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Teaching, Promotion and Tenure: The Experiences of Sub-Saharan African Professors in a Predominantly White American University

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Abstract

This study investigates the experiences of sub-Saharan African professors teaching in a predominantly White American University in the Midwest of the United States with tenure, promotion, scholarship, and their level of satisfaction with their lectureship. The themes that emerged highlighted bittersweet experiences with tenure and promotion, job satisfaction, and loss of social status. This study is a phenomenological inquiry into the experiences of sub-Saharan African professors teaching in a predominantly White university in the Midwest of the U.S. The rationale for the study was to gain understanding of the experiences and challenges of sub-Saharan African professors through their voices. The study revealed that respondents' experiences with tenure and promotion were not smooth one, and would best be described as bittersweet. As a result of migrating abroad to the United States to teach although considered an upgrade of their career, respondents lost their social position and status back home.

Keywords: bittersweet experience, tenure and promotion, job satisfaction, social status.

1. Introduction

Migration of sub-Saharan professionals abroad has cultural implications. Every human being is a product of the culture of its society. Culture therefore has a controlling influence over the way people live, think, speak and behave. As such everywhere one goes, one carries along a "cultural baggage". This cultural baggage serves as the primary paradigm through which the world is explained and understood. It is expected that conflict, dissonance and disorientation will occur when one goes to live and work in a different culture (Kohls, 2001). For professors from sub-Saharan Africa to leave their societies and take up teaching positions on other continents especially in the United States, a society very different from their own, could mean that they do so at a cost to their psychosocial wellbeing.

Scholars have identified a variety of push and pull factors that stimulate or generate migration and immigration. African immigration to the United States is ignored in immigration studies literature. A variety of economic, political and social factors are identified as responsible for immigration (Horowitz, 1992; Watkins-Owens, 1996; Fuchs, 1992; Logan, 1992). These factors also generate the movement of African immigrants to the United States. In dilating on push and pull factors that stimulate migration Chen and Yang assert that, "favourable conditions in receiving country, such as high salaries, high living standards, good research conditions, and career opportunities, pull professional migrants to the recipient country while unfavourable conditions in the sending country push the highly trained to leave" (1998, p. 628).

Mamdani (1994) identifies two historical events in the late 1960s and 1970s that changed the relationship between sub-Saharan African states and their universities, subsequently changing the fortunes of their professors. The first event was the growing state authoritarianism, and the second was the growing fiscal crisis of these states. Growing state authoritarianism manifested in the takeover of universities as national assets and stifling their autonomy. This turned university campuses to battle zones between

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governments who used brute force to squelch student agitation. By the late 1970s when budgetary crisis was beginning to stifle development efforts of many sub-Saharan states, governments shifted their rhetoric from 'development' to maintenance of 'law and order' resulting in the repression of student agitation on university campuses.

The reduction in bilateral aid and foreign investment to most sub-Saharan countries in the 1980s forced them to accept loans from international financial institutions with severe budgetary disciplinary conditions of structural adjustment programs. Part of the fiscal discipline was the demand to devalue national currencies. The devaluation programs cheapened exported raw materials and primary products and increased the quantum of local currency. Sustained devaluation however spurred inflation resulting in the erosion of the living standards of citizens including academicians. The experience of collapsing infrastructure, declining levels of services and heavier teaching loads with less to show for it forced institutions of higher learning to join other discontented salaried workers in the larger society to agitate higher living wages and better conditions of service. As the agitation on campuses grew, so also was the repressive tendency of governments resulting in the closure of many universities forcing professors to seek greener pastures abroad. It is at this juncture that the World Bank stepped onto the university scene in sub-Saharan Africa to become a key player. Its modus operandi was to offer the needed carrot of financial resources; and the stick of academic relevance and financial discipline (Mamdani, 1994; Ake, 1994).

The demise of socialism and the westernization of the Soviet empire was another major blow to the fortunes of sub-Saharan African professors forcing them to leave their motherland. The phasing out of the cold war diminished the political and strategic significance of Africa. The erosion of Africa's significance in a unipolar world also diminished the need to buy off African intelligentsia and less need to make concessions to their political postures (Ake, 1994). The diminished condition in status and income forced many African professors to consider the exit option. The exit option was the migration of more and more African academics to the West, especially to the U.S. as researchers and university professors.

