Journal of Business and Psychology (2025) 40:903–923
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-024-09994-z

ORIGINAL PAPER

Intersectional Penalties for Perceived Interpersonal Justice Violations among Black and Hispanic Male Leaders in the Workplace

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Accepted: 25 October 2024 / Published online: 20 November 2024

Abstract

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has drawn attention to the lack of progress toward racial equity in many domains. Chief among them is the unequal treatment that Black men often face when interacting with law enforcement or within the criminal justice system, which appears heavily associated with the pernicious stereotype that Black men are distinctly aggressive and dangerous. Evidence suggests that Hispanic men are also subject to similar negative stereotypes. We contend that the consequences of this intersectional stereotype are wide-ranging and explore how it manifests and continues to shape the experiences of Black and Hispanic men in contemporary work organizations. Across two field studies surveying employees supervised by a diverse set of leaders, we find evidence that leaders' intersectional identities moderate the relationship between interpersonal injustice and leader evaluations (i.e., performance ratings, reward recommendations) and relational outcomes (i.e., supervisor-directed organizational citizenship behaviors), such that Black or Hispanic men are penalized more severely for violations of interpersonal justice relative to White men as well as Black or Hispanic women. Additionally, this unequal response across leaders is because subordinates find such aggressive actions less acceptable for Black or Hispanic men, as it violates societal proscriptions surrounding for whom aggressive behaviors are deemed acceptable, rather than due to greater fear associated with the content of this negative stereotype.

Keywords Intersectionality · Race · Stereotypes · Aggression · Interpersonal injustice

The initial catalyst that sparked the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement was the murder of Trayvon Martin, a young black man, by George Zimmerman (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2017). The case garnered widespread attention and outrage when Zimmerman was ultimately acquitted and spurred a broader conversation and calls to action regarding racial justice that spread well beyond the United States. This case and the BLM movement also put a spotlight on the biases faced by Black individuals, particularly Black men, when interacting with law enforcement and within the criminal justice system. Subsequent events, such as the highly publicized murder of George Floyd, further underscored these disparities.

At the heart of these biases that disproportionately affect Black men appears to be the stereotype that Black men are dangerous, violent, and aggressive (e.g., Wilson et al., 2017; Sagar & Schofield, 1980). Some scholars have argued that the origins of this stereotype can be traced to the institution of slavery, whereby these beliefs were used to justify or rationalize dehumanizing behavior and control over the Black population (Plous & Williams, 1995; Taylor et al., 2019). Research also suggests that Hispanic men are similarly stereotyped as "macho" and aggressive (e.g., Burton et al., 2005; Ghavami & Peplau, 2013), and often problematically portrayed by politicians and media as criminals (e.g., Brown, 2016; Haner et al., 2020). These stereotypes may also contribute to both groups' over-representation in the U.S. prison population (Ulmer et al., 2016). In this paper, we contend that these stereotypes and their ill effects continue to be reproduced in organizations today to negatively impact

Additional supplementary materials may be found here by searching on article title https://osf.io/collections/jbp/discover.

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the working lives of Black and Hispanic men – though perhaps in more subtle or insidious ways.

To this end, we draw upon and integrate the MOSAIC model (Hall et al., 2019), a Model of Stereotyping through Associated and Intersectional Categories, with research on organizational justice and motivated cognition (Barclay et al., 2017) to theorize that Black or Hispanic male leaders will suffer intersectional penalties for violating interpersonal justice – disrespectful or rude behaviors during decision-making processes (Bies, 2001) – relative to White male leaders as well as Black or Hispanic female leaders, with whom they each share a common demographic category. We chose to focus on interpersonal injustice as the trigger of the negative stereotype given that norms of professionalism and civility in the workplace make more overt and physical forms of aggression less prevalent. Thus, disrespectful or rude interpersonal treatment may be interpreted by subordinates as a manifestation of aggression (e.g., Mu et al., 2024). We examine our hypotheses in two studies, a multi-wave field study (Study 1) and a study that employs event recall methodology to explore underlying mechanisms (Study 2).

The present paper makes at least three important contributions. First, work that takes an intersectional perspective in business and management remains rare (Hall et al., 2019). As a result, we contribute to the literature by demonstrating how distinct negative stereotypes facing Black and Hispanic men that has been shown to be consequential in the criminal justice literature is also at play in the workplace. Second, the majority of research examines barriers to underrepresented groups' attainment of leadership positions, but less work has focused on the challenges that they may continue to face once in these roles. Therefore, we add to the literature by highlighting how interpersonal injustice may have especially damaging repercussions for the evaluations and relationships of Black and Hispanic men in leadership. Finally, the limited existing research that takes an intersectional perspective almost exclusively employs experimental methods, likely because of the numerical rarity of intersectional minority populations (Rosette et al., 2018). By sampling subordinates in long-term working relationships with a diverse set of leaders, our research illuminates what *does* occur in organizations (vs. what *can* occur in controlled settings; Mook, 1983).

Theoretical Background

The term intersectionality was initially coined by Crenshaw (1989). Specifically, she sought to describe how the experiences of Black women were not adequately captured when examining either the experience of women or Black people generally. At the time, courts required plaintiffs to claim *either* race-based or gender-based discrimination, rendering the targeted discrimination faced by Black women as invisible and without legal redress. Thus, this work highlighted the need to consider how the impact of two categories are often not simply additive, but rather can be emergent or multiplicative, and led to a rich tradition of examining intersectional effects in the social sciences (for a review, see Rosette et al., 2018).

MOSAIC was developed to explain and make sense of the findings in this domain regarding how individuals' multiple group memberships combine to influence how they are evaluated (Hall et al., 2019). The model articulates four phases to this process. In the first phase, the perceiver selects which (combination of) categories to attend to. Key to this phase is the concept of a foundational demographic category, which is shared between two individuals, and an intersectional demographic category, which is unshared between two individuals. For example, when comparing a Black man and a White man, the foundational demographic characteristic is gender, whereas the intersectional demographic characteristic is race. In contrast, when comparing a Black man and a Black woman, the foundational demographic characteristic is race, and the intersectional demographic characteristic is gender. Together, these two comparisons help to illuminate emergent intersectional effects. Although there may be circumstances where other comparisons can be informative, they are not required as evidence of intersectionality (e.g., Ponce de Leon & Rosette, 2022). As an example, in the case of White women, they have neither gender nor race in common with Black men, and thus, conceptually would be unlikely to be similarly stereotyped. Moreover, even if the relationships of interest were statistically similar for Black men and White women, it does not preclude that the same relationship may still differ between Black men and Black women as well as White men – demonstrating intersectionality. Finally, it is often infeasible or impractical to include and compare all categories within a demographic characteristic (e.g., compare Black men against Hispanic men, Asian men, Native American men, Middle Eastern men, etc.).

In the second phase, the stereotypes associated with the foundational and intersectional demographic categories are integrated based upon whether and how the intersectional demographic category is implicitly associated with another demographic category. In our example, White men are typically seen as the default for men, who are generally viewed as masculine. For Black men, the Black category has an implicit link with men, such that Blacks as a group are stereotyped as masculine (Galinsky et al., 2013). Consequently, the congruence between their gender and race categories leads to stereotype amplification, such that Black men are seen as hyper-masculine. However, for Black women, their gender and race categories are incongruent, such that being

a woman weakens the masculine stereotype associated with their race, leading to stereotype dilution relative to Black men (Johnson et al., 2012).

In the third phase, different templates (i.e., visibility, proscription, and prescription) are activated based upon integrated stereotypes, which ultimately shape evaluations, the fourth and final phase. The MOSAIC model specifies that stereotype amplification (dilution) leads to greater (lesser) visibility, increased (decreased) severity of proscriptions for that group, as well as greater (lesser) prescriptions for that group. As an example, Black men who are stereotyped as especially masculine should be more visible or memorable relative to White men. Similarly, they will also be more visible or memorable than Black women due to being seen as more prototypical of the Black group (Sesko & Biernat, 2010). In turn, greater visibility can be a double-edged sword, such that it can give rise to both positive and negative evaluations dependent upon how the evaluator judges the nature of their contribution.

In the next section, we apply the relevant tenets of the MOSAIC model to develop our hypotheses regarding why Black or Hispanic men will be evaluated more negatively for violating interpersonal justice relative to (a) White men and (b) Black or Hispanic women. Note we do not make predictions regarding comparisons between Black or Hispanic men versus White women because the two groups do not share any common categories (i.e., race or gender). However, for exploratory purposes and completeness, we do collect data from workers whose supervisors were White women and include them in our analyses.

Hypotheses Development

Interpersonal Injustice and Intersectional Stereotypes of Black and Hispanic Men

Leaders play a critical role in making decisions that affect the working conditions, resources, and rewards available to organizational members. Given these powers, subordinates look to their leaders to act ethically and fairly by upholding organizational justice rules (Colquitt et al., 2015). Thus, when organizational justice rules are perceived to be violated, it results in subordinates' censure of the leader and withdrawal from the relationship (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Historically, the benefits of upholding – and the dangers of violating – justice rules were viewed as universal across leaders. However, research increasingly indicates that responses to leaders' quality of interpersonal treatment during decision-making processes vary depending upon the demographics of the leader (e.g., Caleo, 2016; Mu et al., 2024; Zapata et al., 2016). Still, studies to date have approached this in a relatively simplistic manner – ignoring that all leaders are members of *multiple* demographic groups and the importance of intersectionality (Rosenthal, 2016).

In the current research, we focus on leaders' violation (or enactment) of interpersonal justice. This is because relative to the other dimensions of organizational justice (i.e., distributive justice, procedural justice), managers have the most discretion over interpersonal justice, such that subordinates are likely to pay close attention to these actions and view them as most indicative of their managers' true feelings toward them (Scott et al., 2009). Additionally, prior research also reveals that researchers often conceptualize or classify interpersonal injustice as a form of supervisor aggression (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). Indeed, its ill effect in the workplace is often similar to other more active and egregious forms of negative leadership behaviors (e.g., abusive supervision, Hershcovis et al., 2007). This suggests that subordinates are likely to perceive rude and disrespectful behaviors during decision-making from their leaders as aggressive and reflective of high levels of agency (Mu et al., 2024), whereby their leader is seeking to dominate or control them (Abele & Wojciszke, 2007; Prentice & Carranza, 2002).

