Coping with Structural Racism: What Strategies and Adaptation Mechanisms do Blacks Use to Deal with Perceived Racial Discrimination at Workplaces?

by

Fabian Mbamalu Egeruoh

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctoral of

Philosophy in Social Welfare

Wurzweiler School of Social Work

Yeshiva University

New York

September 17, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The committee for this doctoral dissertation consisted of:

Advisor's Name: (WSSW faculty)	Susan E. Mason, PhD
Committee Member (WSSW faculty):	Isabel Wolock, PhD
Committee Member (WSSW faculty):	Ronnie Glassman, PhD
Committee Member (Outside WSSW):	Michael Katch, MSW

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to several people, but first, I would like to thank God for giving me the health, strength, and knowledge to carry me through the finish line. I wholeheartedly dedicate this to my dear wife, Helen-Gloria Egeruoh. Thank you for your unwavering belief in me. Your love, support, and encouragement have been more than enough for me to go this far. You have always been and will continue to be in the front row of my life. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my children: Nkechinyere, Chukwuemeka, Okechukwu, and my twins: Chibueze and Chidima. Your love and cheers helped me to persevere and finish what I started so that it does not come back to haunt me.

Love you all in Jesus's Name.

Acknowledgments

I am most grateful to my Dissertation Chair, Dr. Susan Mason for her priceless guidance, support, and mentorship throughout the process of this dissertation. I am also incredibly grateful to my professor, and dissertation reader, Dr. Isabel Wolock for steadfastly working with me not only during the regular school semesters, but also during off-school times, tuition-free, offering her expert guidance, editing, and always encouraging. To my two other Dissertation Committee members, Dr. Ronnie Glassman and Professor Michael Katch, I am extremely grateful for their review and constructive feedback, which were critical to the strength of this paper. I also want to thank Dr. Laurie Blackman for her insightful comments at the proposal stage. To a couple of other trusted mentors Dr. Richard Caputo and Dr. Jonathan Fast – both retired, but who are eagerly looking forward to reading this dissertation, thank you for your contributions. I would also like to thank everyone else, especially the anonymous participants whose narratives made this study possible. Lastly, I thank God for allowing me to experience this long journey, for giving me the health and strength to complete this dissertation. My hope now is for God to give me the wisdom to use this doctorate to positively impact the lives of many others in Jesus's Name.

Summary:

Coping with Structural Racism: What Strategies and Adaptation Mechanisms do Blacks Use to Deal with Perceived Racial Discrimination at Workplaces?

This study examined the strategies Black workers used to navigate, negotiate, minimize, or deal with perceived workplace racial discrimination encounters and how they coped with it. The type of study undertaken was a phenomenological qualitative investigation as defined by Creswell (2018). Using Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework as a guide, data were collected using Qualtrics online anonymous survey. Utilizing purposeful and snowball sampling methods, 16 Black workers aged 31 – 74 years old responded to Qualtrics online anonymous survey regarding their experiences with workplace racial discrimination. The data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti 9.0 version Qualitative Data Analysis computer software program. .

. Nine themes were extracted from the survey responses. Four of these themes were associated with the participants' experiences with perceived workplace racial discrimination; five themes were related to their coping strategies. Participants' narratives revealed overt experiences of perceived workplace racism in areas including denials: of promotions, salary increases, training, and upward mobility. Participants' narratives also revealed themes about harassment, being underrated, and not recognized for their accomplishments.

Participants reported utilizing a wide array of coping strategies, consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework. Findings revealed that they regulated stress from threat and challenge appraisals with problem-focused strategies and utilized emotion-focused coping strategies to change the way they felt about threats. Participants concluded that racism played a significant part in their frustration with the overall workplace environment.

The most relevant NASW Codes of Ethics relevant to this research is for social workers to: "work to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class based on race, ethnicity or national origin. This includes Blacks racism and police brutality (NASW, 2018)

KEYWORDS: PERCEIVED WORKPLACE RACISM, COPING, BLACK WORKERS, PROBLEM-FOCUSED, EMOTION-FOCUSED

CHAPTER ONE: DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

This qualitative study examined the strategies and coping mechanisms Black workers used to deal with perceived racial discrimination stressors at the workplace. The type of study is a phenomenological qualitative investigation as defined by Creswell J. D. and Creswell J.W. (2018). Data were collected via Yeshiva University's online Qualtrics website from 16 current and retired Black employees, ages 25 and above using a semi-structured open-ended interview guide (Appendix C). The study data was analyzed using ATLAS.ti (Version 9) for descriptive phenomenology which offers powerful analytic tools to extract, explore, compare, manage; reassemble expressive fragments from a large quantity of information in imaginative, flexible, and methodical ways (Lewis, 2004). The software was used to facilitate the analysis of Black employees' coping responses to perceived workplace racial discrimination stressors from the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical framework. The analysis mainly focused on the participants' assessment patterns of perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents at the primary appraisal stage, as well as at the secondary appraisal stage (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Final data analytical results utilized ATLAS.ti to establish codes, categories, and themes on the pattern of coping preferences, differences, flexibility, and similarities participants utilized when exposed to what they perceived as racism at work.

As such, this study also determined to what extent the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical framework provided a goodness-of-fit valid approach for understanding and responding to Black workers' perceived workplace racism stressors. The most relevant NASW *Codes of Ethics* standard relevant to this research is: to pursue social injustice – focusing primarily on issues of discrimination, unemployment, poverty, and other manifestations (NASW, 2018).

Statement of Purpose

This investigation was an effort to gather information on the ways Black employee participants responded to perceived "workplace racial discrimination" incidents. The current phenomenological qualitative study was aimed at understanding not only how participants with perceived workplace racial discrimination encounter navigated/negotiated the incident, but also the coping preferences utilized in responding/resolving these challenges.

Importance of Blacks' Workplace Appraisal and Coping with Racism

Workplace racial discrimination against Blacks has been persistent even though it has been banned (Beauchamp & Bowie, 1993), and the findings of some studies (e. g., Farley, 1996) have identified several roots of constant workplace racial inequality between Blacks and Whites. Still, the impact of racial discrimination occurring in the workplace has not been widely researched, especially regarding its related negative psychological impacts on Blacks, as well as from the standpoint of developing specific coping strategies. As a result, the emotional and psychological influence of workplace racism-related stressors on the Black community has remained unclear and limited. Several studies (e.g., Billingsley, 1992) have demonstrated that Blacks have long been subjected to a variety of racial discrimination traumas which can lead to such ailments as stroke, hypertension, and cardiovascular, as well as the use of alcohol and drugs. According to Cocchiara (2009), some of the problems associated with racial discrimination at the workplace include prejudices resulting from lower wages, stereotyping, job segregation, inequalities in employment and job-performance assessments, as well as obstacles to in-house occupational mentoring. The U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) revealed that: Blacks have lower job participation rates than Whites with comparable credentials. Blacks are also not likely to hold managerial and specialized job positions by noting that: despite the 1964

enforcement of Title VII Civil Rights Act, Blacks continue to trail behind Whites in employment and occupational mobility.

However, as workplace racism against Blacks persists, most stress and coping models (e.g., Elligan & Utsey, 1999) fail to incorporate strategies designed for Blacks to appropriately appraise and cope with workplace racial incidents. To help Blacks develop effective stress management strategies, Outlaw (1993) stresses the importance of ongoing studies to examine the effect of workplace racism and Blacks' experiences and/or responses to the related stressors. More studies on the topic will lead to a better understanding of the ways by which Blacks can make more informed choices that might enhance their appraisal and effectiveness of coping with workplace incidents of racism. This could, in turn, help them `develop more realistic expectations regarding taking full advantage of opportunities to succeed in mainstream society (Thorn & Sarata, 1998).

In this regard, there is also the need to empower the working-age Black population with a wide range of the appropriate and effective coping resources critical not only to appraise the racial discrimination incident but also to evaluate the costs and/or the advantages of the approaches they will use to cope. However, without adequate research on racial discrimination-related trauma and buffering mechanisms, the question becomes: how can Blacks effectively evaluate perceived workplace racism encounters to successfully cope with the associated stressors? In this regard, Black youths should be educated an early age with skills and perspectives that will help them to be responsive to the possibilities of racism in the workplace (White, 2009) and thereby, enable them to develop appropriate anticipatory coping strategies.

CHAPTER TWO: THE STUDY PROBLEM

Even though various aspects of racial discrimination have been studied, still knowledge in this area continues to lack a concise, agreed-upon definition. As such, many conceptualizations have been developed by researchers to describe this phenomenon. For instance, Feagin and Eckberg (1980) defined racial discrimination as "…actions or practices carried out by members of dominant racial or ethnic groups that have a differential and negative impact on members of subordinate racial or ethnic groups…" (pp. 1–2). Regardless of the definition, the conceptualizations of discrimination indicate that, in essence, discrimination involves the exclusion of certain individuals or groups from other persons or resources. For this study, even though many of these incidents were likely to have occurred, they were not confirmed by official hearings, thus the use of the word perceived. As such, perceived workplace racial discrimination was hereby defined as an individual perception of unfair workplace treatment of Black workers by the dominant White group rooted in racial prejudice occurring at societal levels. Some studies (e.g., Schleyer et al., 2000) have demonstrated that stress from workplace racism has detrimental life-long psychological and a variety of health outcomes on Blacks. Also, it is a subject that has been generally neglected in stress and coping research. As such, the way Blacks evaluate and cope with perceived workplace racial discrimination stressors may be more complex than indicated in previous studies. This section will provide an overview of the characteristics, scope, and impact of workplace racial discrimination stressors on Blacks, as well as the policies and social work values addressing the problem.

Characteristics of the Problem

Several groups (members of other disadvantaged minority groups) such as Latinos, women, Native Americans, lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) are the targets of discrimination in the workplace. However, this study is specifically

focused on the Black community and will employ updated Humphrey (1977) "fair-share" employment" concepts (discussed in detail below) as a good-fit conceptual framework in some discussions of the study problem.

The fair-share employment concepts reflect the 1977 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) study (*Black Experiences versus Black Expectations)* conducted by EEOC Director of Research, Dr. Melvin Humphrey. The study is significant because it represents the first study that utilized EEO-1 data over a time series (1969 – 1974). It is also the first time that an EEOC study publication employed a more analytic approach by concentrating exclusively on the "penetration and occupational position" of Blacks in the private sector economy (Humphrey, 1977). Specifically, the study analyzed the details of racial composition and occupational positions based on nine "occupational categories" designated in the "EEO-1 Report." With the analysis of EEO-1 data, the author refuted arguments that some other market factors besides workplace racial discrimination substantially contribute to the failure of Blacks' advancement at the workplace. Dismissing the "other market factors" argument as man-made, the study systematically estimated the difference between Blacks' experiences in the workforce versus actual expectations of their "fair-share" market employment by conceptualizing the following five concepts: (a) Black Labor participation rates, (b) Black employment gaps (c) Black workers under-utilized and treated differently, (d) Wage gaps between Black and white workers and, (e) Comparison of Blacks and Whites employment by education. These concepts have been updated with (BLS, 2019 current statistics from 1972 through 2016; Gould, 2019b; William & Wilson, 2019; Wilson, 2019) and will be utilized in the discussion of the study problem. By employing these concepts, Humphrey (1977) demonstrated in his main finding that: "…as a class, Black workers are still unfavorably affected by workplace racial discrimination…" (p. 38).

Humphrey's (1977) concept of "fair-share employment" is grounded on the following suppositions: (1) the existence of a sufficient pool of Black workers in the labor market, like whites, "…who are qualified or 'qualifiable' for entry-level positions or higher levels, in many of the occupations included under the broad job categories listed on the EEO-l Reports" (p. 3); (2) the fair-share concept posits that this Black labor pool is more than sufficient not only to meet the labor requirements but also to raise Black employment to the fair-share level; and,(3) any level of Black employment below the fair-share level is the product of, "institutional employment discrimination, practices, procedures and/or employer denial of fair-share employment to Black workers" (Humphrey, 1977, p. 7). The author arrived at this conclusion by estimating "employment gaps" that exist with Blacks' expectations based upon fair-share employment levels. He proposes that Black workers are not only entitled to a fair share of gainful employment but also regarded its attainment as a "…desirable social and economic national goal of the highest priority…" (p. iii). The author further argues that without marketplace "systematic discriminatory influences," the level of black employment would equal the fair-share level. Thus, he rejects the traditional arguments of the influences of the labor market imperfections (e.g., labor immobility, and the difference between fair-share and actual employment). Humphrey regards 'imperfections' as artificial and as such, do not represent natural barriers to fair-share employment.

Figure 1

Black Workers Labor Market Participation Rates
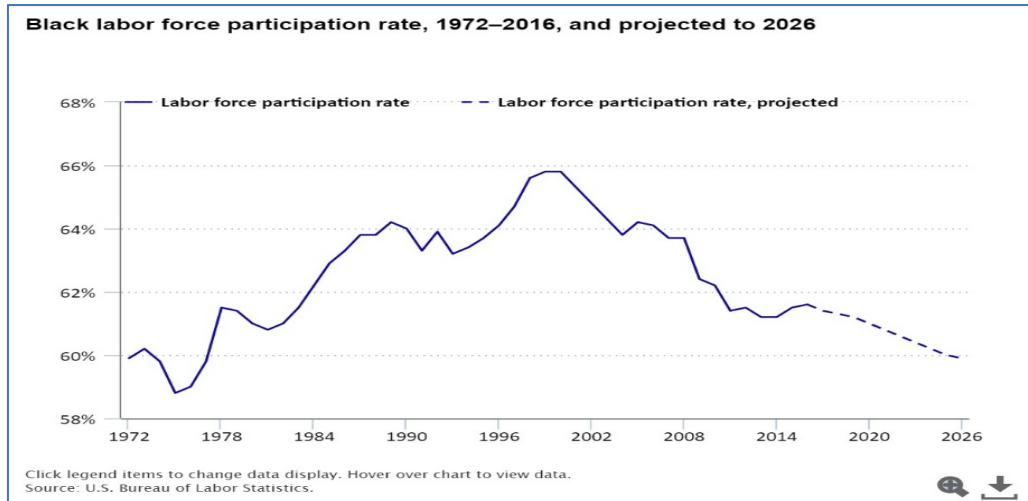
According to U.S. Labor Statistics (2014) Figure 1 above, the labor force participation rate

of Blacks increased steadily from about 60% since Humphrey's study (1977), to its peak of

65.8% in 2000. Since then, it has declined steadily. The largest drop was in 2009, after the

2007–09 recessions, to 62.4%, which was a decline of 1.3% relative to the 2008 rate.

The decline has continued, registering at 61.6% in 2016. BLS projects the labor force

participation rate of Blacks to decline even further in the 2016–26 decade.

The Increasing Share of the Black Labor Force

The share of Blacks in the total labor force has been on the rise since Humphrey (1977)

or since 1972 when data on Blacks were first collected. In 1972, there were 8.7 million Blacks or

about 10% (see Figure 2) out of a total of 87 million people in the U.S. labor force. According to

(BLS, 2014) by 2016, Blacks made up 19.6 million (12%) from a total of 159.2 million people in

the labor force. BLS projects the Black labor force will reach 21.6 million (12.7%) from a total of

169.7 by 2026.

Figure 2

Blacks' Labor Employment Gap
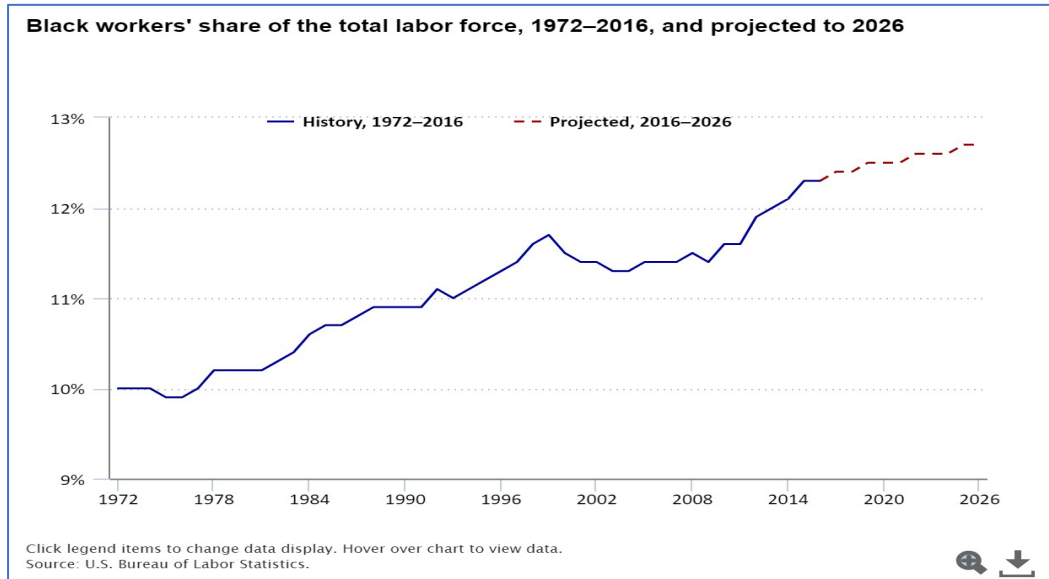
Humphrey (1977) maintains that an equitable fair-share level of employment means that Black worker participation rates in broad job categories would be no less than their "employment availability rates" defined in this study as the number of prime working individuals between 16 – 65 years old. As such, if the participation rate in any broad job category is less than the employment availability rate, then, an "employment gap" exists. Conversely, if the participation rate in any given broad job category is equal to or greater than the employment availability rate, no employment percent gap would exist.

Table 1

Black Labor Force Employment Availability, Participation Rates & Employment Gaps

Black Labor Force Employment Availability, Participation Rates & Employment Gaps			
1974			
EEO-1 Job Categories	Employment Availability Rate	Black Participation Rates	Black Employment Gaps
	A	B	C
	10.70%		(A - B)
1 Office & Managers		2.9%	7.8%
2 Professional		3.1%	7.6%
3 Technicians		7.3%	3.4%
4 Sales Workers		5.5%	5.2%
5 Office & Clericals		8.8%	1.9%
6 Craftworkers		7.0%	3.7%

One way of measuring this difference is by measuring Black workers' "participation rates," and the difference is the percentage of employment gap (Table I – Column C). The difference between Black employment availability rates and their actual participation rates represents the existence of

the employment gap. For instance, Blacks' employment participation rates according to the data from EEO - Report six job categories (Humphrey, 1977) as follows: From Table 1, in 1974, the employment availability rate was 10.7% - (A) The Black workers' participation rates, (B) and percentage of employment gaps, (C) respectively were as follows: officials and managers (2.9%, 7.8%); professionals (3.l%, 7.6%); technicians (7.3%, 3.4%); sales workers (5.5%, 5.2%); office and clerical (8.8%, 1.9%); and craft workers (7.0%, 3.7%). According to the author, "The existence of employment gaps from these selected job categories still implies that Black workers as a group were unfavorably affected by systemic discrimination" (Humphrey, 1977, p. 7).

This Black employment gap contributes to the higher unemployment rates among this group than those for all other workers in the total American labor force. For this study, the unemployment rate denotes the number of people who are unemployed as a percentage of the civilian labor force. Historically, the unemployment rate of Blacks has been higher than those of other races and ethnic groups. Unemployment rates for all races and ethnic groups generally increase during recessionary periods. For instance, during the Great Recession (2007–09), the Black unemployment rate was 10.1%, compared with the 5.2% White unemployment rate. The Black unemployment rate peaked at 16.0% in 2010 and declined to 8.4% in 2016, and 6.7% as of March 2020, and spiked to 16.7% and 16.8% in April and May 2020 respectively (BLS) due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) points out that "when workers are unemployed, they, their families, and the country as a whole lose" but what about when workers are underemployed? This is briefly discussed below under Blacks' underutilization in the workplace.

The Underutilization of Black Workers in the Workplace

Black workers' skills are more likely to be underutilized in the workplace, less likely than

white workers to be employed in a job that is consistent with their level of education (BLS,

2018); and, more likely to be "underemployed" or their skills being underutilized in the

workplace (Abel & Dietz, 2016). Figure 3 not only shows high Black skills-based

underemployment, and unemployment but also that Black workers are twice as likely to be

unemployed as White workers. The chart also shows that Black college graduates are 28% more

likely to be in a job that does not require a college degree (U.S. Census Bureau).

Figure 3

Black Unemployment and Skills-Based Underemployment 2018-2019
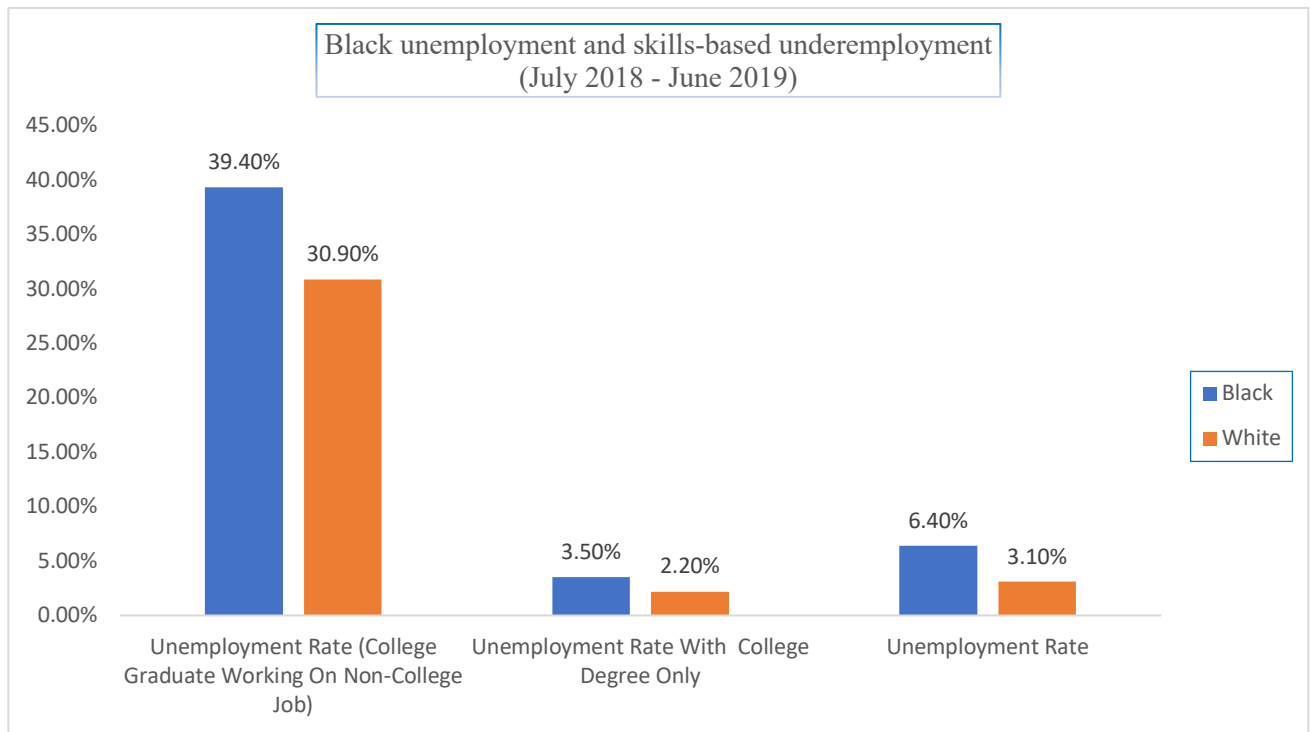
Note: Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Economic Policy Institute.

Black workers are also twice as likely to be unemployed as white workers by 6.4% versus

3.1% respectively or by a 2-to-1 Black–White unemployment ratio. A pattern that has been

persistent for more than 40 years and holds practically in every State in America where Black workers made up a significant share of the workforce (Humphrey, 1977; William & Wilson, 2019). The authors maintain that even Black workers with a college degree are more likely to be unemployed than similarly educated White workers by 3.5% versus 2.2% accordingly. Even when employed, black workers with college or advanced degrees are more likely than their white counterparts to be underemployed when it comes to their skill level. Almost 40% of Black college graduates are in a job that typically does not require a college degree when compared with 31% of white with the same educational qualifications. According to Williams and Wilson (2019) and Humphrey (1977), this relatively high black unemployment and skills-based underemployment suggest that racial discrimination remains in the labor market.

Figure 3 shows that working black graduates are nearly 10% more likely to be in occupations that do not require a college education when compared with working white graduates when both groups have at least a bachelor's degree. As such, Williams and Wilson's (2019) finding supports Humphrey (1977) who maintains "Black workers endure persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes" (p.11)

According to Williams and Wilson (2019), not only that Black workers suffer persistent racial inequalities in employment outcomes, but they are also more likely to be underutilized and treated differently in the workplace (BLS, 2018). Even Black college graduates who are most likely to be employed do not necessarily have the same opportunities as their White counterparts to utilize and develop their skills (Williams & Wilson, 2019).

Figure 4

Black-White Unemployment Rates by Education 2018-2019

Black-White Unemployment Rates by Education. (July 2018 - June 2019)

	All	Less than high school	High school	Some college	College	Advanced
■ Black	6.40%	15.40%	8.20%	5.60%	3.50%	2.10%
■ White	3.10%	8.40%	3.80%	3.00%	2.20%	1.90%
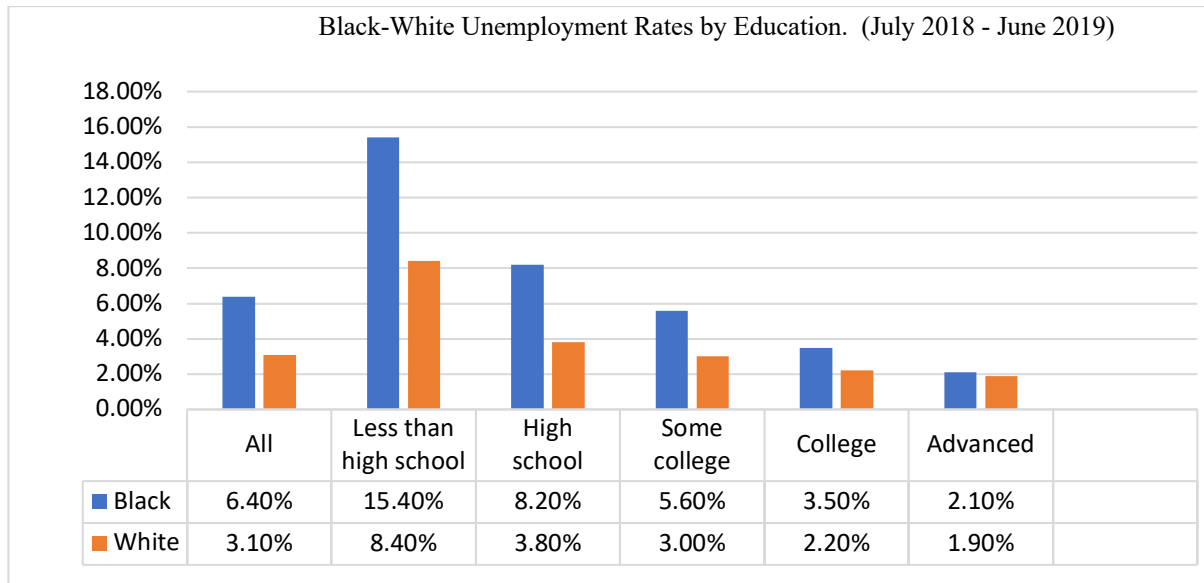
Note: Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Economic Policy Institute.

Workplace underutilization and disparity treatment of Black workers as demonstrated in Humphrey (1977) as updated in (2013 EEO-1 Indicators Report; Williams & Wilson, 2019) can be summarized by the following findings: (a) "Inequality of treatment between Black and white workers is of such a magnitude that it could not have happened by mere chance (Humphrey, 1977), it had to be the result of deliberate employment decisions designed to limit the penetration of Blacks into selected job categories" (p. 40). (b) Whites accounted for 65% of all the six selected job categories when compared to only 28% of all Black employment Humphrey (1977). As such, it is "doubtful if such occupational deficiencies could have occurred through the process of randomly selecting employees from a common pool" (p.40). (c) About 72% of all Black employment was concentrated in "operatives, laborers and service worker" categories when compared to only 35% of all white employment. Even when the occupational distribution of Blacks showed some improvement when compared with whites, Blacks remained grossly

underutilized in all six job categories. (d) Equality of utilization and closing the Black-White

wage gap (discussed below) for blacks is "locked in the distant future and elusive" (Humphrey,

1977, p. 40).

The Black-White Wage Gap

There have been over 40 years of a Black and White wage gap (Gould, 2019b). The wage

gap between Blacks and Whites is larger today than in 1979 (Humphrey, 1977; Wilson &

Rodgers III, 2016). According to these authors, the increase in the wage gap has been because of

different factors. For instance, in the 1980s, it was due to lax policy enforcement on such laws as

anti-workplace discrimination, failure to raise the minimum wage, and declining unionization.

During the 1990s however, the wage gap between Blacks and Whites shrank because of such

factors as minimum wage increases. Also, some historical, social, political, and institutional

factors contribute to differences in Black and White labor market outcomes (e.g., wage gap,

unemployment, etc.). Thus, the centuries of systematic social deprivation and economic

disadvantages maintained and reinforced by those with economic and political power play

significant roles in the Black-White wage gap, unemployment, underemployment, "occupational

segregation" (Humphrey, 1977), and rising inequality from 1979 to 2015 (Gould, 2019). These

political and economic powers are not within the reach of the Blacks as a group.

Hence, given a long history of excluding blacks from social and political institutions that

boost wage growth, the stubbornness of the racial Black-White wage gap is not surprising.

However, what is troubling is the fact that they are getting worse (Gould, 2019). For example,

since 2000, the Black-White wage gap has got larger again. As of 2015, Black men and Black

women earn 22% and 34.2% less than White men and women respectively relative to the average

hourly wage given the same experience, education, and regional residence (Wilson & Rodgers

III, 2016). In order words, there is no single economic explanation of the Black-White wage gap that has continued to grow larger today than what it was in 1977 (Humphrey, 1977). Nor has the increase occurred along a straight line, or affected everyone equally (Gould, 2019; Humphrey, 1977; Wilson & Rodgers III, 2016).

Also, two schools of thought, one represented by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1981) and Blau et al. (1981) agree with Humphrey (1977) and Wilson and Rodgers III (2016) on the existence of significant income gap inequality between Blacks' and Whites' income. These authors agree that Blacks, as a group, live under constant stress because of the consequences of the Black and White wage gap, lower labor force participation rate, high unemployment rate, persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes, and underutilization in the workplace. However, the other school represented by Link et al. (1977), Aigner et al. (1977), Flanagan (1977), and others believe that labor market discrimination is based on "subjective man-made" (Humphrey, 1977, p. 41) forces. Humphrey's (1977) rational business justification decision-making model. In other to determine if wage gaps between Blacks and Whites are due to employment man-made rational business decisions or workplace racial discriminatory practices, several studies (e.g., Flanagan, 1977; Link et al 1977) were conducted using regression analysis. The findings revealed that: approximately 86% of the existing wage disparities between Blacks and Whites were due to pre-market differences and 13.2% to labor market discrimination (Link et al., 1977). In essence, the authors determined that income disparities against Black workers can only be rationalized by racial discrimination practices. They also based their viewpoints on the long history of inequality built into the operations of organizations and in its supporting social structures (e.g., employment, government, and education). According to these authors, these built-in mechanisms constantly buttress the existing racial discrimination and

inequalities against Blacks. In this regard, Humphrey (1977) claims that the existence of a wage

gap suggests that Blacks are treated differently from whites when employers make job

assignments. Thus, this differential treatment gives rise to unequal worker distribution

throughout the various occupations of the study's six job data categories. For instance, the author

maintains that not only are Black workers tend to be concentrated in those occupations with the

lowest wages, but also, the wages of Whites in officials/managers, and professional/technician

job categories increased faster than those of Blacks. Thus, Humphrey (1977) concluded that

"…whether it is the result of present discriminatory practices or present effects of past

discrimination, the impact is the same" (p. 40). Thus, Wilson and Rodgers III (2016) agree with

Humphrey (1977) that Black and White "…wage gaps are growing primarily because of

discrimination or racial differences" and therefore suggested that closing the gap will require

direct policy action/s (p. 1). While also noting that Black workers, not only have yet to fully

recover from the damage of the Great recession and the cutbacks of the 1980s, but also and most

importantly, need the political and financial resources to fight labor market discrimination

(Wilson & Rodgers III, 2016).

Also, siding with Wilson and Rodgers III, (2016) and Humphrey (1977) on the Black-

White wage gap, Woodruff (2013) maintains that since the 1960s, for example, the household

income gap between Blacks and Whites ballooned from $19,000 to $27,000 in the City of New

York. Also, U.S. Bureau of the Census (2012) data confirms the existence of the Black and

White income inequality in New York City by stating that it reached a historic high in 2011.

According to the 2012 Census data, 1.7 million New Yorkers fell in one year below the official

poverty threshold. The official federal poverty line in that year was $23,314 for a family of four.

Nevertheless, in 2013, even though Blacks account for about 13% of the population of the

United States and despite their employment gains from 1966 through 2018, their average household annual median income in 2018 was $41,361, when compared with $70,642 for Whites.

Finally, the impact of perceived workplace racial discrimination against Black workers is one of the most important findings of Wilson and Rodgers III (2016). Specifically, the study found that: changes in Black educational levels (e.g., obtaining a college degree), do not reduce the Black and White wage gap. In fact, according to the authors, the Black and White wage gap instead increased most for Black college graduates. In the next discussion of the Black-White wage gap from the educational perspective, Black male college graduates (those with bachelor's degrees and higher) and newly entering the workforce in the 1980s started with 10% less than their White peers. However, by 2014, similarly educated new entrants were 18% deficit (Wilson & Rodgers III, 2016).

Put differently, Black workers cannot educate their way out of the wage gap because across various levels of education, a major Black–White wage gap remains. Moreover, those black workers with advanced degrees experience significant wage gaps compared with their white counterparts even with every other factor (e.g., gender, age, religion, education) remaining the same, Black workers are paid 14.9% less than White workers. Nevertheless, the good news is policies such as the fiscal monetary policy can be used as levers to achieve, maintain, and improve relative labor market outcomes for Black workers including labor force participation rate, wage growth, unemployment, etc. (Gould, 2019).

Educational Comparison of Black and White Employment

If the labor market operates in a competitive, open, and equal opportunity manner, it is expected that there will be a significant relationship between employment and education and, this

relationship will be similar for Blacks and Whites alike (Humphrey, 1977). It is also true that the educational achievement of the Black labor force has significantly improved over the 1960s (Wilson, 2019). For instance, the number of Blacks with less than a high school diploma has decreased; however, there has been an increase in both the number of high school graduates with no college and associate degrees. Nevertheless, the largest increase in Black's educational achievement has been in the number attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (Wilson, 2016). Thus, the author agrees with Humphrey (1977) that generally, people with more education usually have higher earnings and lower rates of unemployment than those with less education. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics also agrees with both Humphrey (1977) and Wilson (2019) by stating that: advanced educational attainment has been generally and linked to a better likelihood of employment.

However, this is not the case with Blacks, because according to BLS (2014), at nearly every level of educational attainment, Blacks are most likely to be unemployed or underemployed than other ethnic groups in higher-paying jobs (e.g., management, professional, and other related occupations). Thus, in such high-paying major occupational jobs, only 30% of Blacks are employed when compared with 51% of Asians (BLS, 2014). For instance, in 2016, among Black workers with an advanced degree, their highest median weekly earning was ($1,162) and the lowest unemployment rate was (3.3%). While the median earnings for Black workers with only a high school diploma were $592 per week, and the unemployment rate for these workers was 8.6% (Wilson, 2019). It is generally true that college education results in higher wages for both Blacks and Whites; however, it does not eliminate the wage gap even with the steady improvements in the economy since the 1960s (Wilson, 2019). Black workers continue to be paid less than Whites at every level of education. Thus, Wilson (2019) supports

Humphrey (1977) that maintains that Blacks are required to meet more stringent educational criteria than whites when competing for jobs. Humphrey (1977) based this claim on the study data analysis that reveals a significant relationship between Blacks' employment and education in all the study EEO-1 six job categories. The study found that a greater part of the employment for Blacks can be explained by education, with (89%) in the professional/technician categories and (99%) in the officials/managers categories. On the other hand, only a smaller part of the employment of whites is associated and/or explained by education, (from 35% in the professional and technician categories to 92% in the officials and managers category).