2. Literature Review
- **Racial identity of Africans in the U.S**

This section provides a review of the literature on race and how racial identity was developed in the United States and how it is used to locate the individual on the social class and status hierarchy. The section also gives an overview of how the race of the individual particularly Blacks in the United States is determined and how this determination becomes the yardstick for allocating them to their social class and measuring their capabilities. Although culturally differences exist between Blacks who are Americans as a result of slavery and Blacks who voluntarily migrated to the United States from Africa, the development of racial identity in the United States does not make this distinction. The construction of racial identity in the United States therefore has implications for sub-Saharan Africans who migrate to the United States.

Identifying people by race is a way of classifying people, usually by judging how closely their phenotype fits with the somatic norm images of what the different races "look" like (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). In the United States, having African-like features and dark skin color places one within the lower levels of the racial hierarchy (Keith & Herring, 1991; McDaniel, 1995; Telles & Murguia, 1990). As a social construct, the creation and development of race and its ideology in North America has its roots in European enslavement of the peoples of Africa (Drake, 1990; Smedley, 1993). Embedded in the race construct is the hierarchy of racial groups. Within this hierarchy, Africans were on the bottom and Europeans on the top (Keith & Herring, 1991; McDaniel, 1995; Telles & Murguia, 1990; Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). Drake (1987) asserts that, "the system was justified by the deeply felt, and sometimes theologically sanctioned, belief that black people were born to serve white people" (p. 290). The slave was expected to be different from the master in physical appearance and the physical difference between the African and the European was therefore used as defining criteria of otherness.

Racial identification is a symbol of social status, and an important factor in the maintenance of group identification (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). Many scholars have demonstrated the close connection between racial identification and social status (Clark & Clark, 1939, 1940; Hoetink, 1962; Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1988). Racial identity is believed to affect all racial groups within society in the same way but with different implications. An example of how racial identification has different implications is racial identification of Caucasian Americans with "Whiteness" as a confirmation of positive self-esteem among Americans of European origin. However, for African Americans this same cultural preference is a confirmation of their negative status within the society (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997).

The development of the U.S. racial system traces its roots to immigration (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). The early history of the United States shows that migrants from Western and Northern Europe constituted in the main the citizenry of the U.S. These were followed later by immigrants from Southern and Central Europe. These latter European immigrants were initially deemed undesirable and their "Whiteness" contested. Although immigrants do not come to America racially classified (Alba, 1990; McDaniel, 1995); they are forced to assimilate as members of different racial groups because of racial stratification (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). While immigrants from Europe will typically be assimilated into "White" America, those from Africa would be assimilated into "Blacks".

The major forms of social assimilation in the United States are cultural, physical and spatial (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997). In each of these types of assimilation, the African American is excluded (Hacker, 1992; Massey & Denton, 1993; McDaniel, 1995). African Americans are not being assimilated culturally, residentially, or physically. They are not intermarrying as often as other groups, and residential segregation is increasing. The inability of African Americans to socially assimilate has implications for Africans from the motherland living in America. Although differences existed and continue to exist between Africans who immigrated to America and Africans who were brought as slaves, the power of monolithic view of the 'Black race" persists (Butler, 1991; Du Bois, 1935; Horton, 1993; Bashi & McDaniel, 1997).

- **Challenges to Job Satisfaction**

In predominantly White colleges and universities where faculty of color are the "onlys" or "others" their level of loneliness and isolation is at much higher levels than their White counterparts. The isolation and loneliness is exacerbated by the low to nonexistent social and emotional support that they receive from their White counterparts. This issue is a barrier and challenge to their job satisfaction (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000). Below is an interview except from the study of Johnsrud & Sadao (1998) highlighting the loneliness and isolation commonly experienced by faculty of color on predominantly White university campuses,

I have never in my life felt the coldness, the isolation and the… I don't even have words to describe it. I know I was going to face problems. And I knew those problems were going to be significant. I thought that I was going to be strong enough and smart enough or whatever, to be able to conquer them. And maybe not only conquer them but to go beyond those problems. Oddly enough, the technical problems I think I have solved. But I think the human warmth problems have no solution from my perspective. That's what I find is lacking here… human warmth. People will say hello. People are extremely nice. In this college, there is this superficial level of camaraderie, but it's very superficial. I think that you would have to be here five generations and still be an outsider. (p. 334)

According to Laden & Hagedorn (2000), faculty of color suffers unnecessary discomfort because of their distinct physical characteristics which stands out in a predominantly white campus. Sources of discomfort include, gestures, attitudes, stare, cuss words, verbal abuse, heckle, etc. Laden & Hagedorn asserts that in scholarly settings, the perceptible ethnic physical features and behaviors of faculty of color tend to be emphasized over their scholarly achievements (2000). The practice is to ensure that the superiority of White faculty is reinforced.

