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PERCEPTIONS OF WARMTH AND COMPETENCY OF WOMEN OF COLOR IN
LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Women have slowly risen as leaders in recent years but many believe the rise to the top is still too slow and the glass ceiling seems more realistic now than ever. For women of color, that rise to the top is much slower and the number of women in leadership positions currently is infinitesimal. The researchers wanted to know why this phenomenon occurs and are there perceptions of women of color that stop them from rising to the top even behind White women. This study investigates whether women of color in leadership positions are perceived as more or less warm and competent than White women. Participants read a supposed email from a superior to her subordinates about her displeasure with the poor work performance of the entire team. Via random assignment, participants received an email either signed from a White woman, Black woman, or Hispanic woman, and then rated their perception of the superiors' characteristics along dimensions of warmth and competence. A 3 Target Race (Hispanic, White, Black) x 2 Trait Ratings (Warmth, Competence) mixed model ANOVA with repeated measures on the second factor revealed that all targets were rated as low on warmth relative to competence. White and Hispanic women, however, were seen as significantly more competent than Black women who were seen as significantly less competent. The findings that Hispanic women were seen as significantly more competent than Black women is worth further investigation. One thought may lead into the negative stereotypes within not only minority communities of Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos but also negative stereotypes from White groups towards Black groups and White groups towards Hispanic/Latino groups.

KEYWORDS: INTERSECTIONALITY, GLASS CEILING, MICROAGGRESSIONS

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Chapter 1

PERCEPTIONS OF WARMTH AND COMPETENCY OF WOMEN OF COLOR IN LEADERSHIP

Women in the Workplace as Leaders

A landmark piece of legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawed discrimination in hiring and promotion based on sex and race; this allowed women to finally break the glass ceiling in the workforce, however, it seems as though the process is going much slower than planned, even almost 50 years later. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, women made up 57.2 percent of the labor force in 2013. Additionally, the national average of women's earnings in management, professional, and related occupations as a percentage of their male counterparts was 72.1 percent (2013). Differences between men's earnings as compared to women's, at full time status, have risen over time from approximately 62% in 1972 to approximately 82% in more recent years (U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). However, in leadership positions, women are extremely under-represented; they hold 14.6 percent of executive officer positions, are 8.1 percent of top earners, and women make up only 4.6 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs (Warner, 2014). Although, generally, women's presence in managerial positions has increased by 20%, the pattern obscures differences by race -- Black and Hispanic women make up far less than 20% of such positions (Combs, 2003). Additionally, there is one Black female CEO and no Hispanic female CEOs who lead Fortune 500 companies (Fairchild,

2014). Even worse, women of color (e.g. Black, Indian, Hispanic, Asian) hold only 3.2 percent of the board seats across all Fortune 500 companies (Warner, 2014).

That men and women appear in different numbers in terms of leadership is perhaps not surprising given that men and women are also perceived differently in the workplace. One way that men and women are perceived differently is by stereotyping. Stereotyping can be beneficial according to social psychologists, as it is simply defined as “characteristics that are associated with members of social categories” (Stangor & Lange, 1994). A person in scrubs may be stereotyped as being a doctor or a nurse and a child may stereotype all animals with four legs to be dogs; stereotyping, though usually referred to in a negative context, can be positive and has shown to be important for cognitive development (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Negative stereotyping does happen, and when it does, it can be a more subtle form of discrimination and can also have serious implications for the person stereotyping and the groups or person(s) being stereotyped (Task Force on Women in Academe, 2000; Reyna, 2000). Tiedens (2001) found that when males, relative to females, show anger in the workplace they were seen as more competent and were even placed in jobs with higher pay and status. In contrast, when women showed anger in the workplace, she was evaluated as less competent (Tiedens, 2001). An explanation of this would reveal that anger expressed by men is attributed to the situation, while anger expressed by women is attributed to her disposition (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008). Stereotypical female traits (e.g., nurturing, mentoring, humble) are perceived as more effective than male traits in the workplace; women leaders who display more stereotypical male traits (e.g., assertive, independent) are seen as less effective and are at an increased risk of workplace harassment (Leskinen, Rabelo & Cortina, 2015; Rhee & Sigler, 2015). Also, in highly male dominated jobs such as accounting and finance, women were found to experience stereotype threat and report

low senses of well-being and were less likely to recommend that field to other women (Von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa & McFarlane, 2015).

