Race matters for women leaders: Intersectional effects on agentic deficiencies and penalties

Ashleigh Shelby Rosette [a], Christy Zhou Koval [a], Anyi Ma [a], Robert Livingston [b]

[a] Fuqua School of Business, Duke University, PO Box 90120, 100 Fuqua Drive, Durham, NC 27708-0120, USA
[b] Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, 79 John F. Kennedy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA

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ABSTRACT

A significant amount of the research on two types of biases against women leaders—agentic deficiency (perceptions that women have minimal leadership potential) and agentic penalty (backlash for counter-stereotypical behavior)—has generally presumed that the descriptive, prescriptive, and proscriptive stereotypes on which the biases are based are comparable for women across racial groups. We propose that the degree to which agentic deficiencies and penalties occur is contingent on the dimension of agency that is under consideration and its relation to the stereotypes associated with the target's gendered and racial group. The results of our literature review and analysis suggest that when considered in the context of gender and leadership research, at least two dimensions of agency, competence and dominance, closely align with perceptions of agentic deficiency and agentic penalty, respectively. Based on our analysis and the prevalent stereotypes of Black and Asian American women that are likely most relevant to the two types of biases against women leaders, we examined the interactive effects of racial stereotypes and the agentic biases. We suggest that when specific racial and gendered stereotypes are aligned with a specific dimension of agency, we can gain a more thorough understanding of how agentic biases may hinder women's progression to leadership positions.

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For more than four decades, substantial advances have been made in the study of gender and leadership, from Schein's (1973) seminal "think manager–think male" paradigm (demonstrating greater correspondence between managerial characteristics and men rather than women) to Heilman's (1983) lack-of-fit model (explicating how gender preferences restrict women's organizational entry) to Rudman's (1998) backlash effect (explaining how increased competence perceptions can simultaneously decrease likability for self-confident women). We now understand a great deal about the seemingly ever-present gender biases that can prevent aspiring women from successfully attaining and maintaining leadership positions. Perhaps the essence—though not necessarily all of the varying nuances—of this mounting body of research is predicated on the two types of agentic bias most aptly and succinctly depicted in role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002): (1) an agentic deficiency, the perception that women are insufficiently agentic to occupy leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 1983) and (2) an agentic penalty, the social and economic backlash women face for behaving in an agentic manner that is at odds with their prescribed gender role (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

When evaluated as agentically deficient, women are perceived as not possessing enough agentic characteristics (broadly defined) to be leaders. In other words, agentic deficiency is frequently associated with the evaluation of women's leadership potential. This mismatch between the leader role and the gender role occurs because the communal stereotypes affiliated with the female gender role are perceived as inadequate when paired with the agentic characteristics ascribed to typical leaders (Eagly

& Karau, 2002; Heilman, 1983). Male stereotypes are quite similar to traditional expectations of leaders' behaviors and characteristics, whereas female stereotypes diverge from such expectations (Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Schein, 1973, 2001). Hence, the agentic deficiency is derived from descriptive stereotypes, comprising beliefs about what women are like (e.g., kind but incompetent). In contrast, once they assume leadership roles and fulfill these roles' agentic requirements, women frequently incur an agentic penalty for violating gender norms and are evaluated negatively for doing so. Hence, agentic penalty stems from both prescriptive stereotypes (beliefs about how someone *should* behave; e.g., women should be nice) and proscriptive stereotypes (beliefs about how someone *should not* behave; e.g., women should not behave dominantly).

Although both types of biases hinge on the general concept of agency, we propose that the types of agency on which these biases are based are fundamentally distinct. Agentic deficiencies appear to rest on perceptions of leadership ability, which include the skills and talents required to carry out the function of leadership. Alternatively, interpersonal perceptions—perceptions of leadership behavior in relation to others—define the purview of agentic penalties. Therefore, contrary to the assumptions of much of the gender and leadership research (see for exceptions Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012), agency is more likely to be a multidimensional construct than a unidimensional one. Whether a woman experiences an agentic deficiency or an agentic penalty is partly contingent upon the dimension of agency that is under consideration. Additionally, much of the research on these two types of agentic bias has mostly presumed that the descriptive (in the case of agentic deficiency) and prescriptive (in the case of agentic penalty) stereotypes of women are generalized across racial groups. However, mounting research has documented that the stereotypes attributed to White women, the predominant group on which most of the existing gender and leadership research is implicitly based, can be quite distinct from those ascribed to racial minority women (e.g., Berdahl & Min, 2012; Ghavami & Peplau, 2012; Hall et al., 2012; Landrine, 1985; Millard & Grant, 2006).[1] Hence, we propose that the extent to which women are perceived as agentically deficient and incur an agentic penalty is contingent on at least two factors: (1) the specific dimension of agency being considered and (2) the woman's race.

First, we review existing research that suggests that agentic content is varied such that agency may not represent a single construct but is comprised of at least two dimensions that should be considered separately. In gender and leadership research, the term *agency* has been loosely employed to refer collectively to a variety of traits and behaviors, such as assertiveness, competence, dominance, and self-promotion (e.g., Diekman, Brown, Johnston, & Clark, 2010; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004; Jost & Kay, 2005; Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rosette & Tost, 2010; Rule & Ambady, 2009; Scott & Brown, 2006; Witt & Wood, 2010). Hence, one of our goals is to attempt to merge two streams of existing research: (1) research suggesting that agency may be better represented as separate dimensions of an overarching construct as opposed to representing a single construct (e.g., Abele, Uchronski, Suitner, & Wojciszke, 2008; McAdams, Hoffman, Mansfield, & Day, 1996) and (2) research on agentic bias. In this regard, our purpose is to succinctly identify which dimensions of agency are likely applicable to each of the two types of agentic bias, agentic deficiency and agentic penalty.

Second, we propose that the degree to which agentic deficiencies and penalties occur for women not only depends on the dimension of agency being considered but also on each dimension's relation to the stereotypes associated with the target's specific gender and racial group. We draw on the intersectional framework, which posits that social identities based on race and gender are interdependent and mutually constitutive (Cole, 2009; Collins, 1991; Crenshaw, 1989; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). The intersectional framework implies and empirical evidence corroborates that there may be distinct descriptive, prescriptive, and proscriptive stereotypes for women from different racial groups. Thus, the specific agentic deficiency and agentic penalty incurred by women may be contingent on the stereotype associated with a particular gender and racial group. Using this framework, we review existing research suggesting that Black and Asian American women could have distinct advantages and disadvantages as compared to White women as they strive for leadership positions. By teasing apart the nuances of when and how the distinct agentic perceptions affect women of different races, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the agentic biases that can plague women's ascension to leadership positions.

We first summarize research that distinguishes between two dimensions of agency—competence and dominance—and provide arguments suggesting that these two dimensions are most aptly applicable to agentic deficiency and agentic penalty, respectively. Second, we explain how intersectionality and subgroup research serve as the basis of our framework, which considers the influence of racial stereotypes of Black and Asian American women on the two types of agentic bias. In addition, we provide the results of our free-response study and compare our findings to existing research to assess the stereotypic content associated with the three subgroups: White women, Black women, and Asian American women. Finally, we suggest that when specific racial and gendered stereotypes are isolated and then aligned with a specific dimension of agency, we can attain a more thorough understanding of how agentic biases may hinder women's progression to leadership positions.

Distinguishing agentic-competence from agentic-dominance

Generally speaking, there are two comprehensive types of content dimensions present in perceptions of the self, others, and social groups: agentic content and communal content. Agentic content manifests itself as independent achievement, self-

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[1] Gender and leadership scholars have not tended to explicitly designate the leaders in their research as White, but instead have referred to a broad superordinate category of women. Given that Whites comprise the racial majority in the United States and that "being White" represents a prototypical characteristic of leadership (Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008), the superordinate category of women upon which much of the gender and leadership research has been based is prototypically White.

direction, and the pursuit of competence, proficiency, and control (Bakan, 1966). In contrast, communion-focused content encompasses satisfaction through close relationships and cooperation with others (Bakan, 1966). Depending on the area of study that has considered these topics over the past 50 years, different terms have been used to refer to these two content dimensions, such as competence and warmth when studying stereotypes (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), self-construal and other-construal when emphasizing cultural distinctions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and initiating structure and consideration when investigating leader behaviors (Fleishman, 1953).

