
Low Morale in Ethnic and Racial Minority Academic Librarians: An Experiential Study

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ABSTRACT

Library and information science (LIS) literature about workplace bullying and burnout in academic libraries continues to grow, and a recent study has revealed the experience of low morale in the same environment. Concomitantly, research focusing on continuing recruitment, promotion, advancement, and retention problems for ethnic and minority librarians; links between North American library values and workplace abuse; and historiographies on the historic marginalization of minority librarians has also appeared in LIS literature. Citing aforementioned developments in LIS literature and the racially homogenous participant make-up of Kendrick's 2017 study of low morale in academic libraries, this follow-up qualitative study focuses on racial and ethnic minority academic librarians to understand this group's experience of low morale. Emerging data validate the development, trajectory, and health-related consequences of low morale; center the load of additional impact factors; and highlight the impact of low morale on recruitment and retention efforts of racial and ethnic minority librarians employed in North American colleges and universities.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the term *low morale* has been nebulously associated with negative feelings about one's workplace or aspects of a workplace. Brun and Cooper (2009) identified several issues of low morale, including recognition at work, work/life balance, and workload. Numerous articles and books discuss kaleidoscopic aspects of improving workplace morale; however, research remains sparse on tracking the applied processes of facing low morale. Kendrick's 2017 study on low morale begins to close that gap, offering a succinct definition as the result of protracted exposure to

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emotional, verbal/written, and system abuse or neglect in the workplace. The study links low morale to other documented negative workplace behaviors that occur in academic libraries, such as incivility, toxicity, bullying, and mobbing. The study also highlights the trajectory and development of low morale in academic library environments and reveals associated physical, mental, and cognitive outcomes. Additionally, the study identifies several impact factors that occur throughout the development of—and persist after—low-morale experiences. This current study focuses on academic racial and ethnic minority academic librarians to discover how low-morale experiences develop for this group and what outcomes and/or impact factors manifest during this group's low-morale experiences.

The original study only had two participants who identified as racial or ethnic minorities, emphasizing a gap in discovering the low-morale experiences of racial and ethnic minority academic librarians. Published research in areas of race and Whiteness, documented historic and contemporary efforts in library and information science (LIS) to recruit and retain minority librarians, and literature on emotional labor invoke a need to determine commonalities or differences in the low-morale experience for racial and ethnic minority academic librarians. The present study's research questions are as follows:

- What is the low-morale trajectory for racial and ethnic minority academic librarians?
- How does holding a racialized identity impact the low-morale experience for racial and ethnic minority academic librarians?

Emerging data validate the development and consequences of low morale, reveal additional impact factors, and establish the effects of low morale on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), recruitment, and retention efforts of racial and ethnic minorities working in North American college and university libraries.

BACKGROUND

Critical Race Theory

The framework of critical race theory (CRT) provides an important foundation for centering the experiences of librarians of color, rather than simply comparing or contrasting their experiences against the experiences of White librarians. CRT, which is rooted in legal scholarship, has been adapted for use in higher educational research, including LIS research. Taylor asserts CRT “challenges the experience of whites as the normative standard and grounds its conceptual framework in the distinctive experiences of people of color” (1998, 122). Key tenets of CRT as it has been utilized in higher education research also have implications for LIS research. Solorzano identifies five key themes that form the framework of CRT in education: (1) the centrality of race and racism as an enduring

and endemic factor that impacts each person's experience; (2) challenging dominant ideology around claims of the educational system as being objective, race- and gender-blind, race- and gender-neutral, offering equal opportunity, and functioning as a meritocracy; (3) a demonstrated commitment to social justice; (4) valuing and validating experiential knowledge; and (5) studying race from an interdisciplinary perspective that places race and racism within sociohistorical contexts (1998, 122–23). Since the population for this study are academic librarians who identify as racial and/or ethnic minorities, CRT is an essential framework that shapes research questions and aligns with the methodology chosen to answer those questions. As Solorzano and Yosso discuss in their 2002 article exploring critical race methodology, counterstorytelling is an effective means of presenting the actual lived experiences of people of color that are often subsumed by dominant narratives.

LIS and higher education share common dominant narratives that promote the value of neutrality and espouse diversity and inclusion as stated professional values. These narratives are further complicated by a common perception in both fields that the educational endeavor and the LIS profession are seen as noble pursuits, and thus above scrutiny, which Ettarh clearly asserts in her discussion of the concept of vocational awe, which she defines as “the idea that libraries as institutions are inherently good. It assumes that some or all core aspects of the profession are beyond critique, and it, in turn, underpins many librarians’ sense of identity and emotional investment in the profession” (2017). Ettarh further asserts White supremacy as a race-based system that supports vocational awe. This connection between White supremacy and the power of dominant narratives reiterates the need to use a CRT approach in any kind of qualitative analysis of racial or ethnic minority librarianship. Utilizing a CRT framework for this study allows for the centering of the low-morale experiences of librarians of color and the examination of race-based systems that are not separate from LIS and impact those experiences. Furthermore, utilizing the focused-interview method for this study (as a type of critical race methodology suggested by Solorzano and Yosso) provided the opportunity for racial and/or ethnic minority librarians to tell their own stories, surfacing lived experiences that create counternarratives that begin to deconstruct the myths of librarianship as an idealized profession.

Replicating the original study while grounding the current study firmly within a CRT framework also led the researchers to explore the following broad areas of inquiry, which provide additional context for the counternarratives that were gathered as part of the research process.

Negative Workplace Behaviors

LIS research and commentary on workplace toxicity, bullying, and mobbing attempt to solidify and/or amplify how these behaviors shape

academic library cultures and impact employees. Bennett, Freire, and Riley's 2007 presentation defines toxicity and shares how "hostile, unreasonable, and emotionally distressing behaviors" impact library employees' daily practice and career outlook. Later, Staninger outlines specific psychological and physical health impacts of bullying and connects financial implications to the phenomenon (2016). Additionally, Ortega's book on toxic leadership illustrates how library leaders weaponize LIS values against employees (2017), and Freedman and Vreven's work offers quantitative data on experiences of incivility and bullying of minority academic librarians (2017). The present study seeks to discover how these behaviors are presented to racial and ethnic minority academic librarians during their low-morale experiences.

Whiteness in LIS

Historically, American librarianship has been a predominantly White field, and this demographic representation continues into the twenty-first century. The American Library Association's membership study (2017) reports that 87% of respondents identify racially as Caucasian (White); moreover, the majority of librarians (81%) identify as female. Garrison (1972) chronicled how the LIS field has purposively recruited White women to librarianship, leading to a chronically racially hegemonic and feminized profession that aligns with the public's expectations of what constitutes "women's work" while at the same time offering a path for White women to aspire to a sense of "greatness" in their careers.

The predominance of demographic Whiteness also implicates the presence of related ideologies and politics of Whiteness, including White privilege and White supremacy. In her discussion of Whiteness literature in LIS, Hathcock (2015) underscores the urgency of critiquing Whiteness not only as a point of racial and ethnic power differential but also as one that purposely regenerates exclusion as a characteristic of practice. Hathcock's repositioning of Whiteness offers a benchmark of how racial and ethnic minority academic librarians perceive their approaches to LIS practice, are viewed or responded to by Caucasian colleagues, and how those perceptions and responses are exposed during their low-morale experiences.

The history of American librarianship reflects the political modes of White privilege and supremacy it has promoted during its development. LIS history reveals early fissures in the values the profession touts to itself and the public—in particular, that all (public) libraries are open to everyone. Closer looks show the documentation of "local community norms" upholding racial segregation or exclusion and criminalizing public library use by African-Americans (DPLA, n.d.; Cresswell 1996; Knott 2015; Eberhart 2017). Moreover, the early formation of a separate training program and eventual school of library science for African-Americans highlights

White librarians' tacit acceptance of LIS workforce marginalization based on race (Sutton 2005; Burress 2016). During the United States civil rights movement, LIS education desegregation efforts were fraught with problems as African-American students were recruited to predominantly White campuses and experienced racism at the hands of their classmates and professors (Cooke 2017). These historiographies affirm the continuing impact of Whiteness on librarianship and expose causes of enduring inconsistencies of LIS and higher education equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) efforts.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Diversity is a core value of ALA: "We value our nation's diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve" (2004). While the statement does not explicitly mention race, culture, or ethnicity, ALA has worked to acknowledge and calibrate the demographic Whiteness of the LIS field by engaging in EDI efforts. Programs like the Spectrum Initiative and the Kaleidoscope Program (originally named Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce) offer racial and ethnic minorities structured points-of-entry into the field; however, such programs—Spectrum, in particular—were hard-fought to implement (Cooke 2014). A comparison between ALA's 2017 membership report and ALA's *Diversity Counts* report (Davis and Hall 2007) shows that racial and ethnic minority recruitment to the LIS field remains stagnant, underscoring the gap between ALA's stated values and how these values have (not) been realized. A closer look at diversity initiatives reveals another concern: the invisible labor required of minority academic librarians to fit into a historically hegemonic and exclusive professional culture. Hathcock's 2015 article summarized that many LIS diversity programs inadvertently require participants to "play at" or "replicate" Whiteness. When looking at links between EDI and low morale for minority librarians, emotional labor is a central concern, particularly where issues of librarian perception, power dynamics, and academic culture norms are concerned.

