Professional and Petty:
An Investigation Into the Social and Individual Conditions That Promote Instigated Acts of Workplace Incivility Between Black Professionals

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ABSTRACT

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The crabs-in-a-barrel (CIB) mentality—a specialized form of incivility that occurs among members of the same ingroup (i.e., intragroup incivility)—is an understudied yet destructive and consequential intragroup phenomenon. As previous studies on the CIB mentality within the Black community have primarily focused on targets of the deviant behavior, this study trailblazed by serving as the first to employ a mixed methods design to investigate the environmental, perceptual, and affective antecedents of instigated Black-on-Black (B-o-B) incivility in the workplace. More specifically, the present study adopted a social-interactionist approach to investigate whether various aspects of work climate (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climate), affective states (i.e., emotional taxation), and workgroup composition factors (i.e., perceived collective and competitive minority threats) were positively associated with instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace. To that end, a cross-sectional design was employed with a U.S.-based sample of 523 full-time Black professionals across various organizations and industries. The proposed hypotheses were tested using logistic regression analyses.

Overall, the results showed that collective minority threat and experienced incivility were the most consistently significant predictors of instigated B-o-B incivility in the proposed
model—with experienced incivility showing the greatest effect on the outcome variable between the two. Moreover, participants reported that there were 10 primary reasons and/or justifications for acting uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year. This study provides further support and validation to the notion that the CIB phenomenon represents another variant of the workplace incivility construct. Additionally, this study broadens the workplace incivility discussion and research stream by offering unique insight into the perspectives of racial minority instigators of uncivil behavior at work. The results hold considerable implications for practitioners and organizations seeking to better understand, and address, the issue of intragroup incivility in the workplace—particularly as it relates to Black professionals. Theoretical implications and directions for future research are also discussed.
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With love,

D.A.P.
DEDICATION

To my childhood heroes—my “Fab Five”:

Darlean (Ma), Howard (Pops), Willie May (Madea), O.C., and Pepper
There is an old saying among African Americans that when someone Black tries to pull themselves up in the world, “like crabs in a barrel” another Black person always reaches up to pull them back down. How often has the most unbearable antagonist at the job, at school, on the committee, in the church or mosque been another Black person? No doubt fools and idiots come in all shapes, sizes and colors—and African Americans certainly have no shortage of them. However, there seems to be an uncanny tendency amongst many Blacks to orchestrate and plot the demise of other Blacks, sometimes even friends and relatives. It is as though the achievements of family and friends, colleagues and acquaintances are seen as a threat or an affront.


The issue of workplace incivility (i.e., low-intensity deviant workplace behavior with an ambiguous intent to harm; Andersson & Pearson, 1999) has garnered a considerable amount of attention within the organizational literature over the last two decades. In fact, a simple search for the term on Google Scholar yields nearly 14,500 results, with approximately 13,500 (93%) of those articles surfacing between the years of 2000 and 2017. Thus, when considering that an identical query would have generated only a meager 23 publications in the 1990s (see Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Magley, & Nelson, 2017), it becomes overwhelmingly clear that researchers have been actively pursuing a better and more comprehensive understanding of the construct in recent years.

Blau and Andersson (2005) speculatively attributed this flurry of interest in the topic to several organizational trends, including: (a) increased work stress and incidents of employee exhaustion and burnout; (b) diminished perceptions of job security as more companies downsize; (c) increased opportunity for misunderstanding and social miscues due to a more diverse workforce; and (d) lower employee job satisfaction. However, despite the significant headways
that have been made with respect to understanding workplace incivility and its respective prevalence, enablers, manifestations, consequences, and inhibitors (see Schilpzand, De Pater, & Erez, 2016, for an overview), much of the research concerning the construct has narrowly focused on the experiences and opinions of its targets while ignoring the various factors that might prompt individuals to act uncivilly towards others in the first place. Moreover, research focusing on the marginalized experiences of Black professionals, particularly as it relates to uncivil behaviors directed at other Blacks in the workplace, remains sparse.

Therefore, this study addressed this gap by empirically investigating the personal characteristics and social conditions associated with instigators of the crabs-in-a-barrel (CIB) mentality—a specialized form of incivility that occurs among members of the same ingroup (i.e., intragroup incivility).1 More specifically, the rationale for the present study rests on the following premises: (a) the CIB mentality, as an aspect of workplace incivility, is an understudied yet destructive and consequential intragroup phenomenon; (b) when the CIB phenomenon has been studied, the focus has primarily been on the intragroup dynamics of professional women (see Mizrahi, 2004; Sheppard & Aquino, 2014); (c) although anecdotally resonant, few studies have investigated the CIB mentality’s ferocity among the Black community within the U.S. context; and (d) the limited studies that have investigated the CIB construct within the Black community (viz., Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017) have taken a predominantly qualitative and descriptive approach to understanding the phenomenon, and have focused more on the deleterious consequences for those on the receiving end of “crab behavior” and less so on the various social conditions that drive, trigger, or encourage CIB antics by transgressors.

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1 It is also known alternatively as the crabs-in-the-barrel syndrome, the crabs-in-a-basket syndrome, the crabs-in-a-bucket mentality or, more simply, the crab mentality.
For these reasons, this study trailblazes by serving as the first to employ a mixed methods design to investigate the environmental, perceptual, and affective antecedents of instigated Black-on-Black (B-o-B) incivility in the workplace—a phenomenon that has been corroborated qualitatively (see Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017) but never investigated through a systematic quantitative approach. To that end, this paper begins with a brief introduction to the workplace incivility construct more generally, and then proceeds to make a case for the study’s current focus on intragroup incivility among Black professionals in the workplace (i.e., the CIB mentality).

**Workplace Incivility: A Pervasive, Elusive, and Costly Act**

Colloquially, workplace incivility serves as a hypernym to describe discourteous, condescending, and/or exclusionary behaviors that violate workplace norms of professionalism and respect but otherwise appear mundane and nonthreatening (Cortina et al., 2017). Andersson and Pearson (1999) more formally defined the phenomenon as “low-intensity deviant behavior with an ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (p. 457). This may include such behaviors as: (a) making condescending or demeaning remarks; (b) withholding valuable resources or information from someone; (c) belittling another’s work or contribution; (d) insulting or yelling at someone; (e) passing blame for our own mistakes; (f) addressing someone in unprofessional terms; (g) invading another’s privacy or property; or (h) ignoring, interrupting, or socially excluding someone (Pearson & Porath, 2009; see also Blau & Andersson, 2005; Cortina et al., 2017; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Gray, Carter, & Sears, 2017; Martin & Hine, 2005).

Thus, as a form of workplace deviance, workplace incivility categorically fits into Robinson and Bennett’s (1995) classification of *interpersonal deviance* since instigators of
uncivil behavior specifically target fellow organizational members as opposed to the actual organization itself (e.g., theft, fraud, vandalism, or excessive absenteeism). The associated costs of experiencing incivility by unsuspecting professionals have been well-documented and wide-ranging, including: stunted creativity and task performance (Porath & Erez, 2007; Porath & Pearson, 2013); lower job satisfaction (Penney & Spector, 2005); decreased morale and deterioration of team spirit (Porath & Pearson, 2013); increased anxiety and psychological distress (Cortina et al., 2001; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Nicholson & Griffin, 2015; Porath & Pearson, 2013); reduced psychological detachment from work (Nicholson & Griffin, 2015); heightened turnover intentions (Wilson & Holmvall, 2013); increased work-to-family conflict (Lim & Lee, 2011); lost time worrying about the incident and/or avoiding the incivility instigator (Porath & Pearson, 2013); and increased absenteeism (Sliter, Sliter, & Jex, 2012; see Schilpzand et al., 2016, for a more detailed summary).

Interestingly, previous studies (viz., Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004; Montgomery, Kane, & Vance, 2004; Porath & Erez, 2009; Totterdell, Hershcovis, Niven, Reich, & Stride, 2012) have also found that simply witnessing incivility can prove detrimental to one’s psychological and emotional well-being as bystanders have reported experiencing impaired creativity, decreased motivation to help others, lower job satisfaction and commitment, increased emotional exhaustion, lower health satisfaction, and increased work withdrawal and turnover intentions.

Furthermore, the long-term financial impact of workplace incivility on harboring organizations cannot be overstated. In fact, it is estimated that the aftermath of workplace incivility costs organizations upwards of $14,000 per employee annually because of cognitive distractions and work delays that result from experiencing uncivil behaviors on the job (Pearson & Porath, 2009). Thus, when considering that approximately 98% of U.S. workers have
experienced uncivil acts at some point in their professional careers (Porath & Pearson, 2013), the true sunk cost (i.e., costs already incurred that cannot be recovered) of incivility to the American labor force overall is exorbitant and fathomless. As noted by Pearson and Porath (2009):

Incivility’s measurable costs alone are enormous. Job stress, for instance, costs U.S. corporations $300 billion a year, much of which has been shown to stem from workplace incivility. But incivility’s true impact stretches far beyond that which is measurable in dollar terms. How to tally damage done by increased employee turnover, by the disruption of work teams, by the waning of helpful behavior, or by the tarnishing of corporate and individual reputations? As our research shows, incivility unleashes a set of complicated and destructive dynamics on individuals, teams, and organizations that impede performance and create organizational dysfunction on a number of levels, leading to diminished financial results. Far from a minor inconvenience to millions of American workers, workplace incivility is one of today’s most substantial economic drains on American business, a largely preventable ill that begs to be addressed. (p. 4)

Workplace incivility has been shown to be more pervasive and ostensibly disruptive than other forms of workplace mistreatment (e.g., workplace violence and harassment) because of its typically inconspicuous and ambiguous nature that makes it difficult to discern, identify, and formally sanction (Cortina et al., 2017; Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Pearson & Porath, 2009; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Indeed, 50% of American workers reported experiencing uncivil behaviors on a weekly basis (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Furthermore, several studies have also demonstrated the destructive power of workplace incivility in various other cultures like Australia (Kirk, Schutte, & Hine, 2011); Canada (Spence Laschinger, Leiter, Day, Gilin-Oore, & Mackinnon, 2012); China (Wu, Zhang, Chiu, Kwan, & He, 2014); New Zealand (Griffin, 2010); Singapore (Lim & Lee, 2011); South Korea (Kim & Shapiro, 2008); and the United Kingdom (Totterdell et al., 2012)—thus demonstrating incivility’s ubiquitousness across the globe.

Nevertheless, these transgressions do not occur in parity, as Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, and Magley (2013) found that stigmatized minority groups such as women and people of color—particularly African American women and those with double jeopardy status
(see Berdahl & Moore, 2006)—reported higher rates of experienced incivility than other groups. This supports Cortina’s (2008) theory of selective incivility which posits that uncivil treatment can occasionally signify a more covert and contemporary manifestation of gender and racial discrimination since those with lower social power (via gender, race, class, etc.) are generally at a higher risk of being mistreated by their more dominant counterparts. Strikingly, this notion has been corroborated with numerous samples across various industries, including law enforcement personnel (Cortina et al., 2013); attorneys (Cortina et al., 2002); the U.S. military (Bergman, Palmieri, Drasgow, & Ormerod, 2007; Cortina et al., 2013); federal court employees (Cortina et al., 2001); municipal staff (Cortina et al., 2013); and university faculty (Richman et al., 1999).

However, despite the attention that has been paid to uncivil treatment between groups (e.g., men to women, Whites to Blacks), empirical investigations into the experiences of incivility among groups, particularly racioethnic minorities (i.e., biologically and/or culturally distinct groups; Cox, 1990), remain scant in the organizational literature. Therefore, this study directly addresses this oversight by investigating the various work climate aspects, affective states, and workgroup composition factors that influence instigated incivility among Black professionals in the workplace—more commonly known as the CIB mentality.

**The Crabs-in-a-Barrel Mentality:**
**A Marginal Form of Incivility for Marginal Groups**

Throughout American history, the CIB mentality has been used to describe the uncivil and competitive behaviors among members of stigmatized and marginalized minority groups,
most notably within the Filipino American (Nadal, 2011); Black/African American² (Aaron & Smith, 1992; Burrell, 2010; DeGruy, 2005; Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017; Worsley & Stone, 2011); Hawaiian³ (Perry, 2013); and Deaf (DeLora, 1996; Harrington, 2004; Jacobs, 1994; Moore & Levitan, 1992) communities. However, the tendency for individuals to resent and, in more extreme cases, obstruct the upward social mobility of members from their own racial or ethnic group has been documented across various other cultures as well, including South Korea (McDonald, 2011); the Philippines (Bulloch, 2013, 2017); the Caribbean (Wilson, 1973); and Australia and New Zealand (Ely, 1984; Feather, 1989; Mitchell, 1984; Peeters, 2003, 2004).

The CIB analogy draws inspiration from the following idea:

In the West Indies, fishermen will put their day’s catch of live crabs into a barrel. Though crabs are good climbers, the fishermen do not bother to put a lid on top of the barrel because no sooner does one crab climb up toward the rim than it is immediately pulled back down by its fellows. All the crabs could escape if only they were prepared to allow some to go first. But they are not, and they all perish. (Thompson, 1984, p. 10)

Thus, at its core, the CIB metaphor appears to describe a zero-sum scenario wherein members from a particular (social) group intentionally attempt to obstruct the advancement of their fellow ingroup members for the sake of their own self-preservation and/or upward mobility. According to Bulloch (2017), this sentiment is often invoked about one’s ideas of progress or ascension and is typically motivated by some sense of envy (a desire to ensure others are not performing better than oneself), competitiveness (a desire to outperform or usurp another’s position), or burden (a desire to partake of another’s success and thereby diminish it). For these

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² Henceforth, the term Black will be operatively used throughout this paper to refer to all persons of African ancestry or descent instead of African American because the former has historically, and most commonly, been used to refer to all people with African ancestry, regardless of nationality. Conversely, the term African American has historically been used to more narrowly refer to Americans of African descent. Thus, since the CIB mentality appears to be motivated more by race than one’s ethnic or cultural background, the more encompassing term Black seems most appropriate.

³ Hawaiians have historically referred to it as the alamahi crab syndrome.
reasons, Pegues (2017) proposed the following working conceptual definition for the CIB phenomenon (see Appendix I):

Deviant behavior from a fellow in-group member—particularly among lower status minority groups—that violates group norms for mutual respect and operates with an often ambiguous and inconspicuous intent to harm, demoralize, humiliate and/or undermine similar others within a given social setting.

Interestingly, previous studies on the CIB mentality (viz., Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017; Worsley & Stone, 2011) have identified several commonalities between the phenomenon and workplace incivility. In particular:

- Both phenomena are characterized by an ambiguous or inconspicuous intent to harm which makes them difficult to discern or identify.

- Both generally involve low-intensity deviant behaviors (e.g., rude comments and negative gestures) that violate workplace norms of mutual respect and professionalism; typically, these are “verbal rather than physical, passive rather than active, indirect rather than direct, and subtle rather than overt” (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 453). However, the CIB mentality has also been shown to encompass more overt and hostile acts of aggression like workplace bullying and intimidation (see Pegues, 2017).

- Both behaviors have been shown to result in various forms of psychological and emotional distress for their targets as opposed to physical harm or injury (see Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017).

- Both represent socially interactive events that involve two or more parties, especially those that are close in proximity (e.g., a superior, subordinate, colleague, or even a customer; see Schilpzand et al., 2016).
Both concepts have been shown to operate in three relational directions in the workplace: (a) top-down (superior-to-subordinate), (b) laterally (peer-to-peer), and (c) bottom-up (subordinate-to-superior)—though the top-down and lateral manifestations are most common (see Cortina et al., 2017; Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017; Schilpzand et al., 2016).

Traditionally, the CIB phenomenon within the Black community has been explained by an intergenerational transmission of trauma (or more simply, a transgenerational trauma) narrative which suggests that occurrences of B-o-B incivility and competition that persist today are merely derivatives of the psychological trauma that was experienced by their enslaved ancestors during the days of chattel slavery (see Pegues, 2017, or Appendix I for a more comprehensive overview; see also Akbar, 1996). This perspective is perhaps most succinctly and convincingly described by DeGruy (2005), who stated:

It is equally understandable why an African American might feel threatened by the accomplishments of a peer when viewed in the light of slavery. Slaves were divided in many different respects; masters distinguished the house slave from the field slave, the mulatto from the Black slave, etc. Often these different designations meant access to, or denial of, privileges and sometimes freedom itself. It was common practice for slave owners to set one class of slave against another. Slave owners perpetuated feelings of separateness and distrust by sometimes ordering Black overseers to beat or punish their friends, peers and relatives. When the master “promoted” a slave, that slave often joined the master in the rank of “oppressor.” (p. 15)

However, recent studies investigating the phenomenon among Black professionals (viz., Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017) have given more credence to the situational interactionist perspective that places more emphasis on the personal, interactional, and environmental factors of human behavior than the extraordinarily complex psychodynamic processes of the past (see Lewin, 1936). Indeed, Andersson and Pearson (1999) similarly subscribed to this line of thinking with respect to workplace incivility as they found that “the instigator(s), the target(s), the
observer(s), and the social context all contribute to and are affected by an uncivil encounter” (p. 457).

Correspondingly, Pegues’ (2017) grounded theory study on the CIB mentality among Black professionals supported this psychosocial notion as it found that Black leaders were reported to show a higher propensity to act aggressively and uncivilly towards their Black subordinates when faced with high levels of environmental uncertainty (i.e., periods of intense stress, novelty, or change) which led them to feel personally insecure and inept to lead effectively (see Appendix I for more details on this finding). Additionally, the study revealed that Black professionals were seen as having an increased proclivity to behave uncivilly towards their Black colleagues when they believed their valued job incentives (e.g., compensation, recognition, or access to power, positions, and projects) were scant or in jeopardy, which prompted them to act out competitively to protect their relative position in their respective work team, unit, or department. However, these insights into the motivations behind CIB instigators are somewhat speculative as the study only accounted for the perspectives of the CIB targets instead of the instigators themselves.

Nevertheless, as previous studies on the CIB mentality (or intragroup incivility) within the Black community have primarily focused on targets of the deviant behavior, to my knowledge no empirical studies have specifically investigated instigators of B-o-B incivility to assess which social conditions and personal characteristics are most likely to precipitate the CIB phenomenon among Blacks in professional settings. Therefore, in addition to being the first mixed methods study specifically focused on the CIB mentality construct within the Black community more generally, this dissertation also serves as the first empirical investigation on
B-o-B incivility to account directly for the situational and personal characteristics of the actual instigators themselves.

The Present Study

To date, the majority of research on intragroup incivility and aggression has revolved around the troubled experiences of professional women, especially as it relates to the Queen Bee syndrome and the epidemic of workplace bullying and hostility in the nursing profession (e.g., Derks, Ellemers, van Laar, & de Groot, 2011; Ellemers, Rink, Derks, & Ryan, 2012; Lutgen-Sandvik, Dickinson, & Foss, 2012; Vessey, DeMarco, & DiFazio, 2011; Wilson, Diedrich, Phelps, & Choi, 2011). However, to my knowledge, no studies have investigated the social and psychological antecedents to workplace incivility among members of the same racial group, particularly Blacks, while using a mixed methods approach. Therefore, to address this gap and extend our understanding of the form of workplace incivility known as CIB, the following overarching research question was addressed in the present study: What are the primary organizational conditions and individual states that lead to instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace? More specifically, the present study adopted a social-interactionist approach to investigate the various aspects of work climate (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climate); affective states (i.e., emotional taxation); and workgroup composition factors (i.e., perceived collective and competitive minority threats) of Black professionals who have reportedly enacted incivility towards other Blacks while on the job.

The current research contributes to the management literature by expanding our understanding of the workplace incivility construct by illuminating those social and individual factors that result in increased demonstrations of intragroup incivility in the workplace,
specifically among Black professionals. As a majority of the workplace incivility research has focused on the experiences of Whites (see Sherman, 2015), this study also offers unique insight into the perspectives of racial minority instigators of uncivil behavior, which further broadens the scope of the workplace incivility discussion and research stream. In addition, the findings of this study provide further support and validation to the notion that the CIB phenomenon represents another variant of the workplace incivility construct, just as Cortina (2008) demonstrated with her concept of selective incivility. Moreover, this study breaks new ground by showing how workgroup composition factors (i.e., collective minority threat) can serve as precursors to uncivil behavior among racial ingroup members. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this study offers additional support for the social interactionist explanation of the CIB phenomenon to challenge further the pathology-focused transgenerational trauma narrative that has traditionally explained its existence.

This dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter II reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on instigated workplace incivility, in addition to the psychological and emotional underpinnings of workplace racial bias and competitive work climates and how they may promote instigated B-o-B incivility. Moreover, this chapter also addresses the potential influence of workgroup racial composition and an individual’s categorical minority status on instigated incivility among Black professionals (i.e., collective and competitive minority threats). Relevant hypotheses are specified throughout the chapter where appropriate.

Chapter III outlines the methodology and design of the current study, including the sample, procedure, and measures, as well as a brief description of the study’s data analysis plan. This chapter also includes a discussion of a potential methodological limitation related to the use
of self-report questionnaires (i.e., common method variance) and how this limitation was addressed in the current investigation.

Chapter IV reports the results of the various statistical tests associated with the study hypotheses, as well as discoveries related to the data’s descriptive and common method bias analyses.

Lastly, Chapter V includes a summary of the research findings as well as the theoretical and practical implications of the study. The limitations of the study and future research directions are also addressed.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Instigators of Workplace Incivility and Aggression: The Psychology Behind the Madness

When considering the various forms of mistreatment that can occur in organizations, workplace incivility categorically falls on the subtler and ostensibly benign end of the spectrum, compared to the more overtly hostile acts of workplace violence and aggression. According to previous research (e.g., Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2004), workplace incivility differs from workplace violence because it does not involve physical assault or harm towards others. However, the distinction between workplace incivility and aggression is less straightforward, as Figure 1 illustrates (below).

![Figure 1. Incivility and other forms of workplace mistreatment in organizations. Adopted from “Tit for tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace,” by L. M. Andersson and C. M. Pearson, 1999, Academy of Management Review, 24(3), p. 456. Copyright 1999 by the Academy of Management.](image-url)
According to Andersson and Pearson (1999), the primary difference between these two forms of deviant behavior (i.e., workplace incivility and aggression) is one’s conscious or unconscious intent to cause harm:

Aggression is inclusive of violence and of some forms of incivility (e.g., those with intent to harm, but in which the intent—as perceived by the instigator, the target, and/or observers—is ambiguous). Yet other forms of incivility (e.g., those without intent to harm, but in which the intent is ambiguous, such as those that occur out of ignorance or oversight) lie outside the realm of aggression. Thus, incivility is, like aggression, a deviant behavior, but one that is less intense and ambiguous as to intent to harm. (p. 457)

Thus, workplace incivility can be considered “aggressive” only if an individual deliberately aspires to harm others (i.e., it is premeditated); however, if an individual acts uncivilly due to personal ignorance or oversight (i.e., a blunder), then such behavior would not constitute aggression—despite how rude or hurtful it may be.

Previous research on experienced and instigated incivility (viz., Gray et al., 2017; Martin & Hine, 2005) has shown that workplace incivility represents a multidimensional construct that typically manifests in four principal ways: (a) interpersonal hostility, (b) privacy invasion, (c) exclusionary behavior, and (d) gossiping. Indeed, these uncivil behaviors have been attributed to a host of personal characteristics and attitudes, including social and positional power (Cortina, 2008; Cortina et al., 2013; Cortina et al., 2001); trait and state anger (Meier & Semmer, 2013); conflict management styles (Gray et al., 2017; Trudel & Reio, 2011); neuroticism (Gray et al., 2017); low job satisfaction (Blau & Andersson, 2005; Russell et al., 2004); trait aggression (Gray et al., 2017); a perceived lack of reciprocity (Meier & Semmer, 2013); an increased proclivity to boredom (Bruursema, Kessler, & Spector, 2011; Gray et al., 2017; Walker, 2009); low affective organizational commitment (Blau & Andersson, 2005; Gray et al., 2017); psychological contract breach and violation (Gray et al., 2017); emotional exhaustion (Blau & Andersson, 2005; Gray et al., 2017; van Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010); a previous history of experienced incivility.
(Ghosh, Dierkes, & Falletta, 2011; Gray et al., 2017; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010); narcissism (Gray et al., 2017); feelings of social exclusion and distrust (Gray et al., 2017; Scott, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013); and perceptions of distributive and procedural injustice (Blau, 2007; Blau & Andersson, 2005).

Nevertheless, to my knowledge, no studies on workplace incivility and aggression have specifically tailored their research questions and corresponding hypotheses around the unique experiences of Black workers within the American context like this study has. Moreover, as the assessment of individuals’ harmful intent (i.e., deliberate vs. accidental) lies outside the scope of this study, behaviors that are specifically characteristic of workplace incivility (i.e., hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping)—as opposed to interpersonal aggression—was of primary interest in this study.

Since America’s beginning, the Black experience has been marred by dreams deferred and inequitable treatment; however, despite the myriad external barriers to advancement and progress that Blacks have traditionally encountered in their pursuit of the “American Dream,” the CIB phenomenon represents one obstacle that appears, at least on the surface, to be ostensibly self-inflicted. The next section offers more insight into the various challenges that Blacks continue to face in the American workforce with the ultimate aim of illustrating how B-o-B incivility may potentially be the unfortunate symptom of a much larger and more dire issue of organizational life for Black workers.

**The Plight of Black Professionalism: Flies in the Ointment**

Since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the American labor force has left Black workers with much to be desired regarding upward mobility and social capital acquisition (see Johnson & Pegues, 2013; Long, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2016; Wilson, 2016). Despite being published
more than two decades ago, evidence of the harsh realities that typically hinder the forward progress of Blacks and other minorities up the organizational ranks is perhaps best captured by Kossek and Zonia’s (1993) assertion that:

It is likely to be easier to mandate the hiring of White women and racioethnic minorities for entry jobs… than to socialize members to value or respect differences, to seek out and enjoy interaction with those whose intergroup backgrounds differ from their own, and to work productively in those relationships…. While organizations have often stressed representation, in terms of sheer numbers in the organization, they have often overlooked the issues of upward mobility and glass ceilings. Numbers alone will not create the type of climate in which diversity will flourish unaided by policies and official mandates. (p. 62)

Indeed, the contemporary experiences of Black professionals continue to be fraught with myriad obstacles, including: (a) discriminatory practices by those in authority (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Reskin, 2000); (b) a lack of social support in the form of visible role models and mentors in organizational positions (Blake-Beard, Murrell, & Thomas, 2006; Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz, & McKay, 2000; Mackay & Etienne, 2006; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999); (c) limited access to available jobs and promotions because of inadequate social networks (Doverspike et al., 2000; Essien, 2003; Mackay & Etienne, 2006; McGuire, 2002); (d) lower ascriptions of competence and leadership ability (Carton & Rosette, 2011; Chin & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007; Knight, Hebl, Foster, & Mannix, 2003; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008); (e) inequitable rewards, compensation and recognition for their accomplishments, and satisfactory performance (Doverspike et al., 2000; Long, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2016; Wilson, 2016); and (f) less favorable attitudes and expectations about their overall career success because of anticipated barriers to advancement (Doverspike et al., 2000; Pew Research Center, 2016).

More specifically, despite representing nearly 13% of the U.S. population, Blacks continue to remain starkly underrepresented in business—accounting for only 4.7% of executive team members in the Fortune 100 and just 6.7% of the nation’s 16.2 million management jobs in
smaller firms (Menendez, 2015; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Furthermore, Blacks continue to be on the losing end of the ever-widening racial earnings gap:

Analyses of federal government data by the Pew Research Center find that Blacks on average are at least twice as likely as Whites to be poor or to be unemployed. Households headed by a Black person earn on average little more than half of what the average White households earns. And in terms of their median net worth, White households are about 13 times as wealthy as Black households—a gap that has grown wider since the Great Recession. (Pew Research Center, 2016, p. 18)

Thus, it should be expected that such inequities would take a significant toll on the psychological and emotional well-being of Blacks in professional settings, especially those where they represent the numerical and social minority. However, despite the societal and organizational ills that Blacks continue to endure collectively, there are certain organizational climate aspects (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climates) and workgroup composition factors (i.e., collective and competitive minority threats) that appear to be more conducive to Black professionals perpetuating the obstruction and denigration of other Blacks, as opposed to viewing them as a source of consolation and/or interpersonal support. These potential enabling conditions of B-o-B incivility serve as the focal points of the following sections.

**Workplace Racial Bias and Competitive Work Climates: Perhaps Madness Is Contagious**

Considered a derivative of organizational culture, an organization’s climate is perhaps best described as “the shared meaning organizational members attach to the events, policies, practices, and procedures they experience and the behaviors they see being rewarded, supported, and expected” (Ehrhart, Schneider, & Macey, 2014, p. 69). Therefore, an organization’s climate signifies what organizational members actually feel and experience on the day-to-day, whereas an organization’s culture, and the various underlying assumptions and values contained therein,
plays a more covert yet undeniably powerful role in an organization’s functioning (see Burke & Litwin, 1992; Schein, 1992). Organizational climates are measured in terms of subjective perceptions that are psychologically meaningful to its individual members as opposed to objective organizational characteristics (see James, James, & Ashe, 1990); thus, in light of Kurt Lewin’s (1936) famous postulation that behavior is a function of both the person and the environment, it is reasonable to intuit that individuals’ perceptions of their work environment would undoubtedly influence the manner in which they choose to navigate and interact with it.

Although no previous studies, to my knowledge, have explicitly investigated the influence of workplace racial bias and competitive work climates on instigated int/roup incivility, both scenarios have been shown to elicit affective outcomes (e.g., emotional exhaustion) that are commonly associated with uncivil behavior in the workplace (see Blau & Andersson, 2005; Fox & Spector, 1999; Meier & Semmer, 2013; Roberts, Scherer, & Bowyer, 2011). Therefore, these two organizational climate constructs will serve as the focal points of this current section.

**Workplace racial bias as a precursor to B-o-B incivility.** Racial discrimination in the workplace is a dispiriting yet common reality for Black professionals in the American labor force (Deitch et al., 2003; Essed, 1991; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996). In fact, numerous scholars (e.g., Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Deitch et al., 2003; Essed, 1991; Swim, Cohen, & Hyers, 1998) have posited that racism may be more prevalent now than ever before since it is typically expressed in more covert and subtle forms that are more difficult to detect and reprimand (e.g., microaggressions and social exclusion), compared to its more blatant and vitriolic manifestations of the past. However, despite how ostensibly more subtle and covert contemporary racism has become, the overwhelming and devastating toll that it places on the
emotional, psychological, and physical well-being of its stigmatized victims remains steadfast (see Allison, 1998; Clark et al., 1999; Deitch et al., 2003; Jackson et al., 1996; Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999; Krieger, 1990; Krieger & Sidney, 1996; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002).

Indeed, Travis, Thorpe-Moscon, and McCluney (2016) recently corroborated this notion by finding that Black professionals commonly experience an increased emotional tax (i.e., the heightened experience of being different from peers at work because of their race or ethnicity) in non-inclusive work environments that often prove detrimental to their personal health, well-being, and ability to succeed on the job. Determined to be the result of experiences of institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice, symptoms typically associated with this emotional tax include feelings of having to constantly be “on guard”; disrupted sleep patterns and poor sleep hygiene; a diminished ability to contribute productively at work; and a depreciated sense of psychological safety with respect to one’s job security, opportunities for advancement, and peer support. Thus, this finding supports the “stigma as stressor” notion whereby the constant devaluation and maltreatment of stigmatized individuals (e.g., Blacks) eventually tax or deplete their adaptive ability to function successfully and healthily within a particular context (see Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Miller & Kaiser, 2001).

Previous research (e.g., Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Johnson & Indvik, 2001; Leiter & Maslach, 1988) has found that as individuals become more emotionally exhausted (or taxed), their cognitive resources become more depleted and they consequently become more prone to engage in workplace deviance and incivility toward the source(s) of their emotional exhaustion—which may include supervisors (Meier & Semmer, 2013; Mulki, Jaramillo, & Locander, 2006), coworkers (Blau & Andersson, 2005; Milam, Spitzmueller, & Penney, 2009).
and even customers (Baumeister, 2001; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010). According to Fox and Spector’s (1999) work frustration-aggression model, displays of aggression in the workplace are a common response to frustrating events or situational constraints “that block individuals from achieving valued work goals or attaining effective performance” (p. 917). More specifically, Fox and Spector postulated that affective responses (e.g., emotional taxation) mediate the relationship between frustrating events (e.g., perceived workplace racial bias) and counterproductive workplace behaviors (e.g., interpersonal aggression and incivility); thus, this line of thinking seems highly resonant with Black professionals who may aspire to excel and advance up the organizational ranks in a preclusive—and undoubtedly frustrating and emotionally taxing—work environment that condones discriminatory practices and prejudicial attitudes.

Interestingly, previous research has shown that enacted incivility and aggression can also be directed towards unsuspecting and uninvolved individuals as well, instead of only those who represent the source of one’s frustration or angst (Marcus-Newhall, Pedersen, Carlson, & Miller, 2000). Indeed, this notion of displaced aggression was supported by Porath and Pearson (2013), who found that targets of workplace incivility showed increased tendencies to take out their suppressed frustration and anger on unsuspecting customers. Meier and Semmer (2013) also found a similar pattern of displaced aggression among coworkers.

Furthermore, participants in Pegues’ (2017) study on the CIB mentality suggested that Black professionals may find it “safer” to act aggressively towards other Blacks as a way of coping with the emotional burdens of working-while-Black instead of aggressing towards members of the dominant racial majority (i.e., a presumed source of their emotional burden) because of fear of collective retribution by the dominant group. This line of thinking supports seminal models of displaced aggression (see Miller, 1941, 1948), which suggest that when there
is “a strong fear of retaliation from the initial provocateur, aggressive retaliation toward the provocateur will be inhibited. Under these circumstances, aggression is likely to be displaced onto an alternative target person” (Marcus-Newhall et al., 2000, p. 673).

Therefore, just as Derks et al. (2011) found that sexist organizational cultures served as precursors to the Queen Bee syndrome among professional women, I expected to find that organizations fraught with institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice would serve as breeding grounds for B-o-B incivility. More specifically, I predicted that Black professionals’ experiences of institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice at their job would be positively associated with instigated acts of B-o-B incivility.

**Hypothesis 1**: Black professionals who report a higher incidence of institutional discrimination at their job will report greater occurrences of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Hypothesis 2**: Black professionals who report a higher incidence of interpersonal prejudice at their job will report greater occurrences of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Competitive work climates as precursors to B-o-B incivility.** At its best, competition can play an integral role in improving the individual and collective effort, motivation, and performance required to accomplish goals (see Kilduff, Elfenbein, & Staw, 2010; Mulvey & Ribbens, 1999; Reeve & Deci, 1996; Tauer & Harackiewicz, 1999, 2004). However, at its worst, competition can serve as a catalyst for increased aggression, social undermining, and other forms of interpersonal deviance (see Coulomb-Cabagno & Rascle, 2006; Enns & Rotundo, 2012; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Kohn, 1992, 1999). Expanding on the idea that workplace incivility is a socially interactive event that involves two or more parties (Andersson & Pearson,
1999), research has shown that people are more inclined to engage in social comparisons, and ultimately competitive behaviors, when situated in a competitive environment where competition is highly valued and even rewarded (see Brown, Cron, & Slocum, 1998; Fletcher, Major, & Davis, 2008).

Brown et al. (1998) first introduced the concept of competitive climate by describing it as “the degree to which employees perceive organizational rewards to be contingent on comparisons of their performance against that of their peers” (p. 89). However, after ascertaining the multidimensional aspects of competition (i.e., competition for rewards, recognition, status, or as a result of perceiving competition from others), Fletcher and Nusbaum (2010) later proposed that competitive climate is more accurately defined as “individual-level perceptions of a work environment resulting from structured competition for rewards, recognition, or status or competition inspired by coworkers within a work unit” (p. 107). Indeed, previous research (e.g., Brown et al., 1998; Fletcher et al., 2008) has shown that competitive work climates can have both positive and negative consequences on individual performance, particularly if an individual possesses a greater or lesser propensity to seek out and partake in competition more generally (i.e., high or low trait competitiveness). Nonetheless, Fletcher et al. (2008) found that competitive work climates resulted in greater stress for all employees regardless of their level of trait competitiveness.

Thus, since work stress has been shown to serve as both a catalyst and outcome of uncivil behaviors in the workplace (see Porath & Pearson, 2013; Roberts et al., 2011), it is sensible to suggest that a competitive work climate would serve as a hotbed for workplace incivility. Furthermore, Garcia, Tor, and Schiff (2013) suggested that people are more inclined to compare
themselves to, and ultimately compete with, individuals who are nearest to them in space (proximal) and personal resemblance. More specifically:

As the perceived similarity of target to actor increases, so do comparison concerns and thus competitiveness. Similarity refers both to similarity in terms of ability or performance on the comparison dimension (Festinger, 1954, p. 120). For instance, two golfers are similar to the extent that their performance is similar. Yet similarity can also refer to similarity of personal characteristics or attributes more generally, beyond the specific comparison dimension. (Garcia et al., 2013, p. 637)

Previous research (e.g., Elsass & Graves, 1997; Goldberg, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) has consistently shown that race is the most salient factor for self-categorization in group settings. Thus, it is reasonable to postulate that Black professionals who perceive they are working in a competitive climate would theoretically be more inclined to compete with—and act uncivilly towards—other Blacks in that setting, particularly if they feel a Black colleague possesses the capacity to meet or surpass them in performance or ability. For these reasons, I predicted that Black professionals’ membership in a competitive work climate would be positively associated with instigated B-o-B incivility.

**Hypothesis 3**: Black professionals who report a more competitive work climate will report greater incidents of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**The influential role of emotional taxation.** Additionally, according to Koeske and Koeske’s (1993) stressor-strain-outcome model, emotional taxation represents a common negative reaction to workplace stressors (see Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014; Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002; Tetrick, Slack, Da Silva, & Sinclair, 2000; Um & Harrison, 1998; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). Indeed, Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) asserted that “emotional exhaustion closely resembles traditional stress reactions that are studied in occupational stress research, such as fatigue, job-related depression, psychosomatic complaints, and anxiety” (p. 499).
Therefore, since both workplace racial bias and competitive work climates have been shown to serve as primary sources of stress for employees (see Fletcher et al., 2008; Travis et al., 2016), I predicted that Black professionals’ ensuing levels of emotional taxation would partially mediate the influence of experienced institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climates on instigated incivility towards other Blacks. Moreover, since emotional exhaustion has previously been linked to instigated acts of workplace incivility (see Blau & Andersson, 2005; Gray et al., 2017; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010), I predicted that Black professionals’ emotional taxation would also be positively and directly associated with instigated B-o-B incivility.

**Hypothesis 4:** Black professionals who report higher levels of emotional taxation at work will report greater incidents of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Hypothesis 5a:** Black professionals who report a higher incidence of institutional discrimination will report stronger feelings of emotional taxation which will, in turn, partially account for greater occurrences of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Hypothesis 5b:** Black professionals who report a higher incidence of interpersonal prejudice will report stronger feelings of emotional taxation which will, in turn, partially account for greater occurrences of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Hypothesis 5c:** Black professionals who report a more competitive work climate will result in stronger feelings of emotional taxation which will, in turn, partially account for greater occurrences of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Workgroup Composition and Categorical Minority Status:**

**Inhibitors to Ingroup Solidarity**

According to various intergroup theories like similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), and self-categorization theory (Turner,
1985), individuals typically favor and prefer others who are similar to themselves because similarities positively reinforce self-identities, whereas dissimilarities signify a threat and/or incompatibility. Thus, when considering our ostensibly inherent affinity for fellow ingroup members, it is natural to assume that racioethnic minorities (e.g., Blacks) would advocate for or, at the very least, desire a demographically similar other as a workgroup peer.

However, Duguid, Loyd, and Tolbert (2012) argued that this is not a hard-and-fast rule as minority individuals’ categorical social status (i.e., widespread, common beliefs about their stigmatized group), the demographic composition of their workgroup, and the workgroup’s differential prestige within an organization may all interact to result in minorities experiencing a pronounced value threat (i.e., concerns about not being seen and treated as a valued group member) when in the presence of demographically similar others. According to Duguid et al. (2012), this perceived value threat can be manifested in one of three primary ways: (a) collective threat (i.e., concerns about one’s value being diminished because of the stereotype-affirming behavior of a demographically similar other); (b) favoritism threat (i.e., concerns about appearing biased for endorsing or supporting a demographically similar other); and (c) competitive threat (i.e., concerns about one’s value being diminished because of the presumed or displayed competence and ability of a demographically similar other). However, since favoritism threat seems most likely to occur during hiring and promotion processes as opposed to during the day-to-day interactions between employees, this study only attended to how self-perceived collective and competitive minority threats may influence the CIB mentality among Black professionals in the workplace.

