



#CapeBreak: The Reverse Engineering of the Strong Black Woman Phenomena

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Abstract

The #CapeBreak Project offers a diverse perspective from four resilient Black women between the ages of 34 and 58. The initiative seeks to challenge the stereotype of being the "Strong Black Woman" who is burdened with the expectation to be mentally and physically strong for everyone around them. Through art-based research, we explored intergenerational dynamics, the psychological influence of nature, and the emotional well-being of Black women.

The #CapeBreak study will conclude with a live ethnographic performance, conference/festival presentations, panel discussions, and journal publications. We aim to reach a broader audience by highlighting the importance of Black joy globally and supporting Black women who feel constrained by being the "Strong Black Woman."

Introduction

Empowering Black women to look inward to create transformative change emotionally, physically, and mentally, Dr. Omni has created a platform where Black women can break away from the "Strong Black Woman Phenomena" through nature engagement and self-reflection (Image by Yetunde Hofmann).



Research Methods

LITERATURE REVIEWS



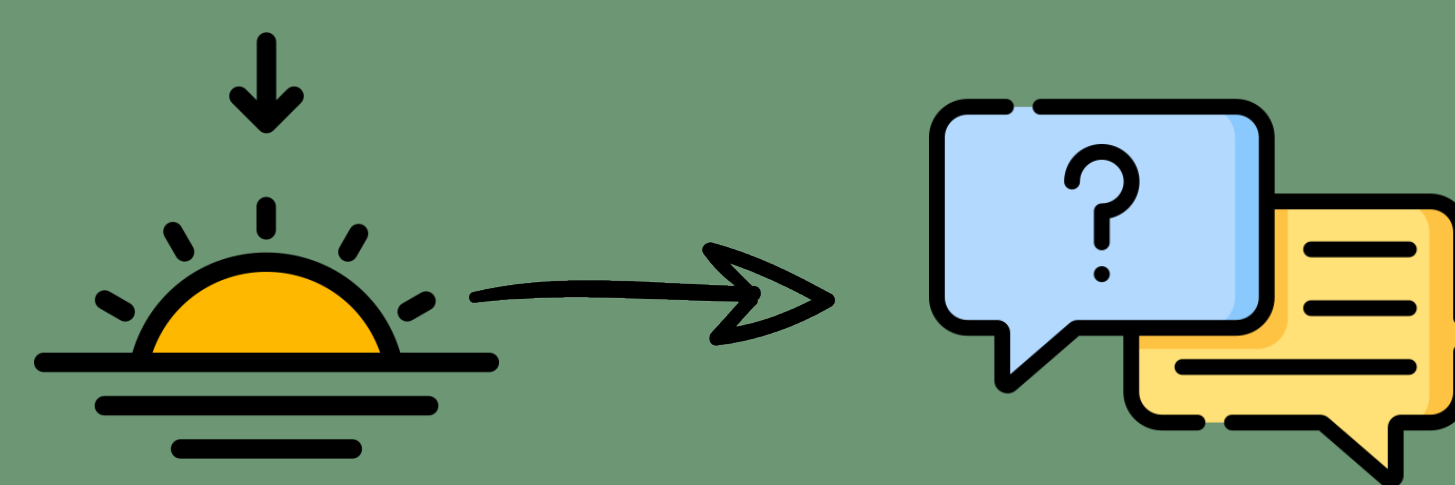
- We collected secondary data and analyzed a variety of academic journals where we examined the information through 3CQs: comment, compliment, connection, and question to present our findings.

OBSERVATIONS/VIDEO REFLECTIONS



- The 11-minute film, "Soles of Black Women," featuring the participants, was available for us to observe before the interviews. In each segment – invitation, acceptance, and reflection – Dr. Omni requested that we find our own three original words as we watched the film.
- After reviewing the film and additional data collection, "vulnerability" and "stillness" became two common themes in both the visual and verbal analysis.

INTERVIEWS

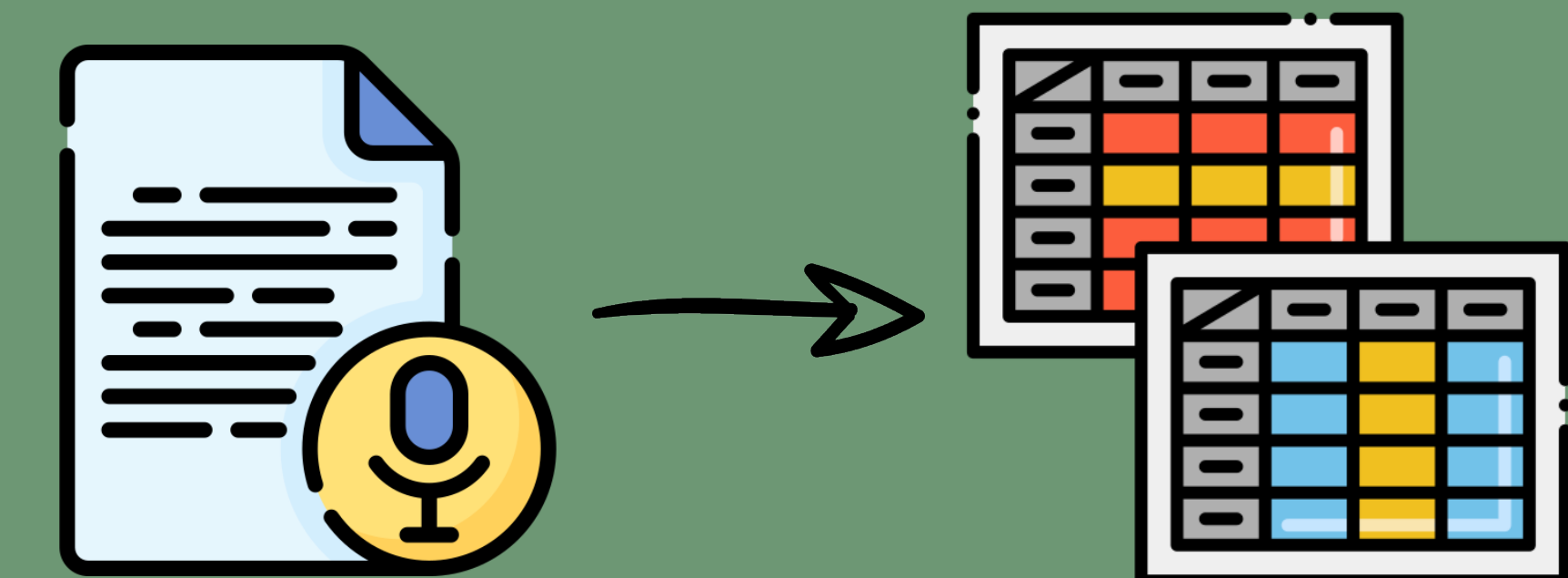


- Interviewed four of the eight Black women who participated in the film, "Soles of Black Women," via zoom.
- Each participant shared three words encapsulating their experiences while watching each segment of the film:
 - Walking toward the camera (invitation)
 - Watching the sunset (acceptance)
 - Staring at the camera (reflection)
- The research participants provided their own personal insights of the 11-minute film.
- The research mentees posed a series of base and bonus questions to deepen our understanding.



Data

- Excerpts from the transcripts were organized on a spreadsheet to find common themes and words.
- We explored the transcripts individually and then collectively to compare and discuss key findings.



Conclusion

We are still analyzing data but have found significant similarities among the four Black women. They share similar experiences while facing individual challenges such as making time for self-care, learning to embrace stillness, and "dropping the metaphorical cape associated with being the Strong Black Woman"(Omni, 2023).

References

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