacy; (g) building a power web; (h) inspiring other women; and (i) embracing one's sexuality (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny

To overcome the self-sabotaging behavior of thinking too small, women must recognize their unique destiny. To do so, women must be who they are destined to be

and not allow anyone to take that power within away from them (H. Lerner, 2012). Women that can reconnect their power have the capacity to acknowledge and use all of their talents and abilities (H. Lerner, 2012). African American women must resist the internalization of marginalization and discrimination in the academy and embrace the notion that they have earned the right to be there (Henderson et al., 2010). For African American women to recognize their unique destiny, they must not allow the mistreatment of others to get in their way of being successful. African American women must focus their energy on their work and be better people which requires confidence and persistence.

H. Lerner (2012) suggested women may not be in touch with their uniqueness because they have yet to experience their full potential or acknowledge that they even exist. Having the courage to step out of their comfort zone is the first step to women reclaiming their power. According to H. Lerner, personal growth brings about change, making people uncomfortable. For women to reclaim their power they must not let the fear of change keep them down; instead, they must be aware that change will occur and be open to it (H. Lerner 2012). African American women must recognize they have the power to influence change and their drive to succeed is not just for themselves but also for the African American community.

Constructive Preparation

Engaging in constructive preparation will help women overcome self-sabotaging behavior, fear, and worry. Constructive preparation is the ability to keep moving forward despite being uncomfortable due to fear (H. Lerner, 2012). Fear is often associated with false beliefs and assumptions (H. Lerner, 2012). To overcome fear and worry, women

must accept that there are some things they cannot control. However, they can control how they react to certain situations. H. Lerner (2012) argued there are habitual ways of responding to discomfort and change that are often rooted in past experiences; however, until women lift the veil, they may think that those destructive patterns have succeeded in keeping suffering away. Confidence is vital to overcoming fear and worry. According to Ryder and Briles (2003), confidence is the power to demand and maintain respect, appreciation, and regard for yourself.

Owning All of Oneself

Owning all of oneself is necessary to overcome misunderstanding oneself. Women who own all of themselves are willing to promote their professional accomplishments, be open to receiving compliments, and not let past mistakes determine their future achievements (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). African American women must develop a positive sense of self and be open to revealing their inner strength (Bell, 1992). Bell (1992) stated, "Women who own themselves know how to speak up for themselves and possess inner confidence because they know how to survive against the odds. Having these qualities will help African American women survive in hostile work environments, where they encounter racism and sexism" (p. 27). Women can take back their power and own all of oneself by appreciating all aspects of themselves, including their faults and weaknesses (H. Lerner, 2012). Personal growth and learning from mistakes can be empowering.

Honest Self-Expression

Women capable of owning their feelings or speaking their truth can connect with others through honest self-expression (H. Lerner, 2012). Honest self-expression is vital

to overcoming dishonesty. When women are dishonest, they often doubt their capabilities, hesitate to share their accomplishments, avoid conflict, use negative self-talk, and seek to please (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). Using negative self-talk diminishes a person's self-esteem and confidence, and is paralyzing, destructive, and leads to failure (Ryder & Briles, 2003). The source of dishonesty can come from fear of failure, criticism, or even isolation. For African American women to achieve deanship, they must be honest with themselves. Finding their inner voice and courage to speak up is necessary for progression in academia. According to (Robinson, 2012), "African American women must be proactive in seeking opportunities to lead. If they want to be competitive in today's institutional climate, they must be intentional about their aspirations, goals, and methods to achieve them" (p. 163). African American women must first be honest with themselves and second with others to be purposeful.

Overcoming dishonesty requires African American women recognize and challenge the internalized external barriers that hinder their opportunities for advancement. African American women need to understand societal perceptions about gender roles for African American women in academia. It will help address existing barriers necessary to develop strategies to overcome them to ultimately increase their representation in a leadership position within higher education (Davis & Maldonado, 2015) Additionally, African American women must learn to say no when depleted and have no more to give and be authentic when giving (H. Lerner, 2012, Ryder & Briles, 2003). Authentic giving means setting limits and only giving when they want to, not because they feel obligated to—understanding that having balance and setting boundaries can feel rewarding and provide a sense of fulfillment for women (H. Lerner, 2012).

When women give authentically, they feel more energized, begin to trust themselves, have deepened connections with others, and increased confidence (H. Lerner, 2012).

Acting with Confidence

Confident women do not hold back. Confident women are present in life during the success and struggles (H. Lerner, 2012). Confident women are not concerned about what others may think of them, have their internal compass, believe in their capabilities, and acknowledge when they need help (H. Lerner, 2012). African American women in higher education leadership are often the first or one of the few or even the only African American woman (Breeden, 2021). These challenges create multiple stressors and feelings of isolation. African American women having to navigate the intersections of racism and sexism with expertise and finesse can be exhausting. African American women often have to work twice as hard to appear credible by their colleagues (Bartman, 2015; Bahn, 2014; Breeden, 2021; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Holmes, 2004; Jackson, 2004; Mosely, 1980; Smith, 2020; Zamani, 2003).

Furthermore, with pressures surrounding success and the feeling of obligation to serve everyone, African American women often do not realize that they have arrived (Bleeden, 2021). They have arrived, meaning African American women have not recognized their success or achievements because they are too busy serving others. Acting with confidence requires a woman is in touch with her inner self, acknowledging, and accepting all of her accomplishments (H. Lerner, 2012). African American women need to learn to take time to self-reflect and celebrate what they have achieved, considering all that they have had to overcome. Women are their own biggest critics and inner criticism can be destructive and consequently destroy self-confidence (H. Lerner,

2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). Largely, African American women must fully understand themselves through self-awareness and mindfulness of personal growth as they both intersect with and often impinge on career development (Harvard, 1986).

Cultivating Self-Intimacy

Self-intimacy is the ability of a woman to know herself profoundly and intimately (H. Lerner, 2012). Cultivating self-intimacy occurs when a woman accepts all parts of herself, even those she does not like, engages in activities to understand herself better, allows herself to be emotional, and deliberately schedules time for herself (H. Lerner, 2012). Women cannot expect others to know what they want or understand how they feel if they do not fully know themselves (H. Lerner, 2012). African American women must be their true authentic self to cultivate self-intimacy. However, as professionals, African American women do not feel safe showing up at higher education institutions as their authentic selves. This lack of security occurs because their cultural dress and hairstyles (i.e., head wraps, braids, locks, twists) are frowned upon and not considered professional by their peers; therefore, they are not taken seriously (Townsend, 2019). When women cannot be their true selves, they often feel unvalued and unworthy, resulting in negative feelings (Bell, 1992; Liao et al., 2020). H. Lerner (2012) mentions it is common to feel insecure in some areas of our lives and not others as women play different roles that can cause them to forget who they are because they do not connect with what they honestly think, feel, or believe. African American women must embrace themselves fully and not worry about the criticisms or judgments of others to ascend to leadership positions in higher education.

Building a Power Web

Building a power web consists of women developing a support system by rallying together individuals vested in their growth and success (H. Lerner, 2012). When creating a power web, it is critical to include a combination of people that are (a) listeners, people who you can share with and provide honest feedback; (b) connectors, people who you network with and make connections; and (c) motivators, people who will push you (H. Lerner, 2012). African American women in higher education lack female formal and informal social networks resulting in the absence of recognition that often leads to advancement (Bell, 1992; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Robinson, 2012). African American women will be better prepared to succeed as a dean in higher education when they build a mentoring relationship (Jackson & Harris, 2007; Robinson, 2012; Townsend, 2017). African American women must secure an advocate or mentor to connect with and guide and groom them for advancement in academe (Robinson, 2012). Women that understand the importance of having a power web will provide a source for professional and personal growth gives insight into the culture and climate of the institution and their inner selves, strengths, and weaknesses (H. Lerner, 2012; Robinson, 2012).

Inspiring Other Women

To increase the visibility of African American women in higher education, other African American women leaders must mentor and coach to help those that aspire to leadership attain it. As women become aware of their true power and authentic self, they can empower other women to do the same (H. Lerner, 2012). Moss (2014) argued mentor relationships are critical as the mentor creates opportunities for the mentee to participate in that provide exposure and recognition of their talents. These opportunities

can provide the experience required for promotions and advancement (Moss, 2014). Without the help of mentors, African American women that aspire to become deans in higher education will have a difficult path (Bell, 1992; Jackson & Harris; Moss, 2014; Robinson, 2012).

Embracing One's Sexuality

The issue of sexuality is one of the most complex yet most debated topics, even though it is a significant aspect of humanity (H. Lerner, 2012). Current structures and processes that reinforce traditional and outdated leadership models and conceptions about leaders and leadership continue to give preference to men (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Today, double standards for female and male leaders still exist (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). Women often face challenges when working in male-dominated organizations and adapt to the organization's culture by taking on masculine attitudes and values (Davis & Maldonado, 2015; Ryder & Briles, 2003). These challenges make it difficult for women to embrace their sexuality.

H. Lerner (2012) argued when women face how they feel about their sexuality, other aspects of their powers are strengthened. Embracing one's sexuality is part of living an empowered life (H. Lerner, 2012). However, "stereotypical assumptions about gender differences between men and women make conditions difficult for women to obtain their opportunity to be placed in senior leadership positions" (Davis & Maldonado, 2015, p. 50). For women to advance in higher education leadership roles, they must express their desires yet understand professional boundaries when in the workplace (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

Synthesis Matrix

A synthesis matrix provides an outline of literature used in this study to identify the categorization of the research related to the barrier's African American females face when ascending to the position of dean (see Appendix A).

Summary

Research has suggested women have continued to face obstacles in their ascension to leadership. It is also evident that men and women have different rules regarding positions of power in the workplace (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Women have continued to show they have the drive to overcome these obstacles in higher education (Cruz, 2013; Parker, 2015; Townsend, 2019), as evidenced in the increasing degree attainment rates (ACE, 2020). There has been a rise in African American female deans, although the representation is minimal compared to their White male counterparts (Bartman, 2015; Bahn, 2014; Espinosa et al., 2019; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Parker, 2015; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Zamani, 2003). Furthermore, research has agreed African American women face the double jeopardy of gender and race discrimination in the workplace (Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Holmes, 2004; Jackson, 2004; Smith, 2020). These external barriers create many challenges that hinder promotions and overall career growth in African American women. Research has also shown that although the overall numbers are modest, many African American women have overcome these challenges.

Existing literature has detailed various barriers to the representation of African American women in the position of higher education deanship; however, the lived experiences and perspectives of African American women and strategies they used to overcome those internalized barriers are missing (A. C. Collins, 2001). Because of

historically negative stereotypes, African American women have internalized those views, leading to self-sabotaging behaviors. Self-sabotaging behaviors include thinking too small, fear and worrying, misunderstanding oneself, dishonesty, holding back, not taking time to reflect, isolating, disempowering other women, and infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). African American women in higher education must reclaim their power and ascend to higher-level leadership roles necessary to influence what higher education institutions look like and pave the way for future generations of women and people of color to move into leadership positions. African American women can reclaim their power by recognizing their unique destiny, engaging in constructive preparation, owning all of oneself, having honest self-expression, acting with confidence, cultivating self-intimacy, building a power web, inspiring other women, and embracing one's sexuality (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter III describes the detailed methodology used for the research study to identify the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans in higher education and describe the strategies used to overcome them. This chapter will explain the purpose statement and research questions followed by a comprehensive review of the research design, study population and sample, instruments of measure, data collection, data analysis, and potential research limitations (Roberts, 2010). H. Lerner (2012) described nine common self-sabotaging categories responsible for holding women back. The explanatory mixed-methods design was used to pinpoint the most common behaviors experienced by female African American deans through a quantitative survey, followed by qualitative interviews with each participant to collect in-depth qualitative data. The qualitative interviews allowed the participants to account for their personal lived experiences as female African American deans. Additionally, the qualitative data collected described the impacts of self-sabotaging behaviors on their pathway to higher education leadership and helped the researcher identify what strategies helped them overcome those self-sabotaging behaviors.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans in higher education and to explore the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies employed by female African American deans in higher education to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Research Questions

The research design of the study was guided by the following questions:

1. What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?
2. What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American deans in higher education?
3. What strategies did female African American deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?

Research Design

An explanatory sequential mixed-method research design was used to identify the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans throughout their career while exploring the impact those behaviors had on their professional growth. According to Patten and Newhart (2018), sequential explanatory designs are appropriate for identifying relationships or trends through a quantitative approach, then addressing underlying reasons through other methods with a specific sequence for data collection. This study used a quantitative Likert scale survey composed of fixed-choice questions followed by open-ended qualitative questions conducted through individual interviews. The researcher was provided with statistical data via the surveys and personal stories via the interviews that described the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated quantitative data are collected first in an explanatory design, followed by accumulation of qualitative data to clarify the quantitative findings. Using the mixed methods approach provided the researcher with evidence from the quantitative survey that supported the self-sabotaging

behaviors identified by participants and then followed up with survey questions to elaborate on the self-sabotaging behaviors and strategies identified by the participants in the initial phase of the study.

Quantitative Research Design

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined quantitative research as an investigation model in which objective data are gathered and analyzed numerically. In the quantitative approach, inquiry begins with a specific plan, a set of detailed questions or hypotheses, and the researcher seeks facts and causes of human behavior and wants to know a lot about a few variables so differences can be identified (Roberts, 2010). In the quantitative phase of this study, female African American deans in higher education in the United States were invited to participate in an online survey with 53 questions about self-sabotaging behaviors and the impact on their career development. Surveys or polls can be used to describe the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of a population (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The researcher used a Likert scale to measure the frequencies of the most prevalent self-sabotaging behaviors. The Likert scale survey used a six-category continuum ranging from 1 = *strongly agree* to 6 = *strongly disagree*. Descriptive data such as surveys provide an accurate portrayal or account of the characteristics, such as opinions, beliefs, and knowledge of a particular individual, situation, or group (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The survey was designed to familiarize participants with the purpose of the research study and gain numerical data. Following the quantifiable survey data collection, a qualitative research approach was used to gain a greater understanding of the quantitative data.

Qualitative Research Design

The qualitative approach to research consists of gathering data on naturally occurring phenomena, words over numbers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Roberts (2010) stated, "The qualitative approach is based on the philosophical orientation called phenomenology, which focuses on people's experience from their perspective" (p. 143). In conducting the qualitative phase of the study, the researcher used a phenomenological approach. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), phenomenology is designed to transform lived experiences into explanations of the phenomena that allow the researcher to reflect and analyze the experience. Qualitative researchers use various methods to conduct their research until an in-depth understanding is achieved (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The phenomenological study design was the most appropriate for the qualitative research phase because it provided the researcher with participants' perspectives that helped identify and describe the self-sabotaging phenomena and the impacts those behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American deans.

Method Rationale

A thematic study was developed as a result of discussions and considerations regarding the topic of women and gay males in leadership and self-sabotaging behaviors impacting their career development. One faculty researcher and seven doctoral students discovered a common interest in exploring specific self-sabotaging behaviors of women and gay males in leadership and the strategies used by these leaders to overcome self-sabotage. This explanatory mixed-methods research study focused on nine categories of self-sabotage and their associated power domains. Leaders in educational and public

organizations were selected by the thematic team of researchers, and each researcher interviewed 8 to 12 participants.

The term *peer researchers* was used to refer to other researchers involved in the thematic research study. The researcher and fellow doctoral candidates studied leaders in the following fields: Ashley Sandor, female secondary principals; LaToya Davis, female higher education executives; Tatiana Larreynaga, female Latina C-Suite millennials; Heather Vennes, female charter school chief executive officers (CEO) and superintendents; and John McCarthy, K–12 gay male school leaders.

Types of Data

According to Patten and Newhart (2018), the phenomenological approach to research includes examining people's perceptions to acquire knowledge about the world. Additionally, a phenomenological study explores human insights into their lived experiences and how those experiences determine their individual beliefs and overall worldview (Patton, 2015). For the quantitative phase of the study, the researcher used a Likert-Scale survey to identify the self-sabotaging behaviors female African American deans have experienced. During the qualitative stage of the study, the researcher conducted interviews to understand how these self-sabotaging behaviors have impacted the careers of female African American deans and the strategies used to overcome those behaviors.

Population

A population is defined as a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn and how a result can be resolved (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). During 2017–2018, the United States had 4,313 degree-granting institutions comprised of 1,485

2-year colleges and 2,828 4-year universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). According to Zippia (2021a), 68.1% of all university deans were White, 13.8% were Hispanic or Latino, and 11.2% were Black or African American. Zippia (2021b) asserted over 5,493 college deans were currently employed in the United States. Data also suggested in 2018, 65.8% of all college dean positions were held by women (Zippia, 2021a). Based on those estimates, this study's population consisted of 264 African American female deans serving in degree-granting institutions throughout the United States. Deans are high-level administrators that oversee a specific college or department at a university.

The role of the dean is to be involved with the college or department, external constituents, the president, the faculty, and the curriculum (Montez, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 2003). For deans to be successful, they must balance the changing demands of each of their constituents while staying true to their values and the situation at hand (Montez et al., 2003).

Sampling Frame

A sample frame provides a list of factors that the actual sample will be selected from (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). These elements are often referred to as delimiting variables (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This study's sample frame included African American female leaders in higher education leadership who: (a) currently served as a dean; (b) have served in their current role for at least 2 years; (c) served at a 4-year degree-granting institution within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions. In 2020, there were currently 4,313 degree granting universities in the United States, 2,828 are 4-year degree granting institutions (National Center for

Education Statistics, 2020), and approximately 76 female African American deans in those 4-year degree granting institutions (Brower et al., 2019). Female African American deans currently serving at 2-year degree granting institutions were not included in the sampling frame of 76 female African American deans.

Sample

Populations are often too large to sample every person, and it is more efficient to study a sample instead of conducting a census (Patten & Newhart, 2018). According to the sampling frame, purposeful and convenience sampling helped identify this study's participants (see Figure 3). Patton (2015) indicated the purpose of a purposeful sample is to focus case selection strategically in alignment with the inquiry's purpose, primary questions, and data being collected. According to McMillian and Schumacher (2010), convenience sampling is a nonprobability method of selecting accessible and or available subjects. The sample size for this study consisted of nine African American women serving as deans at 4-year degree-granting institutions in the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions (see Table 2).

Table 2

Sample Strategy

Region	Total states	% of U.S. states	Sample
Northeast	9	18 %	2
Midwest	12	24%	2
South	16	32%	3
West	13	26%	2
U.S. states total	50	100%	9

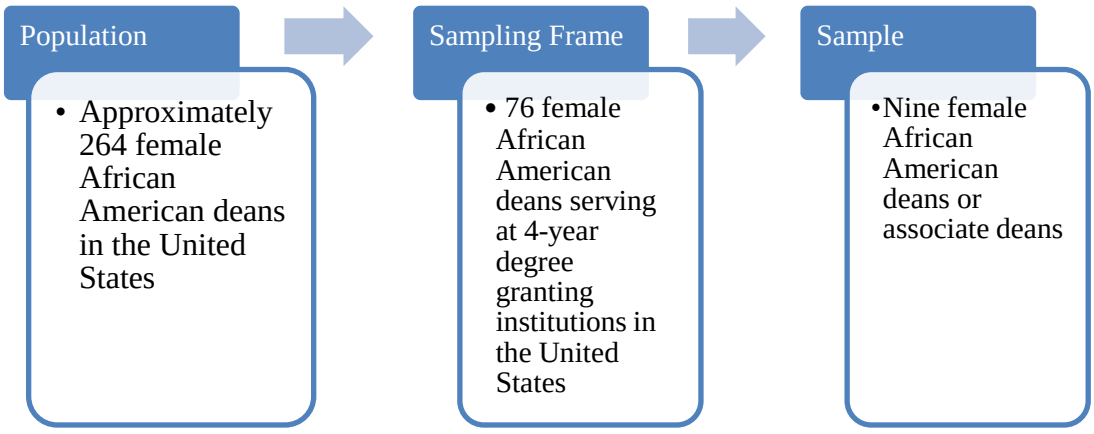


Figure 3. Population, sampling frame, and sample

Site and Participation Selection Process

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), it is critical to ensure the location and criteria are appropriate for the research questions and design when determining a site. To identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American Deans in higher education and strategies they used to overcome them, any site with a female African American Dean was sufficient. Convenience sampling is a nonprobability method of selecting accessible and or available subjects (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). For the researcher to have access to deans in all four regions of the United States, the researcher used a convenient and purposeful sample. Patton (2015) indicated the objective of a purposeful sample is to focus case selection strategically in alignment with the inquiry's purpose, primary questions, and data being collected (p. 264). The participants were selected purposely based on a predetermined set of criteria developed by the peer and faculty researchers to ensure the chosen participants

were appropriate for the study. The participants must have met the following predetermined criteria: (a) identified as African American; (b) identified as a female; (c) served in a leadership role within higher education.

Instrumentation

The researcher used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design for data collection. The researcher used a mixed-methods research approach that combined and integrated quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008). Roberts (2010) stated, "Qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study complement each other by providing results with greater breadth and depth" (p. 145). In this study, the researcher collected quantitative data through an electronic survey. After the participants completed the surveys, the researcher conducted interviews with the participants to understand the participants' lived experiences. Three thematic researchers and faculty members initially developed the quantitative and qualitative survey instruments. The quantitative and qualitative surveys were directly aligned to the frameworks created by H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003). Researchers in previous thematic research studies conducted by Crews (2020), Pianta (2020), and Thomas (2020) used both surveys.

Quantitative Instrumentation

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined quantitative design as a research paradigm in which objective data are gathered and analyzed numerically. In the quantitative approach, inquiry begins with a specific plan, a set of detailed questions or hypotheses, and the researcher seeks facts and causes of human behavior and wants to know a lot about a few variables so differences can be identified (Roberts, 2010). When

using a quantitative approach to research, researchers gather data in a way that is easy to quantify. The original quantitative instrument used in this study was an electronic, Likert-style survey (see Appendix B), developed by three thematic researchers and two faculty members and based on the study's conceptual framework, nine domains of women's personal power adapted from H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003). According to Patten and Newhart (2018), researchers use surveys or polls to describe the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of a population. The initial thematic team of peer researchers and faculty created the survey to identify which self-sabotaging behaviors impacted the career development of female African American deans. Each of the 53 items on the electronic, close-ended survey aligned with the purpose of the study and could answer the research questions; an alignment table was developed (see Appendix C).

During the quantitative phase of this study, respondents were invited via email to participate in an online survey that asked them to identify and rank self-sabotaging behaviors they have experienced within their career development as a leader. The survey questions were emailed via a Google forms link to female African American deans in the United States and included 53 questions. The participants were asked to rank on a Likert scale, with 1 = *strongly agree* to 6 = *strongly disagree*. This survey also allowed the participants to familiarize themselves with the study's parameters before the qualitative interview.

Qualitative Instrumentation

The qualitative approach to research consists of gathering data on naturally occurring phenomena, words over numbers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Roberts

(2010) stated, “The qualitative approach is based on the philosophical orientation called phenomenology, which focuses on people’s experience from their perspective” (p. 143). Qualitative researchers use various methods to conduct their research until an in-depth understanding is achieved (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The second phase of the study consisted of qualitative interviews (see Appendix D). Interviews allowed for responses that were more accurate and detailed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The initial thematic team of peer researchers and faculty developed an interview protocol and guide that was created considering the nine domains of women’s power adapted from H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003). Patton (2015) asserted having an interview guide ensures the interviewer has cautiously determined the best use of the limited time available and makes the interviewing of multiple people more efficient and thorough.

The aim for conducting follow-up interviews with participants was to get detailed responses from everyone based on their lived experiences in their words. The interview questions were designed to be open-ended and semi-structured to ensure that the participants could reflect genuinely and provide the researcher with rich information related to the study’s purpose and conceptual framework. To ensure the interview protocol and guide aligned with the study’s research questions and purpose, the initial thematic team of peer researchers and faculty developed an alignment table (see Appendix E). As a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic, interviews were conducted using an online virtual platform called Zoom. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Researcher as an Instrument of the Study

In a qualitative approach, the researcher collects data using open-ended interviews, focus groups, and naturalistic observation protocols (Gelo et al., 2008). This type of data collection required the researcher to make inferences or interpretations based on the experiences of others. Ambiguities, inherent in human language, can be recognized in analyzing qualitative data that can account for researcher subjectivity on a topic (Roberts, 2010). The use of one-on-one interviews in this study could lead to potential biases when interpreting the results. To minimize the risk for potential bias, the researcher provided the one-on-one interview transcripts to each participant for review and feedback. All research strategies need to be credible to be valuable and credible research does not support the distortion of data to serve the researcher's vested interests and prejudices (Patton, 2015).

