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Silent Cries: Black Women and State-Sponsored Violence

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ABSTRACT
SOCIAL WORK

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SILENT CRIES: BLACK WOMEN AND STATE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE

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The intention of this study is to contribute to research on Black women and to bring awareness to Black women's experiences, as they navigate social institutions. This study examines the perception of the intersectionality of race and gender impacts their awareness of police violence against Black women. Researchers measured respondent's perceptions/attitudes regarding intersectionality and their awareness of people who had been victimized by police violence. The quantitative study is comprised of statements regarding patriarchy and/or sexism and statements concerning racism and/or the lack thereof. The data analysis indicates that respondents' awareness and sensitivity to racism along with their perception of sexism and patriarchy is associated with their awareness of police victims. The researcher's findings found that the intersectionality of race and gender impacts their awareness of police violence against Black women.

SILENT CRIES: BLACK WOMEN AND STATE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

JA'NAE A. WILLIAMS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Johnson (as cited in Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2004) defined a system as “a collection of interrelated parts or elements that we can think of as a whole” (p. 28). A social system is comprised of connected understandings, relationships, and roles that contribute to something larger than the individuals participating in them (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2004). People navigate through social systems: the education system, the political/government system, the family system, the and economic system. These social systems/institutions are imbedded into our society and are unavoidable. Society also employs socially constructed labels or identities that are based on race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status or class, and/or sexual orientation. Particular labels may play a vital role in whether an individual experiences oppression and/or marginalization. This study discusses how Black women’s intersecting labels can place them in complicated conditions.

Between 1986 and 1991, the incarceration rate for Black women increased by more than 800 percent for drug offenses, making Black women the fastest-growing population to be incarcerated during the five-year timespan (Ritchie, 2017). In addition to the War on Drugs, there have been several campaigns within the United States that have engendered and perpetuated systematic oppression and *state-sponsored violence* against

Black women. State-sponsored violence is implemented by the state (government system) through policies and procedures to repress individuals (Herreros, 2006). Conversations concerning the negative impacts of mass incarceration on Black women, or any other social issue, are usually centered around Black women having to raise their children by themselves and being head of their households at a disproportioned rate. Eight out of ten of Black mothers are breadwinners for their families (DuMonthier, Childers & Milli, 2017). While these points are imperative, it is also significant to recognize that Black women are also targeted in ways similar to Black men. "Black women are incarcerated at nearly 3 times the rate of White women (American Policy Forum, n.d., p. 2)." Socially systemic issues and marginalization place Black women in difficult conditions where they are affected not only because of their gender but also because of their race. Not only do Black women have to raise children by themselves, due to systemic oppression, but they are also susceptible to mass incarceration, domestic and state-sponsored violence (sexually, emotionally, and physically), and other systemic oppression reinforced by the government/political system. More than two-fifths of Black women experience physical abuse by an intimate partner. Black women and girls are criminalized more at a disproportionate rate (in their schools and communities) compared to their White counterparts and they are two and a half times more likely to be murdered by men than White women (DuMonthier et al., 2017).

Statement of Problem

The social systems previously mentioned were founded on underlying concepts that promote dominance for specific groups due to their privilege. Wise (2003) described privilege as the “upside” of systemic oppression. He explained that because there are systemic limitations in place for certain groups, there are other groups that inevitably receive systemic benefits. Thus, privilege is attributed to the individual that receives benefits from the systemic oppression of marginalized groups. It is attached to specific labels, which vary; in particular circumstances, one’s label will grant them privilege while in other circumstances, it may not. Feagin (2012) explained that when the Puritans colonized the Indigenous people’s land, they established *social standards* that are utilized today in American society. The social standards mentioned are “dogmatism and the intolerance of dissenting beliefs, a political structure that is substantially oligarchy with democratic principles, and a commitment of social hierarchy...,” (Feagin, 2012, p. 2). These social standards engendered isms that grants privilege to some and systematically marginalizes “others.”

Patriarchy is a social construct that grants privilege to men. Like most of the established social standards, patriarchy is infused in the foundations of the United States’ social institutions and is prominent today. Patriarchy can be defined as "the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men - by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male" (Rich, 1976, p. 50). It is imperative to

note that some men have more privilege than others, depending on their intersecting identities. Patriarchy is male-centered; it constructs gender-specific roles that establishes power over women throughout social systems (Hunnicut, 2009). Patriarchy engenders pay gaps between men, women, and nonconforming individuals. It also perpetuates violence against women and disregards women-specific struggles. Patriarchy also incites gender-roles where women's roles are subdued under men desires.

Like patriarchy, capitalism is a social standard that is maintained throughout America. The expansion of western capitalism and its attributed wealth in early America was a driving force for violence, enslavement of different populations, and socioeconomic inequity (Feagin, 2012). During the early stages of capitalism, the *White racial frame* was established. Feagin (2012) described the dimensions of the White racial frame as “racial stereotypes and prejudices; racial narratives and interpretations; racialized imagery; racialized emotions; and common inclinations to discriminate along racial lines” (p. 6). Slavery, segregation, and mass incarceration are systems of laws that perpetuate racism and have been restructured and justified by White racial framing. Colonizers utilized White racial framing to dominate non-White groups and to preserve socioeconomic power. Hence, the different populations that were enslaved were groups that were not of European decent- Africans, Asians, people of Latin descent, and Indigenous people. Today, racism is infused throughout all social systems: education, government/political, economic, family, and religion. Mass incarceration is a contemporary form of racial oppression that is legitimized by the White frame. One in every eighteen Black women will be incarcerated at least once in her lifetime, one in

every one hundred and eleven White women will be incarcerated at least once in her lifetime, while one in forty-five Latina women will be incarcerated at least once within her lifetime (American Policy Forum, n.d.).