Regardless of the labels used, empirical studies have shown that this two-dimensional configuration of content is quite robust and emerges with different methodologies, including factor analysis (Fiske et al., 2002; Suitner & Maass, 2008) and trait ratings (Bruckmuller & Abele, 2013); in differing domains of study, including cultural differences (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and self-presentation (Paulhus & Trapnell, 2008); and across different countries, such as Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, (Abele, Uchronski, et al., 2008), Korea, and the United States (Ybarra, Chan, & Park, 2001). Because these two broad classes, agentic and communal content, and those comparable to them (e.g., warmth and competence) are so universal in the study of self- and other-perceptions, they are frequently referenced as *fundamental* or even *paramount* to human understanding and interaction, and can be used to describe the content of most social groups (Fiske et al., 2002; Koenig & Eagly, 2014).

However, when the stereotypic content of gender is specifically considered rather than general social groups, empirical and conceptual research suggests that agentic content may be split into at least two distinct measures, as it may represent at least two different stereotypic content dimensions. That is, when social groups are more varied—for example, ranging from welfare recipients to blue collar workers (Fiske et al., 2002) or from millionaires to undocumented workers (Koenig & Eagly, 2014)—the usual two content dimensions of agency (competence) and communality (warmth) have been shown to emerge. However, when the social groups are primarily distinguished by gender, agency can be decomposed further into two distinct dimensions representing agency (defined somewhat narrowly) and competence.

For example, Koenig and Eagly (2014; Study 4) produced a factor solution that encompassed an agency factor operationalized as dominant, arrogant, boastful, egotistical, and daring that was distinct from a competence factor measured as capable, skillful, competent, ambitious, and intelligent. They attributed their findings to an emphasis on gender stereotypes, as four of the six groups in the study were distinguished by gender (i.e., Black men, White men, Black women, White women). When investigating status perceptions, a concept that is frequently linked to gender, Carrier and colleagues (2014) showed that agency operationalized as ambitious, self-confident, and assertive loaded on a separate factor than did competence operationalized as competent, capable, and efficient. Furthermore, Ma, Rosette, Koval, and Livingston (2015) conducted a comprehensive analysis to distinguish the multiple facets of agency,[2] reviewing gender-related research over a 40-year period, including more than 200 articles in top management and social psychology journals. They found that agency comprised two second-order factors, labeled dominance and competence (labels that were initially introduced in gender and leadership research by Rudman and Glick [2001]).

In addition to the factor analyses results suggesting that agentic content may consist of at least two predominant factors, conceptual considerations also support this assertion. Abele, Cuddy, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2008) posit that being assertive, ambitious, and goal-oriented is distinct from demonstrating competence and efficiency. Rudman and Glick (2001) argued that agency comprised two components—agentic-competence and agentic-dominance—and that adherence to dominant behavior violated women's prescriptive stereotypes and accounted for negative evaluations of women. Livingston (2013) suggested a comparable distinction but used the terms *administrative* and *ambitious* to dissect agency. He defines ambitious agency as seeking power, self-promotion, and ambition, and administrative agency as assertiveness and forcefulness toward task accomplishment. He further suggests that Black women are penalized for ambitious rather than administrative agency because they represent a threat to existing social hierarchies.

In sum, existing research on self-, other-, and group-perception has consistently demonstrated that agentic content and communal content form the basis of an array of social judgments. However, there are reasons to suspect that when the stereotypic content of gender is considered, agency may be further decomposed into two distinct types of content: agentic-competence and agentic-dominance. Agentic-competence denotes task functioning, skill, and good performance (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014); agentic-dominance captures dominant and controlling behavior with a competitive functioning toward winning (Carrier et al., 2014; Rudman et al., 2012). Thus, agentic-competence is perceived as instrumental and represents a means or utility by which a purpose or responsibility is accomplished, whereas agentic-dominance is best described in relation to others and connotes the pursuit of control and advancement over others. Hence, agentic-competence is likely the dimension that is most relevant to agentic deficiency, and agentic-dominance is probably the most pertinent to agentic penalties in gender research. We explain these assertions in the next sections.

Linking agentic-competence to agentic deficiency

Agentic-competence can be succinctly described as the possession of the skills and talents that enable one to help a group or organization advance toward accomplishing its goals. In this way, agentic-competence represents the successful achievement of the functional and instrumental aspects of leadership. In attempting to attain a leadership role, the first hurdle that women must overcome is that they must be perceived as qualified to carry out leadership functions. One primary reason that women

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[2] An extensive amount of research has been devoted to understanding the factor-analytic structure of gender identity, which involves self-ratings of masculinity and is closely akin to agency (see Choi, Fuqua, & Newman, 2007 for review). However, much less attention has been devoted to a comparable understanding of the underpinnings of the factoral structure of agency.

are not considered qualified leaders is that they are not regarded as having the same abilities and skill levels as men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The descriptive stereotypes of women as communal do not align with the traits and characteristics needed to successfully accomplish the goals associated with the leader's role. In other words, this lack-of-fit paradigm results in negative perceptions of women's leadership potential, and they are not viewed as competent enough to successfully perform the leader's functions (Heilman, 1983).

Existing gender research is replete with examples suggesting that agentic-competence (and not necessarily agentic-dominance) is linked to weakened leadership potential. For instance, although the devaluation of women was weakened by clear performance attributions and previous competence demonstrations, participants who evaluated the work of mixed-sex dyads rated female members as less competent and less likely to have played a leadership role (Heilman & Haynes, 2005). Mimicking this pattern of low-competence perceptions about women, people applied different requirements for men and women when reporting performance behaviors in the formal and informal reporting of events (Biernat, Fuegen, & Kobrynowicz, 2010). When recording substandard performances, participants noted less incompetent behaviors in the informal reports for women than for men; however, the reverse was true for the formal reports. Furthermore, it was the formal reports that influenced career decisions and affected perceptions of leadership potential. This finding was replicated in two recent meta-analyses. In a meta-analysis that examined performance ratings in field studies, Roth, Purvis, and Bobko (2012) found that performance evaluations favored women but that promotability judgments favored men. In a separate meta-analysis that spanned an array of industries and occupations and included 142 studies across a 30-year time period, Joshi, Son, and Roh (2015) showed that gender differences favoring men over women in salaries, bonus, and promotions were substantially larger than were gender differences in performance evaluations.

In addition, existing research suggests that individuals are evaluated in ways that are consistent with their descriptive stereotypes. In an experimental study, Biernat and Kobrynowicz (1997) showed that when described as applying for chief of staff positions, men were perceived as more competent, but when described as applying for secretarial positions, women were perceived as possessing greater competence. In a recent meta-analysis of experimental simulations that examined employment decision-making, men were shown to be preferred over women for male-dominated jobs, especially in hiring decisions, but there was no preference for men or women in female-dominated jobs (Koch, D'mello, & Sackett, 2015). Audit studies on hiring practices are especially insightful because they highlight that women are perceived as less competent than men and that they are evaluated in stereotypical and prejudiced ways in the absence of individuating information. For example, women who applied for jobs in high-end restaurants were less likely than men to be called for interviews or to receive job offers (Neumark, Bank, & VanNort, 1996). The presumed mechanism underlying the perceptions of agentic deficiencies is that descriptive stereotypes can influence decision makers' perceptions of the target's competence, which can exacerbate or minimize the extent to which the target is perceived as possessing leadership potential. In other words, in much of this research, men and women's experiences and qualifications have been equated; thus, gender stereotypes are presumed to define the task-pertinent attributes of the leader. This suggests that weakened agentic-competence perceptions derived from gender stereotypes can prevent women from being viewed as qualified to occupy a leader's position.