Emotional Labor

Hochschild's seminal work coined the term *emotional labor*, which she defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" within the context of the workplace (1983, 7). Such facial expressions and body movements supersede the practitioner's real feelings, which are subsumed by vocational expectations or organizational norms. Hochschild's work and other research emphasizes that women are more likely to engage in emotional labor, especially in feminized professions like nursing or teaching, since these jobs require actions and feelings of nurturing and care to others. This disproportionate burden has consequences for women, including increased stress, decreased career mobility,

and lower pay (Hochschild 1983; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller and Rundo 2004; Sweet and Mieskins 2008). Research also reveals minorities engage disproportionately in emotional labor and that associated negative effects are compounded by issues of White power dynamics, institutional race neutrality, and devaluation of the influence of race and racism on and during processes of emotion management (Thoits 1985; Evans and Moore 2015). The effects of emotional labor on minorities are also linked to the nascent enquiry of *resilience narratives* in academic library workplaces. Commonly posited in libraries as “doing more with less,” Galvan, Berg, and Tewell argue that resilience narratives, in part, “naturalize and depoliticize social structures” and “place additional demands for labor upon women and people of color” (2017, slide 6).

Documenting the experiences of low morale offers an opportunity to further consider how the dynamics of recognizing and traversing emotional expectations materialize for racial and ethnic minority librarians while they endure long-term exposure to abuse and neglect within neutral organizations and recover from the impact of the compounded results of Whiteness in LIS and in academia.

METHOD

The objective of phenomenological research is to discover and share a person's or group's experience of an event or state of existence. Researchers applying this qualitative method analyze complex, in-depth data (often from detailed participant interviews, sometimes aesthetic renderings) to concentrate shared elements of the experience or state down to a “description of the universal essence” (Creswell 2007, 58). For researchers to use this method effectively, they employ *epoche* and *bracketing* processes to ensure they remain open to the phenomenon they are investigating (Moustakas 1994). Bednall defines and links these processes thusly: “*Ep-oche*, accordingly, allows for empathy and connection, not elimination, replacement, or substitution of perceived researcher bias. Bracketing advances that process by facilitating a recognition of the essence of meaning of the phenomenon under scrutiny” (2006). Low morale is the result of protracted exposure to emotional, verbal/written, and system abuse or neglect in the workplace; thus, the objective of this study was to further understand if, how, and within what frameworks or contexts these types of workplace abuse manifest and impact racial and ethnic minority academic librarians. As members of the group under study, and for whom the study had the potential to be particularly emotionally exhausting and triggering, the researchers also employed psychological or mental health measures to remain as close to a place of nonjudgement, reduced expectations, and supposition suspension as possible on ideas about the causes and effects of this phenomenon for racial and ethnic minority academic librarians. Activities included the following:

- Reducing and monitoring exposure to all data (one researcher concentrated on half of the data; another researcher concentrated on the other half)
- Encouraging open and transparent dialogue about psychologically or emotionally triggering data-points to ensure and check for consistent bracketing and epoche
- Increasing creative, mindfulness, and meditative practices to decrease or deflect self-judgement and negative feelings surrounding our own diversity-related experiences in the LIS workplace and/or in academia

These activities, along with epoche and bracketing measures, were vital in gathering, reviewing, and analyzing the data.

SAMPLE

Study invitations were distributed to LIS-focused email lists (COLLIB-L, LITA-L, NMRTL, RUSA-L, and ULS-L), groups that include racial or ethnic minority credentialed academic librarians working in all specialties and boasting a range of career experience. Informed-consent documents were forwarded to all invitation respondents. After informed-consent review, participants were invited to be interviewed. A purposive sample was generated of credentialed academic librarians (N=21) who (a) identified as part of a racial or ethnic minority group and (b) had experienced low morale while employed at a college or university library in the United States. One participant did not complete the interview phase; after interview transcriptions, two participants withdrew from the study, and another participant was removed from data analysis due to participant misunderstanding of study purpose. As a result, the final study offers data from seventeen participants (N=17).

Participants are from all regions of the contiguous United States. Using the US Census categories of broad divisions (n.d.), most participants reside in the South Region (39%), followed by the Northeast and West Regions (tied at 28%), and finally, the Midwest Region (11%). Just over a third of participants (35%) indicated they are of Asian descent; just under a third (30%) identified as African-American. Twenty-five percent of the participants identified as multiracial; one-fifth (20%) of the participants identified as Hispanic/Latinx, including one Hispanic/Latinx participant who also identified as Caucasian. Five percent of the participants identified as American Indian/Native American. Ninety percent of the participant group indicated they are female; just under half of the group (48%) indicated they are between the ages of 26 and 35 years old, while groups aged 36–45 or 46–55 tied at 24%. New librarians (48%) slightly edged out experienced librarians (43%); only 10% of participants identified as mid-career. A majority (57%) of low-morale experiences occurred at four-year colleges or universities; just over a quarter (28%) took place at four-year

private colleges or universities; 10% occurred at two-year public junior, technical, or community colleges. The majority of participants (48%) indicated their experience took place between one and three years ago, while another 24% remembered low-morale experiences from four to six years ago.

Quantitatively, the top low-morale experience triggers for study participants were as follows: administrative or managerial incompetence and system abuse (tied at 67%); racial microaggressions and personality conflicts (tied at 62%); withholding of workplace recognition and lack of accountability (tied at 57%); lack of transparent communication channels (52%); work overload and collegial incompetence (tied at 48%); and emotional abuse, lack of autonomy, and withholding of workplace advancement (three-way tie at 38%).

Participants who faced low morale were asked to indicate what kind of abuse they incurred and who inflicted the abuse. Seventy-six percent indicated experiencing system abuse from supervisors; 64% indicated system abuse from colleagues; and 40% indicated system abuse from subordinates. Moreover, 59% indicated experiencing emotional abuse by supervisors; 29% indicated emotional abuse from colleagues; and 40% also indicated emotional abuse from subordinates. Additionally, 41% indicated experiencing verbal abuse from supervisors; 29% indicated verbal abuse from colleagues, and 20% indicated verbal abuse from subordinates.

When asked about what mitigated or ended their low-morale experience, two-thirds (67%) of participants indicated talking with colleagues about their experience was helpful. Trailing more than twenty points behind, 43% of participants indicated they sought mental health services; a third of participants (33%) also engaged in physical activities; another third shared individualized coping or mitigation methods. See table 1 for a summary of study participants.

Table 1. Participant summary.

<i>Participant</i>	
African American female, user services	Multiracial female, generalist
Hispanic female, reference and instruction	African American female, management
African American female, administration*	Hispanic female, special collections
Multiracial female, reference and instruction	Hispanic male, reference and instruction
Multiracial female, instruction	African American female, administration
Asian male, public services	Asian female, technical services
Asian female, instruction	Asian female, reference and instruction
African American female, archives	Multiracial female, subject liaison
Hispanic female, subject liaison	Asian female, technical services
Asian female, reference and instruction	

*Note: this participant’s racialization has been subsumed by the general category of “African American” for identity protection.

PROCEDURE AND DATA ANALYSIS

After informed consent was confirmed, the principal researcher conducted twenty full interviews and one partial interview with respondents. Before their interviews, respondents were also asked to complete a short survey focusing on career and demographic information. Participants were then asked questions during a semistructured interview session (see Appendix for the interview schedule). Semistructured interview questions are very broad and allow the researcher to ask specific questions while offering the flexibility to follow up with the participant on various points of interest or to allow the participant to offer more information or clarification. Interviews were recorded for verbatim transcription; needed clarification or verification was negotiated between the principal researcher and participants during analysis.

Seventeen interview transcriptions underwent data analysis. Both researchers used Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive method of analysis: transcripts were reviewed several times to gather broad notes and significant statements about the low-morale experience for racial and ethnic minority academic librarians. The significant statements were the foundation of formulated meanings and their associated clusters. As needed, participants were asked for more information to validate the data. This collaborative process was useful in clarifying the lived experience of low morale for this group.

RESULTS

Data analysis 1) verified the development, trajectory, and impact factors of low morale and highlighted specific kinds of abuse enacted more often on minority academic librarians and 2) showed that minority academic librarians who experience low morale face an expanded set of impact factors related to institutional, social, and political systems that center race or are inherent in academic and larger community environments. Data illustrating the general development of the low-morale experience and associated impact factors are shared first, followed by disclosure of impact factor data that emerged specifically for the participant group.

Validation of General Low-Morale Experience Trajectory

Resultant participant data verified the trajectory and development of low-morale experiences in academic library environments as previously discovered in Kendrick's 2017 study. Reports of bullying, toxicity, and other negative workplace behaviors were shared. Additionally, trigger events; abuse types; associated physiological, affective, and cognitive markers; coping strategies; mitigation methods; and recovery periods were documented by all participants. See table 2 for a summation of general low-morale experience development.

Table 2. Stages of the general low-morale experience.

General Stages of Low Morale in Academic Librarians.

Stage 1: Unexpected Trigger Event

Stage 2: The Impact of the Trigger Event

Stage 3: Emotional and Physical Responses to Trigger Events

Stage 4: Long-term Exposure to Workplace Abuse/Neglect

Stage 5: Emotional, Physical, and Cognitive Responses to Long-Term Workplace Abuse/
Neglect

Theme 6: Negative Effects on LIS Practice and Career Outlook

Theme 7: Onset of Coping Strategies

Theme 8: Engagement in Mitigation or Resolution Efforts

Theme 9: Long-Term Effects of Low Morale

Theme 10: Low-Morale Recovery

Theme 11: Low-Morale Experience Lessons

Theme 12: Low-Morale Experience Impact Factors

Types of Abuse

Participants experienced Kendrick's previously reported forms of abuse:

- Emotional abuse including manipulation, intimidation, thwarting, targeting, privacy invasions, or micromanaging.
- Verbal/written abuse including lying, public shaming, yelling/shouting, castigation, scolding, ephemerally or unfounded complaining, disinforming, or snitching. Verbal abuse also included using oral communication to circumvent formal reprimanding processes with the intent to hide verbal abuse and associated system abuse.
- System abuse including system rigging, cronyism, steamrolling, or violating human resources or workplace policies and procedures.
- Negligence including *laissez-faire* or ambivalent library or campus leadership/administration, lack of advocacy, capricious decision-making, or ineffective communication. (2017, 8)

Looking more closely at types of abuse, minority academic librarians experienced emotional and system abuse more frequently during their trigger events. An Asian female librarian shared the system abuse foundation of her trigger event:

I found out a couple of years later, after I'd been doing it for almost four semesters, that—and it was quite by accident—that I was being paid about thirty dollars less for each course I taught . . . it was a total of about two to three hundred dollars over two years. And there was a male colleague who was—who also adjuncted in a different department and actually was aware of the rate because he was doing the same work somewhere else. And he—you know, when I checked with him, he was getting the go—the campus rate. And so, I had to ask for back pay.