In this study, the researcher examines how the intersectionality of race and gender affects people's awareness of state-sponsored violence against Black women. Intersectionality is a concept that analyzes the interconnectedness between socially-constructed labels and their influence on individuals' susceptibility to marginalization (African American Policy Forum, n.d.). It is imperative to understand these labels affect individuals' experience when navigating the interrelated systems.

Purpose of the Study

A social location is the status individuals possess within the social systems, based off their privilege or lack thereof (Daynes, 2007). Being Black and being a woman places Black women in this complicated social location in which they are disproportionately affected by systemic issues. Due to their intersectionality, Black women's struggles may go unrecognized or overlooked. Because of patriarchy and racism, Black women may experience more contention while navigating social systems. This study contributes to research on Black women and brings awareness to Black women's experiences, as they navigate America's social institutions.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study examines whether sexist/patriarchal attitudes are related to racial attitudes. The researcher hypothesizes that respondents who identify with patriarchal or sexist attitudes will be less aware and sensitive of racism. The null hypothesis states that the respondents' who identify with sexist/patriarchal attitudes will not be aware of or sensitive to racism. Secondly, this study examines how attitudes of the intersectionality of race and gender affect respondents' ability to recognize female victims of state-sponsored (police) violence. The researcher hypothesizes that respondents who identify with patriarchal/sexist and racist attitudes, will not be able to recognize female victims. The null hypothesis for this study states that respondents' response to patriarchy/sexism and/or racism will not have a positive or negative effect on whether they are able to recognize female victims of state-sponsored violence.

There is a significant amount of research on violence against women and how patriarchy contributes to this social issue. There is also a significant amount of research on police violence against Black men and how institutionalized racism contributes to this issue. However, there is a limited amount of research that examines the intersectionality of both race and gender and how Black women are affected. The prevalence of patriarchy and racism throughout the United States' social institutions affect the way in which Black women are perceived, the stereotypes, and the way in which the group is marginalized.

Significance of the Study

Black women are not researched often, which causes their experiences to be overlooked. It is fundamental to note that cis-gendered, Black men are usually the population studied regarding research that focuses on policing or state-sponsored violence. Failing to include Black women in research concerning social issues is dangerous because it can create a misconception that Black women are not affected by policing or state-sponsored violence; that they are not incarcerated, physically/sexually abused, and/or targeted more than their White counterparts. This study is distinctive because it examines how intersectionality affects people's awareness of police or state-sponsored violence against Black women and it creates awareness of Black women's experience within the United States. Studying how intersectionality affects people's perceptions and awareness of state-sponsored violence against Black women can promote policies that can deconstruct racism and patriarchy. Intersectionality gives Black women the opportunity to acknowledge and fight for their rights as women and Black people. Findings of this study can create a conversation on ways to combat the effects of patriarchy, sexism, and racism in addition to finding innovative ways to reeducating society.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historical Perspective

Intersectionality and Black Feminism

Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in the 1980's. The intersectionality movement prompted scholars to further discourse surrounding Black women's experiences. Intersectionality is a framework that analyzes how Black women possess dual positioning within society; which may make the group more susceptible to violence and structural and political subordination (Crenshaw, 1997). The intersectionality framework is centered around Black women's experiences, ensuring that they are included in anti-discrimination and social justice policies. It also analyzes how single-axis frameworks pressure Black women to identify with either their race or gender: choosing one label over the other undermines Black women's reality and their experiences. Intersectionality can also be utilized as a methodological and theoretical framework, which permits questions, hypotheses, and debates about intersectionality. Thirdly, the discourse of intersectionality transcends outside of academia and should be used for political advocacy for Black women (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). For the purposes of this study, intersectionality is utilized as a methodological and theoretical framework.

Before intersectionality, there were women like Sojourner Truth, Shirley Chisolm, Ida B. Wells, and Audre Lorde, just to name a few; these women exposed sexism and racism through their works in activism, politics, and journalism. They worked to hold society accountable by denouncing oppressive constructs that were imposed on Black women. Crenshaw (1989) explained that Black Feminism was created out of necessity to combat patriarchy as well as to challenge White feminists to acknowledge their privilege. Black Feminism was created so that Black women were included in the fight for women's rights. Feminists were traditionally White middle-class women who experienced sexism from White middle-classed men. Consequently, the issues they focused on did not include issues that affected Black women or women who lived in poverty (Davis, 1989). Davis quotes Shirley Chisolm, the first Black woman elected to the U.S. Congress and the first woman to run for the United States presidency, "Black Women have always found ourselves in a sense at the tail end. Neither the Black movement as such nor the women's movement as such in this country has addressed the political problems of Blacks who are female" (Davis, 1989, p. 21).

The unawareness of Black women's experience in America is more complex than most realize. When African women were taken and brought to America, they became subjected to the horrendous living conditions of slavery in addition to patriarchy (Hooks, 1981). Davis (1972) explained that although enslaved African women were subjected to patriarchy, the ideal feminine roles did not apply to them, which further complicates their experience as women. Enslaved women were not protected or seen as fragile like White women. Enslaved women were forced to work in the fields just like

men, regardless if they were pregnant or postpartum. Enslaved women also had the responsibility of caring for their owner's family in addition to their own community. Hooks (1981) argued that racism inarguably is the premise for the inhumane treatment of enslaved African women, but patriarchy perpetuated sexual and violent abuse. Enslaved women were not only sexually exploited amongst their colonizers- if a master favored one of his enslaved men, he would allow him to choose an enslaved girl or woman to marry, regardless of her desires. Throughout America's history and in the present day, Black women have and are still subjected to racism and patriarchy which makes them more vulnerable to both state-sponsored violence and domestic violence.

