

### Individual Outcomes of Discrimination in Workplaces



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### Abstract and Keywords

This chapter reviews the recent literature on the outcomes of workplace discrimination against individuals. The chapter describes how discrimination affects individuals by reviewing theories related to outcomes of discrimination (e.g., social categorization, attributional ambiguity, and minority stress theories). From there, the review covers meta-analyses, empirical studies conducted between 2012 and 2014, and outcomes of discrimination (e.g., job attitudes, psychological outcomes, physical outcomes, and work-related outcomes). There is consistent support for an overall negative effect of discrimination on various individual-level outcomes. Recent studies are advancing our knowledge of individual-level consequences of discrimination by incorporating underrepresented samples, examining discrimination types other than race and sex, considering the nuances of boundary conditions, and connecting research streams from multiple areas (e.g., turnover, incivility). The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research directions on individual outcomes of workplace discrimination.

Keywords: discrimination, individual, outcome, employment, consequences, social categorization, attributional ambiguity, minority stress

<sup>1</sup>“It’s not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it” (Selye, 1974). Human beings have a need to belong, or an interpersonal motive to obtain acceptance and to avoid rejection by other people (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). One major threat to social acceptance and belonging occurs in the context of discrimination (Richman & Leary, 2009). Discrimination is defined as unjustified negative actions that deny “individuals or groups of people equality of treatment” (Allport, 1954, p. 51).

Individuals who perceive rejection in the form of discrimination are more likely to experience negative feelings such as distress (Leary, Koch, & Hechenbleikner, 2001). Much of the literature surrounding consequences of individual discrimination includes stress or strain as a main mechanism by which discrimination perceptions affect mental and physical health, job-related outcomes, and employee attitudes (e.g., Pascoe & Richman, 2009).

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Whether the discrimination is perceived or actual, subtle or blatant, or work related or not, there is a common theme among the outcome: It is detrimental to the target.

In 2013, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) received 93,727 charges of employment discrimination based on several forms of discrimination including sex, race, national origin, religion, color, age, disability, equal pay, and retaliation (EEOC, 2014). These are only the official claims of discrimination filed with the U.S. government and do not include the many instances when employees perceive discrimination but do not file a formal grievance. Given the pervasiveness of perceived discrimination and its negative consequences, federal laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act were passed to protect employees in the workplace from discrimination based on factors such as age, race, sex, and disability.

Although Title VII was enacted in 1964, the occurrence and outcomes of discrimination are still (p. 316) alive. The outcomes of discrimination to the target can range from trivial to moderate to severe and can be tangible (e.g., missed promotions, lost salary) or intangible (e.g., lower job attitudes, increased stress). Experiencing or perceiving workplace discrimination can affect the individual in several ways, including physical effects, psychological effects, and work-related attitudes or behaviors. Based on an extensive literature review, we define each of these categories as follows. Physical effects may include increased stress, loss of appetite, headaches, loss of sleep, lack of energy, high blood pressure, ulcers, or chest pain (Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Psychological effects may include lack of self-confidence, mental distress, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, lack of cooperation, insecurity, and a feeling of helplessness (Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, & Gray, 2016; Lee & Ahn, 2011, 2012; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). Work-related attitudes that may be affected include lower job satisfaction, lower organizational commitment, and higher intent to turnover. Work-related behaviors could include reduced productivity (Jones et al., 2016). The intensity of the psychological, emotional, and work-related consequences can be deep and far-reaching. Assessing the extent of the cost of discrimination is hard due to the complex nature of the construct and the way in which it is typically measured (i.e., perceptions).

However, many theories have been proposed to explain how discrimination impacts employees. The literature covers a wide variety of theories, including justice theories (Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), demand and resource models (Volpone & Avery, 2013), the transactional stress model, and the theory of work adjustment (e.g., Velez & Moradi, 2012). Most of these theories view the experience or perception of discrimination as a stressor. Consistent with stress theories (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), workplace discrimination has negative consequences for job-related well-being, such as job attitudes and turnover intentions (Madera, King, & Hebl, 2012; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Not only discrimination per se, but also targets' reactions to it, are a function of both personal and situational factors (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995).

## Theories Related to Outcomes of Discrimination

Several theories are useful in predicting the individual outcomes of workplace discrimination. Three important theories include social categorization theory, attributional ambiguity theories, and minority stress theory. We briefly describe these theories.

Social categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1985, 1987) explains that people routinely categorize themselves and others into in-groups (those who are similar to themselves) and out-groups (those who are different from themselves) on the basis of surface-level demographics including sex, race, and age (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998). Categorization processes can be functional because they help people get through their day as they categorize stimuli into relevant/irrelevant, safe/harmful, or familiar/foreign. However, categorization processes can lead to stereotyping of others who are different from oneself because self-esteem is partly derived from one's identity groups and we generally want to have positive self-impressions (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Hogg & Terry, 2000). Therefore, positive characteristics tend to be ascribed to the in-group whereas negative characteristics are ascribed to the out-group.