Alternatively, it is possible that descriptive stereotypes of women as possessing low agentic-competence may be waning somewhat. Given the increasing number of women in middle-management positions (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014), the perception that women's mental capabilities are inferior to those of men may be lessening because at that level, women are no longer subordinate to men (Diekman & Eagly, 1999). Moreover, although female entry into top leadership positions has not occurred at a rate comparable to that of women in middle management, women who do occupy top positions in organizations may be viewed as more—rather than less—competent than men. Rosette and Tost (2010) showed that top-level women leaders were rated as more skillful, capable, and powerful than their male counterparts when credit for their performance was unequivocally attributed to the leader rather than the marketplace. The favorable evaluations were shown to occur because women at that level were perceived to have overcome double standards of competence (i.e., when stringent competence requirements are imposed on subordinate groups; Foschi, 2000) to have arrived at their top positions. In further support of the idea that men and women may be viewed as similar in competence, in recent public opinion polls, differences for men and women were imperceptible for leadership characteristics, such as intelligence and capacity for innovation (e.g., Pew Research Center, 2015).

In summary, descriptive stereotypes of women as possessing low levels of agentic-competence have been shown to prevent women from being viewed as possessing leader potential, but whether that perception continues to hold and the conditions under which it is likely to occur are up for debate. As the number of women managers and leaders increase and as women are promoted (though slowly) to occupy top leadership positions, weakened perceptions of leader potential may diminish. In addition, given that women of differing races may not be perceived as possessing the same levels of agentic-competence, the extent to which an agentic deficiency can be applied to women in general or to only a subgroup of women is prime for investigation (and will be considered later).

Agentic-dominance linked to agentic deficiencies

Whereas agentic-competence considerations may exacerbate (or possibly attenuate) perceptions about women's deficient leadership potential, agentic-dominance is the dimension of agency that is most likely relevant to the agentic penalty. According to the status incongruity hypothesis (SIH; Rudman et al., 2012), men are conferred higher status than women. The theory proposes that women who engage in displays of dominance are viewed as status incongruent because dominant displays are proscribed for women but not for men (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). That is, women should not engage in dominant behavior

because such behaviors are high in status and incongruent with both traditional social hierarchy and prescriptions of communion. Agentic-dominance tends to be interpersonal in nature (e.g., someone is dominant toward or over another), whereas agentic-competence is more task-based (e.g., someone is competent at something). Thus, women who behave in a dominant fashion directly violate communal social roles. Dominant women also threaten to subvert established social hierarchies. Because social motives to keep social hierarchies intact are usually high (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), people may reject and negatively evaluate dominant women. In short, the display of dominance facilitates an agentic penalty rather than other aspects of agency, such as competence.

In support of the notion that dominance leads to agentic penalties for women (but not for men), Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) showed in an experimental study (i.e., a simulation) that women in professional contexts who expressed anger, an emotion frequently associated with the display of dominance (Knutson, 1996), were conferred lower status and even received lower salaries as compared with men who demonstrated angry behavior and women who expressed sadness. The opposite was true for men. Furthermore, this pattern held true regardless of whether the female professional was an entry-level employee or the CEO of the company. The authors suggested that this occurred because the study's participants made more internal rather than external attributions to women's anger displays; hence, the women were likely perceived as violating prescriptive stereotypes associated with their gender role. Both expressions and perceptions of power-seeking intentions were also demonstrated to elicit agentic penalties toward female political candidates but not toward their male counterparts (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Moreover, once powerful positions were attained, men had more behavioral leeway than women did because of backlash concerns. Further, using both an archival study and experimental studies, Brescoll (2011) found that powerful men spoke at greater length as compared to less powerful men, but powerful women were no more voluble than less powerful women. This difference was explained by women's fear of backlash for speaking too much. Their concerns were substantiated since talkative women were viewed as less suitable to be CEOs, less promotable, less powerful, and less competent relative to women who talked less than others and men who talked more than others.

In sum, this research suggests that women may not risk incurring an agentic penalty for their competence; instead, once they occupy a leadership role or engage in leader-like behavior and enact dominance, they violate their prescriptive stereotypes and are evaluated negatively for doing so. One question emerging from this literature review concerns the extent to which these findings regarding agentic penalty for the broad social category of women extrapolate to women of differing racial groups. In the next sections, we explore whether agentic-competence and agentic-dominance are differentially related to the two agentic biases—agentic deficiency and agentic penalty, respectively—against women of different races. First, we anchor our review in an intersectional framework and research on subgroups and explain how and why we do so. Second, we identify prevalent stereotypes for Black, Asian American, and White women in gender research. Finally, we use this research to examine the interactive effects of race and gender on agentic deficiency and agentic penalty.

Intersectionality and stereotypes

Intersectionality is the study of the meaning and implication of simultaneous membership in multiple social groups (Cole, 2009; Collins, 1991; Crenshaw, 1989; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Research on intersectionality suggests that demographically derived inequity and its corresponding disparities, such as racism and sexism, interrelate, creating a social system of oppression and resulting in numerous forms of social inequality that may be additive (Almquist, 1975; Beale, 1970; Epstein, 1973) or interactive (Bowleg, 2008; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Settles, 2006). The intersectional framework has traditionally been used to examine how social categories interconnect concurrently, resulting in the oppression of racial minority women (e.g., Davis, 1983; Giddings, 1985; hooks, 1989). Crenshaw (1989) originally coined the term to highlight the shortcomings in existing research that only considered race or gender independently as the central source of disadvantage and oppression.

In addition to Crenshaw's (1989) seminal work, other research has also highlighted how limiting and skewed research interpretations can be by only focusing on a single social category without considering the differences that may occur within the category. The double jeopardy hypothesis proposes that racial minority women face the accrued discrimination for both racial minority men and White women (Beale, 1970; Chow, 1987; Epstein, 1973; hooks, 1989; Reid, 1984). According to this hypothesis, racial minority women are targets of harassment and discrimination because they face both sexual and racial prejudice. In support of the double jeopardy hypothesis, Berdahl and Moore (2006) showed in a survey of workers across five organizations in both male-dominated (i.e., manufacturing plants) and female-dominated (i.e., government service centers) industries, ethnic-minority women, who were comprised mostly of Caribbeans and Asians, reported experiencing more harassment than ethnic-minority men and more harassment than men and women from the ethnic majority (i.e., those of European descent).

In an experimental study, Rosette and Livingston (2012) showed that Black female leaders who made mistakes on the job were penalized more severely than Black male and White female leaders and that this *double jeopardy* was attributable to the fact that Black women were two degrees removed from the White male leadership prototype. That is, White women and Black men were not evaluated as stringently as were Black women when their performances were subpar because they were able to benefit from at least one predominant identity (i.e., being White or male). Further, in a field study with participants from a service-oriented company and a manufacturing-oriented company in the Midwest, Barnum, Liden, and DiTomaso (1995) found that racial minorities (i.e., Black and Hispanic) and female workers had lower pay rates than White male workers and that these differences were greater for older workers. Moreover, Black and Hispanic women tend to be clustered in the lowest-earning occupations, such as service-sector, sales, and office jobs, which can also contribute to their inequitable pay (Fisher, 2015).

Alternatively, intersectional invisibility proposes that possessing multiple subordinate-group identities can render people "invisible" relative to those with a single-group identity because the former are perceived as non-prototypical members of their respective identity groups (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Because the prototypical "Black" is a Black man and the prototypical "woman" is a White woman, Black women end up being non-prototypical for both their racial and gender groups, and may sometimes go unnoticed. For example, across two studies, Sesko and Biernat (2010) showed that Black women were more likely to go unrecognized relative to Black men, White women, and White men. In the first study, when shown a series of photos, White participants were less likely to recall having seen photos of Black women than the other three groups. In other words, Black women were perceived as the least memorable. In a second study, statements made by Black women were misattributed to other groups more so than was the case for White men, Black men, and White women. This invisibility has been shown to extend to the representation of Black women in the media. A review of *Time* magazine covers across a span of more than 85 years showed that pictures of women were disproportionately of White women rather than Black women, and pictures of Blacks were disproportionately of Black men rather than Black women (Purdie-Vaughns, Eibach, & Ditlmann, 2012). Further, in a review of 30 magazine issues (e.g., *Vogue*, *GQ*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Maxim*, and *Cosmopolitan*) containing more than 8000 images of faces, when Blacks were depicted, they were more likely to be men rather than women (Schug, Alt, Lu, Gosin, & Fay, 2015).