**Collective minority threat.** Initially proposed by Cohen and Garcia (2005), collective minority threat implies that the negative behaviors or characteristics of one may be generalized
to all members sharing that same social identity (see Henderson-King & Nisbett, 1996). More specifically, an individual’s experience of collective minority threat in a workgroup setting:

- involves the concern that stereotype-confirming acts of others who share an individual’s low-status category may adversely affect others’ judgments of the individual’s own value to the work group, even though he or she has not personally lent support to the stereotype. (Duguid et al., 2012, p. 393)

Indeed, previous research on the black sheep effect (i.e., the tendency for individuals to judge likeable ingroup members more positively and deviant ingroup members more negatively than comparable outgroup members) has indirectly supported this phenomenon by demonstrating that individuals consistently disassociate themselves from—and even denigrate—similar others whose personal behaviors or opinions may reflect negatively on them in group settings (see Lewis & Sherman, 2003, 2010; Marques, 1990; Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; Marques, Abrams, & Seródio, 2001; Marques & Paez, 1994; Pinto, Marques, Levine, & Abrams, 2010). Moreover, Cohen and Garcia (2005) found that individuals physically distanced themselves (i.e., they displayed exclusionary behavior—a primary form of incivility) from racially similar others who had the potential to confirm negative stereotypes about their racial group, and that self-reported collective minority threat was higher among racioethnic minorities, compared to Whites.

Thus, in following this logic, Black professionals who find themselves in a workgroup where they are a low-status numerical minority may be more prone to experience collective threat when encountering another Black who behaves or performs in a manner that supports the prevailing stereotypes of Blacks that are regularly “in the air” within professional settings (e.g., intellectually inferior, lazy, or ill-equipped to lead; see Cook & Glass, 2014; Knight et al., 2003; Rosette et al., 2008; Steele, 1997, 2010; Sue et al., 2008). As a result, Black professionals may subsequently be more inclined to act uncivilly towards these “stereotypical Blacks”—whether in
the form of social exclusion or personal denigration—as a means to disassociate themselves from those individuals and repair their professional image in the wake of perceived devaluation by their respective group members, or to circumvent the devaluation process altogether.

For these reasons, I predicted that Black professionals’ experiences of collective minority threat would be positively associated with instigated B-o-B incivility.

**Hypothesis 6:** Black professionals who report stronger perceptions of collective minority threat will report greater incidents of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Competitive minority threat.** Alternatively, Black professionals who find themselves in a workgroup where they are a low-status numerical minority may be more prone to experience competitive threat when encountering a *highly qualified or competent* Black counterpart whose presence could potentially “lead to further devaluation of the incumbent because the candidate will be seen as more of a valued group member, even co-opted, by other members” (Duguid et al., 2012, p. 395). Supporting the tenets of Garcia et al.’s (2013) social comparison model of competition, perceived competitive minority threat suggests that individuals feel threatened when they expect to be compared to individuals who are doing better or—at the very least—have the potential to do better than themselves, particularly if the comparisons involve a demographically similar other.

Corroboratively, Rudman and Fairchild (2004) found that women displayed a greater tendency to sanction and sabotage other women who outperformed them on a masculine task than men who outperformed them on the same task. Indeed, upward comparisons (i.e., comparisons to ostensibly superior others) have been linked to several other deleterious consequences for those harboring feelings of competitive minority threat, including expressed envy and jealousy (Salovey & Rodin, 1984), heightened feelings of impostorism and inferiority.
(Mussweiler, Gabriel, & Bodenhausen, 2000), and displays of interpersonal incivility (Testa & Major, 1990).

Thus, for these reasons, I predicted that Black professionals’ experiences of competitive minority threat would also be positively associated with instigated B-o-B incivility.

**Hypothesis 7:** Black professionals who report stronger perceptions of competitive minority threat will report greater incidents of instigated incivility towards other Blacks.

**Summary of Research Questions**

The final section of this chapter highlights the three primary sets of research questions to be examined in the current study. The specific hypotheses of this study (i.e., the main effects and partial mediation models) are also visually illustrated in Figure 2 below.

1. Do stronger experiences of institutional discrimination (H₁), interpersonal prejudice (H₂), competitive work climate (H₃), and emotional taxation (H₄) result in greater occurrences of instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace?

2. Does emotional taxation *partially mediate* the influence of perceived institutional discrimination (H₅a), interpersonal prejudice (H₅b), and competitive work climate (H₅c) on instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace?

3. Do stronger perceptions of both collective *and* competitive minority threats (H₆ and H₇, respectively) in workgroups result in greater demonstrations of instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace?
Figure 2. An illustrative diagram of the proposed hypotheses in the current study, including the main effects ($H_1, H_2, H_3, H_4, H_6, H_7$) and partial mediation ($H_{5a}, H_{5b}, H_{5c}$) models and their respective influence on instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace.
Additional Variables for Consideration

Additionally, the psychological constructs of racial identity centrality (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998) and psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007) served as exploratory variables in this study because of their presumed but undetermined influence on instigated B-o-B incivility. The rationale for each is explained below.

**Rationale for racial identity centrality as an exploratory variable.** Racial identity centrality (i.e., the extent to which individuals normatively define themselves with respect to their race; Sellers et al., 1998) has been shown to both buffer and exacerbate the impact of social stressors (e.g., workplace racial bias) on individuals (see Cross, 1991; Davidson, 2001; Davidson & Friedman, 1998; Phinney, 1990, 1996; Thau, Aquino, & Bommer, 2008). Therefore, since no studies to my knowledge have examined racial identity centrality’s influence on instigated acts of workplace incivility among racially similar coworkers, it was measured for exploratory purposes in this study.

**Rationale for psychological capital as an exploratory variable.** According to Luthans et al. (2007), psychological capital can be defined as:

an individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success. (p. 3)

Indeed, psychological capital has been shown to promote positive workplace behaviors like increased job commitment (Luthans, Norman, Avolio, & Avey, 2008) and performance (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007), in addition to curbing those workplace behaviors that are considered more counterproductive or even deviant (e.g., lack of resourcefulness to others, and tardiness; see Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2010). In fact, Roberts et al. (2011) found that
individuals’ psychological capital moderated the effect of work stress on instigated garden-variety incivility at work. However, to my knowledge, no studies have examined psychological capital’s influence on instigated acts of *intragroup* incivility in the workplace, particularly among members of racioethnic minority groups. Therefore, it was also measured for exploratory purposes in this study.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Participants

Before data collection commenced, an a priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power (version 3.1) to determine the adequate sample size needed to detect the desired effects in the current study with a linear multiple regression. To that end, results from a previously published study on instigated incivility were used to estimate the effect size for this study. As only eight published studies on instigated incivility were available for consideration in the power analysis (see Schilpzand et al., 2016), I opted to err on the conservative side of sample estimation by using an effect size for a comparable predictor variable in Meier and Semmer’s (2013) study that was considered small by Cohen’s (1992) criteria (i.e., lack of reciprocity; $f^2 = .037$). Consequently, the statistical power analysis indicated that the current study required a sample size of at least 518 participants to have 90% power for detecting a small-sized effect when employing the traditional .05 criterion of statistical significance for eight variables (i.e., six predictor variables and two exploratory variables). Thus, the final sample of 523 participants was more than adequate for the main objective of this study.

The research sample consisted of a diverse range of 523 Black professionals from the United States who were recruited and obtained through Qualtrics Panels—a crowdsourcing survey service that enables the targeting of specific demographic groups. All participants worked full-time and had been employed by their current organization for at least 1 year. The gender makeup of the sample consisted of 298 females (57%), 224 males (42.8%), and one who identified as other/gender nonbinary (0.2%). The average age of participants was 40.14 years ($SD = 12.26$), ranging from age 18 to 77. On average, participants had 18.66 years ($SD = 11.83$)
of total work experience.\textsuperscript{1} The sample also consisted of a wide range of educational experience, with three participants (0.6\%) having less than a high school degree; 108 participants (20.7\%) having a high school diploma or GED equivalent; 125 participants (23.9\%) having some college experience but no degree; 73 participants (14\%) having an Associate’s degree; 157 participants (30\%) having a Bachelor’s degree; 51 participants (9.8\%) having a Master’s degree; and 6 participants (1\%) having a doctoral degree. The participant sample also represented several professional industries, with Unclassified/Other (13.4\%), Medical/Healthcare (10.7\%), and Education (10.7\%) being the most common among them.

Moreover, 250 participants (47.8\%) had reportedly worked at their current organization for 1-5 years, while the majority of participants (52.2\%) had worked at their organization at least 6 years or more. Nearly 54\% of participants \((n = 283)\) worked as an individual contributor with no management responsibility whatsoever; however, 10.5\% \((n = 55)\) served as the Owner, President, or CEO of their organization, while the remaining 35.4\% \((n = 185)\) served in either a senior or middle management role. Of the sample, 122 participants (23.3\%) worked in an organization with 50 or fewer employees (small company); 233 participants (44.6\%) worked in an organization with 51-1000 employees (medium-sized company); and 168 participants (32.1\%) worked in an organization with more than 1000 employees (large company). Additionally, participant perceptions of Black representation at their respective organization was almost evenly split between those who worked with very few Blacks (32.9\%), several Blacks (33.1\%), and many Blacks (34\%).

\textsuperscript{1} Three data points from Total Work Experience (Years) had to be omitted from all data analyses because of their “impossible” value based on the participants’ reported age. However, all other data remaining for those three participants were preserved for future analyses.
Relatedly, 99 participants (19%) reported that they worked in an organization of mostly one race, whereas the vast majority of participants (81%) reported that they worked in an organization that was somewhat or very racially diverse. Of those who perceived their organization to be racially homogeneous, 49.5% of the subsample \((n = 49)\) worked in an organization that was mostly Black or African American; 46.5% \((n = 46)\) worked in an organization that was mostly White; and 4% \((n = 4)\) worked in an organization that was mostly Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Finally, 195 participants (37.3%) reported that they worked under leadership of mostly one race, whereas the clear majority of participants (62.7%) reported that they worked under leadership that was somewhat or very racially diverse. Of those who perceived their leadership to be racially homogeneous, 24.1% of the subsample \((n = 47)\) worked under leadership that was mostly Black or African American; 72.8% \((n = 142)\) worked under leadership that was mostly White; and 3.1% \((n = 6)\) worked under leadership that was mostly Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. See Tables 1 and 2 for a more detailed overview of participant characteristics.\(^2\)

**Design**

Study hypotheses were tested using a cross-sectional survey design. This design allowed me to observe two or more variables at a specific point in time and proved useful when assessing a relationship between two or more variables (see Breakwell, Smith, & Wright, 2012). Since all data were obtained via an online questionnaire from the same source at the same point in time, this study was susceptible to the threat of common method variance (i.e., variance that is attributable to the measurement method instead of the constructs the measures are intended to

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\(^2\) All tables discussed in these chapters are presented sequentially directly after the last chapter of this dissertation.
represent; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). As this bias can increase the risk of either inflating or deflating the relationships between predictor and outcome (dependent) variables, ways of reducing this methodological limitation were considered.

Specifically, in accordance with recommendations by Podsakoff et al. (2003), several proactive (ex-ante) and retroactive (ex-post) remedies were used to address and mitigate this common method bias. For example, at the onset of the study’s research design, I assured participants of the anonymity and confidentiality standards of the study, in addition to reminding them of their guaranteed rights as a research participant (e.g., personal consent and voluntary withdrawal). Moreover, in the formative stages of research design, I also provided assurance to participants that no right or wrong answers existed and that they should respond to survey items as honestly as possible. Together, these safeguards should theoretically “reduce people’s evaluation apprehension and make them less likely to edit their responses to be more socially desirable, lenient, acquiescent and consistent with how the researcher wants them to respond” (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 888).

Relatedly, once the study’s data collection process had concluded, I considered various statistical procedures to assess the presence or absence of common method bias in the data and subsequently control for it, if necessary. One of the most reliable statistical procedures that has proven helpful in assessing this limitation is Harman’s (1967) single factor test (see Chang, van Witteloostuijin, & Eden, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2003); therefore, it was employed as a viable ex-post remedy for the threat of common method bias in this study.

Procedure

Approval for this study was requested and obtained from the Institutional Review Board at Teachers College, Columbia University (see Appendix A). Data were collected from surveys
that were developed and administered via Qualtrics—an online survey platform. Participants were recruited and retained via the Qualtrics Panels service. Upon accessing the study link, participants were introduced to the study’s relevant consent information that explained their participant rights in addition to the research focus, risks, benefits, confidentiality, time involvement, and intended use of the study’s findings. Personal consent was achieved by selecting the “Yes, I agree to participate” option at the bottom of the consent page.

After consenting to participate in the study, participants were asked to provide responses to a set of demographic questions—four of which served as screening questions that ensured the retainment of the study’s targeted sample of interest. Specifically, these questions asked participants to disclose their respective racial/ethnic identity, employment status (full-time or part-time), organizational tenure, and the number of Black employees they currently work with. Consequently, participants were ultimately screened out from participating in the full study if they identified as: (a) any other race/ethnicity other than Black/African American, (b) a part-time employee, (c) employed by their organization for less than a year, and (d) someone who worked with no other Black professionals. Therefore, the final sample of participants all shared the same characteristics of being: exclusively Black/African American, current full-time employees, employed by their organization for 1 year or more, and individuals who worked with at least a few other Black professionals.

If participants provided satisfactory responses to the aforementioned screening questions, they were subsequently directed to the main questionnaire where they reviewed and responded to various items regarding their personal experiences with, and perceptions of, the study’s various predictor and outcome variables including: (a) instigated incivility towards Black professionals, (b) institutional discrimination, (c) interpersonal prejudice, (d) emotional taxation,
(e) competitive work climate, and (f/g) experiences of collective and competitive minority threats. Additionally, participants were asked to review and respond to items pertaining to the study’s various exploratory and control variables (i.e., perceived racial identity centrality, psychological capital, and prior history of experienced incivility). Please see Appendix B for screenshots of the full survey and the order in which all items were presented to participants.

On average, participants took 17.86 minutes \((SD = 18.62)\) to complete the survey, with individual ranges from 4.35 minutes to 254.42 minutes total. Relatedly, at the conclusion of the study’s soft launch \((n = 50)\), Qualtrics determined that the median time to completion was 11.40 minutes total; therefore, a “speed check” was implemented that automatically disqualified all respondents who completed the survey faster than one-third the median soft launch time (i.e., approximately 3.76 minutes). Participants who successfully completed the survey in its entirety were financially remunerated for their time with funds (i.e., approximately $6.50) provided by the Qualtrics Panels service.

Since workplace incivility has proven to be a rather taboo and difficult topic for individuals to admit perpetrating (see Gray et al., 2017; Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017), a framing statement was presented to participants before they responded to the various instigated incivility items in the survey. More specifically, this statement was incorporated to help normalize the occurrence of workplace incivility and foster a sense of “partnership” with participants so that they would, presumably, feel more comfortable admitting their participation in uncivil behaviors without fear that their personal character and/or moral compass would be under scrutiny. A full version of the workplace incivility framing statement can be found in Appendix C.

Additionally, because of the sensitivity of the research topic, each survey concluded with a detailed debriefing statement with contact information to mental health resources just in case
participants experienced any signs of emotional distress or discomfort as a result of their participation in the study. The debriefing statement also contained contact information for me (the primary researcher) and my faculty advisor in the event that participants wanted to message us directly with any questions and/or comments after completing the survey. A full version of the survey debriefing statement can be found in Appendix D.

Measures

Instigated Incivility

Instigated workplace incivility towards Black professionals was measured with 20 items adapted from Gray et al.’s (2017) Uncivil Workplace Behavior Questionnaire-Instigated (UWBQ-I). Inspired by Martin and Hine’s (2005) four-factor model of experienced incivility, the UWBQ-I asked respondents to report (via a 5-point rating scale from 1 = never to 5 = many times) how often they have engaged in four distinct types of uncivil behavior within the past year: hostility (4 items; \( \alpha = .89 \)), exclusionary behavior (7 items; \( \alpha = .96 \)), privacy invasion (5 items; \( \alpha = .93 \)), and gossiping (4 items; \( \alpha = .92 \)). Clearly, the coefficient alphas for each of the UWBQ-I subscales were above the acceptable threshold in this study; similarly, the coefficient alpha for the full UWBQ-I instrument also exceeded the acceptable limit (20-items; \( \alpha = .96 \)).

Although survey items were originally created to assess instigated workplace incivility more generally, I specifically tailored each item so that it was directed towards a Black target (i.e., a Black coworker, supervisor, or subordinate). This modification was inspired by Miner-Rubino and Cortina’s (2004) adaptation of the Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al., 2001) to assess specifically observed incivility towards women. Accordingly, the lead-in phrase for all items was adapted to read: “Please indicate how often in the past year you have engaged in each of the following activities towards other Black employees (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or
subordinates) while at work.” Furthermore, since workplace incivility can be both intentional and unintentional (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), the lead-in word “Intentionally” was omitted from Item 15 of the instrument (i.e., “Intentionally failed to pass on information that another Black employee should have been made aware of”) to make one’s personal motive or intent more ambiguous and a nonfactor. Additional example items included how often individuals have “Used an inappropriate tone when speaking to other Black staff members” or “Opened another Black employee’s desk drawers without permission.” Items were scored such that higher scores indicated more frequent enactments of incivility directed at Blacks (see Appendix E).

**Institutional Discrimination**

Individual perceptions of institutional discrimination were measured with five items adapted from the institutional discrimination subscale of Hughes and Dodge’s (1997) self-developed measure of perceived workplace racial bias. All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent they feel their organizational-level transactions and decisions (e.g., salary distribution, benefits, job assignments, and promotion opportunities) are unfavorably biased against Black workers (e.g., “At my job, Blacks get the least desirable assignments” and “There is discrimination against Blacks in hiring practices at my job”; \( \alpha = .93 \)). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger perceptions of institutional discrimination (see Appendix F).

**Interpersonal Prejudice**

Individual perceptions of interpersonal prejudice in the workplace were measured with seven items adapted from the interpersonal prejudice subscale of Hughes and Dodge’s (1997) self-developed measure of perceived workplace racial bias. All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent
they feel they encounter racial bias in their daily interpersonal exchanges at work (e.g., “People I work with have stereotypes about Blacks that affect how they judge me” and “People I work with assume that Blacks are not as competent as others”; $\alpha = .93$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger perceptions of interpersonal prejudice (see Appendix F).

**Emotional Taxation**

Participants’ emotional tax were measured with five items adopted from the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory—General Survey (MBI-GS; Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson, 1996). All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = never to 7 = everyday) how often they feel emotionally drained or depleted by their job demands (e.g., “I feel emotionally drained from my work” and “I feel used up at the end of the workday”; $\alpha = .94$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated greater feelings of emotional taxation (see Appendix F).

**Competitive Work Climate**

Individual perceptions of competitive work climates were measured with four items adopted from Fletcher et al.’s (2008) measure of competitive climate that was initially adapted from Brown et al. (1998). All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent to which they feel their employing organization values and promotes competition between employees (e.g., “My manager frequently compares my performance with that of my coworkers” and “Everybody at my job is concerned with being the top performer”; $\alpha = .79$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger perceptions of competitive work climates (see Appendix F).
Collective Minority Threat

Participants’ perceived experiences of collective minority threat in their workgroup were assessed with four original items. All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent they feel that stereotypical behaviors of other Blacks affect them in a negative way in the workplace (e.g., “I have concerns that the behavior of my Black coworkers will reflect negatively on me at work” and “It bothers me a great deal whenever a Black coworker behaves stereotypically at my job”; $\alpha = .74$). Notably, the only reverse-scored item on the measure was omitted from subsequent analyses because of a negative item-scale correlation ($r = -.46$). Although reversed items can serve a useful function by disrupting undesirable response sets such as acquiescence, previous research (e.g., Carlson et al., 2011; Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991; Swain, Weathers, & Niedrich, 2008) has shown that these potential benefits are often outweighed by various directional response errors, including: (a) increased miscomprehension; (b) lower coefficient alpha and item-scale correlations; and (c) an increased percentage of individual scores that are statistically deviant to respondents’ wider pattern of responses. Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger feelings of perceived collective minority threat (see Appendix F).

Competitive Minority Threat

Participants’ perceived experiences of competitive minority threat in their workgroup were assessed with four original items. All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent they feel valued and/or competent in the presence of other Blacks at their job (e.g., “I feel inferior whenever I am in the presence of my Black coworkers” and “I often get envious of the positive attention that my Black coworkers receive from others at my job”; $\alpha = .79$). Once again, the only reverse-scored item on
the measure was omitted from subsequent analyses because of a negative item-scale correlation ($r = - .12$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger feelings of perceived competitive minority threat (see Appendix F).

**Racial Identity Centrality**

Participants’ racial identity centrality was measured for exploratory purposes in this study with eight items from the racial identity centrality subscale of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers et al., 1998). All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 7-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) the extent they believe their race normatively defines them (e.g., “My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people” and “I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people”; $\alpha = .68$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated stronger feelings of Black racial identity centrality (see Appendix G).

**Psychological Capital**

Participants’ psychological capital was measured for exploratory purposes in this study with 12 items adopted from the shortened version of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-12; Avey, Avolio, & Luthans, 2011; Luthans, Avolio, & Avey, 2007). All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 6-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree) the extent they perceive themselves to be self-efficacious (3-items; $\alpha = .92$), hopeful (4 items; $\alpha = .87$), resilient (3 items; $\alpha = .77$), and optimistic (2 items; $\alpha = .77$). Just as the PCQ-12 subscales yielded coefficient alphas within the acceptable range in this study, the coefficient alpha for the full PCQ-12 instrument was also desirable (12-items; $\alpha = .93$). Example items include “I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals” and “I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.” Items were scored such that higher scores indicated
greater levels of psychological capital (see Appendix G). Lastly, permission to use and reproduce
the PCQ-12 was obtained from the authors before data collection commenced (see Appendix H).

**Demographic and Control Variables**

Several individual difference and demographic factors were considered and measured as
possible covariates to be controlled in this study because of their documented influence on
instigated incivility and aggression. They are elaborated on in more detail below.

**Demographic factors.** Various demographic factors were collected as possible
covariates to be controlled because of their reputed influence on workplace incivility and other
counterproductive work behaviors (see Baron, Neuman, & Geddes, 1999; Bruk-Lee & Spector,
2006; Cortina et al., 2013; Frone, 2008; Henle, 2005; Hershcovis et al., 2007; Lim & Lee, 2011;
Pearson & Porath, 2009; Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998). Specifically, these included one’s
age, gender, education level, and organizational position and tenure. All other demographic
characteristics (i.e., organization size, Black representation in the organization, organizational
racial diversity, leadership racial diversity, total work experience, and industry) were collected
for exploratory purposes.

**Prior history of experienced incivility.** According to Andersson and Pearson (1999),
experiences of workplace incivility can result in a spiraling “tit-for-tat” effect whereby targets of
uncivil behavior may respond with an equal or a greater act of aggression towards their initial
incivility instigator or others (see Foulk, Woolum, & Erez, 2016; Rosen, Koopman, Gabriel, &
Johnson, 2016). Thus, since it has been shown that incivility can beget incivility, individuals’
prior history of experienced incivility was controlled for in this study with Cortina et al.’s (2013)
Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS). All items asked respondents to indicate (via a 5-point rating
scale from 1 = never to 5 = many times) the frequency with which they have encountered uncivil
behavior from supervisors or coworkers within the past year (12 items; $\alpha = .95$). Items were scored such that higher scores indicated more frequent experiences of workplace incivility (see Appendix G).
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Several preliminary analyses were conducted prior to the main hypotheses tests and analyses. First, frequency analyses were conducted to assess the incidence rates of instigated B-o-B incivility in the study. Second, Harman’s single factor test was conducted to determine the presence of common method bias in the study data. Third, the psychometric properties of the study’s major variables of interest (i.e., the predictor, outcome, exploratory, and covariate variables) were analyzed to reveal any extremities in the data that could potentially indicate one or more violations of the statistical assumptions for multiple regression (i.e., linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and independence). Lastly, the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the various study variables were calculated and analyzed. These preliminary analyses helped determine the pattern of relationships among the study variables prior to conducting the main analyses, as well as which variables should be included as possible covariates during the final hypotheses tests.

Incidence Rates of Instigated B-o-B Incivility

The frequency analyses revealed that approximately 65% ($n = 339$) of the study’s 523 participants had reported instigating incivility towards another Black employee at their job within the past year. More specifically, 51% of participants ($n = 267$) reported instigating acts of interpersonal hostility towards another Black employee at their job—the highest reported incidence rate of the four incivility subdimensions. Moreover, the findings revealed that gossiping behaviors served as the second most common form of incivility as 35% of participants ($n = 182$) reported that they had gossiped about another Black employee within the past year.
Finally, almost 27% of participants \( (n = 139) \) reported enacting acts of privacy invasion towards another Black employee at their job, while 25% \( (n = 129) \) reported that they had engaged in social exclusion towards another Black employee within the past year.

However, when viewed aggregately, the incidence rate of these reported behaviors was relatively low \( (M = 1.34, \text{SD} = .63) \), as suggested by the dependent variable’s aforementioned power-law distribution. Thus, this low base rate suggested that, although a majority (65%) of Black professionals did act uncivilly towards other Black employees at their jobs within the past year, it was a fairly uncommon event that occurred 1-2 times annually on average.

**Common Method Variance**

As alluded to in Chapter III, one of the chief issues that can arise when interpreting self-report data collected at one point in time is common method variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Since this bias can increase the risk of either inflating or deflating the relationships between predictor and outcome (dependent) variables, Harman’s (1967) single factor test was conducted to see if the majority of the variance could be explained by a single factor. If common method bias is an issue, a single factor will account for the majority of the variance in the model (>50%). To conduct Harman’s single factor test, I performed an exploratory factor analysis (an unrotated maximum likelihood analysis, the number of factors fixed 1) on a total of 27 items for all of the study’s predictor variables. The test result showed that the single factor accounted for less than half of the variance (38.26%). Since this result did not exceed the critical cut-off value of 50%, the inference can be made that common method bias was not a viable threat in this study.
Psychometric Properties of Major Study Variables

The psychometric properties (i.e., the means, standard deviations, coefficient alphas, ranges, and skewness) of the major variables of interest were analyzed to reveal any extremities in the data that could potentially indicate one or more violations of the statistical assumptions for multiple regression. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 3. Of particular note is the extreme skewness of the study’s outcome variable (instigated B-o-B incivility) which reported a value of 3.02. According to several researchers (e.g., Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), any set of data that yields a skewness (and kurtosis) value greater or less than +/-2 is considered significantly outside the acceptable range of normality and signifies a potential violation of the regression assumptions;¹ notably, the kurtosis value of instigated B-o-B incivility was 10.42. Therefore, a more formal test of normality (i.e., the Shapiro-Wilk test) was conducted to assess the viability of this potential statistical threat.

The Shapiro-Wilk test is a statistical analysis that assesses whether a random sample derives from a normal distribution. Compared to other tests of normality (e.g., the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test), the Shapiro-Wilk test is considered the most reliable assessment of normality for small-to-moderate sample sizes ($N \leq 2000$); thus, it was deemed the most appropriate test of normality for the present study ($N = 523$).

To test whether a random sample comes from a normal distribution, the Shapiro-Wilk test calculates what is known as a “$W$” statistic, whereby small values signify evidence of departure from normality while large values signify the presence of normally distributed data (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). The null hypothesis for the Shapiro-Wilk test is that the data are normally distributed.

¹ Admittedly, the acceptable ranges suggested by Gravetter and Wallnau (2017) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) are considerably more conservative than the acceptable ranges prescribed by other scholars (e.g., Kline, 1998, 2005).
distributed. Thus, if the chosen alpha level is .05 and the p-value is less than .05, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the data can, consequently, be deemed as not being from a normally distributed population. Conversely, if the p-value is greater than .05, the null hypothesis has not been rejected and the data can be considered normally distributed. With respect to instigated B-o-B incivility, the Shapiro-Wilk test reported an overwhelmingly statistically significant result ($p < .01$), which further indicates that its corresponding data are not normally distributed. See the following chart below for output of the results for two tests of normality—the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests—conducted using IBM SPSS statistical software.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests of Normality</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic  df  Sig.</td>
<td>Statistic  df  Sig.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instigated B-o-B Incivility</td>
<td>.292  523  .000</td>
<td>.591  523  .000</td>
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<td>a. Lilliefors Significance Correction</td>
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Note. Although both tests provide evidence that the data for instigated B-o-B incivility are not normally distributed ($p < .01$), the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test are the most relevant for this study’s purposes.

Thus, there is sufficient reason to be concerned about a possible violation of the assumption of normality with respect to the study’s outcome variable. To prove this point further, a histogram and quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot were created to assess the underlying pattern and distribution of the study’s primary outcome variable—instigated B-o-B incivility.

**Histogram of instigated B-o-B incivility.** Histograms are a common method for visualizing and understanding the underlying patterns of data, particularly as related to the data’s distribution, outliers and skewness (Boslaugh, 2013). A histogram can take on myriad shapes and forms (e.g., uniform, skewed, and undefined) depending on the distribution a particular set of
data represents. Perhaps the most common of these patterns is the bell-shaped or unimodal curve which indicates that a data set is normally distributed (see Figure 3 below).

![Figure 3](image)

*Figure 3. An example of a normal distribution with a bell-shaped curve. The possible scores or observations of data are represented on the horizontal or X-axis, whereas the density (or frequency) of the observations are represented on the vertical or Y-axis. In a normally distributed histogram, the scores or observations are most frequent (or dense) in intervals closest to the mean where the curve is highest. Conversely, the height is lower towards the ends of the curve because those scores that are furthest away from the mean are reported less frequently than those closest to the mean. Adopted from *The Normal Distribution* (p. 2), by S. Gordon, 2006, Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney, Mathematics Learning Center. Copyright 2006 by the University of Sydney.*

As Figure 3 indicates, a histogram characterized by a bell-shaped curve contains a prominent mound or peak at its center with a similar tapering of data to the left and right; hence, the distribution’s outward appearance of an actual bell shape. Consequently, this type of distribution indicates that reported scores or observations around the data’s mean (i.e., values located at the histogram’s central peak or mound) have a higher likelihood or probability of being selected than scores furthest from the mean, if taken from a randomly selected population of interest.

However, when we look at the histogram for instigated B-o-B incivility (see Figure 4), we can see that the distribution is severely skewed to the right, as indicated by its extreme peak left of center and a significant tapering of data towards the right side of the histogram. More
specifically, this type of data pattern signifies what is commonly known as a *power-law distribution*—a common yet problematic occurrence wherein a vast number of empirical quantities cluster around one particular value of a distribution, usually at its extremities (Clauset, Shalizi, & Newman, 2009). Therefore, in the case of instigated B-o-B incivility, the histogram shows that the overwhelming majority of responses are clustered around the lower end of the distribution, indicating a high frequency of non-disclosures (or non-offenders) with respect to committed acts of incivility towards other Black professionals.

*Figure 4.* A histogram illustrating the severely skewed distribution of the study’s primary outcome variable—instigated B-o-B incivility. The possible scores related to occurrences of instigated incivility are represented on the horizontal or X-axis, whereas the frequency of those reported values are represented on the vertical or Y-axis. Clearly, the overwhelming majority of responses are clustered around the lower end of the distribution, indicating a high frequency of non-disclosures or non-offenders with respect to instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace.
Q-Q plot of instigated B-o-B incivility. Similarly, the Q-Q plot of instigated B-o-B incivility also shows a significant deviation from the data’s expected normal distribution (see Figure 5 below). If the data did in fact follow a normal linear trend, the data’s corresponding points on the Q-Q plot would fall approximately on a straight line. However, as can be seen, the collected data (as indicated by the gray dots in the diagram) obviously deviate from a normal linear trend; thus, this further confirms that the data for instigated B-o-B incivility are not normally distributed.

Figure 5. A Q-Q plot illustrating the nonlinear trend of the study’s primary outcome variable—instigated B-o-B incivility. The straight black line in the diagram indicates the expected or hypothesized normal linear trend of the data, whereas the gray dots indicate the actual observed, nonlinear pattern of the collected data in the study.
**Conclusion of regression violations.** Evidently, the Shapiro-Wilk test and visual diagrams indicated that the collected data for instigated B-o-B incivility were not normally distributed. More specifically, the data’s power-law distribution signified a severe violation of the regression assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity (or equal variance). Therefore, an alternative statistical analysis method had to be considered since the model was clearly not suitable for standard linear and multiple regression analyses.

According to Coxe, West, and Aiken (2009), this issue can typically be remedied by employing one of two statistical approaches that are suitable for heavily skewed count data—a quasi-Poisson regression or a negative binomial regression. However, the UWBQ-I scale that was adapted and used to measure instigated B-o-B incivility in the study includes what could be perceived as a hybrid of both a count and an interval scale which makes the justification for those remedial approaches less clear-cut and ideal. Therefore, a binary logistic regression analysis was determined to be the most suitable statistical method for the study’s highly skewed dependent variable.

Like standard linear regression analyses, logistic regressions allow for the simultaneous analysis of several variables onto another variable using some predetermined selection criteria. Hence, logistic regression is considered by many (e.g., George & Mallery, 2000; Mertler & Reinhart, 2017) to be a viable extension of multiple regression in situations where the outcome variable is categorical (or discrete) with at least two distinct values (e.g., behaves civilly or behaves uncivilly). However, despite their notable similarities, they also contain some glaring differences.

For instance, while a standard regression analysis attempts to use the weights and values of several predictor variables to predict the values of an outcome variable, a logistic regression
actually derives a probability coefficient (i.e., an odds ratio)\(^2\) that specifies the likelihoods of a particular outcome (e.g., behaves civilly or uncivilly) for each participant or case provided in the data (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Thus, a logistic regression analysis results in a regression equation that attempts to predict accurately the probability of whether an individual will fall into one category (e.g., behaves civilly) or another (e.g., behaves uncivilly).

Moreover, several researchers (e.g., Mertler & Reinhart, 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) have suggested that logistic regression holds two distinct advantages over standard linear regression analyses. First, logistic regression has more analytical flexibility than standard regression because it does not require any assumptions about the distributions of the various predictor variables to be made by the researcher; thus, predictor variables are not required to be normally distributed or linearly related or to have equal variances within each group as they are in standard regression analyses. Second, unlike standard regression approaches, logistic regression has the capacity to analyze predictor variables of all types, including continuous, discrete, and dichotomous variables.

Therefore, it was with these advantages in mind that binary logistic regression analyses were employed in this study. To that end, the dependent variable—instigated B-o-B incivility—was transformed into a dichotomous variable signifying the presence or absence of instigated incivility towards another Black employee at one’s job (i.e., it was coded so that “0” = no reports of instigated B-o-B incivility within the past year, and “1” = reports of instigated B-o-B incivility within the past year). After this variable transformation was achieved, the dichotomized

\(^2\) The odds ratio \((\hat{\theta})\) represents the increase (or decrease) in the odds of being classified in a particular category when the predictor variable increases by 1. If the odds ratio is less than 1, then a negative relationship can be inferred; alternatively, if the odds ratio is greater than 1, a positive relationship can be determined.
dependent variable was then incorporated into the subsequent preliminary analyses and hypotheses tests that are discussed at length in the sections to follow.

**Means, standard deviations, and correlations of study variables.** The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for each of the study variables are displayed in Table 4. There were several correlations of note. As hypothesized, all six of the study’s main predictor variables were small to moderately correlated with instigated B-o-B incivility at the .01 level of significance (i.e., $p \leq .01$). More specifically, the results showed that as experiences or perceptions of institutional discrimination ($r = .18, p < .01$), interpersonal prejudice ($r = .24, p < .01$), competitive work climate ($r = .18, p < .01$), emotional taxation ($r = .19, p < .01$), collective minority threat ($r = .25, p < .01$), and competitive minority threat ($r = .18, p < .01$) increased, so did the likelihood of instigated incivility between Black professionals. However, none of the participant demographic variables were significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility.

Moreover, as hypothesized and in accordance with previous research (e.g., Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Foulk et al., 2016; Ghosh et al., 2011; Gray et al., 2017; Rosen et al., 2016; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010), the control variable representing participants’ prior history of experienced incivility reported a moderately positive association with instigated B-o-B incivility ($r = .30, p < .01$), supporting the “tit-for-tat” notion of workplace incivility. Interestingly, only one of the exploratory variables—psychological capital—reported a small yet significant negative association with instigated B-o-B incivility ($r = -.10, p < .05$) such that Black individuals who possessed greater psychological capital appeared to be less inclined to engage in uncivil behaviors against other Black professionals.
Furthermore, as expected, institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice were strongly and positively correlated ($r = .82, p < .01$); however, both forms of workplace racial bias were significantly negatively correlated ($p < .01$) with the number of Blacks represented at one’s job and perceptions of racial diversity in leadership. A similar pattern was found for emotional taxation as it was shown to be significantly negatively correlated with one’s perceptions of leadership racial diversity at their job ($r = -.16, p < .01$). Thus, the less racially diverse an organization’s leadership structure appeared to be, the more emotionally taxed individuals became and the more likely they were to perceive and/or experience acts of institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice. Moreover, as predicted, emotional taxation was shown to be significantly positively related to perceptions of institutional discrimination ($r = .23, p < .01$), interpersonal prejudice ($r = .28, p < .01$), and competitive work climate ($r = .32, p < .01$). Therefore, the more individuals perceived and/or experienced acts of institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitiveness at their place of employment, the more emotionally taxed they felt.

**Establishing relevant covariates in the study.** Lastly, preliminary analyses were also conducted to determine the appropriate control variables to include in the study’s main hypotheses tests and analyses. Becker (2005) recommended that variables should be controlled if: (a) they have been suggested by prior research, or (b) they significantly predict the dependent or outcome variable of interest. Following this logic, previous research (e.g., Baron et al., 1999; Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006; Cortina et al., 2013; Frone, 2008; Ghosh et al., 2011; Gray et al., 2017; Henle, 2005; Henschcovis et al., 2007; Lim & Lee, 2011; Pearson & Porath, 2009; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010) has shown that one’s age, gender, education level, organizational position and tenure, and past history of experienced incivility all influence the likelihood of instigated
uncivil behavior towards others—hence, the reason why all six variables were accounted for in this study at the onset. This satisfied Becker’s first step of assessing which covariates to include in a study.

However, before these variables could be incorporated into the main hypotheses tests, Becker’s additional requirement for establishing covariates needed to be satisfied by performing a multivariate regression analysis to assess the predictive power of each potential covariate variable on the study’s outcome variable (i.e., instigated B-o-B incivility). To that end, a binary logistic regression technique was employed wherein all 11 demographic variables, in addition to the proposed control variable (i.e., prior history of experienced incivility), were simultaneously regressed on the dichotomized dependent variable (i.e., “0” = no reports of instigated B-o-B incivility within the past year, and “1” = reports of instigated B-o-B incivility within the past year).

To ensure there were enough frequencies or observations in the data to derive valid inferences, the “Industry” demographic variable had to be consolidated into four separate subcategories that each comprised at least 10% of the total sample. To achieve this, industry categories with low frequencies that initially stood alone (e.g., “Legal” and “Consulting”) were compiled into one overarching category (e.g., Professional Occupations) with other similar and/or related industries. Consequently, the four industry subcategories and combined frequencies that resulted from this effort included the following: Professional (27.5%), Medical (10.7%), Public Sector (22.9%), and Other (38.8%). A more detailed summary of how each industry category was categorized and coded into the newly constructed subcategories is provided in Table 5.
Finally, according to the multivariate logistic regression results reported in Table 6, the overall model of 12 predictors (i.e., gender, organizational tenure and size, job title or position, Black representation in the organization, organizational and leadership racial diversity, participant age, education level, total work experience, industry, and prior history of experienced incivility) was questionable, as indicated by its extremely large model fit index value [\(-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 602.819\)];\(^3\) however, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still proved that it was statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of B-o-B incivility \([\chi^2(11) = 72.094, p < .001]\),\(^4\) as it correctly classified almost 67% of individual cases in the data.

Moreover, the *Wald* statistics indicated that only participants’ education level \((p < .05)\) and prior history of experienced incivility \((p < .001)\) were significant predictors of instigated B-o-B incivility.\(^5\) More specifically, the odds ratio for participants’ education level \((e^b = .837)\) suggested that, after controlling for other factors in the model, as an individual’s education level increases by one unit, they will be 16% less likely to instigate incivility towards another Black employee at their job;\(^6\) this thus indicates that participants’ education level and instigated B-o-B are negatively related. Conversely, the odds ratio for experienced incivility \((e^b = 2.991)\)\(^7\) indicated that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increases by one unit, they will

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\(^3\) The \(-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} provides an index of model fit. A perfect model would report a \(-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} of “0.” Consequently, the lower this value is, the better the model fits the data.

\(^4\) Chi-square \((\chi^2)\) for the model represents the difference between the constant-only model and the new model that was generated. In general, a significant model chi-square indicates that the generated model is significantly better in predicting participant membership in a specified category than the constant-only model. However, a large sample size increases the likelihood of finding significance when a poor-fitting model may have been generated.

\(^5\) The *Wald* statistic is a measure of significance for the unstandardized regression coefficient \((B)\) and represents the significance of each predictor in its ability to contribute to the generated statistical model.