Attributional ambiguity theories suggest that it is difficult for targets of discrimination to identify whether discrimination has occurred and how to respond to it. For example, we know that in contrast to blatant, old-fashioned racism, modern discrimination is often subtle and may have several meanings (Benokraitis, 1997; Dipboye & Colella, 2005). Therefore, the target may be unsure whether discrimination has occurred and what the perpetrator's motives for discrimination are. This ambiguity can require the target to aggregate several (ambiguous) events to infer discrimination (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Deitch et al., 2003). This could explain the many reports in the existing literature that targets have difficulty disentangling the reason(s) for discriminatory behavior (e.g., St. Jean & Feagin, 1997).

Minority stress theory (Meyer, 1995) was originally written to describe the experiences of gay people, although it has been applied to other groups subsequently. This theory suggests that stress is derived from minority status. This stress originates from multiple places, including (1) internalized homophobia, which refers to gay men's knowledge that there are negative social attitudes toward them; (2) stigma, which is related to gay men's expectations that there will be discrimination toward them; and (3) actual experiences of discrimination or violence (Meyer, 1995). Meyer (2003) conducted a meta-analysis and found that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people tended to have more mental disorders than heterosexual people, which supports minority stress theory.

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### (p. 317) Findings From Recent Meta-analyses on Individual-Level Discrimination Outcomes

The purpose of this literature review is to give the reader a general understanding of the current state and findings on the individual-level outcomes of employment discrimination research rather than to provide a comprehensive review of all studies. We devote the most attention to empirical research to advance our understanding of the outcomes of workplace discrimination against individuals. Recent meta-analyses in the field will be reviewed followed by a closer look at empirical studies conducted in the past few years (2012–2014). The primary outcomes are classified as job attitudes, psychological outcomes, physical outcomes, and work-related outcomes. Our review indicates that the research is conclusive in terms of a main effect, finding an overall negative effect of discrimination on the various outcomes.

Similar conclusions were reached in several meta-analyses (e.g., Jones et al., 2016; Lee & Ahn, 2011, 2012; Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Meta-analyses allowed us to assess patterns of findings among study results, sources of divergence among results, and interesting moderators that could be examined using multiple contexts of studies. However, in order to assess discrimination outcomes at the individual level of analysis, we specified in our database search that the study must measure discrimination at work as an independent variable and contain an individual-level outcome as the dependent variable. We found several studies that examined discrimination between different types of discrimination (i.e., race, sex, age) and different forms of discrimination (i.e., subtle vs. blatant) (Jones et al., 2016). Most of the studies focused on perceptions of discrimination. Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey (1999) argued that the individual must acknowledge the discrimination in order to react to it. Refer to Table 20.1 to view the variables and inclusion criteria (participants, type of discrimination, outcomes) of recent meta-analyses.

Overall, the findings across participants and types of discrimination show that perceived discrimination is negatively related to work outcomes, helpful work behaviors, and mental and physical health. Some studies focus on specific populations (Lee & Ahn, 2011, 2012) while others focus on broader discrimination against several groups (Jones et al., 2016; Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Similar detrimental effects have been observed across a variety of target characteristics, such as sex, race, and age. However, the strongest available evidence exists for race-ethnicity and gender discrimination (Colella, McKay, Daniels, & Signal, 2012). Nonetheless, each meta-analysis provides a new way of looking at the relationship between perceived discrimination and individual-level outcomes.

### **Pascoe and Richman (2009) Meta-analysis**

Around the time of an influential qualitative review on discrimination and racial disparities in health (Williams & Mohammed, 2009), Pascoe and Richman (2009) quantified the nature of the relationship between perceived discrimination and health outcomes. Their paper combined meta-analysis with research synthesis to provide the field with deeper in-

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sights on the strength, or size, of the relationship. Specifically, they focused on the direct links between perceived discrimination and health, perceived discrimination and health behaviors, and perceived discrimination and physiological and psychological stress responses. The main premise underlying their paper was that discriminatory experiences influence health through the stress responses they engender. Through repeated exposure, these stress responses—both physiological and psychological—can lead to mental and physical illnesses.

Of the 192 studies collected from 1986 to 2007, 134 were included in the meta-analysis. The outcomes of interest included mental health, physical health, stress response, and health behavior. The outcomes examined include mental health (e.g., depressive symptoms, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, indicators of psychosis, psychological distress, well-being, self-esteem, positive self-perception), physical health (e.g., blood pressure, hypertension, nausea, pain, headache, and general health questionnaires), stress response (e.g., cardiovascular reactivity, psychological stress responses such as anger, feeling stressed, changes in state self-esteem, changes in feelings of well-being and life satisfaction, feelings of depression/anxiety, and self-reported positive and negative emotion), and health behavior (alcohol use and abuse, smoking behavior, substance use, good health habits, medication adherence, missing doctor appointments, eating behaviors, and attitudes).