To limit researcher bias in the study's conclusions, the researcher was conscious of their prejudices and implicit biases. Likewise, the researcher ensured the appropriate research design was used to meet the study's objectives. The research narrative was free of implied or irrelevant evaluation of the group or groups being studied (Roberts, 2010). Additionally, the researcher kept detailed records and identified the study's limitations (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Most importantly, the researcher was aware and understood the ethical standards associated with conducting research (see Appendix F), the Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures, and the legal considerations when designing studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Quantitative Field Test

A field test for the quantitative instrument was performed to check for bias in the study's procedures (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher conducted a field test on the electronic survey to ensure that the questions aligned with the research questions, study's purpose, were precise and reliable. While performing the field test, the peer researcher ensured the individual participant had similar attributes to that of the study's sample. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) recommend that the field test participant meet the exact characteristics of those used in the study. Through the course of the field test, the researcher conducted a practice survey (see Appendix G). After completing the survey, the participant provided feedback to the researcher using the feedback form (see Appendix H). After reviewing the feedback form, the researcher revised the instrument based on the input supplied within the participant's feedback.

Qualitative Field Test

Two thematic peer researchers performed a field test for the qualitative instrument (see Appendix I). The researcher interviewed the same dean who completed the survey field test. The interview was conducted online using the Zoom platform and was observed by a thematic peer researcher to provide feedback about her observations from the interview. After performing the interview, the participant provided feedback about the interview on an additional feedback form (see Appendix J). Additionally, the observer provided input about the interview on the observer feedback form (see Appendix K). The participant provided feedback involving the interview questions, pace, and length of the interview. The observer provided feedback about the questions, interview length, and the researcher's comfort level. The researcher transcribed the

interview using the online Zoom platform. After the field test, the researcher discussed the feedback with the thematic peer researchers and faculty advisor. As a result, slight revisions were made to the interview questions to ensure alignment and clarity.

Validity

To have validity, the instrument must truly measure what it is intended to measure (Roberts, 2010). Validity is necessary for a researcher to ensure that the data collected from an instrument is accurate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Roberts, 2010). Methods used in this study to increase data validity included multimethod strategies, multiple researchers, and member checking. After the interviews were transcribed, the transcripts were sent by email to participants to review for accuracy and ensure they reflected accurate accounts of their experiences. To ensure internal validity in the research study, the researcher triangulated the data to check for consistency between the collection of data from the surveys and data from the interviews before drawing conclusions. The original and secondary thematic peer researchers created, revised, and field-tested the survey and interview.

Reliability

The researcher used purposeful approaches to ensure reliability. Roberts (2010) defined reliability as the degree to which an instrument measures something consistently from one time to another. The researcher used internal reliability and intercoder reliability to ensure that the findings were dependable. The thematic peer researchers and faculty advisor developed the survey and interview questions, which decreased the researcher's personal bias. A script and questions were used to establish consistency with

the interview data collection. A thematic peer researcher was used as an expert observer to review the field-test interview.

Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2004) defined intercoder reliability as the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion. Based on this definition, intercoder reliability relies on a statistical measure of agreement between two or more coders. The researcher and one expert panel member met to compare their independent interview data analysis from samples taken. After the interviews were transcribed and verified by the participants, each question was coded to identify themes that surfaced from the data. The themes were then sorted and categorized for each research question. The researcher and another coder sorted and coded the data to determine intercoder reliability. After reviewing the data, adjustments were made to increase the reliability of the data analyzed. To establish intercoder reliability, the research reliability and quantify reliability was set at 80% or greater. A peer researcher analyzed 10% of the code from the qualitative portion of this study's descriptive themes to ensure an 80% greater reliability was met (Patton, 2015). Following the data coding, the researcher wrote a narrative analysis that identified common themes that appeared in each research question to present a story of related events from multiple participants.

Data Collection

Data collection for this research study involved multiple steps. The interview questions were formed as part of a thematic study that builds on work from Ryder and Briles (2003) and H. Lerner (2012). To ensure the interview questions were aligned with the research questions, the researcher worked closely with an expert in qualitative

research. The researcher conducted field tests to ensure the validity and reliability of the quantitative and qualitative instruments. As a result, some questions and interview processes were revised based on observations from both research collaborators and interview participants. Before the researcher began collecting data, the researcher was certified by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program to research human subjects and obtained approval from the UMass Global Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study (see Appendices L and M). Upon approval, the researcher began the data collection process. Additionally, the researcher created an interview guide that was used during a practice field test in which another peer researcher and one participant further evaluated the interview questions and process.

The interviews consisted of 13 questions designed to encourage sharing encounters, insights, and beliefs of those interviewed. The researcher used an open-ended questions format that allowed for elaborate and meaningful conversations during the quantitative portion of the study. Additionally, the researcher presented the questions in a semistructured format to develop a rapport with the participants to feel comfortable sharing their personal experiences.

Before beginning the quantitative and qualitative data collection process, each participant was emailed a copy of the Institutional Review Board Informed Consent and UMass Global Bill of Rights in an email with a link to the survey (see Appendices N and O). Preceding the survey and interview, the researcher ensured each participant was informed all information gathered during any part of the process would only be used for the study and not shared with others. Additionally, the researcher clarified participants

could opt out during either portion of the study if they felt uncomfortable, without consequence.

Quantitative Data Collection

The initial step in the data collection process was to have the participants complete the electronic survey. The electronic surveys were developed using Google Forms. After giving consent, each participant completed the quantitative electronic survey. The surveys were designed to take between 10–15 minutes to complete. Each participant was given 2 weeks to complete the survey, and reminders were emailed during the first and last weeks.

Qualitative Data Collection

Following the survey, interviews were conducted via Zoom. Interviews were scheduled to take 90 minutes. Participants received a copy of the interview questions via email before the scheduled interview date, along with the power domain definitions, informed consent, and the UMass Global Bill of Rights for reference during the interview. Before the interview, in addition to participation consent, permission was obtained to record the interviews, and each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. During the interview, the researcher took anecdotal notes about the interviewee paying close attention to the participants' reactions and significant themes that emerged from the responses. Although, the researcher ensured notes taken were limited to maintain attention on the connection with the interviewee. Once the researcher asked all of the research questions, the researcher showed gratitude to each participant for their time and contributions to the study, asked if they had any questions, and recapped how they could get in touch with the researcher if questions or concerns were to arise in the future.

Following the interviews, a follow-up email was sent to each participant thanking them for their time, and the researcher began transcribing and coding information to identify recurring themes.

Data Analysis

The explanatory sequential design consists of the researcher conducting a quantitative phase first and follows up on specific results using a qualitative phase to help elaborate on the quantitative results (Creswell, 2007). According to Roberts (2010), numerical data may be included in a qualitative study, and narrative data such as open-ended questionnaire responses may be included in a quantitative study. For this study, a quantitative approach was conducted to collect data using a survey to identify self-sabotaging behaviors followed by participant interviews that provided a more in-depth understanding of those behaviors and how they affected career development. Roberts stated, "Qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study complement each other by providing results with greater breadth and depth" (p. 145). The research questions guided the data analysis for this study. The researcher triangulated the data from both the quantitative and qualitative phases to determine the extent of the phenomena. The explanatory sequential research design enabled the researcher to ask different and more complex questions and, consequently, provided different and more complex answers.

Quantitative Data Analysis

During the initial phase of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods study, the researcher collected data using an electronic Google survey. To summarize the data, it was necessary to establish the data's mean, mode, and range to determine the most frequent response (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The questions in the study used a Likert-

scale response system to ensure the results yielded the mode and determined the frequency of self-sabotaging behaviors and the impact that self-sabotaging behaviors had on career development. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the data collected to explain the data to be easily understood (Patten & Newhart, 2018). For each question, the researcher created frequency distributions to analyze the results. Those frequencies and participant percentages of responses for each behavior category are found in Table 4, and the degree of impact on career development is shown in Figure 4.

Table 4. *Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Categories Experienced by Participants as Reported in the Survey*

Self-sabotaging behavior category	References	*n*	% of participants
Dishonesty	37	8	88
Holding back	29	8	88
Not taking time for reflection	26	9	100
Fear and worrying	24	8	88
Misunderstanding oneself	14	7	77
Thinking too small	14	7	77
Isolating	13	8	88
Infusing sex/gender role confusion	5	4	44
Disempowering other women	3	3	33

Note. *n* = the number of participants who rated either *strongly agree, agree, or agree somewhat.*

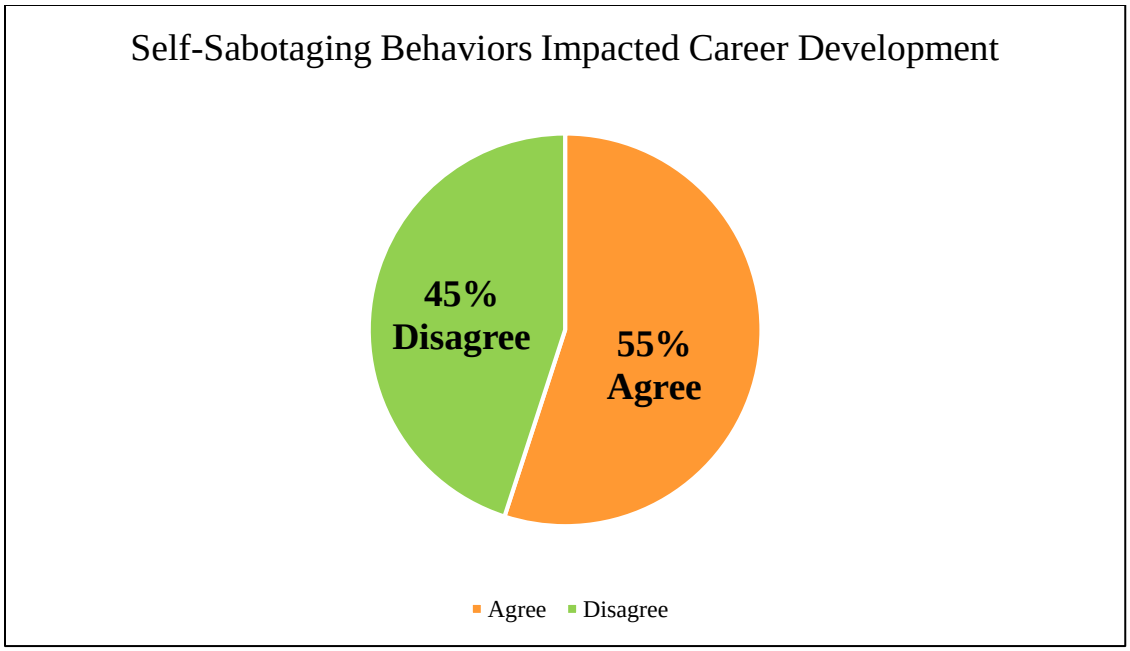


Figure 4. Participants' Belief that Self-Sabotaging Behaviors had an Impact on Career Development

Qualitative Data Analysis

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), in an explanatory sequential study, the researcher must collect the quantitative data first and gather and collect the qualitative data second to further explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. The second phase of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods study included using the qualitative data to refine the qualitative interview questions and data collection protocols. Following qualitative data collection, the researcher analyzed the data by transcribing the interview using the audio transcription feature in Zoom. Additionally, the transcription was reviewed and edited to ensure the data were accurate to ensure validity of the data. The researcher identified the major trends according to the relevance of the response relative to the research question. To ensure theme alignment to the research questions,

the researcher used the sentence frame model to ensure the theme answered the research question.

Once the researcher identified and aligned the themes, the interview transcripts were uploaded into the NVIVO system to code the data and determine each theme's frequency and source counts. Finally, the researcher triangulated the data collected from both the quantitative and qualitative phases. Triangulation finds consistencies in data collected from multiple sources to broaden one's understanding of the phenomenon (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). Conclusions were then drawn from the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study (Creswell, 2007).

Triangulation of Data

Triangulation' is primarily used to describe the process of comparing concurrently collected qualitative findings (Patton, 2015). To triangulate the data for this study, the key findings from the participant survey and interview analysis were compared and evaluated. Themes that appeared across all data sources were identified to support and strengthen the study findings. Additionally, the researcher used the extensive literature in this study to support conclusions drawn from the two other data sources.

Limitations

Roberts (2010) indicated limitations are features of the study that the researcher knows may negatively affect the results of the ability to generalize. More so, limitations are constraints that occur in the study that are often outside the researcher's control (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The limitations in this study included the location of the study, sample criteria for participants, the sample size of the participants, time

constraints, and bias of the researcher. Although limitations exist, researchers can implement purposeful strategies to increase the validity and credibility of the study.

Location of Study

One of the study's limitations included the location of the study as it only looked at female African American deans at 4-year degree granting institutions within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions.

Sample Criteria for Participants

Due to the size of the United States, the researcher used convenience and purposeful sampling to identify participants who met the study's criteria. Given this limitation, the study's participants were limited to female African American deans at 4-year degree-granting institutions in the United States. They did not account for those working at 2-year degree-granting institutions in the United States. As a result of these limitations, the study's results cannot be generalized to the total population of higher education institutions.

Sample Size of the Participants

For this study, there were a total of nine participants. Although the sample size was appropriate for this mixed-method study as the in-depth responses of subjects outweigh participant quantity, these findings cannot be generalized to the overall population of female African American deans in the United States (Patton, 2015).

Time Constraints

The time allocated for conducting each interview was also a limitation of the study. Considering the participant's time, each interview was scheduled not to exceed 90

minutes. Given the time limitations for interviews, there may have been impacts on the responses' depth. Extended interviews may have allowed for lengthier, in-depth answers.

Bias of the Researcher

According to Simundić (2013), bias is any trend or deviation from the truth in data collection, data analysis, interpretation, and publication that can cause false conclusions intentionally or unintentionally. Biases may exist in the interview data analysis because the researcher was female, identified as African American, has engaged in self-sabotaging behavior, and worked at a 4-year degree-granting institution. To address biases within this study, the researcher kept detailed records and identified the study's limitations (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Most importantly, the researcher understood the ethical standards associated with conducting research, the Institutional Review Board procedures, and the legal considerations when designing studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Summary

Within Chapter III, the researcher provided information describing the methodology to investigate the research problem and the reasons for applying specific procedures used to identify, select, process, and analyze information applied to understanding the problem. Furthermore, this chapter outlined the study's purpose statement and research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were identified to explore self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans, their impact on their career development, and strategies used to overcome them. Additionally, this chapter outlined the study's population, sampling frame, and sample selection process. It also reviewed the quantitative and qualitative instrumentation

methods. This information allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability critically. Lastly, this chapter provided the reader with detailed specifics on how the data were collected, generated, and analyzed and examined the study's limitations.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This mixed-method study identified and described the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans throughout their careers and explored the impact the behaviors had on their career development. Additionally, the study identified and explored strategies female African American deans used to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. The foundation for this study was a framework adapted from the work of H. Lerner (2012) and Ryder and Briles (2003) that identified nine domains of women's personal power and the nine corresponding self-sabotaging behaviors. Chapter IV provides an overview of the purpose of the study, population, and sample, concluding with a presentation of the data applying the research questions and a summary of the findings.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans in higher education and to explore the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies employed by female African American deans in higher education to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Research Questions

1. What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?
2. What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American deans in higher education?

3. What strategies did female African American deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

An explanatory sequential mixed-method study was used to identify and describe the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans throughout their career while exploring the impact those behaviors had on their professional growth and strategies used to overcome these self-sabotaging behaviors. The first phase of this mixed-method study included collecting quantitative data from nine female African American deans in the four regions of the United States through a survey instrument. The purpose of the survey was to identify which self-sabotaging behaviors the female African American deans had experienced and determine the level of impact.

This survey also allowed the researcher to examine which self-sabotaging behaviors were most common in female African American dean's career growth and allowed the participants to familiarize themselves with the study's parameters. The researcher collected qualitative data through one-on-one, open-ended, and semistructured interviews with nine female African American deans to allow for each participant to provide detailed answers to expand on the responses reported in the online survey. Interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. The interviews were transcribed using the Zoom transcribing feature and verified for accuracy. The researcher used NVivo software to code the recurring themes identified in the data.

Population

A population is defined as a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn and how a result can be resolved (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). During

2017–2018, the United States had 4,313 degree-granting institutions comprised of 1,485 2-year colleges and 2,828 4-year universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). According to Zippia (2021a), 68.1% of all university deans were White, 13.8% were Hispanic or Latino, and 11.2% were Black or African American. Zippia (2021b) asserted over 5,493 college deans were currently employed in the United States. Data also suggested in 2018, 65.8% of all college dean positions were held by women (Zippia, 2021a). Based on those estimates, this study's population consisted of 264 African American female deans serving in degree-granting institutions throughout the United States. Deans are high-level administrators that oversee a specific college or department at a university.

Sample

The sample size for this study consisted of nine African American women that served as deans at 4-year degree-granting institutions within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions. The sample was divided across the areas: Northeast = 2, Midwest = 2, South = 3, and West = 2. A purposeful and convenience sampling was used to identify this study's participants that met the sampling frame criteria. This study's sample frame included female African Americans in higher education who:

- Currently served as a dean.
- Have served in their current role for at least 2 years.
- Served at a 4-year degree-granting institution within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions.

Convenience sampling was used to identify female African American deans who may meet the predetermined participant criteria. There are currently 4,313-degree-

granting universities in the United States, and 2,828 are 4-year degree-granting institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Approximately 76 deans in those 4-year degrees granting institutions are African American and female (Brower et al., 2019). Potential participants were contacted through email to determine if they met the criteria and were interested in participating in the study. The sample size included nine female African American deans.

Demographic Data

The researcher removed the study's participant names and identifying information from the presentation of findings to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. The nine study participants were identified numerically from 1 to 9 (see Table 3). Nine interviews took place in February and March 2022. For this study, universities and colleges with less than 5,000 students were considered small, 5,000 to 15,000 students were considered medium, and more than 15,000 students were considered large.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data collection for the study began in February 2022 and was completed in March 2022. The researcher used an electronic survey for the quantitative phase of the study followed by one-on-one virtual interviews for the qualitative phase of the study. The research questions guided the analysis of the emergent themes and patterns. The following section will present the study's findings in detail as they relate to answering each research question and a description of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Table 3

Participants Demographic Information

Participant	State	Region	Campus size	Interview date
1	Maine	Northeast	Small	February 2022
2	Kansas	Midwest	Medium	February 2022
3	California	West	Large	February 2022
4	California	West	Large	March 2022
5	Massachusetts	Midwest	Large	March 2022
6	Georgia	South	Small	March 2022
7	Maryland	South	Medium	March 2022
8	Rhode Island	Northeast	Medium	March 2022
9	Tennessee	South	Medium	March 2022

Quantitative Data Analysis

During the initial phase of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods study, the researcher collected data using an electronic Google survey. To summarize the data, it was necessary to establish the data's mean, mode, and range to determine the most frequent response (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The questions in the study used a Likert-scale response system to ensure the results yielded the mode and determined the frequency of self-sabotaging behaviors and the impact that self-sabotaging behaviors had on career development. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the data collected to explain the data to be easily understood (Patten & Newhart, 2018). For each question, the researcher created frequency distributions to analyze the results. The electronic 51 survey questions were closed ended and based on predetermined response scales using a 6-point Likert scale, which included the following numerical assignment: 1= *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *agree somewhat*, 4 = *disagree somewhat*, 5 = *disagree*, 6 = *strongly disagree*. Those frequencies and participant percentages of responses for

each behavior category are found in Table 4, and the degree of impact on career development is shown in Figure 4.

Qualitative Data Analysis

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), in an explanatory sequential study, the researcher must collect the quantitative data first, and gather and collect the qualitative data second to further explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. The second phase of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods study included using the qualitative data to refine the qualitative interview questions and data collection protocols. Following qualitative data collection, the researcher analyzed the data by transcribing the interview using the audio transcription feature in Zoom. Additionally, the transcription was reviewed and edited to ensure the data were accurate to ensure the validity of the data. The researcher identified the major trends according to the relevance of the response relative to the research question. To ensure theme alignment to the research questions, the researcher used the sentence frame model to ensure the theme answered the research question.

Once the researcher identified and aligned the themes, the interview transcripts were uploaded into the NVIVO system to code the data, determine each theme's frequency, and source counts. Finally, the researcher triangulated the data collected from both the quantitative and qualitative phases. Triangulation finds consistencies in data collected from multiple sources to broaden one's understanding of the phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Conclusions were then drawn from the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study (Creswell, 2007).

Interrater Reliability

Roberts (2010) defined reliability as the degree to which an instrument measures something consistently from one time to another. The researcher used internal reliability and intercoder reliability to ensure that the findings were dependable. After the interviews were transcribed and verified by the participants, the researcher and a peer researcher analyzed 10% of the code from the qualitative portion of this study's descriptive themes to ensure an 80% greater reliability was met (Patton, 2015).

Research Question 1: Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

The first research question of this study asked, "What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American Deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?" The surveys and interviews measured the frequency that the participants experienced the nine self-sabotaging behaviors and their corresponding subcategories. The findings from the surveys and interviews are presented in the following sections.

Quantitative Data

Table 4 presents the number of self-sabotaging behaviors participants rated *strongly agree*, *agree,* or *agree somewhat* in the survey. Additionally, the frequency of each self-sabotaging behavior is referenced and the percentage of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behaviors are also provided. The top self-sabotaging behavior was dishonesty, referenced 37 times followed by holding back with 29 references experienced by 8 of 9 participants. Moreover, 100% of the participants experienced not taking time for reflection.

Table 4

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Categories Experienced by Participants as Reported in the Survey

Self-sabotaging behavior category	References	*n*	% of participants
Dishonesty	37	8	88
Holding back	29	8	88
Not taking time for reflection	26	9	100
Fear and worrying	24	8	88
Misunderstanding oneself	14	7	77
Thinking too small	14	7	77
Isolating	13	8	88
Infusing sex/gender role confusion	5	4	44
Disempowering other women	3	3	33

Note. *n* = the number of participants who rated either *strongly agree, agree, or agree somewhat.*

Table 5 highlights the highest-rated self-sabotaging subcategories and their overarching major categories experienced by participants as reported in the survey organized by average rating. The table includes the average rating for each subcategory and the percentage of participants that rated either *strongly agree*, *agree*, or *agree somewhat.* The top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory was "I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to." It was referenced seven times by 77% of participants.

Table 5

Top 10 Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Experienced Most by Participants

Self-sabotaging behavior subcategory	Self-sabotaging behavior category	Average rating	% of participants
I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to	Dishonesty	2.1	77
I said "yes" to things when I actually wanted to say "no"	Dishonesty	2.3	88
I have not allowed myself to experience "down time"	Not talking time for self-reflection	2.5	88
I have not taken vacations when I could	Not talking time for self-reflection	2.5	77
I have talked down to myself	Holding back	2.7	88
I have hesitated to talk about accomplishments to others for fear of trumpeting my ego	Dishonesty	2.8	77
I became anxious when thinking about a change in my career	Fear and worrying	3	77
I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation	Dishonesty	3.1	66
I felt like an imposter on the job	Fear and worrying	3.1	66
I was unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career	Isolating	3.3	66

Table 6 represents the least rated self-sabotaging behaviors subcategories and their overarching major categories experienced by participants as reported in the survey organized by average rating. The table includes the average rating for each subcategory and percentage of participants that rated either *strongly disagree, disagree,* or *disagree somewhat* in the survey.

Table 6

Lowest 10 Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Experienced Least by Participants as Reported in Survey

Self-sabotaging behavior subcategory	Self-sabotaging behavior category	Average rating	% of participants
I have felt jealous of other women who have "made it"	Disempowering other women	6.0	100
I have held women to a higher standard at work than men	Disempowering other women	6.0	100
I blamed others for why things aren't going well	Thinking too small	5.9	100
I have not accepted parts of myself that need improvement	Not taking time for reflection	5.9	100
I have felt too busy to help other women	Disempowering other women	5.9	100
I thought why I should help other women since I did it the hard way	Disempowering other women	5.9	100
I have squashed my natural feminine qualities	Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace	5.9	100
I resisted change	Fear and worrying	5.7	100
I have been reluctant to seek out feedback that would help me improve	Misunderstanding oneself	5.6	88
I have flirted at work	Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace	5.4	100

Qualitative Data

Table 7 represents the number of references to the self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by participants during the interview and the number and percentage of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behaviors. The top self-sabotaging behavior category referenced in the interviews was fear and worrying. It was referenced

18 times by seven participants. Holding back and thinking too small were also referenced by 77% of the participants.

Table 7

Self-Sabotaging Behavior Categories Experienced by Participants as Reported in Interview

Self-sabotaging behavior category	References	*n*	% of participants
Fear and worrying	18	7	77
Dishonesty	16	8	88
Not taking time for reflection	12	5	55
Holding back	10	7	77
Thinking too small	9	7	77
Misunderstanding oneself	7	6	66
Isolating	3	3	33
Infusing sex/gender role confusion	3	2	22
Disempowering other women	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Table 8 presents a comparison of the self-sabotaging behaviors ranked in order from most cited to least cited to triangulate the data from surveys and interviews. Priority ranking was given if most participants selected the behavior. The fear and worrying was ranked number one in interviews and the category of dishonesty was ranked number one in the survey. The lowest ranked category as reported in surveys and interviews was disempowering other women.