\(^6\) Reported probabilities and percentages are ascertained by subtracting the calculated odds ratio from 1.

\(^7\) Although probabilities will always have values that range from 0 to 1, the odds may be greater than 1.
be 199% more likely to act uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job; this thus indicating that experienced incivility and instigated B-o-B incivility are positively related.

Therefore, as advised by Becker (2005), the variables that were ultimately determined to serve as controls during the subsequent hypotheses tests for this study included participants’ 
*education level* and *previous history of experienced incivility*.

**Hypotheses Tests**

For the main hypotheses tests, all of the hypothesized predictor variables (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, competitive work climate, and collective and competitive minority threats) were analyzed via structural equation modeling (SEM) in order to assess their predictive power on instigated B-o-B incivility in a multivariate fashion, while also accounting for participants’ education level and prior history of experienced incivility. The influence of the two exploratory variables (i.e., psychological capital and racial identity centrality) on instigated B-o-B incivility were also considered. The results from this multivariate analysis were then used to justify whether subsequent mediation analyses were warranted, per the guidelines outlined in Baron and Kenny’s (1986) four-step process to establishing mediation.

SEM is a statistical procedure that allows for the simultaneous examination of multiple relationships between one or more independent variables and one or more dependent variables (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). According to Kline (1998), there are two primary goals of SEM: (a) to understand the patterns of correlation and covariance among an established set of variables, and (b) to explain as much variance as possible with a specified model of relationships or hypotheses among several variables. Thus, SEM has proven to be a useful analytical method when attempting to represent, estimate, and test theoretical models of linear relationships between numerous variables. For these reasons, SEM (via binary logistic regression) was an
appropriate statistical analysis framework to incorporate into the multivariate hypotheses tests for this study.

**Multivariate Results for Main Hypotheses Tests With Covariates (Full Model)**

The results of the multivariate binary logistic regression analysis for the study’s hypothesized predictor variables, exploratory variables, and established covariates are displayed in Table 7. Overall, the model of nine predictors (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, competitive work climate, collective minority threat, competitive minority threat, participant psychological capital, racial identity centrality, education level, and prior history of experienced incivility) showed a rather questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its extremely large model fit index value [-2 Log Likelihood = 595.824].

Nevertheless, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still proved to be statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of B-o-B incivility [\(\chi^2(8) = 82.573, p < .001\)], as it correctly classified nearly 71% of individual cases in the data. Notably, the resulting Wald statistics indicated that collective minority threat \((p < .01)\) and prior history of experienced incivility \((p < .001)\) were the most significant predictors of instigated B-o-B incivility in the model. However, institutional prejudice, psychological capital, and participant education level all showed a weak to moderately significant relationship, with instigated B-o-B incivility at the .10 significance level threshold \((p \leq .10)\). The analysis summaries provided in the following sections offer a more detailed account of the conclusions that can be drawn from these findings as they relate to each study hypothesis. Additionally, the conclusions from the multivariate analysis of the study’s main hypotheses tests are graphically depicted in Figure below.
Figure 6. An illustrative diagram displaying the multivariate regression analysis results for the study’s main hypotheses (i.e., Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7), as well as the study’s exploratory and control variables (i.e., psychological capital, racial identity centrality, participant education level, and prior history of experienced incivility). The study’s mediation hypotheses (i.e., Hypotheses 4 through 5c) are not included because there were no significant main effects found between the proposed mediation variables (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climate) and the study’s dependent variable (i.e., instigated B-o-B incivility). Plainly, collective minority threat (Hypothesis 6) was the only hypothesized predictor variable to report a significant relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility. Relatedly, participants’ prior history of experienced incivility served as the only other variable to report a significant relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility. The circular-shaped figures represent the study’s hypothesized predictor variables, whereas the diamond-shaped figures represent the study’s proposed exploratory and control variables. Lastly, the gray-colored figures represent variables that were not significantly related to the study’s dependent variable, whereas the black and emboldened figures represent variables significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility.
Institutional discrimination and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypothesis 1). According to Table 7, institutional discrimination failed to be statistically related to instigated B-o-B incivility \((p = .152)\) when controlling for other factors in the model. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Hypothesis 1 was not supported in the model.

Interpersonal prejudice and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypothesis 2). When controlling for other factors in the model, interpersonal prejudice reported a moderately positive relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility \((p = .057)\) but failed to meet the minimal .05 significance level threshold. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Hypothesis 2 was also not supported in the model. Nonetheless, despite this notable shortcoming, the odds ratio for interpersonal prejudice \((e^b = 1.241)\) suggests that as experiences of interpersonal prejudice increase by one unit, there is a 24% greater chance that instigated B-o-B incivility will occur.

Competitive work climate and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypothesis 3). After controlling for other factors in the model, competitive work climate yielded a weak relationship to instigated B-o-B incivility \((p = .999)\)—the weakest of all variables included in the statistical model. In fact, since the regression coefficient reported a value of zero \((B = .000)\), the results suggest that competitive work climate has no influence on instigated B-o-B incivility whatsoever; this is further supported by the remarkably low Wald statistic (.000), which indicates that competitive work climate does not significantly contribute to the overall model and should, therefore, be removed. For these reasons, it is safe to conclude that Hypothesis 3 was also not supported in the model.

Emotional taxation, the proposed mediation variables and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypotheses 4 through 5c). According to Baron and Kenny (1986), the following conditions must be met to establish mediation within a particular data set:
First, the independent variable must affect the mediator in the first equation; second, the independent variable must be shown to affect the dependent variable in the second equation; and third, the mediator must affect the dependent variable in the third equation. If these conditions all hold in the predicted direction, then the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable must be less in the third equation than in the second. Perfect mediation holds if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled. (p. 1177)

Therefore, since all of the study’s mediated variables (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice, and competitive work climate) failed to report a significant main effect with instigated B-o-B incivility at the .05 level of significance, the subsequent mediation tests for Hypotheses 5a through 5c were not warranted in this study. Furthermore, these non-significant findings also negated the importance of the potential direct relationship between emotional taxation and instigated B-o-B incivility (Hypothesis 4) as its relevance to the study was completely contingent on the presence of a potential mediation relationship.

**Collective minority threat and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypothesis 6).** As predicted, collective minority threat reported a significantly positive relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility ($p = .002$). More specifically, the corresponding odds ratio for collective minority threat ($e^b = 1.269$) suggests that as individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat increase by one unit, they will be 27% more likely to instigate incivility towards another Black employee at their job. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Hypothesis 6 was supported in the model.

Therefore, the data suggested that Black professionals are more likely to instigate B-o-B incivility when they feel like the stereotype-confirming behaviors of other Black employees (e.g., demonstrated laziness or incompetence) may consequently *adversely* be ascribed to them as well simply because of their shared racial identity. This finding supports, and extends, the previous work of Cohen and Garcia (2005) and Duguid et al. (2012).
Competitive minority threat and instigated B-o-B incivility (hypothesis 7). When controlling for other factors in the model, competitive minority threat failed to be significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility ($p = .595$). In fact, it yielded the second weakest relationship among the nine variables included in the overall statistical model. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Hypothesis 7 was also not supported by the data.

**Exploratory variables and instigated B-o-B incivility.** When considering the influence of the two exploratory variables (i.e., psychological capital and racial identity centrality) on instigated B-o-B incivility, only psychological capital managed to show a moderate relationship ($p = .065$) with the dependent variable at the .10 level of significance. More specifically, since the corresponding odds ratio for psychological capital ($e^b = .804$) was below 1, the results indicated that it was negatively related to instigated B-o-B incivility; thus, as individuals’ psychological capital increases by one unit, the likelihood of instigated B-o-B incivility slightly decreases by a 20% margin.

Conversely, after controlling for other factors in the model, racial identity centrality failed to be significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility ($p = .248$), reporting the third weakest relationship among the nine variables included in the statistical model.

**Control variables and instigated B-o-B incivility.** Lastly, when assessing the predictive power of the two control variables (i.e., participant education level and prior history of experienced incivility) on instigated B-o-B incivility, participants’ previous history of experienced incivility was the lone control variable to report a strong significant positive relationship ($p = .000$) with the dependent variable. Specifically, the odds ratio for experienced incivility ($e^b = 2.264$) suggested that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increased...
by one unit, they will be 126% more likely to act uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job.

Additionally, when controlling for other factors in the model, participant education level reported a relatively weak relationship \( (p = .093) \) with the dependent variable at the .10 level of significance. However, despite this shortcoming, the corresponding odds ratio for participants’ education level \( (e^b = .883) \) suggests that as individuals’ education level increases by one unit, their likelihood of instigating B-o-B incivility slightly decreases by 12%.

**Multivariate Results of the Simplified Statistical Model**

In an attempt to achieve a statistical model with a better, more desirable fit to the data (i.e., a model with a lower fit index value), an additional multivariate logistic regression analysis was run on a simplified model that was comprised of only those variables that were previously determined to be significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility at the .10 level of significance or less \( (p \leq .10) \). This ostensibly liberal cut-off point was justified because several researchers (viz., Mertler & Reinhart, 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) have asserted that the *Wald* statistic is very conservative in its estimate and should, therefore, be interpreted with a more liberal significance level (i.e., \( p \leq .05 \) or \( p \leq .10 \)). Accordingly, only five variables satisfied this criterion to be included in the simplified model analysis: (a) interpersonal prejudice, (b) collective minority threat, (c) psychological capital, (d) education level, and (e) previous history of experienced incivility.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the simplified model of five predictors reported another questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its considerably high model fit index value \([-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 599.347]\). Thus, the simplification of the full model failed to achieve a better fit to
the data, as desired. However, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still showed that it was statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of B-o-B incivility \( \chi^2(4) = 79.051, p < .001 \), as it correctly classified approximately 70% of individual cases in the data—1% lower than the full model did previously.

Furthermore, similar to the full model results, the reported Wald statistics of this analysis revealed once again that collective minority threat \( (p = .001) \) and experienced incivility \( (p = .000) \) were the only significant predictors of instigated B-o-B incivility in the simplified model. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was supported in both the full and simplified model analyses of the data.

Moreover, the corresponding odds ratios for both collective minority threat \( (e^b = 1.260) \) and experienced incivility \( (e^b = 2.158) \) indicate that each variable is positively related to the dependent variable. Hence, as individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat increase by one unit, they will be 26% more likely to act uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job. Similarly, as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increase by one unit, they will be 116% more likely to instigate incivility towards another Black employee at their job. The full results of the binary logistic regression analysis for the simplified model are shown in Table 8. Moreover, the conclusions from the multivariate analysis of the simplified model are graphically depicted in Figure 7 below.
Figure 7. An illustrative diagram displaying the multivariate regression analysis results for the simplified model of the data. Clearly, collective minority threat (Hypothesis 6) was the only hypothesized predictor variable to report a significant relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility. Relatedly, participants’ prior history of experienced incivility served as the only other variable to report a significant relationship with instigated B-o-B incivility. The circular-shaped figures represent the study’s hypothesized predictor variables, whereas the diamond-shaped figures represent the study’s proposed exploratory and control variables. Lastly, the gray-colored figures represent variables that were not significantly related to the study’s dependent variable, whereas the black and emboldened figures represent variables significantly related to instigated B-o-B incivility.
Assessing the influence of collective minority threat and experienced incivility on the incivility subdimensions. Drawing from the results of the previous data analyses (i.e., the full and simplified models), additional regression analyses were conducted whereby the outcome variable’s most consistent and significant predictors—collective minority threat and prior history of experienced incivility—were regressed on the four subdimensions of workplace incivility (i.e., interpersonal hostility, privacy invasion, social exclusion, and gossiping). To perform these analyses, each incivility subdimension had to be transformed into a dichotomous variable signifying the presence or absence of the particular uncivil behavior of interest (i.e., they were coded so that “0” = no reports of specific uncivil behavior within the past year, and “1” = reports of engaging in specific uncivil behavior within the past year). Once these variable transformations were achieved, four separate multivariate binary logistic regression analyses were conducted to assess the predictive power of collective minority threat and experienced incivility on each of the four prescribed subcategories of workplace incivility. The analysis summaries that follow offer a more detailed description of the statistical models and findings that resulted from each analysis. Moreover, the conclusions from these additional analyses are graphically depicted in Figure 8 below.
Figure 8. An illustrative diagram displaying the multivariate regression analysis results for the influence of collective minority threat and experienced incivility on the four subdimensions of workplace incivility (i.e., interpersonal hostility, privacy invasion, social exclusion, and gossiping behaviors). Evidently, collective minority threat was most predictive of interpersonal hostility, social exclusion and gossiping behaviors. Relatively, participants’ prior history of experienced incivility turned out to be a significant predictor for all four categories of workplace incivility. The circular-shaped figures represent workgroup composition factors, whereas the diamond-shaped figures represent the study’s proposed control variables. Lastly, the gray-colored lines represent variables that were not significantly related to the uncivil behavior of interest, whereas the black and emboldened lines represent significant relationships to the behavior of interest.
Interpersonal hostility, collective minority threat, and experienced incivility. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Interpersonal Hostility,” was dichotomously coded so that the data were binarily split between those who did commit interpersonal hostility towards another Black employee within the past year (coded “1”) and those who did not (coded “0”). Overall, the model of two predictors (i.e., collective minority threat and experienced incivility) reported questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its extremely large model fit index value [\(-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 650.833\)]. However, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still showed that it was statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of interpersonal hostility \([\chi^2(1) = 73.968, p < .001]\), as it correctly classified approximately 64% of individual cases in the data.

Moreover, the Wald statistics generated by this analysis revealed that collective minority threat \((p = .000)\) and experienced incivility \((p = .000)\) were both significantly positive predictors of interpersonal hostility. Specifically, the corresponding odds ratio for collective minority threat \((e^b = 1.296)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat increase by one unit, they will be 30% more likely to act hostile towards another Black employee at their job. Similarly, the odds ratio for experienced incivility \((e^b = 2.071)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increase by one unit, they will be 107% more likely to instigate interpersonal hostility towards another Black employee at their job. The full results of this binary logistic regression analysis for predicting interpersonal hostility can be found in Table 9.

Privacy invasion, collective minority threat, and experienced incivility. The outcome variable in this analysis, “Instigated Privacy Invasion,” was dichotomously coded so that the data were binarily split between those who did commit privacy invasion towards another Black
employee within the past year (coded “1”) and those who did not (coded “0”). Overall, the model of two predictors (i.e., collective minority threat and experienced incivility) reported questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its considerably high model fit index value \([-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 546.392]\). However, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still proved to be statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of privacy invasion \([\chi^2(1) = 59.253, p < .001]\), as it correctly classified nearly 77% of individual cases in the data.

Furthermore, the \textit{Wald} statistics reported by this analysis suggested that only experienced incivility \((p = .000)\) was significantly and positively related to acts of privacy invasion. In fact, the corresponding odds ratio for experienced incivility \((e^b = 2.115)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increase by one unit, they will be 112% more likely to engage in acts of privacy invasion towards another Black employee at their job. The full results of this binary logistic regression analysis for predicting privacy invasion are displayed in Table 10.

\textit{Social exclusion, collective minority threat, and experienced incivility.} The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Social Exclusion,” was dichotomously coded so that the data were binarily split between those who did commit social exclusion towards another Black employee within the past year (coded “1”) and those who did not (coded “0”). Overall, the model of two predictors (i.e., collective minority threat and experienced incivility) reported questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its considerably large model fit index value \([-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 487.872]\). However, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still showed that it was statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of social exclusion \([\chi^2(1) = 96.454, p < .001]\), as it correctly classified approximately 78% of individual cases in the data.
Moreover, the *Wald* statistics generated by this analysis revealed that collective minority threat \((p = .000)\) and experienced incivility \((p = .000)\) were both significantly positive predictors of social exclusion. More specifically, the corresponding odds ratio for collective minority threat \((e^b = 1.306)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat increase by one unit, they will be 31% more likely to act socially exclusive towards another Black employee at their job. Similarly, the odds ratio for experienced incivility \((e^b = 2.525)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increase by one unit, they will be 153% more likely to instigate social exclusion towards another Black employee at their job. The full results of this binary logistic regression analysis for predicting social exclusion are shown in Table 11.

**Gossiping, collective minority threat, and experienced incivility.** The outcome variable in this analysis, “Instigated Gossiping Behaviors,” was dichotomously coded so that the data were binarily split between those who *did* commit gossiping behaviors towards another Black employee within the past year (coded “1”) and those who *did not* (coded “0”). Overall, the model of two predictors (i.e., collective minority threat and experienced incivility) reported questionable fit to the data, as indicated by its considerably high model fit index value \([-2 \text{ Log Likelihood} = 587.740]\). However, despite the model’s overall poor fit, it still proved to be statistically reliable in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of gossiping behaviors \([\chi^2(1) = 88.180, p < .001]\), as it correctly classified nearly 72% of individual cases in the data.

Furthermore, the *Wald* statistics reported by this analysis suggested that collective minority threat \((p = .000)\) and experienced incivility \((p = .000)\) were both significantly positive predictors of interpersonal hostility. In fact, the corresponding odds ratio for collective minority threat \((e^b = 1.304)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat increase
by one unit, they will be 30% more likely to gossip about another Black employee at their job. Similarly, the odds ratio for experienced incivility \((e^b = 2.247)\) indicates that as individuals’ experiences of workplace incivility increase by one unit, they will be 125% more likely to instigate gossiping behaviors towards another Black employee at their job. The full results of this binary logistic regression analysis for predicting gossiping behaviors are presented in Table 12.

**Qualitative Analysis**

In addition to the quantitative survey data that were collected, participants also had the opportunity to provide qualitative data regarding their reasoning and/or justification for why they acted uncivilly towards another Black employee via open-response items included after each set of instigated incivility questions. The reason for incorporating this supplemental qualitative option was twofold: (a) to grant participants an opportunity to explain their reported behavior and challenge any presumptions of malice intent; and (b) to gain more insight into the various motivations and scenarios that incite instigated B-o-B incivility. Furthermore, several researchers (e.g., Di Pofi, 2002; Schein, 1995; Van Buskirk & McGrath, 1992) have suggested that qualitative approaches provide better insight into organizational phenomena and processes since they possess storytelling value and can more accurately capture respondents’ unique schemas or orientations to the world around them. Thus, the qualitative data gleaned from the survey’s open-response items served as a complement to the collected quantitative data.

Overall, 291 participants provided 569 individual text responses across the four distinct categories of instigated workplace incivility: interpersonal hostility (224 responses), privacy invasion (106 responses), exclusionary behavior (104 responses), and gossiping (135 responses). Before qualitative data analysis commenced, these responses were first reviewed for coherence and relevance to the actual short answer prompt (i.e., “If inclined, please use the space below to
explain the reasons why you committed one or more of the uncivil behaviors described on the previous page towards another Black employee at your job”). After this initial review of the data, 462 legitimate qualitative responses remained, including: 191 hostility responses, 76 privacy invasion responses, 73 exclusionary responses, and 122 gossiping responses. To provide an “aerial view” of the refined set of qualitative data, a word cloud of the 100 most frequently used words from participant responses are displayed below in Figure 9.8 Moreover, Table 13 provides a more detailed account of the characteristics and frequencies for the 50 most common words mentioned by participants in their open-ended responses.

Figure 9. A word cloud illustrating the 100 most frequently used words by participants when explaining why they acted uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year.

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8 The word cloud was created with NVivo 11 by compiling the 100 most commonly used “stemmed” words from participant responses that contained at least four letters. Four words were omitted from the list (i.e., “just,” “well,” “also,” and “else”) because of their lack of significance and relevance to the study’s subject matter.
To allow for a more reflexive and robust analysis process, these 462 remaining textual responses were analyzed using NVivo 11—a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software program. Per the recommendations of several qualitative researchers (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Harry, Sturges, & Klingner, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the primary researcher initially reviewed participant responses on a line-by-line basis and analyzed them for recurring thematic similarities that eventually resulted in provisional meaning segments and first-order codes. Next, the resulting first-order codes were then refined, differentiated, and integrated into higher-level theoretical categories that highlighted the overarching categories that most accurately described the motivations and/or justifications for instigated B-o-B incivility in the workplace.

This analytic process culminated in the creation of 11 higher-order themes that encompassed the personal motivations and justifications of individuals who reported they had acted uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year. Specifically, the qualitative responses in the data revealed that individuals’ main motivations for acting “uncivilly” towards another Black employee revolved around the following: (a) deep interpersonal conflict as the result of a genuine dislike for the target and/or some prior history of antagonism that warranted retribution; (b) reprimanding an unprofessional or unethical employee; (c) sudden loss of self-composure related to experienced anger or frustration in the heat of the moment; (d) social pressure to engage in a certain behavior because of peer pressure or an office’s culture or norms; (e) responding to an urgent matter or crisis; (f) personal oversight or accident; (g) Personal closeness or strong rapport with the individual; (h) general disposition or habit; (i) defending oneself or others from wrongdoing or reproach; and (j) behaving in a manner that they believed was characteristic of the Black community or culture. Additionally,
one group of respondents reported they either had no reason for engaging in the behavior or, alternatively, simply could not recall the reason.

The distribution and frequency of participant responses for each thematic category are displayed in Figure 10 below. Ten of the 11 categories (excluding “No reason/Unable to recall”) are elaborated on in greater detail in the sections to follow.

Figure 10. A frequency chart illustrating the distribution of the higher-level thematic categories that were gleaned from participants’ reported reasons for acting uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year.
Deep Interpersonal Conflict

Nearly a third (27.1%) of participants who responded to the survey’s open-response items suggested that they acted uncivilly towards another Black employee because of some deep interpersonal conflict. Typically, this perceived conflict, and subsequent incivility, resulted from two primary sources: (a) an individual’s genuine dislike for the target (i.e., personality clash), or (b) an individual’s prior history of experienced antagonism or wrongdoing by the ensuing target that ostensibly warranted retribution. Interestingly, both reported forms of interpersonal conflict were generally used to justify displays of interpersonal hostility, social exclusion, and gossiping behaviors; however, deep interpersonal conflict appeared to play a very minimal role in demonstrations of privacy invasion. A sample response from participants included “My boss isn’t the greatest so I sometimes choose not to respond to her.” Additional excerpts typifying this reported justification for instigated B-o-B incivility can be found in Table 14.

Reprimanding Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior

Eleven percent of participants claimed that they instigated B-o-B incivility as a means to reprimanding unprofessional or unethical behavior that they witnessed the target participating in at work (e.g., counterproductive work behaviors or illegal activity). Notably, this justification was reported most by individuals who had engaged in acts of interpersonal hostility, social exclusion, and gossiping. One example of a participant response included “The employee cannot always be counted on to carry out work duties diligently.” Additional excerpts encapsulating this justification are displayed in Table 15.

Sudden Loss of Self-composure in Heat of the Moment

Ten percent of participants attributed their uncivil acts to a sudden loss of self-composure that they experienced as a result of heightened feelings of anger or frustration in the heat of the
moment. According to participants, this loss of self-composure seemed especially likely if they were engaged in some form of heated debate or disagreement with the ensuing target. This justification was reported most by individuals who had enacted interpersonal hostility and gossiping behaviors towards other Black employees. A sample response from participants included “All of the incidents were in the heat of the moment and my emotions were flying high.” Additional excerpts exemplifying this justification are shown in Table 16.

**Social Pressure**

Other participant responses (8.9%) suggested that their uncivil actions towards another Black employee were justified because they were acting in accordance to some form of social pressure around them. Notably, participants commonly attributed their experiences of social pressure to one of two factors: (a) their work office’s culture or norms, or (b) peer pressure from coworkers, close acquaintances, or even a supervisor. Interestingly, both forms of social pressure were reported most by individuals who had engaged in gossiping behaviors towards other Black employees, followed by those who had reported acts of privacy invasion and social exclusion. One example of a participant response included “I was asked by management about the status of a coworker and I explained what I knew.” Additional excerpts capturing this justification are displayed in Table 17.

**Urgent Matter or Crisis Management**

A number of participants (7.4%) claimed that their uncivil acts were justifiable because they were either tending to an urgent matter or, in more extreme cases, resolving a crisis of some sort. This justification was most common among individuals who had instigated acts of privacy invasion towards another Black employee, followed by individuals who had engaged in some form of social exclusion. A sample response from participants included “I was checking for
mice. We had an infestation and I had to check everyone’s desk.” Additional excerpts typifying this justification can be found in Table 18.

**Personal Oversight or Accident**

A smaller number of participant responses (6.5%) declared that they acted uncivilly towards another Black employee as the result of some personal oversight or accident, particularly if they were overwhelmingly busy or preoccupied by other matters. This finding supports Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) assertion that workplace incivility can be perpetrated both consciously (intentionally) and unconsciously (unintentionally) by individuals. Generally, this justification was most characteristic of individuals who had engaged in acts of privacy invasion and social exclusion towards another Black employee. One example of a participant response included “Walked in on someone without realizing they were on the phone.” Additional excerpts encapsulating this justification are displayed in Table 19.

**Personal Closeness or Rapport**

A small set of participants (5.8%) indicated that their uncivil acts were justified because they were socially and/or emotionally close to the target of the behavior and, in many cases, were simply behaving in a way that could be interpreted in a joking or playful manner. Typically, this justification was most common among individuals who had instigated gossiping behaviors and acts of interpersonal hostility and privacy invasion. A sample response from participants included “I just rolled my eyes because that was my best friend and we do this to each other a lot.” Additional excerpts typifying this justification can be found in Table 20.

**General Disposition or Habit**

One contingent of participants (5.8%) suggested that they acted uncivilly towards another Black employee because they were simply behaving in a manner that was typical of them—
whether by way of their general disposition or some developed habit. Generally, this justification was most characteristic of individuals who had engaged in gossiping behaviors towards other Black employees, as well as acts of interpersonal hostility and privacy invasion. One example of a participant response included “Rolling my eyes is a habit I’ve had since I was a kid. I try to be conscious about it to stop from doing it, but it doesn’t always work.” Additional excerpts encapsulating this justification are displayed in Table 21.

**Defending Self or Others**

A small fraction of participant responses (4.3%) claimed that their uncivil actions towards another Black employee were justified because they were merely acting in defense of someone else or, alternatively, defending themselves from some unwarranted criticism or false accusation. This form of justification was reported most by individuals who had engaged in acts of interpersonal hostility. A sample response from participants included “Because the other Black was accusing me of something that I didn’t do. I got the job and she didn’t.” Additional excerpts exemplifying this justification are shown in Table 22.

**Normative “Black Behavior”**

Finally, the smallest cohort of participants (1.9%) indicated that their uncivil acts towards another Black employee were justified because they were simply behaving in a manner they believed was normative to the Black community or culture. This justification was most characteristic of individuals who had reported acts of interpersonal hostility, privacy invasion, and gossiping behaviors. One example of a participant response included “That’s what Black people do.” Additional excerpts typifying this justification can be found in Table 23.
Data Analysis Summary

The final section of this chapter highlights the five principal conclusions that were drawn from the above-mentioned data analyses conducted in the present study. They include the following:

1. All statistical models generated in the binary logistic regression analyses reported a questionable fit to the data, as indicated by their consistently high model fit index values (i.e., all models reported a -2 Log Likelihood value of 487.872 or higher). Nevertheless, despite the models’ poor fit with the data, they all managed to be statistically reliable ($p \leq .001$) in distinguishing between non-instigators and instigators of B-o-B incivility—quite possibly as a result of the study’s large sample size.

2. From the study’s 523 participants, roughly 65% ($n = 339$) reported behaving uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year. More precisely, 51% of participants ($n = 267$) reported instigating acts of interpersonal hostility towards another Black employee at their job, while only 25% ($n = 129$) reported that they had engaged in social exclusion towards another Black employee within the past year. Additionally, 35% of participants ($n = 182$) reported that they had gossiped about another Black employee within the past year, whereas 27% ($n = 139$) reported engaging in acts of privacy invasion towards another Black employee at their job. Nevertheless, the incidence rate of these reported behaviors when viewed aggregately were relatively low ($M = 1.34$, $SD = .63$), as indicated by the dependent variable’s aforementioned power-law distribution. This supports the conclusions drawn by previous research on instigated incivility (e.g., Gray et al., 2017; Rosen et al., 2016).
3. Overall, the results showed that collective minority threat and experienced incivility were the most consistently significant predictors of instigated B-o-B incivility in the proposed model—with experienced incivility showing the greatest effect on the outcome variable between the two. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was the only main hypothesis of the study to be supported. However, the results of both the full and simplified models suggest that the two variables only explained between 10-20% of the variance for instigated B-o-B incivility; therefore, these findings should be interpreted conservatively, especially when considering the obvious complexity of this phenomenon.

4. Notably, the results indicated that one’s prior history of experienced incivility was significantly and positively related to all four categories of instigated B-o-B incivility at one’s job (i.e., interpersonal hostility, privacy invasion, social exclusion and gossiping behaviors). Similarly, collective minority threat was significantly and positively related to enactments of interpersonal hostility, social exclusion and gossiping behaviors towards other Black employees at one’s job; however, it failed to be significantly related to instigated acts of privacy invasion.

5. Finally, participants reported that there were 10 primary reasons and/or justifications for acting uncivilly towards another Black employee at their job within the past year. The three most common justifications included: (a) deep interpersonal conflict as the result of a genuine dislike for the target and/or some prior history of antagonism that warranted retribution; (b) reprimanding an unprofessional or unethical employee; and (c) sudden loss of self-composure related to experienced anger or frustration in the heat of the moment.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Overview and Contributions to the Literature

This study was the first of its kind to employ a mixed methods approach to investigate the situational and personal characteristics of the CIB phenomenon within the Black community. Notably, the current study also served as the first empirical investigation to account for the perspectives and motivations of the actual instigators of “crab behavior” themselves (cf. Miller, 2016; Pegues, 2017; Worsley & Stone, 2011). Given the novelty of this topic within the management literature, the present study was highly exploratory in its scope, as evidenced by its rather complex theoretical model, which included variables—new and old—that had never been systematically investigated together in this fashion previously. While support for the overall model left much to be desired, some noteworthy findings did emerge that substantiated some of the proposed relationships and offered novel insights into the psychosocial underpinnings of the CIB phenomenon among Black professionals. Several noteworthy contributions to the management and workplace incivility literature have been achieved by this research effort. These contributions are reviewed below in light of extant literature and research, and theoretical and practical implications are drawn. The study’s methodological and inferential limitations represent the chapter’s bookend, along with implications for future research.

First, by finding empirical support for Black professionals admitting their participation in incivility towards racially similar others, the current study contributes to the management and incivility literature by providing further support and validation that the CIB phenomenon (or intragroup incivility) represents another variant of the workplace incivility construct. Although anecdotally resonant, few studies have investigated the CIB mentality’s pervasiveness
among the Black community within the U.S. context, particularly as it relates to the various
springboards of how and why it occurs among Black professionals in the first place. Therefore,
the findings from this study have broken new ground in the unexplored area of instigated B-o-B
incivility (as opposed to “experienced incivility”) and, in consequence, have also broadened our
understanding of workplace incivility as a construct and form of interpersonal deviance. Since a
vast amount of the workplace incivility research has focused on the lived-and-felt experiences of
White workers in professional settings (see Sherman, 2015), this study also offers unique insight
into the perspectives of racial minority instigators of uncivil behavior at work which further
broadens the scope of the workplace incivility discussion and research stream.

Furthermore, this study’s reportedly low base rate of instigated B-o-B incivility suggests
that the CIB mentality within the Black community is either: (a) a rare and uncommon
phenomenon (i.e., not chronic), or (b) difficult to assess and measure because of individuals’
conscious or unconscious defenses that ultimately prevent their ability to acknowledge or
recognize their collusion with it. This challenges the prevailing mythology surrounding the CIB
phenomenon and its presumed prevalence within the Black community (see Burrell, 2010;
DeGruy, 2005) by suggesting that “crab behavior” among Black professionals is either more the
exception than the rule, or is emanating from unconscious processes that are difficult to access—even with intentional attempts to normalize and encourage honest reporting from participants.
Nevertheless, this study highlights the fact that low base rate phenomena enacted over short
periods of time can still have significant consequences for people at work (see Gray et al., 2017;
Rosen et al., 2016).

Moreover, this study breaks new ground by showing how collective minority threat can
serve as a precursor to uncivil behavior among Black professionals. This finding supports, and
extends, the previous work of Cohen and Garcia (2005) and Duguid et al. (2012) by giving further credence to the devastating power of the “threat in the air” (see Steele, 1997, 2010) that Black professionals may regularly experience, regardless of one’s organizational and leadership demography factors. It suggests that Black professionals who have acquired a palpable sensitivity or fear of being viewed in a stereotypical light by others (i.e., a “burden of proof”), when in the presence of other Blacks who are perceived as caricatural or stereotypical, may take a course of action to act uncivilly towards them as a means to disassociate themselves from the “stereotypical other” and ultimately manage their professional image in the wake of potential devaluation by their respective group members.

Interestingly, this finding seemed to occur regardless of racial demography factors at the work group level; therefore, further research is warranted to see exactly where this fear or threat stems from, and how it operates in other racioethnic groups. Relatedly, whereas other studies on the CIB phenomenon have placed greater emphasis on competition, jealousy, and envy as potential drivers of interpersonal and intragroup deviance (see Bulloch, 2017; DeGruy, 2005; Pegues, 2017), the findings derived from this study seem to suggest that “crab behavior,” at least among Black professionals, revolves more around one’s contempt or disdain for another Black individual as opposed to some internal drive of covetousness or competitiveness.

Additionally, the findings from this study provide additional support for Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) notion of the “tit-for-tat” effect of workplace incivility, whereby previous targets of uncivil behavior may respond with an equal or greater act of rudeness or aggression towards their initial perpetrator or others. However, the inferences that can be drawn from this finding are rather limited as additional data are needed to determine: (a) the characteristics of the initial instigator of uncivil behavior, and (b) whether the self-proclaimed instigators in this study
actually retaliated towards their initial perpetrator or some alternate target (see Marcus-Newhall et al., 2000; Porath & Pearson, 2013).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this study offers additional support for the social interactionist explanation of the CIB phenomenon (with both situational and personality factors accounting for the acts) in contrast to the pathology-focused transgenerational trauma narrative that has traditionally explained its existence. Hence, these second-hand traumatic experiences are influenced more by the re-enactment of the past as opposed to the past itself (i.e., instigated B-o-B incivility may resemble the divisive tactics and feelings of separateness that were characteristic of chattel slavery but it is not an actual residual of that trauma; see Pegues, 2017, or Appendix I for a more detailed explanation; see also Bowen, 1972; Friedman, 1991).

**Practical Implications**

The findings gleaned from this study underscore the need for organizations to maintain a culture in which courteous and civil behaviors are not only emphasized (i.e., espoused values) but are actually embraced from the top-down. According to Pearson et al. (2000), occurrences of workplace incivility often go dismissed as a “personal” issue of inconsequential impact instead of being seen, and treated, as the organizational strain it really is with respect to the counterproductive impact it has on employee morale, productivity, and overall performance (see Pearson & Porath, 2009).

To remedy this, and potentially curb the long-term effects of the tit-for-tat spiraling effect of workplace incivility, Porath and Pearson (2009, 2012) suggested that organizations should set zero-tolerance expectations with respect to uncivil behaviors at work, starting with leadership and slowly working downward like a domino effect. First, they suggest that organizations should employ multi-rater feedback mechanisms to appraise civility across all levels in the entire
organization, especially among high-status employees. This will not only allow organizations to get a better handle on the “pulse” of incivility within the organization, but it will also allow for the reprimanding or sanctioning of chronic incivility perpetrators regardless of their organizational level. Additionally, Porath and Pearson suggested that organizations should screen out applicants who are chronic incivility instigators through the implementation of thorough reference and character checks.

Moreover, Pearson and colleagues (e.g., Pearson et al., 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2004, 2009) suggested that senior management should take the initiative for fostering an inclusive, respectful, psychologically safe, and incivility-free work environment by modeling appropriate, respectful workplace behavior and clearly stating their expectations of civility in mission statements and policy manuals. Relatedly, all new hires to the organizations should receive education about the organization’s expectations regarding civility, and employees at all levels of the organization should be required to undergo interpersonal skills training that emphasize increased emotional intelligence as well as individual and situational awareness (Porath & Pearson, 2012).

With respect to curbing the influence of collective minority threat on Black professionals, Shapiro and Neuberg (2007) appeared to suggest that collective threat, at least in theory, most closely resembles some variation of own-reputation threat from the outgroup (i.e., the fear that one’s behavior will confirm, in the minds of outgroup members, that the negative stereotypes held of their group are true of them and will therefore result in them being treated badly). However, this distinction does not appear clear-cut as collective minority threat seems to be activated more by the behavior of socially referent others as a proxy for oneself instead of a fear that an individual is behaving in a stereotypical-confirming manner themselves. Moreover, as
organizational racial demography did not seem to play a role in the presence (or absence) of this phenomenon, it is difficult to discern whether individuals’ experiences of collective minority threat were more pronounced in Black-majority versus Black-minority settings which, in turns, makes it difficult to ascertain which form (and source) of stereotype threat activation is actually applicable to a given situation.

Notwithstanding, since collective minority threat appears to deal with deep-rooted impression management concerns, Marx, Stapel, and Muller (2005) suggested that exposure and proximity to successful ingroup members can alleviate one’s own burden to represent the group successfully in the presence of others. Thus, based on this logic, it would appear that Avery’s (2003) call for organizations to “convey that employee racial diversity is unrestricted and extends beyond merely entry-level positions” (p. 678) would seem more than appropriate.

However, while it is important to find and prescribe effective ways to attract, retain, develop, and promote racioethnic minorities to all levels of organizational functioning, it is equally important to investigate and understand the reasons why particular groups continue to be disproportionately excluded from the highest leadership positions in the corporate hierarchy in the first place.

**Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Consistent with the restrictive nature of research, this investigation was susceptible to several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the study’s findings. Foremost, given the cross-sectional approach of this study, inferences of causation could not be made about the relationships between and among the study variables (McGrath, 1981). Therefore, future studies on the CIB mentality (or intragroup incivility) should employ experimental designs to test their research hypotheses, just as Porath and Erez (2007, 2009) have done with their studies on workplace incivility and rudeness.
Relatedly, another potential limitation of this study is that all variables were operationalized using self-report measures. Although this methodological approach is consistent with previous incivility research, the limitations of self-report measures have been well-documented, including increased susceptibility to: (a) response sets, (b) method bias, (c) social desirability, and (d) retrospective memory effects (see Spector, 1994). Thus, despite there being no evidence of common method bias in the present study, it is possible that this investigation could have benefitted from the inclusion of more objective measures to verify the presence of workplace incivility (e.g., using independent, third-party judges or some secondary data source), especially when considering the taboo nature of the CIB phenomenon.

Furthermore, participants in this study may have been more susceptible to retrospective memory distortions because of the Uncivil Workplace Behavior Questionnaire-Instigated (UWBQ-I)’s 1-year recall window for assessing occurrences of instigated incivility. Although this recall window is generally considered more ideal than the once-conventional 5-year window (see Arvey & Cavanaugh, 1995; Cortina et al., 2017; Martin & Hine, 2005), Matthews and Ritter (2016) found that incivility studies that applied shorter recall windows (i.e., 1 month or 2 weeks) were more likely to find larger effect sizes than those with longer recall windows (i.e., 1 year or greater). The authors attributed this discrepancy to several potential factors, including: (a) individuals’ ability to accurately recall the number of uncivil events; (b) the degree to which the recall window accurately reflects the state of the workplace; (c) the amount of confounding “noise” introduced by the recall window because of history effects and other organizational influences; and (d) the extent to which the chosen recall window contrasts with an individual’s experience with a particular behavior outside of the timeframe in question. Although Matthew and Ritter’s (2016) study narrowly focused on the individual targets of workplace incivility,
these methodological considerations should apply to the memory recall for instigators of uncivil behavior as well. However, other researchers (e.g., Blau & Andersson, 2005; Johns, 1994) have asserted that a 1-year reference period should generally be recommended for self-assessment measures since it is a natural work cycle timeframe.

Therefore, future studies on workplace incivility should intently consider the time period participants are asked to reflect on when assessing incidents of interpersonal deviance and maltreatment, as it can have deleterious consequences for the integrity of the collected data. As a general rule, the evidence seems to suggest that shorter recall windows (i.e., less than 1 year) should be judiciously applied when gathering information from a single source at one point in time. However, perhaps an even stronger remedy to this potential methodological concern would be to incorporate a longitudinal time-series research design wherein the study’s variables of interest are all collected independently at different points in time. Instead of merely offering a static snapshot of a set of theoretical variables at one point in time (as this study does), this design would provide stronger causal inference and would allow for a more accurate determination of how instigated B-o-B incivility—and its various antecedents and outcomes—dynamically develop, change, and interrelate over time (see Chan, 1998; Hinkin, 1995; Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010).