Participants also more frequently reported instances of system abuse and negligence as their low-morale experience developed. An African-American female participant remembered:

[I returned to an organization I had worked for previously], but when I got the offer to come back, I inquired about whether or not I would

be getting credit for my previous years of service. And I was told that I would not—I was told that they did not give credit for prior service. What I discovered once I got here was that a similarly situated colleague who was hired around the same time for [a similar position] who was in a similar experience to mine, who had also previously worked here, was given credit for prior service. But I only discovered this after I was onboard.

A Hispanic female participant underscored her experience of system abuse *and* negligence by sharing her desire for consistency and support:

[I want to be able] to give an honest, professional, tactful perspective on things and not get dinged for it. And also, if something happens—like I had a snarl with a couple of subordinates last fall, and nobody back—I didn't get much back up at all from my superiors, that I was aware of. So, the security that when I enforce typical rules about the library and policies, that I'll have the backup to enforce them if somebody's going to try to override me or question my action or authority. So, wanting to feel safe and secure like that.

Responses to Abuse

All respondents reported emotional, cognitive, and physiological responses to the abuse or neglect they experienced.

Affective. For minority academic librarians, there were emotional responses to trigger events, which included shock, confusion, and bewilderment. Of difference for this group were immediate feelings of disappointment and feeling, specifically, “tricked” by colleagues. An Asian male participant who accepted a position in good faith contextualized:

I felt like it was a complete bait-and-switch in terms of this position I took, because they said, you know, “we have a lot of autonomy”; we'd be working collaboratively; we'd be under good leadership, and they switched it on us. Like, it was completely opposite. We were being micromanaged. Which is fine, I understand, everyone has different trials, but it was to the point where it was—not being micromanaged—like, anything you do was being criticized.

During low-morale development, participant responses included feelings of anxiety, vulnerability, anger, disappointment, regret, blame, frustration, helplessness, and isolation. An African-American female librarian revealed her feelings of self-blame:

I think I feel insignificant because I think that I could be contributing more, and I'm not contributing what I think I should be contributing. And maybe that's just a standard that I'm creating for myself. Maybe it has nothing to do with my relationship [with my negligent supervisor]. Maybe I have a standard and I'm not where I think I should be, so I feel like I'm not working hard enough.

Cognitive. Cognitive responses do not manifest during trigger events; however, they are a marker of low-morale development. For this group,

cognitive responses to low morale included a reduction in professional confidence, a desire to isolate oneself from colleagues, self-censorship, and depression; one participant reported contemplating suicide. Unique to this participant group were increased memory gaps regarding the experience. A multiracial female participant who tried to remember details of long-term pervasive abuse and neglect perpetrated by a library administrator commented:

I do apologize: I've blocked out a lot of what went down at that institution. So, I do know there were—I mean there were literally times when I would just come to my office and sit there and just cry because of these meetings with this dean, and she would just say horrible, horrible things, and I don't remember them because I don't want to remember them. And I apologize for that.

Physiological. The participant group reported physiological responses to their low-morale experience, including increases in/of general anxiety (e.g., panic attacks, obsessive worrying or thinking), sleep loss or oversleeping, general body aches and pains, and fatigue. A difference in this group was the specific recognition of decreases in everyday self-care and body attendance. An African-American female participant shared, "I'm always, you know, running, and have very little time to—sometimes to attend to my physical needs. So, I find myself, like, skipping meals, waiting until the last minute to use the ladies' room, those types of things—maybe not getting up from my desk often enough, you know, stand or walk, that kind of stuff." An Asian female participant echoed, "I wasn't really taking care of myself, really by like, exercising or doing anything that would really kind of take me out of my, sort of, thoughts."

Effects on Practice

Low-morale experiences had detrimental effects on participants' librarianship practice, especially concerning how the experience impacted their occupational expectations, general practice, and long-term outlook about the field.

Occupational expectations. Participants reported that their low-morale experiences clashed with their expectations of what library practice would entail. An African-American female participant with a former career in teaching shared her disappointment in the lack of relationship-building and communication in academic libraries: "I feel like as a new librarian and as someone who's working indirectly with the director and it's just us two, I thought that I would be way more engaged than I am now. . . . I know that it's also a different kind of work environment that I'm in now, but I had no idea that I would be totally—sometimes I'm not communicating. At all."

A Hispanic female participant familiar with academia also expressed

her realization and frustration with the perception that respect and collegial support do not seem to be givens in the LIS field: “You know, I’m not perfect—I don’t think anybody’s perfect, but I just want to come, do my job, respect my colleagues, be respected by my colleagues, and be here for our students, and it just doesn’t seem like that for everybody else. There’s some folks who want to find drama just to have drama in their lives, and I don’t like that.”

General practice. Participants reported how the experience affected their ongoing practice of librarianship. Responses centered on aspects of reducing engagement and curtailing mentoring relationships. A Hispanic female participant revealed her response to being ignored and marginalized after a leadership change: “Well, I’m kind of on autopilot, which I’ve been for the past few months. I’ve basically minimally involved myself in different things. I don’t head as many projects as I used to. Other people do them instead. I’m just kind of like, stick with my fundamental job and responsibilities and keep it at that.” A multiracial female participant stated, “My willingness to mentor and help new librarians—I’ve pulled right back. Because I don’t want [another betrayal] to happen again.” Concomitantly, low-morale experiences also offered opportunities to claim empowerment through collection development. A participant explained:

In terms of my practice, I want to ensure—this is very superficial, but I want to ensure there are a variety of items in our collection that reflect the diversity of the country. That there are African-American voices, Latino voices; we have a couple of databases here that are specific—literature specific to persons of color, and I—there was a time when they wanted to cut them because they’re not used as much, but they’re still important; they have a perspective that our other databases don’t have. And I am adamant that those don’t get cut because then we don’t have that perspective.

Career outlook. Study participants recognized that their low-morale experiences negatively impacted how they felt about the LIS field. Their experiences also led them to reconsider if and how they would continue their LIS careers. An Asian female participant ruminated:

I think once I started to really see how everything was coming together, I think I had a very strong flight reaction, where I really thought I had made a huge mistake and perhaps I really should just leave and like, try to find—you know, I even considered leaving the profession, like, thinking it was that bad. [*Laughs*] I probably in my career had never even felt like that, the thought have never even crossed my mind to think, “well, what else could I even—what else should I do instead of this,” because, I don’t know, “if I leave a different library is going to be just like this,” so I really entertained the idea of leaving either just the institution or the profession.

Experience Resolution and Recovery

Respondents shared their attempts to reduce the effects of the low-morale experience or completely resolve the trajectory. The importance of having access to networks of minority colleagues was significant for this group.

Coping strategies. Coping strategies are positive or negative and conscious or unconscious behaviors that low-morale victims engage in to reduce the effects of their experience. These behaviors do not affect workplace abusers or impact the development of the low-morale experience. Most participants sought the company of other librarians to share their stories of abuse or neglect, to get advice on how to respond to abusers, or to reduce professional isolation. Having access to and support from other minority LIS mentors or colleagues was especially affirming and restorative for this group. A multiracial female respondent shared:

I'm a [part of a professional library cohort] and during that time when I was [active with that cohort], I applied for [a mentoring program] and I was hooked up with another librarian of color, and she's been my mentor through a lot of that, and I mean she's been successful. And so, talking to her about these things and you know, she does confirm some things where she's like "yeah, you know that's a little strange and I don't know why they did that," and other times she's just like "you weren't a specific target, I think you need to move on" or "try not to focus on that." You know, she tries to put things in perspective for me and just tells me to keep on going.

An African American female respondent echoed:

[I]n the profession itself, I have so many friends that are kind of in the same boat that I am, so a lot of time we'll call each other and [say] "oooh, can you imagine what they just did today?" and we just listen to each other, and we support each other. And to have that network all over the country with these men and women in our profession who are dealing with similar issues—it makes me feel heard; it makes me feel like I am part of a community. Unfortunately, it's a community that keeps getting, you know, smacked down, but at least we're together, know what I mean?

Other popular coping strategies included increasing professional engagement, increasing self-care and exercise regimens, and taking advantage of their employers' mental health benefits (e.g., employee assistance programs). Additionally, participants engaged in workaholicism, and if they were diagnosed with any chronic physical or mental diagnoses, they began taking medications for those conditions. Journaling, prayer, and establishing firm work-life boundaries were also deemed helpful by this group.

Mitigation methods. Mitigation methods are behaviors that low-morale victims purposefully perform to end the low-morale experience, affect the

offender, or engage with the systems that allow (or exist purportedly to prevent) workplace abuse or neglect. Most study participants began looking for other jobs or requesting transfers to other library departments. Other methods included documenting abuse; meeting with formal leaders, human resources, or union representatives to report abuse and neglect; or creating or joining task forces or committees that directly or indirectly address issues of low morale.