The underlying assumption is that this invisibility can yield both disadvantages and advantages for Black women. On one hand, it may buffer Black woman from racial prejudice, as they may go somewhat unnoticed as compared to White women and Black men. According to the subordinated male target hypothesis (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and the theory of gendered prejudice (McDonald, Navarrete, & Sidanius, 2011), Black men are more frequent and more severe targets of racial discrimination and harassment than Black women. On the other hand, invisibility for racial minority women may cause them to suffer repercussions, as they may be disregarded as unimportant or their accomplishments may go unrecognized.

Although much of this cited research focused specifically on Black women, the uniqueness of intersectional effects and dual identity considerations are applicable to other groups as well, such as Asian American women. For example, Shih, Pittinsky, and Ambady (1999) found that when Asian women's gender rather than their racial identity was made salient, they performed worse on a math test than did a control group. However, when a less subtle manipulation was used that enhanced the expectations of other people, racial salience impaired concentration and resulted in lowered math performance by Asian women (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000). Sinclair, Hardin, and Lowery (2006) showed that Asian women can regulate these self-perceptions by engaging in different forms of self-stereotyping based on the social identity made salient. They showed that when their gender identity was activated, Asian women participants evaluated their verbal abilities more favorably than their mathematics abilities. In contrast, Asian women primed with their race evaluated their mathematics abilities more favorably than their verbal abilities. The dual identities of Asian American women have also been shown to have implications for prejudice reactions. Remedios, Chasteen, and Paek (2011) found that Asian women have different reactions toward racial- versus gender-based prejudice, such that those who experienced race-based prejudice reacted more intensely than those who experienced sex-based prejudice. Specifically, Asian women who were exposed to race-based rejections made greater internal attributions (i.e., that they were refused to enroll in a class because of their race) than Asian women who were exposed to sex-based rejections (i.e., that they were rejected from enrolling in a class because of their gender).

Additionally, dual identities for Asian women have been considered not only in self-perceptions but in other-perception research as well. If the Chinese stereotype was made salient, then the Chinese rather than the female social category was activated when encountering a Chinese woman, whereas the reverse occurred when female stereotypes were made salient (Macrae, Bodenhausen, & Milne, 1995). Pittinsky, Shih, and Ambady (2000) found that the activation of racial as opposed to gender stereotypes about Asian women led to biased memory recall in the direction consistent with the particular stereotype. Participants reviewed the college application of a female Asian American high school senior, which included her score on the math scholastic aptitude test (SAT). In a following recall task, participants recalled significantly lower math performance for the applicant when cues of her gender category were made salient and recalled significantly higher math performance when cues of her racial category were made salient.

It is important to note that the aforementioned studies on Asian American women were more about the complexity of dual identities rather than intersectionality, per se, which reflects the content of the preponderance of social science research on Asian American women. One difference is that with dual identity studies, one of two identities is made more salient than the other possible identity. In intersectionality studies, both identities are considered simultaneously. Although somewhat distinct, research in both areas emphasizes the importance of considering the influence of multiple identities when making social judgments.

We build on this framework of intersectionality and dual identities to suggest that the applicability of the two types of agentic bias—agentic deficiency and agentic penalty—may be somewhat limited by only focusing on the descriptive, prescriptive, and proscriptive stereotypes of the overall social category of women, which may or may not be attributable to racial minority women. That is, consistent with the intersectional frameworks, the experiences of White, Black, and Asian American women, all deemed subgroups of the superordinate category of women, may be unique and differentiated from that of the superordinate group. Subgroups incorporate more diverse schemas of group members, which then generate a more varying conceptualization of the superordinate group (Richards & Hewstone, 2001). Subgroups are distinct from subtyping because beliefs associated with a subgroup may differ from or concur with those ascribed to the superordinate group; however, subtypes comprise atypical individuals who are excluded from the larger group and viewed as deviations from what is normative or expected (Richards & Hewstone, 2001). Further, subgroups are organized based on individuals who are similar in one domain and also distinguished from the overarching superordinate group members in another domain (Maurer, Park, & Rothbart, 1995). For example, the subgroup Black women is similar to the superordinate category of women in terms of gender, but dissimilar from the superordinate

category in terms of race. Both types of agentic bias are predicated on stereotypes associated with the superordinate category of women, and the targets of study have mostly comprised the White women subgroup. Whether the agentic biases are also applicable to other subgroups, such as Blacks and Asian American women, should also be of significant interest, as suggested by intersectional frameworks.

Stereotypes of White, Black, and Asian American women

To examine whether the stereotypes for the subgroups would be congruent or incongruent with the stereotypes for the superordinate category of women which underlie the two types of agentic bias, we conducted a free-response study (e.g., Niemann, Jennings, Rozelle, Baxter, & Sullivan, 1994). We then compared our findings to the results of an existing study that has also assessed the stereotypic content associated with these three groups (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). We next aimed to ascertain whether the identified stereotypes may be relevant to the experience of agentic bias in general and which dimension of agency may be more or less relevant to each of the three racial groups.

Method

We recruited 180 United States citizens from ClearVoice Research, a research firm that recruits survey participants across the country (53% female; M_{age} = 40.77 years with a SD of 10.42; 53% Caucasian, 18% Black, 13% Asian, and 16% Hispanic). All participants were employed full-time at the time of the study.

Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to examine people's perceptions of women of different races. To ensure that participants had a similar interpretation of the concept of race, we provided the following definition to all participants: "Race is usually defined as a social group or category of people that share some biological characteristics. Racial groups differ according to these characteristics. Skin color remains a primary characteristic that Americans use to place people into racial groups. In addition to skin color, features such as hair texture and face-shape have also been used to classify people into races." Each participant was instructed to list as many adjectives as possible (and at least three) that were typically used to describe the social categories of White women, Black women, and Asian American women. The order in which these social categories appeared was randomized. Participants took part in the study online via the survey software Qualtrics.

Results

In total, we obtained 599 responses for White women, 591 responses for Black women, and 603 responses for Asian American women. As expected, some participants provided duplicate adjective responses both within each social category and across the three social categories. However, because we were interested in exploring both the stereotype content and the salience of the stereotypes that people have for each social category, we kept the duplicate responses intact. Following a similar procedure outlined by Niemann and colleagues (1994), we began our data analyses by first creating a list of stereotype content categories based on the responses we received. On the basis of consensus, our research team, which included members of different ages, ethnicity, and varying levels of education ranging from an undergraduate student (at the time of analysis) to senior PhD students to a tenured professor, created 34 stereotype content categories that we believed were the most encompassing and representative of the responses we obtained. Sample stereotype content categories included positive intellect (e.g., smart, wise, intelligent), negative intellect (e.g., uneducated, slow, dense), dominance (e.g., demanding, controlling, bossy), and subservient (e.g., meek, submissive, timid). Appendix A presents the definition and example adjectives for each of the stereotype content categories.

Next, the second author and a research assistant with extensive experience assisting with social psychological research who had undergone three hours of training on this task independently sorted a subset of all responses into the 34 stereotype-content categories for each of the three subgroups.[3] They then compared their sorting results and calculated Cohen's (1960) Kappa to assess the degree to which they consistently sorted the responses into the same stereotype-content categories. This calculation yielded a Cohen's Kappa of 0.72, which indicated *substantial* interrater agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Having established acceptable interrater reliability, the coding was then completed. Once all the responses were sorted into one of the 34 stereotype-content categories, we tallied the number of responses within each stereotype-content category for each of the social categories. Table 1 presents the frequency counts for each stereotype-content category for White women, Black women, and Asian American women, respectively. Excluding general traits that did not belong to any particular stereotype-content categories (e.g., complex, healthy, good) and physical stereotypes (e.g., blonde, petite, long hair), the analysis showed that the most frequent attribute associated with White women was communal (e.g., kind, caring, friendly; 8.8%). This frequency count was higher than that for Black women (4.4%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 9.49, p = .002, and Asian American women, (4.8%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 7.71, p = .005. With similar restrictions (i.e., excluding general traits and physical stereotypes), the most frequent characteristic attributed to Black women was being angry (e.g., angry, loud, boisterous; 8.3%), and this count was higher than those attributed to White women (1.00%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 35.86, p < .001, and Asian American women, (1.2%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 33.95, p < .001. Black women were also perceived as having strength (7.6%), which was identified more frequently than for White women (3.8%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 7.87, p = .005 and Asian American women (1.00%), $\chi^2(1)$ = 31.98, p < .001. For Black women, a close third to strength was dominant,

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[3] The subset included 30% of the total responses. Specifically, the first 10%, the middle 10%, and the last 10% of all participant responses included in the dataset were evaluated for interrater reliability.