Furthermore, an additional limitation of using the UWBQ-I in this study revolved around its somewhat “murky” Likert-format anchoring scale (i.e., from 1 = never to 5 = many times) that could be perceived, by some, as a variation of both a count and interval scale. Because the scale’s measurement designation was less clear-cut than desired, the statistical approach that was ultimately employed to analyze the study’s dependent variable and its power-law distribution (i.e., binary logistic regression) was merely one option of analysis as opposed to the best option,
generally speaking. Considering the regression assumptions that had been violated in the data, a binary logistic regression approach seemed like a viable remedy because of its increased analytical flexibility and applicability to this study’s primary scope (i.e., instigators and non-instigators of B-o-B incivility). However, others viewing the data could have reasonably argued that the data sufficiently signified a true count variable which, in turn, would have made a quasi-Poisson or negative binomial regression the more appropriate analysis approach, per the recommendation of Coxe et al. (2009). Of course, the verdict on which statistical analysis strategy was most suitable for the data is ultimately up for interpretation and individual preference; thus, the findings presented herein should be interpreted with this caveat in mind.

Another notable limitation of the UWBQ-I stems from the measure’s normative assumption that workplace incivility is *always* negative or deviant in form; however, the findings from this study—particularly the qualitative data—provided more insight into the cultural, relational and idiosyncratic nuances of instigated B-o-B incivility, and demonstrated how certain behaviors can be enacted more neutrally, or even positively, as opposed to maliciously. Thus, researchers should consider accounting for these gleaned nuances when investigating this topic in the future.

Additionally, consistent with previous incivility research (see Schilpzand et al., 2016 for a more detailed summary), this study failed to differentiate between the various sources of the CIB phenomenon (e.g., supervisors, coworkers, and/or subordinates) and, instead, approached the broader construct of workplace incivility from a rather universal lens (cf. Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Leiter, Day, Oore, & Laschinger, 2012; Leiter, Laschinger, Day, & Oore, 2011; Leiter, Price, & Spence Laschinger, 2010; Pegues, 2017; Spence Laschinger, Leiter, Day, & Gilin, 2009). Therefore, per the suggestion of Schilpzand et al. (2016), future studies should
address this limitation by explicitly comparing the presumably diverse antecedents and consequences of the different sources of incivility, especially when considering the myriad status, power, and role differentials that are inherently present within each relational dynamic (i.e., supervisor-to-subordinate and peer-to-peer).

Corroboratively, previous research (viz., Hirschcovis & Barling, 2010; Pegues, 2017) has shown that experiences of top-down incivility and aggression (i.e., superior-to-subordinate) typically yield the most adverse consequences on the work attitudes, behaviors, and psychological well-being of those targeted by the behavior; however, these studies solely focused on the undesirable outcomes for individual targets of uncivil behavior and failed to take into account the individual consequences of the perpetrators themselves (cf. Foulk, Lanaj, Tu, Erez, & Archambeau, in press). Therefore, future studies on the CIB mentality should investigate the diverse consequences that such behavior may have on the well-being of its targets as well as its perpetrators.

Finally, perhaps the most apparent limitation to this study is its narrow yet justified focus on instigated B-o-B incivility. As discussed in earlier sections of this research, the professional experiences of Black workers within the U.S. context are rather unique and culturally specific; therefore, the findings from this study may not be generalizable to other forms of workplace incivility, and additional theory may be necessary to account for how other individuals and social groups may react to certain organizational stressors (e.g., experienced incivility and collective minority threat) as they relate to the instigation of uncivil behaviors at work.
**Additional Considerations for Future Research**

In addition to the aforementioned limitations of the present study, several other implications for future research require acknowledgment. First, as alluded to previously, although the current study provides support for the tit-for-tat notion of workplace incivility, it not clear who the Black professionals experienced incivility from initially. Since Cortina’s (2008) theory of selective incivility has already proven that social minorities are generally at a higher risk of being treated rudely by their more dominant counterparts, it is reasonable that instigated B-o-B incivility could very well be an unintended consequence of experienced selective incivility—especially when considering the human tendency to displace negative emotions onto innocent or unsuspecting targets (see Marcus-Newhall et al., 2000; Porath & Pearson, 2013). Thus, future research on this matter is warranted to ascertain whether the CIB phenomenon is actually a derivative of experienced selective incivility or if it, instead, operates in isolation.

Second, although the self-developed instruments of collective and competitive minority threats reported acceptable internal reliability coefficients (i.e., $\alpha \geq .70$), no validation assessments were conducted to ensure that the instruments actually measured the constructs of interest they intended to. Therefore, future studies should account for this psychometric limitation.

Moreover, although this study was successful in investigating the psychosocial factors behind those who have perpetrated uncivil behaviors towards other Black professionals and those who have not, the literature would benefit greatly if future studies on this topic actually took it a step further and assessed individuals’ *intent to harm* (i.e., workplace aggression) as well as the *severity or intensity* of the instigated behavior. Although there appears to be strong consensus that incivility typically involves low-grade or mildly deviant behaviors, Andersson and Pearson
(1999) suggested that uncivil behaviors can spiral into more harmful behaviors over time when not addressed (see Foulk et al., 2016; Rosen et al., 2016).

Lastly, although this study investigated the promotive factors of the CIB phenomenon in professional settings, future studies should consider investigating potential organizational inhibitors to intragroup incivility to see if they happen to alleviate, or possibly even exacerbate, the incidence rates of this counterproductive behavior. These may take the form of various organizational support initiatives (e.g., peer mentorship programs, employee resource groups, etc.) that are typically adopted to cultivate a more welcoming, open, and inclusive work culture and climate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light not just on the happenings that occur as a result of the “crabs” being in the barrel (i.e., instigated B-o-B incivility), but also on how and why Black professionals actually end up in the metaphorical barrel in the first place. The illustration below (see Figure 1) was initially completed by Ronnie Williams (2008) and was later modified to showcase the question that served as the crux of this dissertation project (i.e., Who built the barrel?). Although the verdict to that question is still outstanding, my hope is that this study—and the findings contained herein—will offer more insight into the matter so that future scholars are compelled to dig more deeply with more refined questions, sharper tools, and garnered wisdom that will ultimately spur compelling research and dialogue about this consequential yet understudied area.
It was Zora Neale Hurston (1942) who famously declared that “research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose” (p. 143). Thus, it is in this vein of personal curiosity that I pursued this project with the aspirational goal of prompting a heightened sense of collective awareness and enlightenment about the CIB mentality and the various factors that instigate its ugly rearing. As the CIB phenomenon represents yet another well-known and often undiscussable barrier to the well-being and advancement of Blacks in the workplace, it is my belief that the true power of this discourteous mindset comes from the secret and covert manner from which it has traditionally operated.

Therefore, this is my attempt at shining a brighter light on this issue so that we, collectively, may be better equipped to find innovative, more impactful ways to address it in the
future. This sentiment is perhaps best captured by the words of Philip Aaron who, when publicly
discussing the CIB mentality to a group of onlookers, declared:

    This characteristic is something that we do not like to talk about, but I believe that any
problem has to be addressed and exposed as a problem before it can be solved. And my
motivation here is not to embarrass any of us, but to present the problem so we can start
to solve it. (Aaron & Smith, 1992)
References


Table 1

*Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Demographic Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categorical Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization Tenure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Title/Position</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner/President/CEO</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management (C-level executive)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle management</td>
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<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual contributor (no management responsibility)</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size of Organization</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 or less employees</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-1000 employees</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 or more employees</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Representation in Organization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very few</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Racial Diversity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly one race</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat racially diverse</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very racially diverse</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Racial Diversity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly one race</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat racially diverse</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>42.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very racially diverse</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
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### Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (or GED equivalent)</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college but no degree</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s degree (2-year college)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree (4-year college)</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and public relations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, construction and engineering</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and entertainment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and finance</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food services and preparation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government (federal, state or local)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology (IT)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing and production</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and healthcare</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office and administrative support</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate (rental/leasing)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and consumer products (retail/wholesale)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and shipment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and hospitality</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified/Other</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Frequencies not summing to $N = 523$ and percentages not summing to 100 reflect rounding error.
Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Continuous Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>40.14</td>
<td>12.26</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>77.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Work Experience (Years)</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>18.66</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>55.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Frequencies not summing to $N = 523$ and percentages not summing to 100 reflect missing data. Three data points from Total Work Experience (Years) had to be omitted from all data analyses because of their “impossible” value based on the participants’ reported age. However, all other data remaining for those three participants were preserved for subsequent analyses.
Table 3

_Psychometric Properties of the Major Study Variables_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Skew</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instigated B-o-B Incivility</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Discrimination</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Prejudice</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Work Climate</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Taxation</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Minority Threat</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competitive Minority Threat</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>1.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Capital</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>-1.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racial Identity Centrality</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experienced Incivility</td>
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<td>.88</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>Outcome Variable</td>
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<td>1. Instigated B-o-B Incivility</td>
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<td>.63</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td>Demographic Variables</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Org. Tenure</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Job Title or Position</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Org. Size</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Black Rep. in Org.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.04</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>3.52</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.18**</td>
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<td>19. Psychological Capital</td>
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Note. N ranged from to 520 – 523. * p ≤ .05. ** p ≤ .01. Instigated B-o-B incivility, gender, org. tenure, job title or position, org. size, Black representation in the org., org. racial diversity, leadership racial diversity, education, and industry are all dummy coded such that 1 = did not instigate incivility (cp. instigated incivility), female (cp. male), 1-5 years (cp. 6 years or more), owner/president/ceo (cp. other employees), 50 or less (cp. 51 or more), very few (cp. several to many), mostly one race (cp. racially diverse org.), mostly one race (cp. racially diverse leadership), high school attendee or graduate (cp. college educated), professional (cp. non-professional).
Table 4 (Continued)

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Study Variables

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
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<tr>
<td>13. Institutional Discrimination</td>
<td>3.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Interpersonal Prejudice</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Competitive Work Climate</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Collective Minority Threat</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Competitive Minority Threat</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.36**</td>
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<td>.41**</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Psychological Capital</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.11**</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Racial Identity Centrality</td>
<td>4.42</td>
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<td>.23**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Experienced Incivility</td>
<td>1.66</td>
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<td>.42**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
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<td>.32**</td>
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</table>

Note. N ranged from to 520 – 523. * p ≤ .05. ** p ≤ .01. Instigated B-o-B incivility, gender, org. tenure, job title or position, org. size, Black representation in the org., org. racial diversity, leadership racial diversity, education, and industry are all dummy coded such that 1 = did not instigate incivility (cp. instigated incivility), female (cp. male), 1-5 years (cp. 6 years or more), owner/president/ceo (cp. other employees), 50 or less (cp. 51 or more), very few (cp. several to many), mostly one race (cp. racially diverse org.), mostly one race (cp. racially diverse leadership), high school attendee or graduate (cp. college educated), professional (cp. non-professional).
Table 5

*Frequencies and Percentages for New Subcategories of “Industry” Demographic Variable*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Subcategory</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Combined %</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional occupations</strong></td>
<td>144</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and public relations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, construction and engineering</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and finance</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology (IT)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and administrative support</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate (rental/leasing)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical occupations</strong></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and healthcare</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Sector occupations</strong></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government (federal, state or local)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other occupations</strong></td>
<td>203</td>
<td>38.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and entertainment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food services and preparation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing and production</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and consumer products (retail/wholesale)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and shipment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and hospitality</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified/Other</td>
<td>70</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Frequencies not summing to $N = 523$ and percentages not summing to 100 reflect missing data. Combined frequencies and percentages for each “Industry” sub-category are reported in boldface font.
Table 6

Logistic Regression Summary for Demographic Characteristics and Experienced Incivility Predicting Instigated B-o-B Incivility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (e^B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>1.040</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org. tenure</td>
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<td>.139</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.788</td>
<td>.963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org. size</td>
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<td>.145</td>
<td>1.060</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>.861</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job title or position</td>
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<td>.108</td>
<td>1.095</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.295</td>
<td>.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black representation in org.</td>
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<td>.130</td>
<td>1.017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>1.140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org. racial diversity</td>
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<td>.164</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.936</td>
<td>1.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership racial diversity</td>
<td>-.199</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>1.623</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>.819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>.014</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>1.003</td>
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<td>Education Level</td>
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<td>.080</td>
<td>4.948</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>* .026</td>
<td>.837</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total work experience (years)</td>
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<td>.475</td>
<td>1.010</td>
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<td>2.516</td>
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<td>.113</td>
<td>.560</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry (public sector)</td>
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<td>.071</td>
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<td>.789</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry (other)</td>
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<td>.126</td>
<td>.669</td>
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Model $\chi^2$ 72.094 $p \leq .001$
-2LogLikelihood 602.819

Note. $N = 523$. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated B-o-B Incivility,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate incivility and 1 = did instigate incivility. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating Black-on-Black incivility (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability).

- Reference category = female.
- Reference category = one to five years.
- Reference category = 50 or less employees.
- Reference category = owner, president, or ceo.
- Reference category = very few.
- Reference category = mostly one race.
- Reference category = mostly one race.
- Reference category = less than high school degree.
- Reference category = medical industry.
- Reference category = public sector industry.
- Reference category = other industries not categorized as professional, medical or public sector.

*** $p \leq 0.001$
** $p \leq 0.01$
* $p \leq 0.05$
† $p \leq 0.10$
Table 7

Logistic Regression Summary for Full Model of Major Study Variables and Covariates Predicting Instigated B-o-B Incivility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (e^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional discrimination</td>
<td>-.147</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>2.055</td>
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<td>Interpersonal prejudice</td>
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<td>.114</td>
<td>3.629</td>
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<td>1.241</td>
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<td>Competitive work climate</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<td>**.002</td>
<td>1.269</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.102</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
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<td>Psychological capital</td>
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<td>3.402</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>†.065</td>
<td>.804</td>
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<td>Racial identity centrality</td>
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<td>2.815</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>†.093</td>
<td>.883</td>
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 Model χ²                       82.573   p ≤ .001
 -2LogLikelihood                595.824

Note. N = 523. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated B-o-B Incivility,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate incivility and 1 = did instigate incivility. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating Black-on-Black incivility (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability). ^aReference category = less than high school degree.

*** p ≤ 0.001
** p ≤ 0.01
* p ≤ 0.05
† p ≤ 0.10
Table 8

Logistic Regression Summary for Simplified Model of Significant Major Study Variables and Covariates Predicting Instigated B-o-B Incivility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio ($e^B$)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal prejudice</td>
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<td>.072</td>
<td>2.261</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>1.114</td>
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<td>.071</td>
<td>10.619</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*** .001</td>
<td>1.260</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>.114</td>
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<td>Experienced incivility</td>
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<td>19.226</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*** .000</td>
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<td>.484</td>
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Model $\chi^2$ \textbf{79.051} \hspace{1cm} p \leq .001
-2LogLikelihood \textbf{599.347}

Note. $N = 523$. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated B-o-B Incivility,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate incivility and 1 = did instigate incivility. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating Black-on-Black incivility (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability). *Reference category = less than high school degree.

*** $p \leq 0.001$
** $p \leq 0.01$
*  $p \leq 0.05$
†  $p \leq 0.10$
Table 9

Logistic Regression Summary for Collective Minority Threat and Experienced Incivility
Predicting Instigated Interpersonal Hostility (Incivility Subdimension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio ($e^B$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collective minority threat</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>17.049</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>1.296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced incivility</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>30.309</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>2.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.031</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>51.255</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model $\chi^2$ 73.968 $p \leq .001$

2LogLikelihood 650.833

Note. $N = 523$. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Interpersonal Hostility,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate interpersonal hostility and 1 = did instigate interpersonal hostility. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating interpersonal hostility towards another Black employee (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability).

*** $p \leq 0.001$
** $p \leq 0.01$
* $p \leq 0.05$
† $p \leq 0.10$
Table 10

Logistic Regression Summary for Collective Minority Threat and Experienced Incivility Predicting Instigated Privacy Invasion (Incivility Subdimension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SE$  $B$</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Odds Ratio ($e^B$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collective minority threat</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>3.632</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>†.057</td>
<td>1.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced incivility</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>39.866</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>2.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.814</td>
<td>.310</td>
<td>82.218</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model $\chi^2$ $59.253$, $p \leq .001$

2LogLikelihood $546.392$

Note. $N = 523$. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Privacy Invasion,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate privacy invasion and 1 = did instigate privacy invasion. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating acts of privacy invasion towards another Black employee (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability).

*** $p \leq 0.001$

**  $p \leq 0.01$

*  $p \leq 0.05$

†  $p \leq 0.10$
Table 11

Logistic Regression Summary for Collective Minority Threat and Experienced Incivility Predicting Instigated Social Exclusion (Incivility Subdimension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (e^B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collective minority threat</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>13.122</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>1.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced incivility</td>
<td>.926</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>53.620</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>2.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-3.782</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td>108.696</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model χ² = 96.454, p ≤ .001
-2LogLikelihood = 487.872

Note. N = 523. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Social Exclusion,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate social exclusion and 1 = did instigate social exclusion. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating acts of social exclusion towards another Black employee (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability).

*** p ≤ 0.001
**  p ≤ 0.01
*   p ≤ 0.05
†   p ≤ 0.10
### Table 12

**Logistic Regression Summary for Collective Minority Threat and Experienced Incivility Predicting Instigated Gossiping Behaviors (Incivility Subdimension)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (e^B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collective minority threat</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>16.139</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>1.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced incivility</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>43.046</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>***.000</td>
<td>2.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model χ² 88.180  p ≤ .001
-2LogLikelihood 587.740

*Note. N = 523. The dependent variable in this analysis, “Instigated Gossiping Behaviors,” is coded so that 0 = did not instigate gossiping behaviors and 1 = did instigate gossiping behaviors. Betas are unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model representing the change in log odds and the effect of the IV on the DV. Betas are not to be interpreted as linear regression coefficients. The odds ratio is the increase or decrease in the odds of instigating gossiping behaviors towards another Black employee (odds are never negative, anything less than one is a decrease in probability).*

*** p ≤ 0.001  
** p ≤ 0.01  
* p ≤ 0.05  
† p ≤ 0.10
Table 13

**Characteristics and Frequencies for 50 Most Frequently Used Words in Open Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word Length</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Black</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Black, Blacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. employee</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>employee, employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. working</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>work, working, works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. person</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>person, personal, personalities, personally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. people</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. something</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. like</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>like, likely, liking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. sometimes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>sometime, sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. talking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>talk, talked, talking, talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. needed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>need, needed, needing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. times</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>time, timely, times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. another</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>another, another's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. coworker</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>coworker, coworkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. things</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>thing, things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. done</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. know</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. race</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>race, races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. feel</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>feel, feeling, feels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. make</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>make, makes, making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. White</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>White, Whites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. made</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. always</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. disagreement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>disagreement, disagreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. someone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. actions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>action, actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. behavior</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>behavior, behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. friends</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>friend, friends</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. issue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>issue, issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. call</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>call, called, calling, calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. desk</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. different</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>difference, different, differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. none</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. nothing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. right</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. think</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>think, thinking, thinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. back</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. everyone</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. happen</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>happen, happened, happening, happens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. raise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>raise, raised, raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. rude</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>rude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. situation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>situation, situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. wrong</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>wrong, wronged, wrongs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. eyes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. felt</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. information</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>inform, information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. others</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. point</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. rolled</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>roll, rolled, rolling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. take</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>take, taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. busy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>business, busy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 14

Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Deep Interpersonal Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Retaliation for Past Transgressions)</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> It’s not justifiable, but at the time I thought it was. Because a lot of my Black coworkers don’t like me. They make fun of me, they lie on me and try to get me in trouble. It’s like as soon as I got here I was the punching bag for drama and mess. So at first I tried to retaliate. But that only stressed me out even more. Now I stay to myself. And I let it go and pray.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Retaliation for Past Transgressions)</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> My boss isn’t the greatest so I sometimes choose not to respond to her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Retaliation for Past Transgressions)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Because I felt like the other Black employee was talking about me behind my back so I said something about her to another employee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Genuine Dislike for an Individual)</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> There was a problem of us working well together. We just weren’t very compatible in any way. We often had many disagreements and was just too difficult to work with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Genuine Dislike for an Individual)</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> Our personalities were so difficult to match, we never agreed on anything so the mixture of our bad attitudes caused chaos. Which led to us not consulting one another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Interpersonal Conflict (Genuine Dislike for an Individual)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> It’s hard to trust this lady sometimes so I talk about her with my other coworkers when she’s not around.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Reprimands of Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reprimanding Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> Let’s be clear here... I am an experienced manager and I sometimes use intemperate language to employees of all races and cultures if I feel the situation calls for it. I am a Black manager and if I feel that putting my foot in another Black person’s butt to motivate them is called for, I will. Same as with an Asian, Hispanic or a White person who does not respond in a productive manner in the workplace or presents interpersonal issues. That’s my job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprimanding Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> The employee did a behavior that I thought was inappropriate. She came into the office smelling like weed and even engaged in smoking it right outside the office with another co-worker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprimanding Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> The employee cannot always be counted on to carry out work duties diligently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprimanding Unprofessional or Unethical Behavior</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> More so, if something needed to be reported to management or human resources. If something like a particular standard was not met...in that form. That could be with anybody.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 16

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Sudden Loss of Self-composure in Heat of the Moment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudden Loss of Self-composure</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> All of the incidents were in the heat of the moment and my emotions were flying high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden Loss of Self-composure</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Just wanted to vent sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden Loss of Self-composure (Heated Debate or Disagreement)</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> Sometimes a person gets in your face and pushes you to your boiling point and you just get a little agitated and you lose your cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden Loss of Self-composure (Heated Debate or Disagreement)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> It was during a disagreement we had but we later made up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification Type</td>
<td>Excerpt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Pressure (Office Culture or Norms)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Somebody does something they shouldn’t have and we talk about it behind their back, or you know someone is in trouble and we gossip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Pressure (Office Culture or Norms)</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> The desk drawers are universally used. There is no privacy between my desk drawer and someone else’s. Therefore, this is not a civil problem – this is a joint workforce with a common goal. Interruptions are fairly common whether I’m being interrupted or interrupting someone else. This should not dictate aggressive or biased behavior as race has no grounds in interruptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Pressure (Office Culture or Norms)</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> Just normal office politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Pressure (Peer Pressure from Supervisor)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> I was asked by management about the status of a coworker and I explained what I knew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Pressure (Peer Pressure from Coworkers)</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Fellow employees would ask me about the issue and I would calmly explain it to them in a private manner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18

Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving an Urgent Matter or Crisis Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Matter or Crisis Management</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> Had to interrupt because he/she was needed due to an emergency. I work in healthcare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Matter or Crisis Management</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> Fax was left on copier. Employee was out on medical leave -- needed critical information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Matter or Crisis Management</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> I was checking for mice. We had an infestation and I had to check everyone’s desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Matter or Crisis Management</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> Again -- emergency situation called for an instant decision for life or death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Matter or Crisis Management</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> I was in a rush and wanted to complete a piece of work myself. I did not wish to go through the rigmarole of having to convince this guy of the way I had decided to complete this task. Not dealing with him at all was easier, at least in the short term.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 19

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Personal Oversight or Accidental Behavior*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Oversight or Accident (Social Exclusion)</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> It was an oversight - - nothing intentional. Once I realized what I had done, I let them know right away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Oversight or Accident</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> Walked in on someone without realizing they were on the phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Oversight or Accident (Too Busy or Preoccupied)</td>
<td><em>(Social Exclusion)</em> Work became incredibly busy, and it became a matter of forgetting what I had intended to do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Personal Closeness or Rapport*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Closeness or Rapport</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Close knit family. Nothing is safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Closeness or Rapport</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> I just rolled my eyes because that was my best friend and we do this to each other a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Closeness or Rapport</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> I had a close relationship with the individual. Meaning that we are friends to [the point] I felt that there would not be an issue. I found that a fax was for them and I delivered it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving General Disposition or Habit*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Disposition or Habit</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> Just normal. Do it with everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Disposition or Habit</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> I did it because he wasn’t doing what he was supposed to but I have done it to all employees – Black, White, it doesn’t matter to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Disposition or Habit</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> Rolling my eyes is a habit I’ve had since I was a kid. I try to be conscious about it to stop from doing it, but it doesn’t always work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Disposition or Habit</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> I read the emails when they are left open or if I go on the computer and they leave themselves logged in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 22

*Examples of Justifications for Instigated B-o-B Incivility Involving Defense of Self or Others*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defending Self or Others</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> Because the other Black was accusing me of something that I didn’t do. I got the job and she didn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending Self or Others</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> Because they were trying to tell me how to do the job I was hired for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending Self or Others</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> When someone is making fun of another employee or is just being disrespectful to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending Self or Others</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> The reason why is because of how they treated some homeless people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification Type</td>
<td>Excerpt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative “Black Behavior”</td>
<td><em>(Interpersonal Hostility)</em> We as African Americans tend to be very animated when we speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative “Black Behavior”</td>
<td><em>(Gossiping)</em> That’s what Black people do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative “Black Behavior”</td>
<td><em>(Privacy Invasion)</em> We Black people don’t mind sharing our things.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

To: DeMarcus Pegues  
From: Amy Camilleri  
Subject: IRB Approval: 18-212 Protocol  
Date: 02/01/2018  

Thank you for submitting your study entitled, “Professional and Petty: An Investigation into the Social and Individual Conditions that Promote Instigated Acts of Workplace Incivility between Black Professionals;” the IRB has determined that your study is Exempt from committee review (Category 2) on 02/01/2018.

Please keep in mind that the IRB Committee must be contacted if there are any changes to your research protocol. The number assigned to your protocol is 18-212. Feel free to contact the IRB Office by using the “Messages” option in the electronic Mentor IRB system if you have any questions about this protocol.

Further, all research recruitment materials must include the study’s IRB-approved protocol number. You can retrieve a PDF copy of this approval letter from the Mentor site.

Best wishes for your research work.

Sincerely,
Amy Camilleri  
IRB Administrator  
accamilleri@gmail.com
Appendix B

Screenshots of Survey Items and Instruments

CONSENT (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Research Consent Form

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. This study is being conducted by DeMarcus Pegues, a doctoral candidate in the Social-Organizational Psychology Program at Teachers College, Columbia University. The following provides you with additional information necessary to obtain informed consent. Please thoroughly review the information below and indicate your decision to proceed (or withdraw) from the study by clicking on the appropriate button towards the bottom of this page.

By agreeing to participate in this study, you acknowledge that you have read and consent to the following:

- Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary and anonymous. Further, you understand that you may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without penalty by simply closing your browser.
- You are aware that the questions in this survey pertain to your perceptions of, and experiences in, your current employing organization, particularly as they relate to your identity as an African American/Black staff member or employee.
- The survey uses a secure, web-based platform to ensure that your privacy and confidentiality are maintained throughout the study’s duration.
- No personally identifying information will be collected or connected to your survey responses, and all collected data will only be accessible to the principal investigator, his faculty sponsor and authorized Qualtrics Panels staff.
- Your individual responses will not be analyzed, and subsequent data analyses will only examine patterns in the aggregate.
- The risks associated with this research include the potential of experiencing emotional discomfort or low levels of anxiety as a result of reflecting on, and in some cases acknowledging, wrongful acts committed by you and/or others in the recent past.
- In addition to any compensation provided to you by the Qualtrics Panels service, you understand that there may be an indirect benefit to humanity if this research is successful in making its strengths more noticeable to the scientific community and broader society. To that end, results from this study may be presented for educational purposes in journal publications or at various conferences and meetings.
- This survey consists of five sections, and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. If you choose to participate in this study, please proceed until you receive confirmation that your responses have been recorded at the survey’s end.
- This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Teachers College, Columbia University (Protocol #18-212). For concerns or questions regarding your participation in this research, the IRB may be contacted via phone at (212)-678-4105 or by written correspondence to 525 West 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151. Additionally, if at any time you have questions regarding your participation or this research project more generally, you can contact the principal investigator directly via the contact information provided below.

DeMarcus Pegues
Ph.D. Candidate
Social-Organizational Psychology Program
Teachers College, Columbia University
dap2147@tc.columbia.edu (email)

By clicking “Yes” below, you consent to participate in this study.

○ Yes, I agree to participate in this study.

○ No, I decline to participate in this study.
What is your gender?
- Female
- Male
- Other (specify)

How do you racially identify? (choose all that apply)
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- White
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Asian
- Other (specify)

What is your current employment status?
- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee

How many years have you been employed at your current organization?
- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Which of the following best describes your current job level?
- Owner/President/CEO
- Senior management (C-level executive)
- Middle management
- Individual contributor (no management responsibility)

How many employees work in your organization?
- 50 or less employees
- 51-1000 employees
- 1000 or more employees
In your best estimate, how many Black employees (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) do you currently work with at your job?

- None
- Very few
- Several
- Many

INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION & INTERPERSONAL PREJUDICE (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your current place of employment.

At my job, Blacks get the least desirable assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</table>

There is discrimination against Blacks in salaries at my job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</table>

Blacks at my job have to work harder to get a promotion than others do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
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At my job, Blacks get positions that have fewer fringe benefits or perks compared to others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

There is discrimination against Blacks in hiring practices at my job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
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<th>Agree</th>
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</table>

Differences between Black and White culture sometimes causes trouble at my job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your CURRENT PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT.

I overhear jokes or slurs against Blacks at my job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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People I work with have stereotypes about Blacks that affect how they judge me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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At my job, I deal with people who are prejudiced against Blacks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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People I work with assume that Blacks are not as competent as others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</table>

At my job, people notice my race before they notice anything else about me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</table>

People I work with assume that all Blacks are the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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WORKPLACE INCIVILITY FRAMING STATEMENT (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Section 2 of 5

Workplace incivility (i.e., rude, condescending and exclusionary behaviors that violate workplace norms of respect but otherwise appear ordinary and nonthreatening) is an unfortunate yet common reality for American workers. In fact, it is estimated that nearly 98% of workers in the U.S. have experienced uncivil acts (e.g., being yelled at, gossiped about, socially excluded, or having their privacy invaded) at some point in their professional careers. Perhaps even more astoundingly, 50% of American workers have reported experiencing such behavior on a weekly basis.

However, despite how commonplace uncivil behaviors are in the workplace, it is often challenging for individuals to recall, recognize or acknowledge that they’ve acted uncivilly towards other employees (i.e., coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) at some point in their past. This is because people are generally well-intentioned, and such behaviors are often fleeting or unintentional.
Therefore, as you reflect on the following sets of questions regarding your participation in various displays of workplace incivility towards others, please take your time and ensure that you are answering as honestly and openly as you can. Your honest responses are by no means a judgment of you as a person, and will only be used to help the researcher achieve a more complete understanding of workplace incivility so that organizations can better address it in the future.

INTERPERSONAL HOSTILITY (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate how often IN THE PAST YEAR you have engaged in each of the following activities TOWARDS OTHER BLACK EMPLOYEES (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) while at work.

- **Raised your voice while speaking to another Black employee.**
  - Never
  - Once or twice
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Many times

- **Used an inappropriate tone when speaking to other Black employees.**
  - Never
  - Once or twice
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Many times

- **Spoke to another Black employee in an aggressive tone of voice.**
  - Never
  - Once or twice
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Many times

- **Rolled your eyes at another Black employee.**
  - Never
  - Once or twice
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Many times

If inclined, please use the space below to explain the reasons why you committed one or more of the uncivil behaviors described on the previous page towards another Black employee at your job (i.e., justify your actions). Please be as honest and candid as possible.

**PRIVACY INVASION (Section header not shown in actual survey)**

Please indicate how often IN THE PAST YEAR you have engaged in each of the following activities TOWARDS OTHER BLACK EMPLOYEES (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) while at work.

- **Took items from another Black employee’s desk without later returning it.**
  - Never
  - Once or twice
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Many times
Interrupted another Black employee while they were speaking on the telephone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
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Took items from another Black employee’s desk without prior permission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
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</table>

Read communications addressed to another Black employee, such as emails or faxes.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
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Opened another Black employee’s desk drawers without permission.

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<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
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If inclined, please use the space below to explain the reasons why you committed one or more of the uncivil behaviors described on the previous page towards another Black employee at your job (i.e., justify your actions). Please be as honest and candid as possible.

EXCLUSIONARY BEHAVIOR (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate how often IN THE PAST YEAR you have engaged in each of the following activities TOWARDS OTHER BLACK EMPLOYEES (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) while at work.

Did not consult another Black employee in reference to a decision that should have involved them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Gave unreasonably short notice when canceling or scheduling events another Black employee was required to be present for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
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</table>

Failed to inform another Black employee of a meeting they should have been informed about.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once or twice</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Many times</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Avoided consulting with another Black employee when you would normally be expected to do so.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Were excessively slow in returning another Black employee’s phone message or email without good reason for the delay.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Failed to pass on information that another Black employee should have been made aware of.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Were unreasonably slow in responding to matters on which other Black employees were reliant on you for, without good reason.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

If inclined, please use the space below to explain the reasons why you committed one or more of the uncivil behaviors described on the previous page towards another Black employee at your job (i.e., justify your actions). Please be as honest and candid as possible.

GOSSIPING (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate how often IN THE PAST YEAR you have engaged in each of the following activities TOWARDS OTHER BLACK EMPLOYEES (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) while at work.

Publicly discussed another Black employee’s confidential personal information.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Made snide remarks about another Black employee.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Talked about another Black employee behind his/her back.

Never  | Once or twice  | Sometimes  | Often  | Many times
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

150
Gossiped behind another Black employee’s back.

- **Never**
- **Once or twice**
- **Sometimes**
- **Often**
- **Many times**

If inclined, please use the space below to explain the reasons why you committed one or more of the uncivil behaviors described on the previous page towards another Black employee at your job (i.e., justify your actions). Please be as honest and candid as possible.

**COLLECTIVE MINORITY THREAT (Section header not shown in actual survey)**

**Section 3 of 5**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your personal feelings towards YOUR COWORKERS at your current place of employment.

I have concerns that the behavior of my Black coworkers will reflect negatively on me at work.

- **Strongly disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Somewhat disagree**
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly agree**

It bothers me a great deal whenever a Black coworker behaves stereotypically at my job.

- **Strongly disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Somewhat disagree**
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly agree**

I go to great lengths to ensure that I am viewed differently than other Blacks at my job.

- **Strongly disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Somewhat disagree**
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly agree**

I feel confident in my ability to succeed at my job even when my Black coworkers slack or underperform.

- **Strongly disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Somewhat disagree**
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly agree**

**COMPETITIVE MINORITY THREAT (Section header not shown in actual survey)**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your personal feelings towards YOUR COWORKERS at your current place of employment.
The thought of my work being compared to the work of my Black peers makes me feel "small".

I feel inferior whenever I am in the presence of my Black coworkers.

I often get envious of the positive attention that my Black coworkers receive from others at my job.

I am elated whenever a Black coworker gets recognized for performing well on the job.

EMOTIONAL TAXATION (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate HOW OFTEN you experience the following because of your job.

I feel emotionally drained from my work.

I feel used up at the end of the workday.

I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

Working all day is really a strain for me.
I feel burned out from my work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>A few times a year or less</th>
<th>Once a month or less</th>
<th>A few times a month</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>A few times a week</th>
<th>Everyday</th>
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COMPETITIVE WORK CLIMATE (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your CURRENT PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT.

My manager frequently compares my performance with that of my coworkers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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The amount of recognition I receive at my job depends on how I perform compared to others.

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<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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Everybody at my job is concerned with being the top performer.

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My coworkers frequently compare their performance with mine.

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EXPERIENCED INCIVILITY (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Section 4 of 5

Please indicate how often any of your supervisors or coworkers have done the following within the PAST YEAR.

Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions.

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Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility.

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Gave you hostile looks, stares, or sneers.

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Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately.

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Interrupted or “spoke over” you.

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Rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation.

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Please indicate how often any of your supervisors or coworkers have done the following within the PAST YEAR.

Yelled, shouted, or swore at you.

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<th>Frequency</th>
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Made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you.

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Ignored you or failed to speak to you (e.g., gave you “the silent treatment”).

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Accused you of incompetence.

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Targeted you with anger outbursts or “temper tantrums”.

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Made jokes at your expense.

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**Racial Identity Centrality (Section header not shown in actual survey)**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

### Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

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<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
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### In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.

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### My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.

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### Being Black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.

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### Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

### I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.

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### I have a strong attachment to other Black people.

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### Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.

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### Being Black is not a major factor in my social relationships.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL (EFFICACY/HOPEFULNESS) (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Section 5 of 5

Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself RIGHT NOW. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.

I feel confident contributing to discussions about the organization’s strategy.

I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.

(Item omitted per authors’ request)

(Item omitted per authors’ request)

(Item omitted per authors’ request)

(Item omitted per authors’ request)
PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL (RESILIENCE/OPTIMISM) (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself **RIGHT NOW**. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

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DEMOGRAPHICS (RACIAL DIVERSITY) (Section header not shown in actual survey)

How racially diverse is your **ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE**?

- ![ ]() Mostly one race
- ![ ]() Somewhat racially diverse
- ![ ]() Very racially diverse

Please specify which phrase **BEST DESCRIBES** your organization:

- ![ ]() Mostly White
- ![ ]() Mostly Asian
- ![ ]() Mostly Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ![ ]() Mostly Black or African American
- ![ ]() Mostly American Indian or Alaska Native
How racially diverse is your organization’s leadership?

- Mostly one race
- Somewhat racially diverse
- Very racially diverse

Please specify which phrase BEST DESCRIBES your organization’s leadership:

- Mostly White
- Mostly Asian
- Mostly Black or African American
- Mostly American Indian or Alaska Native
- Mostly Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

DEMOGRAPHICS (GENERAL) (Section header not shown in actual survey)

What is your age in years? (numbers only)

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school degree
- High school graduate (or GED equivalent)
- Some college but no degree
- Associate’s degree (2-year college)
- Bachelor’s degree (4-year college)
- Master’s degree
- Doctoral degree

In your best estimate, how many years of TOTAL WORK EXPERIENCE do you have? (numbers only)

Which of the following industries best describes the one in which you primarily work in?

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT (Section header not shown in actual survey)

Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in this study. Your involvement is greatly appreciated. The specific aim of the current study is to investigate the various individual and environmental factors that promote instigated acts of workplace incivility between Black professionals—more colloquially known as the “crabs-in-a-barrel mentality”. More specifically, this study aims to see which emotional states (i.e., emotional taxation), workgroup composition factors (i.e., perceived collective and competitive minority threats), and aspects of work climate (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice and competitive work climate) result in greater occurrences of Black-on-
Black incivility in the workplace.

Please note that all of your responses to the survey questions will be kept anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research project. Also, if you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact me, DeMarcus Pegues, at dap2147@tc.columbia.edu. Alternatively, you may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Peter Coleman, at pc84@tc.columbia.edu.

Lastly, if for any reason you are experiencing any signs of emotional distress or discomfort as a result of participating in this study, please seek help from a mental health professional as soon as possible. You can obtain a list of mental health providers in your local area by visiting the Mental Health America website at http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/finding-therapy. If more urgent attention is required, you may reach their 24-hour crisis center by calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) toll-free or by texting MHA to 741741.

Thank you again for your participation! Please click the “Next” button to submit your responses.
Appendix C

Framing Statement for Instigated Incivility Questions

Workplace incivility (i.e., rude, condescending and exclusionary behaviors that violate workplace norms of respect but otherwise appear ordinary and nonthreatening) is an unfortunate yet common reality for American workers. In fact, it is estimated that nearly 98% of workers in the U.S. have experienced uncivil acts (e.g., being yelled at, gossiped about, socially excluded, or having their privacy invaded) at some point in their professional careers. Perhaps even more astoundingly, 50% of American workers have reported experiencing such behavior on a weekly basis.

However, despite how commonplace uncivil behaviors are in the workplace, it is often challenging for individuals to recall, recognize or acknowledge that they’ve acted uncivilly towards other employees (i.e., coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) at some point in their past. This is because people are generally well-intentioned, and such behaviors are often fleeting or unintentional.

Therefore, as you reflect on the following sets of questions regarding your participation in various displays of workplace incivility towards others, please take your time and ensure that you are answering as honestly and openly as you can. Your honest responses are by no means a judgment of you as a person, and will only be used to help the researcher achieve a more complete understanding of workplace incivility so that organizations can better address it in the future.
Appendix D

Survey Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in this study. Your involvement is greatly appreciated. The specific aim of the current study is to investigate the various individual and environmental factors that promote instigated acts of workplace incivility between Black professionals—more colloquially known as the “crabs-in-a-barrel mentality”. More specifically, this study aims to see which emotional states (i.e., emotional taxation), workgroup composition factors (i.e., perceived collective and competitive minority threats), and aspects of work climate (i.e., institutional discrimination, interpersonal prejudice and competitive work climate) result in greater occurrences of Black-on-Black incivility in the workplace.

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Thank you again for your participation! Please click the “Next” button to submit your responses.
Appendix E

Instigated Incivility Towards Black Professionals (Outcome Variable)
(adapted from Gray et al., 2017)

Instructions: Please indicate how often in the past year you have engaged in each of the following activities towards other Black employees (i.e., Black coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates) while at work.