In a millennium where the importance of having more women as an integral part of the industries is crucial to meeting quotas and success overall, the implications of negative stereotyping are far too great to ignore. In the book, *The Myth of Mars and Venus* by Deborah Cameron, she explores the negative stereotyping of women on political platforms as well as in leadership roles in the workplace. Cameron suggests that women face verbal harassment in the workplace that makes women think twice about drawing attention to themselves in the public sphere (2007). These negative stereotypes that stop women from moving higher and stop their interest to do so needs to end. It is clear that in the future will be more prepared and qualified for such leadership positions. For example, women were also more likely than men to have a bachelor's degree, which means more women than men will be qualified for leadership positions (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). How does this affect businesses performance and finances? Folkman and Zenger (2015) state that adding women to senior levels of management improves the overall effectiveness of leadership teams in companies. Landis (2011), Gul, Srinidhi, and Ng (2011) and Isidro and Sobral (2015) suggest that there are positive correlations that boards with more women, whether in the United States or in European countries, outperform their peers financially in regards to share prices, stock prices, and larger returns on equity.

Women of Color

Just as it is important to have a gender diverse board and gender diverse leadership in the workplace, it can also be more beneficial to have racially diverse leaders. Roberson and Park

(2006) suggest that beyond a point, firm performance increases when diversity increases; also, investors are more interested in investing in organizations that are recognized for their diversity. According to Richard (2000) diversity is important but it is imperative for businesses and organizations to also have a growth strategy to accommodate for the new growth and change in the business and organization demography. For many businesses, increasing gender-diverse boards and leaders may be tough enough but adding racial diversity within gender may be a more difficult request. Though women in the workplace face many difficulties, women of color are not only lumped into one category generalizing their experiences but also they all deal with perceptions that their leadership traits are worse than those of White women. Women of color face even more adversity because they identify with multiple identities, a phenomenon known as intersectionality (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). They're not only facing sexism in the workplace but racism as well, and as they climb the ladder of leadership, the difficulties they face become unbearable like facing different microaggressions, not having any mentors which is important in terms of networking, and lower pay (Blake, 1999; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010).

While Hispanic and Black women seem to be similar with regard to the statistics, most research about women of color generalizes the experiences of Black women to all women of color. This is a problem as there are distinct differences and challenges that Hispanic women face in the workplace than Black women or women of other races and ethnicities and vice versa. Black women were less likely to work in higher paying management, professional, and related occupations in 2013 (34%) relative to White women (43%) (U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). The same patterns hold true for Hispanic women, who were also less likely to work in higher paying management, professional, and related occupations in 2013 (26%) (U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Another example, White women make 78 cents to a White man's dollar

and Black women make only 64 cents, Hispanic and Latina women come in last with 53 cents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The research is behind on studying the stereotyping of women of color in the workplace; however, the research that is present shows some interesting findings. Not surprisingly when searching for “women of color” as the target race, most frequently the target race being studied are Black women. Nevertheless, the research shows “Being White” is perceived as a leadership trait, and it is, thus, easy to understand why women of color face greater challenges in the workplace than White women (Rosette, Leonardelli & Phillips, 2008). Weitz and Gordon (1993) explain that among White Non-Hispanic Students, Black women are perceived as more aggressive, loud, and talkative, among other traits; solely by showing them pictures of the women and asking the participants to characterize black women using the list of given traits. Even when rated on positive traits such as intelligence, the students rated the Black targets as less positive, 45% for women in general and 22% for Black women (Weitz & Gordon, 1993). A study by Holder, Jackson, and Ponterotto (2015) focused on the racial microaggressions that Black women face in corporate leadership; they studied the psychological and career-related impact and found that all of the Black women interviewed reported using coping strategies to protect themselves from outward frustrations and humiliations. Black women also engaged in an elimination process frequently by recalling an incident that happened at the workplace to confirm or deny a presence of stereotyping, racial microaggressions, and subtle racism (Holder, Jackson, & Ponterotto, 2015).