Thinking too small. Thinking too small was the fifth ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was referenced nine times by 77% of the participants. Table 9 provides an overview of the subcategories

within the thinking too small category as organized by the most referenced to least referenced. The subcategory I feared being rejected was referenced the most, four times, by three participants.

Table 8

Ranking Comparison of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Between Survey and Interview Responses

Self-sabotaging behavior category	Survey ranking	Interview ranking
Dishonesty	1	2
Holding back	2	4
Not taking time for reflection	3	3
Fear and worrying	4	1
Misunderstanding oneself	5	6
Thinking too Small	6	5
Isolating	7	7
Infusing sex/gender role confusion	8	8
Disempowering other women	9	9

Note. Ranking 1–9 is based on the self-sabotaging behaviors cited by participants. 1 = the top ranked and 9 = the least ranked self-sabotaging behavior.

Table 9

Thinking Too Small Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Thinking too small	References	*n*	% of participants
I feared being rejected	4	3	33
I did not have the courage to step out of my comfort zone	2	2	22
I often made perfection the standard in my life	2	1	11
I was not open to new experiences	1	1	11
I blamed others for why things aren't going well	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 2 shared the uncertainty she felt as the newest tenured faculty recently promoted to associate dean and how she feared being rejected. She said:

> You know I talked to my friends about the new position, and they are like "Oh yeah, you'd be great," but I discounted their viewpoints, because you know, there are other people of color telling me this. I talked to my family and they're like "Oh you'd be great," but I just kept thinking that because this is family telling me this it does not hold much value. It wasn't until I heard the White man reaffirm it for me that I would be good in this job. Then I thought okay I'll give it a try, but I wasn't sure I thought, maybe, maybe the faculty wouldn't respect me. You know I had to sit in on disciplinary meetings with the dean. I was the number two person at the law school, and I didn't know how that was going to be received.

Participant 3 recalled a time when she felt disregarded by faculty because she did not hold the technical degree and have the same higher education experiences:

> There is a certain level of respect expected as a dean. Because faculty doesn't respect anyone who does not have a doctoral degree. So, no matter whatever my experience was whatever accomplishments I've made whatever my knowledge, skills and abilities are they don't respect it and it's really sad, especially on our campus. There is truly a level of disrespect. Someone would speak over me about something that pertains to me, and in my area. I would love for my colleagues to say oh well, [Participant 3] is right there why don't you ask her.

Participant 9 reflected on her experiences when job searching and how she often disregarded herself for certain positions and how it took someone else to point out her strengths and said:

> When I job search, I'll see a position and then I'll look at it, and I can immediately think of other people who are also job searching. And I might go I'm not going to apply because if they apply for it, then they will get it over me. My husband has been the one person that would challenge me to apply.

Table 10 provides a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category thinking too small. Thinking too small was identified by seven participants in the survey and interviews. I feared being rejected was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interview, identified by three participants and I often made perfection the standard of life was the top self-sabotaging subcategory for the survey, identified by five participants. Table 10 presents the summary of data.

Fear and worrying. Fear and worrying was the highest ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was referenced 18 times by 77% of participants. Table 11 provides an overview of the subcategories within the fear and worrying category, organized by the most referenced to least referenced.

Participant 1 expressed why she may be anxious when contemplating a career change when she said:

> Sometimes it may be competency in a particular area like an expertise. Like oh I don't have the full knowledge base of this area to be able to

contribute substantially. Do I have all the training that I need to be successful in my next step? And I think we struggle with that, as women in general.

Table 10

Thinking Too Small Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Thinking too small	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*N*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I blamed others for why things aren't going well	0	0	0	0	0	0
I feared being rejected	5	5	55	4	3	33
I did not have the courage to step out of my comfort zone	2	2	22	2	2	22
I was not open to new experiences	2	2	22	1	1	11
I often made perfection the standard in my life	5	5	55	2	1	11
TOTAL	14	7	77	9	7	77

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 2 shared she also experienced the same anxiousness coming into a new position where her predecessor faced challenges that ultimately led to her leaving the institution. She said:

I had heard before my arrival that there had been another Black woman hired at [name of institution] state's law school and she did not get tenure,

she was denied tenure, and so she left. So, coming in with this narrative in my ear, that the other Black woman who came before you didn't make it. I had lots of anxiety over whether I could do it.

Table 11

Fear and Worrying Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Fear and worrying	References	*n*	% of participants
I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation	6	5	55
I felt like an imposter on the job	5	4	44
I became anxious when thinking about a change in my career	4	3	33
I feared looking stupid	2	2	22
I mulled over my mistakes	1	1	11
I resisted change	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 9 stated, "It's situation like that, that make me uncomfortable," as she spoke of her experiences of being the only person of color and how that made her feel powerless:

> For the first time in my life, I had no one above me that was a person of color, and so it was hard, it was very hard trying to understand why some things are happening. Whether they were happening because of who I am or is that just the way the tide rolls in this arena.

Participant 1 reflected when people experience fear and worry, it is often associated with the imposter syndrome:

> Naturally, when you experience fear and worrying, I think, is often when you see the imposter syndrome. No matter how you prepare, I don't think that the feeling of not belonging will ever go away, I just don't. The more and more I just reflect on it like, I think that with fear and worry sometimes you don't feel like you know all the answers. Right, people regard you in this role that you should have all the answers. They are always looking for you to make the decisions. I think that's where you really need to lean on your network and seek out the experts.

Participant 4 shared how her experiences as a Black women contributed to feeling like an imposter when applying for medical school:

> So, it was always, for me for a long time and even sometimes to this day, I feel like I'm going forward and catching up. Even now as a dean, feeling like, yes, I'm moving forward, yet still catching up. And the hardest part with applying to medical school was that I had a master's degree and work experience. I had publications and still didn't get into medical school right away. But today when I look at students who apply here, if they had those things that I had, even at the school that I went to, those students would get what was called added value.

Participant 9 discussed how age was also a contributing factor to fear and worrying:

> I felt like an imposter because of my age, more than anything else. I think in every job I've ever had everyone I supervised was older than me. The

> first time you're all excited like, oh, we can all work together, and this can be great until they look back at you like, you are old enough to be my grandbaby. And you just sit in here like is that a dis. You know, you begin to question yourself and allow yourself to be insecure and remain insecure. But you can't let that dictate how you navigate because you were hired for a reason. I could be young enough to be your grandbaby, probably, I don't know. But I'm still here and is it my age or is it that this melanin looks so good to where you would never know how old I am? So, I think that when you navigate spaces when you're younger there's an additional layer in terms of gender, race, and your age. You're having to not necessarily prove yourself, but you're having to recognize the challenges could come from either one of those identities and more. That could or could not be a result of how you are carrying out your role, and so I do tend to be more serious.

Table 12 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews linked to the self-sabotaging behavior category fear and worrying. Fear and worrying was identified by eight of the participants in the survey and seven participants in the interview. I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interview, identified by five participants, and I became anxious when thinking about a career change was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the survey, identified by seven participants. Table 12 presents a summary of the data.

Table 12

Fear and Worrying Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Fear and worrying	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I became anxious when thinking about a change in my career	7	7	77	4	3	33
I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation	5	5	55	6	5	55
I resisted change	0	0	0	0	0	0
I feared looking stupid	6	6	66	2	2	22
I felt like an imposter on the job	6	6	66	5	4	44
I mulled over my mistakes	4	4	44	1	1	11
TOTAL	28	8	88	18	7	77

Note. n = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Misunderstanding oneself. Misunderstanding oneself was ranked the sixth self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was referenced seven times by 66% of participants. Table 13 provides an overview of the subcategories within the misunderstanding oneself category and is organized by the most referenced to the least referenced.

Table 13

Misunderstanding Oneself Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Misunderstanding oneself	References	*n*	% of participants
I could not accept compliments or praise	3	3	33
I have focused on a person criticizing me	2	1	11
I could not personally acknowledge my own accomplishments	1	1	11
I have been reluctant to seek out feedback that would help me improve	1	1	11

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participants 4, 6, and 9 expressed acknowledging their own accomplishments has been challenging throughout their careers. Participant 6 said:

> So, I officially finished my program in August of 2021, and I think I struggle harder in saying that I am a doctor than other people. I will introduce other people as doctor so and so, but I still struggle with introducing myself as such, even though I know how hard I worked for that and how many things in life I almost hindered. It's the one thing that I'm still embracing.

Participant 9 also said that she struggles with sharing her accomplishments:

> In the neighborhood I grew up in it's a certain something that's unsettling with people if I began to talk about school. And you can feel the tension in the room when you mention it. I don't know if it is resentment or

> jealousy, but it's something. It is almost like they try to belittle you when you bring it up. For example, they may say to me, "how you are doing with that little degree?" So, I would rather not even bring up the fact that I have a degree.

Table 14 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category misunderstanding oneself. Misunderstanding oneself was identified by eight of the participants in the survey and six participants in the interview. "I could not personally acknowledge my own accomplishments" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interviews and surveys, identified by three participants during the interview and six participants in the surveys. Table 14 presents a summary of the data.

Dishonesty. Dishonesty was one of the top self-sabotaging categories identified by participants during interviews, ranked at number two. It was referenced 16 times by 88% of the participants. Table 15 provides an overview of the subcategories within the dishonesty category and is organized by the most cited to the least cited.

The participants reported they could not be themselves when confronting certain situations as Black women because they would be labeled as abrasive. Participant 3 reflected on a time when her supervisor had reviewed her performance evaluation. She said:

> She put some words in my review that I was aggressive, and I walk into meetings defensively. You know, when you say that it's like you're acting like I'm coming for a fight, you know you're walking in aggressively. So again, it's a Black woman stereotype.

Table 14

Misunderstanding Oneself Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Misunderstanding oneself	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*N*	% of participants
I could not accept compliments	3	3	33	1	1	11
I have been reluctant to seek out feedback that would help me improve	1	1	11	1	1	11
I have focused on a person criticizing me	4	4	44	2	1	11
I could not personally acknowledge by own accomplishments	6	6	66	3	3	33
TOTAL	14	7	77	7	6	66

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Table 15

Dishonesty Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Dishonesty	References	*n*	% of participants
I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation	7	6	66
I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to	3	3	33
I said "yes" to things when I actually wanted to say "no"	3	1	11
I remained silent in a situation when it would have been best to speak up	2	2	22
I have hesitated to talk about accomplishments to others for fear of trumpeting my ego	1	1	11
I took sides when I really wanted to stay neutral	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 5 discussed how, as a Black woman, she has to be conscious and strategic in her responses. She said:

> They don't have to like every move I make as a faculty member, but every move I make has to be strategic. You just realize, other ethnicities and especially White men don't have to think about anything, they just do what they want. They get to be themselves and not think strategically about these things. And I'm just like wow, that's when you get to live your life. That's incredible, but as Black women, we don't get to do that and it's really kind of unbelievable.

Participant 8 stated, "I generally look happy and smiley all the time. I have a soft-spoken voice and that all contributes to being a 'safe' black person." Participants 3, 4, 5, and 8 all agreed being a "yes" person and working twice as hard is a requirement as a Black woman. Participant 5 said:

> I think Black women are so used to having to work twice as hard, that we just assume that at a minimum, other races must be doing half of that stuff, but I feel that they are not doing any of it. And we just get so used to it. Someone asked me, am I prepared to do this job and I'm like, "Yes, I am because, just to survive in this profession, I have to do so much more than a person that does not look like me and I have to be more than the best just to make it.

Participant 3 echoed the sentiments of Participant 5, stating, "I really was overworked." She also reflected on how she took on work even when she did not want to, but felt that she had to. She said:

> And I was always the yes person and always wanting to help and ensure that I remained solution oriented. So, if there was a problem that needed to be solved or solutions developed, I would take on those projects or whatever it was. And I never said, like "Oh no, I've got too much on my plate." I never would speak up about that, I would just take it and look at it as a challenge and try to figure it out.

Participant 4 reflected on a time when she remained silent when it would have been ideal to speak up. She said:

> And I remember this one professor came over and I was looking into the microscope. So, me and my White partner are looking in and the professor guiding us in this lab touched my hair and said, "Well, this is what the endoplasmic reticulum is." And I just looked at him and didn't feel empowered at that time to say anything and it was really hurtful.

Table 16 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category dishonesty. Dishonesty was identified by eight of the participants in the survey and interviews. "I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interview, identified by six participants, and "I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the survey, identified by eight participants. Table 16 presents a summary of the data.

Holding back. Holding back was the fourth ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was referenced 10 times by 77% of participants. Table 17 provides an overview of the subcategories within the holding back category and is organized by the most cited to the least cited.

Participant 1 stated, "Sometimes I tell people you got to get out of your own way. Then I have to remember to tell that to myself that. There's plenty of people to tell you no, and you shouldn't be the one telling yourself." Participant 2 also stated, "So I applied for some deanships, and they were not the right fit. So, I think well the deanship thing is not going to happen." Participant 8 reflected on her childhood and said:

> When I was a senior in high school, I didn't know the first thing about applying to college. And honestly, we really didn't have the resources. We were the family on the Christmas tree at Church and the family that classrooms chose to support. You know, a single mom with three kids. And at this age I was always kind of terrified that I would be found out. That my class would be picking on my family kind of thing. But I also thought America was just a really generous place, I was like, oh my God,

people are bringing us food for Thanksgiving, Easter, and all the major holidays. But I think it was really just my community [city] So, there was no way in my mind that I would be able to get on a plane and visit any schools. So, becoming a dean was the furthest thing from my mind.

Participant 9 discussed how she avoided criticism by stating:

So, a former job I was working in I had a female supervisor. Her supervisor was a female, woman of color and I always felt like they had something going on. And I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but you could just tell that there was some friction or tension there. If I tried to make my boss happy it was almost like a lose, lose situation. I don't think I made her boss happy. When trying to make her boss happy my boss felt like I was undermining her, and so it became a need to understand that politics is sometimes the nature of the beast, and you have to figure out a way to stand your ground. But not going too far to one side or the other, and that could come across fake sometimes it really can because you're like okay am I intentionally being quiet because I don't have anything to say or am I, being quiet because I don't want to upset the left or the right.

Table 16

Dishonesty Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported by Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Dishonesty	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I said “yes” to things when I actually wanted to say "no"	8	8	88	3	1	11
I took sides when I really wanted to stay neutral	3	3	33	0	0	0
I remained silent in a situation when it would have been best to speak up	5	5	55	2	2	22
I have taken on too much at work when I didn’t want to	8	8	88	3	3	33
I have hesitated to talk about accomplishments to others for fear of trumpeting my ego	7	7	77	1	1	11
I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation	6	6	66	7	6	66
TOTAL	37	8	88	16	8	88

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Table 17

Holding Back Self-Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Holding back	References	*n*	% of participants
I have talked down to myself	4	4	44
I preferred not to speak up in a meeting or group discussion	3	2	22
I did not reach out for help when I needed it	1	1	11
I have avoided criticism	1	1	11
I have apologized unnecessarily	1	1	11
I made inflections rather than make bold statements	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participants 3 and 9 expressed they preferred not to speak up in meetings. Participant 9 stated, "I was intentionally being quiet because I don't have anything to say, or I am being quiet because I don't want to upset the left or the right." Participant 3's experience related to that of Participant 9. She said:

> I see stuff that sometimes that could impact other areas, and they don't think about it and I'm going to be honest, I don't say anything. I keep my mouth closed because I have gotten to a point where I am not really trying to offer up information sometimes. Because I don't even want to get involved.

Participant 6 reflected on what she has learned about herself by saying:

> You know, looking back on things now I wish I had done what I wanted to do versus what I thought the situation calls for. I wish I would have been a little bit more unapologetic and been myself versus who I thought I

needed to be in the moment. That analysis comes with growth, change, being in a different space, and now raising a daughter.

Table 18 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category holding back. Holding back was identified by eight of the participants in the survey and seven participants in the interview. "I have talked down to myself" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interviews and surveys, identified by four participants in the interviews and eight participants in the surveys. Table 18 presents a summary of the data.

Table 18

Holding Back Self-Sabotaging behavior as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Holding back	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I did not reach out for help when I needed it	5	5	55	1	1	11
I have avoided criticism	1	1	11	1	1	11
I made inflections rather than make bold statements	5	5	55	0	0	0
I have apologized unnecessarily	6	6	66	1	1	11
I have talked down to myself	8	8	88	4	4	44
I preferred not to speak up in a meeting or group discussion	4	4	44	3	2	22
TOTAL	29	8	88	10	7	77

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Not taking time for self-reflection. Not taking time for self-reflection was the third ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during the interviews. It was referenced 12 times by 55% of the participants. Table 19 provides an overview of the subcategories within the not taking time for self-reflection category and organized by the most referenced to the least referenced.

Table 19

Not Taking Time for Self-Reflection Self Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Not taking time for self-reflection	References	*n*	% of participants
I have not allowed myself to experience "downtime"	5	4	44
I have not taken vacations when I could	3	3	33
I have held a grudge with someone	3	2	22
I have hated to "be wrong"	1	1	11
I have kept busy to avoid being alone	0	0	0
I have note accepted parts of myself that need improvement	0	0	0
I have not allowed myself to mourn losses or cry	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participants 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9 all experienced a component of this self-sabotaging behavior and admitted this behavior was something they have continued to struggle with. Participant 3 recounted how not taking her breaks had negative impacts on her physical health. She said:

> What I found was that, even in those high-pressure situations with an abundance of work, I failed to take my break. Even sometimes lunch, and so it affected my health because I gained weight, you know. I did not exercise, and my stress level was high. Even with stress, your anxiety can come on in many forms; you know it does not necessarily have to be just the feeling. It did affect my personal life from a standpoint of you know, not being at home as much. Being in a nervous situation or a new situation, it can come on with just any amount of work being put on you and you thinking like, how can I get through all of this, and so. It affected

> my health, my personal life, and my relationships with my husband and my daughter.

Participant 8 shared a similar experience to Participant 3 that was life threatening:

> When I was in [state], I realized, it was getting too hard to work and go to school at the same time. I was driving back and forth, and it is like a big triangle essentially from home to work. [City] and back home was over an hour driving from my house is about an hour from work, I was commuting constantly. Sometimes, three times a week for like 2 hours one-way. At that time, the College Board was paying for my graduate school education in part. Therefore, that is why I was staying there and working, but I was exhausted. Because I was working and trying to get my homework done and with the commute, I was barely getting enough sleep and I actually fell asleep at the wheel and got into an accident and totaled my car and almost died.

Participant 6 reflected on how she could identify when she needed to take a break even though she would avoid taking them. She said:

> It is the overwhelmed feeling. That is when I know that I am getting to the burnout phase. Things begin to frustrate me that usually probably would not. Certain things trigger me and make me angry, and it is because I am mentally overloaded or physically exhausted and need to be able to take a break.

Participant 6 stated, “I always do feel that as a woman, I always have to work harder, especially as a black woman, I have to work twice as hard.” Participant 1 also shared her experience with having to balance work and motherhood. She said:

> You know one of the things I have really had to allow myself some grace and which I am still working through is motherhood. Because some things you just cannot do. You do not have enough hours in the day to do it period. So, I realized that my response time to people with issues are still timely, but not in the timeframe in which I was accustomed to, and so I felt that my quality of work was declining.

Participant 8 recalled her experience trying to have a work life balance during the pandemic. She said:

> For 3 months straight, I had a Zoom room open almost 24 seven, and I would go to sleep and then come back, showers are optional. Sadly, I ended up developing a condition with my eyes, because I was looking so intensely at a computer screen for 3 months.

Participant 9 recalled an experience when she worked as a dean of students without sufficient support staff that influenced her ability to take time off. She said:

> At a former job where I was the dean of students, there was such a lean staff in every area. While I was the dean of students, I also was the only person who addressed student conduct if it was outside of housing. I was the only person who oversaw our student care, support team, and ended up having to get a committee to help get us through. I literally felt like I couldn’t take a day off because, even when I was off, I would get called

and I felt like if I got called, they viewed it as an emergency, and so I didn't want to let the students down.

Table 20 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category not taking time for self-reflection. Not taking time for self-reflection was identified by all nine of the participants in the survey and five participants in the interview. "I have not allowed myself to experience 'down time'" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interview, identified by four participants. "I have not allowed myself to experience 'down time'" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the survey as well, identified by eight participants. Table 19 presents a summary of the data.

Table 20

Not Taking Time for Self-Reflection Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Not taking time for self-reflection	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*N*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I have kept busy to avoid being alone	2	2	22	0	0	0
I have note accepted parts of myself that need improvement	0	0	0	0	0	0
I have not allowed myself to mourn losses or cry	1	1	11	0	0	0
I have not taken vacations when I could	7	7	77	3	3	33
I have not allowed myself to experience "downtime"	8	8	88	5	4	44
I have hated to "be wrong"	3	3	33	1	1	11
I have held a grudge with someone	5	5	55	3	2	22
TOTAL	26	9	100	12	5	55

Note. n = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Isolating. Isolating was the seventh ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by the participants during interviews. It was referenced 3 times by 33% of the participants. Table 21 provides an overview of the subcategories within the isolating category and organized by the most referenced to least referenced.

Table 21

Isolating Self Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Isolating	References	*n*	% of participants
I have been afraid to reach out to people I didn't already know	1	1	11
I was unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career	1	1	11
I felt guilty for taking up too much of people's time	1	1	11
I have relied exclusively on female mentors	0	0	0
I relied only on networking upstream	0	0	0

Note. n = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 8 shared her experiences with trying to figure out what she wanted for herself both professionally and personally. She said:

> My boyfriend and I were trying to mend some things that did not go well. We were together, but we were also trying to do our own thing because we were both very committed to our paths. I had some support but, but I did not trust him. He was my boyfriend, but we were long distance for 2 years, and we did not realize how much we changed during the time that we were apart. We were sort of growing apart and sort of staying the same and we saw each other every other weekend. So I felt somewhat isolated.

Participant 3 expressed she was afraid to reach out to people she did not know and stated, "It was very difficult because I was the only African American in the department."

Participant 2 shared how she felt uncomfortable having to reach out to individuals for reference letters during her job search because she felt like she was taking up too much of their time. She said:

> I kept thinking well the deanship thing is not going to happen. However, my mentor says, keep applying it will happen and I will be a reference for you every time you apply. Then you start to think you know. I do not want to bug somebody about having applied every year or every other year for a reference letter.

Table 22 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category isolating. Isolating was identified by eight of the participants in the survey and two participants in the interview. "I have been afraid to reach out to people I didn't already know," "I was unaware of the types of support I needed to move ahead in my career," and "I felt guilty for taking up too much of people's time" were the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategories for the interviews, each identified by one participant, and I was unaware of the types of support I needed to move ahead in my career was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the survey, identified by six participants. Table 22 presents a summary of the data.

Disempowering other women. Disempowering other women was the lowest ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was not referenced by any of the participants. Table 23 provides an overview of the subcategories within the disempowering other women category, organized by the most referenced to the least referenced.

Table 22

Isolating Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Isolating	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	references	*n*	% of participants
I have been afraid to reach out to people I didn't already know	3	3	33	1	1	11
I was unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career	6	6	66	1	1	11
I felt guilty for taking up too much of people's time	1	1	11	1	1	11
I have relied exclusively on female mentors	1	1	11	0	0	0
I relied only on networking upstream	1	1	11	0	0	0
TOTAL	12	8	88	3	3	33

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Three participants indicated they have engaged in behaviors that disempowered other women in their survey responses, however, in the interviews this was not the case. Participant 1 stated, "I will never put myself in a position of using my power to influence someone else's success." Participant 3 shared her personal views on disempowering other women, saying:

> I have a spiritual frame of reference and I definitely would rather empower and uplift people. There's something about that, because you know, even if you see somebody who might be struggling, I feel that it's our duty to try to help train them or coach them or give them some direction, and so instead of talking about somebody I would try to help somebody.

Table 23

Disempowering Other Women Self Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Disempowering other women	References	*n*	% of participants
I have felt too busy to help other women	0	0	0
I thought why I should help other women since I did it the hard way	0	0	0
I have felt jealous of other women who have "made it"	0	0	0
I have talked behind a woman's back	0	0	0
I have held women to a higher standard at work than men	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 1 recalled her experiences working with other women in higher-level positions, stating:

> I have found that sometimes the women in higher positions often feel that you have to be doing something for a certain amount of time before you reach a certain level or status. I do not know if that's just old school thinking like pay your dues type of thing or if that is legit how they feel. I have not quite placed it. And they'll do it in different ways, oh, I was this, I was in the field for this many number of years before I became this or I

> had these experiences before I did this or I've been in the field, this many years, like I don't, why are you sharing that. And that's when the politics really have to come into play, like you, can't say how you feel. Because I know someone who feels that way, probably about me right now, and if something pans out and I end up do getting a VP they will have a lot to say.