Table 1
Frequency counts of stereotypes for Black, Asian American, and White women.

Stereotype	Black women N = 591 Percentage	Asian women N = 603 Percentage	White women N = 599 Percentage
1. Positive intellect	6.1%	13.9%	7.3%
2. Mild-tempered	0.0%	10.1%	1.0%
3. Communal	4.4%	4.8%	8.8%
4. Angry	8.3%	1.2%	1.0%
5. Strength	7.6%	1.0%	3.8%
6. Dominance	7.4%	1.2%	3.5%
7. Achievement-oriented	5.2%	2.7%	4.5%
8. Sexual	2.7%	3.6%	4.8%
9. Subservient	.7%	4.6%	1.2%
10. Self-centered	1.7%	1.2%	3.8%
11. Interesting	3.6%	1.5%	1.8%
12. Family-oriented	1.7%	3.6%	2.2%
13. Work ethic	1.9%	3.4%	2.3%
14. Warm	1.0%	0.8%	2.8%
15. Refined	0.8%	0.3%	2.8%
16. Negative intellect	2.5%	0.5%	1.3%
17. Lazy	2.0%	0.0%	0.7%
18. Cold	0.2%	1.7%	0.5%
19. Ordinary	0.8%	.3%	1.7%
20. Greedy	0.0%	1.0%	0.5%
21. Naïve	0.5%	0.2%	1.0%
22. Trustworthy	0.3%	1.0%	0.8%
23. Different	0.3%	0.7%	0.8%
24. Emotional	0.7%	0.2%	0.5%
25. Creative	0.2%	0.0%	0.5%
26. Shrewdness	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
27. Positive physical	5.9%	8.1%	10.9%
28. Negative physical	1.7%	0.3%	0.8%
29. Neutral physical	4.9%	15.9%	6.3%
30. General positive	6.3%	5.0%	4.8%
31. General negative	6.4%	.8%	3.8%
32. General neutral	5.2%	3.3%	5.6%
33. Racial slur	1.2%	2.8%	1.2%
34. Redundant	7.4%	4.0%	6.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

identified as representing them (7.4%) more frequently than White women (3.5%), $\chi^2(1) = 8.94$, $p = .003$, and Asian American women (1.2%), $\chi^2(1) = 28.83$, $p < .001$. For Asian American women (again excluding general traits and physical stereotypes), their most frequently suggested attribute was possessing a positive intellect (13.9%), which occurred more often than for White women (7.3%), $\chi^2(1) = 13.81$, $p < .001$, and Black women (6.1%), $\chi^2(1) = 19.33$, $p < .001$. Another characteristic frequently attributed to Asian American women was being mild-tempered (e.g., quiet, reserved, shy; 10.10%), which occurred more often than it did for White women (1.00%), $\chi^2(1) = 47.43$, $p < .001$, and Black women (0.00%), $\chi^2(1) = 63.05$, $p < .001$.

Discussion

Our findings for Black women and Asian American women are similar to those presented in a study by Ghavami and Peplau (2012) that used an undergraduate student sample but only somewhat congruent with their findings for White women. Comparable to our methodology, Ghavami and Peplau (2012) used a free-response questionnaire but asked participants to generate at least 10 cultural stereotypes for 17 different racial and gendered subgroups. Three of the groups included in their study were also included in ours: White women, Black women, and Asian American women. Excluding stereotypes that assessed physical characteristics (e.g., attractive, blonde, petite, overweight), White women were described most frequently (i.e., frequency counts greater than 10 with a total n of 32) as arrogant (26), rich (15), and ditzy (13). Black women were stereotyped most frequently (i.e., frequency counts greater than 10 with a total n of 40) as having an attitude (38), loud (26), confident (13), and assertive (10). Asian women were believed most frequently (i.e., frequency counts greater than 10 with a total n of 39) to be intelligent (26), quiet (22), shy (12), and family-oriented (11).

In examining the two studies in tandem, a pattern seems to emerge for the three subgroups that could have significant implications for the manner in which their respective stereotypes are considered in relation to the two dimensions of agency on which the agentic biases are based. Black women were stereotyped with attributes that are most akin to the dominant dimension of agency. In addition to rating high on dominance, specifically, they also were rated high on having an attitude (i.e., possessing a hostile state of mind) and anger, which has been shown to be akin to dominance (Knutson, 1996). Black women were also

rated as possessing strength. Asian American women were stereotyped with attributes that were most similar to the competence dimension of agency, as they were most frequently described as possessing positive intellect. However, a second set of attributes that emerged for Asian American women that could be considered in conflict with agentic-dominance is being passive (e.g., mild tempered and quiet). White women were viewed as communal but were not perceived as possessing agentic-dominance. Additionally, the perceptions of agentic-competence attributed to their subgroup were somewhat mixed. In our study, although lower than Asian American women, they still garnered 7.3% on positive intellect (second only to communality when excluding general and physical stereotypes) and 1.3% on negative intellect. In Ghavami and Peplau (2012) study, ratings of White women's intellect were conflicting, as they were rated with frequencies of 13 and 8 for ditzy (e.g., scatterbrained and unintelligent) and intelligent, respectively. White women were perceived as possessing some level of agentic-competence in our sample, but they were perceived as low on agentic-competence in the Ghavami and Peplau (2012) study.

In sum, the stereotypes attributed to Asian American and Black women were distinct from those attributed to the general category of women; Black women were perceived as dominant and strong, and Asian American women were regarded as competent and passive. However, the stereotypes for White women were consistent with those attributed to the superordinate category of women. White women were viewed as communal and not particularly agentic—neither competent nor dominant. Given that the stereotypes for White women closely aligned with those for the overall social category of women and that existing research on agentic deficiencies and agentic penalties are based on such stereotypes, we next focus on the interactive effects of racial stereotypes and agentic biases for Black and Asian American women but not for White women.

Agentic deficiencies and women subgroups

As previously noted, women are evaluated as possessing less leadership potential than men because of the incongruity between the descriptive stereotypes associated with the female gender, such as being warm (Fiske et al., 2002; White & Gardner, 2009), showing concern for others (Diekman, Clark, Johnston, Brown, & Steinberg, 2001; Umberson, Chen, House, Hopkins, & Slaten, 1996), being cooperative (Allen, 2006; Van Vugt, De Cremer, & Janssen, 2007), and acting passively (Gonzalez, 1982; Landrine, 1985), and the agentic expectations associated with the leadership role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Furthermore, we have argued that those agentic expectations associated with leadership that would likely limit the positive evaluation of women's leadership potential involve agentic-competence. Hence, this type of agentic bias against women should be attenuated by the extent to which the descriptive stereotypes for them are perceived as congruent with agentic-competence. In other words, the extent to which Black and Asian American women are perceived as agentically deficient depends on the degree to which the content of their stereotypes offer counterstereotypical or individuating information that is inconsistent with the descriptive stereotypes of the superordinate category of women but consistent with agentic-competence. This matching process is probably best known as a recognition-based process of leadership (Carton & Rosette, 2011; Lord & Maher, 1991). That is, the extent to which these two targeted subgroups will be *recognized* as possessing leadership potential is contingent on the extent to which their characteristics are perceived to match existing representations of leaders (Rosette et al., 2008).