Our study further investigates the differences that Hispanic women face in the workplace under the idea that Hispanic women fall somewhere in between Whites and Blacks when it comes to racial identity. For example, Hispanic and Latino/a persons are considered in census

reporting not as a separate racial group but instead an ethnic group; following the question of whether they identify with being Hispanic and Latino/a, they must then identify as a race (e.g., White, Black, Asian) and research has shown that many select “some other race,” to provide a basis that they fall into none of the given racial groups suggested (Cordero-Guzman, 1992). The struggle with racial identity agrees that Hispanics are under-represented in literature about stereotyping in the workplace and Hispanic women are far more under-represented. One example found Hispanic women law associates perceiving the glass ceiling far more in existence than their male Hispanic and White women counterparts (Foley, Kidder & Powell, 2002). Most literature regards small samples through interviews and qualitative data to reveal discrimination and stereotyping from Hispanic women in the workplace (Hite, 2007). It is clear however, how disregarded Hispanic and Latino/a women are when studying the literature about stereotypes in the workplace.

An important stereotype for the workplace is competence or perceived competence. Competence is predicted by the perceived status from one group as they are related to another in society. Low status groups (e.g., poor people, minority groups) are perceived as incompetent and high status groups (e.g., rich people, majority groups) are perceived as more competent (Fiske, et al., 1999, 2002b). Black and Hispanic/Latino groups are seen as low status and their low status is commonly related to their ability instead of other factors like opportunity, luck, etc.

Warmth and Competence

Fiske, Cuddy, Glick and Xu (2002) found it important to categorize 2 primary dimensions of differentiating out-group stereotypes as being warm and competent. They found

that through different studies they were able to cluster different stereotyped groups into four reliable clusters based on warmth and competence. 70% of proposed groups (e.g., Feminists, Jews, Blue-Collar, Poor whites) were seen as the same on warmth and competence across different samples (Cuddy, Fiske, Glick & Xu, 2002). Professional women are often seen as competent, but cold, which accounts for an interesting view of women as leaders in the workplace. Black professionals are also seen in the same way as professional women (Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick, 2004). The purpose of this study is to see if there are different perceptions of warmth and competency between women of color and White women in the workplace. Particularly we are interested in looking for the different perceptions within Black and Hispanic women in leadership positions. From past studies we expect that all women will be low on warmth. We expect to find that the women of color, Black and Hispanic, will be significantly low on competence as compared to the White women.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

Black women and Hispanic women would be low on competence and White women would be high on competence.

Hypothesis 2:

Black women, White women and Hispanic women would all score low on warmth.

Chapter 2

METHODS

Participants

Participants were surveyed through Amazon Mechanical Turk System. Amazon Mechanical Turk allows for participants take surveys and receive a small reward. The benefit of using Mechanical Turk as opposed to a sample of the college students is it is a lot easier to generalize the findings to a larger population because it is a random sample. 173 people (91 Male, 82 Female; Average Age = 36.55, SD=11.96). Participants were mostly white (n=163) with a small number of Asian (n=10). Black and Hispanic participants were excluded a priori since they were target race.

Measurements

The participants read an e-mail from their superior to her subordinates about her unhappiness with the poor work performance from the entire team. The e-mail was created by the researcher, and included 2 grammatical errors. The grammatical errors were included to see if the participant would think the superior was more or less competent based on the errors, despite her title as Director of Operations of the company. The e-mail was signed either by a White woman, Black woman, or Hispanic woman. The names used were chosen by historical information of U.S. Census information as well as other information from resources about most popular names per race and Hispanic ethnicity. Each name was chosen from the 1960's data set

of the most common names of White, Black and Hispanic women of that decade making the women's age range from approximately 45-55 years of age.