Therefore, we predict that subordinate reactions to Black or Hispanic male leaders who violate interpersonal justice to be especially negative. The MOSAIC model articulates that because Blacks and men are separately stereotyped as aggressive, this tends to amplify the strength of the stereotype and proscriptions when the target is both Black and male (Hall et al., 2019). Thus, this stereotype amplification effect translates into especially poor reactions from those who perceive the heightened negative stereotype as being confirmed. Indeed, a robust literature has documented that Black men and boys are commonly viewed as distinctly threatening and aggressive and tend to be severely punished for such behaviors (e.g., Hall & Livingston, 2012; Okonfua & Eberhardt, 2015; Sagar & Schofield, 1980; Wilson et al., 2017).

Although most of these investigations have focused on Black men, emerging evidence indicates that Hispanic men are subject to similar negative stereotypes involving hostility, aggression, and violence (e.g., Burton et al., 2005; Niemann et al., 1994; Wilson, 1996). Indeed, the term "macho" is uniquely associated with Hispanic men (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013) and reflects hyper-masculine traits, including callous attitudes towards sex with women and the valorization of violence and danger (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). Furthermore, these negative perceptions have likely been exacerbated by problematic rhetoric by politicians and media; for example, President Trump's characterization of Mexican immigrants as "bad hombres… murderers, rapists, and drug dealers" (Haner et al., 2020, pg. 1609). Thus, we anticipate that Hispanic men will be subject to similar penalties as Black men for interpersonal injustice.

In contrast, we posit that the negative consequences of violating interpersonal justice will be less severe for White men relative to Black or Hispanic men. Although men are commonly ascribed agentic and masculine characteristics, which includes aggression (Eagly & Wood, 2012), this stereotype is not further amplified by race for White men. This is because the White group tends to be viewed as "neutral" or the default against which other racial groups are contrasted (Merritt & Harrison, 2006). Therefore, unlike Black or Hispanic men, White men are not stereotyped as highly aggressive. Additionally, White men are generally encouraged to be agentic (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Despite evidence that aggressive behaviors are commonly seen as undesirable among leaders (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004), nevertheless, there are contexts under which such behaviors by leaders are viewed as appropriate (i.e., conditions of high uncertainty, Schoel et al., 2011) and there is considerable variation across people, such that some individuals do believe that ideal leaders ought to possess these traits (Mirowska et al., 2021). In fact, empirical research has shown that these more tyrannical characteristics can be positively associated with perceptions of leader effectiveness for White male leaders (Sy et al., 2010). Thus, although we are not predicting that subordinates necessarily *approve* of interpersonal injustice from their leader when they are a White man, they may be more likely to tolerate it and react less negatively as compared to if they were a Black or Hispanic man.

Additionally, we argue that the negative outcomes for violating interpersonal justice will be attenuated for Black or Hispanic *women* relative to Black or Hispanic men, despite the two groups sharing a common demographic characteristic (i.e., race). Prior research reveals that Black women (e.g., confident, aggressive) and Hispanic women (e.g., feisty, loud) are commonly described using dominant traits (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013). However, according to the MOSAIC model (Hall et al., 2019), the strength of this aggressive stereotype and its associated proscription will be diluted for Black or Hispanic women as compared to Black or Hispanic men because Black or Hispanic women are not seen as prototypical of the Black or Hispanic groups (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013; Schug et al., 2015). Similarly, Black or Hispanic women are also not seen as prototypical of women, as White women remain the standard (Coles & Pasek, 2020). This "cancelling" effect results in a form of invisibility that allows Black women greater behavioral latitude for aggression not afforded to Black men or White women (Smith et al., 2019). Conceptually, MOSAIC also predicts the same leeway for Hispanic women regarding dominant behaviors, though to our knowledge, this has not yet been directly examined in the literature. Supporting these arguments, Livingston et al. (2012) found that dominance was not punished when displayed by Black women in leadership roles but was censured when displayed by Black men in leadership roles. Combining these observations, we put forth the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The damaging effect of leaders' higher (vs. lower) interpersonal injustice on subordinate reactions (i.e., leader evaluations, supervisor-directed OCB) is stronger for Black men relative to (a) White men and (b) Black women.

Hypothesis 2: The damaging effect of leaders' higher (vs. lower) interpersonal injustice on subordinate reactions (i.e., leader evaluations, supervisor-directed OCB) is stronger for Hispanic men relative to (a) White men and (b) Hispanic women.

Investigating Underlying Processes

As argued in the preceding section, we propose that it is because of the amplified negative stereotypes of Black and Hispanic men as highly aggressive that subordinates react to interpersonal justice violations more strongly. It may be further illuminating theoretically to distinguish two ways in which this negative stereotype could serve to erode leader evaluations and the leader-follower relationship when interpersonal injustice is higher. First, the markedly unfavorable reactions to perceived violations of interpersonal justice by Black or Hispanic men relative to other groups may arise from the instrumental *purpose* of prescriptive stereotypes, to maintain the existing social hierarchy by punishing those who deviate (Berdahl, 2007). In fact, the status incongruity hypothesis predicts that individuals who belong to low status groups are penalized for engaging in agentic or high-status behaviors, including dominance, because this challenges the status quo (Rudman et al., 2012). In support of this line of reasoning, Hall and Livingston (2012) found that Black football players were viewed more negatively when they engaged in "celebration" displays post touchdown compared to when White football players did so, as such arrogance was seen as more inappropriate for their group. Moreover, this effect remained significant even when controlling for differences in perceived aggression between the groups. Finally, as articulated above, the MOSAIC model also posits that stereotype amplification contributes to more severe proscriptions for the group at that intersection.

Yet, alternatively (or in addition), other pathways are also plausible. In particular, this stereotype may lead subordinates to feel especially fearful when Black or Hispanic male leaders exhibit signs of aggression, including rude and disrespectful treatment during decision-making, relative to when these behaviors are enacted by White male leaders or Black or Hispanic female leaders. By this account, reactions are the result of the *content* of this stereotype, such that its activation among those with Black or Hispanic male leaders negatively affects subordinates'

feelings toward their leader, which then biases their reactions. Supporting the idea that the negative aggression stereotype can bias observers' emotional reactions to stimuli, prior research has shown that even when controlling for target upper-body strength, Black men are still perceived as more physically threatening than objectively comparable White men (Wilson et al., 2017). In the same vein, prior research also reveals that among CEOs, who are predominantly male, Black CEOs disproportionately have "baby faces" compared to White CEOs, highlighting the importance of being seen as non-threatening for success for the former group (Livingston & Pearce, 2009). Thus, in our research we examine which stereotype-based mechanism(s) might underlie the disproportionate harmful effects of greater interpersonal injustice on judgments and treatment of Black and Hispanic male leaders in the workplace.

Hypothesis 3: The damaging effect of higher (vs. lower) interpersonal injustice on leader reactions are stronger for Black men relative to White men and Black women due to (a) violations of group-based proscriptions regarding how one "ought not" to behave and (b) fear associated with the "too aggressive" stereotype.

Hypothesis 4: The damaging effect of higher (vs. lower) interpersonal injustice on leader reactions are stronger for Hispanic men relative to White men and Hispanic women due to (a) violations of group-based proscriptions regarding how one "ought not" to behave and (b) fear associated with the "too aggressive" stereotype.

Overview of Studies

To address our hypotheses, we conducted two studies that surveyed subordinates in established working relationships with a diverse set of leaders. However, prior to presenting our focal studies, we first report a pilot study that we undertook to check our assumptions and inform our decision-making regarding the appropriateness of potentially combining certain demographic groups in our analyses (e.g., Black and Hispanic men). Then, in Study 1, a multi-wave field study, we focus on Hypothesis 1 and 2, examining whether leaders' intersectional gender and race identities moderate relationships between interpersonal injustice and leader evaluations (i.e., performance rating, reward recommendation) and relational outcomes (i.e., supervisor-directed organizational citizenship behaviors). Finally, in Study 2, we incorporate Hypothesis 3 and 4, using an event recall methodology to clarify and differentiate between two potential stereotype-based mechanisms that may explain why Black or Hispanic male leaders are particularly censured for violating interpersonal justice.

Pilot

Method

Participants and Procedure

The sample consisted of 803 participants based in the United States recruited from Prolific (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Note that this sample is non-overlapping with the samples in the subsequent studies. The majority of participants were White (70.6%, $n = 567$), followed by Asian (10.3%, $n = 83$), Hispanic (8.1%, $n = 65$), Black (6.5%, $n = 52$), Other (2.7%, $n = 22$), Native American (0.7%, $n = 6$), Middle Eastern (0.5%, $n = 4$), and did not indicate their race (0.5%, $n = 4$). In terms of gender, 53.4% of the sample identified as male ($n = 429$), 44.2% identified as female ($n = 355$), 1.5% identified as other ($n = 12$), 0.5% preferred not to say ($n = 4$), and 0.4% did not indicate their gender ($n = 3$). In terms of their current role, the largest percentage of participants were employed in the private sector (38.9%, $n = 312$), followed by employed in the public sector (20.3%, $n = 163$), self-employed (12.5%, $n = 100$), student (11.0%, $n = 88$), unemployed (7.8%, $n = 63$), retired (5.6%, $n = 45$), homemaker (3.2%, $n = 26$), business owner (0.4%, $n = 3$), and did not indicate their role (0.4%, $n = 3$). On average, participants were 37.55 years old ($SD = 13.73$), and had 16.36 years of work experience ($SD = 13.02$).

Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight groups: White men ($n = 103$), White women ($n = 91$), Black men ($n = 94$), Black women ($n = 110$), Hispanic men ($n = 108$), Hispanic women ($n = 103$), Asian men ($n = 102$), and Asian women ($n = 92$). Participants were then asked to choose the group that is "perceived or stereotyped most similarly to [their randomly assigned group] in American society" from a list consisting of the other seven groups and an "other" category, the latter of which they could write in more details. Note that we chose to include Asian men and Asian women even though they were not included in the subsequent studies because it enabled us to ascertain whether all racial minority groups were viewed to be stereotyped similarly (vs. primarily the Black and Hispanic groups as we have argued above). Participants were remunerated 0.75 British pound sterling (GBP) for their participation (as Prolific is an organization based in the United Kingdom).

Results

Table 1 reports the results of our pilot study. There appears to be a general tendency for race to dominate perceptions

Table 1 Similarity in stereotypes across groups pilot study

	White Men ($N=103$)		White Women ($N=91$)		Black Men ($N=94$)		Black Women ($N=110$)		Hispanic Men ($N=108$)		Hispanic Women ($N=103$)		Asian Men ($N=102$)		Asian Women ($N=92$)	
	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n	Proportion [95% CI]	n
White Men			56.0% [0.46, 0.66]	51	3.2% [0.009, 0.08]	3	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	6.5% [0.03, 0.12]	7	1.9% [0.004, 0.06]	2	21.6% [0.14, 0.30]	22	5.4% [0.02, 0.12]	5
White Women	55.3% [0.46, 0.65]	57			0% [0.00, 0.03]	0	3.6% [0.01, 0.08]	4	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	9.7% [0.05, 0.17]	10	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	16.3% [0.07, 0.21]	15
Black Men	14.6% [0.09, 0.22]	15	2.2% [0.005, 0.07]	2			58.2% [0.49, 0.67]	64	43.5% [0.34, 0.53]	47	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	4.9% [0.02, 0.10]	5	0% [0.00, 0.03]	0
Black Women	1.0% [0.001, 0.04]	1	5.5% [0.04, 0.15]	5	42.6% [0.33, 0.53]	40			0.9% [0.001, 0.04]	1	43.7% [0.34, 0.53]	45	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	5.4% [0.02, 0.12]	5
Hispanic Men	13.6% [0.08, 0.21]	14	1.1% [0.001, 0.05]	1	48.9% [0.39, 0.59]	46	0.9% [0.001, 0.04]	1			24.3% [0.17, 0.33]	25	12.7% [0.07, 0.20]	13	0% [0.00, 0.03]	0
Hispanic Women	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	8.8% [0.04, 0.16]	8	2.1% [0.004, 0.07]	2	33.6% [0.25, 0.43]	37	36.1% [0.28, 0.45]	39			0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	23.9% [0.16, 0.33]	22
Asian Men	13.6% [0.08, 0.21]	14	1.1% [0.001, 0.05]	1	1.1% [0.001, 0.05]	1	0.9% [0.001, 0.04]	1	10.2% [0.06, 0.17]	11	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0			47.8% [0.38, 0.58]	44
Asian Women	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	24.2% [0.16, 0.34]	22	0% [0.00, 0.03]	0	2.7% [0.008, 0.07]	3	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	17.5% [0.11, 0.26]	18	59.8% [0.50, 0.69]	61		
Other	1.9% [0.004, 0.06]	2	1.1% [0.001, 0.05]	1	2.1% [0.004, 0.07]	2	0% [0.00, 0.02]	0	2.8% [0.01, 0.07]	3	2.9% [0.01, 0.08]	3	1.0% [0.001, 0.05]	1	1.1% [0.001, 0.05]	1

of similarity. White women was the group that was seen as most similar to White men (55.3% of respondents in that condition), and White men was the group that was seen as most similar to White women (56.0% of respondents in that condition). In the same vein, for Asian men, Asian women was the group chosen as being stereotyped most similarly (59.8% of respondents in that condition), and vice versa for Asian women (47.8% of respondents in that condition chose Asian men).

However, in line with our arguments that Black and Hispanic men are stereotyped similarly, for Black men, participants viewed Hispanic men as the most similarly perceived group in American society (48.9% of respondents in that condition). We note that this was followed closely by Black women (42.6% of respondents in that condition), and the confidence intervals for these two groups overlapped such that participants did not choose Hispanic men significantly more than Black women. Similarly, for Hispanic men, participants reported Black men as the group that was stereotyped most similarly (43.5% of respondents in that condition). Yet, other respondents saw Hispanic women as the most similar group (36.1% of respondents in that condition), and again the confidence intervals for these two groups overlapped such that participants did not choose Black men significantly more than Hispanic women when asked about Hispanic men.

Results for Black and Hispanic women were more mixed. Although a substantial portion of respondents chose Hispanic women (33.6%) as the group most similar to Black women, the most frequently chosen group (and statistically significantly greater than all the other options) was Black men (58.2% of respondents in that condition). In contrast, for Hispanic women, Black women was the group seen as most similarly stereotyped (43.7% of respondents in that condition); indeed, significantly more so than all other groups, including Hispanic men (24.3% of respondents in that condition).

Discussion

The results of our pilot study provide some converging evidence for our arguments that Black and Hispanic men are often stereotyped similarly in the United States. However, it was less clear whether Black and Hispanic women were similarly stereotyped, as participants indicated that Black women are perceived most similarly to Black men rather than Hispanic women. Additionally, we acknowledge that the current pilot study does not shed light on the content of the stereotypes on which groups are judged to be similar, such that it is possible that the perceived similarity is based on other traits rather than the one of primary interest (i.e., aggression). Furthermore, it is also possible that although two groups are judged as *most* similar, they still differ in meaningful and substantive ways. Thus, in our main studies, we first present results where groups are disaggregated, but also present supplemental analyses where we combine Black and Hispanic men as well as Black and Hispanic women.

Study 1

Method

Participants and Procedure

We recruited participants based in the United States from Amazon's Mechanical Turk following best practices (Aguinis et al., 2021). First, to unobtrusively identify a sample of employees who worked with a diverse set of leaders, we conducted a large-scale pre-screen survey ($N = 2{,}981$) that asked participants their workplace supervisors' demographics (which also included filler questions to mask the purpose of the pre-screen). We then invited all participants supervised by a Black or Hispanic male leader ($n = 125$) and Black or Hispanic female leader ($n = 145$), along with a randomly selected, comparably sized group of participants supervised by a White male leader ($n = 145$) or White female leader ($n = 147$) to participate in a two-wave survey study whereby assessments of predictor (i.e., interpersonal injustice) and outcomes (i.e., leader evaluations, supervisor-directed OCBs) were separated by 4–5 days. Participants were remunerated $0.50 USD for the pre-screen, $1.00 USD for the first survey, and $2.00 USD for the second survey.

After matching data across surveys and dropping respondents who failed CAPTCHAs (indicating they could be a bot) or provided different initials when referencing their supervisor (indicating they may not be reporting consistently on the same individual across surveys), our final sample consisted of 305 participants: 20 had a Black male leader, 39 had a Hispanic male leader, 90 had a White male leader, 41 had a Black female leader, 28 had a Hispanic female leader, and 87 had a White female leader. By contrast, the majority of participants (i.e., followers) were White (73%; $n = 223$), followed by Hispanic (9.5%; $n = 29$), Black (9.2%; $n = 28$), Asian (6.3%; $n = 19$), Native American (0.7%; $n = 2$), Middle Eastern (0.7%; $n = 2$), and Other (2%; $n = 2$). The sample of participants was gender-balanced (49.5% men, $n = 151$; 50.5% women, $n = 154$). On average, participants were 35.98 years old ($SD = 9.87$), worked 40.33 h per week ($SD = 8.12$), and had been supervised by their current leader for 3.59 years ($SD = 3.42$).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations among study 1 variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Subordinate Race (0 = minority, 1 = majority/White)	0.73	0.44								
2. Subordinate Gender (0 = female, 1 = male)	0.50	0.50	−0.02							
3. Supervisor Race Dummy 1 (1 = Black)	0.20	0.40	−0.09	−0.07						
4. Supervisor Race Dummy 2 (1 = Hispanic)	0.22	0.41	−0.14*	0.03	−0.27**					
5. Supervisor Gender (0 = female, 1 = male)	0.49	0.50	0.03	0.25**	−0.16**	0.10				
6. Interpersonal Injustice (T1)	1.65	0.77	−0.09	−0.03	0.06	−0.01	−0.04			
7. Performance Rating (T2)	4.68	1.07	−0.07	−0.05	−0.07	−0.00	−0.01	−0.50**		
8. Reward Recommendation (T2)	3.62	1.05	−0.01	0.00	−0.09	−0.01	0.03	−0.57**	0.82**	
9. Supervisor-Directed OCB (T2)	5.41	1.13	0.01	−0.08	−0.04	−0.03	0.01	−0.29**	0.49**	0.59**

$N = 305$; *OCB* organizational citizenship behavior

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Measures

Interpersonal Injustice (T1)[1] Participants rated their supervisor's degree of interpersonal injustice using Colquitt et al.'s (2015) 8-item measure (α = 0.90) using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *a very small extent* to *a very large extent*. This measure assesses the "full-range" of justice, with items tapping both adherence to and violation of justice rules during decision-making. We reverse-coded adherence items prior to calculating the scale score, such that higher scores indicate greater interpersonal injustice. Sample items: *Does your supervisor treat you with respect?* (reverse-coded), *Does your supervisor treat you in a derogatory manner?*

Leader Evaluations (T2) Participants provided two types of leader evaluations. Participants evaluated their leader's performance using Caleo's (2016) 4-item measure (α = 0.87). Sample item: *Overall, how would you rate [your supervisor's] job performance?* Participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale, with the response scale content matched to each item. For the sample item above, responses ranged from *poor* to *excellent*. Participants also provided reward recommendations for their leader using Allen and Rush's (1998) 5-item measure (α = 0.94). Sample item: *[My supervisor] should receive a salary increase.* Participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale, from *would definitely not recommend* to *would recommend with confidence and without reservation*.