Faculty of color identified the issue of being perceived and treated as tokens as a major obstacles to their job satisfaction (Essien 2003; Johnsrud & Sadao, 2003). According to Essien (2003), as tokens, faculty of color are showcased on committees, panels, boards, etc, as representatives of their ethnic groups rather

than on the merit of their professional competence. Tokenism is a practice by the dominant White faculty to strategically make minority faculty feel embraced. A closer look at the practice however reveals that the dominant White faculty uses tokenism to present a semblance of diversity while restricting access to advantaged positions. As one way that faculty of color challenges and overcome marginalization, isolation and tokenism is the establishment of parallel institutions in the form of meetings and conferences to discuss the plight of faculty of color and to offer solutions (Essien 2003). Associated with tokenism is the constant pressure on faculty of color to play the role of multicultural expert (Johnsrud & Sadao, 2003). In this regard, faculty of color is forced to become a resource person and an expert on race related issues. This imposed role becomes a source of attraction to students of color to approach faculty of color for mentorship and help. Consequently, faculty of color ends up devoting more than necessary time to advising.

The literature shows that faculty of color are subject to higher levels of job-related stress than their White counterparts. According to Laden & Hagedorn, 2000), faculty of color perceive they are expected to work harder than White faculty, "or more simply put, work twice as hard to be treated as equal" (p. 61). Many faculty of color feel they are "always in the spotlight" and under constant scrutiny by their White colleagues (Turner & Myers, 2000, p. 90). The stress from scrutiny becomes unbearable when faculty of color serves on a number of frontline committees and targeted groups. In trying to understand the stress suffered by faculty of color teaching in predominantly white colleges and universities, I feel it is like being constantly followed by invisible eyes, looking over your shoulders to see whether your ways and actions live up to the almighty Eurocentric norm. That type of stress can be detrimental to the ability to perform effectively and one's quality of health.

Getting tenured is a stressful process for all faculties. However, for faculty of color, the tenure process is one of the most stressful. It is the most stressful because it is a process of getting a small group of people, mostly White men to decide whether you are good enough to be admitted into the elite club of the professoriate (Stanley, 2006). Faculty of color on tenure-track were expected to develop strategies to cope with the many acts of politics and academic intrigue that goes on in their departments. Although academic freedom is guaranteed to all faculties, but because the tyranny of silence is real and anyone who attempts to rock the boat is promptly and firmly sanctioned, faculty of color on tenure-track must use their freedom of speech frugally in order not to incur negative evaluations when the time comes to go up for promotion. The stress of faculty of color in predominantly white colleges and universities, especially the stress of the process of tenure brings to mind one of the sayings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau that, man is born free, but everywhere he/she is in chains. It is indeed saddening that in the land widely acclaimed on earth as a bastion where individual rights and freedoms are guaranteed the most, faculty of color should unfairly sacrifice some of their freedoms in order to successfully go through the tenure process and receive their promotion.

The literature indicates that limited opportunities for advancement through the ranks have been recorded for every faculty of color except for Asian Pacific Americans (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000; Turner & Myers, 2000). The implication being that other minority faculty (African American, American Indians, and Latinos) are more likely to be concentrated at the lower levels of the professoriate. Turner & Myers (2000) concluded that tenure and promotion may be especially problematic for faculty of color. They reported that many faculty of color were either told outright or indirectly that they did not fit "the profile" when they were not reappointed or denied tenure or promotion (p. 89). The report also indicated that some faculty of color were advised to relocate to other institutions, presumably to institutions of lower status with perceived lower standards where tenure and promotion for faculty of color might be more likely. I find no other name to call this practice but to label is rightfully so, as blatant racism in the academe.

In dealing with factors that promote job satisfaction among faculty of color the literature points to intellectual challenge as the most important component. Other factors include, autonomy and independence in the workplace; developing a meaningful philosophy of life; followed by promoting racial understanding; and being able to help others in difficulty (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000). In seeking to understand why faculty of color consider intellectual challenge as a vital component in job satisfaction, I came to the conclusion that isolation and marginalization deprives faculty of color the environment of collegiality where ideas, insights, concepts, and scholarship can be discussed, and improved upon. The absence of "iron to sharpen iron" in this

case the unavailability of majority White faculty to their minority counterparts to engender healthy intellectual discourse creates the void of intellectual stimulation among faculty of color.

