

Demographic Individual Difference Effects on Employee Attachment Processes: Interactive Relationships between Race/Ethnicity and Employee Engagement

by

James R. Jones
Associate Professor of Management
Department of Marketing and Management
College of Business Administration
University of Nebraska at Omaha
RH 508-F
6001 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68182-0048
Phone: (402) 554-2605
Fax: (402) 554-3747
E-Mail: JimJones@mail.unomaha.edu

Jinlan Ni
Assistant Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
College of Business Administration
University of Nebraska at Omaha
RH 508-E
6001 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68182-0048

David C. Wilson
Assistant Professor of Political Science & International Relations
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Delaware
347 Smith Hall
Newark, DE 19716

Demographic Individual Difference Effects on Employee Attachment Processes: Interactive Relationships between Race/Ethnicity and Employee Engagement

Abstract

The beneficial effect of strong attachment by employees to their organizations, as manifested by decreased withdrawal behavior (i.e., absenteeism and turnover) and increased loyalty and commitment, has been aptly chronicled in management literature. Less well investigated and documented is what impact, if any, the dynamic demographic changes in the U.S. workforce have had on that relationship. We used simple logit regression analysis, ordinary least squares regression analysis, and ordered logit regression analysis to analyze data from 1,252 respondents to a nationwide survey to examine the effect, by race/ethnicity groups, of attachment (as measured by employee engagement) on a precursor of withdrawal behavior (perceived discrimination), actual withdrawal behavior (days missed), and a withdrawal predictor (intent to remain). Among the significant results, Black and Latino respondents reported significantly higher levels of perceived discrimination than did White respondents, while the level of perceived discrimination reported by Asian respondents did not differ significantly from that of White respondents. Employee engagement was negatively correlated with perceived discrimination and turnover intent for all respondents. After controlling for employee engagement, however, Blacks and Latinos still reported higher levels of perceived discrimination, with Asian respondents statistically indistinguishable from White respondents. We discuss implications of our findings for organizational research and practice.

Demographic Individual Difference Effects on Employee Attachment Processes: Interactive Relationships between Race, Gender, and Employee Engagement

An old saw about productivity goes along the lines of “90% of success is just showing up.” Nowhere is this truer than when one considers the role of employee attendance at work. If employees don’t “show up,” whether on a temporary basis via absenteeism, or permanently by way of turnover, then “success,” i.e., productivity, is negatively impacted. The exorbitant costs of this withdrawal behavior have been well chronicled in management literature (e.g., “Cost of Lost Productivity,” 2000; Johnson, 2000; Steers & Porter, 1991). Thus it is not surprising that investigations of ways to motivate employee attendance and retention have been the subject of voluminous academic research (e.g., Branham, 2006; Markham & McKee, 1995; Renstch & Steel, 1998). Another form of not “showing up” occurs when the employee, though physically present, because of various psychological states (e.g., dissatisfaction with the job, supervisor, co-workers, etc.), is “absent” from the job from a mental standpoint. This mental disconnect, in combination with literal absence, constitute a detachment from the organization, or put another way, a lack of attachment to the organization.

The benefits of organizational commitment as an employee attachment phenomenon are without serious dispute. From an attitudinal perspective, organizational commitment has been described as

“the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization, which is characterized by belief in and acceptance of organizational values, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and a desire to maintain membership in the organization” (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982, p. 27).

Research on employees’ commitment to their organizations has established a positive relationship between commitment and organizationally-desired outcomes such as job satisfaction (Bateman & Strasser, 1984) and work attendance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Similarly, organizational commitment has been found to have an inverse correlation with both absenteeism and turnover (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986).

Another construct that shares theoretical ground with organizational commitment is employee engagement. Although myriad definitions exist for the concept of employee engagement (Finn & Rock, 1997), most contain either implicit or explicit implications that employee engagement involves “the expression of the self through work and other employee-role activities” (Jones & Harter, 2005, p. 78; see also Kahn, 1990; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). One similarity between organizational commitment and employee engagement is that both capture some aspect of “employee[s]’ perceptions of themselves, their work, and their organization” (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002, p. 269). In addition, like organizational commitment, employee engagement is a positive correlate of job satisfaction (Mount, Colbert, Harter, & Barrick, 2000) and a negative correlate of turnover (Jones & Harter, 2005; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). A key conceptual distinction between the

two, though, is that the attitudinal experience of commitment, like job satisfaction, operates distally from the day-to-day, routine work activities employees regularly engage in (Jones & Harter, 2005). Employee engagement, on the other hand, being expressed ‘through work and other employee-role activities’ is a more “local” construct than organizational commitment, and, in fact, more immediately determines whether those work activities will take place or not (Jones & Harter, 2005). Thus, engagement may be a more valuable measure of the role of attachment to the workplace on important outcomes.