Supervisor-Directed Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (T2) Participants also rated the extent to which they engage in supervisor-directed OCBs, long recognized as a key indicator of the quality of the social exchange relationship between leaders and followers (Zellars & Tepper, 2003). Participants completed Liden and Maslyn's (1998) 3-item measure (α = 0.73) using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Sample item: *I do work for my supervisor that goes beyond what is specified in my job description.*

Data Analysis

We use multiple regression analyses to test Hypothesis 1 and 2. We conduct these analyses twice, once with Black male leaders as the reference group (reported in-text) and once with Hispanic male leaders as the reference group (see Supplemental Online Materials for tables). We also include participants' own gender and race (i.e., majority or White vs. minority group member) as control variables in our analyses. To rule out relational demography effects (Tsui et al., 2002), we also explored controlling leader-follower gender and race match as alternative control variables. The pattern of results remained consistent regardless of which set of control variables was included.

Results

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics and correlations between Study 1 variables. Table 3 reports multiple regression results. The relationship between interpersonal injustice and leader evaluations was stronger for Black men compared to White men (performance rating: $b = 0.83$, $SE = 0.33$, $p = .01$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.73$, $SE = 0.31$, $p = .03$) as well as Black women (performance rating: $b = 0.82$, $SE = 0.34$, $p = .02$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.70$, $SE = 0.32$, $p = .03$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Additionally, this relationship was also stronger for

[1] To establish divergent validity and rule out the possibility that Black or Hispanic male leaders are unequally censured relative to other leaders for all negative or unfair actions broadly, we examined whether leader demographic characteristics moderated the relationship between distributive injustice, procedural injustice, and informational injustice, respectively, and our outcomes. These relations did not significantly differ by group, indicating that the intersectional effects we uncovered appear to be unique to interpersonal injustice.

Table 3 Multiple regression analyses predicting leader evaluation and supervisor-directed OCBs for Study 1

	Performance Rating			Reward Recommendation			Supervisor-Directed OCB		
	b	*SE*	*t*	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*b*	*SE*	*t*
Constant	7.16**	0.53	13.61	5.74**	0.49	11.77	6.90**	0.62	11.21
Subordinate Race	−0.28*	0.13	-2.24	−0.14	0.12	-1.18	−0.01	0.15	-0.08
Subordinate Gender	−0.14	0.11	-1.26	0.01	0.10	0.06	−0.19	0.13	-1.49
Interpersonal Injustice	-1.45**	0.30	-4.79	-1.41**	0.28	-5.02	−0.92**	0.35	-2.61
White Men – Group Dummy Variable	-1.14*	0.56	-2.03	−0.91	0.52	-1.74	−0.91	0.66	-1.38
Black Women – Group Dummy Variable	-1.32*	0.61	-2.16	−0.96	0.57	-1.69	−0.88	0.71	-1.23
Hispanic Men – Group Dummy Variable	−0.76	0.67	-1.13	−0.16	0.62	-0.26	−0.20	0.78	-0.26
Hispanic Women – Group Dummy Variable	-1.37*	0.63	-2.18	−0.99	0.58	-1.70	-1.27	0.74	-1.73
White Women – Group Dummy Variable	−0.88	0.56	-1.57	−0.56	0.52	-1.08	−0.34	0.66	-0.52
Interpersonal Injustice X White Men	0.83*	0.33	2.53	0.73*	0.31	2.39	0.67	0.39	1.74
Interpersonal Injustice X Black Women	0.82*	0.34	2.40	0.70*	0.32	2.18	0.57	0.40	1.42
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Men	0.50	0.40	1.25	0.18	0.37	0.48	0.18	0.47	0.39
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Women	0.93**	0.36	2.63	0.79*	0.33	2.39	0.76	0.42	1.83
Interpersonal Injustice X White Women	0.69*	0.33	2.09	0.59	0.31	1.94	0.31	0.39	0.80
Total R^2		0.29**			0.36**			0.12**	
ΔR^2 (due to inclusion of interaction terms)		0.02			0.02			0.02	

N = 305; *OCB* organizational citizenship behavior; subordinate race: 0 = minority, 1 = majority/White; subordinate gender: 0 = female, 1 = male; Black men serves as the reference group in these analyses

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Black men compared to Hispanic women (performance rating: $b = 0.93$, $SE = 0.36$ $p = .01$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.79$, $SE = 0.33$, $p = .02$), but not Hispanic men (performance rating: $b = 0.50$, $SE = 40$, $p = .21$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.18$, $SE = 0.37$, $p = .64$). However, contrasts between Black male leaders and White female leaders were inconsistent across the two types of leader evaluations (performance rating: $b = 0.69$, $SE = 0.33$, $p = .04$; reward recommendations: $b = 0.59$, $SE = 0.31$, $p = .05$). These differential relationships are depicted in Fig. 1, which shows that these effects appear to be driven by greater penalties for Black male leaders at higher levels of interpersonal injustice. However, the relationship between interpersonal injustice and supervisor-directed OCBs did not differ significantly between those supervised by Black men versus each of the other groups examined. Overall, Hypothesis 1 is partially supported.

When Hispanic men were used as the reference group in examining the relationship between interpersonal injustice and performance ratings, none of the contrasts with the other groups was significant (for details, see Table S1 in Supplemental Online Materials). Similarly, in terms of the

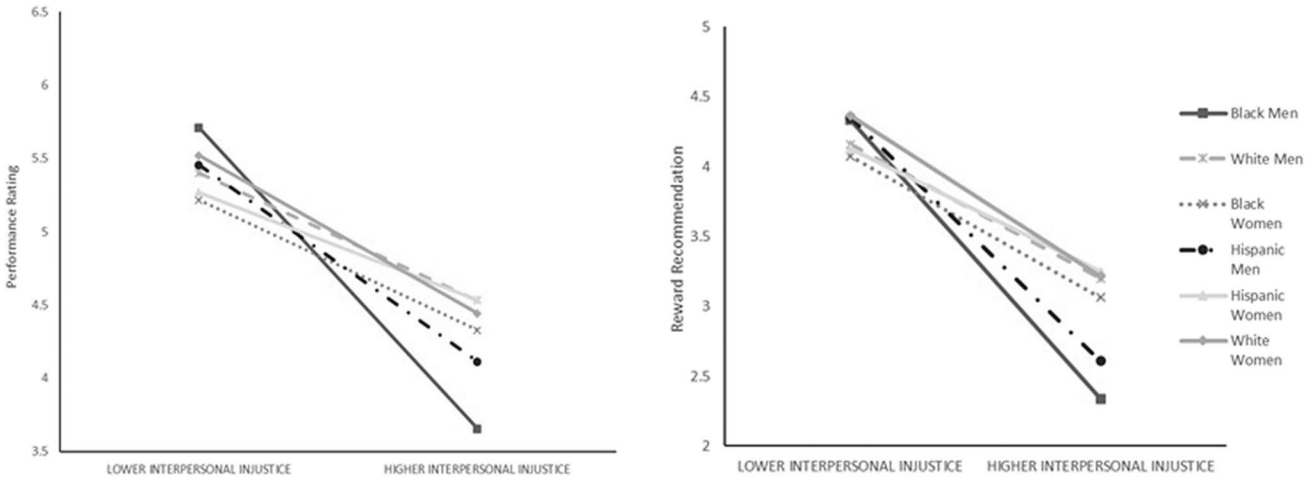

Fig. 1 Moderating role of leader intersectional identities on the relationship between interpersonal injustice and leader evaluations in Study 1

relationship between interpersonal injustice and supervisor-directed OCBs, relationships also did not differ for those supervised by Hispanic men compared to the other groups included in our study. By contrast, for the relationship between interpersonal injustice and reward recommendation, this relationship was stronger for Hispanic male leaders compared to White male leaders ($b = 0.55$, $SE = 0.28$, $p = .046$) and Hispanic female leaders ($b = 0.61$, $SE = 0.30$, $p = .045$), providing partial support for Hypothesis 2.

Supplemental Analyses

Given the results of our pilot study, we also explored combining Black and Hispanic male leaders as well as Black and Hispanic female leaders in our analyses (for details, see Table S2 in Supplemental Online Materials). In terms of leader evaluations, the relationship of interpersonal injustice with performance ratings was stronger for Black or Hispanic male leaders relative to both relevant comparison groups (White men: $b = 0.55$, $SE = 0.24$, $p = .02$; Black or Hispanic women: $b = 0.58$, $SE = 0.23$, $p = .01$). However, this relationship was not statistically different between Black or Hispanic male leaders versus White female leaders ($b = 0.40$, $SE = 0.24$, $p = .09$). A similar pattern of results was obtained for reward recommendation (White men: $b = 0.63$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .01$; Black or Hispanic women: $b = 0.63$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .004$), except the contrast between Black or Hispanic male leaders and White female leaders was significant in this case ($b = 0.49$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .03$).

Additionally, we also find converging results when examining the relationship between interpersonal injustice and supervisor-directed OCBs. Specifically, this relationship was stronger for Black or Hispanic male leaders compared to White male leaders ($b = 0.56$, $SE = 0.28$, $p = .04$) and Black or Hispanic female leaders ($b = 0.55$, $SE = 0.27$, $p = .046$). However, the contrast between Black or Hispanic male leaders and White female leaders was non-significant ($b = 0.20$, $SE = 0.28$, $p = .47$).

Discussion

Our results bring to light some of the challenges that Black and Hispanic men continue to face in the workplace due to common beliefs that these groups are distinctly aggressive. When Black and Hispanic male leaders were treated as separate groups, results suggest that our theorized effects regarding the negative consequences of violating interpersonal justice may be stronger or more robust for Black male leaders relative to Hispanic male leaders. However, results were more consistent across the three outcomes when these two groups (as well as Black and Hispanic female leaders) were combined in analyses, likely due to the larger sample sizes per group and resulting increase in statistical power.