Finally, Humphrey (1977), BLS (2014), and Wilson (2019) maintain that there are enough Blacks with the required education to close the employment gap if they were offered equal employment opportunities. Thus, these studies imply that Black workers as a group are still adversely affected by workplace employment discrimination, even as the U.S. economy continues to improve, and wages are finally beginning to move up very slowly for most ethnic minorities. The authors agree that Blacks as a group are still being paid less than whites at every education level as depicted in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5

Blacks & Whites Average Hourly Wages by Education
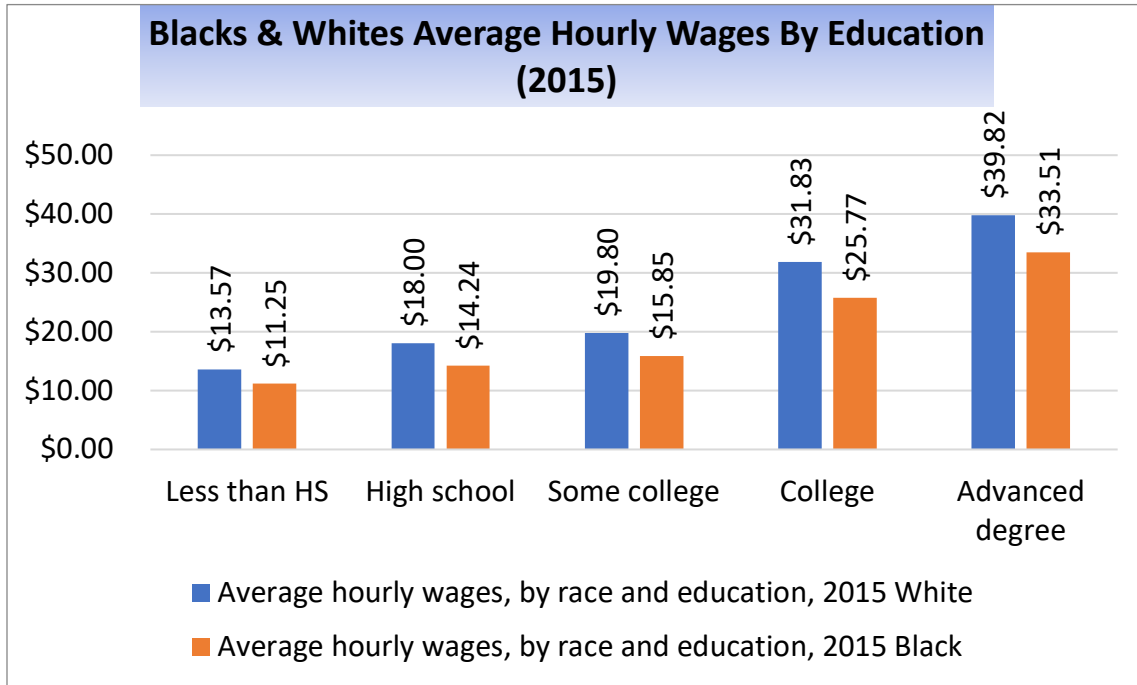
Note: Data Source: Economic Policy Institute, State of Working
America Data Library, Wages by Education (2016).

As college education results in higher wages for both whites and blacks alike, many authors

(e.g., BLS, 2014; Humphrey, 1977; Wilson, 2019) and others concluded that education per se

does not eliminate the Black-White wage gap, and as such, Blacks continue to earn less than

whites at every level of educational attainment as reflected on Figure 5. Thus, closing this part of

the racial pay gap between Blacks and Whites begins with consistent enforcement of anti-

discrimination laws in the hiring, promotion, and pay of Black workers, as well as greater

transparency within organizational wage payment systems (Wilson, 2019).

Scope and Intensity of Perceived Workplace Racial Discrimination against Blacks

According to U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Charge

Statistics, the number of individual charges filed with EEOC in 1997 was 80,680 and by 2019, it

had decreased to 72,675 of which 33% or 23,976 (Table II) represents workplace racism. A

decrease that points to employer preferences for arbitrations led to a sharp increase in Title VII

retaliation cases from 18,198 (20%) in 1997 to 30,117 (41%) in 2019. This number excludes

individual filings with local or State Employment Practices Agencies. Carter et al. (2004) stated

that research on racism found that many minority groups in America had and continue to

experience racial discrimination in the workplace. According to the authors, a study of 233

Black, Asian, Biracial, and Hispanic persons revealed that 89% of the subjects had encountered

racism, and Blacks - (the focus and reason for 'Black-Workers-Only' subjects for this study),

face higher rates of exposure to racial discrimination than any other groups. For instance, the

findings of Borrell et al. (2007) in over a 15-year longitudinal study, utilized data based on a

national probability sample that comprised (1,813) Whites and (1,507) Blacks. The study

revealed that most Blacks (89%) experienced racism in getting a job. This contrasts with 1% of

White Americans who experienced racism in similar areas. Also, in another study by Krieger et

al. (2006) on the prevalence of workplace abuse study, (e.g., racial discrimination, disrespectful

behavior, verbal aggression, and sexual harassment) with a 1,200 sample of an ethnically diverse

population of low-income workers, 37% of Blacks reported a higher degree of exposure to racial

discrimination when compared to only 10% of White workers. Within the workers of Color, the

highest level (44%) of exposure was reported by Blacks (Krieger et al., 2006). According to

these authors, current studies concentrating only on Black samples also found comparable results

to the studies conducted with mixed-race samples. For instance, research that utilized the

National Survey of Black Workers data found that the majority (71%) of the sample population

had experienced racial discrimination.

Duration and Impact of Perceived Workplace Racial Discrimination Against Blacks

Based on the data from 200 Black participants in their book *Living with Racism: The Black Middle-Class Experience*, Feagin and Sikes (1994) illustrates how out of workplace racism adds to the stress and long-term consequences of workplace discrimination by focusing on Blacks and obstructing their social and economic progress, as well as draining their spirit. At other times, it may be that a Black person is refused service in a restaurant, harassed while shopping, and/or a Black little girl is taunted in a public pool by White children (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). These represent some types of everyday incidents encountered by millions of Blacks. The authors maintain that racial discrimination is deeply entrenched in American traditions and that the collective effects are not only profoundly damaging to Blacks, but also demand their constant vigilance as it shapes their personal, psychological, and professional, lives (Feagin and Sikes, 1994). For instance, employers may use disguising codes as 'Talk to Maria' or 'No T' (representing Hispanics and Blacks respectively) to cover their racially discriminatory hiring practices.

On the one hand, Bluestone and Barry (1972) developed the Dual labor market theory that posits the American economy as being made up of the primary and secondary job categories. The primary jobs are those with high-paying positions, high wages, high chances of advancement, good working conditions, and job stability. On the other hand, the secondary sector comes with less desirable jobs, low wages, poor working conditions, low chances for advancement, and most importantly, unstable. The dual market theory maintains that most Blacks start their career in the secondary labor market. As such, Black employment status contrasts with that of the White workers, primarily as the result of hiring and promotion discriminatory practices (Bluestone & Barry 1972). Even most Black college graduates

32

experience greater difficulty obtaining jobs in comparison to their White colleagues (Beauchamp & Bowie, 1993). The higher the job position, the greater the intensity of racism against Blacks (Turner et al., 1991) regardless of their work experience or credentials. Diversityinc.com 2013 statistics (an online magazine), remarks that only six (1.2%) Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Fortune 500 companies were of Black origin when compared to other racial groups. This kind of exclusion can impact the mental health of Black employees (Leymann, 1990). In other words, Black employees might not be afforded the same prospects for growth, promotion, and higher managerial positions.

Tomaskovic-Devey et al., (2005) fixed-effect model demonstrates that Blacks devote additional time hunting for jobs, obtain fewer job experiences in mostly unstable jobs than do whites with similar qualifications. Also, Wilson et al. (1995) maintain that Blacks with high school diplomas are 70% more likely to encounter unemployment than their white colleagues and this inequality is also true among Blacks with advanced educational qualifications. According to Smith (2002), the study points to the perseverance of work-related discrimination, where Blacks are clustered in secondary jobs that are unstable, with fewer advancement opportunities, and without authority. There is wage disparity between Blacks and Whites as suggested by an audit study conducted by Bendick et al., (1994). These authors found that among those participants who got employment offers, white applicants were given wages that were fifteen cents per hour more than similarly competent applicants. Cancio et al., (1996) arrived at a similar conclusion that white males earn approximately 15% more than equally qualified Black males, while White women earn 6% more than comparable Black women.

Historic and Current Federal and State Policies and Judicial Decisions that Addressed the Problem

Blacks believe that gaining an opportunity to equal employment is crucial to achieving the American dream. Still, Blacks and other minority groups have for too long been excluded from many workplaces, deprived of employment, concentrated into secondary jobs, as well as being victims of racial harassment (Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 2017). Racial discrimination and specifically workplace discrimination against Blacks crosscut several social policy areas and therefore have been addressed in different federal laws and Supreme Court cases. On the state and local level, the Fair Employment Practices Agency (FEPA) is the state or local equivalent of the EEOC. The FEPA is the state and local employment discrimination enforcement agency. The agency resolves workplace discrimination charges through mediation and conciliation, making it easy for employees to file employment discrimination cases under various state and local laws. The mediation programs offer limited expense advantages. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is also another Federal Agency that resolves such cases. However, one of the earliest federal government attempts to deal with workplace discrimination was Executive Order 8802 (Fernandes & Alsaeed, 2014).

Executive Order 8802

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 before World War II barring government contractors from participating in employment discrimination based on national origin, color, or race (Fernandes and & Alsaeed, 2014). Executive Order 8802 according to these authors represents the first presidential action preventing employment discrimination by private employers and/or contractors awarded government contracts. However, this Order had no enforcement authority. The primary reason for President Roosevelt signing the Order was to prevent worker's

strikes and demonstrations from disrupting the manufacture/supplies of military supplies during the war (Fernandes Alsaeed, 2014). Twenty years later, the Equal Opportunity Act and Affirmative Action were initiated by the US government to ban discrimination at workplaces. President John F. Kennedy launched the Equal Opportunity Act in 1961 to promote Equal Opportunity in Employment and to prevent employers from discriminating against employees based on nationality, creed, race, or color. This is the Affirmative Action (Fernandes and Alsaeed, 2014).

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The introduction of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 was to broaden the Affirmative Action principle. Title VI provision specified that no person in the United States is permitted based on nationality, race or color to be rejected or deprived of the assistances or become the focus of discrimination in activities associated to federal financial assistance" (Fernandes & Alsaeed, 2014). While Title VII referred to race and addressed the questions confronting Blacks' employment opportunities denials, the 1972 amended Title VII version banned all forms of employment discrimination. The main reason for this law was to reduce the segregation of life aspects of Blacks (Fernandes & Alsaeed, 2014). The 1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act presented the potential of equitable opportunity for employment by banning job discrimination based on national origin, religion, sex, color, and race. This meant that employers can no longer discriminate in such employment decisions as hiring, promotions, wages, and dismissals. According to the authors, specifically, Title VII also prohibits discriminatory employment practices in the following ways:

First, employers may not discriminate in the recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention of employees. Yet, according to Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004), research shows that discriminatory practices persist in these domains and manifest in a variety of ways. Second, Title

35

VII prohibits employers from discriminating in compensation, benefits, or the conditions of employment, such as type of employee work assignments or wage disparities. White men earn a third more than Black men and twice as much as Black women. Third, Title VII prohibits employers from classifying the type of work employees can do based on race factor. Kaufman (2002) determined that racial stereotyping by employers best explained racial segregation across almost two thousand labor sectors. Fourth, Title VII prohibits employers from punishing or retaliating against employees who complain about being discriminated against, such as termination, negative performance evaluations, and/or promotion denials. However, despite all these above-mentioned prohibitions under Title VII, the total charges received by EEOC in fiscal year (FY 2019) was 72,675 of which 23,976 (33%) were claims of racial discrimination and 30,117 (41.4%) were claims of discrimination retaliation (EEOC-2019) Table 2.

The Courts

According to Fernandez and Alsaeed (2014), Title VII's enactment and extensive1960s and 1970s explanation of its scope by the courts contributed to opening employment doors that had been closed to Blacks and other minority groups previously. As such, large numbers of women and other minority groups (including Blacks) for the first time started to be employed as school principals, firefighters, police officers, and engineers. Also, not only that employers could no longer advertise for job openings with the clause that "only whites need to apply," but other workplace harassment based on race, sex, religion, or national origin became a form of illegal job discrimination. As such, under Title VII, targets of workplace racism must first, file administrative charges with the EEOC responsible for investigating the charge and determining if discrimination happened. If victims of workplace racial discrimination file a complaint, EEOC

may decide to seek a resolution and/or litigate the case. Also, the plaintiff can decide to file a

lawsuit in federal court (Fernandez & Alsaeed, 2014) as exemplified with the following cases:

Griggs v. Duke Power Co. (1971)

In the Griggs v. Duke Power Co., case of 1971, the question was: whether the Power

Company worker's transfer policy and condition of employment requiring the possession of a

high school diploma and minimum scores of two different standardized talent tests violates Title

VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Griggs v Duke, 1971). Chief Justice Burger said "yes" in

conveying the Court's opinion on the following grounds: (a) There is no relationship between the

standard intelligence test and effective work performance, (b) The intelligence test and high

school education prerequisites function to the disqualification of Blacks at a significantly higher

degree than white candidates, and (c) Moreover, these positions at the center of the case had as a

Power Company's longstanding practice been previously filled by white workers only (Griggs v.

Power, 1971). With that ruling, the Supreme Court reinforced Title VII's usefulness by

emphasizing the prohibition of discriminatory employment practices (Griggs v. Power, 1971).

Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio (1989)

However, in the 1980s, the same Supreme Court that opened the employment doors (e.g.,

Griggs v Power) to Blacks and minorities substantially narrowed the achievements of Civil

Rights laws addressing workplace discrimination (Ward Cove Packing Company, Inc. v.

Antonio, 1989). In 1989 the Court delivered a series of rulings that set back the effort to protect

workplace equal employment opportunity by extremely interpreting Title VII and related laws

very narrowly. For example, the 1989 Wards Cove Parking Co. v Antonio weakened the 1971

Griggs ruling by reversing the burden of proof from the defendant to the plaintiffs. This means

that the defendant must prove that the employer's workplace discriminatory practice has an

unfavorable effect on minorities is unwarranted (Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio, 1989). The question arising from this case was: If a worker demonstrates evidence of workplace racism in different types of job positions, is the company required to justify this inequality as a "corporate justification" to avoid a "disparate impact" lawsuit under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio, 1989)? In delivering for a 5-4 court, Justice Byron White affirmed "No." The fact that one type of job at an organization has a higher representation of minority groups than another type does not adequately demonstrate that the organization practices inequitable employment (Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio, 1989).

Congressional Response

The US Congressional lawmakers acted in 1991 to overturn the Court's (Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio, 1989) bypassing the Civil Rights Act which was a legislative reversal of Wards Cove, and the other similar cases to restore the wide possibility of Title VII's defenses. Additionally, for the first time, Congress provided limited financial compensations for sufferers of deliberate discrimination to reward them for their grievances, and to penalize wrongdoing, as well as to discourage its repetition (Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio, 1989).

Challenges with Title VII

Some of the criticisms brought against the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are backlogs of cases, underfunding, and skeletal staffing in its ongoing fight for truly equal employment opportunity. Without an active EEOC prosecution, numerous workplace racial discrimination targets and sufferers, specifically low-wage Blacks and other minority workers

will be powerless to defend their lawful privileges because they may not be able to pay for an

attorney to file a private lawsuit against powerful employers.

In this regard, the following are some of the most common statements and questions that

weigh in the minds of many Black workers who believe that they have been racially

discriminated against at the workplace: Is it worth the risk? Even winning can come at a cost. It

takes too much time. I do not want to be seen as a whiner. Even after what I have been through, I

do not want to hurt my boss. I do not want to be disloyal to my company. I do not have or cannot

afford a lawyer. I am afraid that the company or my boss, will get back at me if I complain, and I

do not trust the government to treat me fairly (Rankin, 2017).

Generally, the Black workforce is at 13% of the total U.S. workforce. However,

workplace racial discrimination against this group is at 26% of all claims filed with the

EEOC and its State and local agencies. Center for Public Integrity claims that an increasing

number of Black workers are blocked from suing because their employers require private

arbitration which sharply limits the number of claims filed resulting in an increased

unwillingness of most Black victims to pursue formal filing with EEOC.

However, many Black employee victims fail to file complaints because they do not want

to be known as a complainer or whiner because at the end of the day, they believe that the

responsible bosses will have less to lose and, in some cases, never held accountable. Others may

not want to be labeled as being disloyal to their organizations despite all they have been through

with the incident of racial discrimination. Still, most are afraid that the boss or the organization

will retaliate in so many ways against them. According to these victims, usually, retaliation is

rarely done openly. Rather, it is masked by a valid pretext. For instance, after a Black worker has

won a discrimination complaint, the company may start building up a negative paper trail against

the worker. After some time has passed, that worker may be passed over for a promotion, demoted, or fired for any reason as determined by the company. And even making an accusation or witness can come at a price: almost 40% of Black workers who filed complaints with the EEOC and partner agencies from 2010 through 2017 reported retaliation (The Center for Public Integrity, 2017).

Also, others may not want to file a lawsuit or go for arbitration because they cannot afford a lawyer. Even though lawyers are not necessarily required since the courts allow personal representations. However, most cases require lawyer representations for legal paperwork preparations and appropriate legal court maneuvers against the company.

At other times, many fail or are reluctant to file charges because they do not trust or believe that the government will treat them fairly. Put differently, not only that the bar is high for them because it may come at a high cost (e.g., fired, demoted, negatively evaluated, denied promotion, etc.) but also, such cases take too long to resolve because of EEOC backlogs (Jameel et al., 2019). According to a former EEOC staff and Chair, Jenny Yang, the major backlog issue is due to lack of adequate resources (e.g., smaller budget) today than it in 1980, and 42% less staff when the U.S. labor force increased about 50% or by 160 million. As a result of skeletal staffing, "it takes more time for investigators to make a finding of discrimination than to close a case based on insufficient evidence." (p. 5). Hence, the system's weaknesses hurt black worker victims disproportionately. President Obama's EEOC Commissioner, Charlotte Burrows, appointed in 2014, acknowledged that the agency is stretched thin. A former EEOC Chairman Stephen N. Shulman puts it this way to the Wall Street Journal in 1967: "We're out to kill an elephant with a fly gun." Currently, EEOC's leadership is in flux.

Three of its five commissioner seats are vacant. The Senate has delayed confirming President Trump's nominees for more than a year and that prompted one to withdraw his nomination.

Moreover, Black employee victims feel that the law was not written for them because Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 places the burden on employees to prove discriminatory intent or impact, when, most important evidence relating to these cases are often buried in personnel records that only the employer can access.

In 2009 through fiscal 2017, Jameel et al., (2019) analyzed eight years of Black employees' perceived workplace racial discrimination complaints data from the EEOC, State, and local counterparts. It also reviewed hundreds of court cases and interviewed dozens of black workers who filed workplace racial discrimination complaints. The finding revealed a picture of a system that routinely fails black workers who filed complaints with the lowest rate of success and with just 15% receiving some form of relief. The study also found that most of the black workers' complaints with the EEOC were closed without concluding whether discrimination occurred and, in such circumstances, the judges on such cases normally rule that the evidence did not show "the conduct occurred."

Another reason for not filing is based on the low relief rates for Black worker victims. Some studies (e.g., Jameel et al., 2019) maintain that lack of resources to EEOC and its partner agencies results in being more selective in choosing which cases to pursue. Even as the workforce grew and according to Jameel et al. (2019), racial discrimination charges increased 484% between the 1980-1989 decade and the 1990-1999 decade. The authors attributed the increase in complaints to the increase in the number of Blacks in professional and managerial positions, and the increasingly integrated character of the workplace, making it easier to observe unfair practices against a particular group or groups. As a result, EEOC took on more

responsibilities even as its funding and staffing dropped. For instance, between fiscal years 1980

and 2017, the EEOC's staffing declined by 39%, to 2,082. During that same period, the

American workforce increased 50%. Out of a total of 302,201, EEOC closed cases between 1980

through 2017, only 15% received relief and just 1% had a workplace racial discrimination

finding (Jameel et al., 2019). Most Black workers' victims feel that the law is "weak by

design" (Jameel et al., 2019) because when the EEOC was created under Title VII of the

Civil Rights Act of 1964, it was initially given few tools to enforce the law. It could

investigate complaints, try to mediate between companies and employees, and recommend

cases to the U.S. attorney general for litigation. However, Black workers' lawyers allege

that an EEOC investigation involves no more than asking the employer for a response, and

EEOC cannot sue or issue cease-and-desist orders to the company. In order words, if an

employer decides not to follow the law, there is little the agency can do about it. As a result,

many Black victims say that the law is not designed to protect them. A Chicago EEOC

attorney for 36 years and head of litigation for a six-state region, John Hendrickson, said

before his retirement in 2017, that too many Black employee workplace racial

discrimination cases are falling through the cracks because the majority of these cases are

not being professionally investigated. According to Hendrickson, the statistics are chilling

even as workplace racial discrimination against blacks has increased every single decade

since Title VII was passed in 1964.

Social Work and Blacks' Coping with Racial Discrimination

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has exhibited ongoing leadership in

developing policies and programs to significantly diminish if not eliminate racial discrimination

in society and within the profession of social work. NASW Code of Ethics states,

Social workers . . . must promote for changes in policy and legislation to advance social

environments in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice. . . Social

workers should act to stop and eradicate the control of, exploitation of, and

discrimination against any individual, group, or class. (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017,

4.02).

NASW will continue its leadership role in developing practice approaches and curricula that

embrace racial/ethnic equality and cultural diversity.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) believes that numerous groups of

exploited ethnic and racial groups are continuously in the constant struggle for equal

opportunities with the dominant group. Minorities' struggle during economic stagnation calls for

tax cuts, declining natural incomes, inflation, extensive unemployment and underemployment,

and conservative judicial views within structural and institutional organizations that are

precursors to greater racial oppression and deprivation (NASW, 2017). Unless restricted, these

circumstances will lead to larger ethnic and racial disagreements and greater cultural, political,

social, and economic discrimination (NASW, 2017).

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine the coping and adaptation strategies used by Blacks to deal with the impact of racial discrimination at workplaces and as such, this chapter provides a review of the literature that informed the study. This literature review addresses the following primary areas: (1) A review of the extent of workplace racism, the social and psychological impacts, (2) Conceptual approaches to stress and coping, (3) The specific work on stress and coping related to racial discrimination among Blacks, and (4) Types of coping mechanisms utilized by Blacks who encounter workplace racism.

A Review of the Extent of Workplace Racism, Social and Psychological Impacts

Literature on workplace racial discrimination cases against Blacks is limited. However, during the fiscal year 2019, U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) received approximately 23,976 individual charge filings alleging workplace racial discrimination and harassment from employees. This number does not include charges filed with state or local Fair Employment Practices Agencies. The number is a third of the approximately 72,675 charges of employment discrimination that EEOC received that year (EEOC FY 2019). This number indicates or represents the existence and the persistence of racial discrimination in the workplace. This literature review will draw from the publications of some current studies as well as important relevant research conducted during the last decades on the racial discrimination experiences of Blacks.

In their 1994 book "Living with racism, The Black middle-class experience," Feagin and Sikes employed testimonials from 209 black professionals nationwide to document the type, scope, and the impact of racial discrimination Black's encounter, as well as their coping strategies. In so doing, the authors examined the racism participants experienced in a variety of

settings, including public places, work environments, business arenas, residential complexes, schools/colleges, and neighborhoods. The authors also provided context for their study by reviewing the continuing significance of racism in the United States. The following is a general overview of their findings: (1) Participant's experiences with racial discrimination are not only very agonizing, stressful, and traumatic in the current circumstances but also have a snowballing influence on the individual, and their families. (2) Participants agree that they view recurring encounters with White racism just like "life crises," such as the death of a loved one, that disturb an individual's life trajectory. (3) Encounters with severe racial discrimination are retained both in the person's memories and on the household or family stories and ethnic group recollections.(4) As a result, in discussing their negative encounters with Whites, many respondents move easily from the "I" of their own experiences to the "we" that indicates both a broad racial consciousness and a sense of group solidarity. (5) The participants stated that their experience of racism significantly affects their behavior and understanding of life because it shapes their way of living as family members, employees, or citizens as well as one's life perspective and understandings about life and of the social world. (6) Participants agreed that they frequently respond to acts of racial discrimination by evaluating the situation very carefully before terming it discriminatory and acting. The authors maintained that once participants have evaluated the situation, the appropriate response may vary. One strategy might be to leave the environment rather than engage in conflict, while another strategy might be to ignore the act of discrimination. Also, the authors found that yet in certain situations, other responses included more confrontational responses, verbal physical counterattacks, and even lawsuits.

The Nature of New Racism against Blacks in the Workplace

From the 17th century through the early 1960s Civil Rights era, widespread acceptance of segregation and racial discrimination against Blacks was acceptable in America. Today, blatantly racist attitudes are unpopular and unacceptable. According to Brief et al. (1997), "This is consistent with the findings of survey researchers that indicate a dramatic shift in the racial attitudes expressed by white Americans" (p. 59), which maintains that blatant racism has been substituted with a novel type of racism marked by its subtle nature that reflects adherence to traditional American values of individualism rather than open bigotry. The American rejection of open bigotry against Blacks may have occurred because of such ugly historical events as the slave trade, Holocaust, other racial cleansing inhumanities, and the successes of the Civil Rights movement. However, this new form of racism is not only complex but is also based solely on White's feelings that Blacks are lazy, dependent on welfare, undisciplined, and non-adherence to the Protestant Ethics of hard work and savings. In addition, the Whites claim that through policies (e.g., affirmative action), public officials have ensured unfair excessive gains by Blacks (Brief, et al., 1997).

However, social research findings on racism in the workplace have remained mixed. For instance, in a narrative review of studies, Brief et al. (1997) on the prevalence of racism in the workplace, found that numerous studies show that Blacks are often treated poorly, less frequently recruited, and rated more poorly than European Americans. However, other research disagrees by indicating that Blacks are treated the same as or even better than European Americans. To test the concept of 'prevalence of racism and business justifications to discriminate against Blacks in the workplace, three "business settings simulated experimental studies" were conducted by Brief et al. (1997, p. 64). Two of the studies utilized an "in-basket

exercise" (p. 64), which is a simulation of the paperwork that arrives in a manager's mailbox.

According to the researchers, the in-basket exercises have been tested and applied in the

selection and training of successful managers. All participants for the three experimental studies

were White undergraduates in a private university in the Southeastern United States. The

participants have diverse academic majors. Approximately 27% and 34% university's

undergraduate population are from the Northeastern and Southeastern United States respectively,

while the rest are from elsewhere in America and overseas.

In the first business simulation study, participants were made up of 76 business-major

students, 58% male, 42% female, and 30% were employed. Participants were assigned to read

descriptions of both the company and the roles they were assigned to play as Chief Financial

Officers (CFO) of "JOSE," a hypothetical Mexican restaurant chain. Then, as CFO, they had to

complete the "in-baskek" exercises which required them to make decisions (based on

memorandum instructions in the in-baskets) on a variety of issues (e.g., making several

managerial and vice-presidential hiring decision and what salary offers?). Participants were

provided with options for each in-basket decision-making task, this way, subjects just had to

choose the best course of action from among all other suggested alternatives. They were also

allowed to make their comments regarding their decisions, if necessary. According to the

researchers, this simulation method has been used successfully in prior studies, "producing no

substantial differences in results across samples of students, corporate controllers, and top

managers."   There were control and non-control groups (Brief et al.,1997, p. 63).

In the second study, 84% of the participants were psychology-major students, 54% were

male, and 46% female. Subjects were told they would be working with a faculty member on a

consulting project (Brief et al., 1997). As part of their project assignments, participants were

asked to "Review the credentials of ten candidates, selecting three of them to be interviewed for a marketing position. Three of the candidates were black and qualified for the position, two were white and qualified, and the remaining candidates were white and unqualified" (Brief et al., 1997, p. 65). According to the authors, some of the participants who were randomly assigned to receive a business justification to discriminate were instructed through a memo from the company's president informing them of the company's policy of keeping marketing teams as "homogeneous as possible" (Brief et al., 1997, p. 64). This is because the company's policy specifies the belief that "similar people" (i.e., similar customer representatives) "will have similar goals and ideas" (Brief et al., 1997, p. 64). Most notably, the teams to which the candidates will be assigned have no minority individuals because our company tries to balance the individualities of our customer representatives with that of the population served. There are only a handful of minority individuals living in the regions to which your selected candidates will be serving. "Therefore, in this situation, I feel that it is important that you do not hire anyone that is a member of a minority group" (Brief et al., 1997, p. 64).

The third study utilized the same business simulation as in the first study, which required the participants to complete varieties of decision-making tasks based on "in-basket" memorandum instructions. Participants were 137 business-major students, 58% were male, 42% female and 35% were employed (Brief et al., 1997). It is essential to note that the subjects in these three studies were randomly chosen to be given or not to be given a corporate justification to discriminate. For instance, in one of these three studies, participants received a memorandum in their in-baskets requesting them to rate the qualifications of candidates for the soon-to-be-vacated position of Vice President (VP) of Human Resources. Those assigned to receive a justification to discriminate were instructed that, Given that the majority of our workforce is

White, it is essential we put a white person in the VP position. I don't want to jeopardize the fine relationship we have with our people in the units. Betty, the outgoing vice president worked long and hard to get these folks to trust us; and I do not want her replacement to have to overcome any personal barriers (Brief et al., 1997, p. 64)

According to Brief et al. (1997), the study findings demonstrated that those participants assigned to receive corporate rationalization to discriminate appraised Black applicants substantially lower on a five-point Modern Racism Scale than those who did not receive the justification. This finding was consistent across all three studies, suggesting that the business justifications to discriminate can lead to discrimination. Also, those participants who received the business justification to discriminate selected significantly fewer qualified Black candidates to be interviewed. Thirty-seven and one-half percent of the participants who received the justification selected no Black candidates, at all, which means that they preferred and chose unqualified whites over the qualified Blacks.

Business Simulation Study limitations: The researchers suggested that the business simulations study method may not mirror perfectly with what is happening in corporate America, nevertheless the study findings reveal that whenever a manager justifies discriminatory behavior on the grounds of organizational good-fit (e.g., the business justification) and treat Blacks unfairly, then subordinates may accept the justification. (Brief, et al., 1997).

The City of New York Charter along with other federal and state laws, mandate agency non-discrimination of employees or applicants. In this regard, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) was assigned with the responsibility to "establish measures, programs and annual plans that relay each agency's efforts to provide equal employment opportunity to City employees and applicants. DCAS is "Required to establish such uniformed

procedures and standards to help city agencies establish annual equal employment opportunity plans and other measures and programs to make sure there is fairness in the workplace" (Tacneaux, 2012, pp. 4 – 5).

However, Tacneaux (2012) conducted a conceptual investigation of the impact of partiality in the treatment of government employees in the "investigation in the matter of assurance of discontinuance pursuant to Executive Law: The State of New York v. The City of Niagara Falls. No. 09-141 Section 63(15). The investigation was initiated by the New York City Attorney General about the City's employment policies, practices, and procedures. The conceptual investigation data collection consisted of interviews with city officials, supervisors, employees, a review, and analysis of documents produced by the City, employees, and residents. The findings of the investigation revealed that the City agencies do not have in place sufficient policies and procedures to confirm that employment decisions are fair and just. The findings also revealed that City agencies do not have an EEOC personnel and EEOC Plan to make sure discrimination laws are adhered to. Another finding was that the City's current policies and procedures are inadequate to ensure a workplace that is devoid of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, as prohibited under the New York Human Rights Law, New York Executive Law Section 290, et seq (Attorney General of the State of New York Civil Rights Bureau).

However, despite all these policies in place, EEOC (2018) "Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace," maintains that most workplace racial discrimination victims deny or "Downplay the gravity of the situation, or attempt to ignore, forget, or endure the behavior." (p. 1). The report stated: "roughly three out of four individuals who experienced workplace racial discrimination never even talked to a supervisor, manager, or union representative." about the conduct. "Employees who experience racial discrimination fail to

report the harassing behavior or to file a complaint because they fear disbelief of their claim, inaction on their claim, blame, or social or professional retaliation." (p. 1). For more details of why many Black victims of workplace racism fail or are reluctant to file charges, see "Challenges with Title VII" (see page 389).

Conceptual Approaches to Stress and Coping

Since Blacks were brought to America as slaves, they have been unfairly judged and compared with the dominant culture in all respects and their differences from the established dominant cultures have been negatively interpreted. This negative assessment is stressful to Blacks. Riessman (1990) has located the social origins of stress for the Blacks in the socio-cultural stratification by race. She arrived at this conclusion after synthesizing findings from her ten-year survey (ending in 1985) entitled Illinois Community Survey of Well-Being. Other studies in support of Riessman's socio-cultural stratification premises (e.g., Mirowski & Ross) in their 1989 book "Social Causes of Psychological Distress" restated several well-known social patterns of distress. The authors stated that: higher income, education, and occupational status are associated with less distress, and vice versa. The authors suggested that the causes of distress are linked to the chronic burdens imposed by social inequities

Aneshensel (1992) also supports their claim which forms the core of his conceptual sociological journal article: "Social Stress: Theory and Research." The issue according to Aneshensel (1992) is whether the distributions of stress differ among social levels due to some causal link between social location and stress. In sum, where a group (e.g., Blacks) is in the social system under certain conditions (e.g., racial discrimination at workplaces) impacts the likelihood of encountering stressors, which will ultimately result in their chances of becoming emotionally distressed. Aneshensel's view is also shared by the early proponents of social

causation perspectives (e.g., Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1969) who stated that members of

low-status social groups encounter harsh and difficult living conditions. These groups go through

traumatic or chronic stress experiences because of restrictions toward life goals achievement;

social and economic adversity, which includes overcrowding, crime, poverty, violence, and noise

(Eckenrode 1984), homelessness (La Gory et al., 1990), and chronic physical disability (Turner

& Noh 1988); inadequate rewards relative to invested effort or qualifications due to racism;

frustration due to inability to fulfill role expectations; resource deprivation; barriers to full

participation in institutionalized roles (Pearlin 1983); constant interpersonal difficulties (Avison

& Turner 1988); status and role inconsistency, goal-striving stress, and life-style incongruity

(Dressler 1988).

In his 1935 book "Social History of the Negro," Herskovits described the arrangement of

the West African literature, political, legal systems, and interpersonal family relations. Also,

Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck (1961) and Parsons and Shills (1967) were some of the first American

thinkers and/or theorists to examine the values of the Blacks. For instance, Houston (1990)

maintains that Black churches are the surviving evidence of the Black culture in America.

Houston posits that the availability of many African priests brought to America as slaves

provided stability, and group cohesiveness through which African cultural adaptation and coping

strategy originated.

Specific Work on Stress and Coping Related to Racial Discrimination among Blacks

To clarify some of the research findings and to further present an understanding of the

general processes surrounding the coping strategies Blacks use to overcome racism, three authors

and their colleagues have put forth methods that attempt to sum up the entire coping procedure.

The following models consist of the conceptualizations that fit into three main categories in

response to stress: (1) the internal processes, (2) the behavioral actions, and (3) the cognitive processes. Billings and Moos (1981) were one of the first to put forth a comprehensive definition of coping. The authors see coping with life events as a complex process that seeks to fend off the effects of said events on different aspects of emotional, social, and physical functioning. On an internal level, coping is viewed as a cluster of primarily "intra-psychic processes," such as denial by which an individual's emotional functioning is protected from external intra-psychic threat (Billings & Moos, 1981). These authors cite several coping styles when it comes to cognitive and behavioral responses. Emotion-focused coping involves an attempt to get rid of what is happening by focusing on the positive side of things, for example, saying a prayer as a means of reducing tension.

On the other hand, active-cognitive coping methods include attempts to manage one's appraisal of the stressfulness of the event, such as attempting to rely on the positive side of the situation. Active-cognitive coping involves dealing directly with the problem and its effects. Some examples of this type of coping include, getting more information about the situation and taking proactive steps to deal with the stressor (e.g., trying to find out more about the situation and taking positive action) to deal with it (Billings & Moos, 1981). Billings and Moos also add two more components to the formulation: the "avoidance" and the "problem-solving" coping.

Avoidance coping (or emotion-focused coping) is when a stressed individual decides not to deal with the problem to avoid greater conflict or stressors. Other examples of avoidance coping might involve the use of distraction (e.g., shifting to another activity or using food, drugs, and alcohol) to get rid of the feelings surrounding the situation.

Folkman et al. (1986) also propose their definitions of the coping process. They define coping as "The constant changing of the cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific

external or internal demands that are appraised to be exceeding the person's resources" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). Plummer and Slane (1996) remarked that the coping processes require constant re-evaluation as the individual and the environment attempt to reach homeostasis. Unlike Billings and Moos, Lazarus, and Folkman (1984) give slightly more focus to the meaning of the stressor and its ability to dictate how individuals cope. Thus, the individual's appraisal of the stressor determines the coping strategy that is eventually utilized in dealing with the situation. Finally, the main feature of Moos and colleagues' definition is what the individual thinks and does in response to the stressor. They refer to this as "process-oriented coping, "or the coping strategy that becomes predominant to regulate stressful events and thereby altering the troubled person-environment relation causing the distress.

Research studies demonstrate that coping with racial discrimination is understudied, yet vitally important. Since the eradication of racism is not yet visible on the horizon, how to cope with discrimination is crucial for ethnic minorities such as Blacks. Even though racial and ethnic minorities make up a disproportionate number of those who are harmed and who seek help for health problems, they traditionally have not been a focus of the research in this area. However, some authors do report that individuals utilize everyday coping skills to deal with stress when dealing with racial discrimination but sometimes these are not enough. For instance, Gill and Matheson (2006) sum it up to say that "The strategies perceived as available to contend with discrimination may be limited by normative expectations for what constitutes socially appropriate behavior and expectations pertaining to the management or regulation of negative emotions" (p. 2).

In the Plummet and Slane (1996) empirical study on the coping strategies of Blacks, the authors found that: (a) Blacks utilize less active coping strategy in stressful racial encounters, (b)

stressful racial encounters normally require confrontational coping strategies, and (c) stressful racial encounters tend to restrict the coping options available to Blacks. The authors also stated that their study found that Blacks used a combination of emotional and problem-focused strategies. This finding collectively confirms the coping literature that reveals that Blacks are vulnerable to exceptional racial trauma that necessitate them to summon their total stock of coping mechanisms (Brondolo et al., 2009).

From the Blacks' perspective, racism is a complex stressor that demands various coping strategies capable of dealing with both the practical as well as emotional features of the stressor. The strategies that would be effective for promptly terminating a racist stressor may not be those required in buffering the impact of encounters with longer-term exposure. Therefore, different types of coping mechanisms may be required with each type of racial discrimination stressor. In this regard, the challenges Blacks face are not only the demand to develop a variety of appropriate racial discrimination buffering strategies to effectively respond to diverse racial encounters but also, and most importantly, the demand to be cognitively flexible (Cheng, 2003) to strategically respond appropriately in each of the encounters.