Although there are noted strengths in their inclusion criteria for identifying relevant studies (e.g., many aspects of perceived discrimination and health, nonrestrictive data regarding sample or publication date), most of the studies identified focused on racial discrimination (66% of the studies). Nonetheless, they concluded that health (p. 318) outcomes were not distinguishable based on the type of discrimination experienced. Specifically, the meta-analytic average correlations for each of the categories was: mental health ( $\bar{r} = -0.16$ ), physical health ( $\bar{r} = -0.13$ ), stress response ( $\bar{r} = -0.11$ ), and health behavior ( $\bar{r} = -0.18$ ). However, they note that it is likely some covariates were excluded, which implies that the average weighted correlation is more likely to be inflated than the actual relationship. Their findings provided initial evidence that the relationship between perceived discrimination and outcomes may occur through the mechanism of stress responses and health behaviors.

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Table 20.1 Meta-Analyses Design Choices

Study	Partici- pants	Type of Dis- crimination	Outcomes
Pascoe and Richman (2009)	Not re- stricted	Discrimination (racial, gender, sexual, unfair treatment, other)	Physical health Mental health Health behaviors Stress responses
Lee and Ahn (2011)	Asian par- ticipants (not re- stricted by country)	Racial discrimi- nation	Mental health (depression, anxi- ety, psychological distress)
Lee and Ahn (2012)	Latina/o/ Hispanic Americans in the USA	Racial discrimi- nation	Mental health (depression, anxi- ety, psychological distress, job dis- satisfaction, un- healthy behavior)
Jones et al. (2016)	Not re- stricted	Subtle/Overt dis- crimination and Sex/Racial dis- crimination	Individual work Organizationally relevant Physical health Psychological health
Schmitt et al. (2014)	Not re- stricted	Racism, sexism, heterosexism, mental illness, physical illness/ disability, HIV+, weight, other	Psychological well-being (mood, self-esteem, anxi- ety, depression, life satisfaction, mental health)
Dolezsar et al. (2014)	Not re- stricted	Racial discrimi- nation	Blood pressure (hypertension)

To supplement the meta-analysis, they conducted a multivariate analysis and showed that the association was present even when including common covariates. Important moderator variables between the perceived discrimination and health link were also examined. Generally, they found that social support, group identification, and active coping styles

are likely to serve a protective function and attenuate the relationship between perceived discrimination and negative health outcomes. However, they note that although these moderators may buffer the perceived discrimination-health relationship, the relationship does not occur universally. Scholars are invited to take into consideration boundary conditions in which each type is more likely to act as a protective function.

### Lee and Ahn (2011, 2012) Meta-analyses

Lee and Ahn brought a unique perspective to the understanding of individual-level discrimination outcomes by examining outcomes of a single target population (e.g., Latin Americans, Asians). Lee and Ahn focused on discrimination against particular racial/ethnic groups. For example, they examined the mental health outcomes of general discrimination for Asians (2011) and the effects of general discrimination on mental health, physical health, employment, and educational outcomes for Latino/a populations (2012). The overall relationship between perceived racial discrimination and overall distress was moderate for Asians ( $\bar{r} = 0.23$ ) and for Latinos/as ( $\bar{r} = 0.23$ ).

(p. 319) Each meta-analysis found that the relationship differed depending on the type of outcome measure examined. For the Asian sample that included 23 studies the effect size was largest for anxiety ( $\bar{r} = 0.28$ ), followed by depression ( $\bar{r} = 0.26$ ), and then by psychological distress ( $\bar{r} = 0.17$ ) (Lee & Ahn, 2011). Similar to the Asian sample findings, the Latino/a sample findings based on 51 studies reported anxiety as having the strongest correlation with perceived discrimination, followed by depression (Lee & Ahn, 2012). The weakest correlation was with unhealthy behaviors (alcohol use, general health, perceived physical health). These findings corroborate other studies (Pascoe & Richman, 2009) in identifying a stronger association between mental health indicators and perceived discrimination.

Both Lee and Ahn meta-analyses also tested several moderators of the discrimination-outcome relationship and found mixed support overall. Lee and Ahn (2011) found that the overall effect size between perceived discrimination and individual resources varied depending on the type of individual resource: personal constructs and strengths ( $\bar{r} = -0.19$ ), social support ( $\bar{r} = -0.15$ ), cultural identity ( $\bar{r} = -0.10$ ), and coping strategies ( $\bar{r} = 0.24$ ). Lee and Ahn (2012) examined self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-acceptance, and academic motivation as moderators. Lee and Ahn (2012) did not find strong support (as did Pascoe & Richman, 2009) for active coping or social support. However, they did find that the magnitude of the correlation between perceived discrimination and individual resources varied by sociodemographic factors, such as age and the specific type of Latino/a (e.g., Cuban, Mexican). The correlation between perceived discrimination and individual resources was more strongly negative for Cubans than Mexicans. Children also showed a larger magnitude of loss of individual resources associated with discrimination compared to adults.