Recovery. As in the original study, this study's participants also had highly individualized recovery responses. Additionally, those who resolved their experiences may carry the effects of their experiences with them to new positions, a reminder that recovery is long-term and may never be completed. An Asian male participant noted:

I ended up taking another job. That experience still carries over, you know, good or bad. But you know, whatever current position I am, it's because I escaped, right? I wasn't—I mean, sure, you can say it's a great new opportunity, but it wasn't like I was seizing that opportunity—it was because I needed the opportunity to escape.

An Asian female participant echoed:

I have to say, I think I carried over a lot of those feelings into my current job. I mean, I've been very angry and on edge while I've been here, even though it's a much better—in many ways—it's not like, a toxic work environment. We have our problems and people aren't happy, but people aren't actively going after each other the way they were at [my previous institution], but, because of my experience, I feel like I'm still acting like I'm in that environment.

GENERAL IMPACT FACTORS

Minority academic librarians also verified Kendrick's original findings on general impact factors in the low-morale experience. As low-morale experiences develop, several elements intertwine throughout the trajectory, including subtle increases of abuse or neglect, contagion, and encounters with systems that incubate or perpetuate low morale. Participant data validated the original study's general impact factors of low morale (see table 3 for a listing of low-morale experience general impact factors).

Insidious Experience Development

A marker of the low-morale trajectory is its slow, subtle development. Additionally, instances of abuse or neglect may incrementally increase over time, which negatively impacts victims' ability to respond effectively. In this study, participants gave their abuser(s) the benefit of the doubt or attributed neglect to factors beyond the abusers' control or knowledge. An African American female participant who wanted to establish a mentoring relationship with her neglectful supervisor remembers her consideration:

Table 3. General low-morale experience impact factors for academic librarians.

Impact Factors and Enabling Systems of the General Low-Morale Experience

Insidious Experience Development*
Contagion*
Enabling Systems
Uncertainty and Mistrust*
Leadership*
Faculty Status/Tenure & Promotion*
Human Resources Limitations*
Perceptions of LIS*
Staffing and Employment

*Also validated by minority academic librarians experiencing low morale.

“I said, ‘maybe she’s busy’ or you know, I just was coming up with excuses for her. And I would go home and talk to family members; we would talk about something totally different and I realized that something wasn’t right.” A Hispanic male respondent shared the trajectory of being cautioned about a potential abuser and slowly realizing that he should have heeded the alert:

Yeah, I got this warning. And, you know, I mean, at that point, I had been in other libraries and been in other situations, so you kind of know when something is happening . . . as it slowly developed; as I slowly looked at it and encountered it, it was like, “hmm.” And their warning of me and consultation, and, you know, it verified it. And they didn’t all come to me in a group—it was individually—you know, when we would talk individually. . . . I mean, you don’t want to—being new in a situation, you don’t want that to be happening. Because you’re like, “oh, I’m overreacting.” That’s what sometimes, we do, we say we’re overreacting, but then it’s, you know, like, “this is it.”

Contagion

Contagion occurs when low-morale victims realize they are part of a larger cohort of abused individuals or witness abused colleagues begin to mistreat others. A participant shared her incredulity at realizing that abuse was so rampant in her workplace that a special area was designated for employee recovery: “[There was an empty] office that . . . became the [Sobbing Space]! And . . . you could ask for the key before a meeting with [a formal leader], and then you could go in and cry after you [returned to your office]!”

Another participant recognized that people who participated in abuse were rewarded:

We had . . . a long history of mistreatment in the library, and the peculiar thing about that was the meaner the person, the higher they stood in the totem pole of things, which was ironic because if you defend yourself then you’re going to get punished. But those who did it more—did it differently—oh, but they have all this authority and they get heard and they get what they want in terms of support.

General Enabling Systems of Low Morale

Enabling systems are formal or informal systems, behaviors, or cultural or organizational norms that incubate low morale or prevent its reduction or eradication. See table 3 for a full listing of general enabling systems of low morale. Except for Staffing and Employment, study participants verified the original study's general enabling systems while describing their experiences.

Uncertainty and mistrust. Trigger events and randomized instances of abuse or neglect create constant feelings of uncertainty and mistrust in low-morale victims. As noted in the recovery phase of low morale, these feelings continue even when a victim moves to a healthier workplace. Participants shared how these feelings undermined professional relationships; increased their skepticism of the integrity of academic systems, colleagues and leaders; and ruined their sense of safety at work. A multiracial female participant who was verbally abused by a colleague (but tenuously resolved the matter) shared:

I'm very cautious around her, but yes, there is interaction. After that meeting and she kind of was a very different person. She was more—I'd say she acted more in a professional manner to me after that meeting. I mean, she's kind of—I know she's under duress to do it. But I am able to interact with her, but it's always with a great amount of suspicion.

Another multiracial female participant who unexpectedly lost her faculty status worried:

I feel like [Human Resources] can just come out of the blue anywhere and say "oh, well you were supposed to have been working these days, but you didn't, and you're classified." You're supposed to be here all year and there's just, like, nothing on the books that says this is how your position works as classified ten-month. . . . I just feel like there's a lot of ways they can just get me, meaning they can just get rid of you because there's nothing clear, there's nothing clear anywhere on how all this works.

Leadership. Respondents in this study confirmed authoritarian leadership styles and incompetent or negligent leaders play a significant role in the proliferation of low morale in academic library environments. Details of unexpected or inconsistent directives, poor communication, and absentee leadership were reported by participants:

I think the big thing for me that I've observed is the kind of communication style and like, decision-making style [of formal leaders at my library], I think historically it has been acceptable to make changes. I don't mean like, "we're going to change the couches to be red to yellow." It's like, big changes, like, "that one classroom that you used to teach library instruction—the only one? Well, we're going to take it away. Because, you know, we're going to re-use that space for something

else.” Or “you want a vacation? Well, I’m going to change your job. Completely.” [*laughs*] So, without asking you or floating the idea by you.

[T]his is a very conflict-avoidant environment; we have a conflict-avoidant administration that I was coached on dealing with a person that they acknowledged who was not stable [*laughs*]; but yet, there was no correction. But I was coached to deal with someone who was a difficult person when I had no power.

Faculty status/Tenure and promotion. Power dynamics inherent in faculty status and related tenure and promotion protocols play a role in the low-morale experience. Participants noted that tenured faculty were excused for uncivil behavior and they were more likely to use their tenure status to sabotage tenure-track colleagues. Rotating leadership cycles also enabled bullying of targeted employees. Participants reported:

[There were complaints about a tenured colleague], and it was like, “oh, you know, that’s just how she is.” I don’t think [*laugh*] I would have a job if I was that rude, or, you know—I would never presume to have a job, you know. But, I guess I was an adjunct and she was, you know, this tenured faculty librarian, and I don’t know if that made a difference, but I’m sure that did. But, I know I wouldn’t have a job if I’d been . . . so rude to people.

Every two years you elect a department head and anybody in the department can serve. So, you don’t have to have tenure to serve. And you know, so this person used her platform as her way to, like, poke at me, like, constantly.

Human Resources limitations. De facto and de jure policies and procedures are also major barriers to decreasing low morale in academia. Complainant procedures often place the burden of proof on victims and leave them open to increased abuse or neglect by their perpetrators. Moreover, participants reported a general reluctance of human resources (H.R.) employees to enforce accountability measures on workplace abusers. An African American female participant who reported abuse shared her frustration of carrying the burden of proof:

And then the other thing is, you know, just not being believed. So, and I think part of the dean’s thing is, you know, if [my supervisor] can get the H.R. lady to say, you know, [I] don’t have a case, then she doesn’t have to put herself out there to handle the problem. You know, she can remove herself and you know, that’s a large part of it, too.

A Hispanic male participant recalled H.R.’s reluctance to deal with a person who was a long-term offender: “I think it was just the practice of ignoring the situation—yeah, ignoring the situation. That was it. . . . Yeah, from the H.R.—when we had an H.R. person in the library to the associate director and all the direct reports for that person. So, yeah.”

Perceptions of LIS. The realization that internal and external negative perceptions of librarians were in play impacted the development of par-

ticipants' low-morale experiences. Librarian status and credentials, stereotypes, and cultural norms were discussed. A Hispanic female said:

Here in the library, the librarians are faculty, but yet, our usual—our PhD/instructional faculty don't really see us as peers at all. To be honest with you, I really don't think we are. We're a totally different league than that. So, I think that contributes considerably. . . . I mean, the way they treat us, the way they talk to us, the demands they put on us, no they do not treat us as peers. They—at least not most of us, anyway, so.

An African American female stated:

People are bringing, you know, their perceptions and their experiences from, you know, just some of those old library stereotypes and things. They're bringing those into their worldview about what a library should do and what the role of a library [leader] should be and all that kind of stuff. But at the end of the day, I think that whatever this vision is for a library director, it obviously does not look like me.

An Asian female explained:

[Being told I was unprofessional] I think I was just more shocked, and, like, bewildered, than anything else, because I was like, "what does that even mean?" Because I had been a paraprofessional for ten years before getting my first job, and I mean, my bosses were also paraprofessionals, and they were, you know, just as skilled, just as talented, just as hard-working, just as amazing as any of the other, any of the professional-level librarians. I was just kind of like, "why even make that—?" Like, obviously I know that there's, like, a hierarchical distinction, but it felt like it was a moral or character attack, or like, a slight on support staff. Just, like, why are you going there? This is just bizarre and classist and weirdly elitist.