Participants rated the superior on twenty traits using a seven-point (1-not at all, 2- low, 3-somewhat, 4-neutral, 5- moderately, 6- high, 7-extremely) Likert-type scale derived from Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick's Stereotype Content Model scale (2004). The scales are to perceive warmth of the individual using a four-item scale (good-natured, sincere, warm, trustworthy; $\alpha = .83$) and to perceive competency of the individual using a four-item scale (capable, efficient, organized, skillful; $\alpha = .80$). The remaining 12 traits (e.g., feisty, committed, happy) were filler traits (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002).

Procedure

Participants completed the study online using the Qualtrics system which was used because of the ease to create the study as well as launching the study to Amazon Mechanical Turk. Following consent, participants were told:

“The researchers are studying how quickly an impression can be made from a subordinate towards their superior. We'd like you to read an e-mail from the Director of Operations of Novartis Enterprise LLC to their employees and give us your impressions of them. Imagine you're one of their employees and give us your impression of your superior. Try to answer using your first, immediate impression. “

There are 3 Independent Variables: White woman's name, Black woman's name and Hispanic woman's name.

Each participant received the same e-mail content however; each email was signed by a different name based on the Independent Variable for their survey. Participants then completed Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu's Stereotype Content Model scale. Participants then answered demographic questions about gender, age, race and ethnicity, and education level. Participants were finally asked to answer our manipulation check, which asked them to select the name of the superior in which they had received the e-mail from

Chapter 3

RESULTS

We conducted a 3 Target Race (Hispanic, White, Black) x 2 Trait Ratings (Warmth, Competence) mixed model ANOVA with repeated measures on the second factor. While there was a main effect of Trait Ratings, $F(1,170)=364.35$, $p<.001$, there was also a significant interaction, $F(2,170)=3.17$, $p=.044$. Simple effects test revealed that there were no differences in perceptions of warmth across the three targets, (all p 's $>.65$). The Hispanic Target ($M=1.83$, $SD=.70$), White Target ($M=1.89$, $SD=.78$), and Black target ($M=1.87$, $SE=.92$) were all equally perceived as warm. For competence, however, differences did emerge. While the White ($M=3.25$, $SD=.88$) and Hispanic target ($M=3.23$, $SD=1.00$) did not differ from each other ($p=.91$), both were perceived as marginally more competent than the Black target ($M=2.90$, $SD=1.04$; Black v White, $p=.057$; Black v Hispanic, $p=.073$).

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

Implications

Overall, what we had expected based upon Cuddy, Fiske, Glick and Xu's initial study differed from our current study's findings. In the initial study Black professionals were high on competence but average on warmth, Businesswomen were higher on competence than black professionals but lower on warmth, and Hispanics were low on competence and lower than businesswomen in warmth. What we had expected was to see that all the variables, Black, White, and Hispanic women, would all be low on warmth; these were indeed the findings of our results. We also expected to see that the Black and Hispanic targets were to be seen as low on competence and the White target would be seen as significantly higher in competence than the other targets. Results revealed, however, that Hispanic and White targets both scored high on competence and the Black targets were significantly lower in competence.

Findings that Black targets were significantly lower in competence than White targets was expected based on past findings that Black women are less competent than White women. Again and again, past researchers (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 1999, 2002; Block Aumann and Chelin, 2012; Foley, Kidder & Powell, 2002) have replicated the findings that White superior's are seen as more competent than their Black counterparts. Block, Aumann and Chelin (2012) found not only that White managers were stereotyped as more competent but also more ambitious and manipulative.

The most interesting finding was that Hispanic women leaders scored high on competence when we expected them to be low on competence. Society and data shows us that there are not many Hispanic women leaders in the workplace, which makes this finding unexpected. There seems to be an example of cognitive dissonance between what we expect or perceive from Hispanic women and what is actually happening within Hispanic women in leadership positions. An explanation to the finding could be that in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the majority of Hispanic or Latino/a ethnic persons also defined themselves as White in regards to race (2013). There are complexities also when it comes to skin color, even within Hispanic or Latino/a groups; Black and Brown individuals who identify closer to being *Black* are discriminated more from lighter skinned Latino/as (Araujo-Dawson, 2015).

