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Asian American Women in Leadership and Abusive Supervision

By

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### **Abstract**

Drawing on the shifting standards theory, intersectionality theory, double jeopardy theory, the lack of fit model and role congruity theory, I investigate whether there are differences in perceptions of abuse as a function of leader race (i.e., Asian and White) among women. Participants completed a Qualtrics survey in which they evaluated photos of Asian and White women supervisors and indicated the extent to which they believed the person in the photo would be abusive. Results did not reveal a significant difference in perceptions of abuse, but did reveal a significant difference in favor of Asian leaders in perceptions of friendliness and a desire to work with the leader in the photograph. Implications for Asian women in the workplace are discussed.

Women in leadership face a number of challenges in obtaining such positions, upholding their authority, and maintaining employment. Women are underrepresented in leadership positions as they face both the glass ceiling metaphor (the invisible barriers that block women and minorities from advancing up in the workplace) (Johns, 2013) and glass cliff phenomenon (women obtaining leadership positions when they are risky or precarious (Ryan and Haslam, 2005). Research regarding women in leadership positions is often conducted on white women as they hold more leadership positions than racial and ethnic minorities, studies showing that white women are approximately three and a half times more likely to be in executive positions than Asian women (Gee, Peck, and Wong, 2015). This thesis is analyzing previous scholarly works based upon how stereotypes can impact Asian American Women to be seen as more abusive in leadership or supervising positions compared to White Women.

In addition to facing certain stereotypes, there continues to be a lack of Asian American leaders, specifically Asian American Women leaders, many are facing the problematic issue of rather than being intentionally included, they are being unintentionally excluded. A key finding from a 2017 report analyzing EEOC data on Silicon Valley's management pipeline that exemplifies this statement that despite the fact that Asian Americans were most likely to be hired for high-tech jobs, they were found to be the least likely racial group to be promoted into executive and manager level positions (Gee & Peck, 2017). Based on extraneous challenges faced by the few Asian American women in leadership positions and their inherent violation of gender norms, stereotypes, and preconceived notions, holding leadership positions can cause them to face backlash and additional pressures from their subordinates, colleagues, and supervisors that may impact their leadership behaviors. Furthermore, experiences of stereotype threat may cause Asian American women to feel they need to engage in more masculine forms of

expression or be seen as abusive when acting in an assertive manner in order to compensate for their stigma, including anger.

Additionally, literature concerning experiences of racial minority women in leadership is sparse (Choi 2017), and important as we move toward an intersectional approach—multiple identity categories can collide and the discrimination faced by the individual cannot be understood by one identity category alone (Dennissen et al., 2018). The specific forms of intersectional discrimination can be seen across a variety of identities including Asian-American women. As Asian and Asian American women are more prone to facing double jeopardy, it further causes them to be more vulnerable in facing selective incivility in the workplace, and specifically in the form of abusive supervision, it can in turn lead to them to project the same adverse behaviors onto their subordinates when put in leadership positions.

### **Abusive Supervision**

Abusive supervision has been defined as “displaced aggression, hostility that is directed against convenient and innocent targets when retaliation against the source of one’s frustration is not possible or feasible” (Tepper, 2007, p. 269). Some abusive behaviors may include “reminding followers of their past mistakes and failures, putting a follower down in front of other team members, or giving the “silent treatment” by not responding to questions” (Tu, Bono, Shum, & LaMontagne, 2018 p. 18). Abusive supervision is an antecedent to negative workplace outcomes for subordinates and is both prevalent and costly for individuals and organizations. Abusive leadership is detrimental to organizations, one example being in 2014, approximately 27% of workers reporting abuse and 14% of U.S. employees have reported facing abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007).

Employees experience resentment and are likely to initiate backlash behaviors against perpetrators of abusive supervision or the organization (Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006). Consequences of abusive supervision include negative work-related attitudes and decreases in subordinate's well-being (Tepper, 2000). Moreover, certain consequences of abusive supervision such as causing an increase in turnover absenteeism, and loss of productivity has been theorized to cost organizations approximately \$23.8 billion annually (Tepper et al, 2006). Although a logical solution to reports of abusive supervision is to simply remove those engaging in abuse, evaluations of women, and particularly women of racial minority groups may bring forth biases that further decrease representation and disregard the root of the problem.