MINORITY ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN—SPECIFIC LOW-MORALE IMPACT FACTORS

We now turn to disclosure of differentiation of the low-morale experience for minority academic librarians, which primarily manifests through additional impact factors. Data analysis reveals that minority academic librarians contend with two additional broad impact factors during their low-morale experiences. The following results underscore the importance of counternarratives and expose roles and impacts of Whiteness in LIS, vagaries of EDI initiatives in LIS, and actions and impacts associated with emotional labor during low-morale experiences. Concerns centering a desire to prove the worthiness of one's race, culture, or ethnicity were frequent. Simultaneously, exposure to system and emotional abuse (or a desire to preemptively defend oneself from abuse) also caused participants to consciously withdraw or edit their personalities while at work. See table 4 to review all minority academic librarian-specific low-morale impact factors.

Table 4. Additional low-morale experience impact factors for minority academic librarians.

Minority Academic Librarian—Specific Impact Factors of the Low-Morale Experience

Stereotype Threat
 Deauthentication
 Enabling Systems
 Diversity Rhetoric
 Whiteness
 White Supremacy
 Racism
 Career or Environmental Landscapes
 Politics
 Collegiality

Stereotype Threat

Inzlicht and Schmader summate that *stereotype threat*—a term coined by Steele and Aronson (1995) and furthered clarified by Steele (1997)—is “a situational predicament in which individuals are at risk, by dint of their actions or behaviors, of confirming negative stereotypes about their group. It is the resulting sense that one might be judged in terms of a negative stereotype that is ‘in the air’” (2012, 5–6). Minority academic librarians’ historic exposure to and awareness of race, culture, or ethnic stereotypes—along with their understanding that White colleagues were also aware of such stereotypes and the implicit or explicit associations with their ability to successfully execute the skills, knowledge, and abilities required of academic librarianship—were often linked to participants’ desire to preemptively offset White colleagues’ seemingly low expectations. Reflecting the negative cognitive impacts of stereotype threat on minority students’ academic achievement (Steele and Aronson 1995; Schmader, Johns, and Forbes 2008), minority academic librarians’ responses to stereotype threat also included behaviors they hoped would distance them from negative stereotypes. Workaholism, culture-carrying (i.e., consciously working to positively represent an entire race, culture, or ethnic identity), vocational awe, and resilience cycles were common cognitive responses. These actions produced negative mental health outcomes along with detrimental impacts on their library practice. A Hispanic female participant shared, “It’s that I have to prove more than—I’m always in a position where I feel like I have to prove to myself, and that people are automatically—instead of assuming that I have expertise, it’s like . . . I have to prove why I’m even there and worthy to take on these positions and prove my expertise.” An African American female participant explained:

[I have to prove] I’m better than my other colleagues because otherwise I should—you know. [Or else] I’m going to have a situation where I’m going to be told that I’m not good enough. . . . Yeah, I’m taking on things in order to show that I can, that I am, you know—because I’m

a Black woman, I can do better than the White people, and therefore you have to keep me.

Another African American female participant revealed the link between enabling systems, worries about system abuse, and stereotype threat as she described her perspective on working toward promotion and tenure:

And so, you know, there's some people that kind of, sort of skate by, but personally for myself, I feel like I've got to—I cannot leave anything to chance, you know. I feel like I have to do more than what's expected because, you know, I don't want to get into a situation where—I don't want to get into a situation where if I try to skate, like some of the people who have come before me, and it doesn't work for me. I want to—I feel like the safest route for me is to go above and beyond, and then in that way I make sure that I exceed the expectation, then there is no reason why I can't succeed.

Deauthentication

Data surrounding discussions of race and Whiteness in LIS revealed that during low-morale experiences, minority academic librarians traverse *deauthentication*, a cognitive process to prepare for or navigate predominantly White workplace environments. This process results in decisions that hide or reduce aspects of (1) the influence of ethnic, racial, or cultural identities, and (2) the presentation of natural personality, emotional responses, language, physical and mental self-images/representations, interests, relationships, values, traditions, and more. Moreover, deauthentication decisions are made to avoid macro- or microaggressions, shaming, incivility, punishment or retaliation, and these decisions ultimately create barriers to sharing whole selves with colleagues and/or clients. A Hispanic female respondent asserted:

[When] I walk in the door [of my workplace] . . . when I'm with [my White female colleagues], I'm really usually super quiet with them. I don't speak up. And when I do, I make sure that I speak with very perfect English, and I have to enunciate. I mean, it's like—I mean, I don't have a thick accent, but I, you know, you can hear my [language] accent, sometimes, right? But when I walk in this door, I am—80% of me is left behind. I don't bring in a lot of my culture and stuff. I don't. I don't.

An African American female respondent recalled completely suppressing a natural emotional response to what she perceived was an unfair evaluation: “I wrote a massive response to that. And that response was ignored. You know, short of saying ‘this is racist and you have bias towards me.’ I mean, I stood up in my response, but I made the response as devoid of anger as possible so I wouldn't get canned because I needed to keep my job.” After experiencing system abuse from a supervisor, a Hispanic male succinctly shared how he began withholding information to avoid future abuse: “I really didn't involve her. I kept information to a minimum so that she, again, would not use that against me.”

The impact factors of stereotype threat and deauthenticity are important not only because they are unique to this participant group but also because they are not externally generated like the original study's impact factors of insidious experience development and contagion. Instead, stereotype threat and deauthentication seem to be generated internally as cautionary or defensive cognitive behaviors against what participants deem are hostile or unwelcoming working environments with regard to their racial, cultural, or ethnic identities.

Minority Academic Librarian–Specific Low-Morale Enabling Systems

Another important discovery of low-morale experiences for minority academic librarians are seven enabling systems they encounter in addition to the general enabling systems faced when having such an experience. The following qualitative data reveal intersectional barriers that exacerbate the development and impact of low morale for this group. Half of the additional enabling systems are related to race. While all four types of abuse and negligence were revealed in enabling-system analysis, minority-specific enabling systems most often promoted or inadvertently encouraged emotional abuse, system abuse, or negligence. Table 4 also lists all minority academic librarian–specific low-morale enabling systems.

Diversity rhetoric. Data analysis reveals how diversity initiatives and programs instigate or exacerbate low-morale experiences for these minority academic librarians. The following data reveal the facets of tokenism, marginalization, diversity labor, superficiality and pushback, and specific program-types within this enabling system.

Participants noted that library or campus-wide EDI programs inadvertently centered individual minority employees as monolithic representatives for an entire race, culture, or ethnic identity rather than as regular human beings who bring positive differences of perspectives and experience to traditionally homogeneous workplaces. An African American female participant shared, “They will put a few black people on a diversity team—and I totally respect that, but it’s sort of like tokens of this is what—‘see, we’re diverse: this Asian that I have over here.’”

Conversely, respondents also recognized that EDI initiatives alienated or ignored the experiences and skills of minority employees. This recognition morphed into the perception of such programs existing to (1) center the comfort of White colleagues and (2) satisfy their organizations’ broader desire to join industry trends. An African American female participant asserted:

We’re not being included, so we have to form these groups amongst ourselves to help build ourselves. Now I understand these separate librarianships and when they go for—other organizations have these diversity initiatives, I sort of understand what it means or where they’re

trying to go with it. I don't think a lot of times it's successful because a lot of times these diversity initiatives are run by White people.

A multiracial female respondent explained:

There's this big push for diversity and inclusion, and I'm not sure where that's coming from, because we did get a new president a few years ago. And, you know, the president and H.R. seem to be on different pages, it seems like. So, I don't know if it's because of different political views and that's why they run things differently, but what you hear from the president's office is—it just seems like it's completely different from what's going on in H.R.

EDI-centered observations in respondents' low-morale experiences included skepticism about the depth of their organizations' and/or White colleagues' commitment to EDI values. Issues of double-talk and shallow EDI assessment markers were frequently cited by this group. An African American female participant currently acting as an interim formal leader shared:

I guess I would say it really makes it seem like they're only doing lip service as far as diversity is concerned. Because my day-to-day lived experience really doesn't line up with what they say they want to do. You know, I feel like I'm well-qualified; have proven myself; respected outside of the institution; respected in the profession. But, you know, one of the things that often gets said around here is "we can't find any qualified candidates of color," or "we can't get anybody to apply." And here I am, you know, a qualified woman of color doing the work, and you say that you're going to have to do a search.

Another aspect of ineffective EDI implementation within the low-morale experience was the realization that some White library leaders or colleagues actively resist EDI efforts. A multiracial female respondent explained:

We have a director who doesn't wish to—who is not interested in this topic. . . . Yes, he said there was no diversity in the area! And it's not true! We have an African American community; we have a Latino community; we have an Asian community. I also asked about "what about socio-economic? Or varying abilities?" . . . But, he didn't see any! So that's that mindset. And I have—and again, I've brought up issues with him about, you know, racism in this—in the library, and you know, it's institutional, and he doesn't see it as a problem. Or he won't address it!

Participants found themselves engaging more often to ensure the goals of EDI efforts at their organizations were being met. They also recognized that their work in areas of EDI was seen as less important than other areas of research or service. An Asian female recounted:

I found one experience very tiring. [*Laughs*] I think because I continued to ask questions, like, "what would be your methods of outreach to, let's say, first-generation college students?" and I found it exhaust-

ing to try to explain to [my work group] that answers like, “I went to Africa this one time” [*laughs*] were not answers to the question that were satisfactory in any way!

A Hispanic female stated, “So, a lot of my research is diversity-focused, right? So, I no longer really share any of my research with any of my colleagues. Because they really don’t care. Even though, you know, I’ve presented [and done other things]. . . . They just don’t recognize me as an ‘expert’ in my field at all.”