### **Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, and Gray (2016) Meta-analysis**

Jones et al. (2016) makes several contributions to the literature beyond previous meta-analyses (e.g., Pascoe & Richman, 2009) by directly comparing the relationship between subtle and blatant discrimination with psychological health, physical health, and work-related outcomes. Their motivation lies with a dispute in the literature on the relative impact of different forms of discrimination on consequences for targets. For example, some work has argued that subtle discrimination is less consequential for targets as compared with overt discrimination (e.g., Landy, 2008). However, others argue that subtle, more interpersonal forms of discrimination may produce more stress because of their ambiguous nature (e.g., Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Understanding whether the outcomes are different based on the form of discrimination is important to the field because recent discrimination theories are more representative of the subtleties in discrimination (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986, 2000; McConahay, 1983).

Meta-analyzing 90 effect sizes, Jones et al. (2016) found that subtle and overt forms of discrimination correlate in similar ways to relevant outcomes. In other words, the two forms of discrimination are not differentially related to the studied outcomes. Finding no difference calls into question the belief that subtle discrimination is less consequential for targets as compared with overt discrimination (Landy, 2008). They also note that the relationship between discrimination and its correlates was not significantly different across study settings (workplace vs. nonwork settings).

The magnitude of the relationship between perceived discrimination and physical health was smaller in size than the effect of perceived discrimination on individual work correlates, organizationally relevant correlates, and psychological correlates. Finding a smaller effect size between perceived discrimination and physical health outcomes is similar to previous meta-analytic findings (e.g., Lee & Ahn, 2011, 2012; Pascoe & Richman, 2009).

### **Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, and Garcia (2014) Meta-analysis**

Schmitt et al. (2014) added to the growing meta-analytic findings by conducting two meta-analyses that encompassed a wider range of stigmatized identities and a broader conceptualization of well-being. Overall, the findings in their first meta-analysis mirrored prior findings in the literature. Their study differentiated from others by examining a wider range of disadvantaged groups beyond racial minorities and women. On the whole, effect sizes from disadvantaged samples were larger compared with effects from advantaged groups. Within the disadvantaged sample, they compared the effects of perceived discrimination on well-being outcomes among groups with different types of stigmas. They concluded that the main effect of perceived discrimination on well-being was stronger for sexual minorities, people with mental illness, people with a physical disability, and (p. 320) people stigmatized as overweight compared with groups stigmatized by gender or race.



Moreover, Schmitt et al. (2014) tackled one fundamental problem in many studies examining the focal relationship: causality. The authors used two methods to test whether the relationship is causal. First, they looked for evidence of a causal effect of perceptions of discrimination in longitudinal studies and then they looked in studies manipulating perceptions of pervasive discrimination. They found that effects were not different from zero in studies manipulating discrimination attributions for a single negative event. In response, they concluded that perceiving isolated events as discriminatory is less likely to harm well-being than pervasive discrimination.

### **Dolezsar, McGrath, Herzig, and Miller (2014) Meta-analysis**

Although Pascoe and Richman (2009) incorporated blood pressure within their meta-analysis, the construct was grouped into physical health outcomes. Dolezsar et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of 44 effect sizes to determine the size and magnitude of the effect between perceived racial discrimination and blood pressure. In addition, they examined individual-level moderators (e.g., age, sex, socioeconomic status, social support, body mass index, smoking status) and methodological moderators (e.g., perceived discrimination measure, hypertensive diagnosis, blood pressure assessment).

They found a small association between perceived discrimination and hypertension (or high blood pressure). The relation was stronger for older participants, males, Black participants, and less educated participants. In other words, age, sex, race, and education moderated at least one association between discrimination and high blood pressure. This finding corroborates other work that illustrates the importance of moderating factors in the relationship between perceived discrimination and health outcomes.

## **Recent Articles Examining the Consequences of Discrimination**

A review of recent literature is an indicator of where the field stands in understanding the outcomes of individual-level perceived discrimination. Although the topic of individual costs of employment discrimination has been given ample attention, Colella et al. (2012) encouraged researchers to cover more ground regarding discrimination based on other attributes than sex and race. Specifically, they suggest the field move in three general directions: (1) integrate research across disciplines (e.g., sociology, economics, legal studies), (2) take a multilevel view of discrimination, and (3) aim research on issues that can help inform organizations and the legal system on how to remedy employment discrimination (Colella et al., 2012).

In addition to replicating negative main effects of perceived discrimination on individual-level outcomes (e.g., Bauermeister et al., 2014; Choi, Paul, Ayala, Boylan, & Gregorich, 2013), researchers have begun to chip away at the complexity of how discrimination operates and produces consequences for targets. Based on our review of recent literature, we uncovered several trends: Authors are conducting studies that (1) incorporate under-

represented samples, (2) examine discrimination types other than race and sex, (3) consider the nuances of boundary conditions, and (4) connect research streams from multiple areas of management (e.g., turnover and incivility literature). The trends we uncovered relate to the research directions Colella et al. (2012) put forth. Boundary conditions inform organizations on how to remedy employment discrimination, whereas connecting research streams is a step in the direction of integrating research across disciplines. Moreover, understanding the intricacies of the relationship between perceived discrimination and outcomes in different contexts with minority populations can help the research community better assess the nature (specific vs. universal) of the discrimination outcomes addressed in the literature.