Types of Black Coping Strategies

Perceived workplace racial discrimination has deleterious effects on Black workers because being the target of discrimination can stir up a lot of strong emotions like anger, sadness and embarrassment. Such experiences can trigger a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies to combat the stresses of racism. As such, Black workers are likely to use the following informal internal and external networks of individuals coping strategies to protect themselves against the humiliation, marginalization, and frustration experienced with perceived workplace racial discrimination (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000).

The Person and the Environment Influence

The Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theory posit stress as "a particular relationship between the person and the environment." This means that the key to overcoming racial discrimination-related stressors for the (Blacks) depends not only on the effective interpretation and appraisal of the incident but also on the buffering or coping mechanism/s immediately available at his/her disposal. This requirement puts the Black employee in a difficult and vulnerable position both physically and emotionally with every racial discrimination encounter. It is in this regard and to enable Blacks to overcome this difficulty that prompted Outlaw to enhance Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) conceptual framework of coping. Outlaw (1993) specifically relates to workplace racial discrimination experience and the coping behaviors of Blacks. As a result, her modification of the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) model posits three major coping stages that Black workers challenged with workplace racial discrimination go through: (a) the interaction of person and environment, (b) the primary assessment (i.e., appraisal as a challenge, threat, harm, loss), and (c) secondary assessment (Outlaw, 1993).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) posit that once the Black employee, for instance, encounters a workplace racial discrimination incident, he/she must first appraise the situation as a challenge, threat, harm, or loss. Outlaw's (1993) modification rejected the "positive and irrelevant" assessments from the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) model because according to Outlaw, every racial discrimination encounter by a Black worker is regarded as a challenge, threat, loss, or harm, but not as "irrelevant or positive" (Outlaw, 1993). Furthermore, Outlaw's modified model posits that Blacks may buffer a "harm or loss" assessment of racism with a "withdrawal or depression" passive negative emotional reaction. A lot of studies reporting on the coping strategies Blacks use in dealing with racial discrimination are based on quantitative studies or

qualitative interviews conducted with Blacks about their experiences with racism (Essed, 1990; Feagin, 1991; Feagin & Sikes, 1994) or hypothetical paradigms based on non-empirical data (Daly et al., 1995). In one quantitative study that examined the coping strategies used by Blacks in managing the stressful effects of racism (Utsey & Ponterotto, 2000), a total of 213 Black college students were solicited for participation in the study. Of the 213 participants, 137 were women. Participants were 17 to 60 years old, 199 were single, 11 were married, 2 separated, and 1 divorced.

Findings by Utsey et al. (2000) indicated that Black women in coping with individual racial discrimination encounters favored utilizing "avoidance coping strategies more than problem-solving or seeking social support coping strategies." However, previous studies on Blacks' preferred buffering mechanisms in dealing with racism generated different outcomes. For instance, Feagin (1991) conducted in-depth interviews with 37 respondents, and a second interview with 135 larger samples of the Black middle class from several American cities, found that Blacks confronted with racial discrimination tended to respond with resigned acceptance or verbal counterattacks. Feagin also indicated that confrontational response is "costly" in terms of time and energy for Blacks and therefore, withdrawal becomes a preferable alternative (p. 106). In contrast, Lalonde et al. (1995) conducted two studies with 72 black and 42 Bengali Canadians to assess behavioral preferences in response to workplace and apartment discrimination, respectively. The authors found that Black Canadians preferred seeking social support in dealing with institutional racial discrimination.

Lalonde et al., (1995) indicate that Black participants significantly utilized more "Emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies than did Whites" (p. 314), they also utilized extra coping strategies in dealing with stressors from racism than Whites. This finding

suggests that Blacks' exposure to certain types of racial discrimination stressors require them to deploy their full range of coping mechanisms (sometimes in combination), and this finding agrees with the Slavin et al., (1991) model. Also, Outlaw (1993) and Folkman et al, (1986) maintain that because Blacks are subjected to unique racism-related stressors, they utilize combinations of both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies in response (Figure 1 #10). Another Plummer and Slane (1996) finding posits that reduction of stressful conditions by both Blacks and whites was accomplished by seeking social support, though the Whites normally utilize this strategy more than the Blacks. This might be because, with less or no racial discrimination experience, Whites possess less stressful racism buffering skills. Also, when compared with blacks, whites are less likely to seek help from others due to embarrassment or lack of cultural understanding of these events. Both Blacks and Whites agreed that there are differences between the racial-stress coping strategies of Blacks and Whites.

Responding to Racism and the Environmental Context

The findings of Feagin's (1991) qualitative study with 37 Black participants about their racial discrimination experiences revealed that the setting or environment of occurrence greatly influenced their responses. For instance, racial discrimination incidents that happened on the streets would most probably be buffered with such self-controlled coping strategies (Figure 1, #8) as avoidance/withdrawal and resigned acceptance, or with such confrontative coping strategy as a verbal response. Another finding of the study also revealed that if Black's experienced racism in public areas, their responses would most probably range from confrontative coping strategies (Figure 1, #9) such as verbal counterattack to self-control coping strategies such as submissive acceptance. However, in most cases, Blacks confronted with racial discrimination will normally utilize a self-control strategy (e.g., submission or withdrawal) than a confrontative

strategy (e.g., verbal/physical counterattack) which they deem to be expensive in time and energy (Feagin, 1991). In addition, the author remarked that middle-class Blacks as the result of their status possess some advantages (e.g., access to psychological and material resources) which empower them to improve their racial discrimination coping efficiency.

Passive Coping Strategy

In addition, Blacks especially at workplaces often feel that one should avoid upsetting, humiliating, or embarrassing the perpetrator of the racial discrimination due to the 'power differential' concept. The incentive to maintain a positive relationship for reasons of respect to supervisor, maintain employment, or career advancement also forces Blacks into responding to workplace racial incidents with a passive coping strategy. Too many times this is how the situation evolves and the more this occurs the more Blacks believe that this is the way to handle the incident to protect themselves or their jobs. According to Allport (1954), this passive compliance is sometimes the only way in which seriously threatened Blacks can survive at workplaces, even as they simultaneously search for alternative explanations for the racial discriminatory incident. In fact, according to Allport (1954), passive coping strategy in responding to workplace racial events is not only at the core of protecting one's job safety, but it is also of value to note that coping styles can change over time with each situation. This agrees with Smith (1985) who stated: responding to racial discrimination incidents at workplaces involves being flexible to constantly adjust to the proper buffering mechanisms necessary to endure and overcome the constant stressors of racism.

Seeking Acceptance through Integration, Suppression of Anger, Sadness and Aggression Coping Strategy

Suppression of anger is another coping option that does not always benefit Blacks because it can undermine a sense of control and efficacy (Gill & Matheson, 2006). An example would be when Black workers try to directly resist responding to acts of racism so that their actions would not be seen as aggressive, or to counteract the "…stereotype that Black men are aggressive" (Swim et al., 2003, p. 64). Smith's (1985) empirical (quantitative) research refers to this lack of response as 'role entrapment.' The concept implies that the roles society creates hinder the ability and motivation to honestly act on individual thoughts and feelings for fear of upsetting others. According to the author, with role entrapment, "It is often easier to accept the false classification than to insist on being recognized as an individual with many aspects." (Smith, 1985, p. 547). Blacks' attempt to fight against role entrapment provokes anger and resentment by the members of the dominant group.

Similarly, pressure to suppress sadness, anger, or aggression, is also an experience racially imposed upon Blacks, especially on the males. Sadness is an emotion that evokes guilt, shame, inferiority, paralyzing, intolerable, puts the individual in an awkward position, and is never sanctioned as a way of coping with racial discrimination. One cannot help but feel sad about experiencing racial discrimination, and the Blacks' suppression of sadness is not only a denial or passive coping strategy of dealing with racial discrimination, but it also represents another form of role entrapment (Stangor et al., 2002).

Confrontational Coping Strategy

Confrontation coping strategy involves direct objection to an incident of racial discrimination (Noh et al. 1999) to 'influence the outcome' (Swim et al., 2003). For instance, a

direct outward anger expression, such as, directly protesting or talking to the perpetrator's anger out (Dorr et al., 2007) may persuade the perpetrator/s and others to change their racial discrimination behaviors (Swim et al., 2003).

In a combined method (qualitative and quantitative) study about the racial discrimination experiences of Black college students (N = 51), Swim et al. (2003) stated: "…70% of those who experienced racial discrimination reported extreme anger and more than 30% of participants reported taking some action in response" (p. 41). In this study, Black college student participants reported their "Experiences with everyday forms of racism at a predominantly European American university using a daily diary format" (p. 41). The subjects who were juniors, seniors, and sophomores comprised 24 Black males and 27 Black females.

A notebook containing a daily diary with forms was given to each participant. Participants were required to complete these forms daily for two weeks. They were required to note in their daily diaries, the frequency of the racial discrimination incident as soon as it happened to minimize forgetfulness. Also, they were required to make form-entries concerning all racial discrimination encounters and describe their responses, such as verbal, non-verbal, or physical reactions (Swim et al., 2003).

The study found that something gets triggered when individuals are faced with racial discrimination. This is particularly remarkable because 30% of participants who acted did so in the form of moving against the oppressor or fighting back, moving away from the oppressor or avoidance, aggression or fighting back in form of protest, hostile aggression, and boycotts; reformism, such as actions directed at social change within the existing system, violence, verbal confrontation, complaints to officials, and anger (Gill & Matheson, 2006; Swim et al., 2003).

Social, Family, And Extended Family Support Coping strategy

The extended family for Blacks oftentimes operates within a different framework than traditional White, middle-class families as a result of systematic discrimination, poverty, and loss of family members to incarceration, separation, and disconnection (Wilson, 1986). Black families are also more affected by social policies and interventions that in addition to the natural maturation and progression of a family structure (Wilson, 1986) create stress and degradation of the family as a unit. At the same time, however, the Black extended family structure has traditionally been more accepting of differences in individual maturation, crises, marital dissolution, and extramarital pregnancy. Black extended families are perceived by members as being more welcoming and supportive than the dominant group even when the composition and structure of the group is shifting tremendously and sometimes putting strain on physical space and financial resources (Wilson, 1986). For example, in his 1986 journal article *The Black Family – An Analytical Consideration*, Wilson reviews the Black family within the framework of the family life model and reported that when followed over five years, 40% of Black adolescent mothers and their children were living with their extended family. Wilson continued to write that this percentage reflects the ways that the extended family is used in providing support to combat feelings of aloneness, estrangement from peer group and partner's family, and the loss of economic and personal power. In the face of the degradation of the family by inner-city violence, family breakups, immigration, push to adopt the model of a nuclear family, and society's focus on Black pathology, many still manage to maintain deep cultural and social networks that endure across generations. Wilson (1986) writes that Black extended families can transcend negative experiences because it moderates stress for its members by (a) focusing on shared stress, (b)

62

accounting for the mutual influence of family members on each other's coping behaviors, and (c) using family or group-level resources as coping patterns.

Also, social assistance may be provided by biological family or simply a group of people who act in the role of family; neighbors, extended relatives, a mosque, church, synagogue, or temple (Harris, 1992). Social support in situations of racial discrimination stretches outward, especially to the extended family system. This system is heavily utilized for their past experiences in dealing with racial discrimination and is assumed to have a different level of insight and understanding having survived more egregious forms of racial discrimination (Harris, 1992).

Mastery and Taking Control over Life Events Coping Strategy

The mastery and taking control over life events is an important coping resource (Smith, 1985) and Black coping strategies that are important to them as a group and have historically been a part of the Black experience. Having values such as communalism, affectivity, reciprocity, and spirituality, is instrumental. Such strategies have been reported as being helpful in the moment as well as helpful in reducing future harm including fewer stress-related health problems (Peter & Massey 1983). Slavin et al. (1991) cite other examples which include religious beliefs and rituals, prayers, meditation, and candle lighting, that people might engage in, in lieu of things such as substances, aggressive acts, or even psychotherapy.

Control and mastery over life as coping resources have been projected in stress and coping literature to cushion or shield the consequences of stress experiences (Mirowsky and & Ross, 1990). From the literature on stress and coping, the ability to maintain effective management over life issues and high self-confidence have been constantly associated with buffer stress by increasing the utilization of appropriate buffering mechanisms. However,

unequal distribution of these resources by social status may account for the emotional vulnerability of stressors. If this seems to be the case, the question would be: Are coping methods and coping strategies unequally distributed by the status one occupies in society" (Mirowsky & Ross, 1990)? Turner and Rozell (1994) state that the experience from stress can completely erode control and mastery of life and self-esteem characteristics from an individual and prompts the question of how and to what extent do successes and failures influence these personality resources?

Also, Harris (1992) posits in terms of strategies Blacks use in dealing with racism, that it is the responsibility of Blacks to take charge of their destinies by empowering themselves with a discrimination insurance policy that ensures that they are treated fairly in the workplace. Harris recommended that Blacks consider several factors to be covered against racism in the workplace by (a) acknowledge the prevalence of discrimination; (b) know what is expected of you at work; (c) keep a diary that documents daily work activities, assignments, incidents, and conversations, including names and dates; and (d) learn your rights under the law, particularly as interpreted by the (EEOC). Harris contends that these steps are designed to assist Blacks to exercise the following three important options if they have been discriminated against and want redress: Option A, the decision to resolve the discrimination complaint internally. Option B, filing a complaint with the EEOC, and Option C, filing a racial discrimination lawsuit.

Religiosity Coping Mechanisms

Religiosity and spirituality are the oldest traditional stress coping strategies that Blacks have used since slavery and that has also given them a sense of communalism, self-esteem, and purpose (Mbiti, 1969). Conceptually, the Black Church is possibly "…the most organized, visible, and nurturing institution…" in the lives of Blacks (Hopkins, 1993, p. 1). Mellor (2004)

remarks on the regular and valuable utilization of Blacks' spiritual coping strategy which is inaccurately represented in traditional models of stress and coping. According to Mellor (2004), spiritual coping strategy in certain situations can rightly be characterized as problem-focused, and according to Constantine et al. (2002), spiritual coping can also be characterized as an emotion-focused strategy.

Conclusion

Blacks as a group have been exposed to racial discrimination since the 17th century as slaves in the Americas. Though slavery officially ended with the 13th Amendment in 1865, its subtle lingering effects still follow Blacks like an 'albatross' in so many different forms and shapes at almost all social and economic levels till today. As a result, Blacks encounter greater exposure to many environmental racism stressors than most other Americans (Daly et al., 1995). The bulk of stressors experienced by Blacks are race-related (Utsey & Ponterotto, 1996). Accordingly, these racial encounters put them at a greater risk for many stress-related illnesses than other Americans. Their situation is further compounded because the strategies Blacks employ to cope with these race-related stress are not well understood, and only a handful of research studies focusing on effective coping strategies are available. Even then, those available concentrates on Euro-centric coping strategies that are not well suited to this group than the Africultural which blends more with Blacks race-related stress coping strategies. In this case, the need for research characterizing the nature and effectiveness of Blacks' coping is a necessary step for determining strategies to reduce their psychological vulnerability and increase their potential for resilience (Utsey et al., 2000). African survival-skill concept was reinforced by the availability of African priests among the slaves that helped the traumatized slaves to cope with hardships. Since then, the Africentric paradigm has served the Blacks as an effective strategy in

coping with stress. Some of these survival mechanisms or values that have continued to provide Blacks with the resilience to make effective coping responses to racial discrimination are the family, community, and the extended network of kinship. Historically, these networks have "Managed to buttress psychological isolation and poverty and have been recognized as alternative means of service provision" (Daly et al., 1995, p. 243). To appreciate this scenario, it is important to understand that early Black families lived and raised their children under slavery and segregated society. The Slavery and segregated society offered none or very few opportunities for Blacks (Ross, 1978). It appears that these African survival mechanisms that have shaped the ethics of caring and sharing in relation to one's group are learned in the family and community. The next section, chapter four, outlines the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical conceptualization framework upon which this study was based.

CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This study examined the stress coping strategies Black employee participants used to deal with perceived racial discrimination-related stress at workplaces. As such, this chapter provides the theoretical framework that guided the study. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) approach to stress, appraisal, and coping was the primary theoretical framework that informed this study. The current study also incorporated the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) modifications as proposed by Outlaw (1993), and Mellor (2004). This chapter will explore the application of the major components of the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theory and how the theory helped in understanding the study problem. The application of the theory in similar categories of studies, the specification of how the theory aids in determining and justifying the type of empirical investigation undertaken, and its methodology were also discussed.

According to Hadden (1997), the theory is a framework that leads to a model of the social world. The theory is particularly useful because it compares, evaluates, and relates data (Siporin 1975). Turner (1996) maintains that principles, concepts, and hypotheses are necessary to the definition of a theory, and a theory also helps us to recognize, understand and explain new situations; as well as making it possible to transfer knowledge from one situation to another. In this regard, a theory functions as a body of tested concepts that help practitioners to both understand and predict aspects of reality while providing guidelines for action (Turner, 1996). The theory also emphasizes an individual's capacity for change and social influence, and how to respond to the social construct of the reality of the clients as well as the workers and the environment (Payne, 1997). A theory must not only be "falsifiable" (Popper, 1963) but must also describe what can or cannot occur (Gambrill, 2006).

The Theoretical Framework

In 1926, Hans Selye became the first individual to introduce the term "stress" into the discipline of health psychology. His research in 1978 concluded that the human body has the mechanism referred to as General Adaptation Syndrome, (GAS) that enhances coping when threatened with demands. Selye later renamed GAS to stress. His research focus was on the body's physiological responses to stressors. According to Selye, the presence of stress in an individual immediately puts the involuntary nervous system (which controls muscles of the heart, stomach, and skin) into action and prepares the body to fight or flight. As such, respiration and heart rates increase, adrenaline is pumped into the body, the digestive system stops, and the pupils become dilated. Since Selye's study on how the human physiological systems react when an individual responds to a challenge, McEwen (2002) states that many research studies from different perspectives of stress have been conducted: physiological (Selye, 1976), psychological (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), sociological (Pearlin et al., 1981), occupational (House, 1981) and as an interdisciplinary topic (Appley & Trumbell, 1986). However, despite all these studies on stress, Rees and Redfern (2000) maintain that so far there is no agreed-upon definition of stress. For most people, however, when a person is stressed, life becomes overwhelming, and a sense of losing control sets in.

In other words, stress is the burden that life heaps on an individual and how that burden makes the person feel (McEwen, 2002). Stress is the inner reaction of what happens to an individual and the demands that are placed on the individual as the result of that event. For example, the individual experiences stress when he/she becomes anxious, worried, ashamed, or angry, regardless of the source of the feeling. The individual can cope with the stress adequately only when he/she considers both components of stress: the external events (what happened) and

demands on the individual (as the result of that event) and the individual's inner reaction to them. Hobfoll (1988) and other stress researchers (e.g., Appley & Trumbull, 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) believe that stress results when an individual appraises response capabilities as being inadequate to handle a threatening situation.

The common key elements in the views of stress center on environmental influences, the individual's assessment of a circumstance, the sense of threat or loss, and available coping resources. Generally, researchers agree that stress arises from certain conditions, for instance, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) examined stress as the "relationship between the person and the environment." In their 1984 book, "Stress, appraisal and coping," Lazarus and Folkman presented the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (TMSC). This model posits a framework that incorporates stress, appraisal, and coping as they relate to the individual's reaction to psychologically stressful environments or situations. In other words, TMSC considers a reciprocal-relational-process between the individual and the situation which transacts to form new meanings through the process of appraisal. The transaction focuses on three important aspects: (1) the magnitude of the stressor, (2) the emotions generated by the stressor and, (3) the resulting stress response (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

It is this type of inconsistent classification problem that led Mellor (2004) to seek a different framework for organizing racism-related coping strategies. His model not only organizes coping responses into three categories: defensive, controlled, and direct responses but also offers an important step that enhances the development and classification of effective models of coping with racism.

Also, many models do not include approaches intended to deal with personal conflicts or emotions associated with Black-related perceived workplace racial discrimination. Lazarus and

Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping has been used to assess general race-related stress and the subsequent choice of coping strategies. Similarly, the use of a transactional model of stress signifies improvement because it provides a better explanation and prediction of varieties of responses shown by those who encounter racial discrimination, as well as the consequence of racial discrimination on self-confidence and other associated variables (Major et al., 2003a). However, according to Barnes and Lightsey Jr. (2005), some studies that applied transactional models of stress failed to show adequate results. One such research was the authors' (2005) study with a sample of 114 Black college students who were asked to answer questions on several measures of perceived racism. Participants were asked: (1) the frequency of different forms of racism experience, (2) the degree of coping: the coping mechanism indicator, and (3) the degree of alleged stress. The authors concluded that perceiving racism is traumatic.

Application of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) Theoretical Concepts
and Components to the Problem of this Study

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model is a good fit theoretical framework for this study because it clearly describes and explains the dynamic process an individual goes through in his attempt to deal with stressful situations in two stages. The first stage is the concept of primary appraisal, the second stage is the concept of secondary appraisal (both concepts are explained in detail below). Secondly, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework is specifically based on both the behavioral and the psychological criteria normally used to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful events. This method is not only clear but also distinguishes between the two important coping mechanisms, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies (Figure 1 described both concepts in detail). As such, Lazarus and Folkman (1984)

have been the leading theory for most studies on stress and coping (Aldwin, 2004; Frydenberg & Lewis, 2004).

In this regard, when researching racial discrimination stress and the associated coping strategies, investigators have largely utilized Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework. This theory posits that stress is "A particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being" (p. 19). According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), whether an event is perceived as stressful depends on the outcome of two major evaluations, the concepts of primary and secondary appraisals, both of which form the main theoretical components of this model. The appraisal theory is the cornerstone of the stress and coping transactional framework. This theory according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) assesses the procedure by which emotions are activated because of an individual's understanding or appraisal of significant events or circumstances. The appraisal of the incident determines one's safety relative to the environment. The theory advances the following two main kinds of appraisal: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

According to (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Peters & Massey, 1983), racial discrimination is a constant stressor to Blacks and as such, influences their assessments of situations. In this regard, it can be hypothesized that Blacks are disproportionately exposed to environmental stimuli at workplaces that may form the sources of chronic and acute stress to them (Outlaw, 1993; Thompson, 1996). As such, the concepts of stress, appraisal, and coping theory were applied to the study problem. The concepts of appraisal and coping form the two main components that are central to the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) transactional stress theory. The theory distinguishes between two basic forms of appraisals - primary and secondary appraisals.

Primary Appraisal (Involves the Assessment of an Event by an Individual)

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), a primary appraisal can be defined as the process by which the Black employee at the workplace, for instance, decides whether a perceived racial discrimination incident is stressful. Primary appraisal is when the Black worker assesses an incident or condition as a potential danger or threat to his or her welfare. A primary appraisal can also be defined as the individual's concentration on the extent of possible harm from an incident (Lewis et al., 2006).

The primary appraisal has three components: (a) Goal relevance or the extent the racial incident, for instance, refers to issues about which the Black employee cares, (b) Goal congruence defines the extent to which the perceived racial incident at the workplace corresponds with the Black's employee's personal goals, and (c) Ego-involvement, designates aspects of the Black's worker's commitment, such as, their self-esteem, and moral values. In the authors' transactional model (Figure 1, as diagrammed for purpose of this study), the Black worker in this case, first makes a cognitive evaluation to determine the significance of the perceived workplace racial discrimination encounter which he/she may either interpret in one of the following three ways; (1) "irrelevant," which means that there are no effects for the Black employee's well-being, (2) "benign/positive/beneficial," which means that the Black worker perceives the event as being capable of improving his/her welfare, and (3) "stressful," which means that the Black worker perceives the incident as a "harm/loss, threat or challenge" to his/her welfare. Appraisals of harm or loss are considered that damage has already been sustained, and as such, no coping is required. A "threat" appraisal happens when harm or loss is likely, and a "challenge" appraisal indicates an awareness that there may be a prospect for mastery and gain from the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In other words, the Black

worker evaluates how he or she could learn or gain confidence from this experience. If the content of the transaction is important to the Black worker, he or she will experience the transaction as a 'high stakes' event. Conversely, if the content of the transaction is of little or no importance, the Black worker will experience it as a 'low stakes' event. If the Black worker perceives the event as a threat that will result in harm, loss, challenge, or potential for harm, (i.e., as a high-stake event), then the Black worker will experience the event as stressful (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and therefore goes on to the secondary appraisal process.

Secondary Appraisal (Involves Determining Appropriate Coping Options)

A secondary appraisal is the person's assessment of his or her capability to deal with the incident or situation. The evaluation depends on: (1) whether the incident poses a threat to the individual, and (2) whether the person possesses the required coping resources. For instance, the concept of secondary appraisal is the process by which the 'Black employee at the workplace' based on primary appraisal and/or conclusion, determines the best stress management options (Figure 1). Also, a secondary appraisal has three components: (a) blame or credit, which results from the Black worker at workplace appraisal of who is responsible for the incident. (b) coping potential, which is the Black employee's appraisal of the prospects of generating rational responses that will constructively influence the encounter ,and (c) future expectations, which refers to the Black worker's appraisal of the further course of an encounter.

Assuming that from the primary appraisal, the Black employee has determined the event to be high-stake or low stake (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), he or she will then engage in secondary appraisal to determine how to best deal with the situation and change the undesirable circumstances. This process starts with an evaluation of 'internal' or personal characteristics, such as intelligence, ability, self-esteem, willpower, and inner strength (Slavin et al., 1991). At

the same time, the Black worker also evaluates the 'external' stress-reducing coping options, such as environmental variables – power to change the situation; available type and amount of social support, as well as specific resources to create a more positive environment (Folkman et al., 1986). It is important to note that both the primary and secondary appraisals may occur or are performed simultaneously.

The Stress of Racism and Black Worker's coping strategies (Efforts to Control, Reduce, or Learn to Tolerate the Threats that Lead to Stress)

Based on the secondary appraisal which is a crucial step in the evaluative stage of the cognitive appraisal process, the Black employee reviews his/her coping options, weighs the effectiveness of the coping options, and his/her ability to appropriately apply strategies. An appropriate coping strategy according to the perceived nature of the event is formulated. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest two basic concepts of coping strategies: (1) "problem-focused Strategy" – with four types of characteristics, and (2) "emotion-focused strategy" – also with four types of characteristics. However, Folkman et al. (1986) and Outlaw (1993) hypothesized that in responding to the stress-induced situation, an individual (such as the Black worker) may use both strategies of emotion-focused and problem-focused in combination (Figure 1).

Problem-Focused Coping Strategy

Problem-focused coping strategies according to McCrae (1984) are used when, for example, the Black employee at the workplace evaluates the stress from a perceived racist encounter as controllable and utilizes 'confrontative' coping strategies such as: calling out racism, educating the oppressor, demanding better treatment, expressing pride in racial identity, taking control of the situation, seeking revenge, and getting other people to intervene to change the situation (Figure 1).

The theory of goodness of fit, as suggested by Roussi et al. (2000) posits that the efficiency of problem-focused strategy depends on how well matched the coping strategy is with the characteristics of the stress-inducing stimulus, especially regarding its controllability. In other words, a problem-focused strategy is functionally adaptive when it is adopted by the Black employee to deal with a perceived workplace stressful stimulus that he/she perceives as controllable. Although there is scanty research on the topic of 'controllability' of problem-focused coping strategy, some studies (e.g., Bianchi et al., 2004) suggest that when the individual (Black worker) feels in control of a perceived racial discrimination incident at the workplace, he regulates the stress confrontatively (Figure 1, #9). Thus, the Black worker buffers the effect of perceived discrimination distress by challenging the validity of the discriminatory event/s by employing a problem-focused coping strategy, such as educating the oppressor by (calling out racism or demanding better treatment). In this case, the Black worker may not only reduce negative feelings or health impact of the perceived discriminatory experiences but also may promote good feelings/health habits instead by confrontation.

Emotion-Focused Coping Strategy

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) maintain that generally when the Black worker feels that he or she is powerless to change the situation, emotion-focused coping strategies (Figure 1) are used. In this case, the Black worker's decision to employ the emotion-focused coping strategies is for the management of emotions or anxiety caused by the perceived racial discrimination workplace stressful event. In other words, emotion-focused coping strategies are used by the Black worker in those situations he or she feels relatively helpless and powerless (Folkman et al., 1986). It involves employing such stress regulating coping strategies as escaping, avoiding, distancing himself from the situation, accepting, seeking medical, family, and spiritual support,

or using drugs and alcohol. Other examples of emotion-focused coping strategies include anger, withdrawal, relaxation, and fantasizing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Some coping strategies like alcohol and drug consumption might in the short term be effective, but in the long run they may become devastating and ineffective. At other times, the uncontrollable event might become an opportunity for a 'positive reappraisal' for the Black employee (Folkman et al., 1986); for instance, reappraising the use of alcohol/drugs coping strategy in the light of its addictive/destructive long-term consequences.

Thus, even though Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping has been used to assess general race-related stress and the follow-up choice of coping strategies, the model does not specifically include racial discrimination incidents as potential stressors for Blacks. Therefore, of interest for this study is the proposition that the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) transactional model can be extended to include the missing Black race factor characteristics by integrating it with Outlaw's (1993) and Mellor (2004) models.

Outlaw (1993) Application to Perceived Workplace Racial Discrimination

Appraisal and Coping Process by Black Workers

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model provides the basic theoretical framework on which the Outlaw (1993) modification was based. The main change/modification to the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) framework by Outlaw (1993) model is the elimination of two cognitive evaluation preferences ('benign and irrelevant') from the Lazarus and Folkman model. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), irrelevant appraisals are those assessments with no implications for a person's welfare.

However, Outlaw's modification of the transactional model was made so that she could examine how some Black professionals evaluated and coped with perceived race-related stress in

predominantly White work environments. This is particularly useful for the current study because not only does the modification recognize and capture the Black race factor, but most importantly, it offers an excellent good-fit relationship between the theory and this study's problem on how Black participants can navigate, cope, fail or succeed when encountering racial discrimination stress at their workplace environments.

Outlaw suggests in her model that Blacks working in predominantly White environments are constantly subjected to racism. The author states that this kind of 'new' racism is not only subtle and pervasive, but also poses a constant threat to Blacks' well-being, self-esteem, and financial security. Outlaw (1993) contends that there are no 'irrelevant or gentle' race-related events for Blacks because their experiences with all racial discrimination events have always been stressful. Indeed, she argues that not only does racism in Black professionals' work environments involve constant negative events, but most importantly, it is also ongoing and therefore, chronic.

In Outlaw's model, Black workers hypothetically perceive a threat to their well-being in every race-related incident or cross-racial interaction/event. This kind of high racially charged work environment constitutes a constant threat to Blacks' mental health including raising their stakes to high anxiety and stress. The model posits that Blacks always perceive racial events as harmful, threatening, or challenging (Outlaw, 1993).

Black Workers' Harm/Loss Appraisal

Black employee/s who appraise the perceived racial discrimination-related stress as harm/loss may cope with such emotion-focused passive behaviors as withdrawal, depression, and shame. This is because, in the harm/loss appraisal, the Black employee has already sustained damage (e.g., being fired from a job) and as such nothing else could be done (Figure 1, #4). Also,

when the Black employee thinks that he/she has no control over that aspect of his/her own life, he/she may probably be unhappy and reserved. If the Black employees are repeatedly exposed to racist acts, it damages their self-esteem and may influence their appraisal of a situation at the harm/loss level.

Black Workers' Threat Appraisal

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), threat appraisal is the anticipation of harm/loss. Specifically, 'threat' is the expectation of injury or damage that may be forthcoming. An example of a threat appraisal would be when the Black worker views a racial incident at the workplace as something that will cause future harm, such as being denied a well-deserved promotion. This type of threat may be both psychologically and physically damaging to the Black employee because, unlike harm/loss, threat encourages the Black worker to develop anticipatory coping strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The Black employee in developing anticipatory coping strategies may, for instance, engage in counterproductive work habits (e.g., premature exit from the workforce, tardiness, disengagement, and burnout) and less productivity, or withdrawal from seeking promotions, thus diminishing his integrity and usefulness at work.

Black Workers' Challenge Appraisal

Challenge appraisals are assessments that arouse optimistic emotional reactions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Blacks are believed to be optimistic due to religious inclination (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Also, according to Boyd-Franklin (1989), religious faith (spirituality) and hope arouse coping in Blacks. Some Blacks, for instance, demonstrate the challenging aspect of their religiosity with the positive belief that "God cannot give them more than they can bear." In this case, this pleasurable emotional response translates to an outcome of a challenge appraisal. Challenge appraisals for Blacks may have originated from a variety of community influences

such as ties to extended family kinship, community support, and faith in their religion (Hill,

1972; Peters, & Massey, 1983) all rooted in their slavery or post-slavery experiences.

Outlaw further argues that racially stressful situations demand Blacks at workplaces to

use either active or passive negative emotional coping strategies. Active emotional responses

develop with the perception of threat or challenge and stimulate the Black worker to take some

actions that result in the use of problem-focused coping strategies (Figure 1). On the other hand,

passive emotional responses, which develop from the perception of harm or loss, cause the

person to feel helpless, depressed, and withdrawn, resulting in the use of emotion-focused coping

strategies (Lazarus & Folkman. 1984). Stevenson (2003) notes that experiencing racist situations

that cannot be resolved leads to racism-related stress and racial trauma. Some examples of

ongoing and post racism-related stress include depression, headaches, anxiety, low self-esteem,

humiliation, upset stomach, chest pains, tunnel vision, ulcers, back pains, nightmares, loss of

appetite or overeating, nausea, shortness of breath, weeping, vomiting, fatigue, increased heart

rate/hypertension, anger and frustration, difficulty concentrating, lack of productivity and

motivation, sleep deprivation, and recounting specific racist situations days, weeks, months, and

years after they occurred as if they happened more recently.

Outlaw's model helps conceptualize race-related stress in that it provides an initial

framework for understanding how Black managers might assess and cope with perceived race-

related stress in the environment (Piper II, 1998). Yet, Outlaw's model is deficient for several

reasons: (1) the model is flawed in assuming that all Blacks experience racial events similarly

because all Black managers do not interpret similar racial events in the same manner.

Outlaw's model does not provide a framework for understanding or explaining group

differences in a coping-strategy selection that exists. This might be because unlike the White

Americans, Blacks to be competitive in America must learn to adapt both to the Black culture as well as to the mainstream culture and institutions. Even though Blacks tend to reside in the Black community and have families and friends there, they still must adjust and adapt to White-dominated social institutions. These adjustments require them to juggle different values, behavioral styles, and aspirations. This adaptation can often not only become confusing but also difficult for the Black individual to choose the appropriate coping strategies, especially when suddenly confronted with a racist incident. This situation has led many social scientists (e.g., Ramseur, 1991) to state that many Blacks must be bicultural to function effectively in both cultures. This also might be a reason the Outlaw's model cannot explain why some Black managers selected a White coping strategy, whereas others selected a Black coping strategy (Piper II, 1998).

However, the differences in Outlaw's model could partly be explained by the fact that the coping strategies that Blacks use depend on several factors such as the level of their racial socialization experiences, racial identity development, personal experiences, collective experiences, individual characteristics, and situational characteristics (Brondol et al., 2009; Bynum, Burton, & Best, 2007; Carter, 2007; Cheng, 2003; Harrell, 2000).

Mellor (2004) Application to Workplace Racial Discrimination Appraisal and Coping Process by Blacks

Mellor's (2004) coping classification provides another element of the theoretical framework for the current study. In Figure 2, Mellor provides a continuum of strategies for responding to perceived racism-related stress that focuses primarily on different types of coping actions under three categories: (1) problem-focused, which occurs when the Black worker, for instance, responds directly to the perceived racism at workplace. Essentially, problem-focused

coping looks at the environment or specific radicalized incidents and how things can be resolved. An example of problem-focused coping is when the Black worker responds to the perceived workplace racism with a physical altercation. (2) Emotion-focused, is characterized by avoidance. Examples of this form of coping include detachment and internalization of racism. (3) Support-seeking, while seeking support can fall under both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping, it is often placed in its separate category (Brondolo et al., 2009; Danoff-Burg et al., 2004; Mellor, 2004; Swim et al., 2003; Utsey et al., 2000). According to Mellor (2004), those who seek social support from others do it to gain sympathy from people in their environment or to solicit an intervention from someone who can advocate for them and respond directly to the oppressor.

Application of the Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Theory in Similar Categories of Studies

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have served as the theoretical framework in other non-racism-related studies on stress and coping. For instance, the theory has been used to examine coping and appraisal patterns in reaction to a wide range of stressors: the experience of academic stresses (Friedman, 1989; Mantzicopoulos, 1989) and stress experienced by law enforcement personnel (Braunsdorf, 1989).

Friedman's (1989) quantitative dissertation study used Lazarus and Folkman (1984) to provide the theoretical foundation for his work. The study focused on the appraisal of threat and challenge, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping, on SAT-Verbal and SAT-Math performance of 140 suburban high school juniors. Results of the analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between the appraisal and the coping composite, with threat strongly related to both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping (Friedman, 1989).

In another quantitative dissertation study, Mantzicopoulos (1989) utilized Lazarus and Folkman (1984) to capture the coping strategies used by children who experienced failure in school. The study was designed to capture the extent to which cognitive appraisal factors affect a child's coping response to a stressor such as a school failure, (e.g., poor course grades). A sample of 187 fourth and fifth graders from a school district in Northern California participated in the study. Based on Lazarus and Folkman (1984), participants were assigned to four coping groups: (a) positive coping, (b) denial coping, (c) projection coping, and (d) self-blame. Coping overall, the positive coppers were more likely to: have success, and attribute failure to unstable rather than stable factors, to experience fewer negative emotions after failure, and to have higher self-esteem. Also, positive coppers were rated by their teachers as having higher achievement, and fewer behavioral problems. Finally, positive coppers were more likely to persist academically despite failure (Mantzicopoulos, 1989).