Participant 4 said, "My mom always told me to lift as you climb, keep moving forward." Participant 9 said:

> In order for some of us to be able to reach up, we have to understand that when you get to certain spaces you have to elevate right. And so, it is important for me to remember the people who are coming up behind me and be able to give them an opportunity and an advantage.

Table 24 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category disempowering other women. Disempowering other women was identified by three participants in the survey and zero participants in the interview. "I have talked behind a woman's back" was the only self-sabotaging behavior category for the survey, identified by three participants. Table 24 presents a summary of the data.

Table 24

Disempowering Other Women Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Disempowering other women	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I have felt too busy to help other women	0	0	0	0	0	0
I have felt jealous of other women who have "made it"	0	0	0	0	0	0
I have talked behind a woman's back	3	3	33	0	0	0
I have held women to a higher standard at work than men	0	0	0	0	0	0
I thought why I should help other women since I did it the hard way	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	3	33	0	0	0

Note. n = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace. Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace was the eighth ranked self-sabotaging behavior category identified by participants during interviews. It was referenced three times by 22% of participants. Table 25 provides an overview of the subcategories within the infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace category, organized by the most referenced to the least referenced.

Table 25

Infusing Sex/Gender Role Confusion in the Workplace Self Sabotaging Behaviors as Reported in Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace	References	*n*	% of participants
I have exhibited male like qualities that aren't part of my natural personality	3	2	22
I have dressed sexy at work	0	0	0
I have squashed my natural feminine qualities	0	0	0
I have exhibited "girl" like behaviors such as twirling my hair or using baby talk	0	0	0
I have flirted at work	0	0	0

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Overall, four participants in the survey, and two in the interviews identified infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace self-sabotaging behavior. Participant 1 said, "Let me channel my inner White man" as she discussed the challenges of navigating the next step in her career and questioning if she has what was needed to be successful. Participant 6 admitted to trying to appear more masculine in certain settings:. She said

> [Institute name] is a very White male heavy environment, very. Even in some meetings. I remember, I think my mom had come to visit and I had to go to work, one day, and I remember her asking like, "Oh, why are you wearing a pantsuit? I thought you were going to put on a dress." I reevaluated for a minute but given the meeting who it's with I feel as though, if I wear a skirt, they're going to view this as just another meeting

and would think that they could whatever they were wanting, or that they were not going to take me seriously. In terms of this particular meeting in this particular environment, you know I would feel better in a pantsuit or wearing pants. I was really being cognizant if something was form fitting or not.

Participant 6 also shared:

I was reading something, and it mentioned that the tone of a woman's voice is important. So, depending on where I was and the situation, I would change my voice. Either I would deepen it, make it louder, or sometimes I would play the damsel in distress and, unfortunately, probably sound less intelligent than I would of like to come off, but in that moment, I just needed something done and I didn't have time to fight the thing. But I have taken on those masculine traits absolutely.

Participant 1 discussed the importance of dressing professionally:

I feel like there is a certain way for you to dress professionally and look good and stylish. I always feel like if I'm in a particular role and I need you to see me in that role, and maybe subconsciously I'm also thinking because you might think I'm young or maybe I'm also thinking subconsciously because I'm Black. But I know I need to come, correct. I had that standard set for my staff, so my staff knows. I guess they used to be relaxed with dressing and somebody made a comment, "Oh I didn't know I was meeting with you today" and I was like okay. They were not a direct report of mines and I said, "So what's the problem?" They are like

I would have dressed differently. And that's when I learned that my staff has been talking and saying she don't play around.

Table 26 is a comparison table to triangulate the data from the survey and interviews related to the self-sabotaging behavior category infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace. Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace was identified by four participants in the survey and two participants in the interview. "I have exhibited male like qualities that aren't part of my natural personality" was top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the interview, identified by two participants, and "I have dressed sexy at work" was the top self-sabotaging behavior subcategory for the survey, identified by three participants. Table 26 presents a summary of the data.

Table 26

Infusing Sex/Gender Role Confusion in the Workplace Behaviors as Reported in Surveys and Interviews

Self-sabotaging behavior category: Infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace	Survey reported behavior			Interview reported behaviors		
	References	*n*	% of participants	References	*n*	% of participants
I have dressed sexy at work	3	3	33	0	0	0
I have squashed my natural feminine qualities	0	0	0	0	0	0
I have exhibited male like qualities that aren't part of my natural personality	1	1	11	3	2	22
I have exhibited 'girl' like behaviors such as twirling my hair or using baby talk	1	1	11	0	0	0
I have flirted at work	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	5	4	44	3	2	22

Note. *n* = the number of participants who experienced the self-sabotaging behavior.

Research Question 2: Impact of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

The second research question asked, "What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?" In particular, the survey measured whether the self-sabotaging behaviors had an impact on the leadership careers of the female African American deans, while the interviews evaluated the type of impact self-sabotaging behaviors had on their

career advancement endeavors. Furthermore, the interviews sought to identify which self-sabotaging behaviors had the most impact on women attempting to advance within their careers. The following will provide a presentation of the findings from the surveys and interviews.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

The results for the survey were analyzed to determine the mode and frequency for each rating. The following ratings were categorized as *agree; strongly agree, agree, agree somewhat,* and the following ratings were categorized as *disagree; disagree somewhat, disagree, strongly disagree* to understand the overall impact. Fifty-five percent of female African American deans agreed some self-sabotaging behaviors had an impact on their development and 45% of female African American Deans disagreeing, highlighted in Figure 4.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

The interviews sought to understand which self-sabotaging behaviors impacted women attempting to advance within their careers. For each self-sabotaging behavior, the participants were asked to share an example or a story of the type of impact each self-sabotaging behaviors had on their career development efforts. Several themes emerged from the shared experiences.

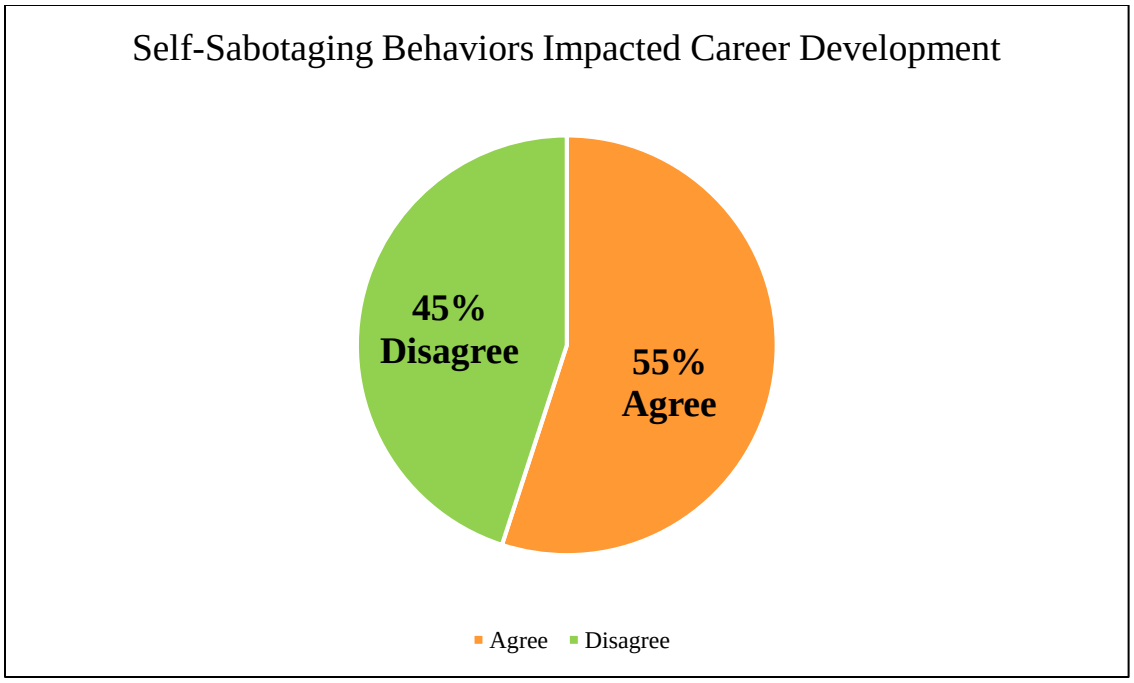


Figure 4. Participants' Belief Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Had an Impact on Career Development

Lack of support. Four participants experienced self-sabotaging behaviors due to the lack of support in certain spaces. Participant 7 stated:

> I saw leaders overlook Black women for promotional opportunities, not because they didn't possess the skillset or knowledge, but because their professional pathway was different from theirs. You know, they think that because we look different, they are unsure of how to develop us, so instead of taking a chance they move on to the next person that looks more like them. And this in turn leads to a lack of representation. With lack of representation, Black women may not have the opportunity to see themselves in certain roles, which further increases gaps.

Participant 2 stated, “I am the first woman and the first person of color to serve as Dean here.” Participant 4 shared an experience where she was faced with being one of the few people of color throughout medical school. She said:

> And medical school, when I started, there were 165 students in the class and only two African Americans, myself, and another male. There were also no professors of color. There was one Black female physician in pediatrics that I met and a few Whites professors who I would call allies for Black students. They would see how the two of us were working so hard and really struggling to make it. I developed a strong friendship with a White guy in the class and he began to share information with me, and I would share with the other Black guy. So that helped with some of the burden of struggling. We may not have gotten that if that relationship was not formed. And you are basically on your own sink or swim.

Participant 3 recalled a time when a Black woman’s concern was dismissed at work without any consideration, stating:

> A lot of the campuses and even corporate America decided to do these diversity, equity, and inclusion committees or departments. But I really feel like a lot of it is for show. A colleague of mine just mentioned that she was in there, talking to her new boss, and he automatically says well you know, [colleague name], this is how it is. And yet, just totally discounted what she was saying and didn’t even want to listen to what she was saying. They do all this training, but then there is no real follow up.

Inhibited by stereotypes. Four participants shared their experiences with feeling like they were inhibited by stereotypes and suffered from mental strain trying to live up a professional ideal originally created to stifle, rather than support, diversity. They felt that they were obligated to make others feel comfortable when they were in a group, especially if that group was made up of people who looked nothing like them. Participant 5 recalled an experience when she was belittled for using her voice because it made the other person feel uncomfortable. She said:

> I remember a White professor I had, who I was challenging when I was a senior. As a senior in college, you're finding your voice more. Well, he had all these writers that we were supposed to be reading and none of them were women or any people of color. So, I questioned him openly in class which you think you could do in this progressive kind of place. And so, I was doing that in front of everybody, and he didn't like it. When I think back on it now, I think what a small thing to do to a student. Then I was talking to him on the phone during a phone conference, and I told him that I feel like I'm such a stranger to the work that we will be reading about race and gender. But I remember a later call that he and I had, and he said to me something that made me feel so small, he said you're good but you're not as good as you think you are and I thought, what Professor says that just to hurt me? You know I was not an arrogant super confident student at all, but he wanted to put me in my place for even thinking to challenge him or raise questions because he was right, and I was wrong.

Participant 6 summed up her experience with having to be conscious of her approach, saying:

> I'm still having to unlearn who I naturally am. African American people are natural people pleasers. And I say I am a recovering people pleaser. I am learning that we were raised that way, I think that's part of it, I think, being humble and being modest is something that a lot of us are always told to do as children. We were also told not to be overly aggressive or assertive, speak in turn, only when spoken to. As a Black woman you always must walk a fine line.

Participant 7 stated:

> As Black women we must diminish aspects of our personality to fit into the culture of our workplace. My mentors talked to me about dimming my light. I have always thought I had to bring that down to make people comfortable. It made me feel that the world isn't ready for me, they weren't ready for this strong, educated, Black woman. They were intimidated by me. This made me feel like I couldn't be my authentic self at work because then I risked making others feel uncomfortable and being labeled as aggressive or angry. These labels could very well hurt my changes of professional advancement.

Participant 9 echoed a similar sentiment:

> I've been told to smile in the office at the risk of coming across as too aggressive, I tend to wait until everyone else has spoken before choosing to weigh in. Part of that is simply because I'm an introvert. But another

> part is because I've been conditioned by society and its predominantly white institutions to feel that as a Black woman I come across as aggressive, bossy, and selfish when I speak my mind compared to a man or white woman making the same statements.

These are examples of how external barriers influenced these female African American deans' engagement in self-sabotaging behaviors throughout their career journey.

Research Question 3: Strategies to Overcome Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

The third research question asked, "What strategies did female African American deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?" The interviews sought to identify different strategies the participants used to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. The following is a presentation of the strategies identified in order used the most by participants, followed by a presentation of the self-sabotaging behaviors that can be overcome by each strategy.

Qualitative Data Analysis of Presentation

Table 27 displays the data for effective power domain strategies for all self-sabotaging behaviors. For each self-sabotaging behavior category, participants identified specific strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behavior within that category. All participants shared examples of the following power domains: building a power web, owning all of oneself, empowering other women, and acting with confidence. Building a power web was referenced 96 times, making it the most referenced power domain strategy. Owning all of oneself was referenced 64 times making it the second most referenced power domain, followed by empowering other women, which was referenced

56 times. Table 27 provides a summary of the strategies used to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Table 27

Effective Power Domain Strategies for All Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

Power domain strategy	References	*n*	% of participants
Building a power web	96	9	100
Owning all of oneself	64	9	100
Empowering other women	56	9	100
Acting with confidence	48	9	100
Constructive preparation	27	7	77
Honest self-expression	21	8	88
Recognizing women's unique destiny	18	8	88
Cultivating self-intimacy	12	7	77
Embracing one's sexuality	9	8	88

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy.

Recognizing women's unique destiny. Table 28 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy recognizing women's unique destiny. Be collaborative and network with different people was the top identified power domain strategy within the recognizing women's unique destiny domain and was referenced 11 times by eight participants. Recognizing women's unique destiny was referenced a total of 18 times by 88% of participants.

Table 28

Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Recognizing women's unique destiny	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Be collaborative and network with different people	11	8	88
Using your voice and stepping out of your comfort zone	4	4	44
Becoming the expert	3	3	33
TOTAL	18	8	88

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 1 discussed how the power of networking and building relationships with people outside of her normal circle helped her land a new role. She said:

> There was a moment when my undergrad dean reached out to me because they needed an interim person and they kept hearing my name. This guy called me and was like I keep hearing your name as a person that I might want to consider for this opportunity. And, by the time he called, I was like I'm in the running and I'm a finalist for this position, which was equivalent to his role. I forgot to mention, that when I was applying for this job, the president of my undergrad is an [Institute name] alum. So, I called him because I was a part of his inauguration, and he was on the alumni council for my undergrad. We had sort of a relationship, but nothing deep, although he knew who I was, and so I called and left a

> message letting him know that I was interested in getting his thoughts on this place, because he had 4 years there. He told me to call him back after the interview. So, I called him back as promised and shared that it was a great interview, I found out much later That apparently, he made a call also to the President of [Institute name]. He told the president that I was the real deal. Even though he has never worked with me before, but everybody regards me highly. As a student he's never seen my work and so to me that showed the power of networking and the power of relationship building.

Participant 9 shared how she challenged herself by using her voice and expanding her comfort zone so she could be her best self in her role. She said:

> But in being quiet or not saying as much or knowing when to say something impacts my students the most, who I'm supposed to serve. So, trying to figure out or navigate the difficulties of who I am doing this for is a question that keeps me centered because if I'm doing something at the benefit of my students, I can grow to expand my comfort a little bit. I try not to say get out of your comfort zone; I can work to expand my comfort.

Participant 6 shared how she learned to embrace her expertise to boost her confidence:

> I think having mentors and sponsors that will really ingrain in you that you are smart that you are capable, that you are the subject matter expert to give you the tools to boost your confidence in yourself, is very important, especially as Black women just because we have to always walk this fine

line of being assertive, being a leader, and being the strategic visionary or being angry, loud, and overburdening.

Constructive preparation. Table 29 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy constructive preparation. Be resourceful, research, and ask questions and pursue mentors, allies and sponsors to reaffirm capabilities were the top identified power domain strategies within the recognizing women's unique destiny domain and were both referenced nine times by all nine participants. Constructive preparation was referenced a total of 27 times by 88% of participants.

Participant 1 stated: "Naturally, when you have fear and worrying, I think that is often when you see the imposter syndrome and I don't think that will ever go away." Many participants shared examples about their experiences and strategies used to overcome the imposter syndrome.

Table 29

Constructive Preparation Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Constructive preparation	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Be resourceful, research, and ask questions	9	9	100
Pursue mentors, allies, and sponsors to reaffirm capabilities	9	9	100
Recognize that the imposter syndrome never truly goes away	5	5	55
Keep moving forward	4	4	44
TOTAL	27	7	88

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 7 shared:

> The idea of finding someone at your institution who can advocate for raises and promotions on your behalf is critical for advancement. The saying "it's who you know, not what you know" is truly relevant to this day. Sponsorship is very important. Within the Black community where I work, we have a hard time finding that. It's not a formal program but it's part of the review process and critical to your success. People will ask who was in this person's corner? You need sponsors to get promotions. If you have a sponsor, you might not need to interview. If you have no one in your corner, you get weeded out and often overlooked. So, it is not just a just a pipeline issue for Black women. Once you are in the door, you need to feel supported in ways that are specific to being a woman of color. So, being intentional in seeking out allies, mentors, and sponsors is the key to your success.

Participant 2 discussed how moving forward opened new experiences for her:

> So, [dean name] gave me the opportunity to serve as associate dean for academic Affairs. I served in that role for 6 years. That prepared me for being a dean. However, when [dean's name] left [institute name] they chose a White male from the faculty who had never been an administrator to serve as the new dean. And I had to teach him his job. He was

> constantly emailing me asking me what's my opinion on this, what I think about this. And I finally got so frustrated, I was like I'm not the dean, you are, you need to figure it out, because I can't do your job in mine too. And that's why I left [institute name], because you know here, I am, the person who has been prepared by the former dean and yet you go and choose a White guy from the faculty who's never done any higher education administration work zero. It was a slap in my face so that's when I said it's time to go. I knew that I wasn't going to advance any further at [institute name] because my mentor had left. So, thankfully a colleague of mine had emailed me one day and said, her institution was looking for a dean, and she thinks I'd be perfect, for it, and here I am.

Participant 3 shared how being resourceful played a part in her success. She said:

> I think I'm a really highly confident person and I'm the type of person that is resourceful. So even if I don't know something I'm going to research it. I'm going to ask questions. I'm going to seek the knowledge that I need to be successful. I think that was the biggest challenge for me coming from that self-support side to the academic side.

Participant 5 discussed how it was important to have others believe in her skillset for her to see it in herself. She said:

> You know, but it was important that people told me that I should consider being a dean, in the same way that it was important people told me to think about being a faculty member, because when I was finally ready to

fight for a deanship, it was in part because people saw whatever they saw me.

Owning all of oneself. Table 30 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy owning all of oneself. "Unlearn influences that say you need to fit in; be authentically you" was the top identified power domain strategy in the owning all of oneself domain and was referenced 32 times by eight participants. Owning all of oneself was referenced a total of 64 times by 100% of participants.

Table 30

Owning All of Oneself Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Owning all of oneself	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Unlearning influences that say you need to fit in; be authentically you	32	8	88
Acknowledge and accept your true value	19	7	77
Take advantage of the opportunities that you are given	13	5	55
TOTAL	64	9	100

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 4 discussed the importance of knowing their worth and when to take advantage of opportunities that are presented to them, by saying:

> After getting promoted to associate professor the next thing would be going up for tenure. And that the university where I was, at that particular time, our chair, had stepped down. We had an interim department chair and I wanted to go for tenure. So, I went to the division head, and I said to him, I would like to go up for tenure this year. And he said, well, you just went for promotion last year, you just went to associate professor. And I said, yes, I know, but tenure is different. Tenure is about your value to the institution. So, he said to me, well, the department is in distress. We don't even have a chair for the department. I would advise you not to go up for tenure now. And I said, no, I think what a better time to go up for tenure, when the ship is sinking, whether they want me to be a part of helping them get back on track and whether they value me as a professor, as a psychiatrist. So, he said, okay, so I went up for tenure, and I got tenure. And at that time, I became the first African American to have received tenure from the Medical University. And after getting the tenure, a few years later, I went out for full professor, and I got full professor.

Participant 6 stated: "We just need to come with our authentic selves and if someone has an issue with that there are a million other places for us to work." Participant 7 discussed the importance of having a high level of self-awareness to genuinely be true to oneself, stating:

> It is important that your personal values align with how you react or respond in certain situations. You should be genuine in all that you do, once you stop being you, it is easy to get caught up in the politics that

takes place within most institutions of education. We all know that Black women walk a tightrope when it comes to expressing themselves. So, it is critical that you are candid about your expressions, transparent about your motives and remain committed to your values. Having consistency is also important.

Participant 8 discussed how being open to opportunities had positive impacts on her career advancement:

> The vice president at the time, who is currently the president at [institute name], was like have you thought about admissions considering your interests, and I was like I do not want to be a salesperson for university. I don't think so, and he was like they're doing some really interesting things here at [institute name] in admissions, I think you should consider. And I was like no I don't want to, and he was like you don't have to do anything forever. It's just to sort of see what's happening, and I was like okay fine, so I applied. I got an interview because he talked to the director of admissions. I was hired on the spot. They were like so we really enjoyed you when do you want to start, and I was like I need to think about this. But then I ended up accepting it and working with a woman who was a former opera singer who used to be the dean at [institute name] business school but moved over time to graduate admissions and she was doing some really exciting research within admissions with one of the institutes. And so, I was helping her with some of that research with that group, and I was so excited about it, it was like really in line with my work. I learned a

> lot about how we get the students to go to more diverse schools or even think about going to schools outside of [state]. Where financial aid is far better at a private institution and maybe this would also be an opportunity for them to bring different perspectives to other institutions, so I was like this is so great, a great learning opportunity.

Honest self-expression. Table 31 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy honest self-expression. "Using your voice and calling people out when warranted" was the top identified power domain strategy within the honest self-expression domain and was referenced eight times by eight participants. Honest self-expression was referenced a total of 21 times by 88% of participants.

Table 31

Honest Self-Expression Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Honest self-expression	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Using your voice and calling people out when warranted	8	8	88
Effectively confront obstacles	7	7	77
Be consistent in your communication	6	6	66
TOTAL	21	8	88

Note. n = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 1 reflected on her direct approach and ability to confront issues strategically and intentionally. She said:

> I feel like I try to be very reasonable. I'm one that typically asks for feedback, I ask my staff for feedback all the time. I don't just ask for it one time at the end of the year. I asked for ongoing feedback if I'm making changes to things, I want to know what people think. So, I don't shy away from people giving me feedback. I ask probing questions, make sure I understand it. And of course, in all cases I don't necessarily agree, but I lean into our conversations and all that, so I kind of think about it and reflect on things.

Participant 2 reflected on a time when she had to use her voice and speak up to ensure that students had a good experience. She said:

> The new dean did something. You know leadership matters and he did something radical. We didn't even have enough Black students in the whole law school for a Black student association chapter, because I think you needed like six or eight students. So, the new dean became radical about recruitment of people of color. He gave scholarships to lure people of color to our school and within 2 years of his arrival, it was a radically different place. We had enough students to found a Latinx, Asian Pacific Islanders, Native American, and Black student organizations. We went from not having any of those groups to having every student affinity group in the institution. And those students made a difference in my experience, but what I started to hear from them was their experience in the classroom

was not great, so they were coming to me. Sometimes in tears, sometimes angry, and sometimes frustrated saying you know these White students say some terrible things in the classroom. It's racist and the teachers just ignore it and move on and it's very upsetting to them. This was shocking information for me because I got to go to [institute name], and I didn't have any of that experience. I didn't have an experience of racism in the classroom from students. I didn't have the experience of teachers who were racially incompetent to talk about race I didn't have that experience at all, so this was completely foreign to me. But student after student after student was coming to me. They're coming to me because I'm the only person of color on the faculty. So, I said, this is not good. You know we're bringing these students here and they're having a bad experience and so I have to do something. So, I work to try to educate faculty members. I did a study with a colleague at [institute name] in the college of education on African American students and layers to learn more about what students' experience was like. We published a book with recommendations on how schools could potentially make it better, and one way to make it better, is to have a critical mass of people in the classroom. So that you know the one or two Black students don't feel like they always have to be the ones to speak up you know, have a critical mass of racial groups in the classroom so that the work of raising the hand and challenging the racist comment or the sexist comment or the homophobic comment doesn't have to fall on one group of students consistently so they

> can focus on learning and not having to monitor the classroom. As a result of that I ended up getting tenure and that told me that leadership matters.