Asian American women and agentic deficiency

When the stereotypic content ascribed to Asian American women is compared to the content of agentic-competence, there exists a great deal of overlap. Asian American women are perceived to possess a high level of intellect and competence, and agentic-competence represents the possession of the expertise and mental agility that enable one to advance a group forward. In addition, Asian American women are often identified with descriptive stereotypes that prohibit women, when considered as a broad social category, from being recognized as possessing leadership potential, but this should occur only to the extent that others view them as passive. That is, although Asian American women are perceived as possessing some communality that is consistent with the superordinate category of women (Anderson, 2011; Balaji & Worawongs, 2010; Chung, 2008; Kitano & Sue, 1973; Mok, 1998), there likely exists enough stereotype content—intelligent, competent, hard-working—that is counter-stereotypical to the descriptive stereotypes of the superordinate category of women for them to be suitably consistent with cognitive representations of leaders with potential. That is, the stereotypes associated with the Asian American women subgroup are likely more compatible with the perceptions of agentic-competence than the descriptive stereotypes associated with the superordinate category of women. Hence, they should be recognized as having more leadership potential than the superordinate category of women.

When we consider the intersectional effects of the stereotype content for women and the stereotypes for Asian Americans, the result constitutes stereotypes for the subgroup of Asian American women as intelligent and hard-working but demure and passive. These characteristics align closely with a collection of stereotypes of Asian Americans, and it has been shown that Asian women rather than Asian men are more representative of the Asian race in general (Schug et al., 2015). Generally referred to as the model minority stereotype (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Homma-True, 1997; Kitano & Sue, 1973; Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005; Taylor & Stern, 1997), this collection of stereotypes emphasizes competence perceptions by conveying the sense that Asian Americans are diligent and successful in their academic and economic pursuits. Additionally, past research has shown that Asian Americans are perceived as "model minorities" who are workaholics with very little time to enjoy hobbies or other leisurely activities (Taylor & Stern, 1997). The prevalent perception is that they achieve academic and economic success *because* of social values that emphasize hard work and perseverance (Yoo, Burrola, & Steger, 2010; YooYoo, Miller, & Yip, 2014).

The prevalence of Asian American women in certain types of occupations provides evidence of their economic success. For example, in 2014, 48% of Asian women were employed in management, professional, and related occupations, which are relatively

high-paying jobs, as compared to 35% of Black women, 26% of Hispanic women, and 43% of White women (Fisher, 2015). Further, from her qualitative interviews with racial minority women, Williams (2014) found some evidence that the model minority stereotype may result in Asian women needing to provide less evidence of competence than White women to be recognized in the workplace. One of the participants in Williams (2014) study observed, "In some sense, I'm more acceptable, if you will, as an Asian woman scientist rather than a woman scientist" (p. 214).

Although viewed as competent and hard-working, Asian Americans are often assumed to have difficulty fitting into conventional social interactions because they are perceived as antisocial, aloof, and passive when compared to other racial minorities. In fact, the stereotype content model suggests that Asian Americans are categorized in a mixed cluster—perceived as competent yet not well liked because they are viewed as not very communal toward outgroups (Fiske et al., 2002). These mixed perceptions may have implications for the types of leadership positions perceived to be best suited to Asian American women. In a paper that examined how perceptions of leadership varies as a function of race and occupation, the authors found that Asian American men were better suited for leadership positions that emphasized intelligence and dedication rather than dynamism and masculinity (Sy et al., 2010). Similarly, management researchers found that participants' decisions in cooperative or competitive contexts were informed by their perceptions of Asians as being high in competence but low in dominance (e.g., somewhat passive). For example, when the task required intellectual competence, decision makers were more likely to prefer a White candidate to compete against but an Asian candidate to cooperate with for the task. However, if the task required dominance, the decision maker was more likely to prefer the White candidate as a teammate and the Asian candidate as a competitor (Lee, Pitesa, Thau, & Pilutla, 2014).

Hence, the stereotypes of the subgroup of Asian American women as competent and hard-working closely align with perceptions of agentic-competence, but the stereotype of them as passive and aloof may undercut the leader recognition process. Thus, they should be evaluated as possessing more rather than less leadership potential when compared to the superordinate category of women, but only to the extent that the leader role does not encompass assertive or aggressive expectations that would be at odds with their passive stereotype.

Black women and agentic deficiency

Since Katz and Braly's (1933) famous study, in which Blacks (then referred to as Negroes) were stereotyped as superstitious, lazy, happy-go-lucky, ignorant, musical, and ostentatious, racial stereotypes of Blacks have evolved in some ways but endured in others (Devine & Elliot, 1995; Macrae, Stangor, & Hewstone, 1996). In present-day research, Blacks are usually negatively stereotyped as unintelligent, lazy, ghetto, criminal, loud, hostile, and poor (Devine & Elliot, 1995; Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). Although considerable research suggests the pervasiveness of positive beliefs about Blacks, such as athleticism, musicality, and rhythmic ability (e.g., Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Ghavami & Peplau, 2012), these positive stereotypes are viewed as adaptations (Ogbu, 1985) that counterbalance incompetence perceptions and accordingly are deemed compensatory rather than central attributes of effective leadership (Carton & Rosette, 2011).

When the intersectional effects of stereotypic content for Black women are considered, the primary stereotype attributed to Black women is one of dominance and anger; hence, there is not a great deal of overlap with the content of agentic-competence. Melissa Harris-Perry (2011) identified this stereotype as ubiquitous for Black women and especially salient in their self-perceptions. A second stereotype that emerged in our content analysis (see the Intersectionality and stereotypes section) is strength. Likely derived from the experience of Black women as heads of households because of adverse situations that frequently prevented Black men from entering the labor force (Sewell, 2013), the stereotype encompasses perceptions of Black women as hard-working and even a bit intimidating because of the perceived responsibilities (Wingfield, 2007). This stereotype may also be attributable to *physical* strength, which is commonly attributed to Blacks (Alexander, Brewer, & Livingston, 2005).

When the content of agentic-competence is compared to the stereotypes ascribed to Black women to assess whether they match leader expectations in accordance with recognition-based processes of leadership, little overlap emerges between the two. In embodying strength and possibly hard work, these characteristics attributed to Black women represent the wherewithal or means by which to assist one in accomplishing a goal, but not the intellect and mental prowess needed to do so. Perceptions of strength and hard work are not likely to lead to heightened perceptions of leadership potential unless also accompanied by perceptions of a certain level of talent, skill, and intellect. Moreover, recognition-based processes of leadership would suggest that social perceivers are not prone to making positive attributions about the leadership potential of Black leaders because Blacks, in general, are stereotyped negatively in terms of attributes, such as competence and intelligence, that are associated with leaders (Carton & Rosette, 2011; Devine, 1989).

Additionally, there is virtually no overlap with the descriptive stereotypes associated with the superordinate category of women and the stereotypes attributed to Black women. That is, in our content analysis (see the Intersectionality and stereotype section), Black women were not described as warm, showing concern for others, or cooperative. On one hand, given that the stereotypes of Black women are incongruent (and maybe even counter-stereotypical) with the descriptive stereotypes of the superordinate category of women that prohibit the positive assessment of leadership potential, it is possible that Black women will be evaluated as possessing leadership potential. On the other hand (and more probable, given the dearth of Black women in professional and top leader positions), there is likely insufficient congruence between agentic-competence and the stereotypes of Black women to enhance the perceptions of leader recognition, especially given the salience of the perception that Black women are dominant and angry.

Agentic penalties and women subgroups

Once women take on leadership positions, they incur an agentic penalty for exhibiting behavior that is too agentic and that contradicts prescribed gender stereotypes (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Consistent with the tenets of SIH (Rudman et al., 2012), we suggest that agentic-dominance is the type of agency upon which these backlash effects are based. Given that women who exhibit dominance are perceived as status incongruent because dominant displays conflict with prescribed gender stereotypes (Prentice & Carranza, 2002), it follows that agentic penalties should decrease as prescriptions of communality are lessened and proscriptions of dominance are weakened for women.