Specification of how the Theory Aids in Determining and Justifying the Type of Empirical Investigation Undertaken in this Study and its Methodology

Unlike the quantitative studies mentioned above that utilized this theory, this study was a qualitative phenomenological empirical investigation. The method of phenomenology primarily focuses on individuals' subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. In other words, unlike quantitative study, this method creates an openness that encourages participants to provide a detailed picture of why they act or feel in certain ways. Creswell (2018) says this method is ideal for generating rich descriptions and gaining in-depth understandings of existing phenomena. Specifically, phenomenology is chosen as an ideal qualitative approach over a quantitative method for this study because it examined the lived experiences of Black employees as they relate to their consciousness and perceptions (Creswell, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Also,

phenomenology captures the meaning and essences of phenomena being studied (Moustakas, 1994).

In this regard, Lazarus, and Folkman (1984) and the modified models presented by Outlaw (1993) and Mellor (2004) will aid and guide this type of study. In other words, not only did the combined theoretical framework have strength in the aspects of exploratory and descriptive nature of this research, but also it is a theory that helps evaluate the linkages between the stressful events of the participants and their selection of appropriate coping strategies. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as extended by Outlaw (1993) and Mellor (2004) improved the design and efficiency of the current research by focusing attention on determinants of stressors and coping behaviors of the participants. Also, utilizing this theory in this study gave support to inform practice by assessing the results of theoretically derived interventions which made it possible to validate or modify the theory accordingly.

Finally, the use of this theory is consistent with the qualitative phenomenological method of research because the data for this study was collected through an anonymous Qualtrics online survey to understand participants' lived experiences of how they handled and coped with racial discrimination stresses at workplaces. The theory also helped to identify the following two research questions for this study: (1) how did participants navigated, negotiated, minimized, and or dealt with workplace racial discrimination stressors? (2) What type of coping strategies did participants employ in dealing with racial discrimination incidents at their workplaces?

CHAPTER FIVE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH QUESTIONS
(NOT HYPOTHESES DRIVEN)

This chapter will present the research questions explored in this study. The focus of the current study was to understand and document how participants dealt and coped with stressors from perceived racial discrimination incidents at the workplace. As such, the research questions were structured to explore how participants appraised and coped with perceived racial discrimination stressors or experiences at the workplace.

Since this study was qualitative research, it was not hypothesis-driven because the goal of the study was to document the experiences and meanings that participants assigned to a particular phenomenon as opposed to the determination of relationships between variables (Moustakas, 1994). This study was organized around the following four research questions:

- RQ 1. What assessment strategies do Black employees use to navigate, negotiate, minimize, or deal with perceived racial discrimination encounters?

Primary Appraisal (Workplace Racial Discrimination Encounter / Potential Stressors)

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) state that cognitive appraisal arises when an individual deliberates on two major factors in response to a stressful situation. The two major factors are: (1) the "primary appraisal" – (where the individual goes into a mental assessment of what is at stake). If the answer to this evaluation is stressful, then, the individual goes on to categorize the situation as:

(a) A "threat" – (which may be a potential danger to one's well-being or self-esteem) an example from the proposed study perspective, will be when a Black employee perceives that the threat may lead to a future promotion denial or the possibility of getting fired.

(b) A "challenge" – (Which suggests that the individual should focus on the possibility of success, rewards, or personal growth that the situation could bring). For instance, the Black

employee may expect that the perceived situation may result in better employment benefits, promotion, wage increase, or other favorable outcomes).

(c) A "loss" – (which means that the damage has already taken place, and there is nothing else that can be done). An example will be where the Black employee has already been fired from the job. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also indicate that the perception of threat or challenge triggers stress and subsequent coping mechanisms.

As such, this study operationalized "Primary Appraisal" as the extent to which Black employees perceive a stressful workplace racial discrimination incident as a "challenge, threat, harm/loss or irrelevant" (i.e., types of perceived risk) in relation to his or her wellbeing.

Racial climate researchers (e.g., Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Fernandes & Alsaeed, 2004; Mellor, 2004; Outlaw, 1993) state that:

- Racial discrimination is a potential stressor for Blacks in the work environment.

- Blacks perceive more workplace racial discrimination than their White peers, Alderfer et al. (1980).

- Blacks perceive more racial organizational conflicts than other ethnic minorities (such as Asians, Native Americans, Latinos, etc. Fernandez, 1981).

- Individuals use their racial identities to make perceptive racial encounter appraisals of the environment as being stressful or not stressful (Piper, 1998).

- Individuals may perceive potentially stressful racial discrimination incidents differently, and therefore, their degrees of anxiety will be relative to their perceptions of encounters as stressful or not (Folkman et al., 1986).

Thus, this research question could provide information about the process and degrees to which participants evaluated their workplace racism stressors at the primary appraisal stage of

Lazarus and Folkman (1984), and the extent to which they perceived the existence of racism at their workplaces.

- RQ 2. What coping strategies do Blacks utilize to buffer perceived workplace racial discrimination?

Secondary Appraisal: (Problem-focused and Emotion-focused Strategies)

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) second major factor in the appraisal of a stressful encounter is the "secondary appraisal" (where the individual assesses the coping resources required to eradicate, minimize, or tolerate the stressor and the stress it produces). Individuals select different coping strategies depending on whether they perceive a racial encounter as harmful, threatening, or challenging (McCrae, 1984).

As such, in this study, "secondary appraisal" from Lazarus and Folkman (1984) was operationalized as the extent to which the Black employees determine from the outcome of their primary appraisal that a particular perceived workplace racial discrimination incident was a "threat" or "challenge" and proceeded to evaluate:

- If he/she felt "powerless" to handle the perceived stressful situation and moved on to regulate the stress through "Emotion-Focused" self-control coping strategies (e.g., avoidance, distancing, acceptance, support seeking, use of drug/alcohol, spirituality, ignoring, etc.), or

- If he/she was "in control" of the perceived situation and proceeded to regulate the stress through "problem-Focused" confrontative coping strategies (e.g., educate the oppressor, call out racism, demand better treatment, proud of racial identity, take control of the situation, seek revenge, and get others to intervene for him/her, etc.)

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) conceptualized a direct flow from primary to secondary appraisals to coping and eventually, to stress reduction/elimination outcomes. Therefore, the application of the key premise of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) was that the sequence of participants' primary appraisal, secondary appraisals, and coping strategies, would eventually facilitate the relationship between stressors and stress outcomes. Thus, this question may provide information about the process by which participants generally coped with perceived workplace racism stressors.

- RQ 3. Do Black employees use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in dealing with most stressful perceived workplace racisms?

Harm/Loss – Passive Emotion Response

Several authors (e.g., Folkman et al., 1986; Lalonde et al., 1995; Outlaw, 1993; Plummer & Slane, 1996) hypothesized that in responding to a most stress-induced situation, an individual may use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies at the same time. The utilization of the emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in combination will be operationalized in the proposed study as the extent to which Black employees utilize both "coping strategies" to buffer stress in response to a particular perceived workplace racial discrimination incident.

For instance, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), passive emotion response develops from a primary appraisal perception of "harm or loss," where the individual feels "helpless and depressed" because irreversible damage has already been done. An example of a harm/loss stressor is when the Black employee is dismissed from a job and there is nothing else that he/she can do about it. In this case, he or she regulates the stress by employing such emotion-focused coping strategy as acceptance, drug/alcohol, spirituality, etc., and by utilizing

problem-focused coping verbal altercation of calling out racism, seeking revenge (e.g., by filing a claim and getting others to intervene on his/her behalf) (Lazarus & Folkman. 1984).

According to Boyd-Franklin (1989), religious faith (spirituality) and hope provoke coping among Blacks. For example, some Blacks facing a challenging racism-related stressor may depend on their spirituality that "God cannot give them more than they can bear." Which is an emotion-focused response utilized in coping with a harm/loss appraisal. Also, Outlaw (1993) further argues that situations perceived as "extremely" racially stressful may require Blacks at workplaces to use either problem-focused strategy (e.g., call out racism, seek revenge, etc.) or emotion-focused coping strategy (e.g., avoidance, acceptance, etc.) and/or both in combination.

Unlike Whites, Blacks to be competitive in America must learn to adapt to both the Black culture as well as to the mainstream culture and institutions by juggling through different values. Ramseur (1991) refers to this as "biculturalism" where Blacks are being subjected to function in both the Black and White dominant cultures. The constant juggling and adjustment may not only prove difficult for Black employees to adapt to but may also become very confusing to them when suddenly faced to choose an appropriate coping strategy in dealing with stressful situation/s. According to Lazarus (1999), *"when there is stress, there are also emotions"* (p. 35).

Thus, this research question was operationalized by focusing on capturing the extent of Black employees' feelings, such as when: (a) fired from their jobs, denied promotions, denied wage increase, and/or forced to quit their jobs because of racism and, (b) whether they utilized both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in responding and coping with the incident.

- RQ 4. Are there demographic differences in responses to perceived discrimination in the workplace?

Demographics will be analyzed to determine possible differences in responses. Although the sample is expected to be small in concordance with qualitative analysis, demographic data may inform a future study on this subject.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study:

Actual employment is the number of persons during a given period for whom Social Security

taxes are withheld. In addition to totals, such employment is also reported by job category

and minority group (Humphrey, 1977).

"Black's attainment of fair-share employment on a broad job category basis does not represent that

African Americans have obtained an equitable share of positions in every occupation and

job title in the job category. Nor does it purport that individual members of the black labor

force would not face problems of job denial or employment discrimination" (Humphrey,

1977, p. iii).

Coping - (Problem-focused, Emotion-focused and/or a Combination of both)

Coping refers to "an individual's mental and behavioral efforts to master, reduce, or

tolerate the internal and/or external demands" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, p. 843) that

might, for instance, be appraised as stressful by an employee confronted with a

workplace racial discrimination incident. "Coping serves two major functions: regulating

distressing emotions and changing the problem that is causing the discomfort"

(Carpenter, 1992, p.17).

EEO-1 Occupational Categories: Officials and Managers, Professionals, Technicians, Sales

Workers, Office and Clerical, Craft Workers, Operatives, Laborers and Service Workers

(Humphrey, 1977).

"EEO-1 Report is filed annually with the Joint Reporting Committee by employers' subject

to the Executive Order or to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended"
(Humphrey, 1977)

Emotion-focused Coping Strategy

Emotion-focused strategy pertains to the regulation of emotions or distresses that come
with the stressful situation. Emotion-focused coping is directed at minimizing the
negative emotions elicited by the stressful situation and may include expressing
emotions, seeking support from others, religiosity, or avoiding the source of stress. For
instance, employees might decide not to report/consult their Human Resources' office or
decide not to file formal complaints about workplace racist encounters, and instead they
may try to relax, distract themselves or walk away from the situation and do nothing.
People tend to use more emotion-focused strategies when the situation was appraised as
not or less changeable, or when the individual is not in control of the situation (Lazarus &
Folkman, 1984).

Employment percent gap represents the difference between black employment expectations or the
employment availability rate at a fair-share level and black employment experiences
(participation rate) at labor market levels of black employment (Humphrey, 1977). "The
employment percent gap indicates the percentage points by which black participation in a
given job category must be increased to achieve equality with the employment availability
rate" (Humphrey, 1977, p. 6).

Fair share employment constitutes a minimum level of employment and that employment at any
lower level is the result of systemic discrimination (Humphrey, 1977).

In Vivo Coding: This code is used to represent a portion of the data that represents concepts,

words, and short phrases taken from the survey/interview written response documents (Saldana, 2012).

"Labor Market Participation rate is the ratio or percent of employment of a particular minority group to the employment of all population groups. It represents the quantity of minority employment. The participation rate is usually stated in terms of a particular job category" (Humphrey, 1977, p. 94).

Open Coding: Refers to the process of attaching a label to a data segment when analyzing the P-Docs. It is an interpretive process that captures the core of central theme of a portion of the data. In ATLAS.ti open coding involves name labeling of the highlighted similar concepts, ideas in portions of the data that may be linked together under the same code (Saldana, 2012).

Primary appraisals

Primary appraisal involves determining the stressor or the significance of whether the person–environment encounter poses a threat. For instance, if the employee in a workplace racial discrimination incident evaluates that there is no harm to his/her well-being, the situation is appraised as irrelevant. However, if the employee appraises the workplace racist incident as harming, threatening, or challenging his/her well-being, the situation is appraised as stressful. Finally, if the employee evaluates the outcome of a specific workplace racist incident and is perceived as preserving or enhancing the employee's well-being, the situation is appraised as benign-positive (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Primary Documents (PD or P-Docs): represent the data you have added to an ATLAS.ti project.

These can be text, image, audio, video, or geographic materials that you wish to interpret (Saldana, 2012).

Problem-focused Strategy

Problem-focused Strategy is the management of the problem that is causing the stress by directly changing the elements of the stressful situation. Problem-focused coping is aimed at resolving the stressful event or situation. For example, in a workplace racist incident, employees might call out racism, file complaint, seek revenge and/or take action to change the stressful person–environment interaction. People tend to use more problem-focused strategies when the situation was appraised as changeable or when they are in control of the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Secondary appraisals

Secondary appraisal involves the individual's evaluation of the resources or coping strategies at his or her disposal for addressing any perceived threats. Given that the employee in a workplace racial discrimination incident determines from the primary appraisal that the situation is harming, threatening or challenging to his/her well-being (stressful), a secondary appraisal is made in which the employee evaluates his or her options for coping. Such appraisals include an assessment of whether problem-focused, emotion-focused and/or a combination of both coping options might be appropriately utilized (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Stress

Psychological stress is defined as "a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources

and endangering his or her well-being" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984: p. 19). Stress is

perceived as the imbalance between the demands placed on the individual and the

individual's resources to cope (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). For instance, job promotion

and salary increase denials might be burdensome demands placed on the employee's

well-being, as such, primary sources of stress. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984),

the way a person appraises these situations determines the appropriate stress reactions

and coping efforts utilized.

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts require Employers with 100 or more employees to file the

Employer Information Report EEO-l (Humphrey, 1977).

CHAPTER SIX: METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the approach that was used for data collection and interpretation of this study. As such, this chapter is organized according to the following sections: research design, participation criteria, sample selection and size, recruitment, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative phenomenological research method using an open-ended survey sent to participants' e-mail addresses. Qualtrics online survey software provided the platform for the anonymous qualitative survey. The method of in-depth data collection captured the major purpose of the research, which was to encourage the participants to tell their own stories. In other words, the study of the strategies Black employees used to cope with perceived racial discrimination at workplaces was an attempt to understand the experiences of this group strictly from their perspectives. As such, this study involved codes, categories, and themes development (Glaser, 1978) in evaluating participants' stories of perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences and their coping strategies. Creswell (2018) highlights this rationale by stating that,

> The purpose of qualitative research is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived. (pp. 53-54)

Whyte et al. (2007) state that "Phenomenology serves as the rationale behind efforts to understand individuals by entering into their field of perception in order to see life as these individuals see it" (p. 90). In other words, phenomenology emphasis is on the individuals'

particular encounters and interpretations of the world and, as such, serves as an inquiry technique for understanding the perceptions as well as the descriptions of individuals' lived experiences. Phenomenological research explains the meaning of group lived experiences about a phenomenon (Creswell, 2018).

Also, the phenomenological method was ideal for this study because it met the study's major goal of capturing and understanding the perceptions and descriptions of the individuals' lived experiences in their natural settings. The phenomenologist is interested in understanding how people view the world around them because it seeks to determine a meticulous and impartial method for understanding human experience (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). In a nutshell, phenomenology aims at acquiring an in-depth meaning and understanding of peoples' experiences about a particular phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990). Most importantly, it should be noted that phenomenological research does not develop theory (Van Manen, 1990); rather it seeks to provide insight into reality closer to the living world.

As such, this study utilized an anonymous open-ended survey research method for data collection because of its benefit to gain deeper, richer insights into phenomena (Massey, 2010). It is also the most effective way to unravel such complex problems as Black employees coping with perceived workplace racial discrimination for further research and explanations.

Institutional Review Board Approval

The research design and implementation plan were approved by the Yeshiva University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), Western IRB, now known as WCG IRB. The approved protocol was followed throughout the study.

Criteria for Participation

Participants were screened for inclusion into the sample based on the following seven criteria (Appendix A):

1. On-the-job racial discrimination experience

2. A Black person of African Decent

3. A current or retired worker with a minimum of 5-years of service longevity

4. 25 years and older

5. Willing to digitally consent to the Informed Consent

6. Willing to participate in an anonymous online survey, and

7. Willing to freely discuss and answer questions about their thoughts, ideas, regarding workplace racial discrimination and coping mechanisms that you may have used.

This information was collected by having the potential participant check off criteria from a list provided before being accepted into the study.

Sample Selection

This study sample was drawn using non-probability, criterion-based purposeful and snowball sampling methods. This was a two-stage process. The first stage consisted of recruiting participants from settings with which the researcher is familiar – the workplace, educational programs, and church congregation. The second stage entailed asking the first group of selected participants to forward the anonymous Qualtrics online survey link to individuals from their network who met the eligibility criteria of this study.

Purposeful sampling is a widely used method in qualitative studies for identifying and selecting information-rich cases (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling involves purposefully selecting participants with the prospects of producing the highest perceptions and understanding of the subject matter under investigation. This includes finding and picking persons or groups of people who are exclusively well-informed about or knowledgeable about a phenomenon of

interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In addition to participants' knowledge and experience on the subject matter, Spradley (1979) maintain that equally and of utmost importance is the availability of the participants and their motivation to actively participate. Also, Merriam et al. (2002) stated, "Since qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning of the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives, it is important to select a sample from which most can be learned" (p. 12).

Snowball Sampling as a Recruitment Method

The current study also utilized a snowball sampling approach. Snowball sampling process begins by inquiring from "well-situated" individuals (i.e., those who know a lot about the phenomenon being studied) "Whom should I talk to?" (Patton, 2002, p. 237). According to the author, snowball sampling is another kind of purposeful sampling technique that works as additional individuals are requested to find possible subjects; the snowball becomes larger and bigger until the yield is new information-rich cases. By employing the snowball sampling technique in this study, Yeshiva University Qualtrics Platform Survey link was forwarded by email to the following 6 individuals who were not study participants: (2 former work colleagues, 2 former classmates, and 2 from the author's church) with the request to forward the survey link to anyone who met the eligibility criteria.

Sample Size and Recruitment

The sample for this study was 16 Black retired and current employees who have experienced workplace racial discrimination. Generally, qualitative research designs concentrate on small purposive samples. This is done because the participant has a particular quality that is the focus of the study. In this study, the aim was to seek cases that represent specific types of the phenomenon, namely, how Black employee participants handled and coped with perceived

workplace racial discrimination incidents and Qualtrics online anonymous survey will be used to collect data.

Participants had a four-week time frame to complete the online survey. This time frame allowed participants sufficient time to respond to the survey. Toward the end of the 30-day window that participants were given to respond to the confidential Qualtrics survey, only 11 out of the 15 – 20 sample size qualified to complete the survey and as such, the survey was extended to another 30 days to allow prospective participants more time to respond and, that yielded 5 more responses that brought the study sample size to 16.

Rationale for using Qualtrics Online Survey

In this time of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the social distancing, lockdown, and stay-at-home measures currently in place nationwide, in-person research faces particularly challenging continuity. As such, it is affecting the way people work and triggers off the idea of learning how to work remotely. It also affects the normal way of conducting in-person and focus group, etc. research. In this regard, the current study re-designed the data collection method from in-person to online Qualtrics survey that considers the social-distancing measures.

With the COVID-19 social distancing measures, Qualtrics online survey software offered researchers with data collection opportunity (Andrew et al., 2003) because Qualtrics web survey is an enhanced data collection method with up-to-date screen designs and question formatting, far surpassing more simplified paper surveys (Schleyer & Forrest, 2000). Using Qualtrics online survey offers participants the opportunity to respond to questions without the pressure to respond in a specified manner or in a fashion that could happen if participants were interviewed in

person. Thus, by using the Qualtrics survey method for this study, responses will generate further insight into the participants' experiences with perceived workplace racial discrimination. Also, not only the Qualtrics online survey offers an extremely low cost of data collection, but it also offers a high participant rate of response and especially with the convenience to answer questions at their own pace, schedule, and flexibility within survey completion time like any structured questionnaire. All of which translates to an affordable low cost and fast data collection process. Rapid deployment and return times are possible with Qualtrics online surveys that do not use traditional methods given the fact that bad contact information for some respondents will be known almost immediately.

Qualtrics Platform survey requires no person-to-person Interviewer and since participants are not responding directly to another person, it offers them the freedom to open without the possibility of being influenced by the interviewer in person-to-person or focus group survey methods. Thus, by using the Qualtrics survey method for this study, responses will generate further insight into the participants' experiences with perceived workplace racial discrimination. However, a major disadvantage of the Qualtrics online survey is that certain populations are less likely to have internet access to respond to online questionnaires. Also, the lack of an interviewer present to clarify and probe can lead to less reliable data.

<div align="center">

Participants

</div>

Description of the Sample

The sample for this study was drawn from Black Workers via an online Qualtrics anonymous survey with 16 respondents qualified for participation. All respondents (n=16) reported themselves as Black persons of African descendant. Also, all the respondents (n=16) reported they experienced workplace racial discrimination incidents. Appendix D presents the

demographic characteristics of the participants. Participants' gender comprised: male (n=3), and female (n=13) of the total. The majority of the participants (n=13) were 50 years old and over. Also, the majority (n=13) were currently working, and a few (n=3) were retired at the time of this survey. Participants' educational levels were as follows: graduate/professional degrees (n=13), bachelor's degrees (n=2), and some college/associate degree (n=1). Respondents reported their employers as follows: government (n=7), hospital (n=3), university (n=2), and private companies (n=4). Based on the respondents' educational levels and job titles, almost all (n=15) of the participants belonged to the middle class or higher. The length of time respondents had worked when the perceived racial discrimination incident occurred were: 1 – 5 years (n=7), 6 – 10 years (n=6), and 10 years and above (n=3). Relationship at work between the respondent and the person accused of being responsible for the perceived racial discrimination incident were as follows: most (n=11) supervisor, colleagues (n=4), and someone that reports to respondent (n=1).

Data Collection

The data for this study came from participants' responses to the Qualtrics online anonymous survey. As such, Qualtrics online anonymous survey was used for data collection to conduct this qualitative study that explored the impacts of perceived workplace racial discrimination of Blacks workers. Participants consented to the informed consent document, completed participation qualifying and demographic questionnaire before being allowed to access the survey.

Although 29 Online Qualtrics survey responses were received, only a total of 16 were qualified for inclusion in the study. Thirteen (13) other cases were not included in the subsequent analysis because three (3) responses did not contain the required information regarding the

eligibility criteria (Appendix A) that must be met for inclusion for this study. Ten (10) responses were incomplete because after the participants correctly completed the demographic and participation qualifying criteria sections, they were cut off from accessing the survey. The Yeshiva University Qualtrics Platform Information Technology (IT) personnel were unable to explain what and why it happened.

The descriptive findings from the demographic questionnaire provided an important deeper understanding of the participants' age, gender, level of education, race, occupation, position, and service longevity at the time the incident occurred.

Participants' demographic data (Appendix D), as well as the 13 non-qualifying cases, were not part of the ATLAS.ti data analysis coding process.

Procedure

Qualtrics survey link was forwarded to 6 non-study participating individuals by email through Qualtrics website online survey site licensed to the Yeshiva University of New York at (Yeshiva University Information Technology Services – Portal). These 6 individuals were requested to forward the survey link to anyone that met the study criteria. Also, within the email was a participant invitation link to the Qualtrics platform which provided the participant with a consent form (Appendix B) for reading and consent.

The Qualtrics online anonymous survey consisted of (13) thirteen survey guide open-ended questions and follow-ups based on the study research questions derived from the theoretical framework of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in application to the participants' experiences with perceived workplace racial discrimination. Thus, the open-ended survey methods allowed a small sample of 16 Black employees the opportunity to provide a greater depth of their understanding about the phenomenon of their perceived workplace racism and how

they coped with the incident. Participants wrote their answers directly on to the Qualtrics online platform where their answers were automatically stored in the system. Participants' data were secured on an encrypted password-protected computer retained in a secure locked location; with access restricted to the researcher.

- The consent form provided a brief description of the purpose of the research study, which was to understand the coping mechanisms participants used to deal with stressors resulting from the participants' perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents.

The voluntary nature of participation: which was that if the participant volunteered to partake in this anonymous research project, the participant also may decide to discontinue at any time during the study by simply exiting the questionnaire and all the information participant provided will be digitally deleted. Participants are also free to skip question/s.

What was expected from participants: The informed consent statement included that if the participant volunteered to partake in the proposed research project, the participant may also be required to participate in an anonymous online Qualtrics survey, and freely answer questions about the participant's experience with the workplace racial discrimination incident as well as the coping strategies employed.

Also, the participant's voluntary participation required the participant's understanding that the Qualtrics software will store the participant's survey data for retrieval and analysis later.

Finally, no risk was expected from participant's participation because not only that this study was anonymous and the researcher would not have access to your identity; but also, all participants' electronic data would be safe guided under lock and key of my filing cabinet and those stored in working computer/portable hard drives will be password protected.

All completed surveys were saved, recorded, and automatically secured on the Qualtrics software program. The stored study survey data as well as the basic demographics (e.g., age and gender) of the participants were then exported from Qualtrics program to ATLAS.ti 9.0 qualitative data analysis software for analysis.

Data Analysis

The analysis of this study data is important because it may lead to a better understanding of Black workers' stress and coping strategies in racially high stakes workplace environments that may provide crucial insight into the enhancement of Blacks and minority worker's overall well-being. Data collection and analysis for this study occurred simultaneously, and analysis commenced with the receipt of the first Qualtrics online survey response. Data analysis commenced with the exportation of participants' responses from the confidential Qualtrics online survey to ATLAS.ti 9.0 Qualitative Data Analysis Software. The data were uploaded in ATLAS.ti as 'Primary Documents' (P-Docs) and saved as a 'Bundle File' for this research project. Each participant was assigned an ID code: Participant 1 or P-1, P-2, P-3 … etc. in order of Qualtrics survey receipts.

At the second stage of analysis, each survey response was read and meticulously re-read to get a sense of the whole. Multiple reading of the data resulted in two open or In-vivo codes or highlighting participants' text data quotations reflecting research question 1 (primary appraisal) or the extent to which participants perceived a workplace racial discrimination incident as stressful: "threat, challenge, harm/loss or irrelevant" (i.e., types of perceived risk) in relation to Lazarus and Folkman, (1984) theoretical framework. Utilizing the in vivo coding method, significant words

and phrases were highlighted and coded. The in vivo codes provided descriptions for the category and eventual theme development (Saldana, 2012).

During the third stage of ATLAS.ti analyses, similar codes from the second stage were pulled together to develop categories that provided a more comprehensive understanding of the data. At this stage, the participants' data transcripts, the review of literature, and the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical framework were connected and relationships between the categories were determined. At the final fourth stage of ATLAS.ti analysis, themes emerged to create the meanings that were compared across and within the research questions to provide support to the research questions.

Throughout the ATLAS.ti coding process, what stress meant to each participant was identified as well as the issues, similarities, and differences that emerged from the participants' narratives. This process enabled understanding the incident from each participant's perspective through the application of the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) 'primary appraisal' theoretical framework for the understanding of the participants' stress appraisal of their perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. Also, codes were used to sort out the coping strategies based on the concepts of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) 'secondary appraisal' or the 'problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies.' As such, open coding commenced by assigning codes to keywords from the participant's responses as they were read. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) served as a guide for data theme coding. The theory of stress, appraisal, and coping is a broad framework for the study of how humans understand stress through their thoughts, interpretations, and experiences (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Cognitive appraisal is how humans interpret or understand demands, strains, or threats to their wellbeing.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESULTS

This chapter discusses the results of the data analysis of this study. First, the chapter briefly describes the demographics of the sample. The next section of this chapter presents the results of the research in the order of the research questions (RQ) noting consistency or inconsistency with prior research findings.

The participants (see Appendix D for a summary of participants' profile) in this study were 16 Black retired and current workers at the time of this survey, who experienced perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. The sample overwhelmingly consisted of women (13) and a minority (3) of men. Most (n=13) of the respondents were 50 years and older and 13 out of 16 had graduate/professional degrees. Respondents reported employers included the government, healthcare, private companies, and the university.

Data collected from the online Qualtrics anonymous survey addressed all four study research questions framed with concepts from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework. The four research questions that guided this study are:

- RQ1: What assessment strategies do Black employees use to navigate, negotiate, minimize, or deal with perceived racial discrimination encounters?

- RQ2: What coping strategies do Blacks utilize to buffer perceived workplace racial discrimination?

- RQ3: Do Black employees use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in dealing with most stressful perceived workplace racisms?

- RQ4: Are there demographic differences in responses to perceived discrimination in the workplace?

The survey question: "what happened?" pertained to RQ1 that encouraged participants to appraise a "perceived racial discrimination" incident that stood out in their experience as a threat, challenge, or loss. Participants' responses to the "what happened" question yielded the following theme categories:

1. Stress was a denial of 'well-deserved promotion,' 'training,' 'pay raise' and advancement.

2. Stress was debased educational achievement, under-utilized, underrated, and doubtful of ability to perform tasks.

3. Stress was being harassed:

   i. Treated differently from White peers,

   ii. Use of derogatory racial slurs,

   iii. "Unsure" of how to deal with the situation,"

   iv. Being ignored, and

   v. Being asked to apologize or face disciplinary action of assignment change *(demotion)*.

4. Stress was being forced to leave the organization prematurely.

Also, data analysis explored participants' survey responses in terms of similarities, dissimilarities, emerging themes, saturation, and unforeseen responses. Creswell (2013) stated that qualitative research allows for the collection of data to be analyzed for themes and perspectives of the participants.

However, the majority of the responses (similarities, dissimilarities, and unforeseen) reported by the respondents pertained to RQ2, regarding how the participants coped with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. Participants discussed a variety of problem-focused, emotion-focused and a combination - (i.e., problem-focused, and emotion-focused)

107

coping strategies. The use of both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies in combination pertained to RQ3: Do Black employees use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in dealing with most stressful perceived workplace racisms, generated the fewest respondents' responses.

Through the ATLAS.ti software analysis of the data, four (4) themes emerged that addressed Research Question 1, five (5) themes were revealed that addressed Research Question 2, and Two (2) themes were revealed that addressed Research Question 3. The demographic data was not part of the coding process but was used to better understand the demographic characteristics of the participants which pertained to RQ 4.

<div align="center">

Research Question 1

</div>

Perception of Racial Discrimination at Workplace – (Primary Appraisal)

Participant narratives clustered into the following four themes: Theme 1: Denial of Promotion, Theme 2: Underrated Education and Abilities, Theme 3: Feeling Ignored or Harassed, Theme 4: Leaving the organization prematurely. Each theme will be discussed in turn.

Theme 1

Denials of promotion (pay raise, training, and lack of advancement) pertain to RQ 1 regarding how some participants described the perception of stress in respective workplace racial environments. Data demonstrated that participants' 'perceived lack of promotions (upward mobility) pay raise and training denials relative to their White counterparts as a source of stress to them.

The following participants gave examples of overt perceived racial discrimination that defined their experiences in the workplace, where they were denied upward mobility despite their high-level positions and performance when their White peers (with same qualification and

experience) were not denied. Half (n=8) of the participants described their perceived experiences

that the literature reviews (e.g., Brief et al., 1997; Cocchiare, 2009; US BLS, 2013) support as

being universal to most Blacks: being denied well-deserved promotions/positions knowing that

one is more than qualified to perform the job. Below are some participants' statements that

reflected similarities in their narratives:

Promotion/Advancement Denials

Jones (1986) found that Blacks reported that they have been passed over for promotions

in favor of Whites and were often not rewarded for their works. Data from this study supported

Jones (1986) as demonstrated by 5 out of 16 participants who had similar promotion denial

experiences. P-1 gave an example of perceived overt racism which defined his job experience

where he was denied a promotion despite high test scores. He claimed that he was "constantly

by-passed for promotion even after scoring higher in the examination than people that were

promoted ..." "I felt sad at times about it. But I decided also to deal with it because I have a

family to take care of." However, P-2 who had trouble dealing with his promotion denial stated

that when he failed to get a well-deserved promotion, that "made me hate my job." P-10 stated

that: "Supervisor refused to allow me to gain a promotion ...," while P-21 claimed she was

"passed over for the promotion of Clinical Manager." However, for P-17, upward mobility

denial involved strategic re-assignment of her job responsibilities "to stagnate personal growth."

Training and Pay Raise Denials

Some of the respondents' experiences about training and pay increase denials reflected

the ongoing difficulties Blacks historically have faced in maintaining meaningful employment,

regardless of preparation or prior skill attainment. In this case, the respondents' inability to

obtain gainful on-the-job training as offered to White peers only added to the stress of not only

having to maintain employment but also to provide for the family. For instance, P-5 stated being denied a pay raise because she was "deemed not a team player." P-14 stated the denial of on-the-job training experience this way,

> I was denied training when other white males and females were not denied. When I inquired about the reason for denial, I was told that my position was at a senior level, and I didn't need training. Interesting, other colleagues at my level were afforded the same training I requested.

From the participants' perspectives, it was not only on-the-job training exclusion; it also included exclusion from departmental meetings. This was the case with P-21 who stated: she "wasn't included in important meetings and decision-making pertaining to area of supervision efforts." These experiences of training and wage increase denials represented additional stresses on the participants being forced to choose between keeping the job they 'hate' according to P-2, and the responsibility of providing for their families they loved, P-1.

Theme 2: Underrated Education and Abilities

Black workers' skills are more likely to be underutilized, less likely than white workers to be employed in a job that is consistent with their level of education, more likely to be underemployed (BLS, 2016), their skills are underutilized (Abel & Dietz, 2016). This pattern has been persistent for more than 40 years nationwide (William & Wilson, 2019).

Findings by these authors were supported by this study where 8 out of the 16 participants described how their educational achievements and job performance abilities were defined, downgraded, and marginalized by perceived workplace racial discrimination. P-1, a government Senior Compliance Officer recounted his experience of being downgraded and marginalized

when he stated: "I was constantly made to prove that I can do the job" even after he scored high in an internal departmental promotional examination.

Misrepresentations of Job Titles

Both P-4 and P-8 experienced underrated education and abilities in form of misrepresentations of job titles by fellow workers based on face value assessment of being Blacks. P-4 described her experience in detail as follows:

> While sitting at my desk which had the name plate with my name and title on it which was the same as my ID badge, three interns entered. They looked at me then looked at the white student nurse who was standing about three feet away. They then proceeded to ask her a question. Her reply was why ask her when the head nurse was right there and that she had only worked there two weeks. One of them then slowly approached me and asked me a question. I referred him back to the white nurse whom he assumed was more knowledgeable.

Similarly, P-8 an Ivy League graduate and a government Deputy Commissioner reported that his "coworkers misrepresented his job title "as more suited to someone white" and his coworkers who were not aware of "my credentials often wondered about my placement. Blacks, like me, were impressed. Whites were more intimidated."

You Don't Deserve It

P-14   "Briefly mentioned how her supervisor, Paul, and a White male frequently mentioned her educational degree (MBA at the time) in a condescending manner "as though I don't deserve it." P-21 wrote that she "didn't get approval for continuing education compared to white counterparts ... nor were her accomplishments acknowledged in evaluations."

Unbearable Work Environment

P-13 stated that "The federal agency (NRC) had not hired a minority attorney in more than 10 years prior to being employed there. However, once hired, he stated that: "the attorney assigned to help me did everything possible to make my job difficult and attacked my work from the beginning. She eventually got the supervisor to recommend firing me from the government. I agreed to resign …"

The experiences of half (n=8) of the participants who complained of workplace underrated education and abilities treatments shared the feeling of being disrespected and treated less favorably, based on their race, and were directly and indirectly disrespected and underestimated by the persons accused. P-18 summarized how pervasive these experiences have been for her and other Blacks,

I was the Clinical Nutrition Manager in my hospital. My Regional Clinical Nutrition Supervisor asked me to coordinate with the hospital and New York City Health & Hospital Corporation (NYC HHC) Food Service Administrators from Manhattan. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the benefits of "CBORD," which is a Nutrition Software so that it can be rolled out to all the eleven HHC Hospitals. At this time, I was the person responsible for its programming in my hospital and I have worked with the IT department to implement Diet Order Interface which no other HHC hospital has implemented. On the day of this meeting, I worked with the IT department to ensure that everything was set up for this meeting. When my Regional Manager arrived, she came with one of my colleagues who is also a Clinical Nutrition Manager like me. Of Course, both were White females. My Supervisor told me, "Helen, you do not need to come to this meeting just stay in your office." Two of them left for this meeting and none of them

know CBORD programming. When she told me this I was so hurt after setting up all the meetings and prepared for the presentation to the benefit of the CBORD System. I was so hurt that I went to the lady's locker room to cry.

This means that P-18's Supervisor "preferred and chose unqualified White peer overqualified Black Clinical Nutrition manager" Brief et al. (1997). According to the concept of Black workers being underutilized and treated differently in the workplace, Black workers' skills are more likely to be underutilized in the workplace, and more likely to be "underemployed" (Abel & Dietz, 2016).