Participant 3 reflected on the importance of having consistent and reflective conversations as she reflects on a controversial email she sent. She stated, "When I sent that email, I went back and I looked at it from a standpoint of did I use words that were too strong, could I have just said can we meet to discuss?" Participant 3 revealed she recognized after the fact there were some missteps in how she handled this situation and learned consistent communication could have prevented this confrontation. Participant 7 discussed the importance of being able to effectively confront obstacles and transform barriers into opportunities, stating:

> It is important as Black women to be honest with ourselves and understand that most of our colleagues and bosses are going to hold low expectations of us, even as we advance to senior level roles. There is always going to be someone that questions your capabilities and is unable to accept your credentials as legitimate. There is always going to be a question of are you really qualified for this job. And what is hurtful is that majority of the time we are overqualified for the role. So, accept that but don't allow their insecurities to be your own. Understand that you are Black excellence, be intentional and shine because they are always watching, so don't let them see you sweat.

Participant 9 had a similar situation as Participant 2, stating:

> I was very concerned in the ways in which we put on paper we care about all students and were inclusive. In one situation, particular in the case where the student was Black, the responses looked completely different, and I grew concerned. So, figuring that was the first time I realized, you need to use your voice. Who cares what happens to you? You just need to use your voice, because while they may or may not get what this looks like the optics are bad, and you need to let them know it's bad. And you don't care how they may view you or treat you later, you know that this is wrong, and these people can't advocate for themselves, and you have been put out a position for you to do that. And so that's where it's like you can be shy, you can be introverted you can be timid, you can be whatever, but if you've gotten paid to do a role, there comes a time and a place when you have to get over it, and do the role and so it was in that moment where it's like I got to speak up got to call that out, that don't look right. I don't know how we are going to fix it. So, it just comes a time and a place as a professional where you have to learn that it's bigger than you.

Acting with Confidence. Table 32 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy acting with confidence. "Seeking out a support system" was the top identified power domain strategy within the acting with confidence domain and was referenced 18 times by all nine participants. Having difficult conversations was also referenced by all nine participants. Acting with confidence was referenced a total of 48 times by 100% of participants.

Table 32

Acting with Confidence Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Acting with confidence	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Seeking out a support system	18	9	100
Getting out of your own way and speaking positive affirmations	12	7	77
Having difficult conversations	9	9	100
Being accountable and owning up to your mistakes	9	8	88
TOTAL	48	9	100

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 2 reflected on her experience as a new faculty member, without a support system and remembered how challenging it was for her to feel confident in herself. She said:

> I accepted the offer to join [institute name] and making the transition from practice back to academia was not as easy as I thought it would be. I had never taught before, and I had no instruction on how to teach. There was no training on how to teach. You were just told do it. Do whatever you want because you act in freedom and so, I basically just mimicked my experience in law school and used the Socratic method and taught my classes. But I had heard that before my arrival there had been another Black woman hired at [institute name] law school and she did not get

> tenure, she was denied tenure, and so she left. And so, coming in with this narrative in my ear, that the other Black woman who came before you didn't make it. So, I had lots of anxiety over whether I could do it. There was almost no mentoring, well there was no mentoring, none. Until we got a new dean [institute name], and he came in and basically told the faculty shame on them for not doing any mentoring.

Participant 4 discussed her experience as a medical resident in which she would have to take part in difficult conversations, assert herself, and not succumb to self-doubt. She said:

> I was a resident there in the late 80s and during that time there were about 500 residents and only two Blacks. I was always mistaken for someone else other than a doctor. Either they thought I was sick or a courier. And not only was I mistaken by others, but I was mistaken by my colleagues. So much that I would have to say to my colleagues you don't see my white coat and the stethoscope in my pocket tell me what made you think that? They would get red in the face when I'd say that.

Participant 5 discussed how she overcame traditional obstacles with the support of mentors, stating:

> So, a lot of ways, you know where I faced the traditional obstacles that women and Black women face but in so many ways, I've also been really lucky. Right that I've been in these spaces, where I had mentors and I've been in this space where I wasn't the only Black person.

Participant 7 shared how she was able to act with confidence:

> For the first time in my career, I reported to a Black woman. I performed better and was a lot more comfortable and confident. I was free to be true self and didn't have to think about code-switching to fit in. I was being judged on your work versus having to mentally perform well which would have been more taxing. My work is judged plus other intangible things. I'm not having to second-guess myself which could have a negative impact on my confidence.

Participant 9 discussed how she acted with confidence. She said:

> People who know me are going to say this about me, [Participant 9] knows how to deliver hard truths, with a very compassionate heart. I believe that a student who's getting ready to be removed from the institution either temporarily or permanently is still a person. And so, you need to convey a decision to them that lets them know we were serious when we said xyz. But you're human and I understand you make mistakes, but if you were to be presented with the same set of circumstances, I want you to reevaluate all the options, you have at your disposal to not make the same mistake again. There's no simple way to say all of that, but it's very important that you say all of that, because for some people, they need to know that they still matter. And for others, they need to know that you haven't given up hope and for others, they want you to see beyond the mistake and see them. So, I tend to think like that, when I go into spaces that don't even pertain to student disciplinary matter it just pertains to a general topic and it's like okay, I need to understand the people in the room and listen.

Cultivating self-intimacy. Table 33 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy cultivating self-intimacy. "Setting boundaries to maintain a healthy work-life balance" was the top identified power domain strategy within the cultivating self-intimacy domain and was referenced five times by five participants. Cultivating self-intimacy was referenced a total of 12 times by 77% of participants.

Table 33

Cultivating Self-Intimacy Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Cultivating self-intimacy	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Setting boundaries to maintain a healthy work-life balance	5	5	55
Taking time to nurture personal, physical, and mental well-being	4	4	44
Devoting time for professional development and self-reflection	3	3	33
TOTAL	12	7	77

Note. n = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Most of the participants expressed this was an area they still struggle to overcome, especially with the demands of being in a senior-level position. Participant 1 discussed how she transitioned into a new position and learned she was pregnant with her first child during a pandemic. She said:

> One of the biggest transitions I would say, is when you have a child, I have so much more compassion for mothers. Because some things you just can't do, you don't have enough hours in the day to do it period. And honestly being remote and all of that probably helped simply because I could figure out how to pump in when to do all that type of stuff more easily than I would have if I were bustling from meeting to meeting. But the grace piece came in, because I always stayed after work, maybe till about 6:30 pm, maybe 7:00 pm, so I got a lot of work done in an hour to 2 hours after work that I did in my 8 hours in a day. Because nobody was interrupting me I had time to concentrate and time to think and you know a lot of the work that you have to do at this level requires reflection time and thinking time, yet it conflicts heavily with the duties of like having to oversee so many offices or have direct reports. You just don't have the time built in, and once you build it in. Even my assistant struggles with building in thinking time for me.

Participant 6 shared how she came to learn balance, stating:

> I think my time at [institute name] allowed me to learn balance. And that came from the time I stayed and overworked myself in the first part of my career when I got to [institute name]. I'm saying you get here at 8:15 am and never take a break. Like if you're working on something after hours and you better be because you're so far behind. My dean is like my expectation is that you're not here all day for something. He's like if there's a big program issue yeah, we stay, but other than that, no. And I

> think at that time they're helping me to reevaluate my priorities and learn that I don't have to work like this. I did get to the point of like I'm turning off email. I'm not checking things after a certain time if I'm working on something after hours it's because I'm truly behind or I must get this in at a certain date. It wasn't a practice of working after hours. Just putting boundaries in place there allowed me to do that more often.

Participant 8 shared how during the pandemic she learned a lot about work-life balance. She said:

> I learned a lot about my work life balance when COVID hit. The University did something that made me very upset. They sent a message to everybody saying you have two weeks to leave campus and apply to eat gap funds, which is, the application system, I created to get some travel help. Still, they didn't talk to me about it, and I was like this was not designed for the entire student body, this was designed for our highest needs students and maybe a few other students who fall out of that. But to collect data for that experience the system was not built for a pandemic, not for people who are outside of that. Plus, we don't know how long they'll be home, we need to collect more data on what they might need and, yes, the system could work, but if you knew why you didn't tell me. I literally I didn't sleep that night because I had to build something that would work. Mind you, I am an office of one, and so I was in the process of hiring people I had two people that had just started in January and February. This was going to happen in March, and then I had to find other

> colleagues to help me. It was still like an insane amount of work. And, and then I had to take a year off. It was a really tough decision for me to leave, I did not want to stop working. I felt like I was abandoning my students, my university and my colleagues during a really difficult time. But I needed that distance to realize the damage that I had been doing to myself and my health because it wasn't like 100-hour weeks were uncommon for me. And so, I will never do that again and what was great is while I was gone, they had to figure out how to do my job.

Building a power web. Table 34 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy building a power web. "Seeking out a diverse group of mentors". was the top identified power domain strategy within the building a power web domain and was referenced 31 times by nine participants. Building a power web was referenced a total of 96 times by 100% of participants.

Table 34

Building a Power Web Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Building a power web	Number of participants' behaviors Reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Seeking out a diverse group of mentors	31	9	100
Open to taking risks and putting yourself out there	26	7	77
Developing a collaborative and diverse network of people	17	7	77
Developing partnerships and allies	14	6	55
Pursuing professional and personal development opportunities	8	4	44
TOTAL	96	9	100

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

The need to have someone recognize, validate, and reaffirm the skills of female African American leaders was a significant recurring theme during interviews. Participant 1 shared her strategy and the importance of building a power web. She said:

> There's just so much power in having that relationship and connectedness, you know. I've also reached out to people, and I do believe in power and cross-cultural allies and mentorship and there's a really good person that I've cultivated a pretty good relationship with. She told me about this woman that she worked with now and she's like a big deal over her institution. And a big deal in the profession. She's chairing the national conference. She was like you should reach out to her because I tell her

about you and I'm like okay. And I reached out to her on LinkedIn, we connected, and it was fine. Finally, I sent her an email and we're about to connect next week, like I just feel like we need to take the opportunities when people present them to us rather than kicking back like I'll just deal with it or they're just saying that no take advantage of it. At the Institute, one of the faculty who's a VP gave me her cell phone number and was like just reach out, and I did. And she has been helping and coaching me along through this like whether I want to do this search thing and like she's been like I'll read your materials, because I've never written an application letter of pitching for this type of position you know. I don't know too many people that sit in that position that I have a relationship with where they would do that because I'm up and coming. That's why it's so important for you to be intentional about who you are seeking out to provide you guidance and mentorship and sponsorship and making sure that they understand that's what the relationship is. Because it is not one sided, it should be them getting something from you and you getting something from them. There is a commitment on both ends. And that has been important for me, as I think about opportunities and, as I think about myself as a professional.

Participant 4 shared a strategy for identifying allies, stating:

> I think too when you start thinking about people that are like minded, yes, representation is important but at the same time when the amount of representation is so low, and you put so much importance on it you are

> missing out. The other part of it is that when you think back to the civil rights movement, you think back to the time of Fredrick Douglas and all the historic times. There were white allies and if we didn't have white allies, we would not have made it through. So, I think what people should think about is how do we identify who they are and bring them into the fold. I feel that I've been uniquely prepared to do that, and I've done that throughout time and if you're an African American and you went to any integrated school there's always a moment when you're the only one and you look around the room and you could feel out who you could gravitate to you can sense who doesn't want to be bothered with you. It's almost like there's something instinctual within you, even on campus today.

Participant 5 said, "I feel like my provost is supportive and you know, having my boss share my values generally, that's important, and I think there are a lot of Black deans who don't find themselves in that situation."

Participant 6 shared how having identified allies during her college years was key to her success. She said:

> I also recognize that there were a lot of the micro aggressions and racism that I experienced in different forms and ways, whether it's been in the community or on campus specifically. But I also recognized that people who went to bat in ways that we now have terms for that we didn't necessarily have terms for them. So, ally, is our favorite term now we didn't necessarily use that term 20 years ago, but they White folks who would at that point, would have been considered allies. And folks who

> felt comfortable enough in where they were to call out racists when they need to be called out. So, there was a small group of folks who did so. Usually, they were tenured or very entrenched in the community and we're not afraid of the repercussions, but nevertheless were there.

Participant 7 stated:

> Somebody must be committed to your success for you to really do well in a higher education environment, honestly, in any environment, especially if you are in a position of authority. I have learned that building those types of relationships matter a lot. I thought if I just work harder than anyone else and become as educated as I could and I would be successful. But that is unfortunately not enough.

Participant 8 shared how being kind and treating people well helped her build an informal network of individuals that supported her. She said:

> I got a new boss [name] who was an amazing boss, and he was just great. And I also made some other friends who were higher ups in the college board who liked some of the work that I was doing and because they knew I was writing all the letters and all the speeches. They had taught at [institute name], so I was building a network that I hadn't realized I was building that helped me advance throughout my career.

Participant 9 shared the benefits of forming relationships:

> When you try to form those relationships, you learn that politics extends itself to everywhere, you know. You learn that certain departments fancy other departments and other academic programs a little bit more, and then

> they see us as the liaison and the middleman. Again, student affairs aren't always touchy feely so you have to go out and explain that to people who may not understand, but when you have those relationships established it's some of the best relationships, because you are truly able to make movement when that happens. You can make movement and so being a part of something bigger than yourself, you get an opportunity, if you don't lose yourself, because some people lose themselves and they become they become greedy.

Empowering other women. Table 35 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy empowering other women. "Motivating and uplifting other women" was the top identified power domain strategy within the empowering other women domain and was referenced 28 times by nine participants. Building a power web was referenced a total of 56 times by 100% of participants.

All participants shared how it was so important to support other women along their journey, and unfortunately, that was not always the case. Participant 1 identified the importance of having grace when dealing with other women. She stated, "Honestly, I don't really have a problem directly telling you about a problem." Participant 1 suggested being direct to ensure mutual understanding and avoid conflict was her go-to strategy. Participant 2 stated, "Too many people of color, they don't reach back once they get there." Participant 3 shared:

> I have a spiritual frame of reference and I definitely would rather empower and uplift people and there's something about that, because you know, even if you see somebody who might be struggling, I feel that it's our duty

to try to help train them or coach them or give them some direction, and so you know, instead of talking about somebody I would try to help somebody.

Table 35

Empowering Other Women Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Empowering other women	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Motivating and uplifting other women	28	9	100
Celebrating other women	21	7	77
Showing kindness and grace to other women	7	5	55
TOTAL	56	9	100

Note. *n* = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 4 recalled a moment when she had to remind others to continue to uplift and keep moving forward She said:

> Keep doing the work that we're doing. Remember that your job is not about a person, it is not about me, it's about bringing others along. I reminded them that my mom always told me to lift as you climb and that they need to keep moving forward.

Participant 6 discussed the culture of African American women in relation to empowerment. She said:

I think that there is still some who are very much in the mindset that I can be the only one, and there isn't space for more. Closing it off to others, does not necessarily gain you any funding and only makes it harder on you, because you are the only one and there's no solidarity with other folks when you are experiencing some very triggering and harmful actions. So, you know it's not as prevalent as it used to be, thankfully, but there's still some mindsets of I can't help others because it's going to hinder my ability to progress here. Versus what I and you know, I will say you know I've curated pieces of my life, so I probably don't see as much of the other pieces but what I'm saying is more of like I kick the door down because I got two people behind me, I'm trying to pull him with me. Just those types of things I think we're seeing a shift, thankfully, but I would say to some Black women to be mindful of those who are of that mindset thinking that there cannot be more of them than me either you'll become competition or a hindrance. Versus I got in so let me get a couple more folks in so, at least I can survive this environment with these other folks and change some things. So, that we can get even more people behind us to come through the door at that point. But there is something about tokenism, it's ingrained in some folks that it allows them to shine and be the magical token negro and that is a very heavy burden to carry and, if you want to knock yourself out but I don't.

Embracing one's sexuality. Table 36 represents a summary of the data from interviews related to the power domain strategy embracing one's sexuality. "Dressing

professionally in professional environments" was the top identified power domain strategy within the embracing one's sexuality domain and was referenced six times by five participants. Embracing one's sexuality was referenced a total of nine times by 88% of participants.

Table 36

Embracing One's Sexuality Strategies as Reported in Interviews

Power domain strategy: Embracing one's sexuality	Number of participants' behaviors reported in interviews		
	References	*n*	% of participants
Dressing professionally in professional environments	6	5	55
Maintaining professional and respectful relationships in work environments	3	3	33
TOTAL	9	8	88

Note. n = the number of participants who referenced the power domain strategy to overcome the self-sabotaging behavior.

Participant 1 said, "I feel like there's a certain way for you to dress professionally and also look good and stylish." Participant 6 highlighted how cultural traditions are often dated and biased. She recalled:

> There are practices that were in place, then that they still do now, so there's a lot of very sacred things that occur. There's a lot of very traditional things that occur. You know, just a few years back, there was a very large conversation about some of their practices. One event calls for

> a white dress to be worn in the ceremony. We had to have a conversation about white attire versus a white dress. Not everybody presents themselves in a more feminine identified way, and maybe they don't want to wear a dress or maybe they are a student who may be a transgender student that no longer identifies as female and will prefer to be more male presenting and is not going to wear a white dress. So, just some of those small nuances of catching the institution up to where we are in terms of society, I think, is also it's been an interesting transition. As a Black culture we hold on to things and don't want to let it go and trying to transition to where society is presently is often a battle, especially in institutions that were founded with religious findings. There's a lot of education that we must do, often in terms of pronouns in you know labeling people and understanding that not everybody uses certain binary labels with identifying terms. Ma'am is not always going to be an accepted term. Things are very culturally based.

Participant 7 reflected on her experience, stating:

> The impact of often being the "only" is a phenomenon of its own. When you feel like you are constantly under a microscope and every move is being questioned, it is important to look the part. I always say, dress for success or dress for the job. That is very important to me because you want to be taken seriously and to be taken seriously you must look the part. It does not mean that you must wear suits and what not, but it does

mean you need to conduct yourself as a professional and that does mean dressing appropriately.

Participant 9 shared a similar sentiment as Participant 7 reflecting on the importance of how she has navigated certain spaces. She said:

> There is one person that I admire very much because when I got to the [institute name] and was a graduate assistant, she was a person that I got to see in a professional light and so while she wasn't my supervisor or anything like that, I got to see her from a peer mentor perspective, as well as a sorority sister. I got to observe her in so many ways, but the one I used to love most was seeing her navigate spaces professionally. Because all the men in the room respected how she navigated. She just said what it is and didn't sugarcoat it.

Key Findings

Based on the data collected and analyzed from surveys and interviews, key findings were found related to the self-sabotaging behaviors female African American deans experienced throughout their careers, the impact they had on their career development, and strategies used to overcome those behaviors. The quantitative data gave preliminary insights into the types of self-sabotaging behaviors participants experienced, and findings from the qualitative data provided an in-depth understanding of the response as presented in the surveys. The qualitative data included self-sabotaging behaviors experienced, the impacts, and strategies used to overcome these self-sabotaging behaviors. Based on the research, the following key findings were discovered.

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Key Findings

- The top self-sabotaging behavior referenced in the interviews was fear and worrying, which was referenced 18 times by 77% of participants. In the survey, it ranked fourth and was referenced 24 times and identified by 88% of participants.
- Within the fear and worrying category, "I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation" subcategory was referenced the most in interviews; 6 times by 55% of participants. In the survey, this subcategory was also identified by 55% of participants.
- The second most referenced self-sabotaging behavior referenced in interviews was dishonesty, which was referenced 16 times by 88% of participants. In the survey, it ranked first and was identified by 88% of participants.
- The third most referenced self-sabotaging behavior referenced in interviews was not taking time for reflection, which was referenced 12 times by 55% of participants. In the survey, it ranked third and was identified by 100% of participants.
- The fourth most referenced self-sabotaging behavior referenced in interviews was holding back, which was referenced 10 times by 77% of participants. In the survey, it ranked second and was identified by 88% of participants.
- The lowest ranked self-sabotaging behavior referenced in interviews was disempowering other women, which was referenced 0 times by zero% of participants and referenced three times by 33% of participants in the survey.

- Self-sabotaging behaviors are caused by the internalization of maintaining racists belief that are passed on from generation to generation.

Self-Sabotaging Behavior Unexpected Findings

- Participants admitted to engaging in self-sabotaging behaviors in the survey more often than in interviews.
- In the dishonesty self-sabotaging behavior subcategory, 88% of participants in the survey admitted to "saying yes to things when I actually wanted to say no," but in interviews only 11% of participants reported "saying yes to things when I actually wanted to say no."
- In the holding back self-sabotaging behavior subcategory, 55% of participants in the survey admitted to making inflections rather than bold statements, but in interviews 0% of participants reported making inflections rather than bold statements.
- In the disempowering other women self-sabotaging behavior subcategory, 33% of participants in the survey admitted to talking behind a woman's back, but in interviews none of the participants reported talking behind a woman's back.
- In the isolating self-sabotaging behavior subcategory, 66% of participants in the survey admitted to "being unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career," but in interviews only 11% of participants reported "being unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career."
- In the infusing sex/gender role confusion in the workplace self-sabotaging behavior subcategory, 33% of participants in the survey admitted to dressing

sexy at work, but in interviews none of the participants reported dressing sexy at work.

- Results from certain subcategories in each domain of the surveys were inconsistent compared to the interviews' responses.

Impact of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Key Findings

- In the interview, 88% of participants provided examples they believed impacted their career development efforts.
- In the survey, 55% of participants agreed self-sabotaging behaviors impacted their career development.
- The top self-sabotaging behavior participants believed had the most impact on career advancement was fear and worrying, selected by 77% of participants.
- The second most identified self-sabotaging behavior participants believed had the most impact on career advancement was thinking too small, selected by 55% of participants.

Impact of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Unexpected Findings

- Lack of support was identified as a barrier for 44% of the participants.
- Another barrier identified by 44% of the participants was related to being inhibited by stereotypes.
- Self-sabotaging behaviors had harmful impacts on participants physical and mental well-being and caused tensions within personal relationships.

Strategies Used to Overcome Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Key Findings

- The top strategy referenced in interviews was building a power web and was referenced 96 times by 100% of participants.

- Within the building a power web strategy, seeking out a diverse group of mentors was referenced the most in interviews, 31 times by 100% of participants.
- The second most referenced strategy in interviews was owning all of oneself and it was referenced 64 times by 100% of participants.
- The third most referenced strategy used in interviews was empowering other women and it was referenced 54 times by 100% of participants.
- In the interview, the strategy acting with confidence was also referenced by all participants.

Strategies Used to Overcome Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Unexpected Findings

- One repeated strategy that was identified by 100% of participants for overcoming self-sabotaging behaviors was the necessity to develop a network of people that can help them discover and actualize their best selves.
- Another strategy identified by 100% of participants was the need to identify allies in certain spaces.
- The ability to be intentional and strategic when having hard conversations was another strategy that was identified by 100% of participants for overcoming self-sabotaging behaviors.
- The most prevalent strategy, referenced by 100% of participants was the need to identify cross-cultural mentors as well as sponsors throughout their career.

Summary

The purpose of this mixed method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by nine female African American deans and explore

the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies used by female African American deans to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. Data collection included an electronic quantitative survey followed by structured and semi-structured open-ended qualitative interviews. The chapter provided a summary presentation of data related to the self-sabotaging behaviors, the impact these behaviors had, and strategies female African American deans used to overcome them. Thirty key findings and unexpected findings were identified. Chapter V provides an overview of the major findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This mixed method study identified and described self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by nine female African American deans throughout their career development and explored the impact those behaviors had on their career development. This study also identified strategies the nine female African American deans used to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors. Chapter V provides an overview of the purpose of the study, the research questions, key and unexpected conclusions, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding reflections.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans in higher education and to explore the impact these behaviors had on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies employed by female African American deans in higher education to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Research Questions

1. What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?
2. What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American deans in higher education?
3. What strategies did female African American deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?

Methodology

This explanatory sequential mixed method study included two phases in which the first phase was collecting quantitative data through a survey instrument completed by nine female African American deans located within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions. The second phase included structured and semi structured one-on-one interviews with the nine female African American deans to gain additional in-depth information about the self-sabotaging behaviors that have impacted their career development, and strategies used to overcome these behaviors. The interviews were conducted via Zoom in February 2022 and March 2022 and were audio recorded and transcribed using the audio transcribing feature within the Zoom platform. The transcript was coded using the qualitative analysis software program NVIVO.

Population

A population is defined as a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn and how a result can be resolved (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). During 2017–2018, the United States had 4,313 degree-granting institutions comprised of 1,485 2-year colleges and 2,828 4-year universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). According to Zippia (2021a), 68.1% of all university deans were White, 13.8% were Hispanic or Latino, and 11.2% were Black or African American. Zippia (2021b) asserted over 5,493 college deans were currently employed in the United States. Data also suggested in 2018, 65.8% of all college dean positions were held by women (Zippia, 2021a). Based on those estimates, this study's population consisted of 264 African American female deans serving in degree-granting institutions throughout the United

States. Deans are high-level administrators that oversee a specific college or department at a university.