### **Gender and Factors that May Contribute to Abusive Supervision**

Working women encounter a number of obstacles to success at work that may influence leadership behaviors, including abuse. Although there has been progress made in women's advancement in leadership positions, there continues to be the interaction of gender stereotypes and managerial role stereotypes, such as the gender-stereotypical perceptions regarding effective managers (Schein, 2001: 675). This can be attributed to the interplay of traditional male-centered organizational structures, which further supports the issue that women are more likely to experience frustration and discrimination in male-centered organizations in regards to achieving leadership roles or advancing in their careers compared to men (Won, 2009). Indeed, Sook-Yeon Won (2009) found that across several characteristics of managerial effectiveness (i.e., competence, affection, communication, loyalty and protection), women supervisors were rated lower and more negatively than their male counterparts.

First, when part of a stereotype activated environment, women in leadership positions may cope with specific internal and external pressures and hardships. Stereotype threat can be

defined as “the concrete, real-time threat of being judged and treated poorly in settings where a negative stereotype about one's group applies” (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002, p. 385).

Masculinity is one of the characteristics that are assessed in regards to leadership self-concept, “along six dimensions of sensitivity, tyranny, intelligence, dynamism, and dedication (Foti, Bray, Thompson, & Allgood, 2012)” (Tue et. al, 2018, p. 10). In addition, masculinity refers to a “think manager, think male” stereotype (Foti, Bray, Thompson, & Allgood, 2012; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Schein, 2001: 675). Stated by the Stereotype Content model, the female gender stereotype would propose that people rate women as high warmth (i.e. positive intentions) and low competence (i.e. low on agentic abilities), whereas the opposite would apply for men (Stempel and Rigotti, 2018; Fiske et al., 2002). Therefore, previous studies have found that attributes of competence (which is closely related to low warmth) and competition (which is related to low warmth) are both essential for leadership (Fiske et al., 2002; Schein, 2001).

Second, women in leadership roles may be prone to facing workplace incivility, categorically in the form of selective incivility (Cortina et al., 2013). Foremost, workplace incivility can be defined as “low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others” (Cortina et al. 2013; Andersson and Pearson;1999: 457). Subsequently, it can be described as psychological aggression when one instigates workplace incivility with the intent to injure an employee or organization (Baron, 2004; Neuman, 2004). However, the harmful behavior must be seen as ambiguous in order to be qualified as incivility to the employee or organization the behavior is directed to (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson et al., 2001). Selective incivility stems from the formal interpersonal discriminations such as unfair selective decisions being made in the



workplace because of racist and/or sexist beliefs thus women of color in leadership positions may face more selective incivility than their white and/or male counterparts (Cortina, 2008; Brief et al., 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000).

In addition, when employees experience workplace incivility, they are likely to project the same behavior to others (Francis, Holmvall, & O'Brien, 2015). Furthermore, women experiencing workplace incivility from coworkers, previous leaders, and organizations, may result in them to act in the same or similar manner. For example, if faced with abusive supervisory behaviors from their current or previous employers, they may engage in abusive supervisory behaviors as their ability to maintain positive leadership for their subordinates becomes weakened. In a recent study conducted by Tu et al., (2018), they examined the relationship between tyranny and abusive supervision. The results of this study concluded that those in subsequent leadership positions with abusive supervisors who were high in ideal leadership self-concept for tyranny were more likely to project abusive behaviors to others. Notably, one of the behavioral example of tyranny was detailed as "cold interpersonal interactions," which is similar with descriptions of career women which are the opposite of the traditional female gendered stereotype described by the stereotype content model discussed above (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008).

### **Discrimination Toward Asians and Asian American Leaders**

Therefore, although high educational attainment opens the door for Asian Americans to enter professional fields, having a large body of professionals has not translated into a proportional representation of Asian Americans in high status leadership positions. Similar to women and other minorities, Asian Americans continuously face discrimination in the workplace, facing artificial barriers and unfair treatment from their white counterparts including

subjectivity of evaluation systems, lack of proper mentoring and accessing informal networks, racial prejudice, negative stereotypes, and perpetual foreigner syndrome (Lai & Babcock, 2013).