Theme 3: Harassment and Stress

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reported that in the fiscal year 2015, nearly one-third of the approximately 90,000 complaints that were filed with the commission involved workplace harassment. Respondents who reported workplace harassment claimed they suffered severe and pervasive unwanted behaviors from their accused individuals based on their Black racial trait. Respondents reported such offensive conducts that not only interfered with their abilities to perform their duties, but also, they were forced to endure the stresses resulting from those conducts to maintain their employments. The following were the types of offensive conducts directed to some of the participants by the accused individuals:

1. Treated differently from White peers

2. Use of derogatory racial slurs

3. Unsure of how to deal with the situation

4. Ignored and

5. Being asked to apologize or face disciplinary action

On the job harassment of Blacks, no doubt according to Brunsma et al. (2003), entails significant psychological, economic, and social costs that impede job performance. The fact that the majority (n=10) of the respondents were harassed represented that they faced greater isolation as well as employer retaliation, (e.g., negative evaluations, job description change and disparate workloads assignments, training denials, left out of meetings, etc.). Some of these respondents reported extremely humiliating racial slurs hauled at them, and these respondents claimed that harassment was intricately woven and was used to frustrate and intimidate them. These participants personally experienced verbal or personal insults. Their comments were not only telling, but also pointed to the subtle nature of perceived discriminatory acts that occurred outside the realm of blatant behavior by the accused persons.

Treated Differently from White Peers

P-1, a 61-year-old male government Senior Compliance Officer offered the following comment which defined how his supervisor treated him differently from his White peers: "I filed the complaint because I wanted the supervisors to treat me the same as others *(Whites)* and I was always made to prepare and teach others on difficult cases." Also, "Difficult cases were assigned to me." Altogether, 10 out of 16 participants reported harassment, 9 were females, and one a male. Also, these respondents expressed the insensitivity displayed by their accused individuals, who probably were not even aware of the humiliation they conveyed with their insults and racial slurs.

Use of Derogatory Racial Slurs

P-10 stated, "The supervisor was also overheard making disparaging comments about black women and leadership." P-11 had a similar experience when she stated that the

"Supervisor would use little discriminatory words about Caribbean people. Such as, she doesn't understand how they speak, they are aggressive, their educational background and standards are lower than the US." P-11 felt humiliated because she continued to write that such treatment was "Unacceptable and does not belong in the work environment for any reason. HR needs to do more on education with workplace racial discrimination; how not to treat staff that way is a role HR should play in such cases." P-5 also reported that "This supervisor and others like her felt they were in their right to discriminate and belittle others who they did not believe belonged in the same room as them. People are often more ignorant than racist. Ignorant of history and other people's life experiences. People are often unaware of their racism and its impact on others' lives."

Unsure of How to Deal with the Situation

P-12 was 24 years old and just out of college when she had a similar workplace racial slur experience. At that time, she was just new on the job and as such, she reported that she was "unsure of how to deal with the situation." She wrote,

> During my shift, it was reported that a patient left the Unit without the knowledge of the
> Staff. During a meeting on the Unit with the Charge Nurse to discuss the issue, the
> patient that left was African American and the Charge-Nurse began to discuss how she
> felt uncomfortable around African Americans and it was best the patient left. She also
> used racial slurs that were not appropriate. The Unit only had three Blacks working with
> a staff of 20 Nurses.

P-14 reported that when her boss, (Paul) called, she told him how close they were to securing a business contract account with her native government of Trinidad, "His response was, I always saw you as my dog. You bring us just what we want."

Being Ignored

P-19 briefly described how her 'accused person' (*responsible for the perceived racist incident*) who worked in the same office with her developed a dislike for her to the point that "She did not answer me every day when I said good morning." P-19 said that despite this 'attitude,' she continued to greet her accused person, but always on edge and prayed her accused person does not ruin her day. P-21 reported that she was constantly ignored and "…wasn't included in important meetings and decision-making pertaining to an area of supervision."

Being Asked to Apologize or Face Disciplinary Action (Demotion)

P-15 described how she was demoted with a sudden change in her job title simply because she refused to apologize to a White peer as demanded by her Supervisor. P-15 wrote,

> In a meeting, I provided feedback to the White woman in the group regarding White privilege, and her position of assuming she could speak for the Black individuals in the room, and she cried. Our supervisor indicated I could apologize or be disciplined. My position was changed (demoted).

Stigma refers to negative views or stereotypes attributed to a person or groups of people when their characteristics or behaviors are viewed as inferior to societal or workplace norms (Von Hippel et al., 2015). The common sentiment that the participants expressed was that of subtle indifference or perceived blatant discriminatory acts.

Theme 4: Stress was Being Forced Out Prematurely

Some participants gave accounts of the loss of hopes and dreams, as well as the insensitivity displayed by the accused persons, who may not even be aware of the humiliations that they conveyed in their comments. P-13's experience appeared stressful for a government General

Counsel to have been pushed to resign her position prematurely. P-13 and P-20 were let go from their jobs during economic recessionary periods and as such P-13 was unemployed for the next five years, while P-20, an Assistant College Professor resorted to (a temporary) 'Uber driving to make ends meet." According to P-20, "after years of excellent student and faculty evaluations, I was let go after the COVID-19 hit ... I am currently an Uber driver while I wait for something better." However, P-13 and P-20 were not alone because other participants took the same route by leaving their employments prematurely due to stressful work environments as demonstrated by the following participants: P-13 passionately described how she was surrounded by 'institutional racism' not only at the workplace but also in her neighborhood. She described a perceived workplace racial discrimination experience that incorporated not only feelings of powerlessness, shame, and confusion that led to not only to her regrettable premature resignation and development of a negative work attitude but also the anguish experienced from having lived in a predominately poor Black neighborhood right next to a predominately affluent White area, that she could never be allowed to buy a house even if she had the money to do so. Thus, she implied that her racial discrimination experience extended beyond her workplace. She described that her premature resignation and associated five-year unemployment greatly harmed her self-esteem and felt "beaten down." The following was how P-13 detailed her premature resignation experience,

> The attorney assigned to help me did everything possible to make my job difficult and
> attacked my work from the beginning. She eventually got the supervisor to recommend
> firing me from the government. I agreed to resign and that is what I did.

However, other respondents who claimed to have been prematurely forced out of their jobs could not afford to resign on the spot like P-13 because of family and other financial responsibilities.

Instead, they individually scheduled suitable times for them to leave their employments. For instance, P-13 was forced to resign on the spot before getting fired. However, P-1 stated that he finally left his job after he was "constantly by-passed for promotion even after scoring higher in the exam than people that were promoted …" and even though that did not affect his attitude toward work, unlike P-13 who developed resentment about his work. P-1 claimed that the treatment of being constantly bypassed for promotions made him "to seek alternative work." P-1 stated: "I didn't remain. After a while, I took a different line of work." P-12 on the other hand decided to leave her employment in the Northeast of the United States of America and moved to West Coast, California that she described had "a no-tolerance policy on workplace racial discrimination…" I am currently not at that hospital any longer." For P-14, the right time to quit employment due to racial discrimination took as long as six years. P-14 stated: "I stayed for another 6 years at that workplace. I waited for what I considered to be the "right time to move on." These participants perceived potentially stressful workplace racial discrimination incidents differently, and therefore, their degrees of anxieties were relative to their perceptions of encounters as stressful or not (Folkman et al., 1986). Also, of particular interest was the stress these participants went through from the on-the-spot P-13 resignation and five years of unemployment, bruised self-esteem, and beaten-down feeling, through the six years "right time" it took P-14 to leave employment and "moved on."

RQ2: **What Coping Strategies do Blacks Utilize to Buffer Perceived Workplace Racial Discrimination?**

For RQ 2, participants utilized a variety of strategies to cope with stress from their perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. This included: (a) problem-focused coping

strategy, (b) emotion-focused coping strategy, and (c) a combination of both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Outlaw, 1993). Each of the coping strategies utilized by respondents is discussed below.

Problem-Focused Coping strategy

The strategies participants used to cope with perceived workplace racial discrimination included problem-focused strategies in situations they perceived as resolvable and controllable. However, when the incident was perceived as being un-resolvable or uncontrollable through direct action, participants engaged in emotion-focused strategies to manage their emotional reaction to the stressor.

This study data revealed that a few participants coped effectively with a couple of 'new' strategies: (possession of advance degrees and high rate of productivity – explained below on Theme **5:** Possession of Ivy League Graduate/Professional Degrees and Confidence in a high rate of productivity) not incorporated in the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical framework. The following 5 problem-focused coping strategy theme categories utilized by participants emerged from the data:

1. Confrontation of the perceived cause of the incident: Educate oppressor, Call out racism.

2. Maintaining personal integrity: Refusal to back-down/ Stand your ground, refusal to be disrespected, Job not viewed as a career, but as a means to an end.

3. Support Seeking: (filed complaint - EEOC, Union, CEO/Supervisor).

4. Proud of racial identity and profession.

5. Possession of Ivy League Graduate/Professional Degrees and Confidence in a high rate of productivity.

Theme 1 - Categories: Confrontation of the Perceived Cause of the Incident:

Educate Oppressor, Call Out Racism

Some respondents utilized problem-focused coping strategies (e.g., educate oppressor, call out racism, etc.) to directly confront perceived discrimination by seeking immediate redress of grievances, being assertive, and using cognitive strategies to cope with the perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. The following comments from some respondents demonstrated their utilization of the self-advocacy strategy, which is an active, confrontational problem-focused coping strategy, where a person takes direct and sometimes aggressive action to change a situation. This strategy may be associated with some degree of risk-taking. Some respondents utilized active and confrontive coping during their perceived workplace racial discrimination encounters that they considered unfair or unjust.

This study data revealed that older participants and those with more service longevity coped with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents with confrontation. For instance, P-15, a 73-year-old female government Event Coordinator seemed to have had enough with putting up with perceived workplace racism when she stated:

> I was not going to do this" (continuing putting up with workplace racism), "I believe that all too often we as black people back down from confronting overt and covert systematic racism in our work environments. I was not going to do this.

Certain Unacceptable Behaviors

P-5 took control of her 8% salary increase denial and a "non-team-player" label situation and demanded better treatment by educating her supervisor as well as calling out racism when she stated, "… most important, the supervisor involved knew how I felt…" "By letting the

supervisor know that there were certain behaviors I would not accept from her; she changed her behavior towards me."

Theme 2 - Categories: Maintaining Personal Integrity: Refusal to Back Down/Stand Your Ground and Refusal to be Disrespected

Personal integrity, self-worth, and respect were important to some of the participants. P-5 refused an 8% salary increase to maintain something far more important to her, "respect of self" - her integrity. She along with some other participants stood their ground and dealt directly with the perceived racial discrimination incidents. For instance, P-5 stated:

I Did Not Allow Her to Disrespect Me as She Did My Other Colleagues

To avoid being disrespected, P-5 distanced herself from her accused person, did an excellent job, and gave up the pursuit of an 8% salary increase. P-5 stated, "The job was no longer personal; how I performed my tasks was personal and part of my integrity."   P-5 further stated,

> I know I did good work and deserved the raise but my sense of self and who I am was
> more important than money. It got to the point she told one of my co-workers that she
> needed to deal with her the way I did--I made her my equal and she knew she could not
> speak to me in any manner whatsoever…and I still had not received the 8% raise; I did
> not ask for it again, because my self-respect and her attitude towards me was worth more
> than 8%. I did nothing to impress her as I wasn't trying to get or want her acceptance.
> Respect of self and work were far more important to me.

However, some participants preferred giving up an 8% pay raise and acceptance of a demotion "(assignment change)" for the sake of maintaining 'respect of self'. Both P-5 and P-15 stood their ground in calling out racism at their workplaces and demanded 'respect of self.' P-15

refused to offer an apology her supervisor demanded a white woman she provided feedback to

the question of white privilege during a departmental meeting. P-15 stated,

"I did not apologize and started working for a different supervisor I took this position as a part-

timer after working for 45 years in corporate America."

Job was no Longer Personal

To maintain self-respect. P-5 had to reappraise the meaning of her job and the following

comments reflect her understanding of what work means to her given the perceived racial

discrimination atmosphere in her organization P-5 stated,

> I stayed on the job and recognized that I was hired to perform a task. When I performed
>
> the task, I was paid. When I was paid, I performed the task. I did not see my job as a
>
> 'career' to move up the ladder.

Institutional/Structural Racism

However, P-5 agreed with P-13 who claimed to have been surrounded both at work and

her neighborhood by institutional racism, P-5 agreed with P-13's assessment of perceived

institutional/structural racism because P-5 stated: "institutional or structural racism is so intrinsic

in the American fiber that often times, people don't even realize they are being discriminatory."

Hate Being Devalued

Highlighting her perspective about perceived institutional/structured racism, P-5 also

remarked about the treatment of not only being devalued as a human being, but more importantly

being expected to 'stupidly' accept whatever insults that were "dished out" to her without

showing any feelings, objections, and concerns. The following comment below represented P-5's

thoughts in this regard,

I hate when someone is trying to make me less than who I am. I am not supposed to be a

bold, confident human being; I am supposed to be submissive and am told I am being

over-reactive or too sensitive as if I am supposed to just take it all in stride as if I have no

feeling as if I am stupid and don't know just accept what is being dished out. I am not

supposed to be angry; I am supposed to swallow it and not respond.

I Think My Approach was Perfect

There were feelings of satisfaction among those respondents who called out racism and

stood their grounds for 'respect of self' and refusal to be disrespected, devalued, and or treated

differently. These participants experienced perceived workplace racial discrimination-related

stress because of their race, black skin color, and preconceptions about who they were without

personal knowledge of their character. These participants stood up against such subtle or blatant

perceived racial discriminatory acts (e.g., bias, being devalued and not taken seriously based on

racial identity). As such, P-4 was proud when she said: "I handled it professionally" (i.e., on the

incident some people assumed white student nurse was more knowledgeable than I, the Chief

Nurse). Insisting on the disrespect of being devalued because of her skin color instead of her

badge or name/position sign on her desk, she "told them to go to their senior (Whom I worked

with for at least five years) and explain to him why they decided that this Black Nurse was

unable to respond knowledgeably about a patient in her care."

P-4 derived satisfaction from standing her ground by "spelling it out to them" that she

had zero tolerance for disrespect and devaluation of persons based on skin color when she stated:

"I think my approach was perfect. They came back with their senior who made them apologize

in front of all the staff and he then proceeded to introduce me and my area of expertise. He also

apologized himself to the white nurse who was upset at the fact that she thought she was in charge."

Theme 3 – Categories: Support Seeking

Filed Complaints

Four (4 out of 16) participants utilized confrontative support seeking from a third party (e.g., filing complaints) for coping with stress and to protest the perceived racial discrimination treatments they experienced at their workplaces. Complaint filing among Blacks is considered exceedingly rare and risky because of powerful employer retaliation. Among those respondents who filed some sort of formal comp1aints, only one, P-13, a former company and government attorney by profession, who also hired an attorney received compensation after which she remained jobless for the next five years. P-13 stated, "I filed an EEOC and a Whistle Blower action against my former employer. We ended up in settling the matter …." She was very distrustful of her Human Resources when she said,

> I did not report harassment to HR because as a company attorney and a government
>
> attorney I learned very quickly HR is primarily there to insulate the company, not to help
>
> me. I saw what happened to people who reported discrimination to HR - career
>
> sidelined.

However, nothing ever came out of the other four participants that filed various complaints than further made "unbearable" work environments for themselves instead. For instance, P-11 who claimed to have filed a complaint without specifying the agency she filed the complaint to said: "It (complaint) was not successful; it affected the atmosphere in the work environment." Also, P-2 who filed a complaint with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) had nothing to show for it because she stated, "I complained to the CEO and asked him to correct the

injustice, it didn't work at all. My boss didn't do anything about it." P-20 said his Union; the Professional Staff Congress was "challenging the layoff." Finally, P-1 filed a complaint with his Workers' Union because he just wanted to be treated like his white peers. He remarked that the Union investigated his complaint that led the supervisors to cease assigning difficult cases and teaching classes.

Theme 4 – Categories: Proud of Racial Identity and Profession

Racial identity has been a protective factor for Blacks. Research (e.g., Umana-Taylor (2014), consistently demonstrates that racial identity plays an important role in the lives of Blacks. The literature suggests that racial identity soothes the effects of discrimination and racism, leading to improved psychological wellbeing. Having a strong sense of racial identity is related to the problem-focused strategy where these participants felt that their perceived workplace racism experiences had made them more independent and bolder to be proud of whom they are for problem resolutions. Some of the participants stressed the importance of standing up for themselves, and not letting others define who they were. They were willing to stand up for whom they were and did not let anybody take that from them, regardless of the risk of getting fired. These participants echoed this belief by standing on their own feet and be the best they could ever be.

Strong Sense of Racial Identity

Four (4 out of 16) participants revealed that pride in racial identity influenced their coping behaviors.

Did not Want to Compromise Integrity or Made Less Than Who I am

P-5 saw the situation as a challenge (that resulted in a positive outcome for her) and as such, she stated: "I did not allow myself to be bitter but used it as teaching moments …" As

such, she grew with the situation and was proud in her ability to overcome stress by forfeiting the pursuit of an 8% salary raise that might have compromised her "integrity or made me be less than who I am." Also, P-15 refused to compromise her integrity and racial identity. She stood her ground, refused to apologize to a White peer at the orders of her supervisor. She preferred a demotion instead of being made less of whom she was by "apologizing."

My Attitude was Never Altered

Despite all the bitter experiences respondents went through at their workplaces most (n=11) like P-17 who reported she was proud to document that she never allowed those experiences to change her attitudes toward work. She stated, "

> I loved my profession and giving care to those under my care was never altered. I maintained my excellent standards/ performance and professionalism. I continued to always strive for excellence; go the extra mile; make recommendations; volunteer to assist where and whenever necessary. My attitude (towards work) was never altered.

Theme 5: Possession of Ivy League Graduate/Professional Degrees and Confidence in High Rate of Productivity

This study data revealed that (6 out of 16) respondents identified and utilized a couple of "effective" problem-focused coping strategies not included in the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) that formed the theoretical framework for this study. These participants implied that their possession of '(Ivy League) and/or graduate degrees' and 'higher rate of on-the-job productivity (performance)' were not only so effective in buffering perceived workplace racial discrimination, but also made them not develop negative work attitudes or behaviors. These coping strategies were Possession of High Educational Credentials and High Rate of Productivity.

Confidence in Higher Educational Credentials

P-8 was surprised to notice how his graduate Ivy League diploma buffered the stress

from his perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. It worked so well that he wrote:

"once the 'Ivy League' connection was bandied, my stock rose . . . significantly" to the point that

the prevailing suggestion (from colleagues) was to hang my diploma over my desk."

Higher Rate of Productivity

P-8 was coping greatly from workplace racism with the possession of high Ivy League

educational credentials that he stated, "my attitude about work was in place, now, productivity

was the strategy… more often than not, productivity, style, and substance were quite effective as

a coping mechanism" to the point that he was frequently told that he was "not a typical black"

because they could "not imagine that a young black man could be functional at that level." His

high rate of productivity also reflected on his performance evaluations as he stated: "my

evaluations suggested that my productivity ignored the slings and arrows of outrageous

coworkers."

Also, P-5 was a 65-year-old female (Ivy League) graduate student and a government

Management Analyst who like P-8 took pride and confidence in her high rate of on-the-job

productivity as a suitable coping strategy when she stated, "I know I did good work and deserved

the raise …" She reported that her high productivity coping strategy was "very successful as

colleagues asked me how to handle similar situations in which they found themselves." Also,

like P-8, she remarked: "I did very good work and excellent on my evaluations."

Advocated for Colleagues

P-5's high rate of productivity coping strategy was so effective that she became an

advocate for her colleagues who found themselves in the same perceived workplace racial

127

discrimination situations but had little or no coping strategies to deal with their situations. She wrote: "Yes. I became a mentor to folks in the workplace; folks who wanted advice on how to cope with these things" (perceived workplace racism).

Offered Coping Strategy Recommendations to Colleagues

"I told them to document everything…" (P-21 also indicated the importance of documentations in dealing with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents). P-5 in emphasizing the need for an effective high-productivity coping strategy instructed her colleague mentees to "Take ownership of their work…. I also told them to choose the battles they wish to fight… and I have encouraged my co-workers to empower themselves."

I Only Changed My Behavior

For P-5, choosing her "battles" made her work life easier to manage because that enabled her to be "in charge of me" (in-control) in the workplace. P-5 stated,

> My work was always good and stayed good, so the quality of my work was not affected. I changed my behavior and once you change your behavior, you see things very clearly. It is not what folks do but your response to what they do will make a difference.

These respondents wanted to be judged and rated by their steadfastness in their 'Protestant Work Ethics' of steady hard work without allowing their perceived workplace racial discrimination situations to affect productivity.

Best Performance or Leave

P-17 also maintained her steadfastness in hard work despite her experience. She wrote,

> I maintained my personal/ professional standards, and if I cannot give my best performance then it was time to leave. My belief is that my performance reflects who I

am" and as such, my strategy was successful. I continued to maintain my standard (her high productivity standard). I maintained my professionalism, did my best …

Do Your Best and Maintain Consistent Work Quality

These participants also stressed the importance of doing your best at work. P-17 continued to write,

Do not allow the negative actions of others to lower your standards and/or change your opinion of other manager(s) of a different race. Always, do your best. Continue to set high standards for yourself and let the consistent quality of your work and your professionalism speak for you.

That was what P-4 also believed when she said: "I loved my profession and giving care to those under my care was never altered."

Empowered Beyond the Workplace

These participants also were empowered by utilizing a "high rate of productivity" coping strategy. P-5 reported that not only that her workplace high rate of productivity coping strategy was effective, but it also helped her cope effectively outside her workplace. She wrote: "No, I would not change anything. My decision '(high rate of productivity coping strategy)' empowered me and I remain empowered as I encountered other incidents in my life." Similarly, a high rate of productivity and professionalism for P17 got her the attention of other "officers/teams" that advocated for her and eventually earned her a promotion. P-17 stated, "the officers/teams that I supported told my supervisor's boss about my performance, reliability, and expertise. The manager of the team I supported also did the same" (i.e., gave her support).

Development of Strong Sense of Independence

Having a strong sense of independence is related to the problem-focused strategy of accepting responsibility for one's role in problem solving and resolution. These respondents felt that their experiences with perceived workplace racism made them develop an extraordinarily strong sense of independence in accepting responsibilities and the resolution of the problems. They utilized what they already possessed (education and good work ethics) that gave them a strong sense of independence that they were so confident of its effectiveness and as such, they did not depend on anyone to do anything for them. It made them feel better, independent, and confident to successfully tackle other personal responsibilities, problems, and challenges they encountered.

Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies

Emotion-focused coping strategies can be defined as the use of emotional responses to regulate stressful experiences. The utilization of emotion-focused strategies may characterize a person's attempts to minimize the psychological and emotional distress of perceived racial discrimination (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The utilization of emotion-focused strategies included distancing which may characterize a person's attempts to minimize the psychological and emotional distress of perceived racial discrimination incidents. However, many other participants were not so lucky despite their hard work and "professionalism" because they never got any positive recognition. The following 5 emotion-focused coping strategies theme categories emerged from the data:

1. Spirituality

2. Support from family, friends, and prior family education on the subject matter

3. Acceptance, Avoidance, Isolation, or Distancing

4. Family responsibility

5. Self-Control – Not getting others to intervene (Non-Complaint Filing)

Theme 1: Spirituality – Religious Coping

The utilization of emotion-focused religious coping (using religious faith to help maintain control in powerless situations) cannot be overlooked and was one of the most powerful and effective strategies utilized by a majority (n=6) of the participants. According to Marks, Nesteruk, Swanson, Garrison, and Davis (2005), the role of religious faith among Blacks has increasingly gained more attention in the coping literature. Since slavery, the importance of spirituality and religious faith in the Black community had played a significant role. The Church has been a solid social organization in the Black community for centuries and has remained the greatest support for most Black people. The Church provides a foundation the Blacks can stand on whether good or bad.

My strategy to Hand Over the Matter to God in Prayer

The use of religious coping cannot be overlooked and was one of the most powerful and effective strategies utilized by a majority of the participants. For instance, P-18 wrote: "My strategy to hand over the matter to God in prayer gave me peace because I knew that Christ would fight my battle." She also insisted that "by praying and handing over the matter to God, I was able to cope with this incident. I think this strategy was successful because it never affected my behavior towards my supervisor, nor did it affect my attitude towards work." Despite the perceived workplace racist treatment, P-17 stated that she continued to do her best and prayed continually. "I maintained my professionalism, did my best, and acted in accordance with biblical standards."

Do not Hate, Pray for Enemies and Go the Extra Mile

P-21 wrote that her "belief and faith helped my perseverance" to the point that she even prayed a lot over perceived discrimination at work in general and believed that strengthened her faith and helped her "survive the workforce especially racist bullies." P-19 wrote that "being a Christian, I continued to be kind" (i.e., reaching out to her offender and showed love). P-17 stated that she relied consistently on her 'spiritual' coping strategies built on the solid foundation of her religious faith, always striving for excellence, "professionalism," doing her best "volunteering, and going the extra mile." Even though P-13 filed an EEOC complaint and hired an attorney, she nevertheless believed in 'higher power' when she wrote: "I went to Mass almost every day."

Immediate Answered Prayers

These participants' convictions on the effectiveness of their faith and religion were highlighted by P-18's claim of an immediately answered prayer when she concluded that her efforts and hard work in preparing for a presentation had again gone down the drain when her White Supervisor refused to allow her to do the presentation at the last minute, but instead, replaced her with another White Clinical Manager peer. However, not so fast this time because as she stated:

> … as I was crying in the bathroom and expressing my feeling to God, then my cell phone
>
> rang, and I pick it up. I was informed to attend the meeting because no one could explain
>
> the benefit and operation of the CBORD system to HHC officers who came from
>
> Manhattan. After my presentation everyone was so impressed, the Food Service Director,
>
> my hospital administrators, even my white colleague who came with my regional
>
> supervisor came and congratulated me for a job well done…

P-17 may not have had an instant answered prayer, but she prayed about her job situations and was eventually offered a promotion as she stated: "Other non-black officers (including several Caucasian officers) recognized what was happening and made recommendations for my promotion to my supervisor's manager and I was offered the position, which I accepted." Perhaps, P-4   provided a better concluding line about the importance of faith in a higher power when she wrote: "I believe that having a Christian background and fostered self-pride and self-respect makes one strong and able to handle even the worse situations..."

Theme 2: Support from Family/Friends & Family Education on the Subject Matter

When under stressful situations, individuals may seek social support. Social support refers to a network of family, friends, and other trusted confidants that serve to offer validation to an individual by providing a sense of comfort, security, belonging, and self-worth (Harrell, 2000). In seeking social support, the individual may share feelings and thoughts, seek advice or ask for resources from others. Social support-seeking was significantly correlated with problem solving (Li & Yang, 2009) as well as the passing down of oral histories among Black families. Some Black families (including grandparents, extended relatives and other adults) in the community who understood that resistance and survival of workplace racism begins at home, played a crucial role through passing down oral histories which revealed lessons on how to navigate through racial ideologies and practices prevalent at workplaces to their children.

The Importance of Preparation to Cope with Perceived Workplace Racism

Some of the participants (n=4) referred to their family of origin as being the main source of support in their lives. These participants mentioned that because they were "drilled" on the subject matter of perceived workplace racial discrimination at home, they were better able to handle the situation when they presented themselves. Most importantly, the family member

giving the instruction never made mention of any likely offender as P-4 stated: "... one thing that stands out is that my father drilled in us that no one was better than us and we should always be proud of who we were and whatever we decided to be, to do it well and with pride because other people would always try to put you down (He never said White people)." In addition to her father's home "drill" on the subject matter of possible perceived workplace racism, P-4 lived with a daily expression as a reminder of her father's advice - "the expression was: I wake up black. At work I am black. I do great things in life for all people but when I leave my home every day the first thing seen is my Blackness." P-4 and P-12 reported that the suggestions provided by their families were not only the suggestions they use till today, but also those suggestions helped them to identify issues such as perceived racial discrimination early and addressed them in the workplace. P-12 wrote that "at the time of the incident I was a new Nurse and didn't have the experience on how to deal with this situation. I knew many of my friends and family had dealt and spoken about similar issues, that knowledge encouraged me to address issues at the time of the incident and how to report future events….," to the appropriate agencies accordingly. As such, I have not only followed these suggestions by my family and friends in addressing perceived workplace racism, but I have also used them "to successfully address issues in other areas of my life. As such, "the suggestions provided by my family have helped my overall progress in the professional and personal aspects of my life."

Theme 3: Acceptance, Avoidance, Isolation, or Distancing

The utilization of emotion-focused strategies included creating emotional distance characterized as a person's attempts to minimize the psychological and emotional distress of perceived discrimination (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Isolation strategy is characterized by distraction to keep one's mind off of a particular stressor. Isolation strategy includes strategies designed to avoid the stressor or other people. Nine (9 out of 16) participants utilized an

emotion-focused strategy of acceptance, avoidance, and distancing to buffer their perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. These 9 respondents shared the following short narratives below:

P-14 wrote: "My coping mechanism was avoidance; I had no confidence or reason to believe that the issues I faced would be resolved in my favor. My strategy of avoidance was the best resolution for me at the time. My attitude towards work changed" and she "chose not to advance the complaint of perceived workplace racial discrimination as she knew "the complexities of racism in Corporate America could not be fought singlehandedly." Some of these participants like P-4 "just listened and agreed" (remained passive), P-10 coped by distancing "stepped away from the position" (situation) or by avoidance - "play dumb," and "pretend you don't know or understand what racist people are doing and circumvent them." P-11 coped by walking away, "a majority of the times I walked away and would not engage or tolerate." P-20 fought his "battle silently most of the time" because according to P-5, they have to "choose which battle to fight…" P-18 took advice from: colleagues, who "suggested that I keep quiet which I agreed", and from her husband, who "also suggested to let it go, and by depending on her faith in God: "I knew Christ will fight my battle…" P-21 coped with acceptance: "No one cared; people didn't want to make waves or be involved." P-1 coped by keeping it a secret from his family: "I didn't let my family members know about it" (the perceived racial racism at the workplace). P-19 coped by avoidance and distancing as well as the constant and daily difficult strategy of walking the tight rope of how to strategically contact her accused individual because any missteps might ruin her day. She wrote: "we (she and her accused person) worked in the same office and sometimes it was uncomfortable speaking to her, but I prayed every time that she would not spoil my day."

135

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theorized that the coping strategy utilized is dependent on the person and the environmental situation. P-1 might have muddled through with any coping strategy that might buffer the stress as he encountered the incident/s when he wrote: "I handled it by doing the best anyone in my class can do *(including)* "doing what they asked me to do just to prove that I am equal to the task.

However, of interest here was P-1's statement: "I handled it by doing the best anyone in my class can do" without actually mentioning a strategy, which might have implied that in response to their experiences, participants engaged in a variety of coping behaviors that were appropriate given the situations they encountered, suggesting a "goodness-of-fit" regarding their coping choices. There were many situations in their experiences when direct coping efforts might have been detrimental and might have cost them their jobs, the source of family support. Therefore, they learned to develop a heightened awareness of their environments to respond accordingly as a means of survival (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

I Had to Adapt

However, all the participants' narratives pointed to adaptations with whatever racial incident that presented itself as summarized by P-21's narrative:

> Attending professional meetings was a challenge. When I became an RD
>
> (Registered Dietitian) in 1988, I was the only black Dietitian for a few years in
>
> Fayetteville, NC, and Northern NJ. Non-White Dietitians like Hispanics and
>
> Indians were few and far between and Black Dietitians were hard to come by. The
>
> profession was dominated by White females and in meetings, everyone clicked
>
> together in some form of a group, to avoid talking to that Black person. It was the
>
> same in seminars where seats were always saved for people who never showed

up. I had to adapt. Read novels and inspirational books a lot, other than lecture

materials.

These 9 participants used the 'denials' emotion-focused coping strategies to stress the

importance of not letting workplace racism bother them. They just "played dumb" and refused to

even think about it. They understood very well that if they let something like that get into their

minds, there would be consequences where their accused persons would win. P-11 said that

majority of the time, she "walked away and would not engage or tolerate."

Theme 4: Family Responsibilities

Four respondents feared getting fired from employer retaliation if they filed complaints

when they have family responsibilities. Instead, they utilized 'self-control,' an emotion-focused

strategy, described by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as efforts to regulate one's feelings and

actions.

Caught Between Choosing Job or Family

P-14 described in detail the emotional and financial trauma she and some other

participants had to wrestle with about their workplace racial discrimination encounters when she

wrote,

> I did not report this incident to Human Resources" because my supervisor's response
>
> (about the incident) was, "that's dealing with the big boys. You have to be prepared for
>
> the consequences. That comment was enough for me to know that I needed to choose
>
> between trying to win in Corporate America or my family. I was primarily concerned
>
> about losing my job and I couldn't afford to do so at that time as I had a young family. I
>
> chose to console the possible consequences. It was important to me that I was able to

retain my income to support my family. For that reason, I did not advance the complaint,

knowing that timing is everything! I needed to make decisions for the long terms and not

in haste for instant gratification in my feelings.

P-1 wrote that he felt sad at times about it *(the perceived workplace racist incident),* but also

"decided to deal with it because I have a family to take care of." P-21 wrote she was "too afraid

to lose my job when you're a single parent."

Theme 5: Self-Control: Refusal to Seek Support by Refusing to File Complaints

Most respondents (n=11) who did not file perceived workplace racial discrimination

complaints utilized (emotion-focused self-control and avoidance/denial coping strategies) to

buffer their experiences. They believed that filing complaints were not worth it. Some

believed they would never win, others feared employer retaliations (e.g., getting fired). P-4

wrote: "No, I did not" (i.e., file a complaint) because "racism is so common in this country that

going to HR would be as regular as going to work." P-5 wrote that she did not file a complaint

because: "I would not have won." P-8 stated: "nothing was ever reported. The Personnel *(i.e.,*

Human Resources, HR) did not seem to warrant the effort and I did not see the need to give the

situation more energy than it deserved." P-10 wrote, "No (i.e., did not file a complaint), because

it's a waste of time. It would have put me in danger and made the workplace unbearable." P-12

wrote that "The incident was not reported because this was my first job since out of college and

being one of few Blacks on the job, I was nervous whether my case would be taken seriously."

P-14 chose not to advance the complaint because he wrote: "I knew the complexities of racism in

Corporate America could not be fought singlehandedly... especially when she did not receive

support from her "immediate supervisor, Peter, who was a white male." P-18 refused to file a

complaint because she "did not want to draw attention to myself because my company was about 80% White and 20 % minority" and P-19 wrote: "No (i.e., not filing a complaint), just dealt with it myself." Finally, P-21 wrote: "I didn't report any of these incidents early in my career…"

In summary, emotion-focused strategies seemed to have been utilized more by most of the respondents in buffering their situations when they believed that confrontation of perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents might have been impossible or very costly (e.g., employer retaliation, attorney fees, getting fired, etc.) to challenge. Many were concerned about losing the family source of income and its consequences. In this regard, emotion-focused coping strategies utilized by most of the female participants may have protected them from harmful psychological consequences as well.

RQ3: Do Black Employees use a Combination of Both Emotion-Focused and Problem-Focused Strategies in Dealing with Most Stressful Perceived Workplace Racisms?

Folkman et al. (1986), Outlaw (1993), Lalonde et al. (1995), Plummer and Slane (1996) hypothesized that Blacks in responding to a stress-induced situation may use both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies in combination. Research also indicates that people use both types of strategies to combat most stressful events (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). The data for this study demonstrated that in some cases utilizing either problem-focused or emotion-focused strategies alone might not be enough to regulate the stress, and therefore additional coping may be required to adequately minimize, regulate the stressors.

Coping Simultaneously with Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Strategies

RQ 3 – "Do Black employees use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in dealing with most stressful perceived workplace racisms" pertains to the use

of both strategies at the same time in regulating the stress? Data revealed that the following (6

out of 16) participants utilized both strategies to regulate stress simultaneously:

P-13 challenged perceived workplace racial discrimination by utilizing a problem-focused

coping strategy of demanding better treatment and called out racism by filing an EEOC and

Whistle-blower complaints. She also hired an attorney (even though she was a lawyer herself) to

intervene on her behalf. At the same time, she utilized an emotion-focused religious strategy as

an additional layer of strength to boost the regulation of the stress when she stated: "… I also

went to Mass almost every day." P-1 also utilized the problem-focused coping strategy of

having the Union intervene on his behalf as well as demand better treatment by calling out

racism. Even after having the Union advocate for him, he also regulated stress by employing an

emotion-focused strategy of 'acceptance and self-control when he stated: "I handled it by doing

the best anyone in my class can do and doing what they asked me to do just to prove that I am

equal to the task" even though "the strategy didn't work as I expected …"

Emotion-Focused Coping Strategy of 'Acceptance' posits that acceptance is a functional

coping response, in that a person who accepts the reality of a stressful situation would seem to be

a person who is engaged in the attempt to deal with the situation (Carver et al., 1989, p. 270)."

P-14 utilized a problem-focused coping strategy of confronting racism and having her supervisor

advocate for her and later decided to accept her situation by discontinuing pursuing the

complaint when she realized the "complexities" involved. In addition to accepting her situation,

P-14 also utilized the 'avoidance' emotion-focused coping strategy to regulate stress as she

stated: "my coping mechanism was avoidance." P-17 utilized problem-focus coping strategy by

getting other people (supervisors, team leaders) to intervene and advocate on her behalf when

she wrote: "Since representation was made by the team …" Also, she utilized 'religious' emotion-focus coping strategy response when she commented that she "… prayed continually." P-20 utilized a problem-focused coping strategy by having the Union advocate on his behalf, "the Professional Staff Congress, which is our union, is challenging the layoff." At the same time, he also utilized an 'acceptance' emotion-focused coping strategy to regulate the stress when he stated: "I started looking for another job."