Sample

The sample size for this study consisted of nine African American women that served as deans at 4-year degree-granting institutions within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions. The sample was divided across the areas: Northeast = 2, Midwest = 2, South = 3, and West = 2. A purposeful and convenience sampling was used to identify this study's participants that met the sampling frame criteria. This study's sample frame included female African Americans in higher education who:

- Currently served as a dean.
- Have served in their current role for at least 2 years.
- Served at a 4-year degree-granting institution within the northeast, midwest, south, and west U.S. regions.

Convenience sampling was used to identify female African American deans who may meet the predetermined participant criteria. There are currently 4,313-degree-granting universities in the United States, and 2,828 are 4-year degree-granting institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Approximately 76 deans in those 4-year degrees granting institutions are African American and female (Brower et al., 2019). Potential participants were contacted through email to determine if they met the criteria and were interested in participating in the study. As such, the sample size included nine female African American deans.

Summary of Major Findings

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Major Findings

Research Question 1 asked, "What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?" In this explanatory sequential mixed-method study, participants shared examples of self-sabotaging behaviors they experienced throughout their career development, which answered Research Questions 1. The major findings are drawn directly from participants' responses.

- The top self-sabotaging behavior categories reported in the surveys included dishonesty, holding back, not taking time for reflection, and fear and worrying.
- The top self-sabotaging behavior categories reported in the interviews included fear and worrying, dishonesty, not taking time for reflection and holding back.
- Self-sabotaging behaviors are caused by the internalization of maintaining racists beliefs passed on from generation to generation.

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Unexpected Findings

- Participants admitted to engaging in self-sabotaging behaviors in the survey more often than in interviews.
- The survey data presented significantly larger percentages of self-sabotaging behaviors than reported in interviews in the following categories: not taking time for reflection, isolating, and disempowering other women.

Impact of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Major Findings

Research Question 2 asked, "What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female African American Deans in higher education?" In this explanatory sequential mixed-method study, participants shared examples of how self-sabotaging behaviors impacted their career development, which answered Research Question 2. The major findings are drawn directly from participants' responses.

- In the survey, 55% of participants reported self-sabotaging behaviors impacted their career development; however, 100% of participants were able to provide examples of how their careers had been impacted by self-sabotaging behaviors in interviews.
- The top self-sabotaging behaviors participants believed had the most impact on career advancement were fear and worrying and dishonesty.

Impact of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Unexpected Findings

- Lack of support was identified as a barrier for 44% of the participants.
- Another barrier identified by 44% of the participants was related to being inhibited by stereotypes.
- Self-sabotaging behaviors had harmful impacts on participants' physical and mental well-being and caused tensions within personal relationships.

Strategies Used to Overcome Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Major Findings

Research Question 3 asked, "What strategies did female African American Deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?" In this explanatory mixed-method study, participants shared strategies used

to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors, which answered Research Question 3. The major findings are drawn directly from participants' responses.

- The top strategies to counteract self-sabotaging behaviors were building a power web, owning all of oneself, and empowering other women.
- Within the building a power web strategy, seeking out a diverse group of mentors was referenced the most in interviews, 31 times by 100% of participants.
- One hundred percent of participants also referenced acting with confidence as a strategy to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Strategies Used to Overcome Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Unexpected Findings

- One repeated strategy that was identified by 100% of participants for overcoming self-sabotaging behaviors was the necessity to develop a network of people to help them discover and actualize their best selves.
- Another strategy identified by 100% of participants was the need to identify allies in certain spaces.
- The ability to be intentional and strategic when having hard conversations was another strategy identified by 100% of participants for overcoming self-sabotaging behaviors.
- The most prevalent strategy, referenced by 100% of participants was the need to identify cross-cultural mentors as well as sponsors throughout their career

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study and supported by literature, conclusions were formed concerting self-sabotaging behaviors, their impact, and strategies to overcome them.

Conclusion 1: Feelings of Powerlessness and not Belonging Impacts African American Women's Career Progression

Fear and worrying, dishonesty, holding back, and thinking too small were self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by at least 77% of participants. Researchers have found that self-sabotaging behaviors are present in most women, and these behaviors can have an impact on their career development (Lerner, Ryder, & Briles, 2003; Martinez & Renn, 2022; Murray, 2015). The top self-sabotaging behavior referenced in interviews was fear and worrying, referenced 18 times by 77% of participants. Within the fear and worrying category, "I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation" was referenced the most, six times by 55% of participants, followed by "I felt like an imposter on the job," referenced five times by 44% of participants. African American women still feel uncomfortable and powerless in certain situations for fear of the consequences of standing up for themselves (Becks-Moody, 2004; Powell, 2018), which can contribute to this self-sabotaging category. In interviews, participants described how feeling inadequate and like an imposter impacted their careers and slowed down their overall career progression. Studies have shown that feelings of not belonging and being inadequate further intensify fear and worrying (Allen, 1195; Brower et al., 2019; Edwards, 1997). False beliefs and assumptions may be associated to fear and worrying (H. Lerner, 2012). Recognizing that these self-sabotaging behaviors exist due

to deep-rooted assumptions and past experiences is vital so women can prevent these behaviors from impacting their career development.

Conclusion 2: Avoiding Confrontation Impacts African American Women's Career Progression

The study participants attributed growing up in a racially biased country to why they developed self-sabotaging behaviors. Women who use rationalizations and unconscious reasoning to avoid expressing how they feel are exhibiting the self-sabotaging behavior dishonesty (H. Lerner, 2012). The second most referenced self-sabotaging behavior identified in the interviews was dishonesty, referenced 16 times by 88% of participants. In the dishonesty category, "I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation" was referenced the most: seven times by 66% of participants. The participants shared how they could not be their authentic selves in certain situations because they feared being labeled as aggressive and intimidating. Participants also shared to avoid being labeled an "angry Black woman," they remain mindful of their responses and body language, including facial expressions. The literature supports this finding. Murray (2015) asserted when an African American woman leads with passion and shows they have invested in their role, they are often perceived as problematic and highly opinionated. As a result, African American women engage in self-sabotaging behaviors and hold back their hunger for achievement to avoid those labels.

Conclusion 3: Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Have Harmful Impacts on African American Women's Physical and Emotional Well-Being

The third most referenced self-sabotaging behavior was not taking time for reflection, which was referenced 12 times by 55% of participants. Within the not taking

time for reflection category, “I have not allowed myself to experience ‘downtime,’” referenced five times by 44% of participants. Participants noted this behavior is something that they continue to struggle with. Participants also shared this behavior took a toll on their physical health because they did not have time to exercise and were not eating or resting properly. Their relationships suffered because they were never home, which caused their stress levels to rise significantly. Research has supported the idea that once African American women obtain these leadership positions, they face criticism, discomfort, and invisibility (Murray, 2015). Consequently, they avoid showing signs of weakness, causing them to engage in not taking time to self-reflect or experience downtime. Additionally, African American women who maintain this persona have difficulties maintaining personal relationships and increased stress-related health behaviors like emotional eating (Woods-Giscombe, 2010). They are also more prone to developing depression, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness, which ultimately keep them from moving forward (Liao et al., 2020). Specifically, a few participants noted having a life-threatening illness caused by not taking downtime was a turning point in their lives.

Conclusion 4: African American Women’s Key Strategy to Counteract Self-Sabotaging Behaviors Relies upon the Power to Develop Cross-Cultural Support Systems

According to research, participants employ a variety of strategies to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors (Crews, 2020; Montgomery, 2019; Pianta, 2020; Ryder & Briles, 2003; Thomas, 2020). The top strategies used to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors include building a power web, owning all of oneself, empowering other women, and acting with confidence. Building a power web was referenced 96 times by

100% of participants, owning all of oneself, referenced 64 times by 100% of participants, empowering other women, referenced 56 times by 100% of participants, and acting with confidence, referenced 48 times by 100% of participants. To build a power web, 100% of participants expressed the power of seeking out a diverse group of mentors, referenced 31 times by 100% of participants. Seventy-seven percent of participants also described the importance of "being open to taking a risk and putting yourself out there," referenced 26 times, and "developing a collaborative, diverse network of people," referenced 17 times.

African American women in higher education often lack formal and informal social networks resulting in the absence of recognition that can lead to advancement (Bell, 1992; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Robinson, 2012). Participants noted the value of having someone recognize, validate, reaffirm their skills, and be committed to their success. Moss (2014) argued mentor relationships are critical as the mentor creates opportunities for the mentee to participate in that provide exposure and recognition of their talents. One participant noted the influence of cross-cultural mentorship and putting yourself out there to build new and diverse connections. These connections included a combination of mentors, sponsors, and allies, all of which act in different capacities. Women that understand the importance of having a power web will provide a source for professional and personal growth that gives insight into the culture and climate of the institution and their inner selves, strengths, and weaknesses (H. Lerner, 2012; Robinson, 2012).

Conclusion 5: Being Authentic is Necessary for African American Women's Ascension to Leadership in Higher Education

To own all of oneself, 100% of participants noted the importance of having a high level of self-awareness. Unlearning influences that say you need to fit in, acknowledging and accepting your actual value, and taking advantage of the opportunities you are given were also identified as essential attributes of owning all of oneself. Women who own all of themselves are willing to promote their professional accomplishments, are open to receiving compliments, and do not let past mistakes determine their future achievements (H. Lerner, 2012; Ryder & Briles, 2003). Participants discussed the importance of being able to speak up for themselves, taking a risk by putting themselves out there to meet new people, standing up for themselves, and exuding inner confidence. Participants also noted the importance of building a power web and acting confidently to aid in career development, referenced by 100% of participants. As women become aware of their true power and authentic self, they can empower other women to do the same (H. Lerner, 2012).

Conclusion 6: There is Enough Room at the Top for other African American Women

Empowering other women was the third-ranked strategy to counteract the self-sabotaging behavior of disempowering other women. In the survey, 33% of participants admitted to talking behind a woman's back; however, none of the participants shared experiences in this category during interviews. Yet, 100% of participants agree that empowering other women is vital to counteracting self-sabotaging behaviors. Although the participants did not admit to engaging in disempowering other women, they

did admit to being victims of disempowerment by other women. Participants noted when they have reached out to other African American women, they were unresponsive, and some believed this was because the women they had reached out to did not feel there was enough room at the top to bring in someone else. Another participant noted sometimes, the more success one has, the more threatening they become. One participant expressed defeat when she shared her experiences of seeking an African American mentor. Another participant was in dismay trying to understand how someone uniquely situated to understand the obstacles African American women are up against would turn their back on another aspiring African American woman.

Conclusion 7: African American Women Have to Triumph Over Self-Sabotaging Behaviors, the Plight of Being African American and a Woman for Successful Career Progression

African American women often experience self-imposed personal barriers based on their morals and preferences (Martinez & Renn, 2002). The participants noted the experience of being Black in the United States creates a type of toughness and makes a person want to keep on moving forward no matter how often they get knocked down. They described this as something ingrained in a person as a child, staying with them throughout their lifetime. Also, participants recognized when they feel rejected, ignored, overlooked, or sidelined, this resiliency gave them the strength to bounce back, refusing to get distracted or derailed and maintaining progress.

Participants mentioned giving up was not an option because of the frequency with which they encountered obstacles and setbacks. In the survey, 100% of participants admitted to engaging in the self-sabotaging category of not taking time for reflection, and

88% of participants admitted to engaging in self-sabotaging behavior categories of dishonesty, holding back, fear and worrying, and isolating. These self-imposed barriers are present in most women at some point in their lives, and if these behaviors become routine, they can lead to self-destruction (Ryder & Briles, 2003).

The interviews showed 100% of participants actively engaged in strategies to counteract self-sabotaging behaviors. To triumph over not taking time for reflection, 77% of participants shared personal narratives and strategies to cultivate self-intimacy for successful career progression. To triumph over dishonesty, 88% of participants shared personal accounts and strategies in which they employed honest self-expression for successful career progression. To triumph over holding back, 88% of participants shared personal narratives and strategies in which they acted with confidence for successful career progression. To triumph over fear and worrying, 88% of participants shared unique reports and strategies in which they constructively prepared for successful career progression. Lastly, to triumph over isolation, 88% of participants shared personal narratives and strategies in which they built a power web for successful career progression.

Implications for Action

Based on the results of this study and a thorough review of the literature, the following implications for action are recommended.

- The research findings must be shared with key stakeholders in the realm of education, including executive coaches, mentors, and sponsors to help bring awareness surrounding the self-sabotaging behaviors African American women experience to help them overcome these behaviors.

- Professional associations and institutions of education must host workshops, breakout sessions, and courses to help raise awareness surrounding self-sabotaging behaviors in African American women and teach strategies to overcome them.
- Research findings must be shared with male and female educational leaders to help African American women overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.
- Research findings must be shared with coaching and mentor programs to encourage and promote cross-cultural and non-discriminatory mentorship and sponsor pairing.
- The researcher must present research findings at local and national conferences.
- Governing boards must be made aware of African American women's self-sabotaging behaviors and impacts to help eliminate racial and gender discrimination.
- Parents must be made aware of African American women's self-sabotaging behaviors and the impacts to help alleviate potential biases from developing during childhood.
- Research findings must be presented in a book, magazine, and journal articles.
- Search firm consultants must be made aware of African American women's self-sabotaging behaviors to help eliminate racial and gender discrimination.
- Retired deans must actively seek appointments in search firms to ensure African American female representation is present when deans are considered for various positions.

- Universities and colleges must encourage African American female leaders to self-reflect and cultivate self-intimacy to help reduce self-sabotaging behaviors.
- African American women seeking to promote their careers in higher education leadership must see the support of mentors, coaches, sponsors, and allies, and build a strong support system to assist with personal and family demands.
- African American female empowerment groups should be formed and cultivated in the public school system beginning in elementary school and continue throughout college to raise awareness surrounding self-sabotaging behaviors and the strategies to overcome them.
- Universities and colleges should develop leadership programs and clear pathways for their students and employees that may aspire to leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations were made for further research based on the findings and conclusions of the study.

- This study must be replicated with African American female deans at historically Black universities to discover self-sabotaging behavior impacts and strategies in different university settings.
- This study must be replicated across multiple generations to analyze trends within each era.
- This thematic dissertation team conducted studies with a variety of individuals in leadership roles, including female secondary principals, gay middle school leaders, female higher education executives, female higher education deans,

female Latina C-Suite millennials, and female charter school chief executive officers (CEO) and superintendents. It is recommended this study be replicated with female leaders in other career sectors.

- A meta-analysis study of all individual self-sabotaging behavior studies must be conducted to analyze trends across populations.
- This study must be replicated with female deans of all ethnicities to identify shared and unique experiences of participants.
- This study must be replicated with site-level educators including female teachers, school counselors, and site-level administrators striving to rise to the ranks of educational leadership to help raise awareness and identify additional self-sabotaging behaviors women experience earlier in their careers.

A Comparative Look at the Original Studies

This study replicated the original thematic research studies conducted in 2020 by Jamie Crews, Rebecca Pianta, and Tiffani Thomas. These thematic dissertations explored the impact self-sabotaging behaviors had on the career development of women in county government leadership, female superintendents, and women in judicial leadership. A secondary purpose of these studies was to identify strategies used by these women to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

In 2003, Ryder and Briles identified nine domains of self-sabotaging behaviors. These studies found that women continue to engage in those self-sabotaging behaviors and that those behaviors impact their career development. All researchers identified common external barrier themes. The research studies conducted by Dr. Crews, Dr. Pianta, and Dr. Thomas focused specifically on self-sabotaging behaviors or internal

barriers. Dr. Crews, Dr. Pianta, and Dr. Thomas discovered fear and worrying, thinking too small, and holding back were the top three self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by participants.

All studies identified key strategies to overcome internal and external barriers in the workplace using personal power. Specifically, they identified for women to move into higher leadership positions, they must act with confidence, empower and mentor other women, and be aware that self-sabotaging behaviors exist and can impact career development. The implications for action in all studies were similar but specific to their field of research. They included creating awareness of women's internal and external barriers to all stakeholders and presenting the research findings to various constituents and stakeholders, including workshops and conferences. Recommendations for future research in all studies were similar and included the study be replicated with various populations, cultures, and geography.

Concluding Remarks and Reflection

After leaving the nonprofit sector and entering higher education, I enrolled in the doctoral program. While working in an administrative position for a brief time, less than a year, I was promoted to a senior-level position working closely with the university population across all levels. I then I realized to be taken seriously, I needed to exude confidence, demand respect, and be authentic doing it. I decided to enroll in the doctoral program to ensure I was constructively prepared to recognize my unique destiny. Enrolling in the doctoral program resurfaced so many of my internalized insecurities. In navigating the program at the end of the 1st year, I recalled mentioning to one of my cohort members that I did not know why I was here, but I knew this was where I needed

to be. Shortly after, an email was sent out for the opportunity to join a thematic dissertation group. I did not even think twice and jumped at the chance.

I have continued to struggle with self-doubt throughout this process, but I have learned so much more about my culture and myself. Recently, I have had to get out of my comfort zone and take risks. I even asked someone I did not know but had heard great things about to be my mentor, and they accepted. I have built an informal network of phenomenal women due to this study and made some lasting relationships with my peers and colleagues along the way. The participants of this study were notable and had some great insights into higher education politics and how to climb the ladder. I am looking forward to putting those tools to work. I honestly appreciate their willingness to open up and share their wisdom and wealth of knowledge on how to navigate the realm of higher education. I will be forever indebted to them, and I will continue to reach back and pull us forward. Lastly, I would like to say that this experience has forced me to look within and identify things that I need to change about myself, both personally and professionally, so that I do not lay that same foundation on my daughter.

REFERENCES

AAUW. (2016). *Barriers and bias: The status of women in leadership*. Washington: AAUW.

Aguirre, A. (2000). *Women and minority faculty in the academic workplace: Recruitment, retention, and academic culture*. ERIC-HE Digest Series EDO-HE-2000-5.

Alexander, T. (2010). Roots of leadership: Analysis of the narratives from African American women leaders in higher education. *The International Journal of Learning*, *17*(4), 193–204. DOI: 10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v17i04/46973

Alexander-Lee, M. L. (2014). *A qualitative study of African American female administrators in the academy: Identification of characteristics that contribute to their advancement to senior level positions of authority* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS).

Allen, K., Jacobson, S., & Lomotey, K. (1995). African American women in educational administration: The importance of mentors and sponsors. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *64*(4), 409–422. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2967264

American Council on Education. (2016). *2016 Annual Report.* Retrieved from https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/ACE-2016-Annual-Report.pdf

American Council on Education. (2020). *Race and ethnicity in higher education: 2020 supplement*. Retrieved from https://www.equityinhighered.org/resources/report-downloads/race-and-ethnicity-in-higher-education-2020-supplement/

Andruskiw, O., & Howes, N. J. (1980). Dispelling a myth: That stereotypic attitudes influence evaluations of women as administrators in higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *51*(5), 475–496. DOI: 10.2307/1981402

Bahn, K. (2014). Women, academe, and imposter syndrome. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 60*(30), 51–54.

Barr, A., & Simons, R. (212). Marriage expectations among African American couples in early adulthood: A dyadic analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *74*(4), 726–742. DOI: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2012.00985.x

Bartman, C. (2015). African American women in higher education: Issues and support strategies. *College Student Affairs Leadership*, *2*(2), Article 5. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/csal/vol2/iss2/5

Bates, G. (2007). These hallowed halls: African American women college and university presidents. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *76*(3), 373–390, 521.

Becks-Moody, G. M. (2004). *African American women administrators in higher education: Exploring the challenges and experiences at Louisiana public colleges* (Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/2074

Beckwith, L. A., Carter, D. R., & Peters, T. (2016). The underrepresentation of African American women in executive leadership: What's getting in the way? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *7*(4), 115–134.

Bell, E. L. (1992). Myth, stereotypes, and realities of Black women: A personal reflection. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *28*(3), 363–376. DOI: 10.1177/0021886392283003

Binkley, C., & Whack, E. H. (2015). Black students around America speak out about casual, everyday racism. *Huffington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/black-studentsaround-america-speak-out-about-casual-everyday-racism_56465539e4b08cda3488cd66

Bischel, J., Pritchard, A., Nadel-Hawthorne, S., Fuesting, M., & Schmidt, A. (2020). *Professionals in higher education annual report: Key findings, trends and comprehensive tables for the 2019–20 academic year (*research report). Retrieved from https://www.cupahr.org/surveys/results/

Bonner, F. B. (2001). Addressing gender issues in the historically black college and university community: A challenge and call to action. *The Journal of Negro Education, 70*(3), 176–191. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3211209

Booi, M., Vincent, L., & Liccardo, S. (2017). 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it': Challenges facing institutional transformation of historically white South African universities. *African Sociological Review, 21*(1), 2–19. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/90013858

Bourdieu, P., & Passerson, J. C. (1990). *Reproduction in education, society and culture.* Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Breeden, R. L. (2021, October 26). Our presence is resistance: Stories of Black women in senior-level student affairs positions at predominately White institutions. *Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/blog/our-presence-is-resistance-stories-of-black-women-in-senior-level-student-affairs-positions-at-predominantly-white-institutions

Britton, L. M. (2013). *African American women in higher education: Challenges endured, and strategies employed to secure a community college presidency* (Doctoral dissertation, National Louis University, Chicago, IL). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/diss/68

Brower, R. L., Schwartz, R. A., & Jones, T. B. (2019). Is it because I'm a woman? Gender-based attributional ambiguity in higher education administration. *Gender and Education, 31*(1), 117–135. DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2017.1324131

Burton, L., Cyr, D., & Weiner, J. M. (2020, May). Unbroken, but bent: Gendered racism is school leadership. *Frontiers in Education*, *5*(52), 1–13. DOI: 10.3389/feduc.2020.00052

Byrd, D., & Shavers, S.R. (2013). African American women and self-esteem: The various sources. *Race, Gender & Class, 20*(1/2), 244–265. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/43496917

Catalyst. (2004). *Advancing African American women in the workplace: What managers need to know*. CATALYST. Retrieved from https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Advancing_African_American_Women_in_the_Workplace_What_Managers_Need_to_Know.pdf

Colleges and University Professional Association for Human Resources (2020). *Professionals in higher education: Representation of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and Black/Hispanic women in leadership positions by professional area*. Retrieved from https://www.cupahr.org/surveys/research-briefs/2020-the-higher-ed-hr-workforce/

Collins, A. C. (2001). *Black women in the academy: A historical overview*. In *R. Mabokela, & A. Green, Sisters of the academy: Emergent Black women scholars in higher education* (pp. 29–42). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Collins, J. (2009). Social reproduction in classrooms and schools. *The Annual Review of Anthropology, 38*, 33–48. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.anthro.37.081407.085242

Collins, P. H. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1989*(8), 139–167. Retrieved from https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8

Crenshaw, K., Gotanda, N., Peller, G., & Thomas, K. (1995). *Critcal race theory: The key writings that formed the movement.* New York, NY: The New Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Crews, J. R. (2020). *Women in county government leadership: Using personal power to overcome self-sabotage* (Doctoral dissertation, Brandman University, Irvine CA). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.brandman.edu/edd_dissertations/326

Cruz, T. (2013, February 11). *African American women education leadership: An examination of the contributions of African American women in education and leadership*. Retrieved from Purdue University Global: https://www.purdueglobal.edu/blog/education/african-american-women-education-leadership/

Davis, D. R., & Maldonado, C. (2015). Shattering the glass ceiling: The leadership development of African American women in higher education. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, *35*, 48–64. DOI: 10.21423/awlj-v35.a125

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction.* (3rd ed.). New York: NY: New York University Press.

Dickerson, A., & Taylor, M. A. (2000). Self-limiting behavior in women: Self-esteem and self-efficacy as predictors. *Group and organization management, 25*(2), 191–210. DOI: 10.1177/1059601100252006

Dina, J. (2008). Deans of women at historically Black colleges and universities: A Story left untold. *Journal of Negro Education, 77*(4), 291–305. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/25608700

Edwards, J. (1997). *African American women administrators in higher education: Adaptations between internal motivations and external expectations*. Cincinnati, OH: University of Cincinnati.

Espinosa, L. L., Turk, J. M., Taylor, M., & Chessman, H. (2019). *Race and ethnicity in higher education: A status report.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Faragher, J. M., & Howe, F. (1988). *Women and higher education in American history: Essays from the mount Holyoke college sesquicentennial symposia*. Norton, New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. (1995). *A solid investment: Making full use of the nation's human capital.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor.

Flood, S., King, M., Rodgers, R., Ruggles, S., & Warren, R. J. (2020). *Center for American progress: Current population survey.* Minneapolis: Minnesota Population Center.

