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Differences in Perceived Workplace Incivility among Senior Women Administrators in Intercollegiate Athletics: An Intersection of Race and Sexuality

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Diversity

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(including questions)
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The establishment of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) in 1971 and passage of Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments to the 1964 Civil Rights Act (P.L. 92-318, 20 U.S.C.S § 1681) allowed women to participate in, and govern women's intercollegiate athletic sport teams while simultaneously challenge sport's male domination (Griffin, 1998). As women's sports increased in popularity and profitability and female athletes began to garner social acceptance, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the governing body for men's intercollegiate athletics, took notice and ultimately took sole control of women's intercollegiate athletics. Upon seizing control, the NCAA established the Primary Woman Administrator (PWA) position, currently entitled Senior Woman Administrator (SWA), as a way of integrating women into intercollegiate sport governance and providing them with some degree of decision-making power. Across all three divisions, SWA's now serve as "the highest ranking female involved with the management of an institution's intercollegiate athletic program" (NCAA 2012-2013 Division I manual, p. 18).

Research on the role of the SWA has identified very little uniformity in the perceived duties and responsibilities affiliated with the position (e.g., Hatfield et al., 1999; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). One exception, however, is the perception that it is the responsibility of the SWA to represent the interests of women and women's sports (e.g., Clausen & Lehr, 2002; Tiell et al., 2012). As such, the responsibilities meant to be those of the institution at large, fall on the often "token" SWA (see Hoffman, 2010). Indeed, SWA's differ greatly from the prototypical athletic department employee - the White, Protestant, able-bodied, heterosexual and therefore may be considered outsiders or of minority status and subsequently suffer differential experiences than do their majority counterparts (Fink & Pastore, 1999; Fink et al., 2001). Whereas overt forms of discrimination were once a reason for such differential experiences, social change has drawn more attention to subtle forms of discrimination such as workplace incivility. Workplace incivility is 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" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 457.). Recent research has demonstrated that these uncivil behaviors can have a negative impact on both the organization as a whole and the employees within it (see Cortina, 2008).

To the extent that uncivil behaviors are targeted at specific social groups (i.e., selective; see Cortina, 2008), incivility is a potential mechanism by which certain groups remain underrepresented and/or are treated differently within an organization. Selective incivility within the workplace has been demonstrated amongst women and racial minorities in relation to their male counterparts workplace (Cortina, 2011). Cortina et al., (2012) also found that women and African American men experienced greater levels of incivility suggesting the presence of intersectionality (i.e., double jeopardy) for African American women. The effects of such uncivil behaviors include lower job satisfaction and commitment (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004), decrease creativity, cooperation and citizenship (Pearson & Porath, 2004, 2009), and diminished institutional satisfaction (Caza & Cortina, 2008). Perceptions of incivility may also lead to intentions to leave the organization (Caza & Cortina, 2008). Currently, less is known about sexuality differences and uncivil work experiences, however, some qualitative research has established the presence of different forms of discrimination (Melton & Cunningham, 2012; Walker & Melton, 2012).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact that sexual orientation, race, and the intersection of the two, may have on perceived levels of incivility and subsequent work outcomes. Based on the aforementioned literature, we hypothesize that race and sexual orientation will be negatively associated with perceived workplace incivility (Hypothesis 1 and 2, respectively). In addition, we expect that individuals possessing multiple marginalized identities (i.e., Black lesbian) will report greater levels of perceived workplace incivility than their White lesbian or Black heterosexual counterparts (Hypothesis 3). We then hypothesize that perceived workplace incivility will be negatively associated with job satisfaction and perceived organizational opportunity (Hypothesis 4 and 5, respectively). Recognizing that perceptions of supervisor support for diversity may also influence the relationship

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between perceived incivility and these work outcomes (see Cunningham & Sartore, 2010; Huffman et al., 2008), we lastly hypothesize that that supervisor support for diversity will moderate the relationship between perceived incivility and organizational outcomes, such that SWAs who have supervisors who support diversity will experience higher job satisfaction and greater organizational opportunity (Hypothesis 6 and 7, respectively) than SWAs who do not have supervisors who support diversity.

This study has received IRB approval and in the coming weeks we will sample SWAs at the Division I, II, and III levels within the National Collegiate Athletic Association (N=650). Utilizing an online survey tool, surveys will be distributed via e-mail complete with instructions and a link to the questionnaire. The questionnaires will assess the participant's demographic information (e.g., sex, race, sexual orientation, tenure, etc), perceived incivility due to one's minority status (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007), job satisfaction (Camman et al., 1979), organizational opportunity (Bergman et al., 2012), and supervisor support for diversity (Cunningham & Sartore, 2010). General workplace incivility and level of diversity within the athletic department (Harrison et al., 2002; Cunningham, 2011a, 2011b) will serve as control variables. To analyze the data, we will use AMOS 19. We will first conduct a confirmatory factor analysis to examine scale validity. We will use structural equation modeling (SEM) to test all hypotheses. Race, sexual orientation, and multiple marginalized identity (Black lesbian) will be exogenous variables and correlated with one another. Following Marsh, Wen, and Hau's (2004) guidelines for interactions, we will then create the perceived incivility x supervisor support interaction terms using the standardized scale items for the two variables. Perceived incivility due to minority status, job satisfaction and perceived occupational opportunity will be latent variables in the model.

Results of this have may possess several implications. First, findings may provide empirical evidence to the perception of incivility among SWAs, an untested population, and could provide additional evidence of discrimination against women within intercollegiate athletics. Secondly, this investigation may provide evidence that supervisor support for diversity delimits the perceptions of incivility among SWAs subsequently identifying the need for athletic departments with weak levels of supervisor support to improve their diversity or leadership training. Lastly, this study extends the current literature on intersectionality by examining the experiences of individuals possessing two marginalized identities within the sport organization setting.