3. Methodology
- **Research Design**

Methodological Approach

The purposeful difference between quantitative and qualitative research is summed up in Albert Einstein's saying cited in Patton (2002) that, "not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted." (p. 12). Glesne (1998) assets that some research questions lend themselves to numerical answers-positivist paradigm; while others seek for detailed understanding-interpretive (also referred to as constructivist) paradigm, which focused on social constructs that were complex and always evolving, making them less amenable to precise measurement or numerical interpretation.

This research carefully and thoroughly captured and described in detail the lived experiences of sub-Saharan African professors teaching at a predominantly White Midwest university. This study did not lend itself to numerical analysis and answers. Since the focus of this study provided a thick and rich description of the experiences of professors from sub-Saharan Africa teaching at a predominantly White university in the Midwest, the study fell within qualitative research. The rationale for collecting material on the lived experiences of the African professors was to understand from their perspectives what their experiences mean to them. It was also to give voice to their experiences which have to the best of my knowledge hitherto not been heard among the voices within the U.S. academe. Qualitative research is descriptive; the data collected take the form of words or pictures rather than numbers (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007). The appropriate qualitative methodological approach to the study was therefore phenomenology.

The thrust of phenomenology is to describe the meanings people give to their lived experiences (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 1998). Phenomenology studies the essence of a phenomenon i.e. what makes a 'thing' what it is. Manen (1990) asserts that the aim of phenomenology is to gain a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. According to Manen, phenomenology asks, "What was this kind of experience like?" (1990, p. 9). The purpose of phenomenology is to describe a lived experience before the experience is conceptualized, categorized, or reflected upon. In other words, the task of phenomenological research and writing is to construct a possible interpretation of the nature of a certain human experience (Manen, 1990, p. 41).

Generally, a variety of techniques are used in collecting phenomenological data. One method is for the researcher to ask the individual whose experience is to be studied to write down his/her experience. The original written text of the person under investigation is called "protocol." The protocol becomes a data source for the phenomenologist to work with. Interviewing is another method used to collect lived experiences. In phenomenological studies, interviewing is used to explore and gather experiential information. It is also used as a means of engaging in conversation with the interviewee with the purpose of understanding the meaning of an experience. Another method used to collect phenomenological data is close observation. This method is appropriate for collecting lived experience of children. With the method of close observation, the researcher is expected to be a participant and an observer at the same time (participant observation technique). The method also requires that the researcher constantly steps back to reflect on the meaning of the situation. In situations of close observation for lived meaning, the researcher gather data termed as anecdotes i.e. a certain kind of narrative with a point (Manen, 1990). Other sources of material for phenomenological studies include literature, poetry, novels, biographies, autobiographies, personal life histories, diaries, journals, logs, stories, and plays. Manen holds that non-discursive artistic material such as painting, sculpture, music, cinematography, etc are also resources for phenomenological studies (1990, p. 74).

This study was an attempt to enter into the academic lives of sub-Saharan African professors at a predominantly White university in the Midwest in order to document what their reality or life world experiences were. Their lived experiences make up their reality and therefore subject to their interpretation. The researchers therefore described truths from the perspective of my respondents and not facts from a positivist science perspective. These truths were shaped by my respondents' cultural and linguistic paradigms and were therefore socially constructed (Patton, 2002).

- **Selection of Participants**

The research sample for this study was drawn from sub-Saharan African professors teaching at a predominantly White university in the Midwest. The population for this study was all the sub-Saharan African professors teaching in the selected Midwest University. There were twelve sub-Saharan African professors teaching in the selected Midwest University. Thus, all the sub-Saharan professors were chosen as part of the sampled population because the population size was small and also because the research was a case study. The study captured the experiences of tenured, tenure-track, and untenured professors to provide a holistic picture of their experiences.

Participants in this study were selected using the purposeful sampling technique. Purposeful sampling technique was used in the selection of participants in order to ensure that participants provided rich data regarding their lived experiences in the U.S. university academe. Purposeful sampling has the power to produce information-rich cases for in-depth study (Patton, 2002). Thus in this study only professors who bore the core characteristics of hailing from sub-Saharan Africa were purposefully selected. They therefore not only provided a rich source of information, but greatly enhanced the quality of data collected, and shed great light on the phenomenon being studied.