The Beginning of State-sponsored Violence

When earlier colonial villages were established, night watches and constables were established to maintain peace and public safety, and to enforce laws (Vila & Morris, 1999). In southern states, the population of enslaved people had grown rapidly, and slave revolts had begun to occur more frequently. In fear of revolutions, southern states organized Slave Patrols beginning as early as 1657 (Villa & Morris, 1999). Colonies in South Carolina and Georgia had begun to declare official proclamations and acts that ordered slave patrols to guard plantations to prevent revolutions and runaways. Brucato (2014) explained the evolution of the United States' police as a system that "was devised primarily to administer slavery, then adapted to maintain segregation.... And now to [sic] maintain the color line in an official color-blind polity" (Brucato, 2014, p. 2). The historical context of the police institution currently operates on the same foundation it

was established with. Goldfield, Olson, and Roediger (as cited in Brucato, 2014), suggested that the essential purpose of the political systems within the United States' history has been to control nonwhite people and to assure that there is divisiveness between different races of the working class to promote a sense of togetherness among White people, irrespective of their class. The emphasis on perpetuating oppression amongst non-White people has permitted police to be a large component of violence and mass incarceration against all people of color.

Vigilante groups were also created and known as the regulators. Also, a part of law enforcement, vigilantes were groups of citizens “who took the law into their own hands...” (Vila & Morris, p. 17, 1999). While the idea of supporting law enforcement is respectable, vigilante groups were able to lynch, kill, and use other methods of corporal punishment without adverse reactions; this constituted and perpetuated the acceptance of racially-motivated violence. Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) explained how vigilante groups administer private violence while police officers administered public violence. It is imperative to note that both private and public violence are state-sponsored violence. Private violence preserved social order and is successful because of formal law enforcement institutions being absent, inadequate, or compliant to the violence.

Study Issues

Intersectionality challenges the conventional way of analyzing social issues. Through the lens of intersectionality, social issues are analyzed by the interconnectedness of oppressive social paradigms. Allison and Banerjee (2014) conducted a study

investigating how often articles on intersectionality between 1990 and 2009 were published in mainstream organization journals and how intersectionality was incorporated within those studies. They found that less than 1% of articles included intersectional methodology or theoretical approach. The researchers also found that majority of the articles that focused on structural oppression were one-dimensional; gender was the most the popular variable studied, following gender was race, then socioeconomic status, and the least studied factor was sexuality. Allison and Banerjee's (2014) research challenges scholars to address the lack of intersectional research and to establish honest discourse in what this means for individuals who are more susceptible to institutionalized marginalization.

The lack of intersectional journals demonstrates how Black women's experiences are silenced and not told in whole truth through mainstream publications. Race and gender being the most prominent factors studied in one-dimensional or single-axis frameworks when articulating systematic oppression demonstrate the omission of Black women's experiences. This finding is indicative of systematic marginalization and causes the group to not be fully represented within research. Intersectionality is necessary as a framework, a field of study, and/or a political or social movement because it elucidates the plight and struggles endured by groups of individuals that are perplexingly socially located. Seeing police violence through an intersectional framework will permit others to understand the lack of awareness of this issue when Black women are the victims.

Using intersectionality, Ponton (2016) examined a video of a stop and frisk interaction that took place in Philadelphia in 2013 between a police officer and a young Black man. Stop and frisk is a policy that executes state-sponsored violence. Ponton uses an intersectional framework to fully elucidate the way in which identities, including race, are not static or definite in every interaction. Ponton explains that identities are indicators of sociopolitical status and they change depending on the circumstance and environment of any given moment. He further explains that race is not always the determining factor of whether a person is a part of a powerful or powerless group. He argues that theories that are founded on rigid ideologies of identity give opposing viewers traction to be dismissive of police violence, because identities should not be viewed through single-axis frameworks.

Through Ponton's intersectional analysis he explains how on-duty police officers' prominent identity is not their race but their uniform, which is referred to as their *Blue flesh*. His rationale for comparing their uniform to skin tone is because when the Black Lives Matter Movement began, in resistance, police officers established Blue Lives Matter as if "blue" is equated to one's racial identity. It is imperative to note that although their Blue flesh may always be prominent to the officers themselves, depending on their other identities and the circumstances race, sexuality, or any other identity can become their prominent identity and can shift their sociopolitical power. Ponton (2016) suggested that their Blue flesh gives officers privilege and a political power to operate as if they are above the law and "super-human." Police officer's privilege is attributed to their ability to perpetuate state-sponsored violence. According to Ponton's analysis, state-sponsored

violence is an issue for everyone. No one individual is truly unsusceptible to state-sponsored or police violence, however marginalized groups are more at risk.

Andrea Ritchie (2017) highlighted the oppressive social paradigms established by policing and how Black women's experiences are usually excluded from the discourse. Black women, too, were disproportionately affected by the War on Drugs, Stop and Frisk, and other policies that had been established to perpetuate state-sponsored violence and marginalization. With all the literature and content that has been produced discussing these social paradigms, Black women are rarely acknowledged. If Black women are acknowledged, the conversation usually highlights how Black women are negatively affected by Black men being taken out of their homes and leaving them to be single mothers and heads of their household. If Black women's struggles continue to be ignored, no one will become aware of their experiences which makes Black women more susceptible to state-sponsored violence. Crime in the United States (as cited in Ritchie, 2017) stated that women are arrested more for "public attitudes and police practices than actual behavior" (p. 44). This is problematic because public attitude is not a crime and it gives too much discretion to the arresting officers. Arresting women for their attitudes essentially can make Black women a target because of the preconceived notion and stereotypes regarding their temperament.