(via five-point rating scale from 1 = never to 5 = many times)

Interpersonal Hostility
1. Raised your voice while speaking to another Black employee.
2. Used an inappropriate tone when speaking to other Black employees.
3. Spoke to another Black employee in an aggressive tone of voice.
4. Rolled your eyes at another Black employee.

Privacy Invasion
5. Took items from another Black employee’s desk without later returning it.
6. Interrupted another Black employee while they were speaking on the telephone.
7. Took items from another Black employee’s desk without prior permission.
8. Read communications addressed to another Black employee, such as emails or faxes.
9. Opened another Black employee’s desk drawers without permission.

Exclusionary Behavior
10. Did not consult another Black employee in reference to a decision that should have involved them.
11. Gave unreasonably short notice when canceling or scheduling events another Black employee was required to be present for.
12. Failed to inform another Black employee of a meeting they should have been informed about.
13. Avoided consulting with another Black employee when you would normally be expected to do so.
14. Were excessively slow in returning another Black employee’s phone message or email without good reason for the delay.
15. Failed to pass on information that another Black employee should have been made aware of.
16. Were unreasonably slow in responding to matters on which other Black employees were reliant on you for, without good reason.

Gossiping
17. Publicly discussed another Black employee’s confidential personal information.
18. Made snide remarks about another Black employee.
19. Talked about another Black employee behind his/her back.
20. Gossiped behind another Black employee’s back.
Appendix F

Institutional Discrimination, Interpersonal Prejudice, Emotional Taxation, Competitive Work Climate, Collective Minority Threat, and Competitive Minority Threat (Predictor Variables)

*Institutional Discrimination* (adapted from Hughes & Dodge, 1997)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your current place of employment.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. At my job, Blacks get the least desirable assignments.
2. There is discrimination against Blacks in salaries at my job.
3. Blacks at my job have to work harder to get a promotion than others do.
4. At my job, Blacks get positions that have fewer fringe benefits or perks compared to others.
5. There is discrimination against Blacks in hiring practices at my job.

*Interpersonal Prejudice* (adapted from Hughes & Dodge, 1997)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your current place of employment.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. Differences between Black and White culture sometimes causes trouble at my job.
2. I overhear jokes or slurs against Blacks at my job.
3. People I work with have stereotypes about Blacks that affect how they judge me.
4. At my job, I deal with people who are prejudiced against Blacks.
5. People I work with assume that Blacks are not as competent as others.
6. At my job, people notice my race before they notice anything else about me.
7. People I work with assume that all Blacks are the same.

*Emotional Taxation* (adopted from Schaufeli et al., 1996)

**Instructions:** Please indicate how often you experience the following because of your job.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = never to 7 = everyday)

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4. Working all day is really a strain for me.
5. I feel burned out from my work.
**Competitive Work Climate** (adopted from Fletcher et al., 2008)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your current place of employment.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. My manager frequently compares my performance with that of my coworkers.
2. The amount of recognition I receive at my job depends on how I perform compared to others.
3. Everybody at my job is concerned with being the top performer.
4. My coworkers frequently compare their performance with mine.

**Collective Minority Threat** (self-developed measure)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your personal feelings towards your coworkers at your current place of employment.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. I have concerns that the behavior of my Black coworkers will reflect negatively on me at work.
2. It bothers me a great deal whenever a Black coworker behaves stereotypically at my job.
3. I go to great lengths to ensure that I am viewed differently than other Blacks at my job.
4. *I feel confident in my ability to succeed at my job even when my Black coworkers slack or underperform.* (reverse-scored)

**Competitive Minority Threat** (self-developed measure)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning your personal feelings towards your coworkers at your current place of employment.

(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. The thought of my work being compared to the work of my Black peers makes me feel “small”.
2. I feel inferior whenever I am in the presence of my Black coworkers.
3. I often get envious of the positive attention that my Black coworkers receive from others at my job.
4. *I am elated whenever a Black coworker gets recognized for performing well on the job.* (reverse-scored)

---

1 An asterisk (*) indicates that the item was omitted from subsequent data analyses because of low item-scale reliability.
Appendix G

Racial Identity Centrality, Psychological Capital, and Prior History of Experienced Incivility (Exploratory & Control Variables)

*Racial Identity Centrality* (adopted from Sellers et al., 1998)

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.
(via seven-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

1. Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself. (reverse-scored)
2. In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.
3. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.
4. Being Black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am. (reverse-scored)
5. I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.
6. I have a strong attachment to other Black people.
7. Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.
8. Being Black is not a major factor in my social relationships. (reverse-scored)

*Psychological Capital* (adopted from Avey et al., 2011; Luthans et al., 2007)

**Instructions:** Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself right now.
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.
(via six-point rating scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree)

Self-Efficacy
1. I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.
2. I feel confident contributing to discussions about the organization’s strategy.
3. I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.

(REMAINDER OF ITEMS HAVE BEEN OMITTED, PER AUTHORS’ REQUEST)

*Prior History of Experienced Incivility* (adopted from Cortina et al., 2013)

**Instructions:** Please indicate how often any of your supervisors or coworkers have done the following within the past year. (via five-point rating scale from 1 = never to 5 = many times)

1. Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions.
2. Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility.
3. Gave you hostile looks, stares, or sneers.
4. Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately.
5. Interrupted or “spoke over” you.
6. Rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation.
7. Yelled, shouted, or swore at you.
8. Made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you.
9. Ignored you or failed to speak to you (e.g., gave you “the silent treatment”).
10. Accused you of incompetence.
11. Targeted you with anger outbursts or “temper tantrums”.
12. Made jokes at your expense.
Appendix H

Permission to Use and Reproduce the Psychological Capital (PCQ-12) Questionnaire

DeMarcus Pegues

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for DeMarcus Pegues to use the following copyright material:

Instrument: *Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Questionnaire (PCQ)*

Authors: *Fred Luthans, Bruce J. Avolio & James B. Avey.*

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for his/her thesis/dissertation research.

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Sincerely,

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Appendix I

Qualitative Study on Experienced Black-on-Black Incivility

All My Skinfolk Ain’t Kinfolk:
A Grounded Theory Approach to Understanding the Psycho-Social Influences of Workplace Competition and Incivility among Black Professionals

DeMarcus A. Pegues
Teachers College – Columbia University
Empirical Paper
Dissertation (Phase I)
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A crabbin’ and backstabbin’ moment in my early career involved a major account in which our ad agency had been significantly undercompensated for the work performed. After much finagling, we gained an audience with both the company’s senior vice president, who was White, and a vice president, who was Black. The senior VP listened to our concerns and concurred that we deserved more money. He threw out a higher number. We immediately agreed to the suggested amount. Upon seeing where things were headed, the Black exec chimed in, blurtin’, “No, no, no, they don’t need that much!” He then recommended a significantly lower amount....But why did the Black executive counter his White superior’s number? Why did he believe that we didn’t “need” (or was it “deserve”) that much? Did he think his stature would increase within the company if he demonstrated that he would keep a Black-owned agency in its place? Or did he feel that we, as a Black-owned agency, simply deserved less than a White-owned firm doing comparable work?

— Tom Burrell


**Introduction**

Competition is a fundamental and ubiquitous part of organizational life: companies vie for increased market share and top talent, departments fight over territory and limited organizational resources like technology and financial support, and employees contend with one another for coveted organizational rewards in the form of promotions, accolades, bonuses and raises. According to Deutsch’s (1949) theory of cooperation-competition, competitive dynamics emerge from a perception of negative goal interdependence whereby the success or goal attainment by one party ostensibly impedes another’s ability to succeed or achieve a goal (i.e., if one party succeeds then the other fails). This sink-or-swim dynamic may result from individuals or groups simply disliking one another (see Converse & Reinhard, 2016; Kilduff, Elfenbein, & Staw, 2010) or from there being a reward structure in place that favors one party—usually the declared winner or highest performer—over another (Deutsch, 2006; see also Cole, Bergin, & Whittaker, 2008).

Thus, at its best, competition can serve as an impetus for increased motivation (Epstein & Harackiewicz, 1992; Kilduff et al., 2010; Reeve & Deci, 1996; Tauer & Harackiewicz, 1999,
and enhanced productivity and task performance (Brown, Cron, & Slocum, 1998; Erev, Bornstein, & Galili, 1993; Mulvey & Ribbens, 1999; Tauer & Harackiewicz, 2004). However, at its worst, competition can serve as a breeding ground for envy, sabotage, hostility and other instances of workplace incivility and interpersonal maltreatment (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Coulomb-Cabagno & Rasce, 2006; Enns & Rotundo, 2012; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; see also Deutsch, 1985). For this reason, competition is reputed as being a primary instigator of destructive conflict at every level within organizations (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008).

Much of the competition literature to date revolves around competition between individuals, groups and organizations (see Kilduff et al., 2010, for review), with only a marginal focus on the competitive dynamics occurring within groups (intra-group). This is surprising when considering how certain groups have developed a reputation for exhibiting more competitive behaviors towards members of their own group than to members from other groups. For example, men have shown a strong preference for competing with other men out of fear of being criticized for competing and succeeding against women or even ridiculed for losing (Meara & Day, 1993). Similarly, women have demonstrated a strong preference for competing with other women, significantly increasing their competitiveness and performance in women-only competitive environments and depressing their performance in mixed-sex competitive environments where men are visible and present (Booth & Nolen, 2012; Gneezy, Niederle, & Rustichini, 2003; Solnick, 1995). Perhaps this may explain why women typically direct more aggressive and hostile behaviors towards other women—and not men—in certain professional settings and in society at large (Cooper, 1997; Crothers, Lipinski, & Minutolo, 2009; Duguid, 2011; Ellemers, Van den Heuvel, de Gilder, Maass, & Bonvini, 2004; Hoyt & Simon, 2011;

However, despite the numerous advancements made in attempting to understand the competitive dynamics that occur among the sexes, there has been little attention paid to the competitive dynamics that exist among various racioethnic groups (i.e., biologically and/or culturally distinct groups; Cox, 1990). This paper attempts to help remedy this gap by employing a grounded theory approach to illuminate the various factors that contribute to the competitive dynamics among Black professionals in the workplace, historically referred to as the *crabs-in-a-barrel* (CIB) mentality (see Aaron & Smith, 1992; Burrell, 2010; DeGruy, 2005; Miller, 2016; Worsley & Stone, 2011).

More specifically, this study aims to provide greater insight into the intra-personal, relational and situational underpinnings of this competitive dynamic among Black professionals across various industries and organizational settings within the United States context. Additionally, this paper will highlight the adverse socioemotional and psychological consequences that result from this form of workplace deviance (see Andersson & Pearson, 1999), as well as the subsequent coping strategies individuals typically employ to mitigate and/or combat it. Uniquely, this paper will also highlight ten distinguishing characteristics of the CIB mentality, as well as propose a new working conceptual definition of the CIB phenomenon and discuss how organizational demography can influence the CIB mentality among Black professionals. And lastly, on a more positive note, this study will provide insight into the various mechanisms that can facilitate a more productive and harmonious working environment among Black professionals, in addition to providing fodder for future directions of research.
The Legacy of the CIB Mentality Within the United States and Black Community

The tendency for individuals to resent and, in more extreme cases, obstruct the upward social mobility of members from their own racial or ethnic group is a cross-cultural phenomenon (see Miller, 2016). South Koreans encapsulate it with the old adage, “If one cousin buys land, the other cousin gets a stomachache” (McDonald, 2011). Australians and New Zealanders describe it as the Tall Poppy Syndrome (Ely, 1984; Feather, 1989; Mitchell, 1984; Peeters, 2003, 2004). However, within the United States, this lack of coalescence and positive regard for fellow ingroup members’ success has traditionally been referred to as the CIB mentality (also known alternatively as the crabs-in-the-barrel syndrome, the crabs-in-a-basket syndrome, the crabs-in-a-bucket mentality or, more simply, the crab mentality).

The CIB analogy is a seasoned colloquialism that draws inspiration from the following idea:

In the West Indies, fishermen will put their day’s catch of live crabs into a barrel. Though crabs are good climbers, the fishermen do not bother to put a lid on top of the barrel because no sooner does one crab climb up toward the rim than it is immediately pulled back down by its fellows. All the crabs could escape if only they were prepared to allow some to go first. But they are not, and they all perish. (Thompson, 1984, p. 10)

In some cultures, this derision and/or impediment of another’s success is motivated by a more collectivist intent to maintain group harmony and solidarity. For example, the more collectivistic societies of Scandinavia refer to this type of self-effacing attitude as the Law of Jante (Sandemose, 1933/1936), whereas the Japanese encapsulate it with the old adage, “The stake that sticks up gets hammered down” (Sherrill, 2008).

However, at its core, the CIB metaphor appears to describe an ostensible zero-sum scenario wherein members from a particular (social) group intentionally attempt to obstruct the advancement of their fellow ingroup members for the sake of their own self-preservation and
upward mobility (see Burrell, 2010; DeGruy, 2005; Miller, 2016; Worsley & Stone, 2011). Ironically, though, the hypothetical saboteurs fail to realize how the advancement and “escape” of one could very well lead to the subsequent “escape” (and ascension) of many others—if not their own. This line of thinking is antithetical to theories of intergroup bias like similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985), optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991), terror management theory (Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1991) and social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) that promote the human proclivity for ingroup solidarity and favoritism (i.e., a more collectivistic “all for one, one for all” cooperative orientation). Instead, the CIB mentality appears to signify a more individualistic “survival of the fittest” competitive orientation (see Deutsch, 2006), and suggests a severe lack of what Campbell (1958) describes as group entitativity (i.e., the perception that a group is a unified and coherent whole).

Therefore, in subscribing to this more individualistic usage of the term, the CIB metaphor has most commonly been used in the United States to describe the competitive behaviors among members of stigmatized and marginalized minority groups, most notably within the Filipino American (Nadal, 2011), Black/African American (Aaron & Smith, 1992; Burrell, 2010; DeGruy, 2005; Miller, 2016; Worsley & Stone, 2011), Hawaiian¹ (Perry, 2013), and Deaf (DeLora, 1996; Harrington, 2004; Jacobs, 1994; Moore & Levitan, 1992) communities. However, because of this study’s narrow scope and the author’s personal interest in the matter,

¹ Hawaiians have historically referred to it as the alamahi crab syndrome.
this paper will only attend to how this discordant mentality plays out within the Black community.  

Booker T. Washington—the renowned educator, author, activist, political advisor and founder of the Tuskegee Institute—is often credited with being the first to reference the CIB analogy in describing the divergent forces apparent within the Black community. Fittingly, it is believed that Washington employed the metaphor during one of his lectures in the late 19th or early 20th century while addressing Blacks’ inability to coalesce as a united front to collectively rise out of their dire straits (Garvey, 1923).  

Unfortunately, however, Washington’s sentiment would continue to be echoed for generations to come as numerous other Black writers, leaders, scholars and public figures (e.g., Ralph Ellison, Lorraine Hansberry, and Louis Farrakhan) would attest to the same prevailing issue of disunity and competition among members of the Black community, even as their civil rights, perceived humanity and collective dignity were irrefutably in peril and hanging in the balance. This is perhaps best captured by Tom Burrell’s (2010) historical recount of the civil rights movement in the 1960s:

While Dr. King and other civil rights leaders peacefully worked to tear down legal barriers and push for integration, other, more militant groups demanded the right to defend themselves as they addressed economic and class issues. Instead of strategizing, playing their diverse strengths, perhaps assuming “good guy/bad guy” roles to share a mutual prize, civil rights and Black Power movement leaders launched verbal attacks at each other, each jockeying to be the ultimate organization with the ultimate plan for Black people. Each organization was so intent on being “the one,” they often underestimated the skill of the opposition. (p. 220)

---

2 The term, “Black,” will be operatively used throughout this paper to refer to all persons of African ancestry or descent instead of “African American” because the former has historically, and most commonly, been used to refer to all people with African ancestry, regardless of nationality (e.g., Caribbean people in the US who descended from the West Indies but still have African roots). Conversely, the term, “African-American,” has historically been used to more narrowly refer to Americans of African descent. Thus, since the CIB mentality appears to be motivated more by race than one’s ethnic or cultural background, the term “Black” seems most appropriate.
In fact, some would argue that the most noteworthy and illustrative examples of how the CIB mentality has operated within the Black community to date concern the consistently harsh criticism and public ridicule that former President Barack Obama received from other high profile Blacks during his historic eight-year tenure as the first Black POTUS from 2008-2016 (see Burrell, 2010; Owens, 2013). Thus, the pervasiveness of the CIB mentality within the Black community appears to be as palpable today as it was centuries ago. Evidently, American folklorist Zora Neale Hurston (as cited in Byrne, 2005) was spot-on with her pointed assertion, “All my skinfolk ain’t kinfolk” (p. 5).

But what is ultimately behind this ostensibly persistent trend of Black-on-Black competition and disregard for coalescence and cooperation, even when such behavior appears—at times—to obstruct the advancement and betterment of the Black collective? Why is it that Black-led businesses and organizations seem more willing to compete with one another to achieve similar goals rather than cooperate and work together to increase scale, influence and impact like the Vietnamese and other racioethnic groups do with rotating savings and credit associations (Burrell, 2010; see also Lui, Robles, Leondar-Wright, Brewer, & Adamson, 2006)? How is it that there seems to be “an uncanny tendency amongst many Blacks to orchestrate and plot the demise of other Blacks” (DeGruy, 2005, p. 161) despite there being evidence that it is just as prevalent among various other cultures and racioethnic groups (see Miller, 2016)?

One school of thought that has traditionally been used to explain this phenomenon derives from the psychodynamic tradition of Carl Jung, and takes into consideration the well-documented plight of Blacks throughout American history to help explain why and how this rivalrous mentality plays out specifically within the Black community. This perspective is more formally referred to as the intergenerational transmission of trauma concept.
Considering Blacks’ long-term subjection to chattel slavery and oppression within the United States, theorists have traditionally attempted to explain and understand the behaviors of Blacks (including the CIB phenomenon) from a psychodynamic perspective. Taking into account the troubled historical legacy of the Black experience in America, this viewpoint suggests that the behaviors and phenomenological experiences of present-day Blacks are symptomatic of an intergenerational transmission of trauma (or more simply, a transgenerational trauma) whereby the trauma experienced by former generations (i.e., their African ancestors) has been transferred to future generations by way of extraordinarily complex post-traumatic stress disorder processes (Akbar, 1996; Danieli, 1998; DeGruy, 2005; Schwab, 2010).

Hence, according to this notion of transgenerational trauma, the prevalence of intragroup competition that continues to persist within the Black community is merely a derivative of the trauma that was experienced by their enslaved ancestors in days of yore (see Akbar, 1996; DeGruy, 2005). In fact, research participants from Miller’s (2016) dissertation provide additional credence to this idea by suggesting that the psychology of oppression (i.e., a “slave” or “plantation” mentality) plays a significant role in instigating the CIB mentality among members of the Black community. Indeed, the implications of this perspective with regard to understanding the potential genesis of the CIB mentality as it relates to chattel slavery are profound:

It is equally understandable why an African American might feel threatened by the accomplishments of a peer when viewed in the light of slavery. Slaves were divided in many different respects; masters distinguished the house slave from the field slave, the mulatto from the Black slave, etc. Often these different designations meant access to, or denial of, privileges and sometimes freedom itself. It was common practice for slave owners to set one class of slave against another. Slave owners perpetuated feelings of separateness and distrust by sometimes ordering Black overseers to beat or punish their
friends, peers and relatives. When the master “promoted” a slave, that slave often joined the master in the rank of “oppressor.” (DeGruy, 2005, p. 15)

This line of thinking is akin to Carl Jung’s (1953a) theory of the collective unconscious wherein he posits that every individual shares a certain level of unconsciousness that is comprised of suppressed memories from their respective ancestral and evolutionary past. According to Jung, this aspect of the unconscious begins during “the preinfantile period, that is, the residues of ancestral life” (Jung, 1953b, p. 76) and, although not experienced personally, influences our interactions with, and interpretations of, the world around us. Even accomplished author and literary scholar, Ralph Ellison, alludes to this school of thought when he credits events that transpired during the post-Civil War Reconstruction Era with instigating a sense of division felt between Black writers and thought leaders during the late 20th century:

We suffer chronically from Booker T. Washington’s “crabs-in-a-basket” syndrome: let one crab try to climb out, and others try to yank him back. But, perhaps this is inevitable. After all, we grow up in our own segregated communities and have our initial contacts and contentions with our own people. So our initial conflicts are with those near at hand. But then there is the factor of race as it operates in the broader society. Following the Reconstruction, Southern Blacks in many localities were allowed to kill one another without too much fear of punishment, so people who didn’t dare lift a hand against a White man would give other Blacks hell. I guess we’re observing that tendency being acted out by today’s Black ideologists. They seem to hate Negroes worse than White racists. (Graham & Singh, 1995, p. 343)

Nevertheless, despite the fact that numerous studies have attempted to validate the phenomenon of transgenerational trauma with the descendants of Holocaust survivors (e.g., Axelrod, Schnipper, & Rau, 1980; Danieli, Norris, & Engdahl, 2016; Epstein, 1982; Gangi, Talamo, & Ferracuti, 2009; Giladi & Bell, 2013; Scharf, 2007; Scharf & Mayseless, 2011) and war veterans (e.g., Ahmadzadeh & Malekian, 2004; Caselli & Motta, 1995; Dekel & Goldblatt, 2008; Suozzi & Motta, 2004; Westerink & Giarratano, 1999), there still remains a dearth of evidence to substantiate its legitimacy. Thus, this psychodynamic approach to understanding
similarities in human behavior across generations characterized by past trauma continues to receive harsh criticism for being too convoluted and abstract to empirically test and validate, especially as it relates to offspring more than one generation removed from the original trauma (see Bachar, Cale, Eisenberg, & Dasberg, 1994; Bachar, Canetti, & Berry, 2005; Davidson & Mellor, 2001; Sagi-Schwartz, van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2008; Sigal & Weinfeld, 1989; van IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2003).

Moreover, this perspective only narrowly focuses on the intra-psychic processes that are occurring within individuals without accounting for the fluid and dynamic influences of the external environment or context surrounding the individual. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, this Jungian interpretation seems to unfairly pathologize those “afflicted” groups and individuals—making them virtually prisoners of the past and offering minimal room for reprieve or rehabilitation from the earlier transgressions and trauma experienced by their predecessors. As a result, any relics of the past (e.g., intragroup competitiveness and divisiveness) become viewed as a permanent stain on a particular group or individual’s existence and livelihood (i.e., a trait) as opposed to being viewed from a more nuanced and malleable lens (i.e., a state).

Therefore, a primary aim of this paper is to offer a psychosocial explanation about the CIB mentality that can rival the more common and pathological intergenerational transmission of trauma narrative. Additionally, to further separate the behavior from this tradition of pathologization, this paper will only adhere to the term—CIB mentality (“mentality” being the operative word)—when describing the competitive phenomenon under investigation as opposed to some of its other variations that imply a more static, pathological condition (i.e., variants that incorporate the word “syndrome” like the aforementioned crabs-in-the-barrel syndrome).
The Present Study: A Grounded Theory Approach

To date, only one peer-reviewed publication in the organizational literature has addressed the CIB mentality within the Black population, and that finding happened to be purely coincidental. While investigating the challenges in upward mobility for Black leaders in the parks and recreation industry, Worsley and Stone (2011) found that the CIB mentality served as one of six organizational hurdles obstructing the upward advancement of Black professionals, and they concluded that it primarily resulted from one’s personal desire to succeed in the face of limited social capital and discriminatory hiring and promotional practices. Thus, despite not being the sole or primary focus of Worsley and Stone’s study, participants still reputed the CIB mentality to be a major impediment to the professional advancement of Blacks within the parks and recreation industry.

Astonishingly, Miller (2016) is the only other researcher to date to explicitly explore the psycho-social influences of the CIB mentality among Black professionals. Using a two-pronged approach with the use of in-depth interviews and public blogs, Miller juxtaposed findings from a netnography and phenomenology to achieve a better understanding of the existence, nature and definition of the CIB mentality. From her findings, Miller concluded that the CIB phenomenon distinctively: (1) involves the interaction of individual, group, societal and organizational factors; (2) manifests in three primary relational directions—downward (superior-to-subordinate), horizontal (peer-to-peer), and upward (subordinate-to-superior); (3) occurs when social identification and group marginalization are both salient; (4) violates workplace and ingroup norms; and, (5) intends to harm in an ambiguous and discreet fashion, most commonly via social undermining, discouragement and competitive positioning. The latter point supports the work of Worsley and Stone (2011) who described the CIB mentality as being present when, “one person
seeks upward mobility [and] another person from the same race (in this case, African Americans) covertly [emphasis added] attempts to prevent them from reaching their goal” (p. 80).

Nevertheless, despite her commendable efforts, Miller’s (2016) study is fraught with several methodological issues that make her findings susceptible to scrutiny and criticism. For one, Miller seems to suggest that the CIB mentality is a monolithic phenomenon that manifests unvaryingly regardless of the relational direction in which it is operating (i.e., downward, horizontal or upward). However, considering the starkly different power and authority dynamics that are apparent across each relational condition, it is difficult to accept this implication at face value. Thus, this issue of relational similarity (and dissimilarity) should either be addressed more explicitly or explored more fully to account for any operational variations of the CIB mentality that may be present between various organizational roles and statuses of power (i.e., superior, peer, and subordinate).

Moreover, despite satisfying several of the procedural steps of a phenomenological design as outlined by Moustakas (1994; e.g., bracketing, purposive sampling, horizontalization, cluster development, and reductionism), Miller (2016) appears to have inadvertently conflated her phenomenological method with the likes of a grounded theory approach. For instance, Miller describes how she:

> Coded the transcripts inductively, simultaneously connecting and building on pre-identified categories based on existing literature and findings from Phase I to identify themes and to create meaning from the data [….And] then moved to a more abstract clustering of the data, jointly generating conceptual and theoretical explanations of the findings and ultimately leading to a statement of the ‘essence’ of the Crabs in the Barrel Syndrome. (p. 92)

Coincidentally, this process closely resembles the open, axial and selective coding stages of grounded theory research wherein one initially codes the data for its major categories or themes, reassembles the data into groupings based on identified relationships and patterns, and
subsequently develops a theoretical or conceptual model that illustrates the interrelated nature of the clustered data categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998; see also Creswell, 2013).

Furthermore, this “statement of the ‘essence’” that Miller alludes to merely includes a newly coined working definition of the CIB mentality along with a corresponding conceptual map—a definitive characteristic of a grounded theory study—and fails to offer an in-depth reflective description of the world-as-experienced (i.e., the “what” and the “how”) by those who actually experienced the phenomenon firsthand, as a pure phenomenological study would aspire to:

van Manen (1990) wrote that phenomenological analysis is primarily a writing exercise, as it is through the process of writing and rewriting that the researcher can distill meaning. Analysts use writing to compose a story that captures the important elements of the lived experience. By the end of the story the reader should feel that she has vicariously experienced the phenomenon under study and should be able to envision herself (or someone else who has been through the experience) coming to similar conclusions about what it means. (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1376)

According to Wertz et al. (2011), this form of method slurring is very prevalent in qualitative research as both phenomenology and grounded theory share many similarities and few substantial differences (see Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992, for a comprehensive summary). However, this common research flaw can potentially be mitigated by more clearly describing and justifying the assumptions and procedures involved in the methodological design(s) at work, whether alone or in concert (Baker et al., 1992; Creswell, 2013; Parse, 1990; Sandelowski, 1986).

Therefore, this study serves as the first research effort to systematically employ a grounded theory approach to better understand and explain the psycho-social elements involved in the CIB mentality among Black professionals. More precisely, this study expands on previous research in this area (viz., Miller, 2016) by building and enriching substantive theory around the
intra-personal, relational and environmental conditions that exacerbate (and attenuate) the phenomenon for Blacks in professional settings within the United States context. Furthermore, as research in this area remains scant within the organizational literature, this study aspires to shed more light on the behavioral manifestations of the CIB mentality (i.e., how it looks, sounds and feels) as well as the accompanying consequences (psychological, socioemotional and physical) and coping strategies that result from experiencing this competitive dynamic firsthand, since these points were only marginally addressed in Miller’s (2016) research.

Moreover, this paper will highlight ten unique and distinguishing characteristics of the CIB mentality, offer a new working conceptual definition of the CIB phenomenon, and provide insight into how organizational demography can perpetuate the phenomenon further for Black professionals. Also, similar to Miller’s (2016) study, this paper will conclude by providing tried-and-tested strategies that have proven useful in facilitating a more productive and harmonious working environment among Black professionals, in addition to discussing implications for future research.

Finally, considering the rather taboo nature of the CIB phenomenon (see Aaron & Smith, 1992; Miller, 2016), I feel compelled to clarify that my intentions in studying this ostensibly provocative topic are well-intended and are, in no way, motivated by malicious aims of causing collective injury, embarrassment or shame. It was Zora Neale Hurston (1942) who famously declared that “research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose” (p. 143). Thus, it is in this vein of personal curiosity that I pursued this project with the aspirational goal of prompting a heightened sense of collective awareness and enlightenment about the CIB mentality and the various factors that instigate its ugly rearing, the reverberating consequences that soon follow, and the various mitigating and remedial strategies that can
challenge its future prevalence and potency. As the CIB phenomenon represents yet another well-known and often undiscussable barrier to the wellbeing and advancement of Blacks in the workplace, it is my belief that this antagonistic mindset’s true power comes from the secret and covert manner from which it has traditionally operated.

Therefore, this is my attempt at shining a brighter light on this issue so that we, collectively, may be better equipped to find innovative, more impactful ways to address it in the future. This sentiment is perhaps best captured by the words of Philip Aaron who, when publicly discussing the CIB mentality to a group of onlookers, declared:

This characteristic is something that we do not like to talk about, but I believe that any problem has to be addressed and exposed as a problem before it can be solved. And my motivation here is not to embarrass any of us, but to present the problem so we can start to solve it. (Aaron & Smith, 1992)
Methodology

Research Design

A Straussian grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) underpinned the collection, coding and subsequent analysis of the data involved in this study. In subscribing to the philosophical idea of symbolic interactionism, grounded theory assumes that individual meaning-making is negotiated and understood through social interactions with others, and that this reciprocal process ultimately informs people’s subjective understanding of themselves and the world around them (Blumer, 1969; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Aptly, Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed grounded theory as a practical method for conducting research that focuses on the interpretive processes of individuals as a means to developing explanatory theory about basic social processes and the environments in which they take place. Glaser and Strauss then expanded this idea even further by suggesting that emerging theories can be either formal (i.e., describing a specific phenomenon across diverse conditions and situations) or substantive (i.e., describing a particular phenomenon within one specific situational setting) in scope.

Therefore, since this study sought to generate knowledge about the social reality of the CIB mentality as it occurs specifically among Blacks in professional settings within the United States, substantive theory development was this paper’s primary objective. Moreover, it is worth noting that the term, “professional settings,” will be operationally used throughout this paper to account for: (1) places of employment, (2) professional degree programs, and (3) professional networking events and/or conferences.

Participants

In accordance with the foundational tenets of grounded theory research (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967), theoretical sampling served as the primary method of data collection for this
study. In theoretical sampling, the initial sample involves the purposeful selection of data based on where the phenomenon of interest exists (Chenitz & Swanson, 1986; Glaser, 1992); therefore, the initial sample for this study consisted of Black professionals who had personally been on the receiving end of the CIB mentality in professional settings (i.e., in places of employment, professional degree programs, and/or professional networking events and conferences). The initial participants (i.e., individuals who perceived they had previously experienced workplace incivility from other Blacks) were obtained by the primary researcher via word-of-mouth and email solicitation recruitment methods using some variation of the following prompt:

*Good (morning/afternoon/evening), (prospective participant's name):*

*I hope all is well. I am reaching out because I am currently recruiting interview participants for my research on Black-on-Black hostility and antagonism in the workplace (i.e., the “crabs in the barrel mindset”), and thought you might have some personal experiences to share that are relevant to the study’s focus. To provide you with more information about the project, this type of behavior is typically characterized by a Black professional (i.e., a Black superior, colleague/peer or subordinate) treating another Black worker harshly or unkindly for some seemingly unjustifiable reason. This could be in the form of constant denigration, career sabotage attempts, slander, intimidation tactics, personal neglect or disinterest, and/or condescension—to name a few. Furthermore, I am primarily interested in how this phenomenon plays out in professional (and/or academic) settings so please keep that in mind, if you do decide to participate.*

*The interview will be audio-recorded and should take about 60-75 minutes to complete (all collected information will remain anonymous and confidential). Additionally, interviews are typically held at Teachers College, Columbia University (525 West 120th Street) but I am open to conducting them anywhere in the greater NYC area as long as you are comfortable and the space is quiet.*

*If interested, I would like to schedule an interview with you at some point in the coming weeks, if possible. Please let me know which days and times work best for you and I will try my best to make it happen. Thanks for considering this research opportunity, and please reach out to me directly at (insert email address) with scheduling details and/or any questions about the project.*
After the initial sample was reached (i.e., five participants), snowball sampling was subsequently used to secure the remaining 10 participants until a state of theoretical saturation regarding the various narratives and experiences of the CIB phenomenon was achieved.

Consequently, and in accordance with the recommendations of previous research (viz., Bertaux, 1981; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006), the resulting sample consisted of 15 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with both men ($n = 8$) and women ($n = 7$) over a three-month span. Of the 15 participants, six (40%) ranged from 20-29 years old, seven (47%) were 30-39 years old, and two (13%) spanned 50-59 years old. All participants described themselves as either Black or African-American, and three participants (20%) identified as either first- or second-generation American (i.e., 2 Haitian-Americans and 1 Jamaican-American). On average, participants reported having 16.4 years of total work experience ($SD = 8.70$), ranging from 4 to 32 years individually. Moreover, three participants (20%) had ascended to the organizational ranks of senior management in their professional career, while nine (60%) had served on middle management and three (20%) were classified as entry-level (non-management) employees. Educationally, five participants (33%) had obtained doctorate degrees, seven (47%) had obtained Masters degrees, and three (20%) reported having a Bachelor’s degree as their highest level of education completed. Lastly, the participants represented a variety of industries, including: education (5), business (5), legal (2), health and human services (1), administrative and support services (1), and informational support (1). See Table 1 (below) for a more elaborate summary of participant demographics.

Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Highest Org. Level</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total Work Experience</th>
<th>Highest Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Senior Mgmt.</td>
<td>Business (Non-Profit)</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Entry-Level</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Senior Mgmt.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Entry-Level</td>
<td>Business (Finance)</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>24 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Business (Non-Profit)</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Senior Mgmt.</td>
<td>Business (Non-Profit)</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Entry-Level</td>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Business (Consulting)</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Administrative &amp; Support Services</td>
<td>32 years</td>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mid Mgmt.</td>
<td>Informational Services</td>
<td>32 years</td>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedure

The most common method whereby to collect rich and useful data on social processes and phenomena is through one-on-one interviews (Boyd et al., 2010; Carpiano, 2009; Sample & Kadlec, 2008). Therefore, data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews wherein the interviewer (i.e., the study’s principal investigator) asked participants questions from a predetermined list of open-ended prompts (see Appendix A), while also using discretionary authority to ask additional probing questions where appropriate to elicit more nuanced and elaborate responses from study participants. These additional questions either stemmed from conceptual categories emerging from previous interviews or simply from the interviewer’s intuition in the moment. More specifically, the interview schedule included general questions regarding one’s experiences with—and reactions to—the CIB mentality, as well as specific questions related to Glaser’s (1978) “six C’s of social processes” (e.g., the contexts, causes, consequences and conditions of the phenomenon). Additionally, the interviewer attempted to cognitively prime participants at the beginning of each interview session by inviting them to read an excerpt from Joy DeGruy’s (2005) widely acclaimed book, *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America’s Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing* (see Appendix B).

Each interview lasted between 53 and 117 minutes in duration, and all interviews were audio-recorded and conducted face-to-face in a private and closed setting chosen by study participants. Afterwards, interviews were transcribed verbatim by a professional transcription service, and were later verified for accuracy by the interviewer. Also, consistent with the foundations of grounded theory research (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998), memo writing was conducted at various points throughout the data collection and analysis process to gain a better understanding of the data and the various theoretical links and
connections contained therein. The necessary ethical clearance for this study was obtained through the university’s Institutional Review Board committee.

Data Analysis

To allow for a more reflexive and robust analysis process, all data presented in this study were analyzed using NVivo 11—a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software program. Following the analytical strategy prescribed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), the data for this study were analyzed in an iterative fashion until a substantive, low-level theoretical model was achieved. More explicitly, open, axial and selective coding were used sequentially to complement our understanding of the CIB mentality among Blacks in professional settings (i.e., places of employment, professional degree programs, and professional networking events and/or conferences). This three-step coding process is outlined in more detail below (see Böhm, 2004, for a detailed summary).

Step 1: Creating meaning segments and first-order codes. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), open coding is best achieved by constantly questioning the data and the various inferences resulting from therein, making comparisons between various cases and incidents, and consequently developing theoretical labels and groupings for similar phenomena where appropriate. Therefore, interview transcripts were initially reviewed on a line-by-line basis by the primary researcher, and were subsequently analyzed for recurring thematic similarities via a constant comparison scheme (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) that eventually resulted in provisional meaning segments and first-order codes. Following the recommendation of Harry, Sturges and Klingner (2005), a plethora of categorical labels and first-order codes were initially constructed to ensure that I would be better able to assess the scope,
stipulations, significance and emerging associations of the themes presented by the data (i.e., who, what, where, how and when).

According to Glaser and Strauss (1965), there are two primary ways whereby codes can emerge from the data: (1) codes that are extracted from the language or terminology included in participants’ descriptions of the phenomenon of interest; and (2) codes that are developed by the researcher in an effort to account for the processes, behaviors and events described in the participants’ accounts of the research situation. Therefore, although difficult to achieve, I tried my best to avoid prematurely favoring any set of codes or meaning segments before fully engaging with the collected data set.

**Step 2: Integrating first-order codes and creating theoretical categories.** As axial coding involves reconstructing data “in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 97), the second phase of the coding process involved the refinement, differentiation and integration of the provisional first-order codes and meaning segments to create higher-level theoretical categories. More precisely, an axial coding paradigm (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) was created to account for the contexts (settings wherein the phenomenon occurs), causes (reasons or catalysts for the occurrence of the phenomenon), action strategies (behavioral responses to the phenomenon), and consequences (anticipated and unanticipated outcomes of the phenomenon) associated with the CIB phenomenon. Together, these theoretical categories culminated in the creation of a substantive theoretical model of the CIB mentality as outlined below in Step 3 and illustratively depicted in subsequent sections of this paper.

**Step 3: Developing theory by aggregating theoretical dimensions.** Once theoretical categories were generated, selective coding commenced and the inter-relational nature of the
established categories (from Step 2) was assessed to see how well the categories fit into a compelling and coherent depiction of the CIB phenomenon. To this end, alternative conceptual frameworks and models were also considered to better assess how the constructed theoretical categories related to one another and to preexisting organizational theories. Once a viable conceptual framework was identified, the data’s fit (and misfit) with this new and emerging theoretical understanding was assessed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001; Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). Following the guidance of Charmaz (2006), special attention was paid to ensure that the resulting substantive theory was: (1) systematic and logical; (2) truly and accurately reflective of the participants’ experiences in the collected research data; and (3) considered practical by its intended audience.

Finally, after this three-step coding process had been successfully completed, substantive theory of the CIB mentality was textually and graphically achieved through the development of narrative statements (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and visual illustrations (Morrow & Smith, 1995). These theoretical representations will be discussed in greater detail in the following section. Afterwards, this paper will conclude by offering a discussion of the implications of the model both for theory related to workplace competition and incivility and, more practically, for organizational leaders and professionals who aspire to create a more productive and collaborative climate for Blacks in professional settings.
Findings

After reviewing the coded and analyzed data, the findings showed support for the relational directions of the CIB mentality initially suggested by Miller (2016). That is, the data demonstrated that the CIB mentality exists in three relational directions within organizations—downward (superior-to-subordinate), horizontal (peer-to-peer), and upward (subordinate-to-superior). Correspondingly, the collected data for this study yielded a total of 28 CIB cases across various professional settings, with most occurring in the horizontal (19 cases) and downward (8 cases) directions. Logically, the fewest incidents occurred in the upward relational direction (1 case); thus, the CIB mentality appears to be most prevalent among equally ranked peers in professional settings (horizontal) and least common among subordinate-to-superior (upward) relationships. Furthermore, since the upward hostility category failed to yield more than one case for analysis, it was not possible to conclude that theoretical saturation for that domain had been reached; hence, the downward and horizontal manifestations of the CIB mentality will serve as the primary foci of this section.

Interestingly, and in contrast with the findings of Miller (2016), the data also showed that the downward and horizontal manifestations of the CIB mentality (hereafter referred to as downward crab mentality and horizontal crab mentality, respectively) represent two distinct yet related phenomena with both similar and different motivating factors, consequences and coping strategies. The specifics of each relational category’s uniqueness (i.e., its antecedent conditions, behavioral manifestations, adverse reactions and resultant coping strategies) will be elaborated on in subsequent sections of this paper. Additionally, as outlined previously, this paper will

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3 Thirty-four (34) cases of the CIB mentality were actually cited in participant interviews but six (6) were omitted from further review because of their placement in undergraduate settings that were outside the scope of this project. Therefore, 28 cases remained for data analysis and subsequent theory formulation.
highlight various discoveries related to the distinguishing characteristics of the CIB mentality, the proposal of a new definition of the CIB phenomenon, organizational demography’s influence on the CIB phenomenon, and considerations for how Black professionals can foster a more productive and harmonious climate when working with other Blacks in professional settings.