One aspect of the potential role of employee engagement that merits greater investigation is the changing nature of the demographic makeup of the workplace. Several years now into the period once prospectively characterized as “Workforce 2000,” the predictions of a great increase in the demographic diversity of U.S. workplaces, particularly with regard to race and ethnicity, have become manifest. Accompanying that change is a concomitant need to reexamine the dynamics of how employees in organizations process work life through the prism of their racial/ethnic identity, and in the present investigation, how that processing might affect attachment processes.

Race is a salient component of how U.S. workers view their experiences in the workplace. For example, Dixon and her associates presented findings of a study of more than 1,000 university workers, showing that African American and Hispanic workers believe themselves to be discriminated against and treated unfairly in the workplace as compared to their white counterparts (Dixon, Storen, & Van Horn, 2002). In addition to academic literature, government-based data support the notion of race-based disparate workplace perceptions, such as the report prepared for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which

asserted that “from [the] white perspective, employment discrimination targeting black Americans is no longer a serious problem in the United States” (Cose, 1993, p. 2), a finding in direct contradiction to one nationwide poll in which adult blacks, by a nearly two-to-one margin, perceived racism in the workplace to be a greater problem than did white adults (Cose, 1999).

While there are many individual research results supporting the salience of race in the workplace, a concurrent, more general, contradictory phenomenon operates in research featuring race as a primary independent variable, in this case evidenced by a propensity to understate, or exclude entirely, race as a central component of organizational life (Nkomo, 1992), or to ignore the “fine-grained ...differences” in how members of different race groups process their experiences in their companies (McKay et al., 2007). When race is given a focal role in organizational research, it is often framed in a broad, binary fashion, as in comparisons between “Whites” and “Blacks/African Americans,” or between “Whites” and “Non-Whites” (Cox & Nkomo, 1990), which may overlook the distinctions between and within race groups (especially “minority” ones).

Sometimes such practices, as in the case of combining all racial minorities into a catch-all “Non-White” category, arise from practical realities, for example when insufficient numbers of respondents don’t allow for discrete categorization. However, perhaps more common is the case that researchers commit a conscious “sin of omission” in their theoretical frameworks when examining race (Nkomo, 1992). With that in mind, it becomes incumbent to reconsider our understanding of whether and how attachment processes operate differentially for

different race groups, and in turn, whether and how those processes lead to different outcomes for those groups.

In this paper, we first hypothesize and test on an overall basis the impact of employee attachment (as measured by employee engagement) on a precursor of withdrawal behavior (perceived discrimination), actual withdrawal behavior (days of work missed), and a withdrawal predictor (intent to remain). We then investigate whether and how these dynamics occur for four different race groups (Whites, Blacks, Latinos, Asians) [NOTE – While we understand that these labels assess not purely “race,” but also ethnicity and/or nationality, and hence might be more accurately categorized as “racioethnicity” (i.e., “the combination of physical and cultural differences that distinguish Euro-Caucasian members of organizations from minority groups such as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and American Indians” (Cox & Nkomo, 1993, p. 205)), we use the term “race” in this paper for consistency across studies, and consistency with the data collection instrument cited herein. Similarly, we use the term “Black” as synonymous with “African American,” and “Latino” as synonymous with “Hispanic.”]

HYPOTHESES

Perceived Discrimination

Discrimination in the workplace is still a problem in the United States, as indicated by claims submitted to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

According to one legal counsel for the EEOC, discrimination claims centering on race “are the leaders” among all claims, a situation that hasn’t changed much over time (Hastings, 2007).