By contrast, negative reactions to perceived interpersonal injustice appear similar in magnitude and less severe for White men and Black or Hispanic women (vs. Black and Hispanic men). The fact that Black or Hispanic women experience consequences similar to White men, the dominant group, for interpersonal injustice may be surprising, but is in line with prior research that has found that, at times, Black women can experience benign intersectional invisibility that allows them more behavioral flexibility and freedom at work (Smith et al., 2019). In the following study, we sought to replicate Study 1 findings and take a deeper dive as to the precise manner in which the aggression stereotype manifests to disadvantage Black and Hispanic men in managerial roles.

Study 2

Method

Participants and Procedure

We recruited full-time workers based in the United States from Prolific. Again, to identify a sample of employees who worked with a diverse set of leaders, we conducted a large-scale pre-screen survey ($N = 5{,}019$)[2] that asked participants their workplace supervisors' demographics as well as filler questions. An additional criterion for invitation to the study was that participants had to report that they could recall a time their current supervisor treated them unfairly during decision-making procedures.

We chose to ask participants to focus on a particular event to enable a better test of underlying mechanism as activating an episodic memory "enables perceivers to provide an explanation or justification for their conclusion", in contrast to generalized impressions (i.e., semantic memory) where respondents rely on their intuition (Hansbrough et al., 2021, pg. 2–3). A focus on episodic memory is also critical because one of our proposed mediating mechanisms is fear, and episodic memories contain rich details, including the emotions experienced when the memory was encoded. Thus,

[2] We note that data collection for this study occurred in two rounds that followed the same procedures and participants were non-overlapping. The second round of data collection was undertaken based on the review team's request to increase sample size. Specifically, we prescreened 3,026 participants in Round 1 during July 2021 and 1,993 participants in Round 2 during June 2023. We compared the data collected in Round 1 versus Round 2 and there were no significant mean differences on study variables; thus, we combined all data for analysis in Study 2.

our event recall methodology helps participants to "re-live" the event, and consequently, enhances the accuracy of their retrospective account.

We then invited all participants who recalled being treated unfairly that were supervised by a Black or Hispanic male leader ($n = 140$) or Black or Hispanic female leader ($n = 109$), along with a comparable randomly selected group of participants who recalled being treated unfairly that were supervised by a White male leader ($n = 138$) or White female leader ($n = 110$) to participate in our study. Participants were remunerated 0.65 GBP for the pre-screen and 2.00 GBP for the study (as Prolific is an organization based in the United Kingdom). In the study, participants were first asked to recall and describe a time when their current supervisor violated interpersonal justice rules before completing measures to assess level of interpersonal injustice, the proposed mediating mechanisms (i.e., violation of prescriptive norms of aggression, feelings of fear), and reactions toward the leader (i.e., leader evaluations, supervisor-directed OCBs).

After excluding respondents who could not recall an event where their leader violated interpersonal justice, reported leader demographics that did not match their pre-screen responses, or failed attention checks, our final sample comprised 309 participants: 37 had a Black male leader, 42 had a Hispanic male leader, 97 had a White male leader, 34 had a Black female leader, 23 had a Hispanic female leader, and 76 had a White female leader. The majority of participants (i.e., followers) were White (64%; $n = 199$), followed by Black (20%; $n = 63$), Hispanic (7%; $n = 22$), Asian (6%; $n = 20$), Middle Eastern (0.3%; $n = 1$), Native American (0.3%; $n = 1$), and Other (1%; $n = 3$). The majority of participants identified as male (56%; $n = 173$), followed by female (43%; $n = 132$), and non-binary/other (1%; $n = 4$). On average, participants were 37.60 years old ($SD = 10.24$) and had worked with their current leader for 4.52 years ($SD = 3.80$).

Measures

In this study, all items explicitly referred to the event recalled by the participant.

Interpersonal Injustice Given the context of this study in which we focused on a specific event when their leader acted in an interpersonally unjust manner, participants were asked to rate their supervisor's level of interpersonal injustice during the incident using only the 4-items from Colquitt et al.'s (2015) measure ($\alpha = 0.83$) that focus on the violation of interpersonal justice rules. We note that only using items that focus on either justice violation or adherence to assess the underlying bipolar justice continuum is a fairly common practice in the literature (e.g., Rosen et al., 2021; Watkins & Umphress, 2020; Zapata et al., 2016).

Violation of Aggression Proscriptions[3] To assess the extent to which one perceived that their leader deviated from how they "ought" to have behaved, we compiled a list of six characteristics associated with the aggression stereotype: *hostile*, *aggressive*, *threatening*, *belligerent*, *combative*, and *menacing* ($\alpha = 0.97$). Participants responded on a 7-point scale regarding the degree to which their manager should have been more or less aggressive during the focal decision-making event compared to how they actually behaved (-3 = *much less*, 0 = *about the same*, + 3 = *much more*). As Black and Hispanic men are particularly proscribed from aggressive actions, we reverse-scored this variable, such that higher scores indicate perceptions that the leader should have acted in a much *less* aggressive manner than they did.

Fear We asked participants to rate what their emotional state was after the event. Specifically, we used three validated indicators of fear drawn from the modified Differential Emotions scale (Fredrickson, 2013): *scared*, *fearful*, and *afraid* ($\alpha = 0.96$). Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all* to *an extremely large extent*.

Leader Evaluations Participants rated how they would assess their leader since the event occurred using the same performance ($\alpha = 0.85$) and reward recommendation ($\alpha = 0.93$) measures as in Study 1, using 5-point Likert scales.

Supervisor-Directed Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs) Participants also rated the extent to which they engaged in supervisor-directed OCBs since the event using the same measure ($\alpha = 0.94$) as in Study 1 but using a 5-point Likert scale.

Data Analysis

We use the same analytic procedures as in Study 1. Again, we explored leader-follower gender and race match as alternative control variables, and results remained consistent. To ascertain whether the event reported systematically differed across the different groups of leaders, we also asked participants to rate the severity of the leaders' actions during the event (i.e., "*How severe were [your supervisor's] actions*?" from *not at all severe* to *extremely severe*), the frequency with which the leader has engaged in such behaviors in the

[3] To avoid demand characteristics, we also asked participants to what extent their leader ought to have displayed communal characteristics, which are more positive in valence (i.e., considerate, kind, understanding, helpful, sympathetic; $\alpha = 0.94$). In exploratory analyses, we found that although participants reported that leaders who were more interpersonally unjust ought to have acted more communally, this relationship did not differ by leaders' intersectional identities.

past with the participant (i.e., "*Prior to this specific event, how often has [your supervisor] displayed similar behaviors toward you*?" from *never* to *very often*), how often the leader had been observed using these types of behaviors with others (i.e., "*Prior to this specific event, how often have you observed [your supervisor] displaying similar behaviors toward others?*" from *never* to *very often*), and how long ago the event took place (on average, the event occurred 3 months ago). One way analysis-of-variance (ANOVAs) revealed that severity ($F(5,302) = 1.02$, $p = .41$), frequency ($F(5,303) = 0.69$, $p = .63$), typicality ($F(5,303) = 1.34$, $p = .25$), and timeframe ($F(5,303) = 1.22$, $p = .30$) did not significantly differ for participants by supervisor intersectional identities (i.e., Black men, Hispanic men, White men, Black women, Hispanic women, White women), indicating that the recalled event is likely comparable across these different groups of leaders. Additionally, controlling for these factors does not change the pattern of results in our main analyses. Finally, to assess moderated mediation, we employed Hayes' (2018) PROCESS macro v. 4.3 to calculate the 95% confidence interval using bootstrapping techniques with 5,000 re-samples around the indirect effects at different levels of the moderator (i.e., for different groups of leaders) and examined whether these indirect effects were statistically different from each other.

Results

Table 4 reports descriptive statistics and correlations between Study 2 variables. Table 5 reports multiple regression results for Study 2 that addresses Hypothesis 1. The relationship between interpersonal injustice and subordinate reactions was stronger for Black men versus White men for two of the three outcomes (performance rating: $b = 0.07$, $SE = 0.16$, $p = .66$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.42$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = .01$; OCB: $b = 0.41$, $SE = 0.21$, $p = .046$). However, contrary to our predictions, relations between interpersonal injustice and outcomes did not differ between Black male leaders and Black female leaders (performance rating: $b = -0.23$, $SE = 0.21$, $p = .27$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.09$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .68$; OCB: $b = 0.18$, $SE = 0.27$, $p = .50$). Rather, the contrast between Black men versus *Hispanic* women was significant for two of the three outcomes (performance rating: $b = 0.45$, $SE = 0.21$, $p = .04$; reward recommendation: $b = 0.68$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .002$; OCB: $b = 0.51$, $SE = 0.27$, $p = .06$). We depict the differential relationship between interpersonal injustice and reward recommendations by leader intersectional identities in Fig. 2, as the other significant contrasts generally followed the same pattern. In summary, these findings partially support Hypothesis 1.

