**Dr Victoria Showunmi**

**Associate professor**

**UCL IOE**

**UK**

**Black women and inequality in the workplace**

*“Living life as black women requires wisdom because knowledge about the dynamics of intersecting oppressions has been essential to black women's survival… Black women cannot afford to be fools of any type for Other objectification as the Other denies us protections that white skin maleness and wealth confer.” Patricia Hill Collins 2000, p.257*

Introduction

This paper explores race and gender in the context of the workplace, analysing the inequality experienced by Black women to create a better understanding of what it is to be Black and a woman in contemporary UK society. The conditionality of equality gains achieved so far is revealed. Examples of gains claimed in reports (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities 2021) are deconstructed, highlighting the uncertainty of fictitious attainments. There may be legislation, but equality has not yet been achieved, especially for Black women. Concerning workplace inequalities, this paper is largely based on empirical research. The methods used have been effective in exposing inequality and the roots of inequality. These are outlined so they can be more widely used. The damaging impact of everyday and sophisticated racism combined with sexism is detailed (Showunmi 2022). A fresh cause of inequality is foregrounded: White Women Syndrome (Showunmi 2022). The ‘pet to threat’ ADD REF phenomenon whereby support is initially provided then withdrawn when Black women progress in their careers is explained. The evolution of the term ‘Black’ and its significance in everyday usage in the workplace are also considered. The dominance of White women and their role in discrimination against Black women is discussed (Showunmi 2022). The persistence of racism despite notions of a post-racist society is elucidated through the theory of sophisticated racism (Showunmi 2022).