As displayed in the Stereotype Content Model, the stereotype that Asians lack social skills further leaves a negative impression of Asians. The stereotype content model labels Asians as being part of the “low warmth/high competence” region, and this specific group is often considered to be ‘clannish’, unfriendly, is envied, receives active harm/active facilitation and seen as competitors (Cuddy et al., 2008). Moreover, those in this group are seen to face envious prejudice thus those in this group are seen as competent but cold (Glick and Fiske, 2001). Asians are often seen as the “model minority” thus “are seen as highly competent and hardworking, envied as too ambitious, but are simultaneously characterized as unsociable and aloof” (Cuddy et al., 2008, p. 78). This categorization allows Asians to be seen as both moderately admirable and as a threat, thus creating “a mixture of envy for their accomplishments and status, along with anger for their allegedly not sharing cooperatively with the ingroup and its reference groups” (Cuddy et al., 2008, p. 129). This further supports another harmful stereotype of Asian Americans involving the “perpetual foreigner” stereotype whom perceive Asian Americans as illegitimate in the U.S. can assist in the notion of Asians being seen as unfit for leadership positions (Ng, Lee, & Pak, 2007; Tran & Lee, 2014). This is because the perpetual foreigner stereotype is inconsistent with expectations that leaders should be culturally competent and proficient in the norms and customs of the organizations they lead.

Moreover, extending the logic of the lack-of-fit model from the sex domain to the racial domain, because of job requirements and racial stereotypes, job discrimination can occur for Asian Americans. The common stereotype that Asians are seen as less socially skilled than whites as stated from The Stereotype Content Model, employers may see an Asian candidate as

incompatible in leadership roles (which often involves a high level of social skills) than their white counterparts (Lai & Babcock, 2012). In a study of race–occupation fit and leadership perceptions, Sy et. al (2010) found that discernment for leadership positions for Asian Americans were less favorable than for Whites in a job requiring social skills (a sales position) but did not differ between Asians and Whites in a job requiring technical competence (an engineering position). In addition, one study conducted by Lai and Babcock suggested that in positions involving social skills, female evaluators were more likely to select a White candidate over an Asian candidate, were more likely to promote White candidates over Asian candidates. Furthermore, their study found evidence that the female evaluators' perceived the Asians candidates as less socially skilled than Whites impacted both the decisions listed above (Lai & Babcock, 2013).

### **Asian American Women, Intersectionality, and Abusive Supervision**

Women are chronically underrepresented in organizational leadership positions. For racial and ethnic minority women, discrepancies are more severe. Asian American women in particular may face specific forms of intersectional discriminations. One explanation being that similar to the glass ceiling, the “bamboo ceiling effect” could be taking place, offering one possible explanation as to why there is a lack of Asian American women represented in supervising or leadership roles. Although there exists research regarding the “bamboo ceiling effect”— the often dismissed unacknowledged barriers based on racism, stereotypes, and biases that Asian employees experience in professional settings that keep them out of positions of leadership (Kawahara, Pal, and Chin, 2013)— limited research currently exists regarding perceptions of Asian American women once they have obtained leadership positions.

Specifically, due to the well documented discrepancies in criticism of men and women leaders (Embry et al., 2008) and additional criticism Asian-American women face (Kawahara et al., 2013; Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018), Asian-American women are likely to face harsher judgement than their White counterparts while in leadership positions, particularly when engaging in masculine forms of leadership expression as Asians. The reason for this is because Asian culture in general tends to reinforce traditional “feminine” traits such as being submissive, passive, affiliation, altruism, adaptiveness, and timidness while concurrently discouraging allegedly "masculine" characteristics such as being independent, being assertive, and being competitive (Fong, 1997; Fong, 1965; Hsu, 1971; Weiss, 1973. In addition, Asian men and women are perceived as more feminine than their white counterparts (Johnson and Freeman, 2012; Fong, 1997; Fong & Peskin, 1969; Meredith, 1973). Furthermore in a study conducted by Aryee, Chen, Sun, and Debrah in 2007, they found evidence that supervisors who experienced interactional injustice such as unfavorable interpersonal treatment (Bies & Moag, 1986) acted more abusively toward their subordinates (Tepper, 2007), and hence Asian American women—in addition to other minority group members—may be prone to engaging in abusive supervision behaviors and facing biased judgements as a result.

Particularly, Asian American women are one of the most underrepresented groups in leadership positions. In data published by the EEOC, the ratio of executives for Asian/White men and women showed that Asian women in leadership were the smallest group comparatively (Gee et al, 2015). In a Gee et al.’s 2015 report about diversity in Silicon Valley found that at Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo, Asians and Asian Americans are underrepresented at management and executive levels. In Gee et al’s study, Asian women are 40% less likely to be an executive than Asian men. Furthermore, there was a 1:285 Asian women executive to Asian

women employees within these companies, equivalating to half the average ratio of 1:118 of executives to professional men and women employees of all races (Gee et. al, 2015). Within Gee's sample, 13.5% were Asian women professionals (9,254 Asian women) but only 3.1% were Asian women executives. (36 Asian women) (Gee et al, 2015).