- **Data Sources**

Data for this study was generated from in-depth, open-ended interviews of sub-Saharan African professors teaching at a predominantly White university in the Midwest. The interviews were complemented with observations of classroom teaching experiences of sub-Saharan faculty. The data gathering sources included in-depth open-ended interviewing, and direct observation. Using multiple data collection methods contributes to enhancing the trustworthiness of the study (Glesne, 1998). In expounding on the utility of using multiple data gathering methods Patton (2002) had this to say, "studies that use only one method were more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross-data validity checks" (p. 248).

In order to increase credibility of the lived experiences data gathering and management process, the researchers' audio taped all the interviews in addition to taking hand written notes. The researchers' also transcribed verbatim what my respondents said. Secondly, the researchers observed some of the classes the sub-Saharan African professors taught. The aim of attending these classes was to observe the verbal and non-verbal communication between the professors and their students. By attending the classes of my respondents, the researchers' observed a firsthand part of their teaching experiences. The researchers' believed combining the interviewing technique with participant observation in the classrooms of the professors strengthened the credibility of the data gathering process, and the trustworthiness of the outcome.

- **Data Collection Procedure**

In-depth interviewing case study technique was utilized in the collection of the lived experiences of the sub-Saharan African professors. Interviewing technique was in sync with phenomenological data gathering. To gather phenomenological data, one must undertake in-depth interviewing with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest as opposed to second hand experience (Patton, 2002, p. 104).

Case study is an in-depth investigation of a discrete entity (which may be a single setting, subject, collection or event) on the assumption that it was possible to derive knowledge of the wider phenomenon from intensive investigation of a specific instance or case (Becker, 1970, p. 75). Case study as a qualitative

methodological approach is a blanket category that applied to a number of research types, each of which has particular procedures and benefits (Patton 2002). Some of the case study methods include: observational case studies, interview case studies, organizational case studies, life history case studies, and multi-site and comparative case studies. A case study is both a process of inquiry and the end product. Some case studies were referred to by the methodological technique used in studying them with the view to emphasizing their process of study for instance, observational case study, interview case studies, and comparative case studies (Creswell, 1998). Other case studies emphasized the end product of the inquiry and were therefore referred to by the end product labels. Examples of case studies that emphasize the end product included organizational case studies and life history case studies.

- **Instrument**

The data gathering instrument was a semi-structured interview protocol. Interviewing allows researcher to enter into respondents' perspectives and find out what is in and on the mind of respondents (Patton, 2002, p. 341). The interview instrument consisted of a list of questions to guide, probe and explore the perspectives and experiences of my respondents. The interview guide ensured that limited time on the hands of respondents was well utilized and every respondent was systematically interviewed with the same questions. The interviews were conducted in a face-to-face setting and were recorded on audio tape.

- **Data Collection Process**

Throughout the interviews, the researcher believed respondents were aware that that the researcher was listening with rapt attention and open mind to what they were saying, and expressing. Respondents also felt the researcher was ready to learn from what they had to say, and to seek understanding by asking respondents to elaborate on their responses. As a result, respondents went beyond superficial answers to share very deep and intimate personal experiences. Subsequent to this positive development all the interviewees went beyond the one hour allotted for the interview session. At the end of the interview sessions all of the respondents requested they be contacted if researcher had further questions to ask them or if researcher had any point in the interview that needed further clarification.

During the process of coding the data, researcher contacted some of the respondents by email to clarify some of their responses which they did also by email. When the draft findings were completed, the quotes used for each respondent was highlighted to them for their validation. The findings were sent to respondents by email and their feedback was given through the email. The researcher went to respondents a second time to those who did not give feedback through the email to ensure that all respondents validated their responses used in the study.. The feedback the researcher received did not change any of the findings nor the substance of the interviews granted originally. The feedback was mainly about taking additional care to protect the identity of respondents.

- **Interpretation of Data**

Being a qualitative research, this study was taken through the inductive process of analysis and interpretation. The process of qualitative data interpretation involved taking the raw data through the process of analysis and transforming it into findings. According to Patton (2002) transforming raw qualitative data into findings was akin to the metamorphoses that takes place in a caterpillar from its unattractive beginning into the splendour of the mature butterfly. The analytical process of the data passed through the transformative process of organizing the data, segmenting the data into meaningful units, coding, synthesizing, and looking for emergent patterns, themes and categories. The findings which emerged after data analysis became the product for interpretation. Data interpretation refers to "developing ideas about findings and relating them to the literature and to broader concerns and concepts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The interpretation process also involved explaining the importance of the findings, how it elucidated relevant theory and other scholarship, how it informed policy and future action that needed to be taken.