Afrocentric Perspective

Mathebane and Sekudu (2017) suggested that culture is an essential component that shapes society's awareness of social issues and the way society react to them. The

authors also acknowledge the dominance of Eurocentric paradigms and how the lack of cultural perspectives can result in the "complicity with the coloniality [colonialism] of power in knowledge production resulting in epistemic injustice..."(p. 1, 2017), hence the significance of the Afrocentric perspective. Afrocentricity was introduced by Molefi Asante in 1980 in his book *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change*. Asante's work (as cited in Mazama, 2001) is centered around African people, their values, and their cultures. The Afrocentric perspective was created to provide a distinct perception of the world that is not centered around Western or colonized ideologies. It is imperative to note that the Afrocentric perspective was not created in opposition of any other framework but was specifically for people to place their own culture at the center of a philosophy (Hunn, 2004).

The Afrocentric perspective is made up of different concepts, and each concept is created to promote consciousness of the deep-rooted Eurocentrism that people of African-descent unknowingly inherit. (Mazama, 2001). Humanistic Values is one of the foundational themes of Afrocentricity, which emphasizes the worth and dignity of all individuals. Placing values on individuals' inherent worth and recognizing their right to maintain their dignity abolishes the acceptance of state-sponsored violence against any group of people. The Humanistic Value concept works to dismantle Black women's intersecting oppression because it places value on their experiences. This concept acknowledges how patriarchy and racism affect Black women and acknowledge their experiences and struggles.

Another tenet of the Afrocentric perspective is the recognition that people are essentially good (Schiele, 1990). This is imperative when confronting issues that are endured by oppressed groups of people. Often, Black people are depicted to be innately dangerous, intrinsically violent, and/or as criminals. The stereotypes that are forced onto Black people's identity teach society to not perceive the group as being fundamentally good and excuses state-sponsored violence committed against them. In relation to this study, acknowledging that people are inherently good plays a vital role in the perception that police officers have when interacting with Black women.

Black Feminist Theory

The Black Feminist Theory is a critical social theory that encompasses epistemology that validates Black women's experiences, sociopolitical statuses, and perspectives (Hill, 2002). The Black Feminist Theory consists of several distinctive and foundational concepts. First, it acknowledges intersectionality as a paradigm. The Black Feminist Theory elucidates intersecting oppression and the practices, systems, and ideologies that perpetuate it (Hill, 2002). By emphasizing intersectionality and eradication of such oppression, Hill (2002) explains that the benefits will transcend beyond Black women as a group and will be advantageous to all oppressed groups. Also, it looks to dismantle the intersecting systems that perpetuate both domestic and state-sponsored violence against Black women.

Secondly, the theory is materialized through Black women's ideas in addition to their experiences. Although Black women share some similar experiences, the Black

Feminist Theory acknowledges the fact that Black women, as a group, do not all have the same experiences, beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, level of education...etc. To some this may be evident, however, too often, Black women's experiences are told one-dimensionally, from one perspective. Cooper (2015) suggested that Black Feminist theorists should raise questions that reject philosophies that are not representative of how Black women are structurally positioned and affected by intersecting systems, not only within the United States but globally. The Black feminist theory acknowledges that Black women are not monolithic.

The third concept continued to push the dialogue surrounding the narrative of Black women, and incorporates empowerment, resistance, and activism. Hill (2002), highlighted how "...self-defined standpoints stimulate resistance" (Hill, 2002, p. 29). The author explicated that oppressed groups should reject perspectives and/or narratives that perpetuate subjugation and delineations that are created by outsiders of their group. In turn, they should develop their own delineations of who they are, what they experience, and how they should be treated. Once the self-defining moments occur, according to Hill (2002), oppressed group members will be able to articulate the oppressive practices and will then be empowered to act and resist subjugation. This pertains to the study because Black women have the right to share their own accounts of police violence without outsiders of the group explaining their experiences for them.

The fourth concept stressed the necessity of dialogical practices of Black women who are intellectuals in academia. The Black Feminist Theory requires Black women from different walks of life to contribute to the theory by raising imperative

questions and conducting empirical research that examines all aspects of Black women's perspectives and contributes to the eradication of intersecting oppression. Cooper (2015) stated that Black Feminist theorists are obligated to "name acts of intellectual colonization and then stop ceding the terms of the debate to the colonizers" (Cooper, 2015, p. 18). In "mainstream" academia there is a continuous effort to discredit and diminish Black Feminist Theory, which is what Barbara Christian calls "academic hegemony"(Cooper, 2015). Academic hegemony must be confronted with resistance and theoretical work that validates Black women's experiences. bell hooks suggested (as cited in Taylor, 1998) that personal experience is significant to serve as a driving force for Black women, however, a theoretical frame is also imperative to evaluate and dismantle oppressive systems.

Hill (2002) suggested that beyond raising theoretical questions Black Feminist Theory needs to possess an epistemological process. These aspects of the Black Feminist theory create a more concrete, scientific, and systematic approach. It is essential that Black Feminist theorists do not allow outsiders of the group to force-feed their values or insights. Importantly, Hill (2002) noted that individuals outside of the group are able to contribute to the theory, however, the leadership of Black women is mandatory to reach true liberation. Similarly, to the previous concept, this acknowledges state-sponsored or police violence as an issue for Black women and stresses the importance of acknowledging this social issue within academia. This theory urges Black intellectuals to increase their presence within academia and share experiences of Black women that are overlooked and vile to Black women.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants for this study were individuals from ages 16 and up who lived in the United States. To conduct this research, nonprobability sampling was utilized; specifically, availability and convenience sampling. The researcher utilized a questionnaire as instrumentation to collect data.