P-19 also utilized both the problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies to regulate stress. She utilized the 'positive belief' problem-focused coping strategy. Positive Beliefs or the "…general and specific beliefs that serve as a basis for hope and that sustain coping efforts in the face of the most adverse conditions…hope can be encouraged by the generalized belief that outcomes are controllable, that one has the power to affect such outcomes, that a particular person or program is efficacious, or by positive beliefs about justice, free will, or God (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 159). P-19 believed she had the power to affect a positive outcome when she stated: I "Continued to greet her despite her attitude" (accused person not responding whenever she greeted her). The emotion-focused coping strategy she also utilized were 'prayers, acceptance and ignoring' the incident as if it never happened. Reaching out to the accused person by continuing to greet her as she stated: "Being a Christian I continued to be kind" *(to her accused person).* Lazarus and Folkman (1984) maintain that in the emotion-focused coping strategy of 'Avoidance or Denial, the individual is, "...vulnerable to disconfirmations by evidence to the contrary and is therefore forced to narrow his or her attention to only confirmatory experiences (p.134)."

RQ 4. Are There Demographic Differences in Responses to Perceived Racial

Discrimination in the Workplace?

Participants' demographic data were not part of the ATLAS-ti data analysis. However,

even though this is an anonymous survey, the descriptive findings from the demographic

Qualtrics online survey provided an important deeper perceptive of the participants'

characteristics: age, gender, level of education, race, occupation, position, and service longevity

when the incident occurred, etc. (Appendix D), and as such, the demographic analysis of the
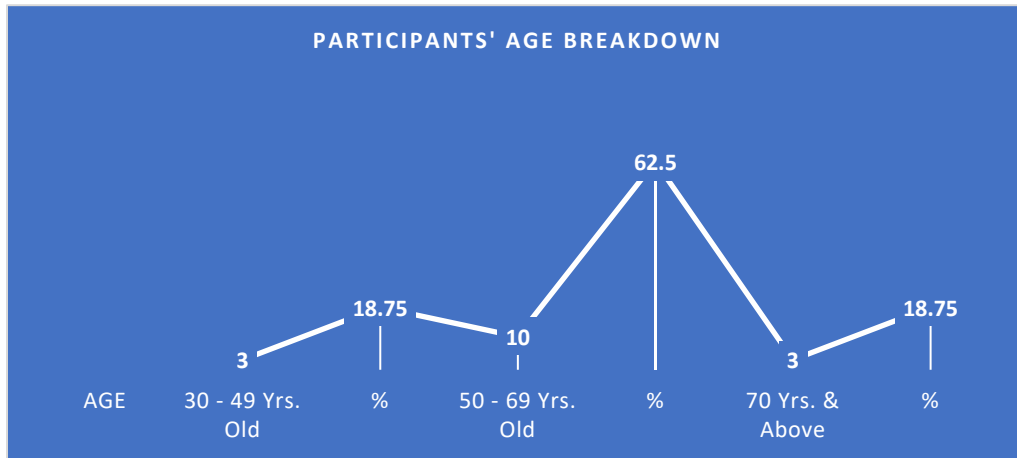
sample was discussed below.

Figure 5

Gender Breakdown of the Participants
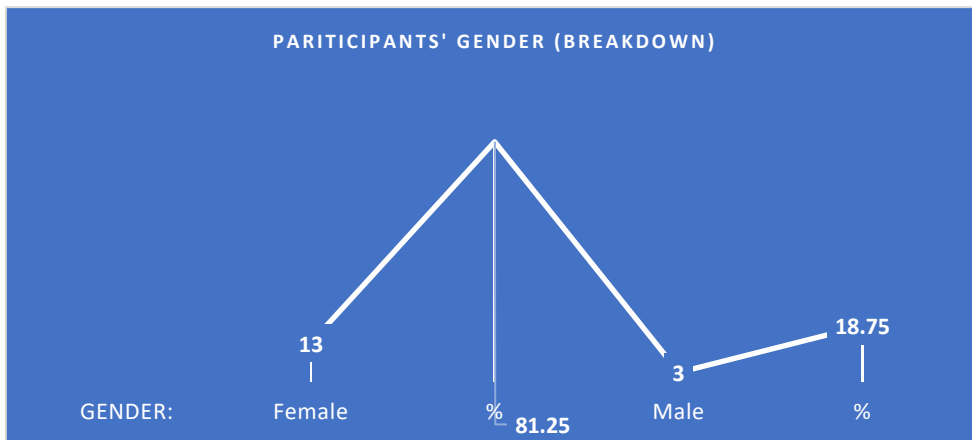
This chart revealed that the sample of 16   participants consisted predominantly of women

(n=13) and men (n=3). While the chart below indicated that the ages of the participants ranged

from 31 to 74 years old according to the following breakdown: 30 – 49 years old (n= 3), 50 - 69

years old (n = 10), and 70 – 74 years old (n = 3).
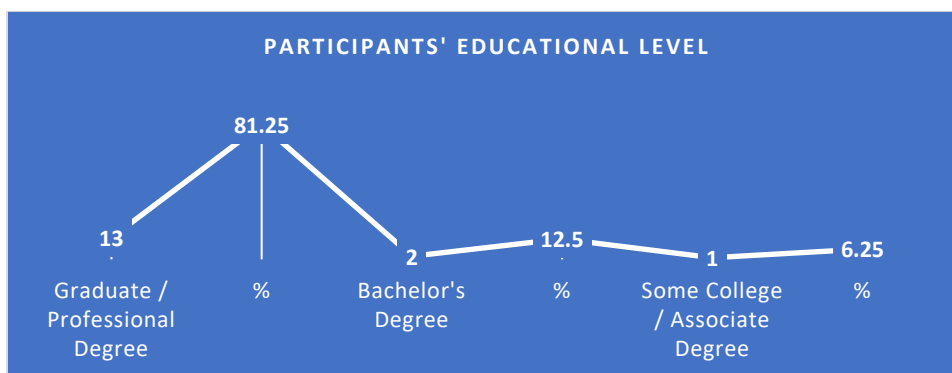
Figure 6

Participant's Age Breakdown

PARTICIPANTS' AGE BREAKDOWN

62.5

18.75   18.75
3   10   3

AGE   30 - 49 Yrs.   %   50 - 69 Yrs.   %   70 Yrs. &   %
         Old   Old   Above

Note: Most (n=10) of the respondents were between 50 to 69 years old.

It was a well-educated sample as almost (n=13) out of 16 participants reported that they had graduate/professional degrees, bachelor's degrees (n=2), and Some College/Associate degrees (n=1).

Figure 7

Participant's Educational Level

PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

81.25

13   12.5
               2   1   6.25
Graduate /   %   Bachelor's   %   Some College   %
Professional   Degree   / Associate
Degree   Degree

Given their educational levels and job titles, (15 out of 16) of the participants belong in the middle class or higher. As for how long have/had participant been at the workplace when the perceived

racial discrimination incident occurred - between 1 - 5 years (n=7); 6 - 10 years (n= 6); and more than 10 years (n=3).
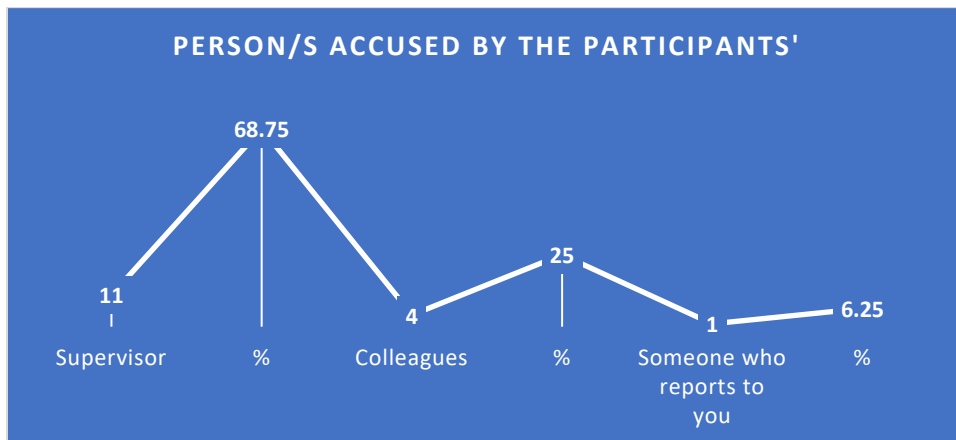
Figure 8

Number of years at Job When Perceived Discrimination Occurred
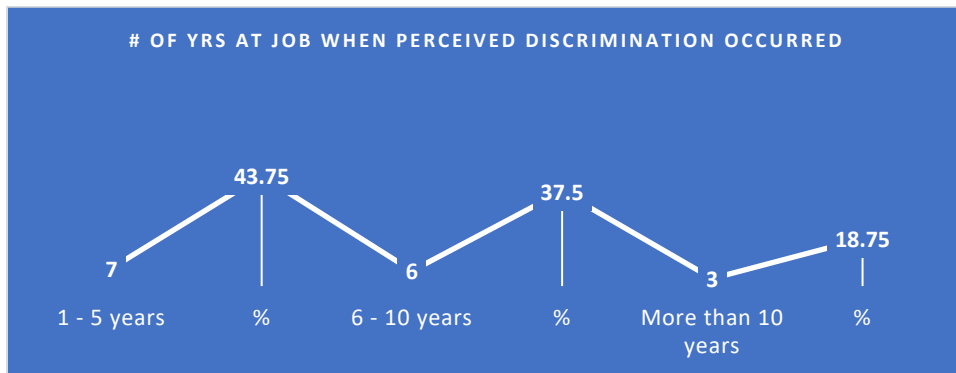
With regards to what was the participants' relationship with the person/s accused of being responsible for this incident: supervisors (n=11), colleagues (n=4), and someone who reports to the participant (n=1).

Figure 9

Person/s Accused by the Participants'

The data for this study revealed that 11 out of 16 participants accused their supervisors of being responsible for their workplace racial discrimination incidents.

Participants' Characteristics

A summary of the participants' characteristics can be found in Appendix D. However, one of the most common important characteristics of the participant was that they all experienced perceived workplace racial discrimination and discussed it very passionately. It was a highly educated sample since 13 out of 16 respondents had graduate/professional degrees and reported being highly productive at work. They shared and expressed the need to remain employed, not only for their love for work but most importantly they had responsibilities (e.g., families). Another thing the respondents shared was that stress from perceived workplace racism took a high toll on them. That level of stressful work environment might have, in some cases, contributed to some respondents' utilization of a combination of both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies simultaneously (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Respondents shared a common sense of passion (an opportunity to get their stories out there). For example, P-5's narrative might have accurately summarized the overall understanding of the participants' feelings about their perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences. P-5 stated,

Institutional or structural racism is so intrinsic in the American fiber that oftentimes, people don't even realize they are being discriminatory. I hate when someone is trying to make me less than who I am. I am not supposed to be a bold, confident human being. I am supposed to be submissive and am told I am being over-reactive or too sensitive as if I am supposed to just take it all in stride, as if I have no feeling as if I am stupid and don't

know - just accept what is being dished out. I am not supposed to be angry; I am

supposed to swallow it. … It is not until you spell it out to them that they realize they are

being discriminatory.

Another sample demographic similarity was that majority (n=12) of the respondents did not file

for perceived workplace racial discrimination complaints. Instead, they expressed total distrust in

the due process. These participants implied that it was not only a trap to file for complaints at

any level, but also the outcome (e.g., employer retaliation) could be very "unbearable."

However, even though the sample men to women ratio was 1:5, the most important difference

between male and female respondents was that females utilized emotion-focused coping

strategies (spirituality, avoidance, denials, etc.) more than the males. This present study finding

is supported by a literature review. For example, findings by Utsey et al. (2000) indicated that

Black women in coping with racial discrimination encounters favored utilizing "Avoidance

coping strategies more than problem-solving or seeking social support coping strategies."

Summary

All participants gave emotional accounts of perceived workplace overt racist experiences

that adversely affected most of them (e.g., development of hatred toward work, premature

resignations, underrated and underutilized, etc.). They all experienced perceived workplace racial

discrimination incidents that limited their economic and job growth as well as threatened their

overall wellbeing. Participants reported perceptions of either implicit or explicit stress to

conform in the workplace. Some of the respondents deliberately took steps (e.g., immediate

resignation) and utilized a combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies as

the best coping methods to reduce stress.

Lessons Learned from the Experiences

The data for this study revealed that some participants learned and benefited, from their 'awful' experiences, while others did not.

Positive Outcome from the Experience

For some respondents, success in their workplaces was measured not so much by the upward mobility, salary increase or in-service training denials, but by the continuous obstacles they were able to overcome to maintain employment and income. These participants believed and derived satisfaction on how they dealt and struggled to successfully cope with the stresses of racism hauled at them by their accused individuals. In hindsight, these respondents reported they became good with coping not only with workplace racism, but also, they successfully applied their experiences to other areas of their lives.

Accomplishments Despite Obstacles.

Some participants displayed a sense of pride in their ability to overcome their perceived workplace racial discrimination obstacles. These respondents felt satisfied and comfortable with their coping strategies. P-14 highlights these feelings when she wrote,

> This incident forced me to evaluate my "why". I was fueled to work more diligently at becoming a successful Entrepreneur so that my legacy can be established. My attitude changed towards Corporate America. I became more focused to accomplish my goals.

She in addition realized that "these incidents do not define who I am, my capability or capacity. I have used these incidents and their outcomes to advance my personal growth and professional development. I stayed for another 6 years at that workplace. I waited for what I considered to be

the "right" time to move on. Also, P-4's experience made her evaluate her worth and pursue further education when she wrote, "In retrospect, I believe that I continued my education to show that I was not just a handmaiden but a talented professional who was confident in her skills."

Some other participants shared the painful experience of not only the loss of the opportunity for upward mobility and income growth but also and more importantly, the lack of acknowledgment of their efforts and contributions. For instance, P-5 resorted to self-education (an information-seeking, problem-focused coping strategy used to solve a particular problem (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). P-5 emphasized she utilized this strategy to learn more about what was going on in her perceived workplace environment so that she could respond accordingly. Her choice of words suggested that she utilized 'planful' self-control and confidence in her abilities as strategies to effectively cope with her perceived workplace racist incidents, so the stress thereof did not affect her negatively when she wrote,

> Yes, I became a mentor to folks in the workplace; folks who wanted advice on how to
> cope with these things. I told them to document everything and take ownership of their
> work. I also told them to choose the battles they wish to fight win or lose…

From P-5's comment, it was apparent that she derived a sense of satisfaction from knowing her mentoring actions have benefited others besides herself. P-5 seems to have developed the satisfaction that her actions can result in positive change, and at some level, the environment has responded to her needs and will continue to do so in the future. Hence, she wrote, "once you change your behavior, you see things very clearly. It is not what folks do but your response to what they do will make a difference."

P-12 wrote that she learned how to better handle similar situations going forward when she stated, "After the incident, I dealt with future situations at the time it occurred with the

person and also informed management on the issue." Similarly, P-1 also learned from his experience to "fight back early when it started happening or leave for a different job." P-12 mentioned that her experience increased her productivity at work and like P-4 allowed her to "know the importance of furthering my education." She also learned to take other steps to cope with her job experience when she wrote, "I did at one time join a black power group. Learn Swahili and wear African attire." All these she did in solidarity with her ethnic black background. Perhaps, most importantly, she stated that her experience led her to understand the importance of having a "strong loving family, a Christian background and fostered self-pride and self-respect that makes one strong and able to handle even the worse situations." P4 wrote that it is important to have a "strong positive support network." P-8 was more specific he wrote: "Lessons learned: success is the best revenge, be prepared to ignore the small stuff, insults are taken . . . Not given. Most times, the bigots know no better. The ideas have not changed. Ignorance is no excuse."

P-17 learned not to,

> Allow the negative actions of others to lower your standards and/or change your opinion
> of other manager(s) of a different race. In all of those racist job-related encounters, I
> chose to prayerfully let God direct my actions …and in so doing, I was able to win the
> favor and respect from colleagues and managers of all races that intervened in her case
> that eventually won her a promotion.

> However, P-21 takes lessons learned from her experience to the next level by briefly

summing it up as follows,

> Going through these unpleasant situations was really difficult. In hindsight, they made
> me a better person and I can advise my children about how to deal with certain situations.

> I'm more assertive now, than when I was younger. I also took management classes to
>
> improve my technical, people and other skills needed to manage other professionals.
>
> Document, document, and document. Keep records of incidences, dates, people involved
>
> and summary of what happened. Record accomplishments and projects, you participated
>
> *(at work)* including the outcomes as to help with specific evaluation questions and
>
> requirements - took credit for my efforts.
>
> She continued to write that her experience strengthened her faith *(in God)* that helped her
>
> to survive the workforce, "especially racist bullies" by becoming "more aware of my
>
> rights and responsibilities. More assertive. Became my own advocate and in doing so,
>
> accomplished more, such as implementing purposeful projects like policy on giving
>
> Dietitian's privilege to write Diet Orders.

Without doubt, P-21 grew from her experience and even recommended how to overcome and

manage workplace "racist bullies" as she continued to write,

> Be informed and knowledgeable. Knowledge is power. Pursue management positions
>
> when opportunities present themselves. Build alliances and advocate for each other. I
>
> didn't report any of these incidents early in my career but as I got more experience and
>
> formed alliances, I was more vocal about Fair Treatment in the workplace. I read the

employee handbook quite a lot and became familiar with rules, regulations and standards which

helped me to grow professionally.

Both P-18 and P-19 learnt that God answers prayer at the appointed time,

> …After my presentation everyone was so impressed, the Food Service Director, the
>
> Hospital Administrator, even my White colleague who came with my Regional
>
> Supervisor came and congratulated me for job well done, but my Regional Supervisor

never said a word to me. To my surprise, the next day when my phone rang at 8:00 am it

was my Regional Supervisor calling to congratulate me for job well done the day before

that she refused to acknowledge then.

P-19 learnt that persistence pays off because her perpetrator who had always ignored her good

morning greetings changed towards the end of her service with the company because she stated

that,

Eventually, before she was let go from the job her attitude was different and she began to

be kind to me." This radical change in behavior by P-19 perpetrator summed up what P-

20 said about his own experience: "no situation is permanent and nothing in life is

guaranteed.

Negative Experience

However, some participants were not so lucky to benefit from their workplace racial

discrimination experiences. Prior studies (e.g., Offermann et al., 2014) revealed that Blacks

became dissatisfied with their work environment based on the racial discrimination experience.

According to Offermann et al. (2014), harassment is a significant component of workplace stress

to Blacks because it increases their perceptions of workplace racial discrimination anxiety and

fear.

These participants with negative workplace experiences utilized venting, which is an

emotion-focused coping strategy that includes the outward, sometimes public, display of

emotions such as acting out, recklessness, or becoming angry (Dorr et al., 2007; Swim et al.,

2003). For instance, P-2 stated that the incident "made me hate my job." P-14 wrote that she had

no confidence or reason to believe that the issued she faced would be resolved in my favor, and

as such, her "attitude towards work changed." P-15 and P-18 expressed their dissatisfaction on

how their supervisors treated them. P-15 stated that she "started working for a different supervisor…"   The supervisors' treatment got both P-18 and P-13 with the feelings of career and educational failures. P-18 said she was "very depressed" and entertained the feelings of career and educational failures and similarly, P-13, a 58-year-old female and an attorney for a federal agency vented extensively over "the harassment that started in earnest in March 2008" at her workplace. P-13 whose experience best summarized these participants' negative workplace racial discrimination experiences when she wrote,

> I could have done a better job of negotiating a settlement (*instead of resignation*). I could have insisted that I remain an employee until I could get a transfer to another agency. That left me feeling like I had little ability as an attorney and since this happened at the beginning of the recession, I was very depressed. I started seeing my life and career as a failure even though the evidence was on the contrary.

For one thing, their experiences created and instilled the negative feelings of doubts in their abilities to succeed in life even though according to P-13 "the evidence was to the contrary."

CHAPTER EIGHT

Discussion

This chapter focused on interpretation of the results of this study as presented in the previous chapter. The chapter is divided into four sections: (a) discussion of the findings; (b) explanation of the theoretical, clinical, educational, social policy and research implications; (c) study limitations and (d) conclusion.

The purpose of this study was to document not only how Black workers with perceived workplace racial discrimination experience navigated the incident, but also the coping strategies they utilized in resolving these challenges and its impacts. Participants were recruited through Qualtrics online platform licensed to Yeshiva University New York. Qualtrics anonymous 'Survey Link' was sent by email to 6 individuals who were not study participants with the request to forward the link to anyone who met the following 7 recruitment criteria: (1) On-the-job racial discrimination experience; (2) A Black person of African Descent; (3) A current or retired worker with a minimum of 5-years of service longevity; (4) 25 years and older; (5) Willingness to digitally consent to the Informed Consent; (6) Willingness to participate in an anonymous online survey; and (7) Willingness to freely discuss and answer questions about your thoughts, ideas, regarding workplace racial discrimination and coping mechanisms that you may have used.

Sixteen (16) Black workers between the ages of 31 and 74 were qualified to participate in this study. The sample comprised of mostly females and, only a few males. Out of the sample size of 16, 3 were retired and 13 were currently working at the time of this survey. Data for this study revealed that it was a well-educated sample as majority of the participants reported that they had graduate/professional degrees. Given their educational levels and job titles, 15 out of 16 participants belonged in the middle class and above. Majority of the participants had service

longevity between 6 to 10 years when the perceived racial discrimination incident occurred.

Majority reported their supervisors as the person accused of being responsible for the incidents.

Discussion of the Findings

The following four study research questions guided this study.

- RQ1. What assessment strategies do Black employees use to navigate, negotiate, minimize, or deal with perceived racial discrimination encounters?

- RQ2. What coping strategies do Blacks utilize to buffer perceived workplace racial discrimination?

- RQ3. Do Black employees use a combination of both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies in dealing with most stressful perceived workplace racisms?

- RQ4. Are there demographic differences in responses to perceived discrimination in the workplace?

The relationship between the findings and the existing literature will be explored for each in turn.

Perceptions of Racial Discrimination

Findings from this study support earlier works (e.g., Becker & Hills, 1981) indicating that the perception of workplace racial discrimination among Blacks may not influence the decision of whether to enter the labor market, but rather may affect their activities toward advancement, skill development, underrated and underutilized working relationships. This study findings were also consistent with previous research and literature that documented the role of workplace racial discrimination in restricting socioeconomic gains for Blacks (House & Williams, 2000) and how Blacks' restricted access to job privileges have been used to perpetuate racial inequality (Williams, 1999). Respondents for this study perceived themselves to be victims of workplace racial discrimination and perceived that their job success was not a function of their efforts but

was controlled by factors beyond their reach and control. For instance, and consistent with the findings from this study, Feagin and McKinney (2003) indicated that many Blacks are puzzled and frustrated that their hard work, experience, and academic achievements does not protect them from workplace racial discrimination.

Wallace (1980) stated that the discouragement in employment due to perceived workplace racial discrimination could come in the form of limited opportunities for advancement. Other researchers (e. g., Becker, 1980; Fernandez, 1981; Haw, 1982) noted that perceived workplace racism may lead to job stress. In fact, the findings of this study contributed further support to Becker's (1980) argument that perceived race-based discrimination may be linked job stress due to intolerable work environments. The perception of workplace racial discrimination was significantly related to the participants' experience of job stressors in this study. These job-related stresses were greatest in the younger less experienced workers. Also, findings from this study and other studies (e.g., (Cochran & Mays, 1994; Mays, 1995) suggested that underutilization of skills and unpleasant working environments, job instability, and salary increase denials were sources of workplace stress. Perceived workplace racial discrimination has been documented as a source of stresses resulting in negative health outcomes for Blacks (Cochran & Mays, 1994; Mays, 1995). Equally as important is the identification of interventions for Black workers that prevent or reduce the impact of the psychological distress associated with perceived workplace racist experiences (Mays, 1995).

In this regard, the experiences of perceived workplace racial discrimination described by the respondents could be considered as overt acts of discrimination, which refers to the public or private conscious attitudes or behaviors intended to harm a person or group of people of color (in this case Blacks) who are seen as inferior to Whites (Joshi, 2005). According to Harrell (2000),

perceived workplace racism related stress refers to stressors experienced as a consequence of belonging to a racial minority group such as Blacks. The stress from perceived Workplace racial discrimination may result from perceived individual, institutional, or cultural racism or discrimination (Jones, 1997), and may significantly impact the well-being and quality of life of Blacks (Outlaw, 1993). According to Jones (1997), perceived workplace racial discrimination is based on a belief in the inherent superiority of the dominant group (Whites) and is reinforced and maintained by the dominant group's power to determine employment outcomes for other (minority inferior groups, e.g., Blacks).

The findings of this study on RQ 1 - 'perception of workplace racial discrimination,' revealed that some of the respondents described not only painful and stressful feelings of being denied of promotion, salary increases and training opportunities, but also, unacknowledged for their work efforts, debased educational achievement, under-utilized, underrated, and doubtful of ability to perform tasks. This finding revealed that the majority of participants felt they had been ignored by supervisors. As such, participants reported associated stressful feelings of battles, knocked down, frustration, bitterness, anger, and sadness. There was a sense that no matter how hard participants worked or how hard they tried, they were never recognized. This finding was consistent with previous research and literature that reported of Blacks being under-rated and underutilized. For example, and consistent with the findings from this study, Feagin and McKinney (2003) indicated that many Blacks in general are baffled and frustrated that the evidence of their hard work and achievements does not protect them from racism at workplaces. Also, the finding was consistent with previous research and literature that documented the role of racism in restricting socioeconomic gains for Blacks (House & Williams, 2000) and how restricted opportunities at workplaces have been used as another means to perpetuate racial

inequality (Williams, 1999). All the participants in this study experienced perceived workplace racial discrimination, which they described in terms of denials of: salary increase, promotion, training, and the loss of opportunities for upward mobility when compared to their White counterparts.

The participants' narratives portrayed a picture of loss of career dreams and opportunities as demonstrated by P-13, a 68-year-old former government attorney, P-5, a 61-year-old Ivy League graduate student and a government Management Analyst, and a 69-year-old male, an Ivy League graduate student, and a government Deputy Commissioner. This finding was consistent with previous research and literature as documented by Williams and Wilson (2019): not only that Black workers suffer persistent racial inequalities in employment outcomes, but Blacks are also more likely to be underutilized and treated differently in the workplace (BLS, 2019). Even among Black college graduates who are most likely to be employed do not necessarily have the same opportunities as their White counterparts to utilize and develop their skills (Williams & Wilson, 2019).

Franklin (1999) defined the invisibility syndrome as an emotional experience in which an individual feels that his or her personal identity and ability are undermined by perceived workplace racial discrimination. Franklin describes an inner struggle with the feeling that one's talents, abilities, personality, and worth are not valued or even recognized because of prejudice or racism. According to Franklin, this struggle can result to frustration, increased awareness of perceived slights, anger, questioning of one's worthiness, conflicted racial identity, depression, substance abuse, loss of hope, and internalized rage. Commenting on Franklin's conceptual model, Parham (1999) wrote, "No segment of the population has been more misunderstood, and mischaracterized … in the workplace than Blacks" (p.794).

Another finding in this study was that participants experienced perceived workplace harassment. Half of the participants described both the direct and indirect physical and psychological insults, such as, derogatory racial slurs, being ignored and being asked to apologize or faced disciplinary actions (e.g., demotion). Most participants accused their supervisors of being responsible for the incidents, four participants accused colleagues, and only one individual that reports to the participant was accused. Two other respondents were fired during economic recessions and one, a former government attorney remained unemployed for the next five years. However, according to EEOC, "harassment based on race and/or color violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts. Ethnic racial slurs, "jokes," offensive or derogatory comments, or other verbal or physical conduct based on an individual's race/color constitutes unlawful harassment if the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment, or interferes with the individual's work performance" (EEOC). Despite the positive promises of Title VII, literature review states that: Black workers are 13% of the U.S. workforce, but racial discrimination against this group accounts for 26% of all claims filed in 2019 with the EEOC and its partner agencies (Table II).

Another finding from this study was that majority of the respondents failed to report/file complaints with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or any other regulatory agencies including the Human Resources (HR). Still even with Title VII legal protection promises, most of these highly educated respondents that faced perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents failed to file complaints. Instead, the data portrayed a picture of a system that the respondents did not trust, considered ineffective, very risky to trust for protection against retaliations from employers, and considered filing a waste of

their time and resources to pursue. As such, majority decided to handle their situations alone in their own ways.

While (5 out of 16) filed some sort of complaints, only one respondent – (P-13), a female attorney, filed with the EEOC and, filed a "whistle blower complaint." She was awarded a small monetary settlement after which she remained out of job for the next five years. However, P-1, a male government Senior Compliance Officer, filed Union Complaint; P-2, a female Administrator, filed a complaint with her Chief Executive Officer (CEO). P-11, a female government Social Worker, filed a complaint, but data did not indicate to whom/ which agency the complaint was filed to. Finally, the Union advocated on behalf of P-20, a male State University Assistant Professor.

The results of this study also revealed that more male respondents utilized problem-focused strategy by filing complaints (got others to intervene or sought revenge), while majority of the female respondents utilized emotion-focused strategy by not filing any complaints, at all, (but remained passive). The following are some of the reasons some respondents stated for not filing complaints:

- "Going to Human Resources (HR) is as regular as going to work."

- "No, I would not have won."

- "The Personnel was not worth the effort."

- "A waste of time; would put me in danger and make my workplace unbearable."

- "This was my first job, and I was nervous whether I would be taken seriously."

- "Withdrew my complaint because my immediate supervisor said it would be my word against the boss and the outcome might not be favorable."

- "Did not want to draw attention to myself because my workplace is 80% White and 20% minority."

- "The incident happened early in my career and did not really know what to do."

- "I did not report some harassment to HR because as a company attorney and a government attorney I learned very quickly HR is primarily there to insulate the company does not help me. I saw what happened to people who reported discrimination to HR- career sidelined."

- "No-one cared…"

Finally, 4 participants were "afraid, sad, naïve, scared" to get fired from pursuing perceived workplace racism cases due to possible employer retaliations thereof, when they had family responsibilities. The weight of their family responsibilities on their shoulders rendered them powerless to file any complaints. Some respondents expressed sadness about the incident and their inability do anything about it as one stated: "I have a family to take care of." Another said he failed to report the incident for fear of getting fired when "I had a young family." One respondent implied that it was like being forced to "choose between trying to win in corporate America or my family." "It was important to me that I was able to retain my income to support my family," said another. P-21 stated: "Too afraid to lose my job when I am a single parent." The fear of losing their jobs certainly was a major factor for some respondents not to file perceived workplace racial discrimination complaints.

However, another respondent, a 68-year-old female government attorney, lost her job during an economic recession because she filed a "whistle blower" complaint. She got fired for filing a complaint and for the next five years remained unemployed. However, she remained bitter for continuing to work beyond 68 years old when she should have been retired and now

believed as she reported: "yes, I am more aware than ever how much racism permeates everything."

Literature review supports these participants' fear and possible consequences of employers' retaliations. According to Jameel and Yerardi, (2019), "…even making an accusation or testifying as a witness can come at a price: almost 40% of Black workers who filed complaints with the EEOC and partner agencies from 2010 through 2017 reported retaliation." Also, Jameel and Yerardi (2019) stated: "at other times, many failed or were reluctant to file charges because they did not trust or believed that the government would treat them fairly." Put differently, not only that the bar was high for participants because it might come at a high cost (e.g., fired, demoted, negatively evaluated, denied promotion and salary increase, etc.) but also, such cases take too long to resolve because of EEOC backlogs.

How Respondents Coped with Perceived Workplace Racal Discrimination

One of the most important findings from this study was that emotion-focused strategy was revealed to be the most effective coping strategy utilized by the participants. This was because all the participants either utilized emotion-focused strategy alone and/or in combination of both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies simultaneously. The reason all participants utilized emotion-focused strategy was that maintaining employment was a major priority for all participants and also most of the participants considered employer retaliation to be very expensive in terms of getting fired, negative evaluation, unbearable working environment, etc. This finding also revealed that the availability of problem-focused, emotion-focused and a combination of both coping strategies provided participants with a range of coping strategy options to choose from in other to buffer the stresses from their workplace racial incidents.

Another findings from this study revealed that the participants utilized problem-focused strategies, such as pride in educating themselves, and self-advocacy. Participants also coped well with emotion-focused strategies including avoidance, denial, and non-support seeking by refusing to file complaints. Several participants engaged in positive reappraisal to perceive the positive aspects of their painful experiences. Many were optimistic and focused on their high academic achievements and high productivity on the job, rather than dwell on the losses and missed promotional and salary increase opportunities. Religious coping strategy was also utilized by the majority of the participants who emphasized strong belief and dependence on God. Some participants also coped by utilizing a combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies simultaneously. These findings are consistent with previous research (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Bowen-Reid & Harrell, 2002; Feagin & McKinney, 2003; Gary, 1995; Peters, 2002; Plummer & Slane, 1996) that Blacks use a wide variety of strategies including problem-focused, emotion-focused and, sometimes in combination, to address the perceived workplace racial discrimination stress. It should be noted that Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model was relevant to this study findings even though religious faith in God, pride in high educational credentials, and high on-the-job productivity were not included in their model. However, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) acknowledged prayer as an important emotion-focused coping strategy. Findings from this study also revealed religious coping as a viable used strategy with some of the respondents.

Respondents used such problem-focused strategies as: confrontations – educating the oppressor, calling out racism, maintaining personal integrity, support seeking, proud of racial identity, pride in high educational credentials, and high rate of productivity. Findings from this study revealed that some of the participants felt empowered and confident in their abilities to not

only resist, speak up, or confront workplace racial discrimination against them, but these participants were also able to take direct actions by utilizing problem-focused coping strategies to control and minimize its effects. Problem-focused strategies are active strategies used to directly change or alter the troubled person-environment relationship, by acting on the environment or oneself (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1993).

Some respondents actively spoke up for themselves and even advocated for other colleagues. This study findings reveal that some participants were able to change their perceived workplace racial discrimination experience into positive outcomes. Even though some responded that these experiences were very 'difficult, sad, bitter, beaten down, unpleasant and a battle' for them, yet they were able to positively reappraise their experiences using problem-focused 'planful, self-control, self-educational reappraisal' coping strategies to derive such benefits as personal growth and colleague-mentoring. They were able to change the problematic situation to alleviate stress. According to Park, Folkman, & Bostrom, (2001), a person may utilize planful reappraisal, a problem-focused coping strategy by perceiving the opportunities for growth resulting from the stressful event. Such a strategy according to the authors, may be particularly useful with extreme stressors and traumatic situations, in this case, Black workers' chronic on-going stress of perceived workplace racial discrimination.

For one participant - P-5, it seemed too painful for her to imagine a workplace without the unnecessary struggles of trying to prove oneself. Another participant, P-1 stated: "I was constantly made to prove that I can do the job." However, despite their experiences, many of participants were taught not to hate others, and believed that hatred could destroy the recipient more than the person responsible for the perceived workplace racial discrimination incident.

Prior Family Education on Perceived Workplace Racial Discrimination

Another finding revealed that majority participants did not receive any prior 'oral history' home education or advice on possible perceived workplace racial discrimination. This finding revealed that those respondents "drilled" on perceived workplace racial discrimination' handled their situations better than those without. P-21 Stated,

Going through these unpleasant situations was really difficult. In hindsight, they made me a better person and I can advise my children about how to deal with certain situations. I'm more assertive now, than when I was younger. I also took management classes to improve my technical, people and other skills needed to manage other professionals.

P-4, who received prior family education on the possible perceived workplace racial discrimination stated,

I think my approach (how she handled the incident) was perfect. They came back with their senior who made them apologize in front of all the staff and he then proceeded to introduce me and my area of expertise. He also apologized himself to the white nurse who was very upset at the fact that because she thought she was in-charge. My work was not affected because racism in professional Black nurse was very common but our instructors while we were still in school prepared us well. We had to be better, smarter and professional at all times because we were always being judged.

P12 reported that, "The suggestions provided by my family were suggestions I use till today. And has helped to identify issues such as perceived racial discrimination early and address them in the workplace." To appreciate the importance of sharing this 'oral history' scenario, it is important to understand that early Black families lived and raised their children under slavery and segregated society. It appears that such African survival mechanism that shaped the ethics of

caring and sharing in relation to one's group are learned in the family and community (Ross, 1978).

Another interesting finding from this study was mentoring of colleagues on how to best cope with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. Majority of the respondents reported they received no prior home education or advice about perceived workplace racism. Nevertheless, this lack of knowledge on those without prior education was taken care of by some of the older participants who mentored (some in this group) about perceived workplace racial discrimination. As such, some of the most important contributions came directly from some of the participants themselves enthusiastically encouraging and mentoring younger Black workers to help them develop effective coping strategies for dealing with perceived workplace racial discrimination. One participant, (P-5) mentored and shared advice with other colleagues to help them not only to develop effective coping strategies, but also how to choose which perceived workplace racial discrimination "battles" to "fight." P-21 stated: "build alliances and advocate for each other." P-5 did all that. P-21 and P-5 derived satisfaction by their shared wisdom when they mentored other Black colleagues on how to effectively cope with perceived workplace racism. P-5 advice included "having a sense of pride from performing a good job, keeping a diary of such incidents, choosing which racist 'battles' to fight." Two participants P-12 and P-4 commented on how the many centuries old tradition for Blacks to pass down information from generation to generation as part of valuable communal knowledge helped them cope effectively with their experiences of perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. According to Feagin and McKinney (2003), such dissemination of information includes strategies for coping with racism. These participants offered an important message for Blacks about the importance of mentoring relationships, particularly for young workers not only to cope with perceived

workplace racism, but also to develop important life skills. This was a part of the oral history of the "passing down" of valuable knowledge to younger generations. Literature review supports encounters with severe racial discrimination are retained both in the person's memories and on the household or family stories and ethnic group recollections (Feagin & Sikes, 1994).