4. Findings

In analysing the data on the research question about experiences of sub-Saharan African professors with tenure, promotion and scholarship, the following themes emerged: bittersweet tenure and promotion; experiences with scholarship; and loss of status.

The above themes have their grounding in the interview data collected. Each theme has been presented using the rich descriptions of the respondents. The presentation of each theme is followed by a discussion of the findings and its bearing on the literature.

Out of the eight sub-Saharan African professors who obtained their PhDs outside Africa only two initially returned to Africa. Only 25% of the researcher' sample went to Africa after their PhD program. 75% continued in the Western academe. Out of the five that studied in the U.S. three remained and two went initially back home to Africa. Out of the three that obtained their PhD programs in Europe, one went initially back to Africa. Three out of the ten professors interviewed were civil and public servants in their respective home countries in Africa before embarking on their graduate programs abroad. The remaining seven professors taught in universities in their respective African home countries before pursuing PhD programs abroad.

In keeping faith with the Institutional Review Board requirement of protecting the rights and welfare of the respondents, the researcher used pseudonyms to protect the identity of the respondents throughout this study.

Sub-Saharan African Professors Experiences with Tenure, Promotion and Scholarship

This section addressed the research question on what the experiences of sub-Saharan African professors were in relation to tenure, promotion and professional development. The tenure and promotion process of some of my respondents reflected the bittersweet success for many faculty of color in predominantly White colleges and universities in the U.S. (Fenelon 2003; Santa Cruz, & Chao, 2003; Nakanishi, 1993).

- **Bittersweet Success with Tenure**

Out of four respondents' tenured, Dr. Pius was tenured before joining the current university while the other three received their tenure and promotion in the university where they were currently teaching. Dr. Union who was the last to get tenured remarked that the requirements for tenure and promotion were clearly stated to him when he joined his department seven years earlier. His awareness of what the tenure and promotion requirements were from the onset helped in no small measure in smoothing the process. The tenure and promotion process of Dr. Renown and Dr. Shine were bittersweet successes.

The story of Dr. Renown was that he was initially invited as a visiting professor to teach for one year. After the expiry of the period, the department offered him a tenured faculty position of associate professor but he refused to accept it. Being an accomplished scholar with many years of teaching experience and having far more scholarly publications and books to his name than those who were full professors in the department he told the committee that he would not accept anything lower than a full professorship position. Dr. Renown commented on the bittersweet experience as follows:

When I was negotiating my appointment the dean at the time insisted that I should be employed as an associate professor despite the fact that I was coming with all the credentials that far exceeded the accomplishments of their full professors. She insisted that I should be an associate professor despite my stature as an internationally recognized scholar. I told them they can take their associate professorship, I was greater than all their professors and they cannot argue that fact. So the other faculty members pressured the Chair to employ me as a full professor. She felt this guy could not just come from Africa and become a full professor but the others in the department prevailed on her and she had to agree to my conditions.

According to Dr. Shine, he went through a tortuous tenure process. He was initially denied tenure when he came up. The shock of being denied tenure negatively impacted his life and had to spend time in hospital and at home for psychosomatic disorders. Dr. Shine described part of his bittersweet experience as:

After all the things I have done having taught for 6 years, having published 15 articles and my book was accepted, and have directed the best play which was adjudged the best since the establishment of the university for 200 years, I was still denied tenure. Although my track record stretches all the way to England and although a Noble laureate wrote one of my letters of recommendation, I was still denied tenure. There was no basis. They tried to use records of my teaching and I produced all of them. Then they asked for averages and I produced them and yet the dean was asking how I produced these averages although the averages could be verified from the Secretary's office. You could see from the way they were acting that they had decided not to tenure me. Anyway the problem was not from my department. My colleagues at the department and students strongly supported me except one guy, an African American who engineered all these. He felt threatened by my presence and put the dean into trouble. He was peeved that students wrote a play about me as their hero and were always praising me.

After fighting the "tenure denied" verdict for one year culminating in an appeal to the university provost and the setting up of an independent committee by the provost to revisit his case the decision not to grant Dr. Shine tenure was finally reversed with apologies from the office of the university provost. Dr. Shine goes on to say:

My African American colleague who was chair of my committee made sure that most of my stuff was not even sent to the external evaluators. If I had taken the case to court he would have been fired but he was still around. When I wrote my appeal the dean became aware that there was something fishy. Meanwhile my tenure committee chair had already made the dean to look like a liar. When the provost received my appeal, he set up a committee to investigate the matter and the provost wrote an apology stating that this should not have happened. That was how I got tenured.