Considering Asian-American women are so underrepresented and counter-stereotypical in leadership positions, or they may be often labeled with derogatory terms used for powerful women such as such as "ice queens", "ball busters", and "iron maiden", when put in actual leadership positions (Cuddy et. al, 2008). Certain generalizations can also be seen overlapping with stereotypes found in Asian men as well, albeit an Asian woman would be more prone to being discriminated against than Asian men and White women in a leadership position because of the double jeopardy theory. The double jeopardy theory (separate from experiences of intersectional discrimination) details how women of all minority groups in the U.S. face a total disadvantage as they suffer from both a race penalty as well as a gender penalty (Greenman and Xie, 2008). This backlash likely results from confusion due to their lack of role congruity as both Asian American women and leaders (Cuddy et al, 2008), considering Asian-American women are stereotyped as "not being leaders", being "meek", "invisible", and "passive/quiet" (Cuddy et al 2008; Mulkamala and Suyemoto, 2018), which can be drawn by the shifting standards theory (Biernat & Manis, 1994). Hence, Asian-American women who engage in abusive supervisory behaviors may elicit more severe perceptions from their colleagues as compared to white women.

In contrast, Asian American women face stereotypes that may lead to increased perceptions that they behave abusively, such as the negative stereotype that labels Asians as lacking social skills and categorizes Asians to be highly competent but low in warmth in The

Stereotype Content Model. There were specific themes found in the discrimination that Asian American women faced such as being a tokenist representative of Asian Americans, foreigners, invisible, excluded, smart and/or inevitably successful, being eroticized, submissive and passive, not leaders, cute and small, and service workers (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018). In regards to not being seen as a leader or characterized as “way too young”, this theme included experiences where others assumed the participant was not capable of taking on a leadership role (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018). Certain experiences reported by Mukkamala and Suyemoto included being bypassed for promotions, being relegated to jobs where not too much responsibility is required, coworkers questioning participants’ decisions, and students or subordinates questioning participants’ knowledge or authority. These specific aspects of intersectional experiences of discriminations that Asian Americans have faced can lead to Asian American Women to be perceived as abusive when they are acting counter-stereotypical.

In the focus groups, this theme appeared as a questioning of a participants’ authority, knowledge, and, in turn, their leadership (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018). This depicted ways in which Asian American women may be considered as team players but not leaders. Participants reported these experiences only in relation to their professional lives, in a range of professions, and at different levels of leadership (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018). This correlated with a second theme that Asian Women faced was the “submissive and passive” stereotype (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018). Some participants stated that they were seen as “docile and gracious”, which was in relations to the discrimination around not being seen as a leader. Associated with this theme of submissiveness where certain participants reported instances of others’ surprise or retaliation if the participant attempted to speak up or be assertive, which led to a limitation of role and an imposition of boundaries around participants’ behavior (Mukkamala

and Suyemoto, 2018). These intermingled and intersectional discriminations are directly correlated to supervisor positions and can be a possible cause of Asian American Women in leadership positions engaging in abusive behaviors or being perceived as abusive.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were undergraduate students in advanced psychology courses (i.e., Perception and Human Sexuality) and were provided extra credit for their participation. 39 participants were included in the final analysis once those who failed attention checks or did not complete the entire survey were removed. The majority of participants were White (N = 31, 79%), and 8 were not White or a combination of racial minority groups. Overall, participants were on average approximately 26 years old (M = 25.62, SD = 8.15) years old, ranging from 18 to 51. Participants were 74% women (N = 29) and 26% men (N = 10), including two transgender men.

### **Procedure**

Participants completed an online survey using Qualtrics in which they were presented with several photos of hypothetical leaders and asked to evaluate the photo on a variety of dimensions.

### **Materials**

Photos of Asian and White women labeled as available for fair use without copyright were obtained on Google for the purpose of this study. Photos were selected to be similar in happiness (i.e., smile), attractiveness, age. All photos were then standardized to include the same background, lighting, and smile size using Facetune2™ (“Lightricks,” 2019). The photos from the Perceptions of Leadership Pilot Study Survey involving Asian/Asian American Women used

in this paper are located in the appendix section of this paper. Participants were asked to indicate the race of the person in the photo. Response options included White, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indian, Middle Eastern, Latin(x)/Hispanic, and an open ended “Other” response. Photos were only included if at least 75% of participants correctly identified the race of the person. Furthermore, to ensure attractiveness was not influencing results, only photos that were not found to have significant differences in attractiveness were included. Given the above inclusion criteria, two photos of white women and two photos of Asian women were included in the analysis.