We re-ran analyses with Hispanic male leaders as the reference group to address Hypothesis 2 (for details, see Table S3 in Supplemental Online Materials). There were

Table 4 Descriptive statistics and correlations among Study 2 variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Subordinate Race (0 = minority, 1 = majority/White)	0.64	0.48											
2. Subordinate Gender Dummy 1 (1 = female)	0.43	0.50	0.11										
3. Subordinate Gender Dummy 2 (1 = non-binary)	0.01	0.11	−0.09	−0.10									
4. Supervisor Race Dummy 1 (1 = Black)	0.23	0.42	−0.38**	−0.02	0.21**								
5. Supervisor Race Dummy 2 (1 = Hispanic)	0.22	0.41	0.00	−0.03	−0.06	−0.28**							
6. Supervisor Gender (0 = female, 1 = male)	0.57	0.50	−0.07	−0.40**	−0.07	−0.05	0.08						
7. Interpersonal Injustice	3.05	1.05	−0.04	0.02	0.08	−0.04	0.00	0.03					
8. Violation of Aggression Proscription	1.89	1.39	−0.12*	0.16**	0.03	0.04	−0.03	−0.06	0.35**				
9. Fear	1.60	1.00	−0.14*	−0.05	0.05	0.01	−0.02	0.06	0.25**	0.01			
10. Performance Rating	3.15	0.98	0.03	−0.15**	−0.04	−0.07	0.02	0.20**	−0.27**	−0.12*	−0.00		
11. Reward Recommendation	2.24	1.02	0.10	−0.11	−0.06	−0.07	0.01	0.14*	−0.30**	−0.21**	0.02	0.72**	
12. Supervisor-Directed OCB	2.69	1.26	0.15**	−0.10	−0.13*	−0.08	−0.04	0.11	−0.32**	−0.20**	−0.01	0.55**	0.68**

$N = 309$; for subordinate gender, men serves as the referent group, OCB = organizational citizenship behavior

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 5 Multiple regression analyses predicting leader evaluation and supervisor-directed OCBs for Study 2

	Performance Rating			Reward Recommendation			Supervisor-Directed OCB		
	b	*SE*	*t*	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*b*	*SE*	*t*
Constant	4.27**	0.45	9.50	3.94**	0.46	8.57	4.43**	0.57	7.82
Subordinate Race	0.03	0.12	0.27	0.17	0.12	1.40	0.31*	0.15	2.00
Subordinate Gender – Women Dummy Variable	−0.19	0.12	-1.56	−0.17	0.12	-1.42	−0.21	0.15	-1.39
Subordinate Gender – Non-Binary Dummy Variable	0.26	0.50	0.53	0.11	0.51	0.22	−0.91	0.63	-1.45
Interpersonal Injustice	−0.31*	0.13	-2.35	−0.53**	0.14	-3.86	−0.60**	0.17	-3.58
White Men – Group Dummy Variable	−0.19	0.54	-0.35	-1.34*	0.55	-2.44	-1.09	0.68	-1.61
Black Women – Group Dummy Variable	0.11	0.66	0.17	−0.77	0.67	-1.15	−0.71	0.83	-0.85
Hispanic Men – Group Dummy Variable	−0.21	0.61	-0.34	−0.01	0.62	-0.02	−0.67	0.77	-0.87
Hispanic Women – Group Dummy Variable	-1.81*	0.71	-2.54	-2.47*	0.73	-3.39	-1.94*	0.90	-2.16
White Women – Group Dummy Variable	−0.14	0.57	-0.25	−0.70	0.58	-1.20	−0.12	0.72	-0.17
Interpersonal Injustice X White Men	0.07	0.16	0.44	0.42*	0.17	2.52	0.41*	0.21	2.00
Interpersonal Injustice X Black Women	−0.23	0.21	-1.10	0.09	0.22	0.41	0.03	0.22	0.13
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Men	0.10	0.19	0.55	0.01	0.19	0.04	0.23	0.23	1.00
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Women	0.45*	0.21	2.12	0.68*	0.22	3.11	0.51	0.27	1.88
Interpersonal Injustice X White Women	−0.01	0.17	-0.07	0.17	0.18	0.99	0.18	0.27	0.68
Total R^2		0.16**			0.18**			0.18**	
ΔR^2 (due to inclusion of interaction terms)		0.03			0.05**			0.02	

N = 309; *OCB* organizational citizenship behavior; subordinate race: 0 = minority, 1 = majority/White; for subordinate gender, men serves as the referent group; for leader demographic groups, Black men serves as the reference group

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

no significant differences in the relationship between interpersonal injustice and performance ratings or supervisor-directed OCBs between Hispanic male leaders and each of the other groups of leaders included in our study. However, in line with Hypothesis 2, the negative relationship between interpersonal injustice and reward recommendation was stronger for Hispanic male leaders compared to both White male leaders ($b = 0.41$, $SE = 0.16$, $p = .01$) as well as Hispanic female leaders ($b = 0.67$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .002$).

Next, we moved on to investigate Hypothesis 3 and 4 by examining potential mechanisms that could explain these differential relationships across leaders (see Table 6). When examining the relationship between interpersonal injustice and violation of aggression proscription, none of the

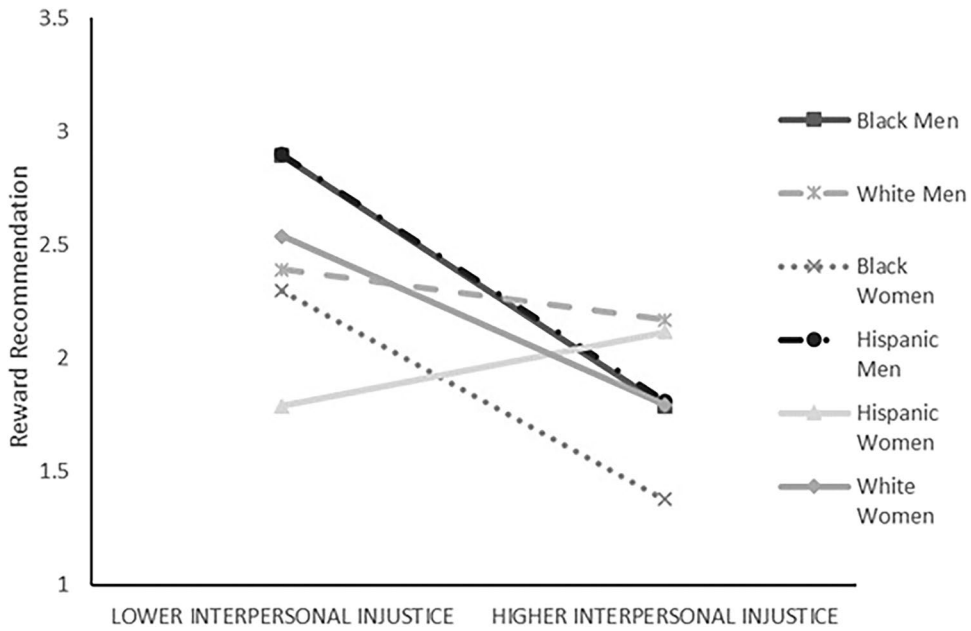

Fig. 2 Moderating role of leader intersectional identities on the relationship between interpersonal injustice and reward recommendations in Study 2

Table 6 Multiple regression analyses predicting violation of aggression proscriptions and fear for Study 2

	Violation of aggression proscriptions			Fear		
	b	*SE*	*t*	*b*	*SE*	*t*
Constant	0.52	0.63	0.82	1.79**	0.47	3.82
Subordinate Race	−0.33	0.17	-1.96	−0.31	0.13	-2.47
Subordinate Gender – Women Dummy Variable	0.45**	0.17	2.70	−0.04	0.13	-0.29
Subordinate Gender – Non-Binary Dummy Variable	0.01	0.69	0.01	0.44	0.52	0.84
Interpersonal Injustice	0.45*	0.19	2.41	0.00	0.14	0.01
White Men – Group Dummy Variable	0.78	0.75	1.04	-1.13	0.56	-2.01
Black Women – Group Dummy Variable	0.03	0.91	0.03	−0.11	0.68	-0.16
Hispanic Men – Group Dummy Variable	−0.70	0.85	-0.82	−0.24	0.63	-0.37
Hispanic Women – Group Dummy Variable	−0.84	0.99	-0.85	−0.83	0.74	-1.12
White Women – Group Dummy Variable	−0.16	0.79	-0.21	-1.06	0.59	-1.79
Interpersonal Injustice X White Men	−0.24	0.23	-1.07	0.41*	0.17	2.41
Interpersonal Injustice X Black Women	0.03	0.30	0.10	−0.03	0.22	-0.12
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Men	0.23	0.26	0.91	0.05	0.19	0.28
Interpersonal Injustice X Hispanic Women	0.23	0.30	0.78	0.29	0.22	1.29
Interpersonal Injustice X White Women	0.08	0.24	0.31	0.34	0.18	1.90
Total R^2		0.18**			0.11**	
ΔR^2 (due to inclusion of interaction terms)		0.02			0.03	

$N = 309$; subordinate race: 0 = minority, 1 = majority/White; for subordinate gender, men serves as the referent group; for leader demographic groups, Black men serves as the reference group

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

contrasts were significant when Black men was the reference group. However, when Hispanic men was the reference group (for details, see Table S4 in Supplemental Online Materials), the contrast between Hispanic men and White men was significant ($b = -0.48$, $SE = 0.22$, $p = .03$), such that proscriptions were stronger for Hispanic (vs. White) male supervisors who were viewed as more interpersonally unjust (see Fig. 3, left panel).

When examining the other posited mechanism, leader intersectional identities moderated the relationship between interpersonal injustice and fear, but the nature of this interaction does not match our predictions and cannot explain why Black or Hispanic male leaders are especially penalized for interpersonal injustice. Specifically, participants were more afraid of White male supervisors who were higher in interpersonal injustice relative to both Black male supervisors ($b = 0.41$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = .02$) and Hispanic male supervisors ($b = 0.36$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = .03$; see Fig. 3, right panel). Moreover, fear was not significantly related to leader evaluations or relational outcomes (see Table 4).