**Downward Crab Mentality (Superior-to-Subordinate)**

Intuitively, all instances of the downward crab mentality (DCM) occurred in traditional, hierarchical work settings where the superior-and-subordinate relationship is formally recognized and present. According to the narrative statements below, there are several conditions that were found to be typically present when a Black supervisor or manager adopts the CIB mentality towards a Black subordinate. These conditions are as follows:

**Condition 1: Environmental uncertainty.** First, the data revealed that the Black supervisor is usually in a situation or environment where there is a considerable amount of *environmental uncertainty* (i.e., periods of stress, novelty, or change; Garcia, Tor, & Schiff, 2013; see also Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Research has shown that high levels of environmental uncertainty can increase one’s need for social comparison (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Wood, 1996) and even decrease one’s willingness to cooperate (Wit & Wilke, 1998). According to study participants, this situational factor showed up most commonly whenever Black superiors: (a) came into a newfound or ostensibly unearned position of leadership, (b) attempted to lead a failing organization or an organization in crisis, and/or (c) led an organization with newly acclaimed recognition and increased expectations. Research on the glass cliff phenomenon (see Ryan, Haslam, Morgenroth, Rink, Stoker, & Peters, 2016, for a comprehensive overview) has shown that minorities, and minority women in particular, are more likely than their White male counterparts to be placed in precarious leadership positions with
organizations in crisis or distress. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that a majority of the cases demonstrating environmental uncertainty’s link to the DCM (i.e., seven of eight) involved Black women superiors. Excerpts typifying scenarios of environmental uncertainty are included below:

- **So just talking about her role as principal – she came in, I think biting off more than she could chew. This school is twice the size of the one that she had last year, and she was successful at that school. She came here to turn this school around to be successful again; has failed dramatically at it – on many ends – like parents don’t know that she’s the principal, so her parent outreach is terrible. Students don’t know that she’s the principal. She’s not visible. She’s also covered in this weird arrangement of – like it’s a top heavy leadership.** (P.2; Failing organization or organization in crisis)

- **The school had just gotten a new distinction my first year there. We were the first magnet school in the district. And so I think she was trying to keep up with that new distinction and make sure that everybody knew that she was in charge of it and that she was kind of like the inaugural leader, if you will.** (P.9; Newly acclaimed recognition and increased expectations)

- **A lot of people around here have been promoted to positions who have never been trained to do so, so a lot of things that they do, they’re doing it on gut instinct. Nobody’s trained them to do so, so they think the way that you supervise a person is to beat them down. They don’t know that this is a job. We’re gonna sit down. We’re gonna have a conversation. I’m gonna give you the tools that you need to succeed on this particular job. They don’t wanna do that because they don’t know what that’s like because in this particular arena, HR does not train people. They just promote people, so people don’t know what to do with those promotions when they get them, so they think that that’s how you supervise a person, by beating them down, not everyone, but quite a few people.** (P.14; Newfound or unearned position of leadership)

**Condition 2: Feelings of inadequacy and impostorism.** According to participant accounts, as the stresses and burdens of environmental uncertainty mount, Black superiors’ belief in their ability to lead and work effectively dwindle to where they feel their positional status and perceived competence are in a precarious and fragile state. Thus, this interaction of the external environment (environmental uncertainty) with one’s own personal insecurities regarding his or her leadership ability is what ultimately primes the Black leader to increase his or her social comparison to others in order to assess comparative levels of competence, status, influence
and/or power within their shared professional setting. Excerpts exemplifying this scenario are included below:

- **So her hands are tied in many ways. She doesn’t feel effective. She’s giving mandates for things that she has to carry off. . . . Do I think in some regard there’s a bit of fear that I might be able to do things a little bit more effectively? Perhaps. When putting those two instances together, and I think those are not completely disjointed, I think there’s a mindset that carries over. Do I think there’s a little bit of a control thing in a space where she doesn’t have a lot of control over anything? Would she like to control some things? I think, for sure. Is there a perception ordeal because her staff at this point has lost faith, but has come together to rally around anything that I put my name to? I think there’s an aspect to that as well. (P.2)**

- **But the school now had this new distinction. So she had a lot to prove. I learned later on that she didn’t even have an actual PhD. It was like a doctor – like a seminary doctorate in something that was completely unrelated to education, not that that matters. But she made it very clear that some doctorate that she got from her church, she made it very clear that everybody was supposed to address her with that title. (P.9)**

- **But then, when I found out later on how she got her job, she was never comfortable in the position she was in because of the way she got it. I think a lot of times when we earn something and we solidify it like that, we feel more comfortable about ownership of that job. However, if you slip on a banana peel, and when I say that, [I mean that] you kinda got that job by default, then you have a tendency to believe that somebody’s out to get it. (P.14)**

Previous research (e.g., Fast, 2009; Fast & Chen, 2009; Georgesen & Harris, 2006; Morrison, Fast, & Ybarra, 2009) has shown that leadership positions can heighten individuals’ need to prove their competence and deservingsness of their respective positions of power to others. Thus, it makes logical sense that one’s knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs)—as well as one’s ability to influence others and the environment wherein they operate (i.e., social power; see French & Raven, 1959)—would generally serve as relevant and significant performance dimensions for leaders across the board. However, when either or both performance dimensions are threatened because of unrelenting pressures from the external environment (e.g., moments of environmental uncertainty), one’s self-perceived competence and ability to lead effectively
become jeopardized and may, consequently, result in the *impostor phenomenon* (i.e., internal experiences of intellectual or, in this case, positional phoniness; Clance & Imes, 1978).

Indeed, research has shown that this impostorism effect is more pronounced among members of minority groups like women (e.g., Clance & Imes, 1978; Reis, 1987; Young, 2011) and people of color (e.g., Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014; Hoang, 2013; Peteet, Montgomery, & Weekes, 2015; Roché, 2014). Therefore, it is not surprising that interview participants considered this form of negative self-concept to be an ensuing factor for Black leaders in the presence of highly stressful and/or turbulent work environments, especially when considering the prevailing stereotypes of Blacks (e.g., intellectually inferior, lazy, and ill-equipped to lead) that are regularly “in the air” within professional settings (see Cook & Glass, 2014; Knight, Hebl, Foster, & Mannix, 2003; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Sue, Nadal, Capodilupo, Lin, Torino, & Rivera, 2008).

**Condition 3: The two critical sources of comparison threat.** Third, the data suggested that Black leaders who are more inclined to engage in social comparisons because of their seemingly precarious leadership role, tend to compare themselves to—and are ultimately more likely to compete with—individuals closest to them in space (proximal) and personal resemblance.

Research (e.g., Alicke, Zell, & Bloom, 2010; Buckingham & Alicke, 2002; Zell & Alicke, 2009) has shown that people often rely on the most local comparison points for self-evaluation and status appraisal since local comparisons have a greater impact on the self than more general comparisons. This is known as the *local dominance effect*. Correspondingly, all cases of the CIB phenomenon between Black superiors and subordinates occurred while both parties were on the same team, department and/or organizational unit.
Moreover, as the perceived similarity of two or more individuals increases, so do comparison concerns and the likelihood for competitive behavior (Garcia et al., 2013; see also Festinger, 1954; Goethals & Darley, 1977). In this case, similarity refers to both resemblance of individuals’ surface-level characteristics (e.g., race, age, gender, etc.) as well as deeper-level attributes like individuals’ ability or performance on a particular relevant performance dimension (e.g., KSAs or social power). For this study, these interpersonal likenesses are more appropriately referred to as surface- and deep-level resemblance, respectively.

Interestingly, the data indicated that surface-level resemblance between Black superiors and subordinates appeared to be exacerbated in predominantly White settings compared to racially heterogenous settings. This may occur because race—more than any other surface-level trait—has been shown to be the most salient factor for self-categorization in group situations (see Elsass & Graves, 1997; Goldberg, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Also, since the data showed that Black superiors depend on deep-level traits like one’s KSAs and social power as comparison points when assessing their perceived similarity to their subordinates, both hard (technical) and soft (socioemotional) skills appear to be of equal importance in activating comparison threat in the DCM phenomenon. Additionally, this study’s data showed that the criteria for deep-level resemblance can be expanded even further to also include similarities with respect to individuals’ personal interests and ambitions, particularly as they relate to their career or professional life.

Furthermore, the study’s data also indicated that deep-level resemblance does not necessarily signify that the Black superior and subordinate are on par with respect to their demonstrated abilities, competencies or social influence, especially when considering that the Black superior already feels ill-equipped for his or her role in the first place. In fact, the data surprisingly showed that Black subordinates were often perceived as being more skilled and/or
talented than their superiors in particular relevant performance dimensions, either from the superior’s personal assessment or from the assessment and recognition of others; therefore, the perceived similarity with respect to one’s skills or ability on performance dimensions may be more aspirational than actual which may explain why, in most cases of the DCM, Black superiors both respected and resented their subordinate’s demonstrated KSAs and/or social and business acumen (this will be elaborated on further in the CIB behavioral manifestations section of this paper). However, this finding may potentially be the result of social desirability bias whereby individuals portray themselves in more positive light than what may have actually transpired (see Chung & Monroe, 2003; Kreuter, Presser, & Tourangeau, 2008; Van de Mortel, 2008).

Thus, in regards to the CIB phenomenon, the DCM is not simply a matter of racial- or melanin-likeness, especially when this competitive dynamic occurs in settings where large numbers of Blacks are present. Instead, it is the combination of both surface-level (e.g., race, age, gender, etc.) and deep-level resemblances (e.g., demonstrated competence on relevant performance dimensions or similar professional interests and ambitions) that activate comparison threat on behalf of the Black superior which, ultimately, results in CIB-related behavior (henceforth referred to as crab antics). For example, if a Black superior has a subordinate who also appears to be Black, is around the same age or generational cohort, and has a comparable academic or educational background, she will be more prone to compare herself to this subordinate and, possibly, even feel threatened by the subordinate’s presence and displays of accompanying competence (assuming the displayed competence aligns with the Black superior’s relevant performance dimensions) than she would someone who does not share as many
likenesses. Excerpts encapsulating both surface- and deep-level dimensions of perceived similarity between Black superiors and subordinates are included below:

- **What ended up happening was the principal, who was like at the top, noticed my talent and gave me opportunities to lead, often in sharing responsibilities with this person who was my mid-level manager. And in me carrying out those additional responsibilities, there was some notice around the school that I am probably someone who is fit for leadership and great opportunities. What I did notice at the same time was that the more and more I was getting these opportunities to lead in an informal role, the relationship with my manager, [redacted], became – I wouldn’t say toxic on its face – but it became one of those nagging, nit-picky ordeals where I would get written up for things that have nothing to do with the job or the job description. (P.2)

- **One of the first places that I can remember being conscious of it was my first year teaching. And the event that I remember was we used to have to put our keys on this door. We couldn’t take our keys home at night. And I was often one of the people who stayed later, got there early, or whatever. And it just so happened that I was the only individual on campus left at the end of the day other than my boss who was an African American woman. And she was an interesting person. She was an odd, odd, odd bird. And I had very few interactions with her for the most part. But whenever I did have an interaction with her, it was always kind of like a glance or a stare, like an extra long glance and not one that just like met my eyes but kind of looked me up, looked me down. (P.9)

- **So she pulls me in, and she starts asking me questions about, at the position I am right now, if I were to elevate to the next level, what would be the next position? Well, from what I had been seeing, because I’m one of those people once I got here, I met everyone, I went and I talked to everybody, I found out what everybody’s job is, and the logical progression in this job is to go from a department secretary to the actual Director [redacted] job, not meaning I want your job, meaning that’s the next logical [step] – there is no in between. That’s the highest level you can go at the administrative supportive level before, and most directors here used to be the department secretary, so I assumed, naturally, that I could say that. From the time I actually said that to her, she went and she pulled my files, she saw my education, she saw what kinda work I did, and from that point on, she went out of her way to just – she was belligerent. (P.14)

**Condition 4: Social category fault lines and incremental jeopardy.** It emerged from the data that once the Black superior’s comparison threat has been activated, crab antics soon follow. However, there are certain between-group differences known as *social category fault lines* (Garcia et al., 2013) that can exacerbate the phenomenon even further. Drawing from the social identity and self-categorization framework, social category fault lines refer to those comparisons made by individuals across different social categories and/or affiliations (e.g.,
female vs. male for gender; Black vs. White for race; Christian vs. Buddhist for religion). Despite seeming like a relational factor because it concerns individuals’ perceptions of their relationships with each other, social category fault lines are actually motivated by influences of the external environment and are, therefore, deemed a situational factor (see Brewer & Pickett, 1999; Garcia & Miller, 2007; Garcia et al., 2013; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

Therefore, since we all belong to a myriad of nonexclusive social categories, the social categories that become most salient to us from one moment to the next are largely contingent on the setting around us. For example, one may self-categorize as being a “Democrat” and thus behave competitively towards a self-identified “Republican” within the confines of the United States; however, if placed in foreign territory outside of the United States, these two individuals’ similar national identity (i.e., American) would presumably become more pronounced than their oppositional political identities, prompting a more cooperative dynamic between them.

Interestingly, as seven of the eight instances of the DCM occurred in predominantly Black settings, social category fault lines appeared to be most pronounced in settings where Blacks were in the majority as opposed to the minority. According to Brewer (1991, 1993, 2003), this need for differentiation in more homogenous settings occurs because of the innate and conflicting human desire to both socially identify with a group and maintain a sense of individual distinctiveness. Thus, as one’s group membership increases and becomes more inclusive, the need for self-differentiation becomes more activated and necessary (see Leonardelli, Pickett, & Brewer, 2010).

Indeed, participant accounts of the DCM supported this notion as differentiating factors like one’s educational status, age, and complexion all served as social category fault lines.
whereby the CIB mentality was perceived to have been exacerbated further. Following the logic prescribed above, since most or all members involved were racially similar (i.e., Black), other factors of distinctiveness (e.g., one’s complexion, age or generational cohort, social affiliation, and job role or education status) became more salient and relevant than they presumably would have in more racially heterogenous settings. This participant’s description of his experiences at a historically Black college and university (HBCU) poignantly captures this sentiment:

*I think HBCUs often have ways of exacerbating those class stratifications and playing into them, particularly when you think about Greek letter organizations and things like that, that really have a way of exacerbating and sort of codifying those class stratifications, that can create tensions between groups, particularly in terms of colorism, in terms of phenotype, what type of hair you have, nose you have, your middle class status versus upper middle class status versus – you know, all those things really do come into play there, and I think are sort of heightened in that space, where you’re among other people of color.* (P.6)

Excerpts demonstrating social category fault lines’ influence on the DCM are included below:

- **So I think there was a – and this is me projecting, right? So I think a lot of it was, there’s this young teacher who is in his second year teaching, right? And I’ve been in this work for years. I have this paradigm for how things should work, or at least how organizational structures should work as far as reporting, and he doesn’t fall neatly within that paradigm. I don’t know how to necessarily manage this type of person. I don’t necessarily know how to communicate with this type of person in a way that’s collaboratively effective.** (P.2; Age or generational cohort)

- **I was probably one of the younger people on staff. So it was a very veteran staff. And I think I became mindful that she was always watching where I was, who I was interacting with. So because it was a veteran staff, she already had her people that she knew. And I didn’t know who was in and who was out. I was kind of like freely connecting with people. But I think she started to perceive that I might start making connections with people that were in her out group.** (P.9; Age and social affiliation)

- **Because she was a light-skinned Black woman. And I’m a dark-skinned Black woman. And we have those issues. To this day, we still have light skin-dark skin issues, and I noticed that the darker skinned women in our department, she really didn’t deal with too much. So I said, “Maybe that was part of it.” I can’t really say for sure, but I think that little things added to that.** (P.14; Skin tone or complexion)
**Condition 5: Activation of the DCM.** Ultimately, the data suggest that the DCM results from the trifecta of a Black supervisor’s personal insecurity (impostor phenomenon) paired with localized comparisons (local dominance effect) to a highly competent and ostensibly similar (perceived similarity) Black subordinate. This sequence provides further credence to leadership studies (e.g., Fast & Chen, 2009; Georgesen & Harris, 2006; Morrison, Fast, & Ybarra, 2009) that show when those in positional power begin to feel incompetent, they then act in a more aggressive and dominant fashion to combat feelings of perceived threat to their ego, status and power. This may be in the form of constant denigration, career sabotage attempts, and/or intimidation tactics—to name a few (a more detailed account of behaviors associated with the DCM will be discussed in future sections of this paper).

**Visually illustrating the DCM.** Moreover, because of its strong resemblance to the theoretical categories and labels developed for the DCM during the data analysis process, an adapted version of Garcia et al.’s (2013) *social comparison model of competition* (SCMoC) emerged as a useful heuristic to synthesize and illustrate the various factors associated with the DCM phenomenon. In subscribing to the Lewinian perspective that behavior is a function of the person and the environment (Lewin, 1936), the SCMoC suggests that individual and situational factors simultaneously influence one’s perceived comparison concerns (i.e., the desire to achieve or maintain a superior relative position) and exhibited competitiveness towards others (see Figure 1).
More specifically, Garcia et al. (2013) posit that the individual factors influencing one’s competitiveness can be bifurcated into both personal (e.g., personality characteristics) and relational (e.g., perceived similarity or closeness to a counterpart) facets, in addition to the surrounding situational or contextual factors that may either heighten or attenuate one’s comparison concerns (e.g., environmental uncertainty, number of competitors, resource scarcity; see Garcia et al., 2013, for a more exhaustive summary). Accordingly, Figure 2 (below) visually illustrates the various individual (relevant performance dimension and impostor phenomenon), relational (perceived similarity), and situational (environmental uncertainty, localization, and social category fault lines) factors that are integral to the DCM’s emergence between Black superiors and subordinates.
Figure 2. An illustrative depiction of the DCM between Black superiors and Black subordinates in professional settings, including some of the individual, relational and situational factors described in Garcia et al.’s (2013) social comparison model of competition. The topmost section of the diagram shows how environmental uncertainty results in the Black superior’s increased feelings of impostorism which, consequently, result in initial comparison concerns. The bottom half of the diagram illustrates the importance of localized comparisons and perceived similarity (resulting from surface- and deep-level resemblance) in triggering comparison threat from the Black superior towards the Black subordinate. Once activated, this comparison threat can then be exacerbated by group-based social category fault lines (right side of diagram). Lastly, the Black subordinate’s presumed “complexion connection” can influence the adverse reactions that result from the CIB behaviors they experience which, consequently, influences the subsequent coping strategies enacted (bottom-most portion of diagram). The emboldened circles represent environmental factors (environmental uncertainty, localization, and social category fault lines),
whereas the diamond-shaped figures represent relational factors (perceived similarity). The square-shaped figures represent individual factors (e.g., relevant performance dimension).

Now that the motivational underpinnings of the DCM have been illuminated, our attention will now turn to those situational, relational and individual factors that promote the CIB mentality among peers and colleagues (i.e., the horizontal crab mentality).

**Horizontal Crab Mentality (Peer-to-Peer)**

Contrary to the DCM, instances of the horizontal crab mentality (HCM) were found to have occurred in a myriad of professional settings, including traditional office settings (12 cases), professional degree programs (3 cases), and professional networking events and/or conferences (4 cases). However, like the DCM, several conditions were typically present whenever Black professionals adopted the CIB mentality towards a Black colleague or peer. These conditions are as follows:

**Condition 1: Perceived scarcity as an enabler of comparison threat.** According to participant accounts, the perceived scarcity of valued incentives or rewards within a given context (e.g., perceived likeability or access to resources and information) exacerbates one’s need to protect his or her relative status, and any accompanying incentives, within that setting if ostensibly threatened by others.

For instance, as a Black professional comes into a professional setting with his respective professional identity characteristics intact (e.g., his KSAs, charisma, pay grade, or pride in being the token Black), he should naturally feel an initial sense of contentment and security with his relative position within that setting assuming he feels there is a sufficient amount of associated incentives and rewards (e.g., compensation, awards and recognition, or access to power, positions and projects) for him to relish and take advantage of there. However, if for whatever reason he begins to sense that his claim to these rewards is at risk or that those incentives are in
paucity, he will be more prone to make social comparisons and, ultimately, act out competitively towards others to secure his relative position (as well as those accompanying incentives and rewards) within that setting. This scarcity model may be perceived from signals in the external environment (e.g., organizational decisions regarding promotions and allocation of resources) or may be the result of an actual competitive scenario where one’s gain is another’s loss (e.g., an interview scenario for limited positions or promotions).

Perhaps as expected, the perceived scarcity model appeared to be most pronounced with Blacks in predominantly White settings where there seemed to be fewer signals of vertical integration of Blacks and minorities at the upper echelons of organizational structure (see Avery, 2003; Avery & McKay, 2006). The interview excerpt below adequately captures this notion:

*It was almost like a sense of urgency, like it’s musical chairs, like there’s not gonna be enough. There’s not gonna be ten Black directors in our department, there might be one. So if me and you are on the same career path, it’s cool to be brothers outside, but you’re literally getting in the way of – it’s like we’re fighting for a quota, basically. (P.4)*

From the passage above, it becomes clear how the perception of the organization’s discriminatory “one-and-done” philosophy towards Black leadership signals an ultra-competitive zero-sum scenario for Black professionals aspiring to fill such roles. Despite how baseless this idea may actually be (cf. Burns, Barton, & Kerby, 2012; DiversityInc, 2012), the anecdote shows just how quickly one’s perception can become his or her harsh reality, especially when considering the pervasive White-male-as-leader paradigm that has permeated the American cultural landscape for centuries (see Chin & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007; Foley, Kidder, & Powell, 2002; Rosette et al., 2008). Thus, it makes logical sense that as the perception of available leadership positions for Blacks within that department (or organization) becomes more bleak, comparison concerns and competitive behaviors among Blacks with similar KSAs and career aspirations (i.e., surface- and deep-level resemblance) should naturally become more
pronounced. This is akin to Duguid, Loyd, and Tolbert’s (2012) notion of competitive threat whereby tokenized minority individuals may feel more threatened by the arrival of a demographically-similar other who is qualified and competent in a particular domain because of fears that their comparative status and perceived value will be overshadowed and/or diminished in the other’s presence.

Therefore, with respect to the HCM, the perceived (or actual) scarcity of the incentives or rewards associated with one’s relevant professional identity characteristics are what prompt individuals to feel increased comparison concerns towards others. If the scarce incentives and rewards are not relevant or significant to that individual’s sense of self-worth and value, then she will not feel the need to compete over them. However, if the incentives and rewards are intrinsically cherished and desired by the individual, then she will be more motivated to secure as much of the incentives and rewards for herself as she can. Additional excerpts from the interview data that encapsulate this idea are provided below:

- One of the employees that handled more of the financial side of things leaked information about how much I was making in comparison to my counterparts and then it became an issue where my counterparts were kind of like, “Oh, well, she’s only here two days a week but she’s making this amount but this but that but blah,” and it started to become this whole concern with other African American employees who felt that they had the same, if not, I guess, they perceived it as being more credentials. We’re working more etcetera. Literally comparing apples to oranges when I’m working two days a week on an hourly basis whereas they’re on a salary rate for the year. (P.1; Pay grade and limited compensation)

- If I walk into a [redacted] conference with a bunch of old White men, I immediately think, they’re going to remember me because I’m a young Black dude. It’s gonna resonate. Another Black dude walks in, I’m sure he’s probably thinking the same exact thing. And when we see each other, it’s like, you just messed up my whole thing. So I can definitely see that it’s literally – it’s just like, we know what the quota is, we know there’s not enough spots, and I think that’s where it comes from. I think, maybe it’s in my head, but I definitely think that’s where it comes from. (P.4; Pride in being the token Black and perceived scarcity of positions)

- I remember one time he made this comment, the teddy bear comment. So it was like, “Yeah, you know, it’s like when [you say] something, everyone kind of works with [you]
and takes it in. But when I say it, there’s always, everyone reacts. Everyone’s upset. You know, that’s because they think [you’re] a teddy bear.” And I remember he said this shit in a conversation with the three of us. And I was like, “Yo, motherfucker, I ain’t a teddy bear. I’m one of the people that’s always straight with folks, and everyone will tell you that on the team.” He’ll tell you what needs to be said when it needs to be said. Right? But I have a different way of saying it. I’m not screaming at folks, so I ain’t trying to disrespect them. But I do say what I need to say. But that’s how he felt. . . . The other Black guy would say it’s like – “He just feels, you know, that no matter what you do, people still like you. But with him, it’s always wrong.” So it became like, okay, this is the good Black guy and the bad Black guy. And then the other Black guy just stayed out of it.

These data support the work of Garcia et al. (2013) who purport that individuals are more likely to compete on performance dimensions that are relevant and/or important to the self than those they deem inconsequential. Relatedly, previous research has also shown that individuals show an increased propensity to compete in situations where they perceive there are a limited number of incentives or rewards available and, thereby, another’s gain is considered their personal loss or disadvantage (Campbell, 1965; see also Bazerman, Baron, & Shonk, 2001; Lawler, 2003; Mittone & Savadori, 2009).

**Condition 2: The two critical sources of comparison threat (redux).** Similar to the DCM, all reported examples of the HCM involved localized comparisons whereby Black colleagues were in direct contact or relationship with one another in a confined professional setting—whether at a professional conference, networking event, professional degree program or work office setting. Thus, the local dominance effect proved applicable to occurrences of the HCM as well.

Moreover, as the interview excerpts in the previous section indicated, the perceived similarity (i.e., surface- and deep-level resemblance) between colleagues was shown to increase comparison concerns and the likelihood for competitive behavior, just as it did in instances of the DCM. Therefore, as expected, the perceived similarity between Black colleagues encompassed both surface-level characteristics (e.g., race, age, gender, etc.) as well as deeper-level attributes.
like individuals’ KSAs, professional interests and aspirations. Also, like the DCM, surface-level resemblance between Black colleagues appeared to be most pronounced in predominantly White settings where they represented the racial minority. Excerpts capturing both surface- and deep-level dimensions of perceived similarity between Black colleagues and peers are included below:

- All African American women, one Hispanic woman but majority African American and—okay, so one was Hispanic, one Indian young lady, yeah, from Trinidad so she’s still kind of half Indian half African American—represents an African American person as well. (P.1)

- When I went to the [redacted] conference a year ago, a lot of young Black guys my age—and there just wasn’t—like, you go there to network, you go there to connect, and it’s almost like—as soon as I’d be in the same breakout session, and I’d see another young Black guy, there wasn’t—I mean, you’d almost hope there’d be like, “Yo, I see you,” a little fist of solidarity, but it was the opposite. It was like, “Oh wow, there’s two of us in here.” That almost token Black guy thing is gone, you know? It’s me and him. That was for an entire weekend, so I found that experience kind of happening over and over again. (P.4)

- When I was in grad school, so there was this brother when I came into the program, there were three programs. There was a clinical program, there was a school program, and there was an organizational program. I was in the organizational, he was in the clinical—he was in the clinical program. So it was—and in that program, I was the first Black male in my program, and I think in his program, there was this message—there was this saying that every three years, they got a Black male. So it was very easy that we became very close to each other. But it’s so interesting, as we became close to each other, there was always this way that he would really kind of like speak down to me, right? Or these micro-aggressions. (P.12)

**Condition 3: Social category fault lines and the impostor phenomenon as sources of incremental jeopardy.** According to the data, once the Black professional’s comparison threat has been activated via the conditions outlined above, crab antics will commence soon thereafter. However, participant accounts of the HCM indicated that social category fault lines and feelings of impostorism could potentially exacerbate the competitive dynamic even further.

In the case of social category fault lines, individuals most commonly stratified themselves by differences in academic training (degree type or focus), age or generational cohort (experienced vs. inexperienced), and organizational affiliation (school, employer, etc.).
Nevertheless, participant accounts also revealed a few occurrences where individual differences in skin tone or complexion, geographical allegiances (state, city, or region), sexual orientation, and social groups (friends and acquaintances) proved significant in exacerbating the CIB phenomenon further. Interestingly, unlike the DCM, social category fault lines played a more balanced role in instances of the HCM as it exacerbated the CIB dynamic in both predominantly White and Black settings, with a marginal edge to the latter. Nevertheless, this slight increase may still be attributed to Black individuals’ need for optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991, 1993) in Black-majority settings, as previously asserted. Excerpts demonstrating social category fault lines’ influence on the HCM are included below:

- I don’t go to Black worker events. I don’t go to any events. You know me, I kind of just chill. . . . I guess I don’t embrace my Black identity as much as maybe some of my peers maybe want me to, especially when we’re kind of in a – we’re like the small group, kind of in a hostile space. I can see wanting to team up, which kind of goes against this crabs in a barrel thing. But it seems like my experience has been, if you’re not teaming up, then you’re an outsider, and that’s where I’ve kind of been pulled down. (P.4; Social affiliation)

- I think probably age. I think again, you know, feeling like he – I think just feeling like he was the more experienced one or he was the more – he understood life more than I probably did, without having to say it. So thinking in some way that I just had to submit to some of the things he thought was right or needed to be done, which I didn’t. And maybe sometimes it was – I mean I think every moment I had, man, I challenged the motherfucker if I felt like he was overstepping. If it was too much, I’d be like, “Yo, nah, that doesn’t – nah, that’s not the case.” (P.12; Age or generational cohort)

Feelings of impostorism were also shown to exacerbate the CIB mentality between Black colleagues and peers. Like Black leaders in the DCM, this personal insecurity appeared to be most prevalent in predominantly White settings where Blacks were in the minority. Yet again, this impostor phenomenon may be the result of the prevailing stereotypes that Black professionals may encounter in professional settings regarding their presumed competence and work ethic (see Cook & Glass, 2014; Knight et al., 2003; Rosette et al., 2008; Sue et al., 2008). Additionally, in one case of the HCM, this impostor effect was thought to be the by-product of
an assumed learning disability and/or mental disorder. Excerpts exemplifying feelings of impostorism among Black professionals are included below:

- *At the end of my first year in graduate school, I won a thesis award. And then at the end of my second year, I won a dissertation fellowship – a three-year, highly coveted three-year dissertation fellowship. And I think that that really created some angst for one of my male colleagues in the program, who is absolutely brilliant, but I think had struggled. He had struggled when he first entered the program in ways that I did not struggle. I did have my own struggles, but he might have – I think he might have struggled with mental illness in some ways, and was almost sort of on probation in the program, and wasn’t quite meeting the milestones he should have met because he had so much anxiety about, I guess, being a Black male in this program and whatever else was contributing to the anxiety.* (P.6)

- *There was a way he saw Whiteness, even though he didn’t want to admit it, that he wanted to strive towards. And for me, I was just like, “Yeah, I mean I see, but I don’t give a fuck about them,” right? Not to say that I don’t want to have friendships with them, but I wasn’t – I didn’t feel like I needed to behave and engage like White people to do the same things that they were doing.* (P.12)

- *For me, it was an insecurity. A lot of it was trying to look and play the part right and that being a very new world for me or role for me, and I already wasn’t sure how to show up, and so it was interesting to see. We all were four very different representations of Black people in a space where I think people move so quick and make snap judgments so fast and move on that so directly.* (P.13)

**Condition 4: Activation of the HCM.** Thus, despite its various commonalities with the DCM (i.e., the presence of perceived similarity and localized comparisons), the data suggest that the HCM differs in that it is initially triggered by a Black professional’s belief that the valued and coveted incentives (e.g., financial remuneration or procurement of an open position or promotion) that are directly linked to his or her relevant professional identity attributes (e.g., KSAs, charisma or pride in being the token minority) are scant or in jeopardy. Once this belief has set in, the Black professional will then be more primed to make comparisons to similar individuals around him and, if ostensibly threatened by them, will act out competitively to protect his relative position, and any accompanying incentives, within that setting.
**Visually illustrating the HCM.** Furthermore, similar to the DCM, several dimensions of Garcia et al.’s (2013) SCMoC also proved useful in visually illustrating the various individual, relational, and situational factors associated with the HCM (see Figure 3 below).

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 3. An illustrative depiction of the HCM between Black colleagues or peers in professional settings, including some of the individual, relational and situational factors described in Garcia et al.’s (2013) social comparison model of competition. The topmost section of the diagram shows how scarce incentives and rewards interact with an individual’s relevant professional identity characteristics to, consequently, result in initial comparison concerns. The bottom half of the diagram illustrates the importance of localized comparisons and perceived similarity (resulting from surface- and deep-level resemblance) in triggering comparison threat from a Black professional towards a fellow Black colleague. Once activated, this comparison*
threat can then be exacerbated by group-based social category fault lines as well as by a Black professional’s self-perceived sense of impostorism (right side of diagram). Lastly, the Black CIB target’s presumed “complexion connection” can influence the adverse reactions that result from the CIB behaviors they experience which, consequently, influences the subsequent coping strategies enacted (bottom-most portion of diagram). The emboldened circles represent environmental factors (scarce incentives and rewards, localization, and social category fault lines), whereas the diamond-shaped figures represent relational factors (perceived similarity). The square-shaped figures represent individual factors (e.g., presumed complexion connection).

Now that the inner-workings of the DCM and HCM have been fully explained, a detailed account of behaviors (crab antics) associated with both manifestations of the CIB mentality will be of primary focus in the following section.

**Behavioral Manifestations of the CIB Mentality (Crab Antics)**

Participant accounts revealed that the crab antics associated with cases of both the DCM and HCM supported extant research on the CIB mentality specifically (viz., Miller, 2016), as well as research on workplace incivility more generally (viz., Porath & Pearson, 2012; Schilpzand, De Pater, & Erez, 2016). Hence, the clear majority of behaviors described in Figure 4 (below) support Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) characterization of workplace incivility as “low-intensity deviant behavior with an ambiguous intent to harm” (p. 457), with the exception of the comparatively more overt and hostile acts of aggression and intimidation that are on the fringe of workplace violence (e.g., leading with an “iron fist” via intimidation tactics or coercion, or attempting to bully or intimidate others with their words and actions). Thus, the CIB mentality appears to represent a unique form of incivility that occurs specifically among ingroup members (i.e., intragroup incivility).

According to previous research (e.g., Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2004), workplace incivility categorically differs from workplace violence because it does not involve physical acts of aggression or assault towards another individual (which no
participants in this study reported). However, Andersson and Pearson (1999) suggest that workplace incivility can occasionally escalate or spiral into more aggressive and violent actions over time—albeit rare.

Also, it is important to note that the documented crab antics are not mutually exclusive and may, therefore, occur concurrently with each other. For example, an individual may engage in passive aggressive remarks to covertly insult someone (a HCM behavior) which, if done publicly, may also be perceived by the targeted individual as a subtle attempt to elicit feelings of public humiliation or shame (a mutually shared behavior of both the DCM and HCM; see Appendices C, D, and E for a detailed taxonomy of crab antics related to the DCM, HCM and those that are mutually shared, respectively).

![Figure 4. A Venn diagram highlighting behaviors associated with the DCM (far left) and HCM (far right), as well as those mutually shared by both (center).](image)

Interestingly, the behaviors included in Figure 4 corroborate many of the findings that Miller (2016) reported in her dissertation study with Black professionals. For instance, her suggestion that crab antics may include someone “not helping, not advocating” and “not
supporting when in a position to do so” (p. 99) is analogous to this study’s behavioral category of deliberately withholding valuable information or resources from others in times of need. However, whereas Miller posits that these behaviors are solely related to the DCM, participants in this study suggest these behaviors are characteristic of both the DCM and HCM. Similarly, Miller’s discovery that crab antics involved individuals “trying to ‘one up’ each other and creating a status hierarchy” (p. 101) seems most comparable to this study’s behavioral category of engaging in social scanning and/or posturing for competitive edge. Yet, Miller suggests that this behavior is primarily a symptom of the HCM whereas participants in this study propose that it is symptomatic of both the DCM and HCM.

Moreover, it is important to note that the aforementioned crab antics are not necessarily mutually exclusive and may occur concurrently with one another. For instance, a Black superior who is “leading with an iron fist” or power-tripping may also be guilty of regularly communicating in a patronizing and condescending tone to his or her subordinates. Similarly, a superior who is considered “unreliable” with information and/or resources may also be guilty of exploiting his or her subordinates for personal gain as they, presumably, would have to pick up the slack for their supervisor’s negligence and/or incompetence.

Thus, as hoped, this study significantly expands on the findings of past CIB mentality research by illuminating and describing 21 total behaviors (i.e., eight DCM antics, six HCM antics, and seven shared antics) that are characteristic of the phenomenon in professional settings—resulting in the largest assembly of CIB-related behaviors among Black professionals to date. Nevertheless, these crab antics are not without dire and depressing consequences for those unfortunate enough to be on the behaviors’ receiving end. These resultant adverse
reactions, along with the corresponding coping strategies, will be discussed in the following two sections.

**Adverse Reactions of the CIB Mentality**

In their study of 800 managers and employees who had all been targets of workplace incivility, Porath and Pearson (2013) found that the consequences of such behavior abounded, including (a) stunted creativity, (b) decreased morale and deterioration of team spirit, (c) increased stress and anxiety, (d) diminished productivity and motivation, and (e) lost time worrying about the incident and/or avoiding the perpetrator. Similarly, Miller (2016) found that Black targets of the CIB mentality reported adverse reactions like anger, frustration, hurt, disappointment, sadness, increased stress, feelings of betrayal, and bewilderment. Perhaps unsurprisingly, participants of this study spoke to many of the same adverse reactions, with a clear distinction between the differential impact of HCM and DCM on their psychological, emotional and even physical well-being (see Appendices F, G, and H for a detailed taxonomy of adverse reactions related to the DCM, HCM and those that are mutually shared, respectively).

This quote from a study participant—and target of both the HCM and DCM—captures the essence of the palpable difference between the two in a clear and succinct way:

> It’s just that it’s a different thing when what you’re experiencing is somebody who’s there to be your supervisor, somebody that’s in a powerful position, in a position of power and authority. It makes a difference than if it’s your peer. Peers, you could basically deal with that. “I don’t have to deal with you. I don’t have to talk to you if you got that attitude,” but when it’s somebody that you have to deal with and it makes you feel like you’re walking on eggshells because you don’t know what’s gonna trip this person up. You don’t know what you’re gonna say that’s gonna cause this person to get upset, so it became something, for me, that I never thought I was gonna have to put forethought into. (P.14)

Clearly, the participant makes a compelling case for how increasingly more cumbersome and anxiety-provoking the DCM can be compared to the HCM, as evidenced by the obvious loss of psychological safety and increased angst that she experienced as a result of the DCM.
Similarly, in their meta-analysis on the individual outcomes of workplace aggression, Hershcovis and Barling (2010) found that targets of top-down (superior-to-subordinate) aggression reported stronger adverse effects on their behavioral and attitudinal outcomes than targets of lateral (peer-to-peer) aggression. Thus, this may also explain why cases of the DCM, despite being significantly fewer in number, yielded more notable adverse reactions related to one’s job-related motivation, engagement and satisfaction than the HCM (see Figure 5).

![Figure 5](image)

*Figure 5. A Venn diagram highlighting adverse reactions associated with the DCM (far left) and HCM (far right), as well as those mutually shared by both (center).*

Interestingly, and perhaps more provocatively, one participant even suggested that his work experiences have led him to believe that a perceived loss of voice and agency would generally be more pronounced under Black leadership compared to other leaders because of Black leaders’ more authoritarian leadership style:

*I feel like in Black-run organizations there’s typically this top-down approach where, as a person who is on the bottom or mid-level, there are particular norms that you have to work with in order to have those type of conversations with upper leaders, or else there might be a Black termination, if you will. . . . It reminds me a ton of Black church. “Pastor say, ‘Do it,’ we got to do it Pastor’s way. Don’t talk against what Pastor say because Pastor – Pastor hear from God himself. Pastor say, ‘Do this,’ we got to do it. We don’t challenge what Pastor say. You just gotta sit and obey.” Right? And I feel like – well, nobody’s gonna say, “The principal said this and this, do it just because.” Right? Like,
who does that, right? You’re dumb. We should not be having this conversation. But I feel like there’s this same respect of person, respect the position, respect the authority which is different than respect this skill, respect the competence and then trust the leader. . . . But I feel like in Black organizations sometimes that’s how decisions are made. That’s how there’s a certain way of communicating. There’s a certain way of feedback. There’s a certain way of voicing an opinion that if you don’t fall into that then there’s a feeling of insecurity that comes. (P.2)

However, this thinking may be the result of fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977) whereby individuals place more emphasis on the role of dispositional factors (e.g., personality or intention) on others’ behavior than they do the influence of situational or external factors.