Procedures

An approval from the Institution Review Board was attained. There was minimal to no risk involved with participation in this research. The researcher employed a quantitative approach for this study and established a survey that examined: patriarchal/sexist attitudes, awareness and sensitivity of racism, and recognition of female and male victims of state-sponsored/police violence. Each victim's experience of police violence has been shared nationally through media (television and/or social media). To carry out this study a survey was developed and utilized through Qualtrics. The survey was approximately 6-10 minutes long; participants completed a consent form and answered 25 items. The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

(SPSS) to analyze data using a multivariate table to examine simultaneous relationships among gender and race attitudes and the recognition of female victims.

Measures

The researcher combined different aspects of various questionnaires to ensure that the questionnaire engenders appropriate data. The measurement scales that contributed to the composition of this survey are the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996) and the Racial Complexity Scale (Reid & Foels, 2010). Each participant was encouraged to answer the questions honestly. Self-reporting was used to convey their perceptions/attitudes of patriarchy/sexism and racism. Respondents were instructed to mark whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree to statements that examined their attitudes of patriarchy/sexism and racism. The statements that measured respondent's patriarchal/sexist attitudes were the following:

- When women ask for equal workplace opportunities, they are really asking for favoritism, not equality.
- At work, I would have more confidence in a male boss than a female boss.
- Feminists are seeking for women to have more power than men.
- Women are too emotional to hold supervisory positions.
- Men should have the final say when making decisions for their entire household.
- Men should be the breadwinner (make the most money) in their household.

The statements that measured respondents' attitudes/perceptions of Racism were the following:

Awareness

- Racism is deeply woven into society.

- Racism is systematic power used to oppress people of color.
- Black people use racism as an excuse for their lack of success.
- I think about racial issues a lot.

Sensitivity

- Racism is exaggerated due to social media.
- Racism only affects Black people.
- Racism does not affect Black women

All items from the patriarchy/sexism scale were created into one composite variable, while items from the Racism measurement were created into two composite variables: awareness and sensitivity. To examine the relationships between the perception of patriarchy/sexism, racism, and the recognition of victims the researcher utilized the Pearson correlation coefficient test.

Police Violence Awareness between female victims (FV) and male victims (MV) was measured by the respondents' ability to recognize the names of people who have been victimized by the police throughout the nation, both male and female. Table 6 and Table 7 displays the variables that were created by counting the frequency of male and female victims recognized by respondents. For instance, if a respondent recognized all six of the victims, then the value of the variable will be six. The following names were listed and were categorized as recognizable or unrecognizable names related to police violence. The female victims listed were Sandra Bland, Chikesia Clemons, Justine Damond, Rekia Boyd, Charleena Lyles, and Korryn Gaines. The male victims listed were Michael Brown, Stephon Clark, Diante Yarber, Alton Sterling, Daniel Shaver, and Zachary Hammond.

Limitations

Limitations of this study are attributed to the low number of participants surveyed. Utilizing convenience sampling as a technique is also a limitation to the study. Because of the sampling technique respondent's race and sex were skewed into one direction. Another limitation of this study is attributed to self-reported data. Because that the data is self-reported, the data collected may not be true to respondent's authentic attitudes and perceptions. To minimize these threats, the researcher encouraged respondents to be as honest as possible. Researchers also used academic jargon throughout the questionnaire, assuming respondents will understand. This is a limitation because respondents may not have a clear of an understanding of the answer they chose. Lastly, researchers did not take into consideration of respondents' location within the United States and how that may affect their ability to recognize victims of police violence.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Results of the findings are presented in this chapter. The researcher examined the relationship between perceptions of racism and patriarchy, and how the perceptions affect people's awareness of police violence against Black women. The intention of this study is to contribute to research on behalf of Black women and to bring awareness to the systemic issues that they face.

Demographic Analysis Results

Data was collected through Qualtrics over a three-month time span. SPSS was used to analyze the demographics of participants. The study consisted of 159 participants. The ages of the participants ranged between 16-68 years. The average age of the respondents was 29.3 years (SD = 9.67). About 71 percent of the sample identified as females, 29 percent identified as males, and 1 percent identified as a non-binary sex or gender. As shown in Table 1, many of the respondents (90.6 %) identified with a single race while the remaining respondents identified as biracial or multiracial. Of the respondents who identified as one race, 67.4% identified as Black, 5% identified as Asian, 1.4% identified as Indigenous or Native, 15.3% identified as Latinx, and 8% identified as White. Approximately thirty-two percent of the respondents have earned their bachelor's degree while nineteen percent have earned their master's Degrees. Five

percent of respondents have attained a professional degree or higher and the remaining respondents (37%) reported to have not completed their high school education, having a high school diploma or GED, or some college. Twenty-eight percent of respondents reported their approximate household income was less than \$20,000 or \$20,000-\$34,999 a year. The remaining respondents (44%) reported their approximate household income to be \$35,000-\$49,999, \$50,000- \$74,999, or more than \$75,000 a year.

Table 1

Respondent's Demographics

	Demographics	Percent
Age	16-23	19%
	24-31	55%
	32-39	11%
	40 and up	11%
Gender	Female	70.7 %
	Male	28.67%
	Non-binary	.63%
Racial Make-up	Single-Race	90.6%
	Biracial	6.3%
	Multiracial	3.1%
Single-Race	Asian	5%
	Black	67.4%
	Indigenous	1.4%
	Latinx	15.3%
	Pacific Islander	0%
	White	8%
	Prefer not to answer	1.4%

Question 1: How are sexist/patriarchal attitudes related to racial attitudes?

