

## Research Brief

### “This Person is Safe”: An Exemplar of Conducting Individual Interviews in Qualitative Research with Black Women

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#### WHY IS THIS RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

- This article seeks to fill the gap of minimal research on how to implement techniques necessary for Black women qualitative researchers, their Black female research participants, and others in historically marginalized and/or underrepresented groups who seek to facilitate, participate in, and further qualitative research with this population.
- This article highlights some techniques that can be effective in individual interviews in qualitative research with Black women.

#### KEY POINTS

- When interviewing Black women or other marginalized communities, it is imperative that the interviewer/s understand the importance of interviewees feeling a sense of safety, as history has repeatedly silenced, stigmatized, and devalued their lived experiences in the United States.
- Interviewers must also consider Black women's intersectional identities (e.g., race, class, and gender) as the power dynamic between the interviewer and the interviewee could impact the individual interviewee's experience.

#### WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

- There are 8 techniques that can be used when interviewing Black women which are grounded in intersectionality and Black feminist thought including: authenticity, change of footing (initiated by the interviewer who animates the participant's words to solidify an atmosphere of rapport and trust), cultural connection, cultural capital, disclosure, humble vulnerability, universalization, and validation.
- Context influences the participant's lived experiences given the topic being explored.
- When interviewing Black women, interviewers should be mindful of how they use themselves as research instruments, their power relation between them and the interviewee, and what the researcher leaves with the research participants when the interview is concluded.
- Qualitative researchers who are not Black women should be mindful that regardless of the techniques they use, there are limitations to the extent they can develop a trusting connection during the interviews as they lack the cultural capital and universalization of what it feels like to be Black and female.

**“When interviewing Black women for qualitative studies, it is vital for researchers to employ specific techniques that build rapport, trust, authentic connection, and help Black women feel safe.”**

#### ACTION STEPS

**Further research is needed to examine how researchers use various techniques in qualitative individual interviews in general, but with Black women specifically.**



#### CONTINUE READING

##### Full Article

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##### About Dr. Quenette L. Walton

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