Limitations and Future Directions

As with all research, this study was faced with limitations. First, the sample size may limit the generalizability of our findings. All participants besides ten participants were White. A larger sample including different race and ethnicities could alter the results for better generalizability. Second, manipulation checks showed that some participant's read over the signature of the superior, which is the basis for the completion of the study, and it's findings. The e-mail is also considered to be imperfect and further research could use a different e-mail or different method of content to base the superior's characteristics.

This study, along with like studies, shows the importance of positive stereotypes of women in leadership. When women are perceived as less competent because of their race and gender, it hinders them from completing their best work. Ely, Ibarra and Kolb (2011) suggest

that “Women’s Leadership Development Programs” can minimize this by helping women develop and advance into more senior leadership roles. Not only do women have to face being seen as less competent but also less devoted to their work. Disparities between men and women on their career and family goals and balances are almost non-existent and don’t match with reality. Women must face great challenges in the workplace and greater challenges in leadership positions. Even more, Women of color face greater challenges and obstacles simply because of the color of their skin.

Further studies should test and re-test similar research to guarantee reliability and generalizability to the larger population. Further studies should also test other women of color such as Asian women, Indian women, Native American women, etc. When women of color are all blanketed under the experiences of one race or ethnicity (usually Black women); we miss the differences between the groups. This will show that not all women of color face the same challenges across the board. This can help leadership development programmers and coordinators to put an emphasis on the importance of different types of identity and diversity within the workplace. When we as a society minimize the experiences of different women of color, we are ignorant to their differences in difficulties to rise to senior leadership and executive roles.

Appendix

E-Mail Content

To all employees,

The past few weeks have been a time of observation, and based on these observations, things are going to change. Firstly, I have not seen anyone step up to the plate to complete their tasks. There is no initiative. As employees, it is up to you too be innovative and leaders in your own jobs. People are leaving their jobs early without finishing their tasks. We have a quota and that quota is not being met. Based on these findings, new regulations need to be implemented. You will have pay deductions if you do not meet your quota and job requirements without a valid reason. In order to ensure that our company succeeds, there will be mandatory employee training two nights a week that are 1.5 hours long. You also have to submit weekly reports based on what you have worked on and what still needs to be accomplished. Failure to adhere to these new regulations will result in a meeting with me. In order for this business to succeed, all of its employees have to be leaders and excel in their tasks. I expect to see positive changes in the coming weeks. The performances so far have been irresponsible, and unacceptable.

If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to respond to this email.

Sincerely,

Ashanti Jones

Director of Operations, Novartis Enterprise LLC
Work: (215) 881-7503



“To all employees,

The past few weeks have been a time of observation, and based on these observations, things are going to change. Firstly, I have not seen anyone step up to the plate to complete their tasks. There is no initiative. As employees, it is up to you too be innovative and leaders in your own jobs. People are leaving their jobs early without finishing their tasks. We have a quota and that quota is not being met. Based on these findings, new regulations need to be implemented. You will have pay deductions if you do not meet your quota and job requirements without a valid reason. In order to ensure that our company succeeds, there will be mandatory employee training two nights a week that are 1.5 hours long. You also have to submit weekly reports based on what you have worked on and what still needs to be accomplished. Failure to adhere to these new regulations will result in a meeting with me. In order for this business to succeed, all of its employees have to be leaders and excel in their tasks. I expect to see positive changes in the coming weeks. The performances so far have been irresponsible, and unacceptable.

If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to respond to this email.