Although Dr. Shine's case may be termed reverse discrimination since the denial of tenure was orchestrated by an African American, the support of the dean who was White reflects the bittersweet experience that many faculty of color go through in predominantly White colleges and universities across the United States.

- **Experiences with Scholarship**

All respondents said they were aware of the required number of scholarly works-articles including books needed in order to be tenured and promoted. They devised various ways of achieving this target over a period. Dr. Union commented on the process:

Initially I was doing my research side by side my teaching and that did not work well for me so, I abandoned that approach. I decided to concentrate on teaching and teaching related matters during the quarter then spend summer and winter breaks to do my research, do all the readings, write the research papers, fine tune it and send it for publishing. So during the quarter, I concentrate on teaching, attending to family life, and do my readings to prepare for classes the next day. During winter break I have 6 weeks to do my research and summer I have 3 months solid block of time to do my research. This gives me freedom not to be too stressed in my teaching. That also means that I do not also have any vacation.

Dr. Sheba remarked that there was the temptation to sit on many committees so as to be seen to be fulfilling the requirements of the policy of diversity of the university. But for the time spent serving on too many committees, and the negative effect the service might have on his scholarship, he agreed with his chair to limit the number of committees he should serve on.

I decided not to serve on many committees. I needed time to do my research and publish papers because I was on tenure track. As a tenure track faculty you were expected to fulfil certain requirements. With the understanding of the chair I decided not to be involved in many committees because it takes too much of your time. On the other hand, I was involved in many committees because, since I came I helped organize the Literary Festival where mostly African writers were invited to the conference here in this university. I am also involved with organizing institutes for the African Studies program. I am kind of doing too much. Now, I am also associate director of the African Studies program.

Respondents were aware of the need to conduct research and publish articles in reputable journals as part of the requirement of tenure and promotion. To this end, they had to set aside time to research and to publish.

- **Loss of Social Status**

Respondents intimated that their academic profession was enhanced by living and teaching in the U.S. university academe. However, in comparing their social status of being university professors here in the U.S. to their status back home, they were of the view that the recognition and prestige they enjoyed back home was higher than in the U.S. university academe.

Commenting on the loss of social status, Dr. Sheba remarked,

I would be honest about this. In my country, I was considered one of the leading academic intellectuals. I was consulted and asked on practically any question on political, cultural and literary issues going on in the country. Here I am only a university teacher. If I would do something in my research areas in Africa I would do something with my knowledge. For example, in Africa, I would go to the field and collect my data and I would have the opportunity to share my findings with the media or policy makers who will use it.

Dr. Renown who spends part of every academic year working back home also had similar experiences to share about having a higher status in Africa.

Back home I am a celebrity. My work was celebrated I am on TV all the time. When I am here I am even called upon often to comment on things which were happening in South Africa. When there was the case of xenophobia in South Africa for instance they called me from the U.S. to comment on the story. So I continue to do active work in South Africa even when I am not physically present. I am called to comment on political issues etc of my country. I like the fact that I live here because it helps me to sit back and reflect on what was happening back home, give my comments, and also do my work. There were too many demands on me if I am physically there.

Dr. Pius attributes the loss of social status of the sub-Saharan African professor in a U.S. university academe on the one hand to the liberal nature of the American society, and on the other to the legacy of the British socio-political system.

In the U.S. university academe nobody cares about social status that was why they call you by your first name. America was a liberal country where titles do not mean much but at home titles were status symbols where they will call you professor but not here. In the U.S. we have no social status but back at home we were located on a very high pedestal. We have social status back at home because of the British legacy of status symbols which we inherited.

Dr. Politics explained that the loss of status in America sometimes served as a disincentive for some professionals to want to continue working in the U.S.

My social status in my country was far higher than over here. For example here when I go to the store all that the cashier was looking at was a Blackman that was all that they see if you go to the restaurant etc. I went to a restaurant in a city in my country Ghana and when they saw me they said, hey professor and greeted me with respect and decorum. Maybe because of the liberal American culture nobody cares who you are. That was why sometimes people get fed up over here and decide that they were going home because they would be treated with dignity and respect back home.