Respondents who participated in diversity residency programs were particularly vocal about issues of superficiality, tokenism, and paternalism of program participants. An African American female participant summarized:

Because of [my residency experience] I realize that some of my colleagues thought that all they had to do was bring in some brown people and then it’d be fine. They could just pat themselves on the back; they wouldn’t have to do, like, any self-reflection about you know, how they interact with brown people, or you know, their ideas about how to treat early career librarians, like, they wouldn’t have to do any of that sort of work internally, or, you know, ask questions about how to best support these people other than just saying, “oh, we gave you money to go to conferences!”

Whiteness. In this study, participants specifically named White women as saboteurs or upholders of status quo behaviors surrounding Whiteness, racism, and minority marginalization in LIS. Additionally, participants recognized their colleagues’ White privilege and desire to center Whiteness.

In this study, participant data show that White women are soundly perceived by minority academic librarians as harbingers and enablers of workplace abuse and neglect. One participant shared that such a perception was inherently well-known by minority librarians to a point of codification:

My group at my previous institution—we just, that was how we described them— “middle-aged White women.” And I have colleagues who’ve come in, come out—I mean, come to this institution and left the institution, different networks you know, through ALA, and that’s how we’ve—that’s the best description we have for them: “middle-aged White women.” And again, that is also the stereotype of what librarians are. Though, when I say that, that’s how we describe them.

An Asian female perceived White women librarians alienate minority librarians through exclusionary attitudes or language:

Most of the teams that might be meeting teams are all White women. All very, sort of, White women with strong opinions, sort of overpowering personalities, and it’s very hard to get a word in edgewise, and they’re really—it’s very easy to feel invisible there . . . like, I was actually invited to attend this meeting, and when they got there, there were like, “oh, are we in the wrong meeting?” And I was like, “no, I’m here on the

agenda.” . . . Yeah, when they saw me, they were like, “oh!” [*laughs*] like “what are you doing here?” Sort of.

White privilege was another facet of the Whiteness enabling system, and it also played a detrimental role in participants’ low-morale experience, especially when it was invoked purposively while dealing with general enabling systems (e.g., Human Resources or other formal reporting agencies). An African American female who reported abuse to a formal agency and went through arbitration with her abuser shared:

[My abuser] was a good actress, and she knew, you know, how to push their buttons so that I could be the one that looked like the big, bad, Black lady, and she could play the innocent, you know, little, young White department head. . . . I had said to the guy, after we met, that they really spun this situation. And he got really angry and told me that he heard from her a lot of apologizing and that I was too tough and that I probably wouldn’t like him for saying that.

White privilege also allowed uncivil behavior to go unchecked. An Asian female participant remembered: “I mean, literally, you know, [my colleague] would disparage other librarians in front of students, just, all this stuff that you don’t do as a—you don’t do generally because you know better, but you also don’t do—if you’re a minority, you learn to fit in, you learn to make people like you, which is, I guess, wasn’t a priority with her.”

Study participants also recognized the intersectionality of diversity rhetoric and White privilege when White colleagues invoked both enabling systems to offset events traditionally seen as only negatively affecting minorities—especially when such events were poised to also affect them negatively. A Hispanic female stated:

The other thing that I would say is that—I mean, I don’t know if—I mean, it is related, but is that I’m—my current struggle is being able to trust my colleagues. Not my colleagues of color, but my White colleagues who are now all of a sudden, “oh, we care are about these things.” Right? Now—especially since Trump got in office. And this sense of, what I’m seeing a lot of is “what can I do to change the world?” and very much feeling like “you need to start with yourself.”

Participants often shared their observations that White librarians ignored the perspectives of minorities or inadvertently highlighted their lack of knowledge (and lack of desire to acquire knowledge) about minority colleagues’ personal or professional life goals and experiences. A Hispanic male noted: “I think, one of things we’ve discussed—and when I say ‘we,’ I mean ‘friends and colleagues’—is that there’s this tendency for middle-aged White women to feel that they are lifting up the minorities, but when the minorities don’t need their help, they get kind of offended.”

An Asian female disclosed White colleagues’ ostensible lack of understanding in how similar broad experiences are implicitly and explicitly nuanced by race, culture, or ethnicity:

I think one of the big things was lack of understanding of intersectionality. . . . There was [a] particular thing that [a formal leader] said, which [implied that his White male LGBTQ experience of struggle during a time that was less tolerant of LGBTQ-identifying groups meant that he understood all struggles from all members of the group]. Which, you know, in the context of what [was trying to be clarified for him] about the experience of the queer person of color, [was] highly inappropriate. That there wasn't room in this person's mind for the experience of a queer person of color to be particular, and not just an experience of White queerness.

White supremacy. Participants discussed White library colleagues' assumption of racial superiority as a significant cause of their low-morale experience. Instances of paternalism, white-washing of organizations' historical roles in institutional racism, and reductionism of accomplishments and organizational value—along with the negative impacts of these occurrences—are facets of the White Supremacy enabling system.

Participants frequently reported episodes of being subjected to White librarians' unrequested guidance or advice, often given under the guise of knowing what is best for minority librarians. These episodes resulted in feelings of belittlement and reduced professional confidence. An Asian participant who experienced shaming by a White supervisor recounted:

I think I forgot to mention that when [my supervisor] told me [what another manager said about my workflow procedures], she said, to me "in this job, we are very detail-oriented, we're very exact, we're very careful," [*laughs*] like, you're talking to a child, basically. And I had always gotten on all my reviews that "oh, she's very detail-oriented, [*laughs*] she's very exact, she's very careful," so I'm like, oh my god! Like, this is being called into question, now? It did do a sort of number on my, on what I thought was one of my strengths.

Respondents mentioned their institutions' active justification or downplaying of the negative outcomes of their historic and contemporary participation in or condonement of programs or events perpetuating White supremacy and racism. These justifications were perceived as signs that their institutions were unwilling to recognize or reconcile the long-term, still-present negative impacts of their actions on marginalized groups. A multiracial respondent shared:

I have heard White staff say [in response to an incident that resulted in blanket targeting of minority male students by community police], you know, the African American students overreacted; blah blah blah, and they wish we'd, you know—we can just go ahead and you know, carry on, and there's those of us who don't think that . . . We need to own this history; understand why it happened, and hope it doesn't happen, and make sure it doesn't happen again.

Participants summarized their perceptions that White colleagues discounted their preparation for, engagement in, and outcomes of their work.

Particularly, participants perceived that such devaluations were motivated by White colleagues' desires to discourage minority librarians' feelings of self-efficacy or trajectories of career success, even if they had no interest in the same activities. An African American female respondent remembered her White colleagues' condescending responses after she shared her pursuit of advanced education to improve her library practice: "Oh you have another degree?! Why?!" You know. 'What is that for?' Often, they think it's funny, but then afterwards they realize, 'Oh, maybe I have to pay you for that.' And they haven't for three years, you know. Then that's a different matter entirely. Or they realize, 'Oh my gosh, she can do this, now!'"

Racism. Minority academic librarians frequently shared vignettes of White colleagues' bigoted views and disclosed instances of White colleagues' subtle and obvious motivations or attempts to purposely inflict emotional pain or other punishment on them because of the participants' racial, cultural, or ethnic identity via stereotyping, microaggressions, oppression, and phenotype reliance.

Respondents shared that White colleagues harbored expectations about their behaviors or interests stemming from limited information about them based on their race, culture, or ethnicity. An African American female participant recalled realizing her supervisor had made assumptions about her political leanings and had viewed her as a spokesperson for an entire movement, based on her race:

A while ago, this is probably when a lot of news and media was surfacing around Black Lives Matter, and she came to work and she seemed to be frustrated. She's a White woman, and she asked me about Black Lives Matter as if I was affiliated with it. . . . So that made me feel uncomfortable because where I am now there are probably just three Black librarians out of probably twenty—you know, it's very few of us. I felt she had no idea about who I was, and she'd never cared to ask. But that made me feel very uncomfortable because of our relationship. If we—if she wanted to talk to me about how I felt about Black Lives Matter, but it seemed like she just came to terms with I knew what was going on and why, you know "they don't talk" [or] "why are they always yelling?" So, I was offended, as well.

A female participant shared the pitfalls of stereotyping, especially from her perspective as an Asian: "I think that it's easy to talk about how the idea of a model minority is a harmful idea and is a myth. It should be fought against. It's easy to do that. It's easy to conceptualize that has its own thing, but I think it's maybe a little more difficult to build that conversation with White people who have power over you."

Behaviors or comments signaling subtle or indirect racial, cultural, or ethnic discrimination were noted by study participants. A Hispanic female summarized a common experience of microaggression:

Well, I think that some people are surprised at my level of knowledge and training and experience. Like, as if they didn't expect me to know what I know and [*laughs*] do what I know how to do. . . . "And how did you know how to do that?" "Where did you get that from?" You know, "Where did you get that?" You know, "how long did you say you studied that?" You know, "How long did you say you did that?" Like, I never hear other people be asked those kinds of questions.

Study participants relayed feeling emotionally or physically limited in their workplaces or career development due to racism. An African American female declared:

I feel sometimes like I'm in a cage because I feel like I'm a lot more restricted than I used to be. That I don't have the freedom to do what I need—what I feel I can do as a professional, because everything that I do is undermined. And I think that part of it has to do with racism. It's not—it isn't as though I've been told, "Oh yes, but you are good at what you do!" and "We can't say that you aren't good at what you do."