Our review of the recent literature will be presented in terms of the common trends discussed above. We searched the PsychInfo and Business Source Complete databases for key terms to identify recent empirical or theoretical articles on workplace discrimination and its consequences. We focus most of our attention on empirical studies that specifically examine workplace discrimination consequences. However, there are a few studies mentioned briefly that look at a broader view of discrimination (e.g., discrimination from the community or everyday discrimination). These studies can help inform us of future study directions to test whether some of the relationships uncovered are generalizable to workplace discrimination. Based on our extensive review of the literature and on the existing meta-analyses, we identified several important themes in recent articles on the outcomes of individual discrimination at work. These themes described below include underrepresented samples, other types of discrimination, and nuances and boundary conditions around the way workplace discrimination affects individuals.

### **(p. 321) Underrepresented Samples**

Marginalized groups have been a recent focus of study. For example, studies have sampled specific communities such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community (Bauermeister et al., 2014; Choi et al., 2013; Deblaere & Bertsch, 2013; Velez & Moradi, 2012; Velez, Moradi, & Brewster, 2013), women-only samples (Herrbach & Mignonoac, 2012; Kim, Lee, & Sung, 2013), and Latin American samples (e.g., Ojeda & Pina-Watson, 2013; Sawyer, Major, Casad, Townsend, & Berry Mendes, 2012).

Minority stress theory is used to explain disproportionate stress related to marginalized status and to psychological distress (Meyer, 2003). Velez et al. (2013) tested minority stress theory specific to sexual minorities by examining the association of workplace heterosexual discrimination, expectations of heterosexual stigma, internalized heterosexism, and sexual identity management strategies on psychological distress and job satisfaction. Based on a sample of 326 sexual minority employees, they found that minority stressors were associated with greater distress and lower job satisfaction.

In another study, Bauermeister et al. (2014) found that work discrimination was negatively associated with self-rated health ( $b = -.15, p < 0.001$ ) and was associated with a greater number of days when their physical and mental health was not good. The sample

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( $n = 397$  young men) has a sizable representation of Blacks/African Americans (49%). Overall, these studies show initial support for minority stress theory and suggest that disproportionate stress may be felt more by marginalized groups, which in turn, relates to higher levels of psychological distress or physical health.

Several studies have examined whether discrimination outcomes are equivalent across different racial/ethnic groups (Bergman, Palmieri, Drasgow, & Ormerod, 2012; Choi et al., 2013; Purnell et al., 2012). All three studies found no significant variations across race/ethnicity. This was consistent for attitudinal outcomes such as satisfaction with work, supervisor, and opportunities and turnover intent (Bergman et al., 2012) as well as mental health (depression and anxiety; Choi et al., 2013) and behavioral outcomes (e.g., smoking; Purnell et al., 2012).

For example, Bergman et al. (2012) examined whether the relationships among racial/ethnic harassment and discrimination (REHD) and its outcomes were equivalent across five racial/ethnic groups (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American; 1,000 per group in the U.S. military). Overall, they found that REHD had a significant effect on work, supervisor, and opportunity satisfaction. The authors examined the relationships across groups using multigroup modeling and found that even though the means were different across groups, the relationships among the variables were the same. This indicated that the differences in outcomes across groups are associated with differences in REHD and their predictors across groups, thus supporting the differential exposure view (Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999). In other words, differences in racial/ethnic discrimination across racial scores are met with equal differences in job-related outcomes regardless of race.

It is worthwhile to consider whether those findings across racial/ethnic groups exist for other types of discrimination consequences, such as mental health. A study by Choi et al. (2013) can help answer this point. However, the type of discrimination examined is from the community rather than from the workplace. Choi and coauthors surveyed about 400 men from each of the following ethnic groups: African Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, and Latinos for a total of 1,200 men. They found that past-year experiences of racism within the general community were positively associated with both depression and anxiety, regardless of race.

Not only has the relative effect of the type of discrimination been considered but also the source of the discrimination has been of concern (Choi et al., 2013; Wood, Braeken, & Niven, 2013). For example, Wood et al. (2013) surveyed 1,733 United Kingdom mental health workers and found that reported discrimination from multiple sources (manager, coworker, patient, and visitor) was related positively to poor well-being and negatively to job satisfaction. Reported discrimination from managers had the strongest effect. These findings demonstrate that the power of the perpetrator of discrimination is important to consider in explaining the effect of discrimination on employees' well-being and satisfaction.

### Other Types of Discrimination

Colella et al. (2012) encouraged researchers to explore consequences of different types of perceived discrimination in addition to race and sex. In the last few years, researchers have examined a wide range of forms of discrimination from weight discrimination (Randle, Mathis, & Cates, 2012), family obligation discrimination (Volpone & Avery, 2013), sexual orientation discrimination (p. 322) (Bauermeister et al., 2014; Choi et al., 2013; Deblaere & Bertsch, 2013; Velez & Morondi, 2012; Velez et al., 2013), and age discrimination (Rabl, 2010; Rabl & Triana, 2013). The majority of this recent work has examined sexual orientation discrimination, as discussed earlier in the chapter, and age discrimination. Age discrimination has been of interest recently, given the aging workforce, higher unemployment rates, and later retirement dates. Much of the work in the age discrimination literature examines the concept as being either too old or too young (e.g., Snape & Redman, 2003). Snape and Redman (2003) found that perceived age discrimination, whether for being too old or too young, has negative consequences for affective organizational commitment (Snape & Redman, 2003). In addition, he found some support for the notion that older workers who feel that they have been discriminated against have a stronger intention to retire early.