## **Results**

### **Measures:**

Questions were included in the survey to assess perceptions of abuse (“this person is abusive”), friendliness (“this person is friendly”), professionalism (this person is professional”), happiness (“this person is happy), competence (“this person is competent”), liking (“I like this person”), and desire to work with this person (“I would want to work with this person if they were a supervisor”). Participants rated each of these measures on a 7-point likert-type unipolar scale (i.e., agree not at all, slightly agree, somewhat agree, moderately agree, agree, strongly agree, very strongly agree).

### **Results:**

*Abuse.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between mean perceived abuse scores of photos of Asian women compared to photos of White women. Average abuse scores were computed across photos of the same race. Mean abuse scores were very similar between Asian women ( $M = 1.28$ ,  $SD = .09$ ) and White women



( $M = 1.28$ ,  $SD = .09$ ). Results indicated that there was not a significant difference between mean abuse scores as a function of race,  $t(38) = 0.00$ ,  $p > .05$ , ns., 95% CI[-.09, .09].

*Professionalism.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between mean professionalism scores of photos of Asian women compared to photos of White women. Average professionalism scores were computed across photos of the same race. Overall, White women ( $M = 1.41$ ,  $SD = 0.23$ ) were perceived as more professional than Asian women ( $M = 1.32$ ,  $SD = 0.21$ ). Results indicated that there was a marginally significant difference between professionalism scores as a function of race,  $t(38) = -1.75$ ,  $p = .09$ , 95% CI[-.44, .03].

*Liking.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between mean liking scores of photos of Asian women compared to photos of White women. Average liking scores were computed across photos of the same race. Overall, participants liked the White women ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 0.24$ ) less than Asian women ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ). Results indicated that there was not a significant difference between liking scores as a function of race,  $t(38) = 1.44$ ,  $p = 0.16$ , ns., 95% CI[-.08, .46].

*Desire to work together.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between participants desire to work with Asian women compared to photos of White women. Average scores regarding a desire to work together were computed across photos of the same race. Overall, participants wanted to work with the Asian women ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ) more than White women ( $M = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ). Results indicated that this difference was significant,  $t(38) = 2.49$ ,  $p = 0.02$ , 95% CI[.07, .63].

*Friendliness.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between friendliness scores of photos of Asian women compared to photos of White

women. Average friendliness scores were computed across photos of the same race. Overall, Asian women ( $M = 4.56$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ) were perceived as more friendly than White women ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ). Results indicated that this difference was significant,  $t(38) = 3.43$ ,  $p < .01$ , 95% CI[.14, .55].

*Competence.* A within subjects t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a difference between competence scores of photos of Asian women compared to photos of White women. Average competence scores were computed across photos of the same race. Overall, Asian women ( $M = 4.60$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ) were perceived as more competent than White women ( $M = 4.51$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ). Results indicated that this difference was not significant,  $t(38) = .97$ ,  $p = .33$ , ns., 95% CI[-.08, .23].

### **Discussion**

The current results did not reveal differences in perceptions of abuse as a function of women's race (i.e., Asian American compared to White). However, additional analyses revealed significant differences in participants desire to work with the subject, perceptions of friendliness, and marginally significant perceptions of professionalism as a function of race. Specifically, participants would have preferred to work with the Asian women, perceived them as more friendly, and more professional.

There are several reasons as to why there was no significant difference in perceptions of abuse between Asian women and White women including whether or not the participants had personal experiences with abusive supervision and the participant's comprehension of abusive supervision results, however, did reveal that participants would have preferred to work with Asian women more than with White women. This may be related to "model minority" stereotypes (Cuddy et. al, 2008). Specifically, Asians are more prone to face a stereotype that

they are able to overcome racial barriers in society and the workplace to become highly successful, and hence participants may have assumed that the Asian women would make good supervisors (i.e., model minority stereotype; Cuddy et al., 2008).