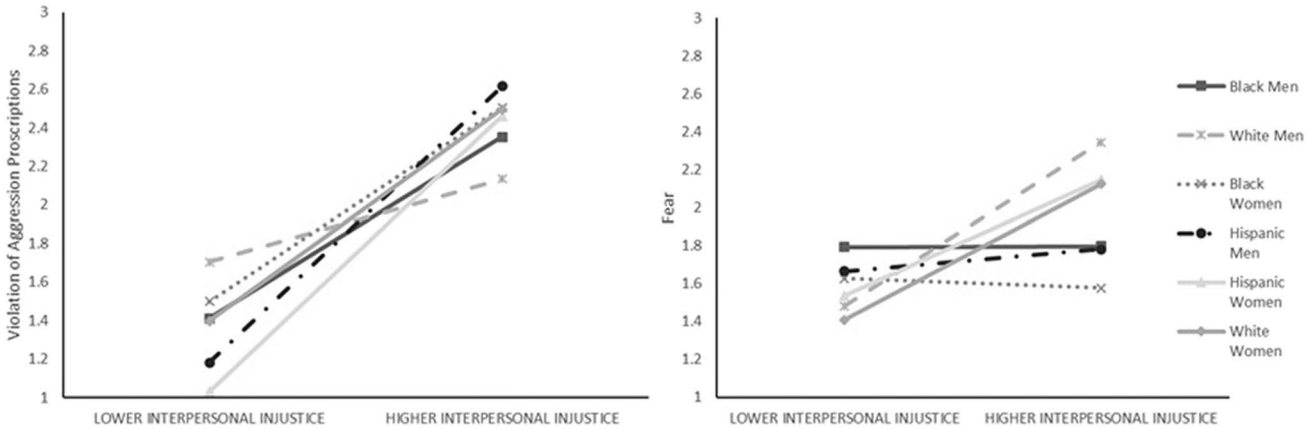

Fig. 3 Moderating role of leader intersectional identities on the relationship between interpersonal injustice and potential mechanisms in Study 2

Consequently, we only moved forward to assess a moderated mediation model linking interpersonal injustice and reward recommendation via violation of aggression proscription focusing on the contrast between Hispanic male leaders versus White male leaders. These results reveal that this mediated relationship was significant for those with Hispanic male leaders (*indirect effect* = − 0.09, *SE* = 0.04, 95% CI = [-0.17, − 0.01]), but was non-significant for those with White male leaders (*indirect effect* = − 0.03, *SE* = 0.02, 95% CI = [-0.08, 0.02]). Finally, a significant index of moderated mediation supports that these two indirect effects are statistically significantly different from each other (*index of moderated mediation* = 0.06, *SE* = 0.04, 95% CI = [0.0007, 0.155]). Therefore, different proscriptive beliefs regulating how managers from different groups ought not to behave explains differential reactions to interpersonal injustice from Hispanic men compared to White men.

Supplemental Analyses

We repeated our analyses aggregating those supervised by Black and Hispanic men into one group and those supervised by Black and Hispanic women into another group (for details, see Table S5 in Supplemental Online Materials). There was no evidence of significant moderating effects by leader intersectional identities on the relationship between interpersonal injustice and performance ratings as well as the relationship between interpersonal injustice and supervisor-directed OCBs. However, we uncovered significant moderation for the relationship between interpersonal injustice and reward recommendation. Namely, this relationship was stronger for Black or Hispanic men combined relative to White men ($b = 0.41$, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .002$) or Black or Hispanic women combined ($b = 0.38$, $SE = 0.15$, $p = .01$), in line with predictions. However, the contrast with White women was non-significant ($b = 0.17$, $SE = 0.15$, $p = .26$).

We then examined potential mechanisms (for details, see Table S6 in Supplemental Online Materials). Similar to what we observed in the main analyses, higher levels of interpersonal injustice were associated with stronger beliefs that the leader should have been much less aggressive among subordinates with Black or Hispanic male supervisors combined (as well as Black or Hispanic female supervisors combined, contrary to our prediction, $b = -0.01$, $SE = 0.21$, $p = .96$), but this relationship was weaker among those with White male supervisors ($b = -0.36$, $SE = 0.18$, $p = .048$). Finally, this relationship also did not significantly differ between those supervised by Black or Hispanic men combined vs. White women ($b = -0.05$, $SE = 0.20$, $p = .82$).

Results for fear were also similar to those obtained in the main analyses with disaggregated groups. Specifically, the positive relationship between interpersonal injustice and fear was stronger for those supervised by White men versus Black or Hispanic men combined ($b = 0.38$, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .006$). However, in contrast to the findings above, the contrast between Black or Hispanic male leaders combined and White female leaders was significant ($b = 0.31$, $SE = 0.15$, $p = .04$), such that workers were also more fearful of White female leaders at higher levels of interpersonal injustice compared to Black or Hispanic male leaders combined.

Given these findings, we again only moved forward to assess a moderated mediation model linking interpersonal injustice and reward recommendations via violation of aggression proscription focusing on the contrast between Black or Hispanic male leaders versus White male leaders. This mediated relationship was significant for those with Black or Hispanic male leaders (*indirect effect* = − 0.08, *SE* = 0.04, 95% CI = [-0.16 − 0.02]), but non-significant for those with White male leaders (*indirect effect* = − 0.03, *SE* = 0.03, 95% CI = [-0.08, 0.02]). However, we cannot be confident that these indirect effects are different from each other, as the confidence interval included zero (*index of moderated mediation* = 0.05, *SE* = 0.04, 95% CI = [-0.0001, 0.141]).

Discussion

Study 2 provides additional evidence that Black or Hispanic male leaders face distinct challenges that are not shared by White male leaders and Black or Hispanic female leaders and implies violation of agentic proscriptions, rather than fear, as a key mechanism underlying these unequal effects. However, one limitation of Study 2 is that is retrospective in nature. Yet, we tried to guard against recall biases by focusing on a specific event, which should tap into more vivid, episodic memories as opposed to generalized semantic memories that are more prone to gap-filling and the influence of other cognitive shortcuts (Hansbrough et al., 2021).

Another limitation is that all variables were assessed at the same time. This decision was made in an effort to maximize sample size (by minimizing opportunities for participant attrition) given our focus on racial minority leaders, and because we already demonstrate the predicted pattern of results using a time-separated design in Study 1. However, this may raise concerns regarding common method variance in this study. In line with best practices in the literature, we sought to minimize the influence of common method variance procedurally by utilizing different response formats for our predictor, mediator, and criterion measures (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, prior research demonstrates that interaction effects, the focus of our investigation, cannot be artifacts of common method variance (Siemsen et al., 2010).

General Discussion

In two studies, we demonstrate more pronounced, negative reactions to interpersonal injustice by Black or Hispanic male leaders relative to White male leaders as well as Black or Hispanic female leaders. We note that in both studies these groups of leaders do not differ in terms of subordinates' ratings of their interpersonal injustice, either when Black and Hispanic men or women are considered separately or together. That is, subordinates do not generally see their Black or Hispanic male leader as more interpersonally unjust; rather, when such behaviors are exhibited, which appears to occur similarly across different groups of leaders, *responses* to Black or Hispanic male leaders tend to be more extreme. Additionally, our research provides critical insight as to why these unequal effects occur. Namely, instead of being more afraid, subordinates judge aggressive actions as more socially unacceptable for Black or Hispanic men. In other words, these actions are seen as a particular norm violation for this group. This reveals a rational and "cold" mechanism for why Black or Hispanic male leaders are disproportionately disparaged for aggression as opposed to an automatic and "hot" process.

Although we argue that Black and Hispanic men are often stereotyped similarly (i.e., as aggressive) and predict the same pattern of effects, it was unclear whether these two groups should be combined or not in our investigation. Thus, we conducted our analyses both ways. Generally, results were more consistent and supportive of our theorizing when these groups were combined, likely due in part to a larger sample size and enhanced statistical power to detect effects, and indicative of convergence. Additionally, aggregating is also supported by common labels or rhetoric (e.g., "black and brown"), demonstrating that people may tend to think of these groups together or as part of a meaningful, overarching category (e.g., Orelus, 2012).

Yet, disaggregated results were also informative in that they were suggestive that our predicted effects may be more robust for Black men relative to Hispanic men. We speculate that Black male supervisors could be more strongly censured for interpersonal injustice compared to Hispanic male supervisors because the aggression stereotype is stronger for the former (vs. latter) group as people are more likely to animalistically dehumanize Blacks relative to Hispanics in American society (Kteily et al., 2015). Furthermore, results, particularly from the pilot and Study 2, also indicate that perceptions of and reactions to Black women and Hispanic women may differ meaningfully. We encourage future research to unpack these potential differences, especially as we generally uncovered very limited research on stereotypes of Hispanic women.

As stated previously, we did not hypothesize differences between Black or Hispanic men versus White women. However, we did include participants who were supervised by White women in both our studies for completeness and to examine potential differences in an exploratory fashion. Broadly, contrasts between Black or Hispanic men and White women were largely not statistically significant, indicating that White female leaders may be subject to similar negative reactions when they act in more interpersonally unjust ways. This is in alignment with recently published work that shows that subordinate trust is damaged more strongly by interpersonal injustice for female leaders, presumably most of which are White women, compared to male leaders due to violation of agency proscriptions (Mu et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, in one analysis, this contrast was significant such that Black male leaders were penalized more harshly than White female leaders for engaging in interpersonal injustice. Our conjecture is that this may be due to differences in descriptive versus prescriptive stereotypes for the two groups. Namely, although both groups are proscribed from engaging in aggressive behaviors, people may generally expect aggression to be rare among White women, whereas they may anticipate aggression to be relatively common among Black men. As a result, individuals may be less apt to make internal attributions for these atypical actions for White women relative to Black men (Kim et al., 2022), leading to less severe punishment for a "problematic" behavior they do not expect to be repeated. Alternatively, to the extent that Black men are seen as lower status than White women, the status incongruity hypothesis would predict stronger negative reactions when Black men enact these agentic or aggressive acts as it is a stronger challenge of the status quo (Rudman et al., 2012).