Two recent studies conducted with separate samples of German employees have examined the consequences of age stereotypes (Rabl, 2010; Rabl & Triana, 2013). Rabl (2010) found that older employees were more strongly affected by age discrimination than their younger colleagues and this perceived age discrimination led to less perceived organizational support and a higher fear of failure. Chronological age was not related to achievement motives. From this study, Rabl (2010) concluded that the stereotype of “unmotivated older employees” was not justified. Although chronological age was not a factor in the aforementioned study, age plays a moderating role in the next study concerning employees’ perceived age discrimination and affective organizational commitment (Rabl & Triana, 2013). As expected, results showed a negative relationship between perceived age discrimination and affective organizational commitment. Moreover, this relationship was stronger for older employees than for younger employees, suggesting that older employees are more vulnerable to the stressor of perceived age discrimination.

James, McKechnie, Swanberg, and Besen (2013) found that the perception of discrimination against older employees is negatively related to employee engagement among all employees. The authors examined the perceived intentionality of the discrimination and found age differences in the relationship between intentional and unintentional discrimination and employee engagement. Specifically, older workers have a more negative relationship between unintentional discrimination and employee engagement, while for younger workers the relationship is more negative for intentional discrimination. This study examined stereotypes rather than perceived discrimination. Nevertheless, the study adds to the literature on age discrimination consequences by examining the intentionality of the discrimination from the eyes of the beholder. Future work can examine how intentionality relates to the form of discrimination (subtle vs. blatant) as discussed in Jones et

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al. (2016). Perhaps subtle forms of discrimination that are seen as intentional are more harmful than subtle forms of discrimination that are perceived as unintentional.

Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, and Magley (2013) tested elements of selective incivility as modern discrimination in organizations. Using theories of intersectionality and double jeopardy, they suggested that women of color might be most at risk of experiencing incivility, or modern discrimination, which in turn linked to higher levels of turnover intent. Their findings support the notion that some uncivil conduct represents an inconspicuous form of gender and racial discrimination.

Finally, Bell, Berry, Marquardt, and Green (2013) call for research on discriminatory job loss, which involves discriminatory termination, layoff, retaliatory termination, and constructive discharge. The call for research is on understanding its negative consequences, which are theorized to exceed negative outcomes of discrimination or job loss alone. Overall, discriminatory job loss is proposed to affect unemployment duration and reemployment quality as well as targets' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and perceived control.

## Nuances and Boundary Conditions

Given the significant costs associated with workplace discrimination including worsened employee attitudes and increased turnover intentions (King, Hebl, George, & Matusik, 2010; Madera et al., 2012), many researchers have undertaken initiatives to understand the process by which discrimination has deleterious effects. This has resulted in more complex models being tested using both mediation and moderation hypotheses to explain how discrimination manifests itself into various outcomes.

Several studies have examined how to remedy employment discrimination by trying to understand contextual factors that may moderate or buffer the effects of perceived discrimination on negative outcomes. For example, Pascoe and Richman (2009) (p. 323) found that social support and coping are effective at reducing the effects. However, not all coping behaviors are equally successful; active or problem-focused coping are the most effective.

Boundary conditions have become more established in regard to the relationship between perceived discrimination and outcomes. In particular, coping mechanisms have been examined to determine whether certain strategies buffer the effects of perceived discrimination on the outcomes. Coping can be adaptive and buffer the effects or it could be maladaptive and cause other effects. For example, one common maladaptive coping strategy is smoking (Purnell et al., 2012; Shih, Young, & Bucher, 2013). One study finds that some populations (e.g., migrant women workers in China) may be more vulnerable to dealing with stressors in maladaptive ways such as smoking cigarettes (Shih et al., 2013). Purnell et al. (2012) examined perceived racial discrimination in the workplace as well as in healthcare settings and found that the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and current smoking habits was more relevant in the workplace than in healthcare settings (Purnell et al., 2012). This suggests that the workplace context is unique and should be examined further.

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Although workplace discrimination research has focused on coping mechanisms that serve an adaptive function (e.g., Randle et al., 2012; Volpone & Avery, 2013), this work has produced mixed results that seem to depend on the proposed model at hand. For example, coping mechanisms moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination (race, age, family obligation, sexual orientation) and work withdrawal (Volpone & Avery, 2013). However, for workplace weight discrimination, coping does not buffer the effects of perceived weight discrimination on perceived career success (Randle et al., 2012).