Participants indicated that higher perceptions of friendliness, liking, and professionalism which further supports previous research. Specifically, Asian employees are more frequently seen as team players, productive, and valuable as subordinates (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018, Cuddy et. al, 2008). These results may be conclusive with Asian employees advised to act in ways that are contradictory with common Asian stereotypes (Gee, Peck, & Wong, 2015; Lai & Babcock, 2013), and hence may be the result of changing stereotypes as a function of Asian women's changing behavior as advised by Asian advocacy groups. For example, Asian women may exaggerate their warmth and friendliness while simultaneously downplaying their competence (Gee, Peck, & Wong, 2015; Lai & Babcock, 2013).

Another possible explanation from the findings mentioned above is because of the racialized sexism or sexualized racism, an intersectional discrimination that Asian women particularly face, frequently stereotyped as "China doll," "Suzie Wong sex pot," and/or the "Geisha girl (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018; Fong, 1997). From an evolutionary perspective, this may lead to increased positive perceptions (i.e., friendliness and liking) of Asian women or a heightened desire to be in their presence. Indeed, Asian women have a history of being fetishized; Mukkamala and Suyemoto (2018), found that Asian women faced being exoticized and objectified along with facing other discriminations such as being seen as cute, submissive and passive, and "docile and gracious". These participants described that they faced assumptions from others that Asian American women would be more friendlier. Therefore, these stereotypes

may have impacted participants perceptions that Asian women were friendlier or more desirable to work with compared to White women (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018, p. 42).

Surprisingly, there was no significant difference in perceptions of competence of White compared to Asian Women which contradicts previous research stating that Asian people are often viewed as more competent than White people, as detailed stereotype content model (Cuddy et. al, 2008).

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations from this study including an unavailability of resources and a small sample size as this was a pilot study and those who took the survey were undergraduate students. The sample was mostly comprised of mostly white women (there were 31 white participants and 8 nonwhite participants) and the mean age of the participants was 25.62 years old, thus may arise biases as fewer men have not taken the survey. It is unknown whether participants had experience working with Asian women leaders than those who have not accumulated the same experiences thus basing just off of appearance may not prove accuracy of how they would perceive real Asian women leaders. This study took place in Portland, Oregon, whose majority population is White, thus may not have as much general experience working under people of color, specifically Asian Women. Although it has been shown that intergroup contact reduces prejudice (Pettigrew,1998), individuals who have not experienced intergroup contact rely on stereotypes about Asian women (Mukkamala and Suyemoto, 2018).

Furthermore, another limitation was the fact that we did not include a variable for warmth in the pilot study. This would have helped further analyze our results in the context of the stereotype content model (Cuddy et. al, 2008) if photos were evaluated for warmth in addition to competence. Finally, rating perceptions of abuse on the basis of a photograph of a subject may

not be enough data to accurately find significant evidence on whether one genuinely believes the subject to be abusive or not.

### **Future Research**

Taking the results from this pilot study and publishing it on a large scale platform (i.e., Amazon's Mechanical Turk) would generate more responses from a larger participant pool and assist in obtaining more data to review perceptions of abusive supervision, particularly in regards to race and gender. Future research should include abusive transcripts of interactions between supervisors and subordinates paired with these photos to examine differences in perceptions of actual interactions as a function of race and gender. This type of research can be used to further explore issues of how perceivers view women of color and specifically Asian women in leadership positions.

Future research could also utilize qualitative methodology and specifically qualitative interviews. Researchers should interview Asian American women regarding their experiences in the workplace and about their experiences with career advancement. Qualitative data collection can provide rich information to determine the causes of abusive supervision, specifically as a function of participants' genders and races. For example, Asian women's experiences of racism and sexism may be damaging to their mental well-being and lead to their subsequent abusive behaviors. The results found in this study can be used to further analyze or support the integration of this multidisciplinary literature analysis, which can see how the specific barriers and hardships placed on Asian/Asian-American women in the workplace can influence the lack of Asian/Asian-American women representation in leadership positions. In conclusion, future research can further examine the intersection between gender and race, especially the specific

intersectional discriminations that Asian women continue to face in the workplace in regards to career advancement and/or careers in leadership positions.

### **Appendix**



*Figure 1.* A photo of one of the six Asian/ Asian American subjects photos participants rated part of the ‘Perceptions on Leadership’ Pilot Study.



*Figure 2.* A photo of one of the six Asian/ Asian American subjects photos participants rated part of the ‘Perceptions on Leadership’ Pilot Study.



*Figure 3.* A photo of one of the four White women subjects photos participants rated part of the ‘Perceptions on Leadership’ Pilot Study.



*Figure 4.* A photo of one of the four White women subjects photos participants rated part of the ‘Perceptions on Leadership’ Pilot Study.

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