Hypothesis: Respondents who identify with patriarchal or sexist attitudes are more likely to identify with racial attitudes.

As shown in Figure 1, a Pearson correlation coefficient test was computed to examine the relationships between patriarchal/sexist attitudes and respondents' awareness of racism. Table 2 displays that there is a significant correlation between patriarchal/sexist attitudes and racial awareness $r = .486, p < .05$. Based on the findings, respondents who are not aware of racism are likely to identify with patriarchal attitudes.

As shown in Figure 2, a Pearson correlation coefficient test was computed to examine the relationships between patriarchal/sexist attitudes and respondents' sensitivity to racism.

The significance between racial sensitivity and patriarchal/sexist attitudes is negative, $r = -.263, p < .001$. Findings suggest if a respondent is insensitive to racism, they are more likely to have a sexist attitude.

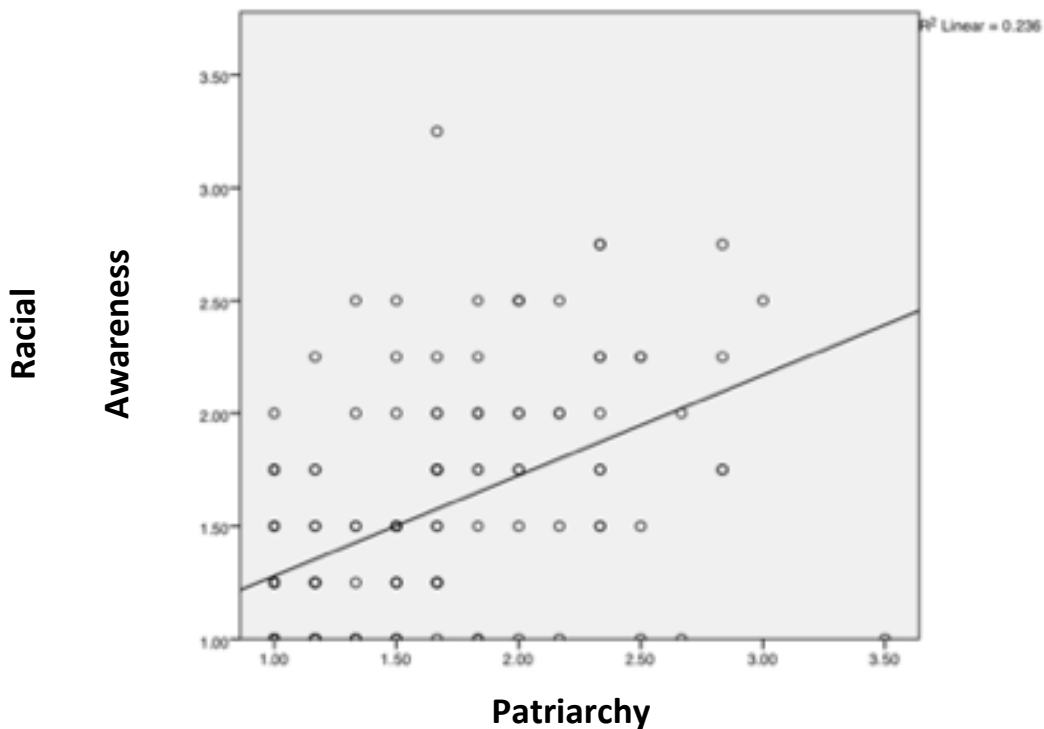


Figure 1. Correlation Between Racial Awareness and Patriarchal Attitude

Table 2

The Relationships Between Patriarchal/Sexist Attitudes and Racial Attitudes

	Racial	
	Awareness	Sensitivity
Patriarchal/Sexist	.486**	-.263**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