**The complexion connection’s influence on participant reactions.** Despite the clear consequential differences between the DCM and HCM, they also share some similarities regarding the adverse reactions of their targets. One notable similarity involves the participants’ general admission that a surface-level resemblance of race in professional settings (i.e., interactions with a fellow Black colleague or superior) fostered a unique sense of solidarity and kinship towards other Blacks, particularly in predominately White settings. More specifically, this complexion connection, as one participant called it, essentially signified a sense of belonging and connectedness to the participants’ Black identity that, consequently, nurtured a more collectivist desire to connect with other Blacks and/or see other Blacks succeed:

> I did everything in my power to make sure that she would be successful because of that complexion connection. Like I always ride with Black people, that’s just what I do – and maybe to a fault sometimes, but I don’t know if you can ever ride with people to a fault. I think that my responsibility as a Black person and as a Black woman is to always make sure that other Black people can succeed. That’s just the way that I feel whether I know you or not. (P.8)

Remarkably, this complexion connection is what also exacerbated the adverse reactions of hurt, sadness, disappointment and confusion that participants experienced as a result of the crab antics subjected to them by individuals they considered “one of their own” (as shown in Figures 2 and 3). Examples of this are included below:
o I think what was most upsetting to me about it is because she was a Black woman – to me, I don’t think you need preferential treatment because you’re – just because your supervisor’s a Black person, “Oh, I’m dealing with a Black person.” Because I’m an employee I deserve to be respected as a human being. I expected that, but I just felt like I identified more with her because I knew we were the same age, I knew we had both been working, say in our lifetime, at least 25 years. So I thought we had something in common, but when I realized what it was and that she was trying to damage me in that way – when I left from here, for a while, I felt bad about it. (P.14)

o Because you’ve been through the same experience. You experienced some of the same experiences so you should be sticking together and supporting each other rather than seeing each other as competition and you already know from way back in slavery that they conditioned us to be against each other. So, why do we continue that curse or that trend? Why do we continue to allow that? Why don’t we change that? Because we’ve been conditioned way back when and they know as long as they divide us then that’s a way of controlling us. They’re still keeping us – even though slavery doesn’t exist anymore. There’s still a way of controlling as long as they can keep you divided because that’s what we were back then – divided. So, we know that -- we talk about it. But yet we still do it. That’s what’s disappointing. (P.15)

Coping Strategies Employed to Mitigate or Combat the CIB Mentality

After a detailed review and analysis of the interview data, 11 coping strategies (i.e., three DCM strategies, and eight mutually shared by both the HCM and DCM) were identified by participants as being useful in mitigating or combatting the CIB mentality in professional settings (see Figure 6 below; see also Appendices I and J for a detailed taxonomy of coping strategies related to the DCM as well as those that are mutually shared, respectively). One noteworthy finding regards the fact that five out of eight cases of the DCM resulted in the voluntary departure or exit from a work team, department or company. This finding supports the work of Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) who found that targets of workplace incivility had higher turnover intentions than those unaffected, as well as the work of Miller (2016) who found that four out of five Black professionals who admitted to being targets of the CIB phenomenon reported leaving a previous position as a direct result of that maltreatment. As you can see in Figure 6, this coping strategy did not show up at all in participant reports of the HCM which
gives further credence to the differential impact between the two relational manifestations of the phenomenon.

![Venn diagram](image)

**Figure 6.** A Venn diagram highlighting coping strategies associated with the DCM (far left), as well as those mutually shared by both the DCM and HCM (center).

Speculatively, and in line with previous organizational research (e.g., Edmondson, 2004; Yanchus, Periard, Moore, Carle, & Osatuke, 2015), this coping strategy most likely results from the Black professional’s perceived loss of psychological safety since it encompasses one’s ability “to show and employ one’s self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career” (Kahn, 1990, p. 708). According to Edmondson (1999, 2004), if leaders are ineffective at creating a psychologically safe environment wherein employees feel comfortable being and expressing themselves, it can inhibit individuals’ ability to learn and fully engage in the roles and responsibilities they have been hired to fulfill; therefore, this reduced level of employee engagement could logically increase one’s intent to leave his or her team or, more drastically, the company (Shuck, Twyford, Reio, & Shuck, 2014; see also Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010; Saks, 2006). Corroboratively, this hypothesis was supported by Yanchus et al. (2015) who found psychological safety to be a direct predictor of voluntary turnover intentions among healthcare employees at the Veterans Health Administration.
Another notable discovery involved the influential role that the aforementioned complexion connection (i.e., the collectivist desire to connect with other Blacks and/or see other Blacks succeed) played in participants’ coping behaviors. Specifically, several participants attributed the complexion connection as being significantly linked to the strong feelings of shame and guilt they experienced after either confronting their Black superior or colleague head on or getting a third-party involved to arbitrate or mediate. Excerpts exemplifying this scenario are included below:

- So when I called her out, publicly, I guess, even though it’s on a form, and it’s really to White folks, about her essentially being an angry Black woman, I feel bad about it. Because that’s an easy thing to say, right? That’s the low-hanging fruit – you’re an angry Black woman; be better. And I actually wanna tell her that I wrote that, like tell her in person before she reads it, because what I’m ultimately trying to say is, “You have a lot of emotional power, and you are a leader in this organization. Be aware of what you emote.” That’s all. But I know it’s not gonna be read like that, so I wanna have that conversation with her. (P.3; In response to highlighting negative behaviors on evaluation form)

- I hate having to feel like I have to counter her in a meeting or that she even feels like she needs to throw me under the bus. . . . Because it makes me feel like I’m doing what she’s done to me. That is not who I am. I’m capable. I’ll go there if I have to go there. But I don’t like going there. 1) If you rise, I rise. So my last resort is to take you out at the knees because that doesn’t make me feel anymore – but I want to hold you – I need you to meet me halfway. I need you to help. Call me to the mat. I’m about accountability, too. I am not saying make this easy for me. I am not saying soft soap something I do. But when you deliberately frame something in a misleading way, I can’t let that ride. I can’t let that stand. And I have to speak up. And now, you’ve put me in this position to step outside how I would typically like to operate just to defend myself. Why? Why do I have to do that? (P.9; In response to confronting head on in public setting)

- I know this is gonna sound really crazy, but I gotta say this. I felt like I was ratting her out. I felt like I wish that she had been the kinda person that I could have just talked to and said to her, “We don’t have to do this. This is so unnecessary. I don’t have a problem with you. I don’t know why you have a problem with me.” I felt like I shouldn’t have had to go that far. (P.14; In response to getting Human Resources involved)
Unique Characteristics of the CIB Mentality

The data analysis also revealed 10 distinguishing and unique characteristics of the CIB mentality that held true for virtually most, if not all, reported cases of the phenomenon. As a result, we can provisionally deduce that the CIB mentality often:

1. Targets those who are proximally located within one degree of separation from the antagonist (local dominance effect); thus, making the CIB mentality both a dyadic and group-level phenomenon. This supports the work of Miller (2016) who also found that the CIB mentality, particularly the HCM, commonly occurs in both dyads and groups.

2. Stems from a one-sided competitive dynamic (as opposed to mutual competitiveness). Although there were some instances of mutually competitive scenarios where both parties were clearly competing for limited rewards or incentives (e.g., an interview scenario for limited positions or promotions), many participants expressed a one-sided competitive dynamic wherein the CIB perpetrator viewed them as competition in a way that was not reciprocated by them. This one-sidedness, in addition to their presumed and self-proclaimed complex connection, is what contributed to an increased sense of confusion and bewilderment at the onset of the crab antics directed towards them.

   - And that was the thing that I could never understand, was like this guy is so brilliant and has strengths that I don’t have. He’s very good theoretically in ways that I – you know, that’s something I have to work harder at. And for some audiences, they really, really enjoy that. In fact, he got a job that I didn’t get. We both applied for it and we both interviewed for it, and he got the job and I didn’t get it. You know what I mean? And so I always knew that he was capable of that, but I think he was always really insecure and really struggled with focusing. He might be ADD or ADHD or something like that. And so I think that that contributed to his sort of passive aggressiveness toward me early on. (P.6)

   - At first, I tried to tell myself, “This is not happening. This can’t be happening. She must be joking. This can’t be serious,” because I’ve never experienced it on that level right

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4 However, since the data only comprises perspectives from targets of the CIB phenomenon, more insight from the actual perpetrators of this behavior is needed to fully validate and legitimize these claims.
there because there’s no competition. I’m not trying to get your job. We’re not in corporate America, so it’s not like you could fight for this position. You apply for a position, you get interviewed if it’s available, and you go – there’s no lateral moves; there’s none of that. (P.14)

3. Operates more at the downward (superior-to-subordinate) and horizontal (peer-to-peer) relational directions than upward (subordinate-to-superior). As the HCM and DCM yielded the most reported incidents of the CIB phenomenon (19 and 8 cases, respectively), the CIB mentality appears least likely to take place in the upward relational direction (subordinate-to-superior), even though many participants had held management positions at some point in their careers. Additional exploration is warranted to assess why this may be the case, and under what circumstances the upward CIB mentality is more likely to become activated. However, Miller (2016) found that subordinates were more likely to make upward comparisons to their managers if they were older or had longer tenure in the organization.

4. Manifests inconspicuously and is hard to pinpoint or discern. Supporting the characteristically inconspicuous nature of workplace incivility (see Andersson & Pearson, 1999), the CIB mentality can often go undetected by those witnessing and/or experiencing it firsthand; therefore, the intent to harm is often ambiguous and difficult to discern which may, consequently, result in increased feelings of confusion and denial on behalf of the target.

- I’ve been in situations where this could have cropped up a lot more than I think it has, and I think, sometimes, depending on how you approach these sorta situations, I wonder sometimes if maybe stuff has come and I just maybe wasn’t cognizant of it all the time. So, if I think of four times when this might have happened, like maybe there were eight times where it happened and I just kinda wasn’t aware. So, I think if you think about it in terms of a range of the ways in which people can slight you, some of it can go seen and some can go unseen. It can be stuff you would say behind your back, stuff that could have happened that I just didn’t really take into account, or didn’t appreciate, or necessarily maybe just didn’t think the source of it was kind of this sort of vindictive, “If I can’t be successful, you can’t be successful” sort of thinking, which I think is probably at the core of that kind of behavior. (P.11)
Every day wasn’t the worst day I ever had, but when they were bad days, they were bad days, and I think what makes them bad for me was it made me feel bad. It made me feel like I was doing something that I couldn’t identify, and, of course because I can’t say to her, “Well, what is it that’s really bothering you? What is it about me that’s making you act out like that?” I couldn’t verbalize that to her because as far as she was concerned, “I’m not doing anything to you.” (P.14)

5. Emerges in both racially homogeneous (predominantly White or Black) and racially heterogeneous (diverse) settings. Participant accounts of the CIB mentality took place in racially diverse settings and teams, as well as those that were more racially homogenous (i.e., predominantly White or Black); thus, lending support for the ubiquitous nature of the phenomenon in professional settings. Nevertheless, participants did speak to several reasons why they believed the CIB mentality, particularly the HCM, would be more prevalent in predominantly White settings than others (these will be addressed in the following section regarding organizational demography’s influence on the CIB mentality).

6. Serves as a taboo and “undiscussable” topic for most. Several participants expressed moderate levels of discomfort and shame when discussing their personal experiences with the CIB phenomenon during the interview. Furthermore, out of numerous asks, only two participants admitted to exhibiting crab antics towards a fellow Black coworker, subordinate or superior. Thus, there seems to be a reluctance to discussing the CIB phenomenon more generally, in addition to admitting one’s role in perpetrating the behavior towards a fellow Black. This is comparable to Miller’s (2016) study where no participants admitted to being instigators of the CIB mentality.

It’s hard talking about this because I feel like it hits so close to home and I’m very – I don’t like to – I don’t know. I don’t like to publicize other people’s situations or anything so I would appreciate if it’s possible to not disclose names or something. I’m very – I don’t know. I don’t wanna create issues or problems but I would like to address these situations. So I think this is important which is why I offered to interview today. . . . So, yeah. I don’t know. I feel bad. Thank you for asking questions that try to tie in the
positive side of things as well because I just feel like I’m like, “Oh my gosh. All this just sounds negative.” (P.1)

- I think this feels partially negative to talk about. . . . Because I see if it goes to the [redacted] department, it’s gonna be negative for the organization. They’re like, “See, it’s them hurting each other. We don’t have to do anything because they’re –,” you know? So that’s what’s floating around in my head now is feeling a little bit of guilt for calling that stuff out or wanting to make sure it’s – I don’t know. I think the context does weird things. (P.13)

7. Occurs in relatively new interpersonal and/or professional relationships in an immediate or accelerated fashion. The majority of reported CIB mentality incidents appeared to occur within one year of the CIB perpetrator and target’s relational history, if not immediately (e.g., professional conferences, networking events or interview scenarios). For those instances that occurred over longer periods of time, the CIB mentality appeared to be instigated by a sudden change in the positional authority (e.g., promotion, demotion, etc.) of one individual in the relationship. This supports judgment and decision-making research that suggests individuals regularly form specific trait-based impressions regarding others’ competence, attractiveness, trustworthiness, intentions and likeability in a rapid and effortless fashion (see Bar, Neta, & Linz, 2006; Hassin & Trope, 2000; Todorov, Mandisodza, Goren, & Hall, 2005; van ‘t Wout & Sanfey, 2008; Willis & Todorov, 2006); however, more research is warranted to support the legitimacy of this claim with respect to the CIB mentality specifically.

8. Deliberately targets one or few. Study participants typically felt that CIB perpetrators purposely acted more hostile and competitively towards them than anyone else in their work team and/or department. Moreover, in those cases where the CIB perpetrator was generally hostile and unpleasant towards others around them, participants expressed that the antagonistic behaviors directed towards them felt exceptionally more aggressive and pronounced compared to others.
This woman would come into the office, and she could be pleasant standing right there at that door, she’s speaking to everybody as she’s coming in. The minute she walked in that door and she looked at me, her whole countenance changed [snaps fingers] immediately. . . . Her facial expression, her attitude, her voice changed, her attitude. She became aggressive when she saw me. When I listened to her standing outside the door, I didn’t hear the person that came inside. She’s standing out there, and she’s talking to people, and she’s having a nice conversation, and the minute she walks inside, that whole conversation changed. She immediately gets an attitude, she’s immediately aggressive about what she’s saying, she is demanding, she’s rude, disrespectful. (P.14; Targeted one)

He was very rude. He was degrading to, I guess, to me – to women. He was abusive in how he treated you and the way he talked to you. He degraded women. He belittled us. Now, that was me and the other professional librarian — not the person who he replaced. The person who he replaced, he did not talk down or belittle or speak to her in a negative way because she was the person who had to do his job and he’d get credit for it because he didn’t know what he was doing. So he didn’t belittle her. He never talked down to her. (P.15; Targeted few)

I think he treated us both badly, but he still needed Ms. [redacted] a little bit more than he needed me [so he treated me worse]. (P.15; Crab antics more pronounced)

9. Relies more on individuals’ racial identity for social comparison than their ethnicity. Participant accounts revealed that the CIB mentality appears to be determined more by race than one’s ethnic or cultural background. Interestingly, two participants indicated that they had experienced the CIB phenomenon from Black Latinos and West Indians, in addition to African Americans. For this reason, race (i.e., Blackness) appears to be more important than ethnicity in assessing perceived similarity (surface-level resemblance) and the potential for comparison threat in professional settings. This supports the thoughts and findings of Sidanius and Pratto (1999) who claim that, “for most of American history, ‘race,’ rather than social class has been and remains the primary basis of social stratification” (p. 61).

10. Results from a significant shift in the relational dynamic between the CIB perpetrator and target, especially from a positive and collegial tone to a more negative and hostile one. The majority of participants could recall a pivotal moment in their relational history with the CIB perpetrator that signified a significant shift in their interpersonal dynamic from
friendly and collegial to more adversarial and antagonistic. According to many, this significant shift is what indicated the beginning of the CIB phenomenon.

- **So at the beginning, the feeling was certainly a place of comfort and I guess contentment, if you will, as far as the working relationship between me and that mid-level manager. Then when things unfolded – my day was typically on the spectrum of frustration – just students is a different conversation – but as far as adult relationship, that was more frustrating than anything.** (P.2)

- **He was never – like at the very beginning, not antagonistic at all. He wasn’t – yeah, not antagonistic at all initially. I think it was after it was announced that I – because when I got the thesis award, he actually posted something on social media to congratulate me, and seemed to be really happy for me. But I think maybe because we had both – maybe it’s because we had both really applied for that same fellowship, and I got it and he didn’t. Maybe at that point he began to feel like there was some type of competition or discomfort.** (P.6)

- **He got semi-promoted to supervisor assistant and once that happened, it was a lot of reporting everyone else. He started to step on a lot of toes for him to continue to climb the ranks. We noticed that he distanced himself from us. We used to go out to lunch together, just things that colleagues do, and he stopped doing it. He also kinda started to give out directions but to certain people. It was kinda like he knew who he could say it to because certain people, like myself, would look at him like he was crazy because we were all in the same boat.** (P.7)

**New conceptual definition of the CIB mentality.** Since previous definitions of the CIB mentality (see Miller, 2016; Worsley & Stone, 2011) fail to fully account for the inconspicuous, homogenous, socially interactive, and context-specific aspects of the phenomenon, I felt compelled to develop and propose a new working conceptual definition of the CIB mentality that encapsulates these unique characteristics in a more coherent and integrated fashion. Hence, I define the CIB mentality as:

Deviant behavior from a fellow in-group member—particularly among lower status minority groups—that violates group norms for mutual respect and operates with an often ambiguous and inconspicuous intent to harm, demoralize, humiliate and/or undermine similar others within a given social setting.
Organizational Demography’s Influence on the CIB Mentality

Contrary to Miller (2016), this study found near parity with respect to the number of CIB mentality occurrences in predominantly White settings (14 total cases; 1 DCM and 13 HCM) versus predominantly Black or racially heterogenous settings (13 total cases; 7 DCM and 6 HCM). Thus, although organizational demography and the vertical integration of Blacks in leadership can and do play an important role in the prevalence of the phenomenon (e.g., effects on self-perceived impostorism, interpersonal similarity and surface-level resemblance, and perceptions of limited or scarce organizational incentives and rewards), they do not appear to be the primary causal factors for the emergence of the CIB mentality among Blacks in professional settings, as Miller suggests; this appears especially true for the DCM. Nevertheless, participants did manage to identify several conditions whereby the CIB dynamic among Black professionals may be perpetuated more in predominantly White settings. These reasons are as follows:

1. **White authority figures and co-workers are clueless or apathetic to the intra-racial CIB dynamic.** Some participants reported a lack of support and understanding from White colleagues and authority figures when they attempted to explain their experiences of maltreatment from their fellow Black superior or colleague. This may perhaps be the result of the CIB mentality’s inconspicuous nature and ways of operating.

   o *The top boss* was totally oblivious. *He was like, “What the hell is going on in here? What? I don’t understand.” He was just so laid back and so chill. He was clueless. . . . He allowed [her] to do a lot of stuff that he should have been doing on his own. He allowed her to sign things that she shouldn’t have been signing, and so she got away with a lot of stuff. He never took sides, but he never took ownership that he understood what was going on. I really didn’t need him to confirm or not confirm, but because you need to follow a chain of command where you are, then I needed to get him involved and let him know that, “This is it what’s taking place in your department right up under your nose.”* (P.14)

2. **White authority figures have a fear or reluctance to firing or reproaching**
Black professionals, particularly those in leadership. Some participants attributed the prolonged occurrence of the CIB phenomenon to White authority figures’ fear of firing and/or reproaching Black professionals and leaders who were guilty of acting uncivilly towards others. Many believed that this was due in large part to the authority figure or organization wanting to maintain the image that they are racially inclusive and progressive. Previous research (e.g., Croft & Schmader, 2012; Crosby & Monin, 2007; Harber, 1998, 2004) has supported this idea by finding that Whites typically inflate praise and curtail criticism when providing feedback to Blacks.

- We are in a predominantly White organization that likes to talk about social justice and race stuff, and there’s a level of “We want to demonstrate our progressiveness by talking about race and diversity as much as possible.” And I think that in situations like that, White folks sometimes feel incapable of calling behaviors out because the behaviors have been acted upon – a person of color does it. It’s like as a White male, we’re supposed to be all about social justice and racial whatever whatever whatever. As a White dude, how am I supposed to tell this Black woman to not speak to these Black males in this way, especially a Black woman that’s supposed to be all pro Black. How am I doing that? (P.3)

- I feel like [redacted] as a larger company had this fear of firing Black people. Clearly, they didn’t for [my old manager]. I don’t know how, but they had a fear of lawsuits. (P.13)

3. Black targets of the CIB mentality feel reluctant or apprehensive about publicizing or bringing attention to the CIB dynamic with “others” (primarily Whites).

Several participants expressed a reluctance to publicize or bring attention to the CIB dynamic with White colleagues or authority figures because of increased shame and embarrassment that the competitive dynamic even existed. Instead, and perhaps as a result of their complexion connection, they saw it more important to maintain the illusion of a united and harmonious front with their Black colleague or superior than to expose the harsh reality of the situation. Contrarily, participants generally expressed greater comfort discussing the CIB dynamic with colleagues and leaders of color—Black and otherwise.
They talk about microaggressions around here all the time, they talk about—they’re talking about all these different things, but nobody’s really talking about that, so I can’t come to HR and say, “We’re having some Black on Black issues.” I can’t say that. All I can say as an employee—as a worker—is, “I want my rights protected because she’s doing these things to me. I don’t feel comfortable when I come to work. I feel disrespected. I feel like she’s taking advantage of me. I think that she’s abusive.” These are things I have to say in front of you, in front of these Whiteys. That’s how I felt. I felt like I was basically snitching on a sister. That’s how I felt. (P.14)

4. Blacks may maintain greater distance from one another in predominantly White settings to minimize concerns and/or suspicions of Black coalescence. This idea supports the work of Duguid et al. (2012) who found that individuals, particularly members of low-status groups (e.g., women and racioethnic minorities), will avoid outwardly supporting and/or advocating for demographically-similar others to assuage concerns that they are favoring their own (i.e., favoritism threat). In fact, Hekman, Johnson, Foo, and Yang (2017) corroborated this notion by finding that women and racioethnic minority leaders are actually penalized and judged more harshly for supporting and advocating for fellow minority-group members with hiring decisions and promotions. Thus, since an increased sensitivity to favoritism threat may decrease some Black professionals’ ability or desire to act collegially and collaboratively towards other Blacks in predominantly White settings, this seemingly standoffish behavior may be interpreted or perceived as “crabby” by others which, in turn, may perpetuate the perception of a CIB dynamic.

I think by virtue of being very engaged with Black folks, a lot of times, opportunities that involve Black folks, I’ll know about them and can decide to share or not to share or figure out how to share. So, there’s been times where people were thinking about having some sort of lunch, bringing folks out, so I’ll think about, “Okay, well, I wanna bring at least a couple cats, but depending on the numbers, I don’t wanna be the person who’s like the brother who brought all the Black people here.” So, I’m cognizant of that, but it’s never usually in a way where it’s like, “Let me try to undercut someone,” or me try to do it at the expense of someone else. (P.11)

Even today, at work, if they see Blacks talking—say one or two Blacks talking—I think they get uncomfortable. White people get uncomfortable and they come up and say something, “Oh, you know we are not supposed to be having fun.” Or they make some
kinda little joke, but now you can have two or three White people going out to lunch or talking and they don’t think nothing of it, they just pass by and they don’t act like they don’t see it. There’s nothing said, but if they see two Blacks or three then it’s almost like they think you are trying to come up with some way that’s going to be against the department or something, you come and you—what is it? What’s the word? When you come together? . . . Conspiring. They think you are conspiring with each other to do something. (P.15)

5. The CIB mentality may be the result of displaced anger or frustration from organizational barriers that are commonly associated with working in predominantly White settings. According to Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz, and McKay (2000), the organizational barriers restricting the advancement and upward mobility of Blacks and other minority groups are no mystery: (a) a lack of visible role models and mentors in organizational positions to support them, (b) limited access to valuable information about available jobs and promotions because of inadequate social networks, (c) fewer significant rewards and recognition for their accomplishments and satisfactory performance (see also Wilson, 2016), and (d) less favorable organizational attitudes and expectations about their overall career success because of anticipated barriers to advancement (e.g., the “glass ceiling”). Thus, it should come as no surprise that such inequity would take a significant toll on the emotional, psychological, and financial well-being of Blacks in professional settings, especially those where they represent the numerical and social minority.

Proving this point, Travis, Thorpe-Moscon and McCluney (2016) recently found that Black professionals commonly experience an increased emotional tax (i.e., the heightened experience of being different from peers at work because of their race or ethnicity) in predominantly White settings that has proven detrimental to their personal health, well-being and ability to succeed on the job. Symptoms typically associated with this emotional tax include constant feelings of having to constantly be “on guard,” disrupted sleep patterns and poor sleep hygiene, a diminished ability to contribute productively at work, and a depreciated sense of
psychological safety. However, participants from this study suggested that the CIB mentality may signify an additional symptom of working-while-Black in predominantly White settings, as Black professionals may deem it easier and more acceptable to act aggressively and combatively towards their Black peers or subordinates than members of other groups, particularly those of the dominant majority. Surprisingly, this “dual victim-offender” (Whetstone, 2016) notion is not far-fetched as Porath and Pearson (2013) found that targets of workplace incivility showed increased tendencies to take out their suppressed frustrations and anger on unsuspecting customers in a similar fashion.

- I think, also, we both deal with the same pressure as Black folks in the same space and we can’t really express. . . . “Displaced” is a word for this – I can’t remember the exact word for it – but it’s like displaced anger, displaced aggression. You can’t aggress toward the object that is making you feel aggressive – that’s aggressing toward you – so you divert and sublimate that emotion to a safer object which wouldn’t be able to defend itself as well. So instead of lashing out at the White people who are making you feel like shit, you lash out at the other Black person who can’t defend themselves – who the White folks are going to be quite fine with you beating the shit out of each other because it’s entertainment for them. And it’s just like, “Oh, this is what you guys do.” I’m almost one hundred percent certain that if the same shit was going on and it’s either two White folks, or a White and Black person, that shit would never have gone on for as long as it was without it ever being addressed. (P.5)

**Enabling Conditions for Productive and Harmonious Working Relationships**

In a more positive light, and as an attempt to bridge theory and practice, interview participants also highlighted eight tried-and-tested enabling conditions that have proven helpful when trying to foster a more collaborative and productive relationships among Blacks in professional settings (see Figure 7). These generative factors are as follows:
Figure 7. A diagram illuminating the enabling factors for productive and harmonious relationships among Black professionals in the workplace.

- **Intentionally creating a sense of community.** Many participants declared how important it is for them to create, and partake in, a sense of camaraderie and community with fellow Black professionals (e.g., employee resource or support groups), especially in predominantly White settings where they might feel more marginalized and isolated (see Travis et al., 2016). This may be in the form of an employee resource or affinity group, or even a steering committee of sorts that provides resources and/or specialized programs specifically tailored to the needs of Black professionals and/or the Black community.

*Our Black Affinity Group, we meet once a month. It’s like me, mostly people from third, fourth, fifth, sixth – a variety of levels of seniority. We’ve thought about ways to support first-years. We’ve thought about ways to kind of just bring our group together. We’ve thought about ways to help ourselves out professionally. We had an opportunity to meet with the managing partner of the firm, and we strategized around what kind of questions were important to us, and I put together a list. It’s been a beautiful thing. We’ve done coffee breaks with all the first-years, where we had some relatively senior attorneys, in pairs, just meet with any of the first-years who wanted to go just talk about what they’re*
doing, answer questions about, “Hey, this partner’s doing this. What do you think?” And it’s been beautiful, man. It’s been phenomenal. They’re all really cool people. I don’t love all of them, but I don’t have to, and I don’t think all of them love me, which is probably a good thing. So, that’s been good. That’s been good. It’s been productive.

(P.11)

❖ Embracing each other’s humanity. Virtually every participant highlighted the collective significance of embracing each other’s humanity by mutually valuing and appreciating others as a human citizen and individual first and foremost, irrespective of one’s job title, credentials, background, ideology, personal accolades, and/or organizational tenure and rank.

You know, there was a way, man, we understood that we were different Blacks, if that makes sense. And it worked. It worked. So we weren’t, oh, you know – I remember he was from New Jersey, and I was from Brooklyn, you know, sort of different worlds, but he also was from the Bronx. We had different school experiences, but we were just like, “Yo, this is what it is. This is who we are,” and we made it work. So I felt like our connection wasn’t – interesting –, it wasn’t just on the Black thing. So there was that connection, but there was all these other ways that we saw the world, that we connected on. And even in the ways that we had different ways of seeing the world, it kind of worked. You know, I would never say, “No, man, that don’t work.” Or he would never say, “No.” He would just say, “Oh yeah, that’s your perspective,” and we kind of worked and learned from that. (P.12)

❖ Aspiring for excellence. Several participants vocalized the importance of holding themselves, and their Black colleagues, accountable to high standards of ethics, conduct and performance in the workplace.

That they gonna do right. You know, they’re gonna always look the part, and when I say look the part, meaning that they not trying to meet a White person’s expectation, but they’re gonna always show up in this space of being excellent and what it means to just be on the top of your game all the time. Like Muhammad Ali stature. Muhammad Ali could mix and mingle with any person on the face of the planet, so could Malcom X, but they were never apologetic about how they showed up. That’s what I like. That’s what Black excellence looks like to me and those are the kind of Black people that I like to be around. (P.8)

❖ Fostering a climate of honest feedback and communication. Numerous participants spoke to the necessity of fostering a climate of honest and candid feedback and communication when working with other Black professionals. This holds true for both positive and negative
feedback. Fascinatingly, some CIB targets even blamed themselves for prolonging the CIB mentality as they believed they could have curbed the competitive dynamic earlier if they had directly addressed or confronted the crab antics at their onset.

*I think for growth and development for myself – I feel like there’s much that I could have done in voicing directly to the person, “This is what I’m feeling right now. Is this the case? Or is this not the case? If it is the case, this is not okay.” You know what I mean? Or even having that conversation would make people be more reflective of their practice. Because I don’t feel like there’s this – I don’t feel like there’s this continuous motive for crab mentality. I think that people happen to fall into this theory, right? People happen to fall into this phenomenon at particular instances, and I, myself, could do the same thing. I feel like that if there’s any corrective experience that happens, it happens through people being aware that this is how things are playing out. And I have confidence in both of those two people, even though there might be personality clashes, that like if self-awareness happens – I think things would play out differently or people would go back to make corrective experiences happen for folks.* (P.2)

❖ **Adopting a more collectivist mindset.** Nearly every participant found it imperative that Black professionals adopt a more collectivist mindset when working together as a means to creating a more collaborative and collegial environment (as opposed to a competitive one). Ideally, this collectivist outlook would prompt individuals to feel safer and more comfortable acknowledging, supporting and promoting each other’s personal goals and ambitions.

*We had an even smaller cohort of Black professionals that worked good together there. And it was because we all showed up with a very team orientation, with an “If I succeed, you succeed” orientation. We are going to get this done by any means necessary. Like, we had a shared commitment and a shared responsibility, a shared definition of success. It was all of these things. And it was like I have your back no matter what. Even if you’re wrong, we’re going to talk about it offline. But we know that, publicly, we have a shared face. We have a shared feeling of unity. And it’s understood that when we show up, we’re showing out. And we are going to do our best work. And we’re going to praise each other for it. And we’re going to be proud of each other for it. It was very public. It was very private. But it was very family oriented. And I remember thriving in that environment. I mean, literally, doing more than I thought I could possibly do because the people who were around me were like creating a holding environment that was positive, that was meant for all of us to feel and to do really great work.* (P.9)

❖ **Making time to discuss the larger organization.** Numerous participants emphasized
how critical it is to discuss the larger organization, and its various challenges, with their Black colleagues as a source of both institutional and informational support, particularly when working in a (racially) hostile work environment.

\[I \text{ think having a space to have talks about the larger organization because, even in [my old supervisor’s] position, I think she was definitely a pawn in a larger game, and I think that we knew that on some levels, but just the weird ways things played out. So I think having a space to talk about the organization you work in – because even if the organization’s pushing for an initiative, especially in that work environment where we were faced with such negative messaging about the Black community all the time and working hard to repurpose it and put it out there, I think it’s important to have a space in the interim until the organization gets where it thinks it’s going or where it is.} (P.13)\]

❖ **Finding comfort with self.** Many participants advised that Black professionals should strive to find comfort with themselves, their talents and their shortcomings so that they will be better suited to be an asset, and not a liability, to others.

\[I’m \text{ also struck by – there seems to be a recurring theme in [this] story just around finding contentment and security within your own talents, gifts, treasures, that allows you to kind of regulate any potential negative feelings, dynamics or things that may be occurring, in a more productive fashion as opposed to one that’s maybe more disruptive.} (P.6)\]

❖ **Mobilizing around a common cause.** The majority of participants endorsed the necessity of mobilizing and uniting individuals around a common cause or superordinate goal (e.g., a passion or vested interest), especially as it relates to matters of philanthropy and/or social justice and activism that are moving and heartfelt.

\[Once \text{ you get people aligned back to a mission and the reason for why they came into this work, people – it’s like a lightbulb effect, if you will. It’s like, “Oh my gosh, I remember.” You know what I mean? It’s like Simba remembering that he needs to go back to Pride Rock, whatever it’s called. And Rafiki helped him to understand, asked the right questions, and it’s like, “Let’s get back to where we’re supposed to be.” And people are on-board when there’s something that they can believe in. People are on-board where you challenge them and say, “Hey, we’re doing a lot of stuff that’s stupid and that doesn’t really matter, and doesn’t help kids. Let’s do this thing because it’s more on target with why we came here.”} (P.2)\]
Discussion

This paper began by discussing how the competitive dynamics that are prevalent within (and not between) various racioethnic groups had long been ignored in the mainstream organizational literature. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by contributing to our understanding of the competitive dynamics that can manifest among Blacks in professional settings, particularly as it relates to the hierarchical relationships between Black superiors and subordinates (the DCM) as well as between Black colleagues or peers (the HCM). More specifically, by being the first to officially employ a grounded theory approach on this topic, this study expanded on the findings of previous research on the CIB mentality among Black professionals (viz., Miller, 2016) by offering the most comprehensive and detailed accounts of the behaviors (crab antics), adverse reactions and accompanying coping strategies associated with the phenomenon in professional settings to date.

Moreover, by shining a more luminous and extensive light on the psychosocial underpinnings of the CIB mentality, this study aspired to challenge the pathology-ridden narrative of transgenerational trauma that previously permeated our understanding of this competitive dynamic by perpetually painting the Black community with a broad brush of collective competitiveness, resentment and discord. Furthermore, although admittedly outside the scope of this study, Miller (2016) found evidence to substantiate the cross-racial and cross-cultural significance of the CIB phenomenon. Thus, the circumstantial or situational explanations of this phenomenon appear paramount to other alternative explanations that mainly focus on the intrapsychic and psychodynamic processes of a group and/or individual and, quite frankly, appear to only address a small fraction of the holistic phenomenological picture. This sentiment is perhaps more eloquently captured by this study participant:
I don’t think this is a Black dichotomy, and while pointed in the feedback, I think it’s a lived experience amongst any group of people that are looking for forward movement or progression, and don’t see that there are a plethora of opportunities, and access is quite limited. So I don’t think this is a “Blackism,” if you will. . . . So if you’re talking about a family or group of people that are looking to transcend either through education, through whatever mechanism, mode, or means looking to move beyond their current socioeconomic status, I think this speaks to that type of mobility. And I don’t think Blackness is really rooted in an experience like that. (P.10)

Nevertheless, my intent is not (and never was) to discount and/or diminish the role that chattel slavery and perpetuated forms of institutional racism has had on the minds, bodies, souls and legacies of Blacks throughout America’s history but to, instead, position it in its rightful place. As Lewin’s (1936) principle of contemporaneity contends that past experiences can only be deemed influential if a person is presently aware of them, one’s awareness and knowledge of the past as it ostensibly relates to their present behavior is of more importance than the actual happenings or events that transpired hitherto. Thus, in subscribing to this notion, it appears that the CIB mentality for Blacks would signify more of a re-traumatizing experience that resembles or reenacts conscious experiences or narratives of yore (e.g., slavery and the Willie Lynch doctrines) as opposed to representing an actual post-traumatic behavior itself. This supports the thinking of family theorists who have found that parents with personal trauma history may continue the “legacy of trauma” by engaging their children in scenarios that are conceptually reminiscent of their own trauma (see Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973); hence, these second-hand traumatic experiences are influenced more by the reenactment of the past as opposed to the past itself (see Bowen, 1972; Friedman, 1991).

**Limitations and Future Directions for Research**

Despite its noteworthy contributions, this study is not without its limitations. For one, as a majority of the collected data came from targets of the CIB mentality, the revelations gleaned from participant interviews are heavily biased and speculative and do not account for the
perspectives or “truths” of the actual CIB perpetrators themselves. This raises validity concerns
associated with retrospective data collection from the study’s participants as the accuracy of their
accounts may have been compromised because of critical incident bias and/or fundamental
attribution error. Moreover, as many of the participants were either one or two degrees of
separation from the interviewer, social desirability concerns may have been amplified more than
usual, especially when considering the seemingly taboo and sensitive nature of the topic already.
Future studies could enhance the validity of these accounts by employing a more randomized
sampling technique, using real-time data collection methods, and ensuring that the lived
experiences of both the CIB perpetrators and targets are considered in data analysis and
subsequent theory development.

Moreover, as a number of personality variables have been linked to increased comparison
concerns and competitiveness for individuals, including one’s social comparison orientation
(Gibbons & Buunk, 1999) and goal orientation (Darnon, Domnier, & Poortvliet, 2012;
Poortvliet, Janssen, Van Yperen, & Van de Vliert, 2007, 2009), future research should pay more
attention to which personality dimensions and motivational underpinnings are most critical
among CIB perpetrators in professional settings. Also, as Foulk, Lanaj, Tu, Erez, and
Archambeau (in press) found that power-tripping behavior and perceived incivility can have
detrimental effects on an abusive leader’s subsequent well-being, future studies on the CIB
mentality should also investigate the consequences, negative or positive, that such behavior may
have on the well-being of its perpetrators—not just its targets.

Additionally, as the determination of an adequate sample size for a qualitative study can
be influenced by myriad factors (Thomson, 2011; see also Creswell, 2013; Guest et al., 2006),
this study could have benefitted from obtaining a larger sample size to provide a more complete
understanding of the CIB mentality, particularly as it relates to Black subordinates’ behaviors towards Black superiors (i.e., the “upward crab mentality”). Future research in this area should aim to fill this gap. Moreover, as every participant in this study came from a White-collar profession and/or industry, this study’s findings might not be generalizable to populations of Blacks who work in blue-collar or manual labor professions. Therefore, future research in this area should also make a conscious effort to incorporate perspectives from those sectors of the Black populace as well to assess any similarities and/or dissimilarities that might exist between them with respect to the CIB phenomenon. Relatedly, as a majority of the participant pool represented the business and education industries, future research should aim to assess how the CIB mentality manifests in other White-collar industries like the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

Furthermore, as this study solely investigated the CIB mentality’s influence on Black professionals within the United States context, future studies should aim to transcend this cultural-centric view by investigating how the phenomenon operates in other cultures and populations around the globe in order to give additional credence to its cross-cultural pervasiveness. Also, in agreement with Miller (2016), future avenues of research in this area should place an increased focus on how the CIB phenomenon compares to, and is distinguishable from, conceptually similar phenomena such as the Queen Bee Syndrome (Staines et al., 1974; see also Ellemers et al., 2004), the black sheep effect (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988; see also Abrams, Palmer, Rutland, Cameron, & Van de Vyver, 2014; Lewis & Sherman, 2010; Pinto, Marques, Levine, & Abrams, 2010), malicious envy (Bedeian, 1995; Van de Ven, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2009), petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), and the Tall Poppy Syndrome (Ely, 1984; Feather, 1989; Mitchell, 1984; Peeters, 2003, 2004).
Lastly, although gender dynamics in the CIB mentality appeared to be consistent with social comparison and competition research (i.e., men vs. men; women vs. women) except for cases where gender became a salient social category fault line (e.g., a token woman in a male-dominated group), two male participants in the education industry did speak to a theme of being viewed from a “deficit” perspective by older, Black women superiors and colleagues. After inquiring about this notion further, this deficit perspective appeared to essentially resemble behaviors described in the “patronizing and condescending” category of crab antics.