Identity management strategies (e.g., identity switching and identity redefinition) are also proposed to mitigate the negative consequences of discrimination. By redefining one's identity, one can protect his/her self-esteem from the harmful effects of discrimination. Shih et al. (2013) importantly note that strategies for coping with discrimination are temporary tools in the short run. Thus, it is important to consider the long-term consequences. For example, a study by Madera et al. (2012) conceptualized perceived discrimination as a mediator between social identity management and job-related outcomes. They found that group identity management (either manifesting a group identity or suppressing a group identity) was linked to job satisfaction and turnover intentions directly and indirectly through perceived discrimination. Similar to mainstream findings, perceived discrimination was associated with less job satisfaction and higher turnover intentions.

The relevance of the coping strategy to the type of discrimination perceived also matters. More specific coping mechanisms may be more likely to have a positive effect if they are related to the type of discrimination being experienced. For example, those who are committed to womanism (a mixture of multiple identities and combatting multiple oppressions) are less likely to experience the harmful effects of perceived lifetime sexist events on psychological distress (DeBlaere & Bertsch, 2013). Specifically, sexual minority women of color ( $n = 182$ ) who have a framework of womanism can better contextualize and identify their sexist experiences, which in turn, allows them to externalize and minimize the negative effects of those experiences (Landrine & Klonoff, 1997). Womanism is defined as a commitment to fuse multiple identities and to combat multiple oppressions (Garth, 1994). This could help buffer the negative effects of sexism on psychological distress for women (DeBlaere & Bertsch, 2013). Drawing from critical race theory (Solorzano, 1998), womanism allows sexual minority women of color to identify and analyze the aspects of society that maintain oppressive systems. Sexism can be more easily placed in a broader historical and cultural context, which can provide women with the knowledge to deconstruct their experiences.

The concept of womanism stems from work examining feminism. A recent study by Holland and Cortina (2013) examined how feminism related to women's experiences of sexual harassment as both a cost (increasing exposure to harassment) and a benefit (decreasing harassment-related outcomes). In this way, feminism can be thought of as a factor that may help protect women against negative outcomes of sexual harassment or discrimination. They hypothesized that both feminist-identified and feminist-active women would experience negative outcomes of harassment to a lesser extent. Only women who were active in feminist movements experienced a lesser degree of some negative occupational

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outcomes. Although their findings received mixed support, the important factor to highlight in future research is women's relationship to feminism in models of sexual harassment risk.

Findings pertaining to the role of support as a moderator of the relationship between perceived (p. 324) discrimination and outcomes are also inconclusive (Kim et al., 2013; Minnotte, 2012). On one hand, supervisor support moderated the effects of gender discrimination in the workforce on Korean female employees' job satisfaction and work stress. On the other hand, social support has also been found to have little effect on the relationship between perceived discrimination (sex, race, and age) on work-life conflict (Minnotte, 2012). In other words, perceived discrimination still had an effect on work-life conflict even when coworker and social support were controlled. Future work would be well served to conduct a meta-analysis on the role of coping and support mechanisms (both maladaptive and adaptive) on the relationship between discrimination and outcomes.

Part of the mixed findings may be addressed by reviewing studies that consider multiple contextual factors. These studies examine how individual experiences are affected by the combination of personal and organizational elements. Elements examined range from the organization's level of ethnic discrimination (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2012) to an individual's expectations of how the work environment is perceived (Herrbach & Mignonoac, 2012; Settles, Cortina, Buchanan, & Miner, 2012; Velez & Moradi, 2012). For example, Settles et al. (2012) found that discrimination in pay, promotion, resources, and so on, increased a target's feelings of alienation from colleagues as well as their perceptions that the general work environment was poor. These perceptions then undermined their reported job satisfaction.

An individual's perception of their talents, needs, and values (or career anchors, Schein, 1990) were found to shape the relationship between perceived gender discrimination and subjective career success (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012). In a sample of 300 women working in technology jobs at a French company, the authors found that some career anchors (managerial, technical, and lifestyle) enhanced the negative effect of gender discrimination on subjective career success whereas other career anchors (security and autonomy) lessened the effect.

Other research has started to take on the multilevel perspective that Colella et al. (2012) recommended as a future research guideline. For example, King et al. (2012) considered how organizational factors influenced the relationship between ethnic discrimination and individual levels of satisfaction. They found that organizational factors buffered the negative effects. Specifically, the pervasiveness of ethnic discrimination in the organization buffered the negative effect of personal discrimination on job satisfaction. Ethnic diversity, on the other hand, enhanced the negative effects of personal discrimination on satisfaction. These findings suggest that organizational demography affects employee attitudes by signaling the extent to which the company genuinely values diversity.

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Stainback and Irvin (2012) considered an organization's demographic composition and found that Whites, Blacks, and Latino/as were less likely to experience discrimination when the majority of their coworkers were of the same race. However, for all racial groups, perceived racial discrimination reduced employer loyalty and increased job-search intentions. This suggests that consequences of discrimination may differ based on whether the organization's demographic composition matches the target's demographic characteristic of consideration.