Black women and agentic penalties

Although dominance is frequently perceived as a proscribed stereotype for the superordinate category of women, this may not be the case for Black women. The image of Black women as dominant and angry has persisted since the time of slavery in the United States, and this persona for Black women was exemplified by the character Sapphire on the 1940s and 1950s "Amos 'n' Andy" radio and television shows. Perceived in modern day as the "stereotypical Black b*tch" (Pratt, 2012) or "angry Black woman" (Childs, 2005), Sapphire is often portrayed as an excessively aggressive and masculinized (Walley-Jean, 2009), loud, confrontational, and domineering woman (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003; Pratt, 2012; Tonnesen, 2013; Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010). These characteristics closely align with agentic-dominance and accordingly may have important leadership implications.

In an experimental study, Black women leaders who behaved dominantly were evaluated similarly to Black women leaders who behaved communally; hence, they did not provoke an agentic penalty (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012) due to the speculation that dominance was not a proscribed stereotype for Black women (Hall et al., 2012). At times, Black women may be expected to display acts of dominance; accordingly, they are not penalized for doing so because they are behaving in accordance with the expectations of their subgroup. Thus, dominant displays may actually represent a prescribed (rather than proscribed) stereotype for Black women (Hall et al., 2012). In support of this assertion, expressions of dominance were shown to be internally attributed to White women but not to Black women (Livingston et al., 2012). This suggests that White women were perceived as violating normative expectations, but Black women, perhaps behaving normatively and in accordance with prescriptions attributed to their subgroup, were not.

Moreover, although prescriptive stereotypes tend to foster gender biases in evaluations of women (when considered in aggregate) enacting masculine roles (Gill, 2004; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004), this may not be the case for Black women, as they tend to be viewed as more masculine than feminine. For example, because participants viewed Blacks as more masculine than Whites, they made more mistakes when categorizing Black female faces than White female faces (Goff, Thomas, & Jackson, 2008). Specifically, Black women were thought to be men more frequently than was the case for White women. Further, masculine traits become more accessible when individuals are primed with the word Black rather than Asian or White (Galinsky, Hall, & Cuddy, 2013; Study 2). The association of Black women with masculinity was shown to have significant implications for leadership perceptions. Black women were more likely than White women and Asian women to be matched with a leadership position described as masculine rather than feminine (Galinsky et al., 2013; Study 5).

Because the displays of dominance may be prescribed and not proscribed for Black women and because Black women tend to be viewed as masculine rather than feminine, they may not be evaluated negatively when acting in a dominant manner in a leadership role. Thus, they may be less likely than the superordinate category of women to extract agentic penalties. Hence, when they occupy leadership positions or engage in leader-like behaviors, they may be given more behavioral freedom than other women subgroups.

Asian American women and agentic penalties

In contrast to Black women, we expect Asian American women who display dominant behaviors to be evaluated negatively for doing so. Existing research, along with our analysis (reported in the section Intersectionality and stereotypes), suggests that dominance does not comprise the stereotypic content for Asian American women. On the contrary, they are expected to behave in a passive, mild-tempered manner. Thus, acting in a controlling and aggressive manner may be at odds with the expectations of their subgroup and may be proscribed behavior even when they occupy a leader-like role. Using free response methodology, Niemann and colleagues (1994) analyzed the stereotype content of eight different groups using cluster analysis. Out of the 10 different clusters of content found in the data, one was negatively related to Asian American women and included characteristics such as dominant and independent. Furthermore, in lists of the first five synonyms that each participant listed, as well as all of the synonyms listed by participants, some of the words used to describe Asian American women were clearly related to non-dominant behavior, such as "passive" and "shy." These findings are consistent with our results reported in the previous section, Intersectionality and stereotypes.

Researchers have documented how perceptions of passivity can hinder Asian American women in the workplace. For example, Berdahl and Min (2012) found that Asians are perceived to be significantly more passive and less dominant than Whites and are also more likely to receive backlash in the form of racial harassment if they violate stereotypic expectations and prescriptions by displaying dominant behavior. Similarly, Kamenou and Fearfull (2006) interviewed female employees to document the organizational expectations to which racial minority women must adhere in return for access to influential social networks and career

advancement. They found that expectations often differ based on the different intersections of gender and race, and that expectations for Asian women in particular are of non-dominance and compliance. Finally, Asian women who act in a dominant manner in the workplace are harshly criticized (Williams, 2014). Specifically, Asian women who do not fit the descriptive stereotype of being demur and subservient often receive unfavorable receptions and are perceived as a "dragon lady"—a conniving, ruthless predatory woman who manipulates others to satisfy her own self-interests (Ono & Pham, 2009; Prasso, 2006). Thus, to the extent that Asian women act in a dominant manner, they are perceived as untrustworthy and conniving. In sum, Asian American women will likely extract an agentic penalty comparable to or perhaps even greater than the superordinate category of women because dominance is at odds with prescriptive expectations that they should behave passively and with subservience.

General discussion and conclusion

Intersectionality matters. Our review of the past literature and the stereotypic content of Black, Asian American, and White women clearly reveal that there are distinct stereotypes associated with each group and distinct consequences for women leaders from each of these subgroups of women. Simply stated, Black women are perceived as being dominant but not competent. Asian American women are perceived as being competent but passive. White women are perceived as primarily communal without being seen as particularly dominant or excessively competent. Consequently, Black women are the least likely to suffer agentic penalties, whereas Asian American women (and perhaps to a lesser degree White women) are most likely to suffer agentic penalties. The pattern is reversed for agentic deficiencies. This research adds to the significant body of literature examining agentic biases against female leaders as a result of descriptive, prescriptive, and proscriptive gender stereotypes. In this paper, we argued that separating the agency construct into two dimensions, agentic-competence and agentic-dominance, could provide a useful framework for understanding the processes through which agentic deficiency and agentic penalty against female leaders of different races are enacted.

Although the agentic-competence dimension of agency is most closely aligned with gender biases resulting from agentic deficiency, and agentic-dominance is most closely aligned with gender biases resulting from the agentic penalty, our framework does not preclude agentic-competence from being applicable to agentic penalty or agentic-dominance from being applicable to agentic deficiency. As per Rudman and Phelan's (2008) review, agentic backlash and penalties can occur at multiple levels as a result of both agentic-competence and agentic-dominance. For example, women who demonstrate confidence (a set of behaviors that can characterize agentic-competence; Ma et al., 2015) have been shown to extract an agentic penalty for doing so (Rudman, 1998). Similarly, women who demonstrate agentic-competence by being successful at their jobs often experience social backlash from their female coworkers and subordinates (Ely, 1994; Heim, 1990). In these examples, the agentic penalty is enacted against women who demonstrated agentic-competence but not necessarily agentic-dominance. Hence, agentic-dominance does not represent an exclusive dimension of agency for which women may be penalized. Nonetheless, we merely suggest that, in general, agentic-competence is most represented in gender and leadership research that focuses on agentic deficiency, whereas agentic-dominance is mostly found in research on agentic penalties and backlash. We believe that by separating agentic-competence from agentic-dominance, we can provide a helpful framework for conceptualizing the degree to which agentic deficiencies and penalties will occur for women leaders. This framework is particularly useful when we consider each dimension's relation to the stereotypes associated with the target's specific gender and racial group.

Our framework rests on our attempt to clearly articulate the stereotypic content associated with each of the three subgroups we considered: Black, Asian American, and White women. There are several structural models within social psychology that may explain the origins of intersectional stereotypes, including intergroup image theory (Alexander, Brewer, & Herrmann, 1999; Alexander et al., 2005), social role theory (Koenig & Eagly, 2014), and the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002). All of these theories argue that stereotypes are derived from macro-level social structures that lead to images, roles, or judgments, which then produce intergroup attitudes and stereotype content. For example, social role theory maintains that social structures that place women in caregiver roles lead to stereotypes associated with warmth (see Koenig & Eagly, 2014). Intergroup image theory argues that status and power interact to produce images (e.g., dependent, barbarian) that produce affect (e.g., pity, fear) and stereotypes (e.g., weak, hostile). Finally, the stereotype content model argues that people make immediate judgments about whether outgroups are friend or foe (i.e., warmth) and whether they are able to act on their intentions (i.e., competence). This two-by-two matrix of warmth and competence produces a host of stereotypes and attitudes (i.e., envious prejudice) toward groups depending on where they fall in these quadrants. It is beyond the scope of this research to assess which of these frameworks may explain the content of the stereotypes that we suggest are affiliated with each of the three subgroups considered here. However, we believe that appraisals of gender subgroups among many of these dimensions can help to explain the content of the various stereotypes associated with the groups and should be considered in future research.