An Asian woman who was scouted as an internal candidate for a position and then passed over remembered:

The thing that really bothered me when [my director] said that I didn't get the job, that has stuck with me all these years, she said, "You know, this is a real outward-facing position," which, I'm a very outgoing person, I'm really good. In my current job, I work with almost every unit across campus. So, I have those skills, and she knows that and I know that and almost everyone on campus knows that. . . . What bothered me was she said, "The person in this position is literally going to be the face of the library." And you know, we are a Southern [single gender] college with a majority White student body. And I could not believe she was saying that to me! I'm a person of color. . . . I'm an immigrant. And it was just a horrible, poor choice of words.

Multiracial participants shared that White colleagues relied on phenotype to determine if it was safe to share racist opinions. These participants also recognized that the non-White aspects of their identities were more often met with disdain than the perceived "better" qualities of Whiteness. One participant noticed:

Yes, yes, some people see me as a White person—well, they see things—I've been in situations where people have said things, particularly about African Americans, which are—they would not have said if they knew—they wouldn't say them in front of an African American person. Inappropriate, racist terms. . . . and then, when I said that, "You know, this is how I identify," they make up some excuse. I feel that if people perceive me as White, I am treated differently. I am treated better.

Another multiracial participant and one of the researchers parsed the role of phenotype perception and racism among her colleagues (researcher statements are italicized):

They see you as—they perceive you racially as White and then when they find out that you have this—the African ancestry, [affirmative vocalization] then that takes on the “oh, the reason she’s acting this way is because she”—Yeah! I think that that is what is going on. Ok. And I understand you can’t say for sure how they perceive you—I’m asking you what you perceive, ok. Yes—I—Yes! I perceive that is what is going on, yes! You’ve reminded them that you’re Black, too, so therefore you’re “just Black.” Yep, yep, that’s right!

Within the enabling system of racism, participants also shared the additional burden of identifying, exposing, and responding to the subtle ways racism can be presented and hidden. Participants summate: “I think sometimes it’s like really hard to know, like, when you’re in the moment or when you’re observing these things happen or even if I don’t notice it right away, but I might leave a meeting and say, ‘you know what, I really didn’t like how that person spoke to me.’ You know, it’s not always clear to me because of like, my racial identity, or is it my age?” and “Well, you know, you can never prove that something is—well, I’ll say that it’s hard to prove that something’s racial. . . . But to any person of color that’s been in a similar situation, for us, the subtext is always about color. And you know if you if you say it, they will just deny it.”

Career or environmental landscapes. Minority academic librarians cited workplace and broader community trends that accelerated their low-morale experiences. These observations evoked feelings of disappointment and isolation.

Respondents worried about attrition of minority library employees, long-time employees’ acceptance of factors that facilitate low morale, and active resistance to advances in LIS practice. These worries dovetailed into their concerns about the perpetuation of workplace abuse and marginalization. A Hispanic female shared: “When I look at the librarians that come and go, I mean, we do have considerable attrition here, but it seems like those who are Black and Latino leave—the Black and Latino librarians always move on. I think we have had one Hispanic librarian who stayed on for a very long time and one Black librarian who stayed on for a very long time.”

An African American female stated:

Fifty percent of those folks were eligible for retirement in about three years. So, imagine you’re going to a place where most of the people are from the state; they went to the university, they got a job here; they never left, and they’re also more on the side of retirement. Also, they’re used to a very top-down culture; they’re resistant to cultural change; there’s not a lot of racial diversity on staff.

Racially homogenous workplaces and associated norms were particularly off-putting when participants recognized their colleagues’ leanings toward status quo employment norms or when they compared the racial homogeneity of campus employees with increasingly diverse student

bodies. Conversely, participants were concerned about working at institutions with homogenous student bodies, especially when their organizations were in racially diverse areas. An Asian female who volunteered for a search committee remembered:

We're not a very diverse campus in terms of the student body or in terms of staffing. So, subsequently I was on a job search committee, and [one of the candidates] was an immigrant who spoke English as a second language. . . . It was a technical position, so [lots of writing wasn't expected], but would probably be interacting with faculty. And you know, [some committee members] were very concerned that faculty wouldn't take into account that [the candidate] would be using English as a second language. Subsequently, the [candidate] was hired at [a local larger, more diverse institution], and I guess [the candidate's] accent and language skills were not an issue to them because they were used to having people who spoke differently and looked different than themselves.

Broader environmental landscapes also affected the development of participants' low-morale experience, particularly those who were also living and/or working in insular or rural areas or communities that were perceived as politically or socially conservative or hostile to racial, cultural, or ethnic minorities. An African American female who moved to the American South recalled:

I've seen a few times as I've been driving, you know to the grocery store—one time I was driving, a truck had huge Confederate flags flying. One time I was at a grocery store, a guy got out of the car and he had a huge Confederate flag plastered on his car. So, with that in particular, I know what that's supposed to mean for Black people as far as that flag goes and as far as the experience goes.

Another African American female discussed how the community she lived and worked in impacted her quality of life:

[I sacrificed anything that] I think just personal. Just anything relating to personal. I mean, [the city I lived in] was not a very diverse place to live. [The state] was very insular, [the city] was very insular, they were not very welcoming to people who are not from there. They think they are; they are not. There's really no young professional community there; so, it's just—I was clearly just out of my element.

Politics. Politics also played a role in the development of low morale for minority academic librarians. Political affiliations had definitive effects on workplace civility, morale relationships, and career outlook. Specifically, Donald Trump's election to the United States' presidency and his administration's subsequent rapid assaults on issues of social justice were frequent flashpoints. An African American participant shared how Trump and his administration encouraged incivility at her library:

[My supervisor] is a Trump supporter, and I think that contributed to some of these conversations or maybe the idea that she thought she

could talk freely about of the things, which she does have a right to say to what she wants to say. . . . She openly defended the fact that there was [a Muslim travel ban], so I think if he wasn't running for office at the time, it would be certain things that probably wouldn't have come up in a conversation—the ban, period. . . . And [my supervisor] was just very disrespectful. If she understood the climate at that time, sometimes you just, I believe you just shouldn't say anything because you know that there's a lot of friction there.

A Hispanic respondent commented on the general negative effect of the Trump presidency on education:

I think the political climate, for sure, with 45 in office, is just toxic. I think I've used that word several times. It's poison to the country, to our libraries, to our universities. And morale just gets sucked dry because of that person in power. And especially at an HSI, a Hispanic Serving Institution, because so many of our students are undocumented. They don't know what's going to happen from one day to the other.

Collegiality. Issues of work-share, lack of professional support, and credit-stealing were also referenced as minority academic librarians navigated their low-morale trajectories. A multiracial participant asserted:

I had [thousands] of students on my caseload that I was responsible for. And the other librarians—one of them, she had [only hundreds]! Right, and I just—I remember going and sitting in these library faculty meetings and just saying “I cannot do this. I cannot take on [multiple campuses], plus all the [online] reference, all on my own. . . . Can someone please help me?” And the librarians just said, “No! You're the [STEM] librarian, that's your job!” Yeah. And I couldn't handle it. I was just like, “No, no. You cannot do this. This is why you've had [multiple turnovers of this position] in less than six years!”

An Asian participant remembered:

I was sharing ideas or things that I thought could be improved. And I went to a different meeting without my supervisor there and then I saw another director of a different program outside of the library basically say that “Oh, [my director] had this idea to [create a new space]” and I just felt like, “that's not her idea—I told her that!” and she passed it off as her own. [*laughs*] This idea—to someone else!

Oppressed group behavior, more popularly known as “eating [a profession's] young,” occurs in professions where members may feel powerless holistically as a group and between individuals; as a result, group members mistreat each other, particularly those whom they view as the least powerful within the group—usually new or marginalized members (Roberts 1983). Oppressed group behavior was reported by this group, and it is a behavior that did not manifest in the original low-morale study. Common weapons of oppressed group behavior are watching targeted members struggle to acclimate to purported “common industry knowledge” or punishing new

members who try to side-step abuse that senior group members see as a rite of passage. One Hispanic participant was leading a faculty-centered protocol and was trying to get clarity and assistance after being told by seasoned colleagues that she was proceeding incorrectly. She recounted that experience:

You get told by one person, "You're doing it wrong, you're doing it wrong." And when I'd say, "Okay, give me specifics, what am I doing wrong?" they wouldn't respond. How am I supposed to fix what I don't know I'm supposed to fix? . . . Yeah, well finally they told me what I was doing incorrectly. . . . I didn't know [that particular action wasn't allowed]—nowhere in the [protocol] procedures does it say that, so that was an unspoken thing. It was unspoken and not written anywhere! . . . It's almost like they wanted me to fail. And if it were somebody else, any other librarian that works here, asking for help—you know, "If I'm not doing this right, then somebody help me," I think that that other person, whomever that other person was or could be, would've gotten the help that she requested.

An Asian respondent explained:

If I'm trying to spin too many plates, and [I] forget to send one email, you know, I get like, weird comments like, "Well, you know, so-and-so came by and I had to give them the key to the exhibits." It's not like I didn't try to coordinate with that person. . . . We have people who work in our unit; it's not so hard to get a key, but you don't have to hang it over me like, you know, you've done me such a huge favor. I would do the same for you because it's collegial. But instead, I get these kind of, like, guilt trips and it's not about big things. It's about little things. And so, I just feel like, you can't really even mess up a little bit because people will just really—how I perceive it, they really kind of hang this stuff over me.

DISCUSSION

Minority academic librarians verified Kendrick's previous report of low-morale experience development, including types of abuse and negligence and a trajectory of long-term exposure to instances of abuse and negligence. Additionally, minority academic librarians confirmed emotional and physiological responses to trigger events *and* emotional, physiological, and cognitive responses to low morale. Looking more closely at cognitive responses to low morale, minority academic librarians indicated having memory gaps about their experience and as well as having feelings of defiance or resolve to persevere in the face of workplace abuse and neglect. Minority academic librarians also were especially likely to eschew very basic *daily* self-care functions in response to stress caused by low morale.