This study also found that some participants developed sense of mastery, self-independence and confidence that enabled them cope very effectively. For instance, P-5 formed the opinion that work was no longer the means for personal development or achievement, nor a place for socialization, neither a career for that matter. For P-5, "job was no-longer personal, but only a means to an end." She was always one step ahead of her accused person by educating herself to maintain an 'inside-informant' who alerted her. An informant she preferred to have at the cost of forfeiting the pursuit of an 8% salary increase. P-5's job satisfaction was never monetary any longer, but doing everything right not only to remain employed, but most importantly, to torture her accused person with her continued presence in that workplace. According to literature review, confrontation coping strategy involves direct objection to an incident of racial discrimination (Noh et al., 1999) to 'influence the outcome' (Swim et al., 2003). For example, a direct outward anger expression, such as, directly protesting or talking to the accused person 'anger-out' (Dorr et al., 2007) may persuade the accused person/s and others to change their racial discrimination behaviors (Swim et al., 2003).

Generally, participants demonstrated a great deal of personal resilience and confidence which were some of their individual characteristics that helped them to effectively cope with their perceived workplace racism. As such, even though with a small sample size, participants' narratives offered effective and practical strategies that other Black workers can utilize to cope with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. Having such resistance resources as

social network, self-esteem, occupational and educational attainment contribute to a sense of

mastery as displayed by these study respondents (Antonovsky, 1979).

Emotion-Focused Coping Strategy

In contrast to problem-focused coping strategy, emotion-focused coping strategy is an

attempt to change the way the stressful relationship with the environment (Lazarus & Folkman,

1984) is attended to by vigilance, avoidance, or by changing the relational meaning of what is

happening, which mitigates the stress even though the actual conditions of the relationship have

not changed (Lazarus, 1993).

This study found that some of the participants stressed the importance of relying on

support networks including family, friends, or a wider network of support as a buffer to regulate

the effects of perceived workplace racial discrimination. Surprisingly, only a few of the

respondents acknowledged the role of the regulatory agencies (e.g., EEOC – Title VII or

organizational Human Resources (HR) advantages or support as a buffer against adverse

perceived racist workplace events. This is consistent with the findings of previous research in

this area that (only few Black workers ever file perceived workplace discrimination complaints).

On the contrary, many Black workers tried to withdraw from filing complaints or even denied

the magnitude of the perceived racist events at occupational settings where they perceived

powerlessness with a lot at stake (e.g., employer retaliations). Also consistent with this study's

finding was the notion from literature review that very often, Blacks at workplaces avoid

upsetting, humiliating, or embarrassing the accused person/s due to the 'power differential'

concept or the need to maintain a positive relationship with authorities (e.g., supervisor) to retain

employment, and advancement. For instance, one of this study participants, P-14 was warned

that filing a complaint might upset, humiliate, or embarrass the accused supervisor, and stated,

"That's dealing with the big boys. You have to be prepared for the consequences…. that comment was enough for me to know that I needed to choose between trying to win in Corporate America or my family." With that "power differential" warning, P-14 immediately withdrew complaint. Sometimes, this passive coping strategy is the only way in which seriously threatened Black workers can survive at workplaces and it is the core of protecting one's job safety (Allport, 1954).

This study also found that respondents utilized such emotion-focused strategies as: religiosity, avoidance, acceptance, distancing, self-control, social support seeking, and family responsibilities. Emotion-focused coping strategies of 'Acceptance, Avoidance and Distancing' or (Denials) are attempts to keep the mind off a particular stressor (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). They serve as coping strategies that are utilized to avoid the accused person/s or the stressor. In this study, (9 out of 16) respondents utilized acceptance, avoidance, or distancing (denials) coping strategies to buffer perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. However, these findings are consistent with (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) which states that some emotion-focused strategies are healthy while some are not because in most cases, they only serve short term without addressing the underlying issues (Folkman, 2013; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 2000).

Female Participants Utilized More Emotion-Focused Coping Strategy

Another study finding in this study consistent with other prior research findings (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), was that (11 out of 13) female participants utilized emotion-focused strategies to buffer their perceived workplace racial discrimination stressful encounters. For instance, when P-5 did not receive an expected an "8% pay raise," she accepted the situation, but distanced and avoided her accused supervisor. According to Lazarus and Folkman, (1984),

distancing, acceptance and avoidance are cognitive processes aimed at regulating feeling, that can "create a dissociation between thoughts and feelings..." that enables the individual to evade the emotional implications of the incident. Three respondents - (P-5, P-18, and P-20) described their perceived workplace racial discrimination experience as a "battle." A battle, they were powerless to do anything to change the situation than to cope with acceptance, avoidance, and distancing strategies. This is consistent with Lazarus and Folkman (1984), participants used emotion-focused coping strategies to change their emotional state to reduce the unpleasant feelings associated with stress or use avoidance or withdrawal behaviors to distance themselves from the stress.

Another finding from this study also revealed that younger participants (e.g., 31 years old P-12) was only 25 when her incident occurred in 2014, as such, was "unsure as to how to handle the situation." She also stated that with home education on the subject matter, she was able to handle the incident and buffer the associated stress passively. This finding also showed that older participants with more years of on-the-job experiences not only learnt how, and which perceived workplace racism "battles" to fight, but also these older participants developed strength and wisdom to better buffer perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents as well as other non-job life issues. In other words, new employees with no prior on-the-job experience were "unsure as to how to handle" such perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. On the other hand, older participants over the years developed such coping strategies as, formed alliances (network) and became vocal. These older participants moved from such emotion-focused coping strategies as avoidance and self-control, to such problem-focused strategies as being 'vocal, calling out racism, taking control of the situation, and self-educated themselves on the subject matter.

According to Gill and Matheson (2006) and Swim et al. (2003), something gets triggered when individuals are faced with perceived racial discrimination. This is particularly remarkable because in this study, participants' actions were triggered in the form of: moved against the person accused and fought back, moved away from the accused person or avoidance, or verbal confrontation, filed complaints to officials, and anger. Participants' behaviors were consistent with (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), since it proposes that people use either problem-focused or emotion-focused coping to alleviate the feelings associated with perceived threats or challenges.

Religiosity Coping Strategy

This study found that 6 out of 16 respondents utilized religious coping strategy as their sole and only coping strategy throughout the duration of their perceived workplace racial discrimination ordeal. Some of them prayed, not for themselves, but for the accused individuals and the workplaces. According to P-17 "Certainly, there are other strategies that could have been utilized however, I did what I felt most prayerfully comfortable with. I believe that I should acknowledge God in all my ways, and He will direct my path. In all those racist job-related encounters, I chose to prayerfully let God direct my actions ..."

These participants found the religious coping strategy successful because not only that they were able to effectively cope with it, but also, it never affected their behaviors toward the accused person/s or their attitudes toward work. These respondents emphasized spirituality and a strong belief in God as their strategy. This finding is consistent with previous research (Plummer & Slane, 1996) that reported that Blacks use a wide variety of strategies including emotion-focused religious coping strategies to address the stress and hostility of perceived workplace racism. Literature review indicated that Blacks are believed to be optimistic due to their strong religious inclination (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Also, according to Boyd-Franklin (1989), religious faith (spirituality) and hope arouse coping in Blacks. Some Blacks, for instance,

170

demonstrate the challenge aspect of their religiosity with the positive belief that "God cannot give them more than they can bear." Faith in their religion was rooted in their slavery experiences (Hill, 1972; Peters & Massey, 1983).

Of the existing coping theories, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model is most relevant to this study's findings. Although, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) model did not include religious coping strategy, however, the authors acknowledged prayer as an important emotion-focused coping strategy. This study revealed religious coping as a viable strategy with this group of respondents.

Social Support Seeking

This study found that some participants utilized social support seeking coping strategy to cope with their workplace racial discrimination incidents which is consistent with literature review. Simply defined, the seeking of social support is an emotion-focused strategy of seeking out comfort or emotional support from others. Social support results from the feeling that one is valued, loved, esteemed, and cared for. Social support offers mediating effect on stress (Corsini & Auerbach, 1996). Social support seeking is a supportive relationship that arises from friends, family members, and others social support networks in which both material and emotional resources are provided through relationships with others (Corsini & Auerbach, 1996).

This study findings showed that those participants who had no prior family or social support education and preparedness on the possible perceived workplace racial discrimination were caught off-guard when they suddenly realized their situations. For instance, P-13 said, "It led me to look back at all of my career moves since I graduated from law school and realized I had been a victim of institutionalized racism a lot more than I thought." As such, P-13 said,

171

I could have done a better job of negotiating a settlement" (when she agreed to resign

than fired) – I could have insisted that I remain an employee until I could get a transfer to

another agency. That (premature on-the-spot resignation) left me feeling like I had very

little ability as an attorney and since this happened at the beginning of the recession, I

was very depressed. I started seeing my life and career as a failure even though the

evidence was to the contrary.

Only a few respondents reported about being "drilled" from home (in form of receiving

social support) about possible perceived workplace racial discrimination. The finding for this

study showed that those few who had prior family education on the subject matter were not only

better able to handle the situation when they found themselves dealing with the incident, but also

that prior family education helped them moving forward in other areas of their lives. These

participants referred to their family of origin as the main source of social support in their lives.

One respondent (P-18) acknowledged her husband as a great source of support resulting

from the strength of a good marriage. Literature review also stated that social assistance may be

provided by biological family or simply a group of people who act in the role of family;

neighbors, extended relatives, a mosque, church, synagogue, or temple (Harris, 1992). According

to this author, social support in situations of perceived racial discrimination stretches outward

especially to the extended family system. This system is heavily utilized for their success in past

experiences in dealing with racial discrimination (Harris, 1992).

Simultaneous Use of Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies

The finding from this study supported by literature review was that some participants

utilized both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies simultaneously. Literature review

supports that Blacks used a combination of emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies to

cope with stressful workplace racial discrimination incidents. This finding collectively confirms the coping literature that reveals that Blacks are vulnerable to exceptional racial trauma that necessitate them to summon their total stock of coping mechanisms (Brondolo et al., 2009). Lalonde et al. (1995) indicates that Black participants significantly utilized more "emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies than did Whites" (p. 314), they also utilized extra coping strategies in dealing with stressors from racism than Whites. This finding suggests that Blacks' exposure to certain types of racial discrimination stressors require them to deploy their full range of coping mechanisms (sometimes in combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies), and this finding agrees with the Slavin et al. (1991) model. Also, Outlaw (1993) and Folkman et al. (1986) maintain that because Blacks are subjected to unique racism related stressors, they utilize a combination of both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies in response.

Summary

The findings of this study indicated that emotion-focused coping strategy was the most effective and was utilized by all the respondents even though they utilized other coping resources available to them based on the type of stressors they encountered. Majority of the female respondents utilized only emotion-focused coping strategy. There were certain situations in which the respondents were able to utilize problem-focused strategy to directly confront the perceived workplace racism, and others in which they needed to use passive strategies (e.g., avoidance, distancing, and acceptance) to cope. Also, some respondents utilized a combination of both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies simultaneously. However, the findings also indicated that the importance of choosing the most effective strategy was crucial for these participants, because a wrong decision might have been detrimental to their livelihood or their

survival (e.g., by getting fired) as a single parent or the sole family breadwinners. Therefore, the goodness-of-fit hypothesis outlined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984); Park, Folkman, and Bostrom (2001) can be applied to the findings of this study. According to the goodness-of-fit hypothesis, coping effectiveness is dependent on the match or goodness-of-fit between coping efforts and other variables in the stress and coping process, including an individual's values, beliefs, and temperament. This agrees with Smith (1985) that stated: responding to perceived racial discrimination incidents at workplaces involves being flexible to constantly adjust to the proper buffering mechanisms necessary to endure and overcome the constant stressors of racism. These findings are also consistent with (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which states that stress is between the person and the environment. According to the authors, depending on the demands the person is confronted with and the available resources to deal with those demands, stress may either be high or avoided entirely (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Also, the lack of control over the duration and intensity of the perceived workplace racial discrimination encounters might have explained why these experiences were so detrimental to the participants (Borysenko et al. (1987).

Theoretical Implications

The present study findings supported the applicability of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stress, appraisal and coping theoretical framework to Blacks' perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences. The respondents' narratives corresponded perfectly well as (goodness-of-fit) with the appraisal and coping concepts of the theory. As a result of these study findings, future researchers can confidently explore Blacks' perceived workplace racial discrimination appraisal and coping using the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theoretical model.

Although the sample size (of 16) was small, but the responses from the participants offered effective and practical strategies for other Black workers to cope with perceived

workplace racial discrimination incidents. Concepts including sense of mastery or control over one's life, confrontations, high rate of productivity, possession of higher educational degrees, religious faith, distancing, avoidance, denials, passivity, etc. were some important coping strategies participants utilized in coping with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents.

The participants' narratives portrayed a picture of being constantly in state of vigilance and always being on guard in anticipation of perceived workplace racial encounters. P-19 stated: "We worked in the same department and sometimes it was uncomfortable speaking to her, but I always prayed that she would not spoil my day." This kind of workplace environments suggest a great amount of daily on-going emotional stress of anxiety, depression, in addition to having a job to do. The respondents' narratives portrayed a picture of emotional exhaustion that manifested in choosing your 'battles, frustration, anger, sadness, bitterness, confusion, beaten-down, learnt Swahili, dressed up in African attire, joined a black-power group, and the chronic stress that the respondents endured and will continue to endure because according to one respondent, there is no end of racism for blacks, ever. P-4 stated: "The expression is I wake up black. At work I am black. I do great things in life for all people but when I leave my home every day the first thing seen is my Blackness."

Nevertheless, according to the study findings, most of the respondents seemed to have made positive adjustments with these "teaching moments" through positive choices of coping with their high-quality education attainments, high rate of on-the-job productivity, and strong spiritual belief. Their development of these effective buffering mechanisms helped them to be optimistic despite tremendous obstacles and structural barriers imposed upon them as a result of perceived workplace racial discrimination. The study findings fit well with Lazarus & Folkman

(1984) theoretical framework regarding the primary and secondary appraisals of perceived workplace racial discrimination stressors.

Most of the respondents seemed to have achieved a sense of integrity and knowledge from their perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences and felt proud and empowered in their accomplishments of standing up against the accused persons responsible for the incidents. Most of participants demonstrated a strong sense of personal control over their lives to deal with the demands of daily living and the stressful experiences of perceived workplace racial discrimination. Many of them found that they were empowered by calling out racism, educating the oppressor or refused to be disrespected. By taking direct action against perceived workplace racism, they gained confidence in their abilities to appraise perceived workplace racism. They seemed to have struck a balance between their perceived abilities to appraise perceived workplace racial discrimination encounters and their expectations to apply a good-fit coping strategy for a favorable outcome.

Contribution to Social Work

Social Work Practice

This study's findings revealed that participants perceived stress from promotion, salary increase and on-the-job training denials as well as from harassment (e.g., being underrated and non-recognition). Literature review (e.g., Leymann, 1990; Pearlin, 1983) noted that lack of inclusion, feelings of being devalued with no sense of belonging, and inadequate support by authorities within work environment could be significant contributors to stress. This study findings provide valuable information for clinical practice with Black clients. First, it is important for social workers to understand the significant impact perceived workplace racial

discrimination has on their clients. In this regard, social workers should be mindful of perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences among Black worker clienteles. For instance, this study findings portrayed a picture where participants demanded to be heard, understood, and acknowledged at workplaces, especially in a society that has great difficulty engaging in meaningful discussion about perceived workplace and other types of racisms, despite the agonizing experiences of racism. In this regard, clinical therapeutic interventions might focus on helping Black workers on how to identify perceived workplace racial discrimination encounter to appraise and apply appropriate coping strategies. For instance, social workers should help clients change their negative thinking about racism which may help alleviate their feelings of anger, depression, anxiety, and stress resulting from perceived racial discrimination incidents.

Another finding from this study was that participants were very resilient and possessed great optimism, strength, and willingness to share their wisdom by mentoring other Black workers. For example, P-21 indicated the importance of documentations in dealing with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. P-5 wrote: "Yes. I became a mentor to folks in the workplace; folks who wanted advice on how to cope with these things" *(workplace racism)* I instructed colleague mentees to "take ownership of their work….," "choose which battles they wish to fight…" and "I encouraged my co-workers to empower themselves." This finding suggested that it might be useful for clinicians to encourage clients to develop some sort of network whereby older Black workers can mentor the younger and others (Black workers) on how to cope with perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents.

Another 'mentorship-related' finding was that some participants benefited greatly from prior (home) education on the subject matter and as such, were able to handle their experiences better than those participants without prior education. This finding offered practical strategy to

clinicians about advising clients on the importance of home education (for instance, via "passing down knowledge - oral history") to their children at home on the subject matter.

Also, one other finding from this study was that, though the participants in this study passionately told of their painful experiences from their perceived workplaces racial discrimination experiences such as: the constant anticipation of a possible racist encounter and its associated on-going anxiety, stress and emotional exhaustion that always had them on edge. P-19 wrote her accused person "did not answer me every day when I said good morning." P-19 said that despite this 'attitude,' she continued to greet her accused person but always on edge and prayed her accused person would not ruin her day." This study finding might encourage other Black workers to disclose their feelings in a trusting clinical environment to help them cope with the trauma from these experiences. Parham's (1999) article supports the importance of empowering clients to disclose their feelings without which Black workers may continue to internalize a sense of powerlessness or their ability to transform their negative circumstances at workplaces into something more positive as was the case with some of the current study participants.

Study findings also revealed that some respondents displayed a strong belief in God, belief in a higher power, and a strong religious faith, which they felt were a very effective and important factors in their ability to cope with workplace racism. Literature review (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Billings & Moos, 1981; Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Houston, 1990; Mbiti, 1969; Mellor, 2004; Roberson, 1985) emphasized the importance of religious faith and the role of Black church as a supportive network in the Black community. It is therefore reasonable to believe that clinical therapeutic healing must include a deliberate focus on the client's faith in God which can assist clients in their ability to take charge and to change their negative thoughts,

which may give them a sense of empowerment. For instance, even though some of the workplace racial discrimination stressors cannot be eliminated, however, participants can learn how to reprogram their minds to get rid of old coping habits and replace it with new ways of perceiving stressors they cannot control, to decrease its effects and build efficiency (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). P-5 learned how to change the reactions to it when she wrote: "I changed my behavior and once you change your behavior, you see things very clearly. It is not what folks (*accused persons*) do but your response to what they do will make a difference." When Black workers understand why they are experiencing stress, the impact of their background and history has on their appraisal of stressors, and the effects of stress on their well-being, coping with stress should be easier to manage (Lazarus, 2002). In this regard, social workers can encourage Black clients to consult their spiritual leaders about spiritual strategies that can help them develop the skills necessary to enhance their coping skills from work-related racial discrimination stress.

Finally, this study finding revealed that some participants coped by achieving and possessing high educational qualifications that enabled and enhanced high productivity at work. Clinician may encourage clients to pursue their education in preparation for employment. This finding was important as it implied that no matter the opportunities given to Black workers to grow and develop, perceived racism still prevailed when they may not have had their most esteemed needs (the desire to belong, and a need to be acknowledged by others in their work environment) met. According to Maslow (1943), Black workers will only have a desire to grow and develop (cognitive needs) when they feel a sense of belonging, respected and are not treated as inferior in their workplaces (Maslow, 1943).

Social Work Education

Current literature suggests that only a few studies (e.g., Outlaw, 1993; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) posit empirical models on how Black workers manage the stress from perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents. In this regard, there are implications from this study for social work schools to design and develop career development curriculum for Blacks and minority students to ensure that graduates would be knowledgeable not only with stress, appraisal, and coping strategies, but also, on the importance of workplace mentorship program. Such school courses and mentorship programs as implied by current study findings will enable Black workers and other minority groups to learn how to appraise and choose appropriate coping strategies to buffer possible perceived workplace racial discrimination related stress. Put differently, the findings of this study held implications for the need for education that speaks to the real issues facing Black workers' need to buffer perceived workplace racism-related stress.

Another finding from this study supported by literature review (e.g., Lam & Zane, 2004; Utsey et al., 2004; Utsey, Ponterotto, et al., 2000) implied that multicultural workforce environment is still elusive to Black workers and suggests that without intervention, corporate America is not an essentially environmental inclusive. This is because institutional and structural racist ideologies and practices transmit White privilege in the workplace and as such this study highlighted the need for schools to offer relevant career development programs that consider unique social positions and cultural values of Blacks and by extension, minorities.

Social Policy

This study represented an effort to document not only how Black workers appraised perceived workplace racial discrimination incidents, but also, how they coped with the stressors.

Although the findings of this study were supported by prior research findings, however, the following is the social policy implication regarding workplace race relations from this study.

This study revealed that based on job titles, majority of the participants were in managerial positions and belonged in the organizational leadership structure, but they were not recognized as such. Instead, they were underrated and excluded from the decision-making structures of the organizations. This represented perceived workplace racial discrimination especially as some participants reported of being excluded from internal managerial trainings and meetings. The fact that participants reported that Whites controlled the organizations' decision-making structures had serious implications. For instance, some participants became estranged from the organizational management structure. In addition, since the generally all White management structures were unaware (or disregarded) the participants' problems and needs, the overall ability of the organizations to accomplish missions became seriously impaired. Perceived workplace racial discrimination as identified in this research may continue to exist if the organizational management structures remain overwhelmingly controlled by White personnel. Much of the participants' perceived workplace racial discrimination were rooted in the organizational policies and practices. Thus, policies must be adjusted, or at least, some of it alleviated. This research demonstrated that most participants, despite high educational attainments, on-the-job experience and performances were overwhelmingly not recognized. As such, if the present status of non-respondents' participation continues, with no appreciable change in policies, these organizations run the risk of becoming segregated institutions with White leadership individuals always at the top with non-Blacks or minority leadership participation contrary to Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts.

Future Social Work Research

Perceived workplace racism like all other types of racism is common to most Blacks and much has been written about it. However, this study represented a case study for expanding similar research to the area of perceived workplace racism. Even though this study focused only on Black workers, it would be of interest for future research to examine the perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences of 'older Black workers only-sample and younger Black workers only sample' to ascertain differences and similarities of their appraisal and coping strategies. Data obtained could be compared with this study findings to compare the similarities and differences in the coping strategies. Findings from the current study revealed that older workers utilized more problem-focused coping strategies because of several years of on-the-job experiences, while the younger workers utilized more emotion-focused coping strategies because they were "unsure" or lacked the experience of how to deal with the encounters.

The impacts of perceived racial discrimination and its stressors on individuals is an area in need of further empirical investigation. This study found that that perceived racial discrimination negatively affected some of the participants' career upward mobility, earning growth, attitudes toward work and overall feelings at work. Jones (1997) stated that "social psychologists have spent most of their scientific careers focusing on perpetrators of prejudice, rather than on how the recipients of prejudice react to and cope with it" (p. 261).

Another suggestion for future research would be to conduct more studies which will probe for a better understanding about the coping effectiveness with the possession high educational qualifications (and high rate of on-the-job productivity). Some participants in this study provided incredibly detailed information about how they effectively coped with the

possession of an Ivy League education that enabled them to be highly productive both at job and outside the job.

Also, there is the need to research on the effectiveness of: (a) older Black workers on-the-mentoring of the younger workers, and (b) the effectiveness of prior home education on perceived workplace racial discrimination, because some participants provided information of effective coping in these regards. As such, there is a need for more studies to be conducted especially, studies which incorporate validation of the incident as to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of prior home education on the subject matter and mentorship. Future research can replicate this study, and its implications tested as a logical step toward research. The results from such studies may enrich the perspectives of Black workers experiences from perceived workplaces racial discrimination.

Finally, the purpose of this study was accomplished, because it succeeded in providing a rich source of data in a relatively unknown area of study regarding the Black workers' perceptions of workplace racial discrimination encounters, and how they coped with such incidents. Also, this study added to the small but growing body of literature on the subject matter. However, if this study had obtained the perspectives of more individuals, this would have added credence to the validation of the workplace racial discrimination incidents Nevertheless, the results of this study were mostly the same results with other previous research on Black workers' perceived workplace racial discrimination.

Study Limitations

One of the main limitations of this study was the small sample size of 16 recruited via Qualtrics online anonymous survey. The small sample size, like most other qualitative studies, limits its generalizability.

Online participants' recruitment method was used because of the COVID-19 social distancing rules that presented difficulties with in-person interview. As a result, unintentional selection bias may have been introduced into the sample. Respondents were retired and current Black workers who had experienced perceived workplace racial discrimination. Thus, this study restriction to 'Blacks-Only' population might have been a selection-bias limitation because there might have been other non-black participants who could have shared valuable perceived workplace racial discrimination experiences if they had been selected. Finally, the lack of discrimination validation is another limitation of this study. If it were possible to procure a larger sample or employing the method of triangulation to document the incidents, the question of perceived versus real would have been answered, making an important contribution to the trustworthiness of the data.

Conclusion

This study utilized Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theoretical framework to provide a comprehensive picture of cognitive stress appraisals and coping related to a group of Black workers' perception of workplace racial discrimination. In order words, the findings from this study provided a framework that demonstrated the process of the participants' cognitive stress appraisal and coping with their perceptions of workplace racism.

Findings from this study revealed that the participants were subjected to perceived workplace racial discrimination. The perceived blatant experiences of workplace racial discrimination the participants encountered were different from the more covert forms of modem racism. The impact of these experiences should not be minimized or dismissed as obsolete because they provided an historical context to define national current progress. The participants' experiences pointed to the realization that there is still a lot of work to be done to ensure an equitable quality workplace environment for everyone, especially for Blacks as a group. Participants in this study overcame formidable obstacles and displayed great strength, sense of optimism and qualities contrary to the ways Blacks are often portrayed.

The findings from this study highlighted the positive image of a group of Black workers who were resilient and optimistic individuals who effectively appraised and coped with workplace racial discrimination incidents despite all odds. This study provided insight into a relatively high-functioning, strong, and tenacious group of Black workers who overcame the obstacles against them at the workplaces.

This study also advanced the racial discrimination stress in the Blacks' workplace literature. Perhaps, of particular interest was the overall impact of workplace racism on the nation in terms of the loss of years in potential contributions to human capital. However, while some participants envisioned what a life without workplace racial discrimination would look like, readers can imagine the extent of progress that can be achieved without the negative influence of workplace racial discrimination.

References

Abel, Jaison R. and Deitz, (2016). *Richard, Underemployment in the Early Careers of College Graduates Following the Great Recession* (September). NBER Working Paper No. w22654, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2840602

Aigner, Dennis J. and Glen G. Cain (1977). Statistical theories of discrimination in labor markets. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 175-187.

Aldwin, C. M. (2004). *Stress, coping, and development: An integrative perspective*. Guilford Press.

Allport, G.W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Alridge, D. P. (2003). The dilemmas, challenges, and duality of an African American Educational historian. *Educational Researcher, 32*(9), 25-34.

American Psychological Association. (2015). *APA dictionary of Psychology* (2nd ed.). Author.

http://www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/employment/jobpateeo1/2011/index.cfm#select_label

Andrew, D., Nonnecke, B., Preece, J. (2003). *Electronic survey methodology. A case study in reaching hard to involve internet users. International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction, 16*(2), 185-210.

Aneshensel, Carol S. (1992). Social stress: Theory and research. *Annual Review of Sociology 18*, 15 – 38.

Antonovsky, A. (1979). *Health, stress and coping.* Jossey-Bass.

Appley, M. H., & Trumbull, R. (1986). *Development of the stress concept.* In M. H. Appley & R. Trumbell (Eds.), *Dynamics of stress*: Physiological, psychological, and social perspectives (pp. 3-16). Plenum.

Attorney General of the State of New York Civil Rights Bureau (2009). *"Investigation and Findings,"*

http://www.oag.state.ny.us/sites/default/files/pdfs/bureaus/civil_rights/The%20City%20of%20Niagara%20Falls%20AOD.pdf

Avison, W. R., Turner, R. J. 1988. *Stressful life events and depressive symptoms: Disaggregating the effects of acute stressors and chronic strains*. Journal of Health Social Behavior, *29*(3), 253-64.

Azza J., & Ahmad-Tajuddin, A. (2013). *Proceedings from: ATLAS.ti User Conference 2013: Defining professional communication skills for Malaysian graduates*: Looking at trustworthiness. Berlin, Germany: Technische Universität Berlin. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.14279/depositonce-4846

Barnes P. W., Lightsey O. R. Jr. (2005). *Perceived racist discrimination, coping, stress, and life satisfaction*. *Journal of Multicultural Counselling & Development*, *33*, 48–61

Beauchamp, T.L. & Bowie, N.E. (1993). *Ethical Theory and Business* (4th ed). Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Becker, B. E., Hills, S.M. (1981). Youth attitudes and adult labor market activity. *Industrial Relations, 20*, 60–70.

Becker, B. E. (1980). *Perceived discrimination, work attitudes, and labor market experience.* U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

Bell, E. L. (1990). *The bicultural life experience of career-oriented black women. Journal of Organizational Behavior, II*, 459-477

Bendick, M., Jackson, C., Reinoso, V. (1994). *Measuring employment discrimination through controlled experiments. Review of Black Politics & Economics, 23,* 25–48.

Bertrand, M. & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha And Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination. *The American Economic Review, 94*(4), 991-1013.

Bianchi F.T., Zea M.C., Poppen PJ, Reisen C.A., Echeverry J.J. (2004). *Coping as a mediator of the impact of sociocultural factors on health behavior among HIV-positive Latino gay men. Psychology & Health*, *19*(1), :89–101.

Billings, A.G., & Moos, R. (1981). The Role of Coping Responses and Social Resources in Attenuating the Stress of Life Events. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 4*, 139-157.

Billingsley, A. (1992). *Climbing Jacob's ladder: The enduring legacy of African American families.* Simon & Schuster.

Bluestone, B. (1972). The Tripartite Economy: Labor Markets and the Working Poor. *Poverty and Human Resources, 5*, 15-35.

Blau, F. D. and Kahn, L.M. (1981). Causes and Consequences of Layoffs. *Economic Inquiry*, XIX, 270-295.

Borrell, L. N. et al., (2007). Self-reported Racial Discrimination and Substance Use in the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Adults (CARDIA) Study, 166. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 1068.

Borysenko, M., & Borysenko, J. (1987). Stress, behavior, and immunity: Animal models and mediating mechanisms. *General Hospital Psychiatry, 4* (1), 59-67.

Bowen-Reid, T. L., & Harrell, J. P. (2002). Racist experiences and health outcomes: An examination of spirituality as a buffer. *Journal of Black Psychology, 28*(1), 18-36.

Boyd-Franklin, N. (1989). Black families in therapy: *A multisystem approach.* Guilford Press.

Braunsdorf, M. S. (1989). *Cognitive appraisal, stress, coping, and encounter outcomes of law*

enforcement officers (Order No. 9004990). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (303701091). Retrieved from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/3037010 91?accountid=15178

Brief, A. P., Buttram, R. T., Reizenstein, R. M., Pugh, S. D., & al, e. (1997). Beyond good intentions: The next steps toward racial equality in the American workplace. *The Academy of Management Executive, 11*(4), 59-72. Retrieved from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/2105256 05?accountid=15178

Brondolo, E., Brady, V. H., Pencille, M., Beatty, D., & Contrada, R. J. (2009). Coping with racism: A selective review of the literature and a theoretical and methodological critique. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 32*(1), 64-88. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10865-008-9193-0

Brunsma, David & Feagin, Joe & McKinney, Karyn. (2003). The Many Costs of Racism. *Contemporary Sociology, 32*, 684. doi:10.2307/1556631.

Bynum, M. S., Burton, E. T., & Best, C. (2007). Racism experience and psychological functioning in African American college freshmen: Is racial socialization a buffer? *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*(1), 64-71.

Cancio AS, Evans TD, Maume DJ. (1996). Reconsidering the declining significance of race: Racial differences in early career wages. American Sociology Review, 61, 541–556.

Carpenter, B. N. (Ed.). (1992). *Personal coping: Theory, research, and application.* Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group.

Carter, R. T. et al., (2004). Racial Discrimination and Race-based Traumatic Stress: An

Exploratory Investigation, in Handbook of Racial-Cultural Psychology and Counseling. Training & Practice, Volume 2, 467. *Robert T. Carter Ed., 2004) [hereinafter Carter, HANDBOOK]; Carter, Recognizing and Assessing Race-based Traumatic Stress, supra note I1, at 19.*

Carter, R. T. (2007). Racism and psychological and emotional injury: Recognizing and assessing race-based traumatic stress. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*(1), 13-105.

Carver C.S., Scheier, M.F., Weintraub, J.K. (1989). Assessing coping strategies: a theoretically based approach. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 56*(2), 267-83. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.56.2.267. PMID: 2926629.

Cheng, C. (2003). Cognitive and motivational processes underlying coping flexibility: A dual-process model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(2), 425-438. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.425

Cocchiara, F. (2009). *Sociolinguistic cues, perceived race and employment selection outcomes: An exploration of the aversive racism framework*. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Arlington, United States -- Texas. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global Database

Cochran, S. D., Mays, V.M. (1994). Depressive distress among homosexually active African American men and women. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 151*, 524–529.

Constantine, M. G., Donnelly, P. C., & Myers, L. T. (2002). Collective self-esteem and Africultural coping styles in African American adolescents. *Journal of Black Studies, 32*(6), 698-710.

Corsini, R. J., & Auerbach, A. J. (1996). *Concise encyclopedia of psychology* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.

Creswell, J. (2015). *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*. SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V.L. (2011) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Cokley, K. & Williams, W. (2005). A psychometric examination of the Africentric Scale Challenges in measuring Afrocentric values. *Journal of Black Studies, 35*, 827-843. 10.1177/0021934704266596.

Daly, A., Jennings, J., Beckett, J. O., & Leashore, B. R. (1995). Effective coping strategies of African Americans. *Social Work, 40*(2), 240-248. Retrieved from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/215275283?accountid=15178

Danoff-Burg, S., Prelow, H. M., & Swenson, R. R. (2004). Hope and life satisfaction in Blac college students coping with race-related stress. *Journal of Black Psychology, 30*(2), 208-228.

Debois, Stefan, (March 8, 2019). *Advantages & Disadvantages of Questionnaires*. Survey Anyplace. https://surveyanyplace.com/questionnaire-pros-and-cons/

Derrick, R. C. (1997, March). Healing the wounds of racism. *Essence, 27*, 37-38.

Dohrenwend, B. P., Dohrenwend, B. S. (1969). *Social Status and Psychological Disorder*: *A Causal Inquiry.* Wiley- Interscience.

Dorr N, Brosschot JF, Sollers JJ III, Thayer JF. (2007). Damned if you do, damned if you don't:

The differential effect of expression and inhibition of anger on cardiovascular recovery in Black and White males. *International Journal of Psychophysiology, 66*(2), 125–134. [PubMed: 17532076]

Dressler, W. W. 1988. Social consistency and psychological distress. *Journal of Health Social Behavior, 29*(1), 79-91.

Duncan LE, Helmeke KB, Sori CF. *The therapist's notebook for integrating spirituality in counseling: Homework, handouts, and activities for use in psychotherapy*. Haworth Press; New York, NY: 2006. Using concepts of NTU psychotherapy to encourage the use of prayer: Overcoming distress and trauma in Christian clients; pp. 251–255.

Eckenrode, J. 1984. Impact of chronic and acute stressors on daily reports of mood. *Journal of Personal Social Psychology, 46*(4), 907-18.

Elligan, D., Utsey, S. (1999). Utility of an African-centered support group for African American men confronting societal racism and oppression. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 5*(2), May, 159-165.

Essed, P. (1990). *Everyday Racism: Reports from Women of Two Cultures*. Hunter House.

Farley, R. (1996). Racial differences in the search for housing: Do Whites and Blacks use the same techniques to find housing? *Housing Policy Debate, 7*(2), 367–386.

Feagin, J. R., & McKinney, K. D. (2003). *The Many Costs of Racism*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Feagin, J. R. (1991). *The continuing significance of race: Anti-Black discrimination in public places. American Sociological Review, 56*, 101-116.

Feagin, J. R., & Eckberg, D.L. (1980). Discrimination: Motivation, action, effects, and context. *Annual Review of Sociology, 6*(1), 1-20

Feagin, Joe R. and Sikes, Melvin P. (1994). *Living with racism: The Black middle-class experience.* Beacon Press.

Fernandes, L. and Alsaeed, N. (2004). *African Americans and Workplace Discrimination.* European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies Vol.2, No.2, pp. 56-76, June 2014 Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)

Fernandez, J. (1981). *Racism and Sexism in Corporate Life: Changing Values in American Business.* Lexington Books.

Flanagan, R.J. (February 1977). Labor force experience, job turnover and racial wage differentials. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 10-30.

Folkman, S. (2013). Stress: Appraisal and coping. In Gellman, M. D., Turner, J. R. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Behavioral Medicine* (pp. 1913-1915). Springer.

Folkman, S., Lazarus, R.S., Dunkel-Schetter, C, DeLongis, A., & Gruen, RJ. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*(5), 992-1003.

Folkman, S., Lazarus, R., Gruen, R. J., & DeLongis, A. (1986). Appraisal, coping, health status, and psychological symptoms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*, 571 – 579.

Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1980). *An analysis of coping in a middle-aged community sample. Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 21*(3), 219– 239. https://doi.org/10.2307/2136617

Franklin, A. J., & Boyd-Franklin, N. (2000). Invisibility syndrome: A clinical model of the

effects of racism on African-American males. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,*

70(1), 33–41.

https://doi.org/10.1037/h0087691

Friedman, J. L. (1989). *Appraisal of stress, coping, and performance of high school*

students (Order No. 8916020). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

(303709142). Retrieved from

https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/3037091

42?accountid=15178

Frydenberg, E. & Lewis, R. (2004). Adolescents least able to cope: How do they respond to their

stresses? *British Journal of Guidance & Counseling, 32*(1), 25-37.

Gambrill, E.D. (2006). *Social Work Practice: A Critical Thinker's Guide.* Oxford University

Press.

Gary, L. E. (1995). African American men's perspective of racial discrimination: A

sociopolitical analysis. *Social Work Research, 79* (4), 207-217.

Gill, R., & Matheson, K. (2006). Responses to discrimination: The role of emotion and

expectations for emotional regulation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,*

32(2), 149-161.

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Sociology Press.

Gould, Elise. (2019b). *Stark Black – White Divide in Wages Is Widening Further*. Working

(Economic Policy Institute), February 27.

Green, J., & Thorogood, N. (2013). *Qualitative Methods for Health Research*. Sage.

Griggs v. Duke Power Company. (n.d.). *Oyez*. Retrieved April 26, 2017, from

https://www.oyez.org/cases/1970/124

Hadden, R.W. (1997). *Sociological Theory: An Introduction to Classical Tradition*. Broadview Press.

Harrell, S. P. (2000). A multidimensional conceptualization of racism-related stress: Implications for the well-being of people of color. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 70*(1), 42-57.

Harris, T. O. (1992). Some Reflections on the Process of Social Support and Nature of Unsupportive Behaviors. Pp. 171-90 in *The Meaning and Measurement of Social Support*, H. O. F. Veiel and U. Baumann (Eds.). Hemisphere.

Haw, M. (1982). Women, work, and stress: A review and agenda for the future. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 23*, 132–144.

Hill, R. (1972). *The Strengths of Black Families.* Emerson Hall.

Hobfoll, S. E. (1988). *The Ecology of Stress*. Hemisphere.

Hopkins, D. (1993). *Shoes that Fit Our Feet: Sources for a Constructive Black Theology*. Orbis Books.

House, J. S. (1981). *Work stress and Social Support*. Addison-Wesley.

House, J.S., & Williams, D. R. (2000). Understanding and reducing racial / ethnic disparities in health. In B. D. Smedley & S. L. Syme (Eds.) *Promoting health intervention strategies from social and behavioral research.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Houston, L. N. (1990). *Psychological Principles and the Black Experience.* New York University Press of America.

Humphrey, Melvin (1977). U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, *(A Case for Fair-Share Employment)*, Washington, D. C. Research Number 53.

Jameel, M.; Yerardi, Shapiro, L. J. (2019). *More than 1 million employment discrimination complaints have been filed with the government since 2010. Here's what happened to them*. The Washington Post in collaboration with the Center for Public Integrity (Feb. 28).

Jones, Edward. (May 1986). Black managers: The dream deferred. *Harvard Business Review.*

Joshi, K. (2005). Covert-vs-overt discrimination. In P. Gap Min, *Encyclopedia of racism in the United States* (Vol. 1). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Kaufman, R. L. (2002). Assessing alternative perspectives on race and sex employment segregation. *American Sociological Review, 67*, 547-572.

Kluckhorn, F., & Strodtbeck, F. (1961). *Variations in Value Orientations*. Greenwood Press.

Krieger N., Waterman P. D., Hartman C., Bates L. M., Stoddard A. M., Quinn M. M., et al. (2006). Social hazards on the job: workplace abuse, sexual harassment, and racial discrimination —a study of Black, Latino, and White low-income women and men workers in the United States. *International Journal of Health Services 36*, 51–85. 10.2190/3EMB-YKRH-EDJ2-0H19

Kuo, B. C. H., Roysircar, G., & Newby-Clark, I. R. (2006). Development of the cross-cultural coping scale: Collective, avoidance, and engagement strategies. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 39*, 161-181.

La Gory, M., Ritchey, F. J., Mullis, J. 1990. Depression among the homeless. *Journal of Health Social Behavior. 31*(1), 87-101.

Lalonde, R. N., Majumder, S., & Parris, R. D. (1995). Preferred responses to situations of housing and employment discrimination. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 25*, 1105-1119.

Lam, A. G., & Zane, N. W. (2004). Ethnic differences in coping with interpersonal stressors:

    A test of self-construals as cultural mediators. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 35*,

    446-459.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Psychological Stress and the Coping Process.*

    Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Lazarus, R. S. (1993). *Coping theory and research: Past, present and future.*

    *Psychosomatic Medicine, 55,*234-247.

Lazarus, R. S. (1999). *Stress and Emotion: A New Synthesis.* Springer Publishing Co

Lazarus, R. S. (2000). Relational meaning and discrete emotions. In K. R. Scherer, A. Schorr, &

    T. Johnstone (Eds.), *Appraisal processes in emotion: Theory, methods, research*. Oxford

    University Press.

Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (2017)

Leininger, M. (1977). Cultural and biological diversity and health care. *Nursing Clinics of*

    North America, I2(1), 4-18.

Lewis et al., (2006). Chronic exposure to everyday discrimination and coronary artery

    calcification in African American women: The SWAN Heart Study. *Psychosomatic*

    Medicine, 362, 363-65.

Lewis, R. B. (2004). NVivo 2.0 and ATLAS.ti 5.0: A comparative review of two

    popular qualitative data-analysis programs. *Field Methods, 16*(4), 439-469.

Leymann, H. (1990). Mobbing and psychological terror at workplaces. *Violence and Victims,*

    5(2), 119, 126.

Li, M.-h., & Yang, Y. (2009). Determinants of problem solving, social support seeking, and

avoidance: A path analytic model. *International Journal of Stress Management, 16*(3), 155–176.

https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016844

Lincoln, C., & Mamiya, L. (1990). *The Black Church in the African American Experience.* Duke University Press.

Link, C. R. and Ratledge, E.C. (February 1977). The Influence of the Quantity and Quality of Education on Black-White Earnings Differentials: Some New Evidence. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 18-30.

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation.* Sage Publications.

Major B., McCoy S. K., Kaiser C. R., Quinton W. J. (2003a). "Prejudice and self-esteem: a transactional model," in *European Review of Social Psychology, 14*. Strobe W., Hewstone M., (Eds.). Psychology Press, 77–104.

Mantzicopoulos, P. C. (1989). *Coping with school failure: A study of elementary school children* (Order No. 9006431). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (303680516). Retrieved from

https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/3036805 16?accountid=15178

Marks, L., Nesteruk, O., Swanson, M., Garrison, B., & Davis, T. (2005). Religion and health among African Americans: A qualitative examination. *Research on Aging, 27*(4), 447-474.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). Sage Publications. ISBN 9781412924894

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychology Review, 50*(4), 370-396.

Mays, V.M. (1995). Black women, work, stress, and perceived discrimination: The focus support

    group model as an intervention for stress reduction. *Culture and Mental Health, 1*(1), 53–

    65.

Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy.* Praeger.

McCrae, R. R. (1984). Situational determinants of coping responses: Loss, threat, challenge.

    Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46, 919-928.

McEwen, B. (2002). *The End of Stress as We Know It.* Dana Press.

Mellor, D. (2004). Responses to racism: Taxonomy of coping styles used by aboriginal

    Australians. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 74*(1), 56-71. Retrieved from

    https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/2368661

    72?accountid=15178

Merriam, S. B., & Simpson, E. L. (2000). *A guide to research for educators and trainers of adults*

    (2nd ed.). Krieger.

McAdoo, H. (1983). Societal stress: *The Black family*. In H. McCubbin & C. Figley (Eds.),

    Coping with normative transitions (Vol. 1, pp. 178-187). New York: Brunnermazel.

Miles, H.B., and A.M. Huberman (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis.* Sage Publications.

Mirowsky, John and Ross, Catherine E. (1990). Control or defense? Depression and sense of

    control over good and bad outcomes. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 31*, 71-86.

Mirowsky, John and Ross, Catherine E. (1989). *Social Causes of Psychological Distress*. Aldine

    de Gruyter.

Moustakas, Clark E. (1994) *Phenomenological Research Methods.* Sage.

Nancy Krieger et al., (2006). Social Hazards on the Job: Workplace Abuse, Sexual

Harassment, and Racial Discrimination - A Study of Black, Latino and White Low-Income Women and Men Workers in the United States. *International Journal of Health SERVServices, 51.*

National Association of Social Workers. (2018). *Code of ethics of the national association of social workers.* Retrieved from:

https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp

Noh S, Beiser M, Kaspar V, Hou F, Rummens J. (1999). Perceived racial discrimination, depression, and coping: A study of Southeast Asian refugees in Canada. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 40*, 193–207. [PubMed: 10513144]

Offermann, L. R., Basford, T. E., Graebner, R., Jaffer, S., De Graaf, S. B., & Kaminsky, S. E. (2014). See no evil: *Color blindness and perceptions of subtle racial discrimination in the workplace. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 20*(4), 499–507. https://doi:10.1037/a0037237

Outlaw, F. H. (1993). Stress and coping: The influence of racism on the cognitive appraisal processing of African Americans. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 14*, 399-409

Parham, T.A. (1999). Invisibility syndrome in African Descent people: Understanding the cultural manifestations of the struggle for self-affirmation. *The Counseling Psychologist, 27*(6), 794-801.

Park, C. L., Folkman, S., & Bostrom, A. (2001). Appraisals of controllability and coping in caregivers and HIV+ men: Testing the goodness of fit hypothesis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 69*(3), 481-488.

Parsons, T., & Shils, E. (1967). *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Harvard University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Payne, M. (1997). *Modern Social Work Theory* (2nd ed). Lyceum Books, Inc.

Pearlin, L. I., Meneghan, E. G., Lieberman, M. A., & Mullan, J. T. (1981). The stress process. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 21*, 337-356.

Pearlin, L. I., (1983). Role Strains and Personal Stress. *Psychosocial Stress*. Academic Press. ISBN 9780123975607. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-397560-7.50006-4. (https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780123975607500064)

Peters, M.F., & Massey, G. (1983). Mundane extreme environmental stress in family stress theories: The case of Black families in White America. *Social Stress and the Family, 6*, 193-218.

Peters, R. (2002). The role of chronic stress, stress emotions, and emotion regulation in hypertension among African Americans. *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section B: The Sciences and Engineering*, *62* (12-B), 5645.

Piper, Ralph E., II. (1998). *An examination of the stress and coping process of black managers in predominantly white organizations* (Order No. 9920989). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304427427). Retrieved from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:8443/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/3044274 27?accountid=15178

Plummer, D.L., & Slane, S. (1996). Patterns of coping in racially stressful situations. *Journal of Black Psychology, 22*(3), 302-315.

Popper, Karl R. (1963). *Science as Falsification: Excerpt was originally published in Conjectures and Refutations*. Retrieved from:

http://www.stephenjaygould.org/ctrl/popper_falsification.html

Priest, R. (1991). Racism and prejudice as negative impacts on African American clients in therapy. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 70*, 213-215.

Rambaree, K. and Faxelid, E. (2013). *Considering Adductive Thematic Network Analysis with ATLAS.ti 6.2.* In N. Sappleton (Ed.). Advancing Research Methods with New Media Technologies (pp. 170-186). Hershey PA, USA: IGI Global.

Ramseur, H. (1991). Psychological healthy Black adults. In Reginald Jones (Ed.) *Black Psychology* (3rd edition), 353-378.

Rankin, K. (2017). *When it comes to Racial Wealth Gap, Structural Racism Always Wins.* IMDiversity. (February 7).

Rees, C. J., & Redfern, D. (2000). *Recognising the perceived causes of stress - A training and development perspective*. Industrial and Commercial Training, *32*(4), 120-127.

Riessman, Catherine Kohler. (1990). *Divorce Talk: Women and Men make Sense of Personal relationships.* Rutgers University Press.

Roberson, M. (1985). The influence of religious beliefs on health choices of Afro-Americans. *Topics in Clinical Nursing, 7*(3), 57-63.

Ross, E. (1978). *Black heritage in Social Welfare, 1860-1930.* Scarecrow Press.

Roussi, P., Miller, S. M., & Shoda, Y. (2000). Discriminative facility in the face of threat: Relationship to psychological distress. *Psychology and Health, 15*, 21-33.

Saldaňa, J. (2012). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Schleyer, T. K. L., and J. L. Forrest. 2000. *Methods for the design and Administration of Web-*

based Surveys. J. Am. Med. Info. Assoc. 7:416-425. doi: 10.1136/jamia.2000.0070416

Selye, H. (1976). *The Stress of Life* (Revised Edition). McGraw-Hill.

Silver, C. & Lewins, A. (2014). *Using Software in Qualitative Research: A Step-by-Step Guide.* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Siporin, M. (1975). *Introduction to Social Work Practice.* Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc.

Slavin, L.A., Rainer, K.L., McCreary, M.L., & Gowda, K.K. (1991). Toward a Multicultural Model of the Stress Process. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 70*, 156-163.

Smith, E. M. J. (1985). Ethnic minorities: Life stress, social support, and mental health issues. *Counseling Psychologist, 13*, 537-579.

Smith RA. (2002). Race, gender, and authority in the workplace: theory and research. *Annual Review of Sociology, 28*, 509–542.

Smyth, K., & Yarandi, H. N. (1996). Factor analysis of the ways of coping questionnaire for African American women. *Nursing Research, 45*(1), 25- 29.

Stangor, C, Swim, J.K., Van Allen, K.L., & Sechrist, G.B. (2002). Reporting Discrimination in Public and Private Contexts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*(1), 69-1 A.

Steber, Colson (2017). *In-Depth Interviews: Data Collection Advantages and Disadvantages. Communication for Research* (CFR).

https://www.cfrinc.net/cfrblog/in-depth-interviewing

Stevenson, H. C. (Ed.). (2003). *Playing with Anger: Teaching Coping Skills to African American Boys Through Athletics and Culture.* Praeger.

Swim, J.K., Hyers, L.L., Cohen, L.L., Fitzgerald, D.C., & Bylsma, W.H. (2003). *African American college students' experiences with everyday racism: Characteristics of and responses to these incidents. Journal of Black Psychology, 29*, 38-67.

Tacneaux, N. (2012). *Discrimination in the Workplace: Race, Age and Gender: Discrimination-Impact On Performance in the Public Sector.* State University of New York. http://www.ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/pdfs/bureaus/civil_rights/The%20City%20of%20 Niagara%20Falls%20AOD.pdf

Thoits, Peggy A. (1995). Stress, coping, and social support processes: Where are we? What next? *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, (Extra Issue), 53-79.

Thompson, V. L. (1996). Perceived experiences of racism as stressful life events. *Community Mental Health, 52*(3), 223-233.

Thorn, G.R., Sarata, B. (1998). Psychotherapy with African American men: What we know and what we need to know. *Journal of multicultural counseling and development, 26*(4), 240-253.

Tomaskovic-Devey D, Thomas M, Johnson K. (2005). Race and the accumulation of human capital across the career: A theoretical model and fixed-effects application. *American Journal of Sociology, 111*, 58–89.

Turner, F. (1996). Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches (4th ed.). The Free Press

Turner, M.A., Fix, M. & Struyk, R.J. (1991). Hiring discrimination against Black men. *The Urban Institute Policy and Research Report, summer*, 4-5.

Turner, R. J., Noh, S. 1988. *Physical disability and depression: A longitudinal analysis*. Journal of Health and Social Behavioral, *29*(1), 23-37.

Turner, R. J. and Roszell, P. (1994). Psychological Resources and Stress Process. pp. 179-210 in *Stress and Mental Health: Contemporary Issues and Prospects for the Future*, edited by W. R. Avison and I. H. Gotlib. Plenum.

Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Quintana, S. M., Lee, R. M., Cross, W. E., Jr, Rivas-Drake, D., Schwartz, S. J., Syed, M., Yip, T., Seaton, E., & Ethnic and Racial Identity in the 21st Century Study Group (2014). Ethnic and racial identity during adolescence and into young adulthood: an integrated conceptualization. *Child Development, 85*(1), 21–39. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12196

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019). "*Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey.* http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS14000000.

U.S. Bureau of the Census (2018). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1992.* Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of Labor, *Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014). Employment situation summary.* Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012). *Employment and earnings online*. Retrieved From http://www.bls.gov/opub/ee/home.htm

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1981). *Affirmative action in the 1980s: Dismantling the process of discrimination*. Clearinghouse Publication 65, Washington, D.C.U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Retrieved from

https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges.cfm

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (2016): *Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace*. Retrieved from:

https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/report.cfm#_Toc453686298

Utsey, S. O., Adams, E. P., & Bolden, M. (2000). Development and initial validation of the Africultural coping systems inventory. *Journal of Black Psychology, 26*, 194-215.

Utsey, S. O., Ponterotto, J. G., Reynolds, A. L., & Cancelli, A. A. (2000). Racial discrimination,

coping, life satisfaction, and self-esteem among African Americans. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 78*, 72– 80.

Utsey, S. O., Brown, C., & Bolden, M. A. (2004). Testing the structural invariance of the Africultural Coping Systems Inventory across three samples of African descent populations. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 64*, 185-195

Van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.* State University of New York Press.

Von Hippel, C., Sekaquaptewa, D., and McFarlane, M. (2015). Stereotype threat among women in finance: negative effects on identity, workplace well-being, and recruiting. *Psychology of Women Quarterly 39*, 405–414. doi: 10.1177/0361684315574501

Wallace, P.A. (1980). *Black women in the labor force.* MIT Press.

Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Atonio. (n.d.). Oyez. Retrieved April 26, 2017, from https://www.oyez.org/cases/1988/87-1387

White, B. (2009). Addressing career success issues of African Americans in the workplace: An undergraduate business program intervention. *The Career Development Quarterly, 58*(1), 71-76. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global Database.

Whyte, William & Bruyn, Severyn. (2007). The human perspective in sociology: The methodology of participant observation. *Journal of Applied Social Science, 1*. 10.1177/193672440700100201.

Wilson F, Tienda M, Wu L. (1995). *Race and unemployment: Labor market experiences of Black and White men,* 1968–1988. *Work Occupation, 22*(3), 245–270.

Wilson, M.N. (1986). The Black extended family: An analytical consideration. *Developmental Psychology, 22*(2), 246-258.

Wilson, V. and Rodgers III, W. M. (2016). *Black – White wage gaps expand with rising wage inequality*. Economic Policy Institute. (September 20).

Wilson, V. (2019). *Black unemployment is at least twice as high as White unemployment at the national level and in 14 States and the District of Columbia*. Economic Policy Institute. (April 4).

Williams, D. R. (1999). Race, socioeconomic status, and health: The added effects of racism and discrimination. In: N.E. Adler, M. Marmot, B.S. McEwen, & J. Stewart (Eds.). Socioeconomic status and health in industrial nations. Social, psychological and biological pathways. *Annals of New York Academy of Sciences,* 896,173-188.

William, J. and Wilson, V. (2019). *Black workers endure persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes.* (August 27)

Woodruff, M. (August 29, 2013). *The income gap between blacks and whites has only gotten worse since 1960's.* Business Insider.

http://www.businessinsider.com/the-income-gap-between-blacks-and-whites-2013-8

Wojnar, D. and Swanson, K. (2007). Phenomenology: An Exploration. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 25*(3), 172-180.

Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I hereby voluntarily agree to participate in the proposed research study titled:

"Coping with Structural Racism: What Strategies and Adaptation Mechanisms do Blacks Use to Deal with Perceived Racial Discrimination at Workplaces?"

The proposed research project will be undertaken by Fabian Egeruoh, a doctoral candidate at Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, New York, New York under the direction of Dr. Susan E. Mason.

I entirely recognize that my intention to participate in this research project is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason. Also, I understand that I can demand for the return of all information about me and/or have them deleted at any time and stage of the research process.

The reason for the proposed study is to understand and document the coping mechanisms Black employees use to deal with stressors resulting from perceived workplace racial discrimination. The proposed study will be interested in understanding how workplace racial stressors affect participants and how they deal or fail to deal with such incidents.

· To participate in an anonymous online Qualtrics survey, and

· I understand that the Qualtrics software will store all data for retrieval and analysis later.

 I understand that if I volunteer to partake in the proposed research project, I may be required to:

 No risk is expected from your participation because the study is anonymous. The researcher will not have access to the identity of the participants.

To further enhance confidentiality, all electronic data relating to participants for the proposed research project will be safe guided under lock and key of my filing cabinet; those stored in my working computer/portable hard drives will be password protected.

If you volunteer to partake in this anonymous research project, you also may decide to discontinue at any time during the study by simply exiting the questionnaire and all the information you provided will be digitally deleted. You are also free to skip question/s.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and the researcher will answer any further questions regarding the proposed study throughout the study period, and can be contacted at

718-723-7897 (home),
347-586-8362 (cell) or by

email at fabian.egeruoh@mail.yu.edu

You may also contact the study supervisor, Dr. Susan E. Mason at 212-960-0806, Email: masonse@yu.edu

By consenting to this informed consent, I am agreeing to voluntarily partake in the proposed study project.

Also, you may print and retain a copy of the informed consent form for your records.

Please select one

- ○ I consent

- ○ I do not consent

Appendix B

Survey

Qualifying Questions

Participant Recruitment Email

Subject: A Request to Partake in an "ANONYMOUS" Online Survey Titled:

"Coping with Structural Racism: What Strategies and Adaptation Mechanisms do Blacks Use to Deal with Perceived Racial Discrimination at Workplaces?"

Dear Potential Anonymous Study Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this assessment. The purpose of this study is to understand and document the strategies Black employees use to deal with perceived workplace racial discrimination. Specifically, the proposed study will be examining the coping mechanisms employed to buffer racial discrimination you have encountered in your workplace and its impacts.

To ensure you are qualified to participate in this assessment, please answer the following seven questions:

Q1
Have you experienced on-the-job racial discrimination?

YES	No
☐	☐

Q2
Are you a Black Person of African descendant?

YES	NO
☐	☐

Q3
Are you a current or retired worker with a minimum of 5-years of on-the-job service?

YES	NO
☐	☐

Q4
Are you 25 years or older?

YES	NO

☐   ☐

Q5

Did you digitally consent to the Informed Consent?

YES   NO

☐   ☐

Q6

Are you willing to participate in an anonymous online survey?

YES   NO

☐   ☐

Q7

Are you willing to freely discuss and answer questions about your thoughts, ideas,
regarding workplace racial discrimination and coping mechanisms that you may have used?

YES   NO

☐   ☐

This study will consist of one online survey likely to take 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Once
you begin you are free to answer all questions, skip some you would prefer not to respond to or
discontinue. Discontinued surveys will be deleted and not used in the data collection.

The survey does not ask for your name and does not report identifying data such as email
addresses. The researcher will not be able to connect you with your responses.

The Informed Consent Form, at the start of the survey questions contains the details about the
purpose of the study, how the study will be conducted, how all your collected information will be
concealed and properly secured. After reading the informed consent, you will be able to decide
whether to voluntarily participate in this study. If you have consented to participate, click on:

- ⊙ I Consent

Finally, even though this is an anonymous survey, if you have any questions or concerns in this
regard, please do not hesitate to contact me at (347) 586-8362, email:
fabian.egeruoh@mail.yu.edu

You may also contact my study supervisor, Dr. Susan E. Mason, Professor of Social Work &
Sociology, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, 2495 Amsterdam Avenue,
New York, NY 10038. Phone: (212) 960-0806, Email: masonse@yu.edu

If you know anyone who meets the above recruitment criteria and may be interested in
participating in this survey, please forward this link to them:

Sincerely,

Fabian Egeruoh, BS, MA, MBA
PhD. Candidate
Wurzweiler School of Social Work
Yeshiva University, New York, NY

Participants' Demographic Data

The following demographic data will help to gather some general background information about you.

Q8
What is your gender?

Male	Female	I do not want to respond
☐	☐	☐

Q9
What is your age?

[   ]

Q10
What is your highest educational attainment?

- ○ Less than High School Graduate

- ○ High School Graduate/Equivalent

- ○ Some College/Associate Degree

- ○ Bachelor's Degree

- ○ Graduate/ Professional Degree

Q11
Who is/was your employer?

- ○ Government

- ○ Other, specify:

[   ]

Q12

What is/was the title of your job's position?
Please specify.

[   ]

Q13
How long have/had you been at the workplace when the perceived racial discrimination incident occurred?

- ○ 1 - 5 years

- ○ 6 - 10 years

- ○ More than 10 years

Q14
What is/was your relationship with the person/s responsible for this incident?

- ○ Someone who reports to you

- ○ Supervisor

- ○ Colleague

Appendix C - Survey

Q15

Please answer the following questions about the incident.
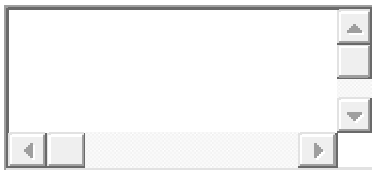
Q 15 a

What happened?
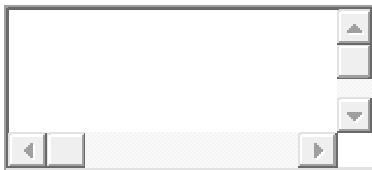
Q 15 b

When and where did it happen?

Q 15 c

Describe how you handled and/or coped with this incident

Q 15 d

How long have you been working at the workplace where this occurred?

Q 15 e

In your view, how successful was the strategy you used to cope or handle this incident, and did the strategy affect your work behavior or attitude toward work?

Q 15 f

How the strategy affected your work behavior or attitude toward work?
Please describe in detail.

Q16

Have there been other incidents that you can recall where you reacted in the same way or differently from the one you just mentioned?

Q 16 a

If there are others, how successful were your coping strategies for this or these incidents?
Give examples. (please skip this question if there were no others that you recall).

Q 16 b

In any of these incidents, did you report the incident/s to any legal authority or workplace's Human Resources? If yes, which legal authority did you report the incident to? (This can include your workplace personnel agency or an external agency). Please provide your reasons for your actions.

Q 16 c

If you did not report the incident to a legal authority or workplace's Human Resources, what was your reason?

Q 16 d

If you made a report to a legal authority or to your workplace's Human Resources, what was the outcome of your complaint?

Q 16 e

Did any colleagues in your workplace provided suggestions?
If yes, what suggestions were provided to you by other employees in the workplace?

Q 16 f

Did you follow these suggestions or not? Please explain?

Q 16 g

What type of support or suggestions did your family or friends provide to you?

Q 16 h

Did you follow these suggestions or not? Please explain?

[text box]

Q 17
Can you describe your over-all reaction to these incidents and their outcomes?

[text box]

Q 18
Did the suggestions from friends or families have an effect on your productivity at your workplace? Please explain.

[text box]

Q 19
Did you remain at the workplace where these incidents took place?
If not, can you describe how they may have affected you at other jobs you may have had?

[text box]

Q 20
Looking back at these incidents, are there lessons you have learned and wish to share regarding your reaction(s) to these and similar incidents?

[text box]

Q 20 a
Do you think you coped or handled them in the best way? Is there something you would have done differently? Please explain.

Q 20 b

Have your ideas about these incidents remained the same or changed?

Q 20 c

Do you think you viewed them accurately at the time they occurred, or would you now view them differently? Please explain.

Is there anything you would like to add that has not been asked?

End of Survey. Survey Termination Options.

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE									
Participant ID	Gender	Age	Educational Level When Incident Occurred	Employer When Incident Occurred	Currently Working/Retired	Position At Work When Incident Occurred	# of years at work when incident occurred	Person Accused	Filed Complaint - YES / NO
P-1	Male	61	Bachelor's Degree	Government	Retired	Senior Compliance Officer	More than 10 years	Supervisor	YES
P-2	Female	60	Graduate/Professional Degree	Private	Currently Working	Administrator	6 -10 years	Supervisor	NO
P-4	Female	73	Graduate/Professional Degree	City Hospital	Currently Working	Associate Nurse specialist	6 -10 years	Colleague	NO
P-5	Female	65	Graduate/Professional Degree	Government	Currently Working	Management Analyst	More than 10 years	Supervisor	NO
P-8	Male	69	Graduate/Professional Degree	Government	Currently Working	Deputy Commissioner	1 - 5 years	Colleague	NO
P-10	Female	48	Graduate/Professional Degree	University	Currently Working	College Professor	1 - 5 years	Supervisor	NO
P-11	Female	47	Graduate/Professional Degree	Government	Currently Working	Social Worker	1 - 5 years	Supervisor	YES
P-12	Female	31	Graduate/Professional Degree	Healthcare	Currently Working	Staff Nurse III	6 -10 years	Colleague	NO
P-13	Female	68	Graduate/Professional Degree	Government	Currently Working	Senior Attorney	1 - 5 years	Supervisor	YES
P-14	Female	52	Graduate/Professional Degree	Willis Tower Watson	Currently Working	Vice President	1 - 5 years	Someone that reports to Participant	NO
P-15	Female	73	Graduate/Professional Degree	Government	Retired	Event Coordinator	1 - 5 years	Supervisor	NO
P-17	Female	62	Graduate/Professional Degree	Non-Government Entity	Currently Working	Officer	1 - 5 years	Supervisor	NO
P-18	Female	61	Graduate/Professional Degree	Hospital	Currently Working	Clinical Nutrition Manager	6 -10 years	Supervisor	NO
P-19	Female	70	Some College/Associate Degree	Company	Retired	Office Assistant	6 -10 years	Colleague	NO

| P-20 | Male | 59 | Graduate/Professional Degree | Government | Currently Working | Assistant College Professor | 6 -10 years | Supervisor | YES |
| P-21 | Female | 60 | Graduate/Professional Degree | Non-Government Organization | Currently Working | Dietitian/Patient Services Manager | 6 -10 years | Supervisor | NO |

FIGURE 1. THE COGNITIVE STRESS APPRAISAL & COPING PROCESS OF BLACK WORKERS' PERCEIVED WORKPLACE RACISM

Based on : Lazarus & Folkman (1984) Stress, Appraisal & Coping Therotical Framework

(1) **EVENT**

Person
R a c i s m
Environment

A racial discrimination incident at workplace against Black employee takes place.

(2) **Primary Appraisal**

S T R E S S F U L

The Black worker asks: What does stressor mean? How can it affect me?

Active Negative Emotion

Based on Primary Appraisal, the Black worker perceives threat as Stressful: Threat or Challenge.

(3) **Perceived Threat**

(4) **Perceived harm/loss**

(5) **Secondary Appraisal**

The Black worker perceives threat as stressful/beneficial, goes on to Cognitive evaluation to minimize harm / Maximize gain via coping response.

Passive Negative Emotion. Harm / Loss means that the damage has already been done and therefore, no need for coping

(6) **Inability to Cope**
Emotion-Focused Strategy

(7) **Ability to Cope**
Problem-Focused Strategy

Secondary Appraisal determines the Black worker is Powerless to handle the stressful situation / Event.

Secondary Appraisal determines the Black worker is In-Control of the stressful situation / event

(8) **SELF-CONTROL**

Avoidance
Distancing
Acceptance
Seek Support
Drug & Alcohol use
Ignore incident
Spirituality

The Black worker regulates stress through the following Self-Control coping strategies:

(9) **CONFRONTATIVE:**

Educate the oppressor
Call out racism
Demand better treatment
Proud of racial identity
Take control of situation
Seek revenge
Get people to intervene for you

The Black worker Regulate stress confrontatively via the following coping strategies

(10)

Combination of (6/8 & 7/9) - Emotion & Problem Focused Strategies

(Folkman et al. 1986, Outlaw 1993, Lalonde et al., 1995, Plummet & Slane, 1996) hypothesized that the Black worker in responding to stress-induced situation, may use both strategies of emotion-focused and problem-focused in combination.

221

Figure 2

Summary of Mellor's Taxonomy of Coping Styles

Summary of Mellor's Taxonomy of Coping Styles		
Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Defensive Responses	**Controlled Responses**	**Direct Responses**
Accepting racism by withdrawing, feeling helpless, & avoidance	Wanting to respond but deciding not to.	Being proud of one's racial identity & displaying it
Reassessing the situation to see to see that the oppressor will change & accepting oneself	Thinking of ways that they could have responded but did not	Taking control of the situation by responding before the oppressor commits an act or making light of the situation
		Getting people to intervene on one's behalf. Seeking revenge verbally or physically

Source - Mellor (2004)

Table 1

Black Labor Force Employment Availability, Participation Rates & Employment Gaps

Black Labor Force Employment Availability, Participation Rates & Employment Gaps			
1974			
EEO-1 Job Categories	Employment Availability Rate	Black Participation Rates	Black Employment Gaps
	A	B	C
	10.70%		(A - B)
1 Office & Managers		2.9%	7.8%
2 Professional		3.1%	7.6%
3 Technicians		7.3%	3.4%
4 Sales Workers		5.5%	5.2%
5 Office & Clericals		8.8%	1.9%
6 Craftworkers		7.0%	3.7%

Table 2

Charge Statistics (Charges filed with EEOC) 1997-2019

	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2002	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Charge Statistics (Charges filed with EEOC)																			
FY 1997 Through FY 2019																			
Total Charges	80,680	79,591	77,444	79,896	84,442	79,432	75,428	75,768	95,402	93,277	99,922	99,412	93,727	88,778	89,385	91,503	84,254	76,418	72,675
Race	29,199	28,820	28,819	28,945	29,910	27,696	26,740	27,238	33,937	33,579	35,890	33,512	33,068	31,073	31,027	32,309	28,528	24,600	23,976
	36.20%	36.20%	37.30%	36.20%	35.40%	34.90%	35.50%	35.90%	35.60%	36.00%	35.90%	33.70%	35.30%	35.00%	34.70%	35.30%	33.90%	32.20%	33.00%
Sex	24,728	24,454	23,907	25,194	25,536	24,249	23,094	23,247	28,372	28,028	29,029	30,356	27,687	26,027	26,396	26,934	25,605	24,655	23,532
	30.70%	30.70%	30.90%	31.50%	30.20%	30.50%	30.60%	30.70%	29.70%	30.00%	29.10%	30.50%	29.50%	29.30%	29.50%	29.40%	30.40%	32.30%	32.40%
National Origin	6,712	6,778	7,108	7,792	9,046	8,361	8,035	8,327	10,601	11,134	11,304	10,883	10,642	9,579	9,438	9,840	8,299	7,106	7,009
	8.30%	8.50%	9.20%	9.80%	10.70%	10.50%	10.70%	11.00%	11.10%	11.90%	11.30%	10.90%	11.40%	10.80%	10.60%	10.80%	9.80%	9.30%	9.60%
Religion	1,709	1,786	1,811	1,939	2,572	2,466	2,340	2,541	3,273	3,386	3,790	3,811	3,721	3,549	3,502	3,825	3,436	2,859	2,725
	2.10%	2.20%	2.30%	2.40%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.40%	3.40%	3.60%	3.80%	3.80%	4.00%	4.00%	3.90%	4.20%	4.10%	3.70%	3.70%
Color	762	965	1,303	1,290	1,381	930	1,069	1,241	2,698	2,943	2,780	2,662	3,146	2,756	2,833	3,102	3,240	3,166	3,415
	0.90%	1.20%	1.70%	1.60%	1.60%	1.20%	1.40%	1.60%	2.80%	3.20%	2.80%	2.70%	3.40%	3.10%	3.20%	3.40%	3.80%	4.10%	4.70%
Retaliation - All Statutes	18,198	19,114	19,694	21,613	22,768	22,740	22,278	22,555	32,690	33,613	36,258	37,836	38,539	37,955	39,757	42,018	41,097	39,469	39,110
	22.60%	24.00%	25.40%	27.10%	27.00%	28.60%	29.50%	29.80%	34.30%	36.00%	36.30%	38.10%	41.10%	42.80%	44.50%	45.90%	48.80%	51.60%	53.80%
Retaliation - Title VII only	16,394	17,246	17,883	19,753	20,814	20,240	19,429	19,560	28,698	28,948	30,948	31,208	31,478	30,771	31,893	33,082	32,023	30,556	30,117
	20.30%	21.70%	23.10%	24.70%	24.60%	25.50%	25.80%	25.80%	30.10%	31.00%	31.00%	31.40%	33.60%	34.70%	35.70%	36.20%	38.00%	40.00%	41.40%
Age	15,785	15,191	14,141	16,008	19,921	17,837	16,585	16,548	24,582	22,778	23,264	22,857	21,396	20,588	20,144	20,857	18,376	16,911	15,573
	19.60%	19.10%	18.30%	20.00%	23.60%	22.50%	22.00%	21.80%	25.80%	24.40%	23.30%	23.00%	22.80%	23.20%	22.50%	22.80%	21.80%	22.10%	21.40%
Disability	18,108	17,806	17,007	15,864	15,964	15,376	14,893	15,575	19,453	21,451	25,165	26,379	25,957	25,369	26,968	28,073	26,838	24,605	24,238
	22.40%	22.40%	22.00%	19.90%	18.90%	19.40%	19.70%	20.60%	20.40%	23.00%	25.20%	26.50%	27.70%	28.60%	30.20%	30.70%	31.90%	32.20%	33.40%
Equal Pay Act	1,134	1,071	1,044	1,270	1,256	1,011	970	861	954	942	1,044	1,082	1,019	938	973	1,075	996	1,066	1,117
	1.40%	1.30%	1.30%	1.60%	1.50%	1.30%	1.30%	1.10%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%	1.20%	1.20%	1.40%	1.50%
GINA											201	280	333	333	257	238	206	220	209
											0.20%	0.30%	0.40%	0.40%	0.30%	0.30%	0.20%	0.30%	0.30%

Source: https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges.cfm