Theoretical Contributions

Overall, our research generates several important contributions to the literature. First, we add to the limited literature that takes an intersectional perspective in business and management (Hall et al., 2019). Specifically, we highlight both areas of convergence and divergence regarding how the stereotype of Black and Hispanic men as threatening affects their experiences within the justice system versus the workplace setting. On one hand, in both domains, this intersectional stereotype appears pervasive in that it continues to affect how others react to perceived aggression on the part of Black or Hispanic men. On the other hand, whereas prior research in the criminal justice literature suggests that this stereotype can enhance perceivers' feelings of physical danger or threat (e.g., Wilson et al., 2017), in the workplace where signals of aggression are typically

more minor or subtle, it appears that these actions are unequally punished when exhibited by Black or Hispanic men for more "symbolic" reasons – in that different standards of behavior appear to be applied to different groups of leaders.

Second, our research illuminates subtle ways in which Black or Hispanic male leaders continue to face additional burdens. Specifically, the aggressive behaviors of Black or Hispanic men appear especially closely scrutinized by followers, and heightened feelings of visibility due to one's demographic background can be related to a host of negative outcomes for workers (e.g., Settles et al., 2019). Additionally, across our two studies, we find more consistent evidence for differential relationships between interpersonal injustice and *leader evaluations*, particularly reward recommendation, by leaders' intersectional identities than between interpersonal injustice and *supervisor-directed OCBs*. On the surface, this may appear to be a good thing in that subordinates may not necessarily differentially withhold helpful behaviors toward their leaders based upon who they are. However, such a pattern could make it especially difficult for Black male leaders to repair their relationships with their subordinates in the aftermath of perceived interpersonal injustice, as it may not be apparent to these leaders that their subordinates have lost faith in their leadership.

Lastly, one unexpected finding that deserves more attention is that only participants whose supervisor was a White man (or a White woman in the analyses using aggregated groups) indicated that they felt more fear when faced with greater interpersonal injustice from their leader. The evolutionary purpose of fear is to signal a threat to one's survival (Dozier, 1998). Prior work has argued that fear at work often occurs in situations where hierarchy is salient, and people are often particularly fearful of how authority figures react because of their ability to enact "social death" in the form of ostracism or other painful behaviors (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). We speculate that this is because of inequality in American society, whereby White men (or White individuals generally) continue to disproportionately hold status and power (Elliott & Smith, 2004). As a result, poor interpersonal treatment from a White (male) leader may be seen as particularly worrisome for one's social standing because these leaders are powerful enough to cause significant harm. In contrast, Black male leaders may be more likely to be seen as tokens, and subordinates may assume they hold more limited influence in organizations. Thus, the differential pattern of associations between interpersonal injustice and our two proposed mediators by leader demographics seems to reflect that although participants judge such actions as inappropriate when enacted by Black male leaders, they are mainly concerned about how these actions will negatively affect their own welfare when exhibited by White (men) leaders.

Practical Implications

Despite greater societal awareness of issues related to racial disparities and the need for racial justice and equality, Black and Hispanic leaders continue to be underrepresented at the upper echelons of organizations (e.g., Agovino, 2022; McKinsey Quarterly, 2021). Our study suggests that one barrier to the success of Black and Hispanic male leaders is stereotypes of aggression. Prior research demonstrates that when people are aware of stereotypes, they may be more equipped to circumvent their influence (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2001). Therefore, organizations could include information about this "too aggressive" stereotype that plagues Black and Hispanic men in their diversity training and articulate how it can be harmful. It would also be important for any such training to convey that this stereotype is likely not based in reality. Indeed, we do not find any evidence that Black or Hispanic men are more interpersonally unjust in our study – even though observers may be particularly prone to noticing aggressive behaviors from this group.

Some might argue that our work also evidences potential benefits of the aggression stereotype. Namely, there is some indication that Black or Hispanic male leaders may be *advantaged* at lower levels of injustice compared to other groups of leaders. This could represent a stereotype expectancy violation effect (Jussim et al., 1987), whereby followers may have lower expectations that Black or Hispanic male leaders adhere to interpersonal justice rules. Although such a "boost" for being less interpersonally unfair for Black or Hispanic male leaders may on the surface seem unproblematic, it is also based on biased expectations and could be construed as patronizing behavior. We recommend that diversity training incorporate this point and educate workers on how discrimination by favoring a group is still problematic (Phillips & Jun, 2022).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although our studies have many strengths, including capturing subordinate evaluations of a diverse set of leaders as part of ongoing working relationships, we acknowledge that limitations remain. One limitation is that we cannot draw causal conclusions based on our correlational study designs. Although experiments can help to bridge this gap, it can often be difficult to simulate followers' salient concerns in the workplace in an experiment. Moreover, in our own research, we have found that one key challenge that can plague experimental research examining reactions to novel underrepresented leaders is that participants are often cued to the study purpose because such leaders are numerically rare in reality and so by definition unusual; this can lead to socially desirable responding, undermining construct validity. Thus, we encourage future research that seeks to address

these and other thorny methodological issues that make it challenging to study the experiences of underrepresented groups in the workplace.

In our paper, we examine our hypotheses based upon *leader* demographic characteristics because of our focus on interpersonal (in)justice, which traditionally centers on treatment during decision-making processes that supervisors typically oversee given their responsibility for organizational resources (Colquitt et al., 2015). However, conceptually, co-workers could also engage in behaviors that could be construed as aggressive (e.g., incivility). Thus, an open question is whether the unequal consequences we observe for Black or Hispanic male leaders relative to leaders of other groups for engaging in actions perceived as aggressive generalize to Black or Hispanic male employees broadly. On one hand, our arguments are based on stereotypes of Black and Hispanic men generally, such that we might expect these aggression proscriptions to apply to all members of these groups. This would suggest that people may similarly censure Black or Hispanic male coworkers who engage in aggressive behaviors. On the other hand, the status incongruity hypothesis posits that members of low status groups are particularly prohibited from engaging in agentic actions because this violates the status quo (Rudman et al., 2012). Thus, aggressive actions from a Black or Hispanic male leader (vs. non-leader) may elicit an especially strong negative reaction because it reflects a member of a low status group holding a high-status position, in contravention to social norms, who is engaging in a high status behavior. Given these contrasting possibilities, we call for future work that identifies the boundary conditions of this effect.

Although our research uncovers that Black or Hispanic men, White men, and Black or Hispanic women do not appear to differ on perceived interpersonal justice, future research may benefit from exploring whether this is the result of conscious or deliberate efforts on the part of certain groups of leaders. For example, perhaps Black or Hispanic men are cognizant that their group tends to be stereotyped as aggressive and thereby tend to regulate workplace behaviors that could be seen as threatening much more carefully than other groups. This would be in line with emerging research on racial codeswitching whereby some groups change their appearance or behaviors in order to be seen as more professional in the workplace (McCluney et al., 2021).

In our studies, similar to Black or Hispanic men, participants also thought that Black or Hispanic women should have been much less aggressive when they were rated as higher on interpersonal injustice. However, these perceptions did not appear to translate to poorer evaluations and lower organizational citizenship behaviors for this group, as they did for Black or Hispanic men. This pattern of findings is in line with the outgroup male hypothesis, which theorizes that intergroup conflict tends to be a "male-on-male phenomena" (Hall & Livingston, 2012, pg. 899). That is, aggression from outgroup men tends to garner much more negative reactions than similar behaviors from outgroup women because, evolutionarily, intergroup conflict tends to disproportionately occur between men and affect men's reproductive fitness (Navarette et al., 2010).

Even though in our case Black and Hispanic women appeared to escape the penalties faced by Black and Hispanic men for interpersonal injustice, it is important to acknowledge that Black and Hispanic women may face other distinct intersectional challenges. For example, a recent paper by Motro et al. (2022) found that Black women were rated more negatively for expressing anger relative to Black men, White men, and White women, as observers were more likely to make internal attributions regarding anger for this group. At first glance, this finding may seem to conflict with our results as well as prior research that demonstrates that Black women are not punished for dominance (Livingston et al., 2012).

We speculate that this seeming contradiction is due to prior research failing to distinguish between two related, but distinct, stereotypes about Black women that center on agency: the "strong Black woman" stereotype versus the "angry Black woman" stereotype (Lewis & Neville, 2015; Spates et al., 2020). The former characterizes Black women as (too) independent, assertive, and straightforward, whereas the latter portrays Black women as angry and volatile. Our pattern of results suggest that when Black women violate interpersonal justice they may tend to activate the "strong Black women" stereotype rather than the "angry Black woman" stereotype; rude behaviors during decision-making may generally be interpreted by subordinates as these women being direct and brash instead of angry. This may occur in part because the "strong Black woman" stereotype is more prevalent and less overtly negative (Lewis & Neville, 2015), rendering it more socially acceptable. We encourage future research to differentiate between these two stereotypes surrounding Black women and ascertain when each is most likely to be activated and applied by perceivers.

Conclusion

Our work contributes to the ongoing conversation regarding racial justice by highlighting how the pernicious intersectional stereotype of Black and Hispanic men as highly aggressive continues to shape and constrain the working lives of these groups. Namely, reactions to violations of interpersonal justice by these leaders tend to be more negative and extreme relative to both White men and Black or Hispanic women. Moreover, our research illuminates that these differential responses are due to different standards of appropriate behaviors that different groups are subject to, such that actions perceived as aggressive are often seen as more norm violating when enacted by Black or Hispanic

male leaders relative to other groups of leaders, rather than due to fear associated with the content of this stereotype. Thus, this work spotlights the need for further progress in battling entrenched stereotypes and dismantling inequitable behavioral requirements for different societal groups.

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-024-09994-z.

Acknowledgements This research was supported by research grants from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) awarded to Winny Shen (Insight Grant #435-2016-0696) and D. Ramona Bobocel (Insight Grant #50656-10066).

Data Availability The datasets generated and analyzed in the current research are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declarations

This research involving human participants received ethics approval (Pilot Study: York University, Office of Research Ethics #e2022-424; Study 1: University of Waterloo, Office of Research Ethics #22018; Study 2: York University, Office of Research Ethics #e2021-191), and informed consent was provided and received from all study participants.

Conflicts of Interest The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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