- I think it comes from the end of the supervisor having to supervise a Black man – again this is my opinion – a Black man who doesn’t fit the stereotype of needing a lot of supervision, if you will. That’s different because people have perception – I think people have strong perceptions of Black men in these spaces. I think they also have a definite, deficit perception of Black men and their ability to be successful and really going against the dominant stereotypes that exist out there. People have that perception of Black male teachers: that while they relate to kids, they’re not incredibly effective. But when you get in this space where you’re supervising somebody who is a Black male who defies your understanding of how they operate, it makes it a weird space to figure out, “How can you manage this person really, really well?” You know what I mean? This is new. Somebody who has unrestrained ambition, how do you fit that within your expectations for the organization? You know what I mean? How do you manage that person? How do you get that person to hone all of their energy into your vision? You know what I mean? What happens if there’s a vision that clashes, like to what extent will they stop? You know what I mean? (P.2)

- But what I do see with her is that she treats Black males differently, especially younger Black males, differently than she treats other groups. She’s currently getting a PhD in counseling, and she’s focusing on minority males. But I think she works with a deficit approach to what we’re working with. We come in, especially males, minority males come in with some kind of need for extra support on the sole consequence of our race, and that pisses me off. Granted, historical shit happened, structural stuff, all these things are real. I’m working in urban education for a reason. But you can’t come off as like, “All I care about is supporting Black males,” when you start your concern from Black males are starting at a deficit that I need to support them with. So I see the way that she interacts with her Black male students. It’s very patronizing. It’s patronizing. (P.3)

Thus, future research efforts should aim to illuminate the prevalence and various motivational and situational underpinnings of this deficit perspective as it relates to Black men and women in professional settings (e.g., Is this perspective specific to, or more prevalent in, the
education industry compared to other industries?; Does age play as significant a role in the emergence of this perspective as personal anecdotes suggest, or is it more of a gender dynamic?).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study sheds light not just on the happenings that occur as a result of the “crabs” being in the barrel but also on how the “crabs” (in this case, Black professionals) actually end up in the metaphorical barrel in the first place. Thus, as this study’s findings show that the DCM exemplifies the “heavy is the head that wears the crown” idiom while the HCM exemplifies a more “survival of the fittest” attitude, one must be leery of alternative explanations of the CIB mentality that do not take into account the circumstantial or situational keystones of this phenomenon. Moreover, as this study aspires to offer a more nuanced perspective into the CIB mentality’s influence on Blacks in professional settings, it is important to note that much of the phenomenon’s occurrence—whether for Black superiors in the DCM or Black colleagues in the HCM—appears to stem from the stresses, inconveniences and anxieties associated with operating, living and working within a dominant White hegemonic culture. Therefore, whether you have been the gnawing “crab” yourself or are now serving as the unfortunate target of, or witness to, this deleterious behavior, it is vital that we keep the words of Abbe Smith (2005) in mind before reacting and passing judgment: “It is the rare perpetrator who has not also suffered” (p. 369).
References


*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*(3), 467-482.
Appendix A

Interview Questions

**Question 1**

What is your initial reaction to this statement?

**Question 2**

Can you describe a time when you have experienced antagonism from other Blacks in your professional life? What was that experience like for you? How did that experience make you feel?

**Question 3**

What do you think were some of the motivating factors behind this antagonistic behavior (towards you)?

**Question 4**

How did you decide to handle this situation/person?

**Question 5**

How do you think this negative experience has influenced your expectations of working with Blacks today?

**Question 6**

Generally, what are your expectations of Blacks when working with them in professional settings (if any)?

**Question 7**

Would you say that you typically feel or experience more competition between yourself and other Blacks than other racial groups? If so, why do you think that is?

**Question 8**

Would you say that the competition/antagonism you experience from other Blacks is any way different than the competition you experience from other racial groups? How so?

**Question 9**

Was there ever a time when you’ve felt that you were the “antagonist” in the story? If so, what do you think contributed to you acting that way?

**Question 10**

So we’ve talked a lot about the ‘darker, shadowy’ sides of working with other Blacks but I’m also interested in how Blacks can work together in a collaborative and united fashion. Can you tell me about a time when you’ve had a positive working relationship with other Blacks in a professional setting? What do you think were some of the factors that contributed to that more collaborative relationship?
Appendix B
Interview Opening Prompt
(adopted from DeGruy, 2005, p. 161)

There is an old saying among African Americans that when someone Black tries to pull themselves up in the world, ‘like crabs in a barrel’ another Black person always reaches up to pull them back down. How often has the most unbearable antagonist at the job, at school, on the committee, in the church or mosque been another Black person? No doubt fools and idiots come in all shapes, sizes and colors – and African Americans certainly have no shortage of them. However, there seems to be an uncanny tendency amongst many Blacks to orchestrate and plot the demise of other Blacks, sometimes even friends and relatives. It is as though the achievements of family and friends, colleagues and acquaintances are seen as a threat or an affront.

Joy DeGruy
Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (2005)
## Appendix C

### Downward Crab Mentality Behaviors (Crab Antics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crab Behavior/Antic</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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| Shows defensiveness to feedback or help from others                                | ➢ When I would try and engage in feedback in a helpful way, one response I got is, “When I want your advice I’ll ask for it.” (P.13)aleur  
➢ [My senior colleague] tried to be helpful to her in the same way she was helpful to [our old supervisor], but [the new supervisor] very much wanted to enforce it, like, “She’s this position. She has it down. When she wants advice, she’ll ask for it.” So we couldn’t [really help]. (P.13) |
| Leads with an “iron fist” via intimidation tactics and coercion (Ego- or Power-Tripping) | ➢ We had a well-established culture and relationship with our clients and what we provided, and she didn’t take the time to learn that and just came in and really tried to implement her new agenda, and that was met with severe backlash and a lot of things that went down on the team. (P.13)  
➢ We were having a conversation in her office, and she stood up and she threw her papers at me. And [hits table with hand] did like that. “Did you see that?!” I was like, “What’s going on here? Because I don’t know what’s going on. Why are you so upset? Why are you so angry?” “I’m not angry!” she said. “Well, I’m looking at your body language, and I’m hearing your voice elevate, and you’re hitting on the desk, doing this,” and she was like, “Well, maybe you’re just reading things wrong.” “No, no. I’m seeing, I’m hearing, and I’m feeling uncomfortable.” (P.14)  
➢ So I was opening the library, turning on the computers and starting up the computers at the circulation desk and he said “Ms. [redacted] I need the paper.” And so I finished doing what I was doing and then got ready to go and I didn’t stop what I was doing then because I couldn’t. I had to finish doing what I was doing because, say within the next 10 to 15 minutes, the students start rolling in so you gotta be ready. So, I finally got through and got the key and went on out there and he came walking straight behind me. So, I’m walking and I’m like, “I know he’s not going out here behind me to the mailbox when he could’ve gotten the key and went out here already.” So, he followed me all the way out to the mailbox. I unlocked and opened the door and got the paper out. Then he’s gonna put his hand down for me to hand him the paper. So I went on and gave him the paper and locked the thing back and went on back to work. . . . I think it was just because he had authority over me and could do it. Just starting off your day and there wasn’t a reason to do it, but because he had authority over you he could do it and he could get away with it. (P.15) |
| Exploits subordinates’ work or competence for personal gain                         | ➢ On the training floor. I feel like the relationship I can build really quickly on the floor, and there would be moments where she just wouldn’t be prepared, so she’d click through the slides or finish, and they’re – you know? So I feel like – and I would try so much to be supportive or weave into her. . . . So I felt like I really hard to support her, but I’m sure in those moments, she could feel, as I’m filling in for sections she didn’t cover as I’m talking, some kind of a frustration because she always wanted to hang out and drink at night, but I needed to hang out and study at night because I need to be ready for your parts and my parts. (P.13)  
➢ I was her face for the whole entire department because no one knew her because she wasn’t a person that went out of her way to make herself known so people would know that she was the Director. So when people called the office, they would never call and ask for her. They would ask for me because they didn’t know her. They knew that there was a Director, but she was one of those people that was undercover. She was quiet about
it. She was behind the scenes. I don’t know if that was her orientation, that she was used to being behind the scenes, so she would never go out and venture out. So she would say, “Well, [redacted], you’ll take care of it.” So I was the face for – whatever department here, whatever department I had to interface with, they only knew me. That also made her angry, but she created that. . . . So I didn’t try to take on her job, but I was the face for her. In one way, she liked that part, but the backlash was everybody would come to me and wouldn’t go up to her. (P.14)

Falsifies or exaggerates performance evaluations

- We wound up having to go to arbitration, she tried to give me an unsatisfactory rating, and she never came to my classroom the rest of the year. She did all of these types of things and none of her claims were substantiated. She said I didn’t wanna do professional development when everybody knows that I’ve done every professional development, $750.00 here, $800.00 there, $1,000.00 for this one. And I pay for that stuff out of my own pocket. And I brought all of the receipts in there so the arbitrator said, “Well, how do you explain all of these things and why are all of the emails coming from Ms. [redacted] to your staff if you’re the principal but you say she’s a bad teacher? How do you explain that?” Her response was, “Let’s move on. I don’t wanna talk about this.” (P.8)

- He would lie on your evaluation. He would exaggerate. You might be talking to a student in the computer room to explain something, or if they saw you in the hallway and asked you something you might stop for a minute and be talking to them about something and telling them where they need to go for this or something related to what they were doing or whatever. And he would say you were socializing in the hall. Or if you went to the bathroom and while coming back a student may stop you or ask you a question – you’re socializing in the hall or something. But he would put stuff like that because he couldn’t say you didn’t do your job so he would try to find something negative to put on your evaluation. He would just make up stuff. He would just straight out lie and put all this stuff on your evaluation that wasn’t true. (P.15)

Expresses or shows favoritism and double standard towards a select few

- Mr. [redacted] could do no wrong. He was a Filipino male. We had a lot of – they had some kind of Filipino exchange program there. And she treated that group differently. We had a couple of Caucasian females – like they were specialist teachers – like a dance teacher and stuff like that, arts teacher. She was very [hands in air] ka-keeing with them as if they were on a very familiar tip. But as soon as she would talk to one of us, her tone would change. That familiarity would go away. And, again, it was based on your in-group/out-group. But it was never quite as lighthearted and bubbly as it was with them. (P.9)

- I’ve seen her with other people who she didn’t have a problem with that was doing the same thing I was, but they weren’t Black. She didn’t have a problem with that, but when she saw me, it was a problem. (P.14)

Displays a reluctance to show appreciation or provide positive feedback to subordinates

- [Positive feedback] would be very limited, very – the great job would only happen if there was an audience because it pointed back to her. That was a consistent theme for her. It needed to point back to her, or else you weren’t getting it. (P.9)

- She never gave me a compliment no matter how much work I did; no matter how much I made her look good. (P.14)
Intentionally decreases morale or causes angst

➢ I knew who he was. I knew that he was a person – he was like Satan walking on earth. If I ever saw Satan walking on earth it was him because he didn’t like for – for some reason he seemed like he did not like for us to get along or have peace. He seemed like he was more happy when there was tension between the librarians. . . . I think he instigated. I think he did. I think he liked to say stuff and if we seemed like we were – if we would say something and we would laugh and were getting along, he would come out and say something to one of us – to me or Ms. [redacted] or something – and just put a damper on it. (P.15)

➢ If it seemed like it was a good day and everybody was feeling pretty good or something, he seemed like he would find something to dampen it or bring you down or something. He just seemed like he just didn’t enjoy when people were happy. I guess he wasn’t happy it seemed like. (P.15)

Fails to take responsibility for actions and falsely blames or accuses others for mishaps or wrongdoing

➢ The Chief Operating Officer comes to me two days later and says that he was in a meeting with the CEO and Head of School about me. The CEO asked the Head of School, “So what is the plan for training and developing him into this new role for next year?” And she says, “Well, we have a snag in play. Apparently, he won’t be here to be able to do training for the summer because he’s going to some program at [redacted] and he won’t be able to be here.” At which point the CEO replies to her in frustration and rage, and is like, “Does he think he’s some type of prima donna? How can he ask for this position and then tell us he can’t be here to train for it? That’s like – what’s he trying to – are we at his disposal, or something like that?” And then she begins to walk down this conversation with him about whether or not this is the appropriate time for me to take this leadership position next year. So they’re having this discourse and the CEO finally turns to the Chief Operating Officer and asks him, “Hey, do you – like what are your thoughts on this?” And he says, “I’m appalled,” in terms of the Head of School, “that you would throw Mr. [redacted] under the bus like that. You knew back in January before you offered this position that he was planning to go to [redacted] to do this program, regardless of what was happening. He had big plans and you signed off on it. You have the dates in writing. Why are you throwing him under the bus as though you are completely surprised about this?” So she was asked to leave. (P.2)

➢ So the way that [the new supervisor] would try to blame us for something that didn’t happen and [my coworker] could show in the process where it broke down – they had a lot of back and forths. (P.13)
Appendix D

Horizontal Crab Mentality Behaviors (Crab Antics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crab Behavior/Antic</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to bully or intimidate others with their words and actions</td>
<td>She would get very angry and very aggressive. I felt like I was being bullied – legit – but I’m in grad school. Whatever. But that’s how the crabs in the barrel was before grad school – that’s what it felt like. It felt like I was being bullied by other kids – by Black kids. (P.5) &lt;br&gt; It would happen again, where he would – a lot of times is that he would raise his voice, he would raise his tone like he’s trying to scream at someone or trying to intimidate them. (P.12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiates and/or engages in gossip to instigate conflict or harm others’ reputation</td>
<td>For some reason, one of the employees that handled more of the financial side of things leaked information about how much I was making in comparison to my counterparts and then it became an issue where my counterparts were kind of like, “Oh, well, she’s only here two days a week but she’s making this amount but this but that but blah,” and it started to become this whole concern with other African American employees who felt that they had the same, if not, I guess they perceived it as being more, credentials. We’re working more et cetera. Literally comparing apples to oranges when I’m working two days a week on an hourly basis whereas they’re on a salary rate for the year. (P.1) &lt;br&gt; And then even when he finally left, about a year or two ago, and we got a new executive director, the executive director told me, he was like, “Yeah, I spoke to [redacted], and this guy said he hates you. He said just the way you work, the way you do things.” I said, “Yeah, I’ve heard it already.” And this was a new person, the executive director, who was becoming in charge of the organization. And I was like, “Yeah, that’s what he told you?” And he was another Black guy. (P.12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ignores and interrupts others for attention during conversation</td>
<td>Ignoring and interrupting were the main two, I think, when we were in shared spaces. . . . It didn’t really get to get much past feelings and just awkward energy when we were together when we were clearly able to easily talk with others next to us. I had to try and engage – because I did try once with each of them, but it didn’t feel like it went anywhere. (P.13) &lt;br&gt; I think a lot of times that Blacks will be jealous of other Blacks because some people want attention. Like the person I work with now, [redacted]. A lot of people might come up and start talking to me. She would find a way. It’s almost like “Oh, so-and-so” and she would come up and get involved and invite herself. Whereas if she’s talking to somebody, I just say “Hey” and keep moving. (P.15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engages in passive aggressive remarks and veiled criticism to insult others</td>
<td>Just extremely passive aggressive and it’s kind of like either you fall in line with the passive aggressiveness or you step out and it becomes this huge issue or you kind of try to divert it and it’s still there but you’re not really approaching it or you try to mention certain things in a polite manner but it’s still received by a passive aggressive front. So it’s like you’re still facing it in some capacity. (P.1) &lt;br&gt; So after I won the big – like the highly coveted dissertation fellowship, he would sort of make passive aggressive remarks about how much money I was bringing in. He just really seemed to be consumed with the amount of money that I had now that I had this big fellowship, and just really – but it was always passive aggressive, always passive aggressive. (P.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brings attention to others’ shortcomings or wrongdoings for personal gain (Tattling orThrowing Under Bus)</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>➢ When I came in the next day, I had a doctor’s appointment. . . . So I told my supervisor ahead of time that I needed to leave 15 minutes early. She already knew. At the end of the day, I signed out and I purposely walked by his desk and said, “Bye,” because I wanted him to see that I left. I didn’t even get to the elevator. My friend called me and said, “Do you know he got up and went to your supervisor and was like, ‘She just left. This and this and that.’” The main boss wasn’t there, so there was no reason for him to even do that. My supervisor looked at him and said, “Okay. I know that. Thank you.” Because they don’t like that, either. Our supervisors have a lot of – oh god, they come in half an hour, all kinds of times late. In their minds, if you can snitch on people who were your friends five minutes ago, you can snitch on us to get our position. (P.7)</td>
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<td>➢ Now, we’re peers because we have the same title. So we’re in the same meetings together. We’re in the same spaces together. And I’m realizing she’s throwing me under the bus in the meetings. . . . We’ll have a one on one conversation. It’s made to feel like it’s very platonic, and we’re just having this regular conversation. And then, we get into a different space, and it’s staged as, “I’m the lead on this idea. [redacted] and I have come into agreement on this thing.” And then, it will be something bigger than it is, or she’ll call me out as like, “Well, [redacted] is not quite finished on X, Y, or Z yet. But even though she’s not done that, I can –” really setting it up to make me look like I’m less than, or I’ve dropped the ball somehow, or she can’t move her work forward because I’ve dropped the ball somehow. And I’m like, “Wow, what just happened? How did we get to this place? Why would you –” (P.9)</td>
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<th>Acts “brand new” (differently) following a recent promotion or form of public recognition</th>
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<tr>
<td>➢ He got semi-promoted to supervisor assistant and once that happened, it was a lot of reporting everyone else. He started to step on a lot of toes for him to continue to climb the ranks. (P.7)</td>
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<td>➢ And that company was crazy. . . . He knew. He talked about it. He was there. We vented. He vented. It was like we know this company sucks. We know this company doesn’t care about us. We know this company is so grimy. We just have to get the money that – you know – get paid and don’t care. Then he got that promotion and it was like, “Hi. I’m with the company now and we’re the greatest in the world. They love you. They would never do anything like that to you.” It was a total 180 because I’m saying, “What happened to you?” It got to the point to where things that we would normally converse about and include him in, he can’t be a part of those conversations anymore because we don’t even – and people kept saying. “I don’t trust him. I don’t trust him.” For a while, they kept saying it, and I’m saying, “No, I don’t think that he would do that.” But I started to see that he might take a conversation that we have and go back to the boss. (P.7)</td>
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Appendix E

Mutually Shared Crab Behaviors (Mutually Shared Crab Antics)

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<tr>
<th>Crab Behavior/Antic</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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| Attempts to dissuade or curb others’ ambition           | ➢ We would even have meetings where she would tell me, “You’re doing too much. Don’t do this.” I’ll never forget. I’m in a meeting, and I made a suggestion. She pulled me to the side afterward. She said, “If you ever have a good idea, come and tell me first, because odds are, someone’s already done it.” And I had just made a suggestion at a meeting, and I remember thinking to myself, “That’s probably not accurate. Like somebody’s already done the idea?” And sure enough, the meeting I had that basically has launched my entire career, she tried to put me in some conference room two floors away with four chairs for eight vice presidents. (P.4)  
➢ I didn’t become combative until I was asked directly to not work as hard on something. When I was directly told, “Don’t do this or you’re going to make us look bad – you’re going to make me look bad,” I was like, “I have never in my life been asked to not do something because it’s going to make other people look bad. If me working hard makes you look bad, then you’re supposed to look bad because that’s what working hard...” Like, “Fuck you,” basically, “I’m not going to not...” But I did – I did do that and it hurt me, essentially, in a lot of ways. (P.5) |
| Excessively criticizes others’ work, ideas and/or performance (Nitpicky) | ➢ She went out of her way to just attack every single thing I did. (P.14)  
➢ But from day one it was – it wasn’t two days before she knew she didn’t like her. And from that point on she started trying to get rid of her. You know? She would critique every little thing she did. She was critical of everything she did. There wasn’t anything she could do right. (P.15) |
| Attempts to humiliate, shame or denigrate others publicly | ➢ The day she resigned, she went to my boss and said, “I’m quitting. I’m gonna do this.” She was super dramatic. I’m sure she thought about it for 15 years. She walks into his office, she tells him she’s quitting. It’s glass offices, so the entire floor saw it. She walks out head high, and she goes – she did that to the senior vice president – and she goes to the actual vice president who I report directly to. She tells him she’s quitting too, and she says loud enough so everyone can hear, “By the way, now you can give [redacted] my job!” So everyone heard that. (P.4)  
➢ Well, what was antagonistic to me wasn’t that one instance – it was pervasive. It was a constant denigration of my ideas in the classroom, in professional settings, in front of professors and teachers, in a very direct way where I couldn’t say anything back. (P.5)  
➢ And so at some point, he was a respondent for a panel that I was on. And I felt that he – all our advisors were there – and I felt that he intentionally tried to ask me a sort of difficult question to like embarrass me or to give me a difficult time, a hard time in this setting. (P.6) |
| Socially isolates and/or distances self from others (Social Exclusion or Coldness) | ➢ But the thing about Ms. [redacted] is that she didn’t talk to anybody. She wasn’t personable and she was cold. It was like she had a wall up. And because she had a wall up, a lot of the staff who were older than her and who had been in the building since the school opened up, they didn’t take to her either. (P.8)  
➢ Nothing ever really assertive or direct, but definitely, when you’re out the next day, and folks are kicking it, and you weren’t invited, you feel bad about it or whatever. You know, also, a lot of mutual friends, but never quite sitting with or talking to each other. (P.13) |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Engages in social scanning and/or posturing for competitive edge</th>
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<td>➢ When I look across my peers, I think there’s always been that tension of wanting to tease out, and not that I’ve experienced it directly, I see them doing it to other people, even, “What is your pedigree? Are you like me, or are you not?” As opposed to, “Your mere existence means you’re like me.” There are the qualifiers, and that frustrates me. . . . And even wanting to understand, “What are your affiliations? Who are you? From what family line?” And it just – before there is an investment or a door opened. (P.10)</td>
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<td>➢ I feel like – what made me feel insecure in those interactions was the few times we spoke, it was very much trying to get the rundown of your resume and what-you-do type conversations, the few times we did speak. And so for me, I had a genuine interest, and what I felt like on the other side was they were scanning for what would be the threat in my work story, if that makes any sense. I felt like it was more I was being interviewed as opposed to [building relationship]. (P.13)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Deliberately provides misinformation or withholds valuable information and resources from others (Unreliable)</th>
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<td>➢ Eventually we built a database that did a lot of stuff that she probably should’ve been doing. And at every turn – when I got done with the database, I wanted to present it to the attorneys. She put me in a conference room two floors away that’s this big [motions to surrounding small room] with no TV screen. (P.4)</td>
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<td>➢ She was very much involved in big projects, but you could never single out what she’d done, and that’s what we felt was happening and why she held the knowledge tight. So if she’s working with evaluation women on the grant, but we’re really writing the pieces of the grant, or she would tell the D.C. team she was with us, and she would tell us she was with them, and she was with neither – so things like that where it was like – and whenever you needed her to be accountable for a report or a deadline, she would not – and the work would fall on us. (P.13)</td>
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<td>➢ She told me that I’m supposed to have a six-month evaluation. I thought it was strange, but I went along with it because I’m like, “Okay, well, usually it’s like a year, but six months, okay, I don’t know, if you wanna do this then fine.” So she pulls me in, and she starts asking me questions about, at the position I am right now, if I were to elevate to the next level, what would be the next position? . . . And what I’ve come to find out is that evaluation shouldn’t have taken place then anyway. It was supposed to be a year, but she did it at six months, and she presented it to me as if it should have been done now. (P.14)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Communicates in a patronizing and condescending tone</th>
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<td>➢ Sometimes it was him just like sort of being abrasive, raising his voice. And I think he might have tried to do that to other people. But I was always the one who sort of challenged him on it. I was like, “Nah man, you’re not going to talk to me like that.” Or, “You’re not going to raise your voice to me like that.” . . . And I was like, “Yo man.” I was like, “If we’re having a conversation, we’re having a debate, you know, I think there are ways, your tone” – and he always felt like, “Tone? You know, you always being sensitive.” I was like, “I ain’t sensitive. But I’m telling you, if you talk to me that way, I’m going to talk to you a certain way, and then it’s not going to be productive.” So I was like, “It’s not about being sensitive.” So he would say things like, “You’re too sensitive.” I was like, “Just don’t talk to me that way.” (P.12)</td>
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<td>➢ She would wait until we were alone, and she would do stuff like, “You know I’m your boss, right?” . . . She wanted to exert her authority in some kinda way to make me feel like, “Well, I’m better than you,” as opposed to saying, “Well, you’re such a competent person,” or whatever. (P.14)</td>
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### Appendix F

**Adverse Reactions of the Downward Crab Mentality**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Adverse Reaction</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decreased morale and motivation</strong></td>
<td>❑ You can be abusive verbally without ever using a curse word, it’s the way, it’s your tone, it’s your actions, it’s your mannerism, it’s your body language. All of that contributed to me feeling every day like, “God, I can’t believe I gotta go to this job today.” (P.14)</td>
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<td>❑ I hated to go to work. (P.15)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Increased stress and stress-related illnesses and physical changes</strong></td>
<td>❑ I’m telling you the environment was very toxic because of the stress. So if it was just – you ain’t gonna tell me that you gonna get that many people inside of a building this bad in a school. It just don’t happen like that. . . . My hair started turning gray and everything. I’m like, “Nuh-uh.” I had to do some inventory and look at myself and be like, “What the hell? This ain’t me.” (P.8)</td>
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<td>❑ There would be moments where she just wouldn’t be prepared, so she’d click through the slides or finish, and they’re – you know? So I feel like – and I would try so much to be supportive or weave into her. I’d try hard, and I, at least to the best of my knowledge, cut off the animosity during trainings because I would never do that to participants who have – I would suck it up for them so much that I would get sick after the trainings. (P.13)</td>
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<td>❑ So if you have to get to the point where you are building up in your mind already how you have to deal with somebody long before you come to them, then they’re creating a certain environment that’s causing me to have some type of anxiety, where on Sunday night, my stomach is already in knots because Monday morning I know what’s getting ready to go down when I come to work. (P.14)</td>
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<td><strong>Over-worked and over-extended (Fatigue)</strong></td>
<td>❑ She got rid of what she experienced as the problem, and then was trying to have a conversation with me where I felt like she was a little bit smug, and it rubbed me the wrong way because what I was thinking is, “You should just finish the job. Just get rid of the whole team if you want a fresh start because I’m getting everyone’s e-mails and phone calls. Everyone’s work is coming to me, and I haven’t been able to lean on you yet, so I am not sure that I am gonna be able to lean on you.” So that’s when the beginning of our end started. (P.13)</td>
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<td>❑ I’m very competent with what I did and was doing her work to a large degree, which I didn’t really know for a while that I was doing her work until I found out because I had to really – I saw what my job description was, but she was piling things constantly on top of me. (P.14)</td>
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<td><strong>Perceived loss of voice, agency, and/or psychological safety</strong></td>
<td>❑ I didn’t leave the school until 2013. So we went through this back and forth, this legal stuff, all the way back and forth. And I told her – and I didn’t speak to her either. So on October the 12th, from October the 12th, 2011 till I left in 2013 we didn’t utter one word to each other. Well, she said stuff to me; I wouldn’t speak to her. I wouldn’t say good morning, I wouldn’t look at her. I wouldn’t have anything to do with her because I didn’t trust her. And I said, “If you wanna have a conversation with me it needs to be in writing only.” Everything has to be in writing because I didn’t trust what she did because she felt that she had been wronged and she felt that it was my duty to not have any kind of integrity. (P.8)</td>
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<td>❑ The thing is, she was very secretive, but she wasn’t very secretive or tactful in how publicly negative she was. So in meetings, seeing the way she would treat [my colleague], who was someone we respected and trained with and worked with – seeing the way she would shut [my other co-worker] down, seeing the way she forced the new topic – it wasn’t quite a – there was never a, “What’s your plan for the team?” or, “What are we gonna—,” any of that team building. So the way she came in guns blazing is what started to shut me down. (P.13)</td>
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Appendix G

Adverse Reactions of the Horizontal Crab Mentality

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<th>Adverse Reaction</th>
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<td>Internal pull or impulse to explain self or “fix” the situation</td>
<td>I just wanted to explain myself and where I came from but I knew if I did, it was something that was greater than just me explaining. It would turn into this whole, “Oh, you shared this information but then you — Now I don’t trust you.” . . . but I decided not to have a conversation because of all of the other variables that would come into play. (P.1)</td>
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## Appendix H

### Mutually Shared Adverse Reactions

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<tr>
<th>Adverse Reaction</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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| **Anger and frustration**              | ❑ It gets frustrating because you wanna maintain a perspective that we can organize, we can commune and work through these things but when you just − so many times, it just happens so frequently. So I’m like, “Okay, next case.” I remind myself like, “Let me just focus on this and not think of,” but sometimes I find myself murmuring, I understand why Black people can’t organize. I understand why. I get frustrated. You can get frustrated. (P.1)  
❑ Like I said, I’m not a confrontational person, especially when it comes to work, so I laugh it off; whatever whatever − I’m getting used to this team, I’m getting used to this woman. But when she criticized my work, and then I was like, “We’re a team. At the end of the day, we’re a team. And if you think I did something poorly, you should tell me about it, because all I wanna do is get better. I’m new to this. I’ve never done operations before. You’ve been here a year longer than I have. Help a brother out,” essentially. And for you to just sit there and laugh at it, that shit pissed me the fuck off. (P.3) |
| **Confusion and bewilderment**         | ❑ So I always felt there was this anger toward me. And I respected the dude highly, man, so I always felt like, “What the hell is going on? Why are you always making comments about what I do or how I do it?” It was always like these little micro − these little slights, like, “Dude you ain’t dressing right. You didn’t enunciate that right.” And it was a lot of those. . . . So it was really difficult. Because in some ways, the person did help you at times, and then there were these other ways where you were like, “Damn, this dude is − the motherfucker is really looking down on me in some ways.” (P.12)  
❑ I kept questioning myself after a while, “Am I doing something? Am I antagonizing her? Did I say something at one point, and maybe she misinterpreted it? Did I disrespect her?” It started make me start questioning, and, like I said, it didn’t start out like that, but over a period of time, I started questioning me about, “Am I doing something to contribute?” Because I always say I always believe that it takes two people to create a situation. (P.14) |
| **Denial and/or rationalization of the situation or incident** | ❑ I don’t want everyone to believe that I would pull down my own brother and sister just because − or anyone else would be doing that to me. So even when I think of other people that I might have had issues with, I never think that they’re doing it because I’m another Black person, and they don’t want to see me succeed. But then when I thought about it even, I said, okay, maybe there were times where they might have been doing that. But I still just don’t want to believe that it’s possible. That it’s possible that we would want to pull − bring each other down or see each other fail. Because from my perspective, I just feel like I always want to see every Black person succeed. (P.12)  
❑ Was he trying to make me look bad? I don’t know. I don’t know. It just really, never really made sense to me, how often he did it. It just − because sometimes it really − you know, and then I would think not many people realized it, and it was just me. So I would just say, “Alright, [redacted], you’re just taking these things a little bit too personal.” And then afterwards, when people said, “Yeah, we always saw that. We always saw how he treated you and the things he said to you.” So I found that interesting. (P.12)  
❑ I was, at first, in denial that it was even taking place. (P.14) |
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<th>Hurt, sadness and disappointment</th>
<th>It did make me feel bad. It made me feel bad because he was someone that I was cool with. If it was someone that I didn’t really have that relationship with, then I wouldn’t have liked it but it wouldn’t have hit the same way. It really surprised me that he would do that. Then it just, you know, just goes to show that people just do things. It just taught me a lesson. But the fact that we were all cool, it did bother me. It bothered me. (P.7)</th>
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<td>Resentment. And hurt. You know, you just really feel hurt when you know that you ride with people. I sat on this woman’s C30 so that she could get appointed to the principalship. And she made sure that I got other people and asked other people to sit on her C30. People that would be in her favor. So, anyway, that’s water under our bridge, but it still makes me upset when I think about it. (P.8)</td>
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<td>But the part that is very difficult for me to tolerate is the fact that, of all of the people in this organization, I’m going to have your back in ways that nobody else will. And you are still willing to throw me under the bus. (P.9)</td>
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<td>Disrespected and unappreciated</td>
<td>It just really felt, at some level, disrespectful. Like the person had no respect for me. But also, it really felt like it was always making me feel like I was – trying to make me feel less than. That’s my sense. So he was always trying to make me feel like I was less than everyone else. That’s the sense I always got from him. (P.12)</td>
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<td>You feel unappreciated. You feel abused and disrespected. (P.15)</td>
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<td>Isolation and distrust</td>
<td>And it’s just really unfortunate because it doesn’t have to be that way. We, together, could be an incredibly powerful combination in this organization. And yet, I can’t trust her to have my best interests in mind nor trust her to have our collective best interests in mind. And that’s infuriating to me because, at the end of the day, I should be able to rely on her having my back even more than – and in this case, I had a person who doesn’t look like me and who actually understands who I am as a human being have my back. So what’s your problem? I’m giving you no reason not to have my back. (P.9)</td>
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<td>So, every day I had to drive for an hour, get there and mostly all day we didn’t say nothing – no more than to the students or whatever. It was the kind of environment that I was in the middle of the two professional librarians because they would be arguing back and forth and I had to try to keep peace with them but then, at the same time, we really didn’t talk. We would say a few words, whatever we had to say related to work. And you would sit there pretty much all day because he seemed like he was happy when we weren’t talking or we weren’t getting along or there was some kind of tension or whatever. So, most of the time we just didn’t say anything to each other – no more than just work related. You just sit there at the computer and speak to the students, help them do what they got to do and that was it. (P.15)</td>
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### Appendix I

Coping Strategies of the Downward Crab Mentality

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<tr>
<th>Coping Strategy</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>Prayer and meditation</td>
<td>❖ I had to pray every day, all day that I wouldn’t say something or do something that would let him get me to the point where I would do something to get fired – because at the time I was the only one who had insurance for the family. (P.15)</td>
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<td>Voluntarily exiting or departing from team, department or organization</td>
<td>❖ The day that I resigned was the day of victory for me because it was like, “Yes, this.” And the messaging that I had sent to the principal was, “Hey, to be clear, yes there’s opportunities at other places. I’m leaving because I can’t work with her. I’m leaving because I can’t function and be successful in a space where – where there’s this toxic relationship there, and there’s this toxic way of going about communicating, this toxic way of going about collaborating, if that can even be called collaboration.” And I told her. I said, “This is why I’m leaving the organization.” (P.2)  &lt;br&gt;❖ So our relationship with her affected all of our careers such that a lot of the team was fired, and I was the last one, and that’s actually why I left to come to grad school. (P.13)  &lt;br&gt;❖ I waited and when Ms. [redacted] got there I applied for a job and I got her to give me a reference because she was over me in a sense. And so when I got ready to leave I just went in and told Mr. [redacted] and Dr. [redacted]. I gave my two weeks’ notice. Of course they were shocked because they knew neither one of them had to give me a reference and he thought “Ain’t no way she can go nowhere because I ain’t gonna…” If I had gone to him he definitely wouldn’t have given me a reference because he wasn’t gonna – that would’ve been just doing something nice. (P.15)</td>
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# Appendix J

Mutually Shared Coping Strategies

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<th>Coping Strategy</th>
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| Third-party involvement (Mediation or Arbitration) | ❖ I remember the first year, we had mediation by another colleague. ...A woman, Latina woman. ...So she saw this, and she was like, “Yeah, man, let’s try to figure this out. Let’s see how we could come together.” But the shit still continued. (P.12)  
❖ I’m trying to go with the flow, but I realize that this woman is really trying to hurt me in a way that was to the point that I had to take her to human resources administration not once, not twice, but three times in seven years to let her know that, first of all, I’m an employee, and as an employee, I have rights, and you are violating most of them. (P.14) |
| Combatting with positivity and kindness (Brown-nosing) | ❖ So although the situation wasn’t necessarily handled, based on my interactions with the employees and when I’m able to speak to them and see how they’re doing, see if they’re okay or if something happened, I don’t know, explain or apologize or whatever for little things that may occur in the office. Like, “Oh, I missed – I got here ten minutes late. I’m sorry.” Let them know that I am here to help and I don’t wanna hurt them, I feel like we’re able to slowly look past those things by building that sense of camaraderie around what actually needs to get done and showing that I’m not here to hurt you. I’m here to help all of us. (P.1)  
❖ I was also trying to maintain a very positive front in front of our training group so that no one senses what’s going on. I think at first it was very fake. I think she thought I enjoyed her company a lot because I just had to keep my job safe and was doing what I had to do. (P.13) |
| Confronting head on | ❖ And I think after the third ask of some sort, I said, “Okay, what are you really trying to get at? Like, okay. So I’m born and raised in Spanish Harlem, I live in Harlem Central.”. ..I cut to the chase. “You’re trying to tease out – you’re asking what schools did I go to, you’re asking what church am I a member of. Okay, now what? You don’t know anything more about me. To what end?” (P.10)  
❖ “I’m not angry!” she said. “Well, I’m looking at your body language, and I’m hearing your voice elevate, and you’re hitting on the desk, doing this,” and she was like, “Well, maybe you’re just reading things wrong.” “No, no. I’m seeing, I’m hearing, and I’m feeling uncomfortable.” I would tell her stuff like that so she would know that she was going too far, and sometimes, she would stand there, and she would look at me like, “Maybe I did go too far,” and then you would see her back up. Then, she would try to change, but see, the cat’s out of the bag now. You’ve already done that. I’ve already seen that. You can’t come back now from where you’ve just been. (P.14)  
❖ I knew that no matter what he said and how much maybe he tried to misuse his authority and try to abuse us, I knew he couldn’t say that I didn’t do my job. That’s one thing I knew he couldn’t say and that’s why, when he went and wrote that in my evaluation, I could go in there and say “No. That’s not in there because you know that’s not the truth.” And he had no choice. And we’d be sitting there looking at each other because I wasn’t going to sign the paper. So, either he would take it off or the paper wouldn’t be signed. (P.15) |
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<th>Distancing oneself from the perpetrator and/or situation</th>
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<td>❖ I mean, at some point – to be honest – at some point I just started moving around her. So my way of minimizing frustration, mitigating this whole interaction was to work around her. So I just reported directly to the principal and of course that was problematic because she felt like she was looped out of the conversation. (P.2)</td>
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<td>❖ My personality is one in which I don’t have a lot of patience for passive aggressiveness or people who are in competition with me when I’m not in competition with them. And so my strategy then would either be if I don’t feel like it’s wise for me to go speak to that person, I just won’t deal with them. And I’ll surround myself with people who are – who like me, are okay with supporting each other in the work that we’re doing. That’s typically my strategy. (P.6)</td>
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<td>❖ So then, she brings me back into that inner circle, gets more confidential information, and then she uses it again. Boom. And it’s that same cycle. But this last time she did it, she did it in a very public way. And I came back in a very public way. All professional but very clear like we’re not going to play this game. And so I’ve created this distance with her. And I will keep it purely platonic. It will be just about the work. I won’t cross that boundary with you again because you don’t know how to treat that boundary. (P.9)</td>
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<th>Remaining strategically proactive in dealings with perpetrator</th>
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<td>❖ Eventually we built a database that did a lot of stuff that she probably should’ve been doing. And at every turn – when I got done with the database, I wanted to present it to the attorneys. She put me in a conference room two floors away that’s this big [motions to surrounding small room] with no TV screen. And I got to work a half an hour before her, found a conference room that was free, told all the attorneys face-to-face that this was where we were gonna meet. She was boiling hot, but I showed them a database that’s now our department’s main database. (P.4)</td>
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<td>❖ So what I did was I recorded everything. I have a spreadsheet that’s 45 pages long because that’s my specialty, is writing stuff up, so I wrote it up, and I kept recording. And when we went into HR, I would pull out this list and show them, “These are things I’ve done. This is the way I’ve been attacked,” and she would calm down for about three, four months, and she would be [cool] – and then all of a sudden, it would rear its ugly head again. (P.14)</td>
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<th>Discussing with others (Social Support)</th>
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<td>❖ So to wrap my mind around what was happening and still be able to engage effectively and work well in this space, I started to have conversations with the chief operating officer, and I say, “Well, what am I supposed to do in this situation? Help me to understand where she’s coming from. Like, what I’m feeling right now is that she’s trying to find a way to block [me] in the most passive-aggressive way known to man. And that doesn’t make me feel good, doesn’t make me trust her as a leader. I don’t want to be here in this organization if that’s the case.” (P.2)</td>
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<td>❖ So when I talked about it – I had a group of ladies that I ate lunch with, and we talked about it, so – I felt comfortable talking to these ladies about it, and a lot of times, they would talk about some of the things they experienced, but it wasn’t in the same way because the way I was getting it was as if I was after her job. (P.14)</td>
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<th>Redirecting attention to larger goal or bigger picture</th>
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<td>❖ I felt that I was playing my part and being a critical piece in helping to make sure that students still had a quality experience given the terrible climate around. I felt like I was doing a lot and giving a lot for kids who are totally deserving of it and who, regardless of what’s going on, they totally deserve quality. You know what I mean? And I felt like I was breaking my back to make sure that happens and I felt like I was appreciated from the principal. (P.2)</td>
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<td>❖ All of that contributed to me feeling every day like, “God, I can’t believe I gotta go to this job today,” and I’m thinking to myself in the same second, “You got thousands of bills for this child in school, and losing your job is not an option right now, so you gotta do whatever you need to do to stay here.” (P.14)</td>
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<td>Action</td>
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<td>At the time I was the only one who had insurance for the family. So I knew I had to try to keep that job. I couldn’t just walk away and everything. I couldn’t just walk away or do something to get fired. (P.15)</td>
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<td>Acting resilient and unfazed</td>
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