Unlike my male respondents who said they experienced loss social status as a result of teaching in the U.S. academe, Dr. Sweetie a female African professor remarked that her social status in the academe was enhanced by teaching in the U.S. compared to teaching in her country in Africa. Dr. Sweetie explained that when she taught in the university in her country of origin, her male colleagues did not respect her because of her gender. Dr. Sweetie on the other hand felt her countrymen in Africa would respect her more than the respect accorded professors here in the U.S. Dr. Sweetie intimated:

I will feel more respected about my knowledge back home. The students and the general public will respect me more back home than here. As a woman I am respected more here than I would have been respected back home because when I taught in the university back home my colleagues did not respect me because I was a woman. We would have meetings and my male colleagues would tell me to go get them tea and that would not happen here. The reason why I feel I would be respected more in my country was that the U.S. was the only place where being smart was frowned upon. To be dumb was cool and being smart was frowned upon even among high school kids. They talk about how Obama was smooth talking and cannot be trusted. So in some social settings I feel I cannot correct people when they are wrong because I do not want to come across as arrogant but in my country I can tell them exactly what I think. In Kenya it is acceptable to express your knowledge to the point of being rude as long as you know what you were talking about.

Although Dr. Sweetie shared the same sentiments with his male sub-Saharan counterparts that she would have been more respected back in her country for her knowledge, she gained social capital by accepting a teaching position in the U.S. academe. Being a woman, Dr. Sweetie's experiences of gaining social status as a result of teaching in the U.S. academe was at variance with the literature that women faculty of color in the U.S. academe suffer from double-bind and invisible marginality (Turner, 2002; Alfred, 2001; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). Dr. Sweetie's experiences and perspective of gaining respectability in the U.S. academe could be traced to the strong patriarchal nature of sub-Saharan African societies and societal expectations of women. According to Kuenyehia (1995), irrespective of the career a woman chooses, her duties and expectations as a woman are primarily to serve in the home as wife and mother.

5. Concluding Discussions

This concluding section presents a reflection on the themes that were gleaned from the interviews and observations of research participants. The themes that emerged were bittersweet success with tenure; experiences with scholarship; job satisfaction; and loss of social status.

The literature describes the tenure and promotion process of minority faculty of color in predominantly White American colleges and universities "bittersweet" (Fenelon 2003; Santa Cruz, & Chao, 2003; Nakanishi, 1993). This description aptly fitted the experiences of two out of the four sub-Saharan African professors who were tenured in the predominantly White American University. According to Blackburn, Wenzel, & Bieber (1994), the "often stated remark that minorities publish significantly fewer articles than their majority colleagues" needs to be substantiated with more research (p. 271).

Respondents who had negative experiences with tenure proved that the often stated remark that minorities publish considerably fewer articles than their majority colleagues was not the issue but rather a case of discrimination. The bittersweet experiences of my respondents who were tenured also mirrored the literature that the tenure process for minority faculty of color in predominantly White colleges and universities was stressful because it was a process that involved a small group of people, mostly Whites who decided whether you were good enough to be admitted into the elite club of the professoriate (Stanley, 2006).

Respondents explained that by devoting a lot of time to preparation and delivery of lectures, having open door policy to student advising, being asked to serve on various committees and organizing conferences etc. they have to work extra hard to conduct their scholarly researches and write their research articles for publication. As a result of the time they devote to the above issues, my respondents said they felt they were tokens. The experiences of "working hard" by my respondents confirmed the literature that minority faculty of color perceived that they were expected to work harder than their White counterparts, "work twice as hard to be treated as equal" (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000, p. 61). The perception by my respondents that they were treated as tokens also confirmed the assertion of Essien (2003) that minority faculty of color in predominantly White American educational institutions were treated as tokens by showcasing them on committees, panels, boards, etc as representatives of ethnic groups rather than on the merit of their professional competence.

Majority of the respondents commented on the loss of their social status as a result of leaving their professorial jobs in Africa to teach in America. Unlike Africa where their status as university professors meant so much cultural capital, over here in the U.S. this invaluable capital meant very little. Respondents saw the American university system as a marketplace where one's cultural capital was objectified and sold without the corresponding enhancement of the cultural networks necessary for sustaining their field of influence.

In Africa, educational achievement was a major status symbol in society. To be a professor in Africa not only meant that one has become an expert in ones field, but more importantly a professor was seen as a reservoir of knowledge and wisdom to be tapped by all sectors of society. The recognition in Africa of the university professor as an embodiment of wisdom was accompanied with influence, power and privilege. It was this loss of returns in the form of influence, power, and privileges from "embodied" cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that my respondents were lamenting over.

The above experiences of respondents reinforced their state of marginality. As marginal men looking simultaneously in two looking-glasses, respondents did not only see the gains they made by migrating to United States, they also saw their loss of power and privilege at the same time.

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