Sincerely,

(Name of Woman)

Director of Operations, Novartis Enterprise LLC”

Stereotype Content Model Scale

1. Is the Supervisor capable?
2. Is the Supervisor efficient?
3. Is the Supervisor organized?
4. Is the Supervisor skillful?
5. Is the Supervisor good-natured?
6. Is the Supervisor warm?
7. Is the Supervisor trustworthy?
8. Is the Supervisor sincere?
9. Is the Supervisor determined?
10. Is the Supervisor practical?
11. Is the Supervisor alert?
12. Is the Supervisor committed?
13. Is the Supervisor cooperative?
14. Is the Supervisor happy?
15. Is the Supervisor helpful?
16. Is the Supervisor lazy?
17. Is the Supervisor positive?
18. Is the Supervisor feisty?
19. Is the Supervisor impatient?
20. Is the Supervisor miserable?

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ACADEMIC VITA

Academic Vita of Melissa Aguilar
Melissa.aguilar@tc.columbia.edu

Pennsylvania State University – Abington College
Bachelor of Arts in Psychological & Social Sciences
Women's Studies Minor
Letters, Arts & Sciences Honors

Perceptions of Warmth & Competency of Women of Color in Leadership
Michael J. Bernstein, Associate Professor of Psychology

WORK EXPERIENCE

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment

Sesame Place, Langhorne, PA

April 2010-Present

Human Resources Training Representative

October 2015-Present

- Ensure a positive guest and team member experience through Team Member training
- Train all 1800+ full-time and part-time employees on park policies, emergency action plans, EHS, OSHA regulations, etc.
- Deliver Guest Service Basics training to all Team Members
- Assist in the development and administration of the Team Member incentive and recognition programs

Park Operations Supervisor – Guest Arrival

January 2015-Present

- Lead a Guest Arrival team consisting of 85 Team Members, 4 Team Leads, and 6 Assistant Supervisors
- Complete all daily operation tasks swiftly in a high velocity, fast-paced work environment
- Ensure all Team Members and the Guest Arrival Leadership Team are providing the highest level of guest courtesy, recognizing and rewarding team members who provide exemplary service
- Respond to Guest Correspondent Emails using correct and professional language as quickly as possible

Human Resources Coordinator

January 2015-May 2015

- Processed employment applications across all operational disciplines
- Conducted structured interviews to hire the 1800+ seasonal employees required to operate the park
- Confirmed on-boarding paperwork for all hired employees

Penn State Abington Orientation Leader, Abington, PA

May 2013-August 2015

- Led new student orientations through public speaking and interactive skills
- Mentored new orientation leaders in presenting PowerPoint presentations, diversity trainings and ice breakers
- Espoused strong public speaking and interaction skills with both groups and individuals to mentor incoming students and their families

AWARDS

2015 Eric A. and Josephine Walker Award

2015 Exemplary Campus Leader Award

2014 Emerging Leader of the Year Award

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Aguilar, M., & Bernstein, M. J. (anticipated April, 2016). Perceptions of Warmth and Competency of Women of Color in Leadership. **Schreyer Honors College Thesis Presentation.**

Aguilar, M., & Bernstein, M. J. (anticipated March, 2016). Perceptions of Warmth and Competency of Women of Color in Leadership. Poster to be presented at the Eastern Psychological Association conference, New York, NY.

Aguilar, M., & Bernstein, M. J. (March, 2015). The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Facial Expression Detection. Poster presented at the Eastern Psychological Association conference, Philadelphia, PA.

COMMUNITY SERVICE INVOLVEMENT

Abington Benefiting THON – Executive Director April 2014-April 2015

- THON raises funds for the Four Diamonds at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital in the fight against pediatric cancer
- Coordinated and planned fundraising events including soliciting for donations throughout the community
- Assisted, led, and mentored the Abington Benefiting THON Executive Board throughout the year
- Communicated any questions, comments and concerns between members, donors, and supporters
- Handled all donations, finances and transfers through Penn State’s Financial Account Systems
- Led a group of 60 members to raise nearly \$34,000 within a 5 month fundraising period

Safe Harbor at Abington Memorial Hospital, Abington, PA August 2013-June 2014

Children’s Bereavement Co-Facilitator

- Facilitated a group of 4-7 year olds who lost a parent or sibling and provided ongoing grief support
- Created activities to help the participants through the healing process

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Fluent in English with limited working proficiency in Spanish