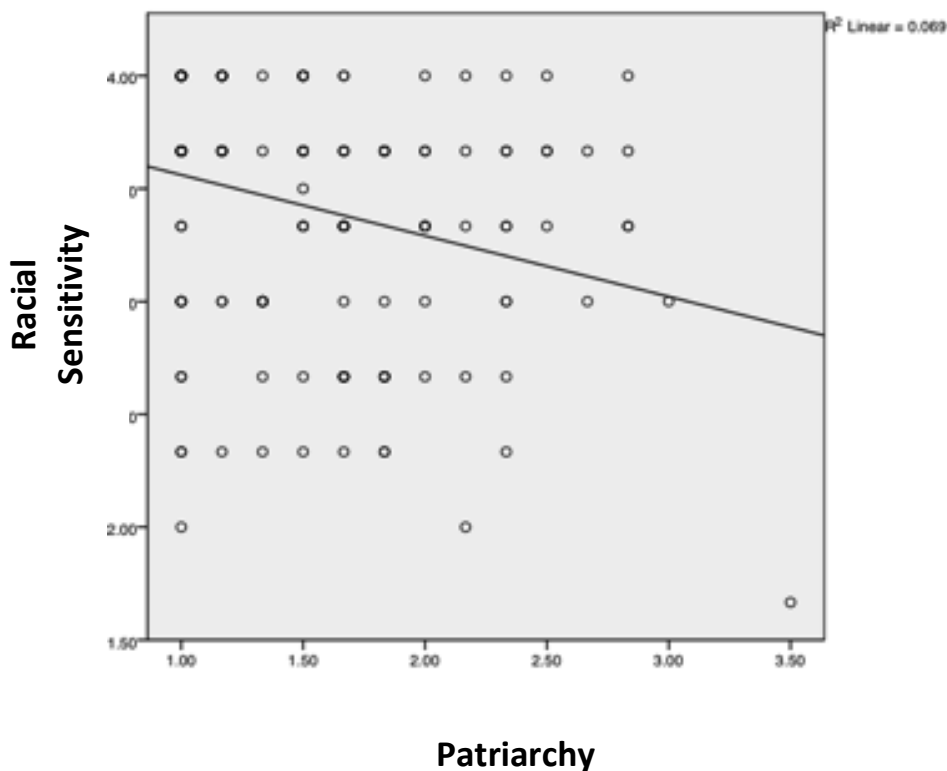


Figure 2. Correlation Between Racial Sensitivity and Patriarchal Attitudes

Table 3 shows that racial sensitivity and racial awareness have a significant relationship, $r = -.348$, $p < .001$, so if a respondent is aware of racism, they are also sensitive to racism. A Pearson correlation coefficient test was computed to examine the relationships between patriarchal/sexist and racial attitudes with respondents' ability to recognize female victims of state-sponsored or police violence. There is a significant correlation between the ability to recognize female victims and respondents' awareness of racism. Table 4 suggests although a person is aware of racism, they are not likely to recognize female victims $r = -.236$, $p < .001$. Findings from the study suggest if a person is sensitive to racism, they are more likely to recognize a female victim, $r = .165$, $p < .05$.

See Table 4. Also suggests that a respondent who identifies with sexist attitudes is less likely to identify a female victim of police violence, $r = -.247, p < .001$.

Table 3

The Relationship Between Racial Awareness and Sensitivity to Racism

	Sensitivity
Awareness	-.348**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Question 2: How do attitudes of the intersectionality of race and gender affect respondents' ability to recognize female victims of state-sponsored violence?

Hypothesis: Respondents who identify with patriarchal/sexist and racist attitudes, will not be able to recognize female victims.

Table 4

Correlations of Racial and Patriarchal Attitudes and Recognition of Victims

	Racism		Patriarchy/Sexism
	Awareness	Sensitivity	
Recognition of Female Victims	-.236**	.165*	-.247**
Recognition of Male Victims	-.196*	.085	-.195*

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 displays the frequency of the victims recognized by the respondents, both male and female. Fifteen percent of respondents did not recognize any male victims, while 25 percent of respondents did not recognize any female victims. Approximately 32 percent of participants were able to recognize 3 male victims, while only 15 percent were

able to recognize 3 female victims. Overall, the disparities of the respondents' ability to recognize victims by gender support Richie's (2017) conception of Black women being unacknowledged victims of state-sponsored violence by police officers.

Table 5

Frequency of Victims Recognized

Number of Victims Recognized	Percentages	
	Female Victims	Male Victims
None	25.2%	15.1%
One	17%	11.3%
Two	21.4%	15.7%
Three	15.1	32.1%
Four	9.4%	12.6%
Five	7.5%	8.2%
All Victims Recognized	4.4%	5.0%

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

In this study, the researcher examined how peoples' perception of intersectionality regarding race and gender impacts their awareness of police violence against Black women. Researchers examined the intersectionality of race and gender by assessing respondents' attitudes regarded to patriarchy/sexism and racism. The relationship between the intersectionality of race and gender and one's ability to recognize female victims was also examined. The data suggests that respondents who are not aware of racism tend to identify with patriarchal attitudes. The research also indicates that if a respondent is insensitive to racism, they are more likely to have a sexist attitude. Also, respondents who are not aware of racism tend to be less sensitive to racism. Findings also indicate that although a person is aware of racism, they are not likely to recognize female victims. Findings from the study suggest that a person who is sensitive to racism, is more likely to recognize female victims and a respondent who identifies with sexist attitudes is less likely to identify a female victim of police violence. Based on this study, Black women who are victims of police violence were recognized less than male victims. The findings of this study are imperative because they show the disparities between sexism/patriarchy, racism, and the recognition of female victims. The findings of

this study are indicative of how Black women are ignored when discussing social issues, that are not specifically related to either or race. Black women's intersectionality of race.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Based on the findings of the study, the intersectional framework should be utilized more throughout social work scholarship. Outside of race and gender, intersectionality as a framework can be utilized to measure the social barriers of people of color, language, and physical abilities, LGBTQIA communities, and many other identities. There should be procedures put in place, that engenders social workers to assess barriers that their clients may face through an intersectional lens. Honoring and acknowledging barriers that may be present due to sexism, racism, and other systemic oppression. Through social work scholarship, assessments can be established to ensure intersectionality frameworks are being utilized and could establish safe spaces and inclusivity for all people. This study should also be taken into consideration when discussing effective techniques to assist clients in therapeutic and/or counseling settings. Recurring marginalization and systemic oppression can cause clients to develop mental health issues and providing a space where Black women's struggles are acknowledged and understood would be conducive.

Implications for Social Work Policy

Social constructs that are sexism, patriarchy, and racism systemically oppress and marginalize Black women and other groups with similar social disadvantages. To

dismantle police and state violence against Black women, would mean to dismantle the foundation of the national policing structure. To acknowledge the systematic disregard of Black women's lives impacted and lost due to state-sponsored violence would mean to establish a system that allows Black women to have the same treatment as their White counterparts.

Nationwide, Black women are subjected to state-sponsored violence: sexually, physically, verbally, and emotionally. Black women, like Charnesia Corley, experience body-cavity searches, publicly, that are comparable to sexual assaults (Ritchie, 2016). Black women, like Chikesia Clemons, are not able to freely express their displeasure with food services that they pay for. So while waiting for a number to incorporate, she was wrestled to the ground, exposing her breasts, while police officers yelled and threatened her (Packnett, 2018). While these are only two stories, police misconduct, discretion, and excessive abuse must be addressed. Police officers need to be held accountable and policies need to be implemented to ensure women and citizens are protected.