While our research focused on stereotypes of Asian American and Black women, we recognize that there are several limitations to consider. First, we treat Black, Asian American, and White as monolithic categories when they clearly are not. Indeed, there are a variety of ethnicities within each subgroup. For example, Blacks include ethnic groups, such as African-Americans, Africans (e.g., Nigerians), Latin-Americans (e.g., Dominicans, Cubans), and West Indians (e.g., Jamaicans, Trinidadians). Similarly, Asian Americans include multiple ethnicities and nationalities, such as Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Chinese. Moreover, East Asians are distinguished from South Asians, such as Indians and Pakistanis, and our emphasis in this research was on East Asian Americans rather than South Asian Americans. Even the category "White" may include different ethnicities that have distinct stereotypes associated with them (e.g., Italian, Jewish, German, WASP, Irish). Although stereotype content can vary within and across race, we elected to emphasize parsimony over precision by focusing on race as a basic-level category rather than on

subgroups within race. Moreover, despite within-group ethnic differences, it is the basic-level category that is the primary focus of measurement (e.g., United States Census) and intellectual discourse in the North American context. Nevertheless, future work examining particular stereotypes associated with each ethnicity would likely yield fruitful findings.

A second limitation is that we did not include all racial groups in the North American context (e.g., Latino/a and Native/First Nation groups). The decision to focus specifically on the gender stereotypes of Black and Asian American women was not intended to imply that they are more worthy of consideration than other racial and ethnic groups. Rather, these groups reflect the preponderance of stereotype research on non-White women. Latinas have been somewhat difficult to study because they are racially/phenotypically ambiguous. To be sure, Hispanic origins were not recognized as a race in the United States Census questionnaire until 2014. Prior to this census, Hispanics were categorized as either Hispanic-White or Hispanic-Black. Therefore, unlike Asian Americans and Blacks, there is no specific phenotype associated with Latina/Hispanic women, who can range from African to indigenous to European in racial origin and physical appearance. Thus, it is much easier to categorize Blacks or Asian Americans based on phenotypical features. As a result, we chose to focus on two groups that can provide the clearest stereotypical contrast to White women, the predominant subgroup upon which much of the gender stereotypes and gender research is based.

In conclusion, we have attempted to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the diverse challenges facing women from distinct racial groups. Dissecting the nuances of how women of different races are perceived to demonstrate agentic-competence and agentic-dominance contributes to a better understanding of the barriers and facilitators of women's leadership achievements. In particular, by taking an intersectional perspective, our work provides a systematic examination of the unique challenges and opportunities that are faced by racial minority women, particularly Asian American and Black women. We hope that our work can help reframe the conversation and corresponding research about gender and leadership so that it can become more inclusive. We can thus arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the barriers that continue to prohibit women of all races from advancing in organizational hierarchies.

Appendix A. Stereotype categories

1. Positive intellect
   Definition: The capacity for knowledge; demonstration of an ability to learn and reason.
   Sample adjectives: smart, intelligent, wise, educated, knowledgeable
2. Mild tempered
   Definition: Slow to anger or irritate; doesn't get upset easily.
   Sample adjectives: laid back, calm, quiet, reserved, shy
3. Communal
   Definition: Concerned with others' welfare; caring for others.
   Sample adjectives: kind, caring, team minded, kind hearted
4. Angry
   Definition: Quick/easy to anger or irritate.
   Sample adjectives: angry, irritable, loud, boisterous, unruly
5. Strength
   Definition: the quality or state of being strong.
   Sample adjectives: strong, tough, empowering, brave, resilient
6. Dominance
   Definition: Exercising influence, control, and authority toward others.
   Sample adjectives: demanding, controlling, bossy, aggressive, overbearing
7. Achievement-oriented
   Definition: Concerned with accomplishing or finishing; goal-oriented.
   Sample adjectives: ambitious, motivated, willful, go getter
8. Sexual
   Definition: Relating to erotic desires or activities.
   Sample adjectives: hot, sexy, sensual, exotic, kinky
9. Subservient
   Definition: Serving or acting in a subordinate capacity relative to others; obeying others without questioning.
   Sample adjectives: meek, submissive, timid, obedient, needy, follower
10. Self-centered
    Definition: concerned with one's own interests and welfare; engrossed in self; selfish.
    Sample adjectives: selfish, spoiled, entitled, high maintenance, self-righteous
11. Interesting
    Definition: arousing curiosity or interest; holding or catching the attention.
    Sample adjectives: interesting, fun, engaging
12. Family-oriented
    Definition: Concerns about families or family oriented.
    Sample adjectives: motherly, family oriented, mom

13. Work ethic
    Definition: Descriptors which convey the importance of hard working, diligent, or effort.
    Sample adjectives: studious, dedicated, industrious, hard working
14. Warm
    Definition: having, showing, or expressive of affection
    Sample adjectives: happy, good-natured, cheerful, energetic, expressive
15. Refined
    Definition: elegant and cultured in appearance, manner, or taste.
    Sample adjectives: sophisticated, elegant, high class, stylish, classy
16. Negative intellect
    Definition: The lack of mental capacity; an intellectual deficiency.
    Sample adjectives: stupid, dumb, uneducated, ditzy, unintelligent
17. Lazy
    Definition: unwilling to work or use energy.
    Sample adjectives: inactive, lethargic, lazy, idle, loafing
18. Cold
    Definition: lacking affection or warmth of feeling; unemotional.
    Sample adjective: cold, unsocial
19. Ordinary
    Definition: with no special or distinctive features; normal.
    Sample adjectives: plain, ordinary, average intelligence, alright
20. Greedy
    Definition: having or showing an intense and selfish desire for money.
    Sample adjectives: greedy, gold-digger, money oriented
21. Naive
    Definition: Showing a lack of experience, wisdom, or judgment.
    Sample adjective: naïve, simple, gullible
22. Trustworthy
    Definition: able to be relied on as honest or truthful.
    Sample adjectives: trust, discrete, dependable, honest, reliable
23. Different
    Definition: not the same as another or each other; unlike in nature, form, or quality.
    Sample adjectives: unique, different, distinct
24. Emotional
    Definition: having feelings that are easily excited and openly displayed.
    Sample adjectives: emotional
25. Creative
    Definition: relating to or involving the imagination or original ideas.
    Sample adjectives: creative, intuitive
26. Shrewdness
    Definition: Marked by clever discerning awareness and acumen.
    Sample adjectives: savvy, tactful, resourceful, conniving, calculating
27. Positive physical
    Definition: Favorable descriptions of the body or of one's outward appearance.
    Sample adjectives: pretty, beautiful, youthful, good looking, attractive
28. Negative physical
    Definition: Unfavorable descriptions of the body or of one's outward appearance.
    Sample adjectives: overweight, ugly, fat
29. Neutral physical
    Definition: Descriptions related to the body or to one's appearance with neither a positive nor negative valence.
    Sample adjectives: pale, blonde, round eyes, long hair, petite
30. General positive
    Definition: words with a positive connotation but do not fit into other categories.
    Sample adjectives: wonderful, good, awesome, healthy, lucky
31. General negative
    Definition: words with a negative connotation but do not fit into other categories.
    Sample adjectives: erratic, annoying, frustrated
32. General neutral
    Definition: words with a neutral meaning or a general description but do not fit into other categories.
    Sample adjectives: content, complicated, complex

33. Racial slur

   Definition: a derogatory or disrespectful nickname or description for a racial group.

   Sample adjectives: slant eyes, chink, zipperhead

34. Redundant

   Definition: words that repeat the question, i.e., when they describe the race or the gender of the person that the question asks.

   Sample adjectives: White, Caucasian, Asian, China, Japan, girl

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