Finally, recent research has considered the overlapping nature of perceptions of a supportive climate and perceived workplace discrimination. For example, Velez and Moradi (2012) explored perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB)-supportive climates with job satisfaction and turnover intentions in a sample of LGB employees. Workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates related in the expected directions to person-organization fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. However, when the two contextual variables were examined at the same time, they found support only for LGB-supportive climate with respect to their hypothesized indirect relations with job satisfaction and turnover intentions (P-O fit as a mediator). As the authors note, this study suggests a "future need for multimethod approaches to examining discrimination and climate" (Velez & Moradi, 2012, p. 405).

## Future Research Directions and Conclusion

Overall, based on the research reviewed above, there is solid evidence that many people perceive discrimination at work today and that the outcomes of discrimination include psychological, physical, attitudinal, and work-related harm. What can we do about this problem? We provide a few future research directions that would expand our understanding of discrimination at work from the victim, organizational, and perpetrator perspectives.

From the victim's perspective, we recommend more research to uncover who reacts which way to discrimination. DeBlaere and Bertsch's (2013) findings that womanism seems to buffer women from (p. 325) the harmful effects of sexism suggest that traits representing hardiness are effective at insulating people from the effects of discrimination. Another recent paper by Wagstaff, Triana, Kim, and Al-Riyami (in press) found that social coping in response to perceived discrimination was positively related to job withdrawal but this effect was attenuated by core self-evaluations. Core self-evaluations is a multifaceted trait that is made up of self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control (feeling in control of his/her life), and emotional stability (Judge & Bono, 2001). In their study, employees with high core self-evaluations did not withdraw from work, even when they confided in someone about the perceived discrimination.

Which approach is better for the employee, withdrawing or not? Perhaps each has pluses and minuses. Employees like to feel engaged at work, and putting in the bare minimum at work does not seem professionally satisfying. However, withdrawing from a dysfunctional environment is a perfectly rational response and may provide needed stress relief if done

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in moderation. It may be that employees with high hardiness traits like core self-evaluations are subjecting themselves to more stress and internalizing the discrimination. An interesting future research idea would be to test the relationship between core self-evaluations and the physiological consequences of discrimination, including blood pressure and somatic symptoms.

From the employer's perspective, it may seem obvious that hiring employees with hardiness characteristics such as core self-evaluations would be ideal as they have a natural buffer against discrimination and will keep working hard no matter what they experience in the workplace. However, we suggest that an organization full of people with high core self-evaluations may not be ideal if these employees sweep problems under the rug when they really should complain about them. A hostile work environment could persist if no one reports it. Future research should examine what individual differences make employees more or less susceptible to perceived discrimination at work. Future research could also study whether events that are seen as bad in the short run (e.g., a discrimination complaint with human resources or the EEOC, or a discrimination lawsuit) may actually be good for the organization in the long run if it initiates a change in the culture that provides a better long-term diversity climate.

The other party involved in discrimination is the perpetrator. Although our focus to this point has been on the victim, it is important to examine the perpetrator as well. For every victim of discrimination, there is at least one perpetrator. Understanding the dynamics going on within the perpetrator side of the discriminatory incident could ultimately help us improve the experiences of the victims. Recent work by Wagstaff, Triana, Peters, and Salazar (2013) used an experimental design to test perpetrators' responses to being accused of subtle discrimination. They found that the mode of confrontation (directly speaking with the perpetrator versus filing a complaint with human resources) affected both the perpetrator's state of anger and the likelihood of them providing a justification for their actions to the alleged victim. The accused perpetrator's anger was higher when the mode of confrontation was indirect through human resources than when they were approached directly with the complaint. However, the perpetrator was also more likely to provide a justification for their actions when human resources was involved and the situation was made public.

This study by Wagstaff and colleagues began to shed light on perpetrator reactions to discrimination. Learning more about the perpetrators of discrimination and how to manage their actions can help us reduce the discrimination that victims experience in organizations. Future research may examine whether diversity training may make perpetrators more receptive to listening to victims' complaints and reflecting on their actions to avoid discrimination against others in the future. For example, if organizations trained employees about implicit (i.e., subconscious) bias, it may be possible for employees to realize that it is common for people to hold implicit biases in their minds about other groups and that these implicit biases affect their thoughts (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). If such training could be implemented voluntarily and successfully in organizations, without stigmatizing the training attendees, this could be a powerful tool to combat work-

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place discrimination because research shows that implicit bias can be controlled (Plant & Devine, 1998).

Overall, we conclude that while we know a lot about modern discrimination, there is still much to learn and do to prevent workplace discrimination and mitigate its harm on the target. The study of discrimination is always ongoing because it changes as society's norms for acceptable behavior and employment laws change. In the end, though, the human tendency to categorize others according to their social groups is strong and enduring (Tajfel, (p. 326) 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Inevitably, this leads to some discrimination, whether perceived or real. The challenge for research and practice, then, is to minimize and prevent the negative influence of discrimination. It is important for researchers to continue studying discrimination and advancing our knowledge (both in research and in practice) to understand discrimination in organizations, its effect on employees, and what can be done to reduce it.

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(1.) The first and second authors share equal authorship.

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