Similar to the original low-morale participant group, minority academic librarians' low-morale experiences had negative effects on their LIS practice, career development, career outlook, and physical and mental health. As their experiences progressed, they began to engage in coping strategies

to neutralize emotional and physiological impacts; they also started mitigation methods to resolve their experiences. While engaged in coping or mitigation, minority librarians sought recovery from their experience, but found that full healing may be difficult to achieve as they carry their wounds to new workplace environments.

Impact factors of general low morale include insidious experience development and contagion, which minority academic librarians confirmed. In another departure from the original study group, minority academic librarians were more likely to consciously give their abusers the benefit of the doubt when faced with habitual abuse or neglect. This group also witnessed abuse and neglect of other colleagues and recognized broad and sweeping informal abuse protocols across departments in their libraries. Minority academic librarians reported experiencing previously reported enabling systems of low morale: uncertainty and mistrust, leadership, faculty status/tenure and promotion, human resources limitations, and LIS perceptions. One enabling system, staffing and employment, did not manifest in this study.

Turning to low-morale results that are *specific* to minority academic librarians, data revealed that in addition to the general low-morale experience's impact factors and enabling systems, this group faces two more broad impact factors and seven more enabling systems that intensify the effects of the phenomenon. Stereotype threat and deauthentication are impact factors that affect minority academic librarians throughout their low-morale experience; additionally, these impact factors are significant because unlike general low-morale impact factors that are results of what is occurring externally (subtle increases of abuse; watching others being abused), they are *internal* responses or defense mechanisms against perceived hostile or alienating workplaces.

Stereotype threat provoked participants to overwork, and they were often caught in cycles of activities or behaviors that they hoped would both disprove the worst stereotypes associated with their race, culture, or ethnicity *and* prove their knowledge and abilities of their specialties, worthiness of the LIS profession, and support of mainstream LIS values. Ancillary to stereotype threat, minority academic librarians also engaged in deauthentication behaviors, wherein they pointedly curated or hid parts of their personalities, interests, or emotions to reduce or avoid race-, culture-, or ethnic-related denigration, assorted slights, shaming, or punishment from their colleagues.

Enabling systems specific to minority academic librarians' low-morale experiences include diversity rhetoric, Whiteness, White supremacy, racism, career or environmental landscapes, politics, and collegiality. Concerns about (1) their organizations' levels of engagement and commitment to EDI values, (2) colleagues' and institutions' roles in upholding or perpetuating tenets and structures of White social or political dominance,

(3) navigating instances of racism, and (4) working and/or living in insular, racially homogenous campuses and communities intensified this group's feelings of disillusion, disappointment, and isolation. Within the realm of EDI initiatives, it is important here to note the implications for recruitment, particularly with regard to diversity residencies. Study participants who had been employed as diversity LIS residents relayed the irony of experiencing abuse or neglect while participating in programs supposedly designed to ensure they felt welcomed to the LIS profession.

Overwhelming Whiteness in the LIS field, including the tacit understanding that White female librarians are likely to use established ideologies and systems of White privilege and White supremacy to exact abuse and neglect on minority colleagues, caused an increase in feelings of skepticism, anger, and powerlessness. Concomitant with Whiteness, participants also voiced concerns about racism as they described acts of stereotyping, microaggressions, and oppression by their White colleagues or formal leaders.

Politics, particularly issues brought into relief as a result of the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle, also factored into minority academic librarians' low-morale experiences as they witnessed increases in workplace incivility, attacks on higher education and civil rights, and race- or religion-based political or social restrictions on immigrant and migrant populations. These political developments caused or exacerbated feelings of worry, anxiety, and depression in this group of participants.

Minority academic librarians also experienced reduced collegiality from experienced librarians via oppressed group behavior as they were punished for unwitting infractions of workplace culture or exposing gaps of purportedly common LIS-related knowledge, skills, or abilities. Such punishments resulted in reduced professional confidence, professional isolation, anger, shock, and resentment.

For this group, coping strategies like having access to and engaging directly with other minority colleagues offered a great sense of recalibration and support. This finding underscores the need for established minority LIS programs like Spectrum and Kaleidoscope with one caveat: ensuring that associated discussion forums are truly safe spaces where participants can voice their concerns about workplace abuse or neglect without judgment or retribution is paramount. A respondent shared:

It's just like, when I want to reach out to other librarians of color . . . because they're going to understand it more, I think, than the White librarians. But I also have librarians here who I know are active in [certain affinity groups], and I can't talk to—I can't just send out an email because what if that librarian sees it and then tells the other librarian, you know?

The data analyzed in this study reveal that several minority-specific enabling systems center race; specifically, diversity rhetoric, Whiteness, White

supremacy, and racism. Minority academic librarians who experience low morale cited inconsistent or superficial support or implementation of EDI programs as a factor that increased their low morale; and the most used phrase within their discussions of the diversity rhetoric enabling system was “lip service.” Their observations echo Ahmed’s discussion of *official diversity*, in which she asserts,

When diversity becomes a routine description, what is reproduced can be the routine of this description. Statements like “we are diverse,” or “we embrace diversity” might simply be what organizations say because that is what organizations are saying. We might call this the “lip service” model of diversity. Diversity becomes a convention, or a conventional way of speaking about the university. Diversity becomes a ritualized or polite speech. (2012, 57–58)

Minority academic librarians’ low morale is not divorced from historic and contemporary events of racism and segregation in the United States and LIS. Respondents considered the ongoing outcomes of institutional racism as they moved through their experience. While historiographies and popular media chronicling LIS civil rights’ missteps are increasing, the profession continues to struggle with consistently framing, promoting, and supporting the library profession and library spaces as welcoming to and safe for marginalized racial, cultural, and ethnic groups (Melfi et al. 2017; Wiegand and Wiegand 2018; Hathcock 2018, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study provides further validation of the low-morale experience; moreover, the study centers and clarifies the low-morale experience for racial and ethnic minority librarians working in academic library environments. Minority academic librarians are particularly vulnerable when facing low morale: in addition to suffering through the emotional, physical, and cognitive outcomes and impact factors (including enabling systems) of the general experience, they also contend with two additional broad impact factors (four total) and seven additional (twelve total) enabling systems. As a result, negative affective, physiological, and cognitive outcomes are amplified.

The low-morale experiences of minority academic librarians reveal aspects of both vocational awe and resilience narratives. Denying self-care and basic physical attendance needs in deference to overwork, offering benefit of the doubt to workplace abusers, and facing dead-end channels of recourse when seeking relief from abuse or negligence, for instance, could invoke the upholding of several central values or perceptions of librarianship, including, *librarians are always available to provide service*, *librarians do not cause or experience intergroup conflict*, or *libraries are quiet places of refuge and minimum violence*. Added work-related labor (revealed in EDI

work) and emotional labor (via deauthentication and stereotype threat)—along with the general impact factors of contagion and uncertainty and mistrust—underscore that minority academic librarians internalize and normalize their negative individualized low-morale responses, which are, in turn, incubated by systems originating from cultural, structural, or organizational problems in academic libraries and exacerbated by historical and ongoing institutional racial and political frameworks in the LIS field and in the United States writ large.

This study adds to growing literature on emotional labor, incivility, and bullying in libraries and offers further validation to Freedman and Vevren's (2017) quantitative data on the bullying experiences of minority academic librarians. Specifically, they found that ethnicity was a reliable predictor of racial and ethnic minority academic librarians' exposure to negative behaviors (incivility and bullying) at work. The present study also offers additional credence to Freedman's work on congeniality and collegiality, in which she explored Guistini's assertion that "there is one component that overshadows all others: being agreeable. Collegiality has become nearly synonymous with this trait. A collegial person doesn't rock the boat, goes with the flow, and supports prevailing sentiments. A collegial person preserves the comfort level of colleagues" (2009). Freedman's study ultimately noted that academic librarians' tendency to be conflict-avoidant leads to conflation of collegiality and congeniality and argued the danger of such conflation:

Collegiality should not be used in the same breath with congeniality which librarians in all different functional units often cite in surveys and literature. Without referring to the common purpose of our collaborative work, the invocation of collegiality is hollow. In fact, it can be dangerous by focusing on interpersonal relations, as opposed to the interprofessional works. Recognizing the [*sic*] conflicts arise from the hierarchical setting of higher education and the nature of collegiality and its condition mismatch is crucial. Fostering collegiality is a hallmark of good leadership. (2009, 383)

This study's resultant data also reveals more areas worthy of deeper inquiry, including the machinations of stereotype threat and deauthentication as defense mechanisms against abuse and an exploration of oppressed group behavior in the LIS field. Replicating this study for other library environments (e.g., special, public, archives) would also be helpful. Exploring any or all of these areas would result in a clearer understanding of what is needed to address definitively the emerging issues of workplace dysfunction and incivility in order to impact positively perennial concerns in LIS, including leadership development; succession planning; EDI; and general and minority workforce recruitment, retention, *and* advancement in the field.

APPENDIX

Interview Schedule

1. Please describe a situation in which you experienced low morale while employed at an academic library. Choose an impactful experience, and be sure to describe the situation as it developed. Be as specific and detailed as possible.
2. If you believe any historical or current institutional or cultural contexts that may have contributed to your experience, please share them.
3. If you believe there were any social or political contexts that may have contributed to your experience, please share them.
4. If you believe there were any formal or informal policies, procedures, or practices that contributed to your experience, please share them.
5. As fully as you can, please describe how this experience has impacted you, your library practice, or your library career.
6. Please share any other comments about your experience that you wish.
7. Do you elect to receive more information about counseling at this time?

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