Implications for Social Work Research

Intersectional attitudes of race and gender played a vital role in whether respondents were aware of Black women who experienced state-sponsored or police violence. The data demonstrate answers to the researcher's developed hypotheses, but further analyses can derive from the data. Future social work research can investigate the role media plays in conveying news regarded to Black women's interactions with police. Researchers can specifically look at social media and its impact in relaying the news.

Future research can also investigate Black women's awareness and attitudes towards state-sponsored violence. Gathering data with a larger sample size would also be beneficial for future research. Continuing social work research that validates Black women's struggles and experiences without reducing them to stereotypes

APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

Clark Atlanta University

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Study Title: Perception of Poxslice Duties

Principal Investigator: Ja'nae Williams

Research Advisor: Youseung Kim, Ph.D., MSW

IRB Study Number: HR20185780-1/A

I am a student at Clark Atlanta, in the Whitney M. Young Jr., School of Social Work. I am planning to conduct a research study, which I invite you to take part in. This form has important information about the reason for doing this study, what we will ask you to do if you decide to be in this study, and the way we would like to use information about you if you choose to be in the study.

Why are you doing this study?

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of people's perceptions and awareness of police officer's behaviors and the factors that connect them.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study?

You will be asked to complete a 25-questioned survey.

Study time: Study participation will take approximately 5-15 minutes.

Study location: All study procedures will take place online

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

To the best of my knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life. The risks associated with this study are minimal. There is a risk that you may feel uncomfortable sharing your personal beliefs and insights.

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality of the information we collect from you could be breached – we will take steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form.

What are the possible benefits for me or others?

You are not likely to have any direct benefit from being in this research study. This study is designed to learn more about people's perceptions of police officers. The study results may be used to help others with their future research.

How will you protect the information you collect about me, and how will that information be shared?

Results of this study may be used in publications and presentations. Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used.

We may share the data we collect from you for use in future research studies or with other researchers – if we share the data that we collect about you, we will remove any information that could identify you before we share it.

If we think that you intend to harm yourself or others, we will notify the appropriate people with this information.

Financial Information

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. Participants who complete the survey will be entered into a raffle for a \$25.00 Amazon gift card. The winner will be randomly selected.

What are my rights as a research participant?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer not to participate in this study, please feel free not to. You may withdraw from this study at any time, and you will not be penalized in any way for deciding to stop participation.

If you decide to withdraw from this study, the researchers will attempt to utilize the information already collected from you.

Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this research study?

If you have questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact the researchers at Ja'nae Williams Janae.williams@students.cau.edu. You may also contact the Researcher's Advisor Youseung Kim, P.H.D., MSW who can be reached at (404)-880-8559 or at ykim2@cau.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study or the integrity of this research, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of

Sponsored Programs at (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829 at Clark Atlanta University.

Consent

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I identify my ethnicity as:

Asian

Black/ African

White/ European

Latinx/Hispanic

Indigenous/Native

Pacific Islander

Prefer not answer

(Option to write in answer)

2. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If you're currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received.)

Less than a high school diploma

High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)

Some college, no degree

Associate degree

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Professional degree or Doctorate

Prefer not to answer

3. What is your age?

Under 18

18-25 years old

26-35 years old

36-45 years old

46 and up

Prefer not to answer

4. Gender:

Female

Male

Prefer not to answer

5. Would you identify as a trans person?

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

6. What is your approximate household income?

Less than \$20,000

\$20,000 to \$34,999

\$35,000 to \$49,999

\$50,000 to \$74,999

\$75,000 or more

Please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions in this survey. Please answer the questions honestly. For each statement please mark whether you Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, or Strongly Agree.

1. When women ask for equal opportunities for workplace promotions, they are really asking for favoritism rather than equality.
2. Feminists are seeking for women to have more power than men.
3. At work I would have more confidence in a male boss than a female boss.
4. Women are too emotional to hold supervisory positions.
5. Men should have the final say when making decisions for their entire household.
6. Men should be the breadwinner (make the most money) in their household.
7. Racism is exaggerated due to social media.
8. Racism is systematic power used to oppress people of color.
9. Black people use racism as an excuse for their lack of success.
10. Racism only affects Black people.
11. Racism is deeply woven into society.
12. Racism affects Black women.
13. I think about racial issues a lot.
14. People who have experienced violence at the hands of police officers did something to deserve it.
15. Police violence/brutality can include sexual assault, rape, and physical abuse.
16. Black people experience police violence because Black people are naturally violent.
17. Black women do not experience police violence.
18. When I think of police violence or police brutality
 - a. I automatically think about Black men or boys being victims.
 - b. I automatically think about Black women or girls being victims.
 - c. I automatically think about Black people in general being victims
 - d. I automatically think about ethnic minorities in general being victims.
 - e. I automatically think about a woman of color being victims
 - f. I automatically think about men of color being victims.
 - g. I automatically think about white men being victims.
 - h. I automatically think about white women being victims.
 - i. I automatically think about white people being victims.

19. I normally receive news about police violence/brutality
 - a. By watching the news stations on television
 - b. Through social media
 - c. Word of mouth
20. Please check next to the name that you recognize.
 - a. Sandra Bland
 - b. Michael Brown
 - c. Lisa Moore
 - d. Chikesia Clemons
 - e. Jacari King
 - f. Justine Damond
 - g. Rekia Boyd
 - h. Stephon Clark
 - i. Charleena Lyles
 - j. Diante Yarber
 - k. Alton Sterling
 - l. Korryn Gaines
 - m. Daniel Shaver
 - n. Kayla Moore
 - o. Zachary Hammond

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