Fourtane, S. (2021, April 23). Black women in higher education: Navigating cultural adversity throughout the centuries. *Fierce Education*. Retrieved from https://www.fierceeducation.com/administration/black-women-higher-education-navigating-cultural-adversity-throughout-centuries

Frye, J. (2021, August 3). *Ensuring equal pay for Black women is not just about work-It's also about family.* Retrieved from American Progress: https://www.americanprogress.org/article/ensuring-equal-pay-black-women-not-just-work-also-family/

Gardner, L., Barrett, T. G., & Pearson, L. C. (2014). African American administrators at PWIs: Enablers of and barriers to career success. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 7*(4), 235–251. DOI: 10.1037/a0038317

Gelo, O., Braakmann, D. & Benetka, G. (2008). Quantitative and qualitative research: Beyond the debate. *Integrative and Psychological Behavioral Science, 42*, 266–290. DOI: 10.1007/s12124-008-9078-3

Glazer-Raymo, J. (2001). *Shattering the myths: Women in academe*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Glazer-Raymo, J. (2008). *Unfinished agendas: New and continuing gender challenges in higher education.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Grant, A. D., & Taylor, A. (2014). Communication essentials for female executives to develop leadership presence: Getting beyond the barriers of understating accomplishment. *Business Horizons*, *57*(1), 73–83. DOI: 10.1016/j.bushor.2013.09.003

Green, L. (n.d.). Stereotypes: *Negative racial stereotypes and their effect on attitudes towards African Americans*. Retrieved from https://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/jimcrow/links/essays/vcu.htm

Greenman, E., & Xie, Y. (2008). Double jeopardy? The interaction of gender and race on earning in the U.S. *Soc Forces*, *86*(3), 1217–1244. DOI: 10.1353/sof.0.0008

Guy-Sheftall, B. (1982). Black women in higher education: Spelman and Bennett colleges revisited. *The Journal of Negro Education, 51*(3), 278–287. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/40037237

Hannum, K. M., Muhly, S. M., Shockley-Zalaba, P. S., & White, J. S. (2015). Women leaders within higher education in the United States: Supports, barriers, and experiences of being a senior leader. *Advancing Women in Leadership, 35*(2015). DOI: 10.21423/awlj-v35.a129

Hanson, M. (2021, September 20). *Education attainment statistics*. Retrieved from Education Data Initiative: https://educationdata.org/education-attainment-statistics

Harris, S. L., Wright, S. J., & Msengi, C. (2011). African American females' career paths to the presidency: Navigating the glass ceiling challenge. In G. Jean-Marie & B. Lloyd-Jones (Eds.), *Women of color in higher education: Turbulent past, promising future diversity in higher education* (pp. 79–98). Emerald Publishing.

Harvard, P. A. (1986). *Successful behaviors of Black women administrators in higher education: Implications for leadership*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED272092

Henderson, T. L., Hunter, A. G., & Hildreth, G. J. (2010). Outsiders within the academy: Strategies for resistance and mentoring African American women. *Michigan Family Review*, *14*(1), 28–41. DOI: 10.3998/mfr.4919087.0014.105

Holmes, S. (2004). An overview of African American college presidents: A game of two steps forward, one step backward, and standing still. *The Journal of Negro Education, 73*(1), 21–39. DOI: 10.2307/3211257

House, L. E., Fowler, D. N., Thornton, P. L., & Francis, E. A. (2007). A survey of African American deans and directors of U.S. schools of social work. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *43*(1), 67–82. DOI: 10.5175/ JSWE.2007.200400477

Howard-Vital, M. (1989). African American women in higher education: Struggling to gain identity. *Journal of Black Studies*, *20*(2), 180–191. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2784699

Hughes, R. L., & Howard-Hamilton, M. F. (2003). Insights: Emphasizing issues that affect African American women. *New Directions for Student Services*, *104*, 95–104. DOI: 10.1002/ss.110

Hurwitz, J., Peffley, M., & Sniderman, P. (1997). Racial stereotypes and white's political views of blacks in the context of welfare and crime. *American Journal of Political Science*, *41*, 30–60. DOI: 10.2307/2111708

Jackson, J. F. (2004). Engaging, retaining, and advancing African Americans in executive-level positions: A descriptive and trend analysis of academic administrators in higher and postsecondary education. *The Journal of Negro Education, 73*(1), 4–20. DOI: 10.2307/3211256

Jackson, S., & Harris, S. (2007). African American female college and university presidents: Experiences and perceptions of barriers to the presidency. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*, *5*(2), 119–137. Retreieved from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/jwel/7?utm_source=digitalcommons.unl.edu%2Fjwel%2F7&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages

Jean-Marie, G. (2006). Welcoming the unwelcomed: A social justice imperative of African American female leaders of historically Black colleges and universities. *Educational Foundations*, *20*(1-2), 85–104. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ751762

Jones, T. B., Wilder, J., & Osborne-Lampkin, L. (2013). Employing a black feminist approach to doctoral advising: Preparing Black women for the professoriate. *The Journal of Negro Education, 82*(3), 326–338. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.3.0326

Jones-DeWeever, A. (March 13, 2014). The education of Black women. In National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, *Black women in the United States, 2014: progress and challenges* (pp. 13–19). Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/BWR.Final_Black_Women_in_the_US_2014Report.pdf

Kachchaf, R., Ko, L., Hodari, A., & Ong, M. (2015). Career-life balance for women of color: Experiences in science and engineering academia. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *8*(3), 175–191. DOI: 10.1037/a0039068

Leath, S., & Chavous, T. (2018). Black women's experiences of campus racial climate and stigma at predominately White institutions: Insights from a comparative and within-group approach for stem and non-stem majors. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *87*(2), 125–139. DOI: 10.7709/jnegroeducation.87.2.0125

Ledesma, M. C., & Calderon, D. (2015). Critical race theory in education: A review of past literature and a look to the future. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *21*(3), 206–222. DOI: 10.1177/1077800414557825

Lerner, G. (1992). *Black women in White America: A documentary history*. New York: Vintage Books.

Lerner, H. (2012). *In her power: Reclaiming your authentic self*. New York, NY: Atria Paperback.

Liao, K. Y.-H., Wei, M., & Yin, M. (2020). The misunderstood schema of the strong Black woman: Exploring its mental health consequences and coping responses among African American women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *44*(1), 84–104. DOI: 10.1177/036

Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C. C. (2004, October 4). *Practical resources for assessing and reporting intercoder reliability in content analysis research projects.* Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242785900_Practical_Resources_for_Assessing_and_Reporting_Intercoder_Reliability_in_Content_Analysis_Research_Projects

Luster-Edward, S. & Martin, B. (2018). Minorities in higher education in the United States: Their status and disparities in student and faculty representation in a Midwest research university. *Higher Education Studies*, 9(1), 68–75. DOI: 10.5539/hes.v9n1p68

Macris, V. (2011). The ideological conditions of social reproduction. *The Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, 9*(1), 19–46. Retrieved from http://www.jceps.com/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/09-1-02

Mainah, F. (2017). *The rising of Black women in academic leadership positions in USA: Lived experiences of Black female faculty* (Doctoral dissertation, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Chicago, IL).

Mainah, F., & Perkins, V. (2015). Challenges facing female leaders of color in U.S. higher education. *International Journal of African Development*, *2*(2), 5–13. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/ijad/vol2/iss2/3

Martinez, A. M., & Renn, K. A. (2002). *Women in higher education: An encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Mayberry, K. R. (2018). *African American women leaders, intersectionality, and organizations* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/5221

McManus, K. L. (2013). *Career aspirations versus career actualizations of African American executive level administrators in higher education at historically Black colleges and universities in a state in the southeast: An exploratory study* (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC). Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/career-aspirations-versus-actualizations-african/docview/1377545515/se-2?accountid=14521

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry,* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Meyer, K. A. (2009). New definitions for new higher education institutions. *New Directions for Higher Education, 146,* 11–15. Retrieved from https://www.learntechlib.org/p/64166/

Mirza, H. (2015). Decolonizing higher education: Black feminism and the intersectionality of race and gender. *Journal of Feminist Scholarship*, 7, 1–12. Retreived from https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/jfs/vol7/iss7/3

Montez, J., Wolverton, M., & Gmelch, W. H. (2003). The roles and challenges of deans. *Review of Higher Education, 26*(2), 241–266. DOI: 10.1353/rhe.2002.0034

Moore, M. (2000). *Cracking the concrete ceiling: An inquiry into the aspirations, values, motives, and actions of African American female 1890 cooperative extension administrators* (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH). Retrieved from http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=osu1202759934

Moradi, B., & Grzanka, O. (2017). Using intersectionality responsibly: Toward critical epistemology, structural analysis, and social justice activism. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *64*(5), 500–513. DOI: 10.1037/cou0000203

Mosely, M. H. (1980). Black women administrators in higher education: An endangered species. *Journal of Black Studies*, *10*(3), 295–310. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2784137

Moss, Y. (2014). *The role of mentoring and career advancement: A phenomenological study examining Black female mid-level community college administrators*. (Doctoral dissertation, California State University, Fullerton, CA) Retreived from https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds/53?utm_source=digitalcommons.odu.edu%2Fefl_etds%2F53&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages

Munden, S. D. (2015). *Starting at the top: Increasing African American female representation at higher education administration in the United States*. (Doctoral dissertation) Northeastern University, Boston, MA. Retrieved from https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/files/neu:rx915c608/fulltext.pdf

Murray, P. L. (2015). *The impact of self-imposed barriers on African American successes.* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/1732

National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Table 105.50. Number of educational institutions, by level and control of institution: 2019*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_105.50.asp

Nickerson, J. C. (2020). *Black women in higher education leadership: Examining their lived experiences utilizing cross-race and cross-gender mentorship.* (Doctoral dissertation). Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX.

Parker, P. (2015). The historical role of women in higher education. *Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, 5*(1), 3–14. DOI: 10.5929/2015.5.1.1

Patten, M. L., & Newhart, M. (2018). *Understanding research methods: An overview of the essentials* (10th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Patton, M.Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Patton, T. O. (2004). Reflections of a Black woman professor: Racism and sexism in academia. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, *15*, 185–200. DOI: 10.1080/10646170490483629

Penny, J., & Gaillard, L. (2006). Mentoring African American women in higher education administration. *Race, Gender and Class, 13*(1/2), 191–200. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/41675232

Perkins, L. (1996). Lucy Diggs Slowe: Champion of the self-determination of African American women in Higher Education. *The Journal of Negro History, 81*(1), 89–104. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2717610

Perkins, L. (2015). Bound to them by a common sorrow: African American women, higher education, and collective advancement. *Journal of African American History*, *100*(4), 721–747. DOI: 10.5323/jafriamerhist.100.4.0721

Pianta, R. (2020). *Female superintendents self-sabotaging behaviors and their journey to reclaiming their power*. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.brandman.edu/edd_dissertations/323

Piper, J. (2019). A move toward greater diversity in deanships. *Chronical of Higher Education*, *66*(12), pA47, 1p. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/A-Move-Toward-Greater/247550

Powell, A. D. (2018). *African American women and work-life balance*. (Doctoral dissertation). Walden University, Minneapolis, MN.

Pritchard, A., Li, J., McChesney, J., & Bichsel, J. (2019). *Administrators in higher education annual report: Key findings, trends, and comprehensive tables for the 2018-19 academic year.* (research report). Knoxville, TN: CUPA-HR. Retrieved from https://www.cupahr.org/surveys/results/

Roberson, P.J. (1998). *Career paths and profiles of women as senior administrators in higher education.* (Doctoral dissertation, George Washington University, Ann Arbor, MI). Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/openview/ccd5dc5ab6658e4e3428878ebc69beb2/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

Roberts, C. M. (2010). *The dissertation journey: A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Robinson, K. A. (2012). *Institutional factors contributing to the under-representation of African American women in higher education: Perceptions of women in leadership positions*. (Doctoral dissertation, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/811

Roebuck, J. B., & Murty, K. S. (1997). *Historically black colleges and universities: Their place in American higher education*. In L. Goodchild, & H. Wechsler, *The history of higher education* (2nd ed., pp. 667–776). Needham Heights, MA: Simon and Schuster Custom Publishing.

Romero, R. E. (2000). *The icon of the strong Black women: The paradox of strength*. In L. C. Jackson, & B. Greene, *Psychotherapy with African American women: Innovations in psychodynamic perspective and practice* (pp. 225–238). New York, NY: Guilford.

Rosenberg, M., & Simmons, R. (1972). *Black and White self-esteem: The urban school child.* Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.

Rousseau, N. (2013). Historical womanist theory: Re-visioning black feminist thought. *Race, Gender & Class, 20*(3-4), 191–204. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/43496941

Ryder, M., & Briles, J. (2003). *The sexx factor: Breaking the unwritten codes that sabotage personal and professional lives*. Fair Hills, NJ: New Horizon Press

Sanchez-Hucles, J. V., & Davis, D. D. (2010). Women and women of color in leadership: Complexity, identity, and intersectionality. *American Psychologist, 65*(3), 171–181. DOI: 10.1037/a0017459

Sandler, B. (1986). The campus climate revisited: Chilly for women, faculty, administrators, and graduate students. In a Project on The Status of Women, *Women in higher education: A feminist perspective* (pp. 175–203). Washington, DC: Ginn.

Schmitt, K. (2016). *Deans of women in U.S. higher education* (Doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL). Retrieved from https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1889&context=gs_rp

Silverstein, A. L. (2000). Standardized tests: The continuation of gender bias in higher education. *Hofstra Law Review, 29*(2), 669–700. Retrieved from https://scholarlycommons.law.hofstra.edu/hlr/vol29/iss2/8

Simms, J. (2018). *Experiences of African American women and their ascension to senior academic leadership positions in higher education institutions* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri, St. Louis, MO). Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/experiences-african-american-women-their/docview/2182741460/se-2?accountid=14521

Simundić A. M. (2013). Bias in research. *Biochemia Medica, 23*(1), 12–15. DOI: 10.11613/bm.2013.003

Slowe, L. D., (1933). Higher education of Negro women. *The Journal of Negro Education, 2*(3), 352–358. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2292205

Solórzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial micro aggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *The Journal of Negro Education, 69*(1/2), 60–73. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2696265

St. Jean, Y., & Feagin, J. R. (1998). *Double burden: Black women and everyday racism*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Taylor, M., Turk, J. M., Chessman, H. M., & Espinosa, L. L. (2019). *Race and ethnicity in higher education: A status report*. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Retrieved from https://1xfsu31b52d33idlp13twtos-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/REHE-Exec-Summary-FINAL.pdf

Thomas, D., Love, K., Roan-Belle, C., Tyler, K., Brown, C., & Garriott, P. (2009). Self-efficacy, motivation, and academic adjustment among African American women attending institutions of higher education. *The Journal of Negro Education, 78*(2), 159–171. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25608732

Thomas, T. (2020). *Women in judicial leadership: Using personal power to overcome self-sabotage* (Doctoral dissertation, Brandman University, Irvine, CA). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.brandman.edu/edd_dissertations/320

Toutant, S. M. (2017, March 20). Underrepresentation of Black women as college and university presidents. *Edsurge Independent.* Retrieved from https://edsurgeindependent.com

Townsend, C. V. (2019). *Advancing African American women in public higher education: A phenomenological study of recruitment, retention, and career ascension* (Doctoral dissertation, Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID). Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/advancing-african-american-women-public-higher/docview/2292910661/se-2?accountid=14521

Tuck, E., & Gaztambide-Fernandez, R. A. (2013). Curriculum, replacement, and settler futurity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, *29*(1), 72–89. Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/content/qt55p0c597/qt55p0c597_noSplash_b920015e0efd5532d12491ac4e01b594.pdf?t=puwvdn

U.S. Department of Education. (1999). *Office for Civil Rights: Impact of the Civil Rights Laws*. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/impact.html

Walkington, L. (2017). How far have they really come? Black women faculty and graduate students' experiences in higher education. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, *1*(39), 51–65. DOI: 10.55671/0160-4341.1022

Whitehead, M. (2017). *A phenomenological study of the barriers and challenges presented to African American women in leadership roles at four-year higher education institutions* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA). Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/phenomenological-study-barriers-challenges/docview/1943006285/se-2

Wilder, J., Jones, T., & Osborne-Lampkin, L. (2013). A profile of Black women in the 21st century academy: Still learning from the "outsider-within." *Journal of Research Initiatives*, *1*(1), 27–38. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri/vol1/iss1/5

Wilson, P. A. (2004). *The career development of senior-level African American women working in community and technical colleges in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens, GA). Retrieved from https://athenaeum.libs.uga.edu/handle/10724/21722

Wing Sue, D., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271–286. DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271

Woldai, L. (2021, February 11). *Black women in higher education: A reflection on inequity and injustice*. Retrieved from The Emory Wheel: https://emorywheel.com/black-women-in-higher-education-a-reflection-on-inequity-and-injustice/

Woods-Giscombe, C. L. (2010). Superwoman schema: African American women's views on stress, strength, and health. *Qualitative Health Research, 20*(5), 668–683. DOI: 10.1177/1049732310361892

Zamani, E. M. (2003). African American women in higher education. *New Directions for Student Services, 104,* 5–18. DOI: 10.1002/ss.103

Zippia. (2021a). *Higher education administrator demographics and statistics in the U.S.* Retrieved from https://www.zippia.com/higher-education-administrator-jobs/demographics/

Zippia. (2021b). *Dean demographics and statistics in the U.S.* Retrieved from https://www.zippia.com/dean-jobs/demographics/

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

References	Themes																	
	History of African American women in Higher Education/ Ascension to leadership	Barriers Affecting African American women in Leadership	Discrimination/ Stereotyping / Intersectionality of Race and gender	Demographics in Higher Education	Social Reproduction Theory	Critical Race Theory	Expectancy Theory	Conceptual Framework: Women's Personal Power	Thinking too Small / Recognizing women's Unique Destiny	Fear and Worrying / Constructive Preparation	Misunderstanding oneself / Owning all of oneself	Dishonest / Honest Self-expression	Holding Back / Acting with Confidence	Lack of Self Reflection / Cultivation Self- Intimacy	Isolating / Building a Power Web	Disempowering other women / Inspiring other women	Infusing sex/ gender role confusion / Embracing one's sexuality
AAUW, 2016				X													
Aquirre, 2000	X	X	X														
Alexander, 2010	X																
Alexander-Lee, 2014	X																
Allen et al., 1995									X	X					X		
ACE, 2020				X													
Andruskiw & Howes, 1980			X														
Bahn, 2014	X	X	X								X		X	X	X		X
Barr & Simons, 2012			X														
Bartman, 2015		X	X														
Bates, 2007	X																

Becks-Moody, 2004		X	X														
Beckwith et al., 2016		X	X														
Bell, 1992			X								X		X	X	X		X
Binkley & Whack, 2015			X														
Bischel et al., 2020				X													
Bonner, 2001			X														
Booi et al., 2017	X	X	X														
Bourdieu & Passerson, 1990					X												
Breeden, 2021	X																
Britton, 2013		X	X														
Brower et al., 2019			X														
Burton et al., 2020			X														
Catalyst, 2004				X													
CUPA HR, 2020				X													
A.C. Collins, 2001	X																
J. Collins, 2009					X												
P. H. Collins, 1990	X																
Crenshaw, 1989		X	X			X											
Crenshaw et al., 1995		X	X			X											
Creswell, 2007				X													
Crews, 2020								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cruz, 2013	X																
Davis & Maldonado, 2015		X															
Delgado & Stefancic, 2017						X											
Dickerson & Taylor, 2018	X	X															
Dina, 2008	X																
Edwards, 1997	X																
Espinosa et al., 2019				X													
Faragher & Howe, 1988	X	X	X														

Flood et al., 2020				X													
Fourtane, 2021	X																
Gardner et al., 2014		X															
Gelo et al., 2008				X													
Glazer-Raymo, 2001	X								X								
Glazer-Raymo, 2008	X	X															
Grant & Taylor, 2014	X	X	X						X								
Green, n.d.			X														
Greenman & Xie, 2008			X														
Guy-Shetfall, 1982	X	X	X														
Hanuum et al., n.d	X	X															
Hanson, 2021				X													
Harris et al., 2011	X																
Harvard, 1986	X																
Henderson et al., 2010	X	X								X							
Hills Collins, 2000						X											
Holmes, 2004	X																
House et al., 2007	X																
Howard-Vital, 1989	X	X	X						X	X	X		X				
Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003	X	X									X						
Hurwitz & Sniderman ,1997			X														
Jackson, 2004	X																
Jackson & Harris, 2007	X																
Jean-Marie, 2006	X	X	X									X					
Jones et al., 2013	X																
Kachchaf et al., 2015	X	X	X														
Leath & Chavous, 2018	X	X															
Ledesma & Calderon, 2015						X											

G. Lerner, 1992			X												X		
H. Lerner, 2012								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Liao et al, 2020		X	X								X						
Lombard et al., 2004				X													
Luster-Edward & Martin, 2018	X	X	X														
Macris, 2002					X												
Mainah, 2016	X																
Martinez & Renn, 2002	X																
Mayberry, 2018			X														
McManus, 2013									X								
McMillan & Schumacher, 2010			X	X													
Meyer, 2009	X																
Mirza, 2015	X		X														
Montez et al., 2003		X															
Moore, 2000		X	X														
Mosely, 1980	X	X	X														
Moss, 2014			X													X	
Munden, 2015			X														
Murray, 2015		X							X	X				X			
NCES, 2020				X													
Nickerson, 2020	X	X	X														
Parker, 2015	X		X														
Patton, 2004				X													
Penny & Gaillard, 2006			X														
Perkins, 2015	X	X	X														
Pianta, 2020								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Piper, 2019	X		X														
Powell, 2018		X							X								
Pritchard et al., 2019				X													
Roberts, 2010																	
Robinson, 2012	X	X	X	X													

Roebuck & Murty, 1997	X	X	X														
Romero, 2000		X	X							X	X		X				
Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972		X	X						X	X	X						
Rousseau, 2013		X	X														
Ryder & Briles, 2003								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010	X	X	X											X			
Sandler, 1986	X	X	X														
Schmitt, 2016	X																
Silverstein, 2000			X														
Simms, 2018	X	X	X														
Simundic, 2013			X														
Solórzano et al., 2000	X		X			X											
St. Jean & Feagin, 1998			X														
Taylor et al., 2019		X	X	X													
Thomas et al., 2009								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Thomas, 2020								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Toutant, 2017	X	X	X														
Townsend, 2019																	
Tuck & Gaztambide, 2013		X	X														
U.S. Dept of Educ, 1999				X													
Walkington, 2017																	
Whitehead, 2017		X	X												X		X
Wilder, Jones, & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013		X	X							X	X						
Wilson, 2004	X																
Wing sue et al., 2007			X														
Woldai, 2021	X	X	X														
Woods-Giscombe, 2020		X	X														
Zamani, 2003	X	X	X														

Zippia, 2021a				X													
Zippia, 2021b				X													

APPENDIX B

Quantitative Survey Instrument

INTRODUCTION

"We have the power inside to be great," says women's advocate Helene Lerner, "but oftentimes it's covered by false beliefs about ourselves." Lerner's book, *In Her Power: Reclaiming Your Authentic Self* (2012) maintains that women need to embrace their inherent power. "The world needs more women leaders," Lerner says. "That means we [women] need to step out in ways we haven't been." To achieve true power, Lerner says women must first recognize and overcome its barriers. She describes nine common self-sabotaging categories that hold women back. A framework was adapted from Lerner's thesis coupled with the work of Ryder and Briles from *The SeXX Factor: Breaking the Codes that Sabotage Personal and Professional Lives* (2003) to group female self-sabotaging behaviors within nine overarching domains.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research on women's personal power and self-sabotaging behavior. This study is focused on the following nine domains of Women's Personal Power and nine corresponding categories of Sabotaging Behavior.

1. **Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny: THINKING TOO SMALL**
2. **Constructive Preparation: FEAR AND WORRYING**
3. **Owning all of One's Self: MISUNDERSTANDING ONE'S SELF**
4. **Honest Self-Expression: DISHONESTY**
5. **Acting with Confidence: HOLDING BACK**
6. **Cultivating Self-Intimacy: LACK OF SELF REFLECTION**
7. **Building a Power Web: ISOLATING**
8. **Inspiring Other Women: DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN**
9. **Embracing One's Sexuality: INFUSING SEX ROLE CONFUSION IN THE WORKPLACE**

It's best not to 'overthink' the statements and respond with your first perceptual thought. It is anticipated you can complete this survey in 10-15 minutes. After you complete and submit the survey the researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to explore your thoughts on these behaviors and how they may have an impact on women's ability to move forward in her career.

Directions: The following survey represents 9 categories of self-sabotaging behaviors. For each category there is a list of behaviors associated with each category. Using the six-point scale for each behavior, please indicate how you have personally exhibited each behavior throughout your adult life as you progressed along in your career.

1= Strongly Agree
2= Agree
3= Slightly Agree
4= Slightly Disagree
5= Disagree
6= Strongly Disagree

1. **POWER DOMAIN:** Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny (Capacity to have a significant impact; living up to one's potential)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: THINKING TOO SMALL

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I blamed others for why things aren't going well						
I feared being rejected						
I did not have the courage to step out of my comfort zone						
I was not open to new experiences						
I often made perfection the standard in my life						

2. **POWER DOMAIN:** Constructive Preparation (Embraces, understands and accepts fear)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: FEAR AND WORRYING

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I became anxious when thinking about a change in my career						
I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation						
I resisted change						
I feared looking stupid						
I felt like an imposter on the job						
I mulled over my mistakes						

3. **POWER DOMAIN**: Owning all of One's Self (Owns and appreciates accomplishments and limitations)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: MISUNDERSTANDING ONE'S SELF

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I could not accept compliments or praise						
I have been reluctant to seek out feedback that would help me improve						
I have focused on a person criticizing me						
I could not personally acknowledge my own accomplishments						

4. **POWER DOMAIN**: Honest Self Expression (Accepting strengths and weaknesses)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: DISHONESTY

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I said "yes" to things when I actually wanted to say 'no"						
I took sides when I really wanted to stay neutral						
I remained silent in a situation when it would have been best to speak up						
I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to						
I have hesitated to talk about accomplishments to others for fear of trumpeting my ego						
I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation						

5. **POWER DOMAIN**: Acting with Confidence: Approaching obstacles with confidence; having the courage to step forward
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: HOLDING BACK

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I did not reach out for help when I needed it						
I have avoided criticism						
I made inflections rather than make bold statements a						
I have apologized unnecessarily						
I have talked down to myself						
I preferred to sit in the back of the room at conferences or meetings						
I preferred not to speak up in a meeting or group discussion						

6. **POWER DOMAIN**: Cultivating Self Intimacy (Getting to know oneself more deeply)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: NOT TAKING TIME FOR REFLECTION

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have kept busy to avoid being alone						
I have not accepted parts of myself that need improvement						
I have not allowed myself to mourn losses or cry						
I have not taken vacations when I could						
I have not allowed myself to experience "down time						
I have hated to 'be wrong'						
I have held a grudge with someone						

7. **POWER DOMAIN:** Building a Power Web (Building a network of personal and professional advisors for support)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: ISOLATING

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have been afraid to reach out to people I didn't already know						
I was unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career						
I felt guilty for taking up too much of people's time						
I have relied exclusively on female mentors						
I relied only on networking upstream						

8. **POWER DOMAIN**: Inspiring Other Women (Ability to inspire and empower other females)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have felt too busy to help other women						
I thought why I should help other women since I did it the hard way						
I have felt jealous of other women who have 'made it'						
I have talked behind a woman's back						
I have held women to a higher standard at work than men						

9. **POWER DOMAIN**: Embracing One's Sexuality (Awareness of gender roles and sex role stereotypes)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: INFUSING SEX/GENDER ROLE CONFUSION IN WORKPLACE

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have dressed sexy at work						
I have squashed my natural feminine qualities						
I have exhibited male like qualities that aren't part of my natural personality						
I have exhibited 'girl' like behaviors such as twirling my hair or using baby talk						
I have flirted at work						

10. **Impact on Self-Sabotaging Behaviors on Women's Career**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe some of the behaviors listed in this survey have had an impact on my career development (lack of promotions, moving ahead in career in a timely manner, lack of access to top positions etc.).						

APPENDIX C

Quantitative Survey Instrument Alignment Table

Research Questions	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8	Question 9	Question 10
What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American Deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female, African American Deans in higher education?										X

APPENDIX D

Qualitative Interview Script and Instrument

Participant:
Date:
Organization:

INTERVIEWER SAYS:

My name is Davina M. Bailey and I am a doctoral candidate at UMASS Global in the area of Organizational Leadership. I would like to thank you for participating in the Women and Self-Sabotaging Behavior survey and volunteering to be interviewed to expand the depth of response.

I will be conducting interviews with a number of female African American deans such as yourself to hopefully provide a clear picture of self-sabotaging behaviors that can impact women's career planning. In addition, I would like to explore any strategies you have used to overcome any identified self-sabotaging behaviors experienced throughout your career. The questions I will be asking are the same for each female African American dean participating in the study. The reason for this is to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interview with all participating female African American deans will be conducted in the same manner.

INFORMED CONSENT (required for Dissertation Research)

Please let me remind you that your participation is completely voluntary and will greatly strengthen the study. If at any time you feel uncomfortable of would like to end the interview or not respond to a question, please let me know. Your information will be kept confidential and your name will be changed to protect your identity. After I record and transcribe the data, I will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and UMASS Global Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document?

I have provided a copy of the questions and a list of self-sabotaging behaviors for the nine categories of sabotaging behaviors defined in my research that I will ask for your reference; however, I may have follow-up questions to clarify as needed. The duration of this interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Do you have any questions about the interview process?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself and your career journey that brought you to the role you currently serve in today?

2. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of THINKING TOO SMALL:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

3. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of FEAR AND WORRYING:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

4. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of MISUNDERSTANDING ONESELF:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

5. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of DISHONESTY:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

6. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of HOLDING BACK:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

7. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of NOT TAKING TIME FOR REFLECTION:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

8. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of ISOLATING:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

9. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

10. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of INFUSING SEX/GENDER CONFUSION IN THE WORKPLACE:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

11. The top five sabotaging behaviors that the survey respondents identified as exhibiting throughout their careers were _____. Of these five behaviors, which two do you feel have the most impact on females attempting to promote within their careers?

12. Can you speak to your perception of how critical it is for women to overcome these behaviors as they relate to career development and promotions?

13. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding women and self-sabotaging behaviors?

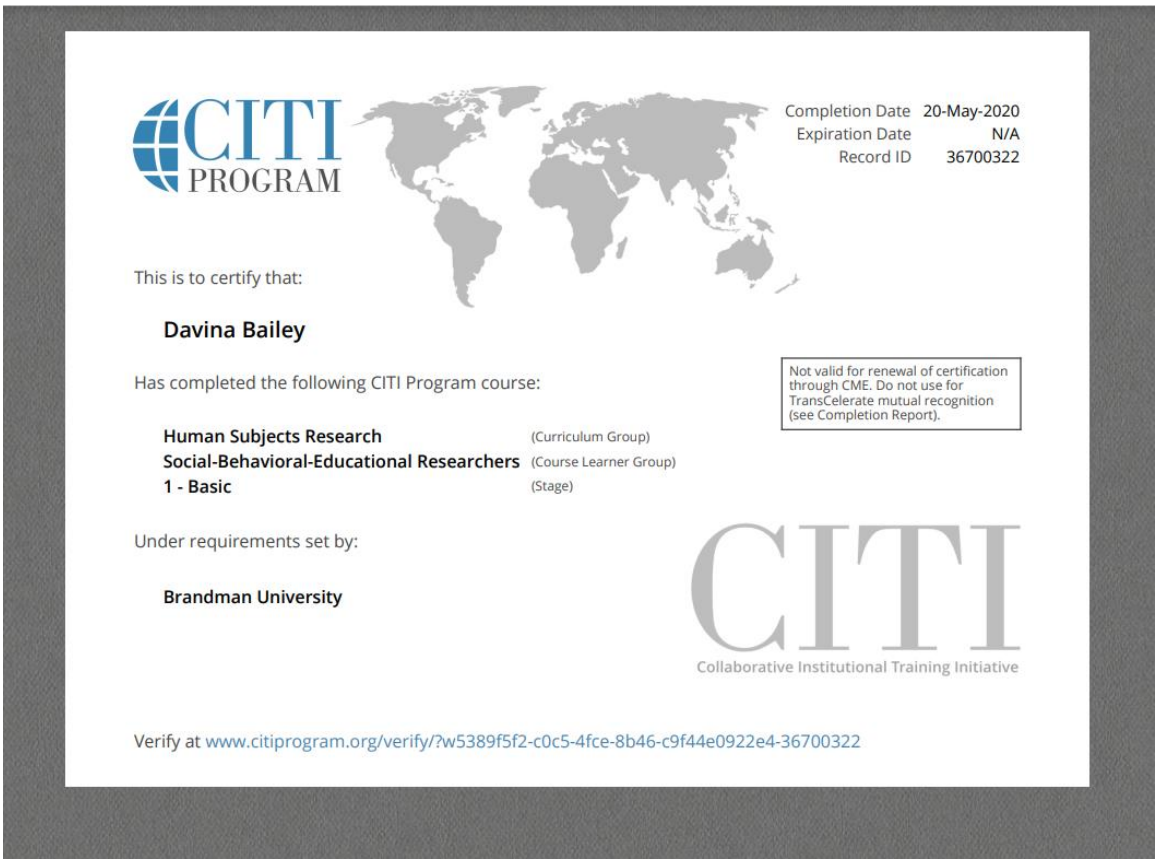
APPENDIX E

Qualitative Alignment Table

Research Questions	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8	Question 9	Question 10	Question 11	Question 12	Question 13
What self-sabotaging behaviors have female African American Deans in higher education experienced throughout their leadership careers?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
What impact did self-sabotaging behaviors have on the leadership careers of female, African American Deans in higher education?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
What strategies did female African American Deans in higher education use throughout their leadership careers to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	

APPENDIX F

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Certificate on Protecting Human Research Participants



CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 20-May-2020
Expiration Date N/A
Record ID 36700322

This is to certify that:

Davina Bailey

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

Human Subjects Research (Curriculum Group)
Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Brandman University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w5389f5f2-c0c5-4fce-8b46-c9f44e0922e4-36700322

APPENDIX G

Quantitative Survey Field Test Tool

INTRODUCTION

"We have the power inside to be great," says women's advocate Helene Lerner, "but oftentimes it's covered by false beliefs about ourselves." Lerner's book, *In Her Power: Reclaiming Your Authentic Self* (2012) maintains that women need to embrace their inherent power. "The world needs more women leaders," Lerner says. "That means we [women] need to step out in ways we haven't been." To achieve true power, Lerner says women must first recognize and overcome its barriers. She describes nine common self-sabotaging categories that hold women back. A framework was adapted from Lerner's thesis coupled with the work of Ryder and Briles from *The SeXX Factor: Breaking the Codes that Sabotage Personal and Professional Lives* (2003) to group female self-sabotaging behaviors within nine overarching domains.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research on women's personal power and self-sabotaging behavior. This study is focused on the following nine domains of Women's Personal Power and nine corresponding categories of Sabotaging Behavior.

1. **Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny: THINKING TOO SMALL**
2. **Constructive Preparation: FEAR AND WORRYING**
3. **Owning all of One's Self: MISUNDERSTANDING ONE'S SELF**
4. **Honest Self-Expression: DISHONESTY**
5. **Acting with Confidence: HOLDING BACK**
6. **Cultivating Self-Intimacy: LACK OF SELF REFLECTION**
7. **Building a Power Web: ISOLATING**
8. **Inspiring Other Women: DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN**
9. **Embracing One's Sexuality: INFUSING SEX ROLE CONFUSION IN THE WORKPLACE**

It's best not to 'overthink' the statements and respond with your first perceptual thought. It is anticipated you can complete this survey in 10-15 minutes. After you complete and submit the survey the researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to explore your thoughts on these behaviors and how they may have an impact on women's ability to move forward in her career.

Directions: The following survey represents 9 categories of self-sabotaging behaviors. For each category there is a list of behaviors associated with each category. Using the six-point scale for each behavior, please indicate how you have personally exhibited each behavior throughout your adult life as you progressed along in your career.

1= Strongly Agree
2= Agree
3= Slightly Agree
4= Slightly Disagree
5= Disagree
6= Strongly Disagree

1. **POWER DOMAIN:** Recognizing Women's Unique Destiny (Capacity to have a significant impact; living up to one's potential)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: THINKING TOO SMALL

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I blamed others for why things aren't going well						
I feared being rejected						
I did not have the courage to step out of my comfort zone						
I was not open to new experiences						
I often made perfection the standard in my life						

2. **POWER DOMAIN:** Constructive Preparation (Embraces, understands and accepts fear)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: FEAR AND WORRYING

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I became anxious when thinking about a change in my career						
I felt out of control in an unfamiliar situation						
I resisted change						
I feared looking stupid						
I felt like an imposter on the job						
I mulled over my mistakes						

3. **POWER DOMAIN**: Owning all of One's Self (Owns and appreciates accomplishments and limitations)
   SABOTAGING CATEGORY: MISUNDERSTANDING ONE'S SELF

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I could not accept compliments or praise						
I have been reluctant to seek out feedback that would help me improve						
I have focused on a person criticizing me						
I could not personally acknowledge my own accomplishments						

4. **POWER DOMAIN**: Honest Self Expression (Accepting strengths and weaknesses)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: DISHONESTY

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I said "yes" to things when I actually wanted to say 'no"						
I took sides when I really wanted to stay neutral						
I remained silent in a situation when it would have been best to speak up						
I have taken on too much at work when I didn't want to						
I have hesitated to talk about accomplishments to others for fear of trumpeting my ego						
I have been nice as a way to avoid confrontation						

5. **POWER DOMAIN**: Acting with Confidence: Approaching obstacles with confidence; having the courage to step forward
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: HOLDING BACK

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I did not reach out for help when I needed it						
I have avoided criticism						
I made inflections rather than make bold statements a						
I have apologized unnecessarily						
I have talked down to myself						
I preferred to sit in the back of the room at conferences or meetings						
I preferred not to speak up in a meeting or group discussion						

6. **POWER DOMAIN**: Cultivating Self Intimacy (Getting to know oneself more deeply)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: NOT TAKING TIME FOR REFLECTION

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have kept busy to avoid being alone						
I have not accepted parts of myself that need improvement						
I have not allowed myself to mourn losses or cry						
I have not taken vacations when I could						
I have not allowed myself to experience "down time						
I have hated to 'be wrong'						
I have held a grudge with someone						

7. **POWER DOMAIN:** Building a Power Web (Building a network of personal and professional advisors for support)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: ISOLATING

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have been afraid to reach out to people I didn't already know						
I was unaware of the types of support needed to move ahead in my career						
I felt guilty for taking up too much of people's time						
I have relied exclusively on female mentors						
I relied only on networking upstream						

8. **POWER DOMAIN**: Inspiring Other Women (Ability to inspire and empower other females)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have felt too busy to help other women						
I thought why I should help other women since I did it the hard way						
I have felt jealous of other women who have 'made it'						
I have talked behind a woman's back						
I have held women to a higher standard at work than men						

9. **POWER DOMAIN**: Embracing One's Sexuality (Awareness of gender roles and sex role stereotypes)
SABOTAGING CATEGORY: INFUSING SEX/GENDER ROLE CONFUSION IN WORKPLACE

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have dressed sexy at work						
I have squashed my natural feminine qualities						
I have exhibited male like qualities that aren't part of my natural personality						
I have exhibited 'girl' like behaviors such as twirling my hair or using baby talk						
I have flirted at work						

10. Impact on Self-Sabotaging Behaviors on Women's Career

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe some of the behaviors listed in this survey have had an impact on my career development (lack of promotions, moving ahead in career in a timely manner, lack of access to top positions etc.).						

APPENDIX H

Survey Field Participant Feedback Tool

As a doctoral student at UMASS GLOBAL, I appreciate your feedback to help develop the most effective survey instrument possible.

Please respond to the following questions after completing the survey. Your answers will assist in refining survey items and making edits to improve the survey prior to administering it to potential study participants.

A hard copy version of the survey has been provided to refresh your memory of the instrument, if needed. Thank you very much for your assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

1. How many minutes did it take you to complete the survey, from the moment you opened it on the computer until the time you completed it?

2. Did the section that asked you to read the consent information and click the agree box before the survey opened concern you at all? If so, would you briefly state your concern

3. The first paragraph of the introduction included the purpose of the research study. Did this provide enough clarity as to the purpose of the study?

4. Was the introduction brief and clear enough to inform you about the research? If not, what would you recommend that would make it better?

5. Were the directions to Part 1 clear, and did you understood what to do? If not, would you briefly state the problem.

6. Were the brief descriptions of the 6 choices clear, and did they provide sufficient differences for you to make a selection? If not, briefly describe the problem.

7. As you progressed through the 10 items in which you gave a rating of 1 through 6, did any items cause you say, *"What does this mean?"* Which item(s) were they? Please use the paper copy and mark those that troubled you. Or if not, please check here:_____

APPENDIX I

Qualitative Interview Field Test Tool

Participant:
Date:
Organization:

INTERVIEWER SAYS:

My name is Davina M. Bailey and I am a doctoral candidate at UMASS Global in the area of Organizational Leadership. I would like to thank you for participating in the Women and Self-Sabotaging Behavior survey and volunteering to be interviewed to expand the depth of response.

I will be conducting interviews with a number of female African American deans such as yourself to hopefully provide a clear picture of self-sabotaging behaviors that can impact women's career planning. In addition, I would like to explore any strategies you have used to overcome any identified self-sabotaging behaviors experienced throughout your career. The questions I will be asking are the same for each female African American dean participating in the study. The reason for this is to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interview with all participating female African American deans will be conducted in the same manner.

INFORMED CONSENT (required for Dissertation Research)

Please let me remind you that your participation is completely voluntary and will greatly strengthen the study. If at any time you feel uncomfortable of would like to end the interview or not respond to a question, please let me know. Your information will be kept confidential and your name will be changed to protect your identity. After I record and transcribe the data, I will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and UMASS Global Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document?

I have provided a copy of the questions and a list of self-sabotaging behaviors for the nine categories of sabotaging behaviors defined in my research that I will ask for your reference; however, I may have follow-up questions to clarify as needed. The duration of this interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Do you have any questions about the interview process?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself and your career journey that brought you to the role you currently serve in today?

2. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of THINKING TOO SMALL:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

3. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of FEAR AND WORRYING:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

4. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of MISUNDERSTANDING ONESELF:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

5. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of DISHONESTY:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

6. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of HOLDING BACK:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

7. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of NOT TAKING TIME FOR REFLECTION:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

8. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of ISOLATING:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

9. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of DISEMPOWERING OTHER WOMEN:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

10. As you think back on your career please reflect on your behavior related to the sabotaging behavior category of INFUSING SEX/GENDER CONFUSION IN THE WORKPLACE:
    a. Can you provide an example or a story of a behavior in this category that you perceive had an impact on your career development efforts to promote to a higher position?
    b. Can you describe some strategies used to counteract any self-sabotaging behaviors in this category?

11. The top five sabotaging behaviors that the survey respondents identified as exhibiting throughout their careers were _____. Of these five behaviors, which two do you feel have the most impact on females attempting to promote within their careers?

12. Can you speak to your perception of how critical it is for women to overcome these behaviors as they relate to career development and promotions?

13. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding women and self-sabotaging behaviors?

APPENDIX J

Field Test Interviewee Feedback Tool

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe your experiences with self-sabotaging behaviors, the impact, and strategies used to overcome the barriers?

2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?

3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?

4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?

5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview?

APPENDIX K

Interview Observer Feedback Tool

1. How long did the interview take? Did the time seem to be appropriate?

2. Were the questions clear or were there places when the interviewee was unclear?

3. Where there any words or terms used during the interview that were unclear or confusing?

4. How did you feel during the interview? Comfortable? Nervous? For the observer: how did you perceive the interviewer in regard to the preceding descriptors?

5. Did you feel prepared to conduct the interview? Is there something you could have done to be better prepared? For the observer: how did you perceive the interviewer in regard to the preceding descriptors?

6. What parts of the interview went the most smoothly and why do you think that was the case?

7. Are there parts of the interview that seemed to be awkward and why do you think that was the case?

8. If you were to change any part of the interview, what would it be and how would you change it?

9. What suggestions do you have for improving the overall process?

APPENDIX M

UMASS GLOBAL Institutional Review Board Application Approval

Davina Bailey <dbailey2@mail.umassglobal.edu>

IRB Application Approved As Submitted: Davina M Bailey
1 message

Institutional Review Board <my@umassglobal.edu> Fri, Feb 4, 2022 at 7:14 AM
Reply-To: webmaster@umassglobal.edu
To: dbailey2@mail.umassglobal.edu
Cc: mcote@umassglobal.edu, vsmithsa@brandman.edu, irb@umassglobal.edu

Dear Davina M Bailey,

Congratulations, your IRB application to conduct research has been approved by the UMass Global Institutional Review Board. This approval grants permission for you to proceed with data collection for your research. Please keep this email for your records, as it will need to be included in your research appendix.

If any issues should arise that are pertinent to your IRB approval, please contact the IRB immediately at IRB@umassglobal.edu. If you need to modify your IRB application for any reason, please fill out the "Application Modification Form" before proceeding with your research. The Modification form can be found at the following link: https://irb.umassglobal.edu/Applications/Modification.pdf.

Best wishes for a successful completion of your study.

Thank you,
Doug DeVore, Ed.D.
Professor
Organizational Leadership
IRB Chair
ddevore@umassglobal.edu
www.umassglobal.edu

APPENDIX N

Email to Research Study Participants

WOMEN'S POWER AND SELF-SABOTAGING BEHAVIOR SURVEY

Dear Potential Participant:

You are being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Davina M. Bailey, a doctoral candidate at UMASS GLOBAL. The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans and to explore the impact these behaviors have on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify strategies employed to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You are welcome to choose not to participate. If you do decide you participate, you may withdraw at any time.

The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be confidential. Survey questions will pertain to your perceptions of identified self-sabotaging behaviors that you may have experienced throughout your career and the impact they may have had on your career development.

Please review the following information:

I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowable by law. If the study design of the use of data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the researcher will protect my confidentially by keeping the identity codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the principal researcher. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS GLOBAL, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

If you have any questions about completing this survey or any aspects of this research, please contact Davina M. Bailey at dbailey2@mail.umassglobal.edu or by phone at (951) 255-8386 or Dr. Marilou Ryder, Advisor at ryder@umassglobal.edu.

Sincerely,
Davina M. Bailey
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX O

UMASS GLOBAL
A nonprofit affiliate of the University of Massachusetts

Electronic Informed Consent Form

INFORMATION ABOUT: Self-Sabotaging Behaviors of Female African American Deans and Strategies Used to Overcome Them

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Davina M. Bailey, Doctoral Candidate

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE ELECTRONIC SURVEY:

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Davina M. Bailey, a doctoral candidate from the School of Education at UMASS Global. The purpose of this mixed-method explanatory study is to identify and describe self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans and to explore the impact these behaviors have on their career development. A secondary purpose of this study is to identify strategies employed by female African American deans to overcome self-sabotaging behaviors.

This study will fill the gap in the research regarding self-sabotaging behaviors experienced by female African American deans throughout their career development and identify strategies they used to resolve patterns of self-sabotage. As a product of this mix-methods study, it is the hope that this research will increase the leadership capacity of African American females by increasing their awareness so they can recognize self-sabotaging behaviors and use strategies to overcome them.

The study consists of an electronic survey that will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and a follow-up interview conducted either face-to-face or via an online video conferencing system called Zoom. The interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Completion of the electronic survey and interview will take place February 2022 through March 2022.

Each participant will use an alphabet, assigned by the researcher, rather than using identifiable information. The researcher will keep the identifying alphabet safe-guarded in a password protected digital device to which the researcher will have sole access. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only.

By agreeing to participate in this study, you acknowledge the following statement:

a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying

codes and research materials in a password protected digital device that is available only to the researcher.

b) I understand that the interview will be audio recorded. The recordings will be available only to the researcher and the professional transcriptionist. The audio recordings will be used to capture the interview dialogue and to ensure the accuracy of the information collected during the interview. All information will be identifier-redacted, and my confidentiality will be maintained. Upon completion of the study all recordings will be destroyed. All other data and consents will be securely stored for three years after completion of data collection and confidentially shredded or fully deleted.
c) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding developing the leadership capacity in females. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about the coaching experience in which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.
d) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Davina M. Bailey at dbailey2@mail.umassglobal.edu or by phone at 951-255-8386; or Marilou Ryder at ryder@umassglobal.edu.
e) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study, and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.
f) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed, and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS Global, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that you have read this informed consent form and the information in this document and that you voluntarily agree to participate. If you don’t wish to participate, you may decline by clicking the ‘Disagree” button. Please select your choice below.

□ AGREE: I acknowledge receipt of the complete Informed Consent packet and “Bill of Rights.” I have read the materials and give my consent to participate in the study.

□ DISAGREE: I do not wish to participate in this study.

APPENDIX P

UMASS GLOBAL
A nonprofit affiliate of the University of Massachusetts

UMASS GLOBAL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the UMASS Global Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The UMASS Global Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS Global, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.