Although some overt racial discrimination still occurs even into the 21st century, much of the

race discrimination claims received by the EEOC involve more subtle, “hidden bias” (Hastings, 2007). Accordingly, such discrimination would fall most precisely in the realm of perceived discrimination (as opposed to demonstrated, or proven bias). As mentioned earlier, there is myriad evidence that African Americans and Hispanic employees perceive themselves to be discriminated against in the workplace to a much greater degree than do their white co-workers (McKay et al., 2007). A reasonable foundation for these perceptions could relate to the tendency of human beings to engage in “oppositional identity” (Fine, 1994), or the process by which people “define [themselves], [their] identities, in opposition to, or as distinct from, others” (Gentile, 1996, p. 14). This practice can become problematic when, as Gentile points out, “my sense of myself is built upon my ability to distinguish myself from you; therefore I value the ways in which I am different from you; therefore I begin to devalue the traits that make you distinct from me” (1996, p. 14). As played out in a workplace setting where white employees are the majority, as is the case in most U.S. businesses, non-white workers would be predicted to feel themselves devalued on the basis of their most visible trait, i.e., their race, hence buttressing perceptions of race-based discrimination. In this scenario, one might not expect there to be noteworthy differences between Black, Latino, and Asian employees in their level of perceived discrimination.

However, another theoretical formulation would support the notion that we could expect Asian workers to perceive less discrimination than their Black and Latino counterparts. Equity theory (Adams, 1965) asserts that individuals perceive their organizational outcomes in relation to what they “bring to the job” (i.e., inputs), and compare that input-outcome ratio with those of relevant referent others. If the comparison of ratios favors the referent other

(i.e., the “other” receives greater outcomes based on a relatively equal level of inputs), the individual would be predicted to feel underrewarded. When one feels inequity in reward outcomes, there is a natural desire to make an attribution for that outcome; to do otherwise would expose oneself to the psychologically vulnerable position of feeling oneself to be at the whim of random fate (Abramson, Garber, & Seligman, 1980). As a defense against this, people will frequently engage in the self-serving bias attribution, whereby one attributes positive outcomes to internal characteristics, and negative results to outside forces, perceptions of race-based discrimination being one potential external attribution.

Based on the foregoing conceptual argument, there is a concomitant sound empirical case that would result in Blacks and Latino workers perceiving discrimination in the workplace to a greater extent than both Whites and Asians. Recent government data on median household income, a primary organizational outcome, shows a large discrepancy between these groups (Black: \$30,939; Latino: \$36,278; White: \$50,622; Asian: \$60,367) (DiversityInc, 2006). Similar patterns emerge with regard to promotion/career advancement opportunities for majority vs. minority workers (e.g., Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990), at least as concerns Whites, Blacks and Latinos (the relative paucity of organizational research that incorporates race as a variable, and includes Asians as a racial category (Cox & Nkomo, 1990), makes it difficult to make conclusive comparisons in this area for that group). Trends for education level, a strong correlate of household income, are also comparable (percent of adults in each group earning a bachelor’s degree: Latinos - 12%; Blacks - 17%; Whites - 30%; Asians - 49%) (DiversityInc, 2006). Given this situation, we could expect Blacks and Latinos to feel underrewarded from their work efforts compared with Whites, and

perhaps attribute the unequal outcome to discrimination based on their racial characteristics (i.e., their “input”), especially given the “oppositional identity” phenomenon. Based on their higher socioeconomic standing, Asian workers would not be expected to engage in the same equity calculus as Blacks and Latinos, and thus would also not differ significantly from Whites in perceived discrimination. Also, there is some evidence that in certain Asian cultures the tendency to engage in the self-serving bias is in general much less than in North American and Western European ones (Steers, Bischoff, & Higgins, 1992). Thus, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 1. Black and Latino respondents will report a significantly higher level of perceived discrimination compared with White respondents. The level of perceived discrimination reported by Asian respondents will not differ significantly from that of White respondents.

As indicated by Polzer and his associates (Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002), the in-group/out-group categorization that is at the heart of oppositional identification (and, in our formulation, provides one foundation for perceptions of racial discrimination) frequently leads to negative employee outcomes such as decreased productivity and increased turnover intent. These same researchers, however, as a result of a longitudinal study of interpersonal dynamics in team-based work, also concluded that when members of racially diverse groups exhibited high interpersonal congruence, those individuals were able to overcome their initial antipathy toward one another (Polzer et al., 2002). Central to this conceptualization of interpersonal congruence is the notion that it encompasses the “degree of similarity between a person’s self-views and others’ appraisals of the person” (Polzer et al., 2002, p. 299) and “enhance[s] the chances that people will achieve the goals that brought them to the

interaction” (Polzer et al., 2002, p. 299). These elements dovetail with definitions of employee engagement that describe it as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles [by which they] employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances” (Kahn, 1990, p. 694), and leading to such benefits as the preservation of one’s self in the face of the demands of the work role (Kahn, 1990). In this light, it would be expected that employees highly engaged with their workplace would be much less likely to experience the kind of relational antagonism leading to perceptions of discrimination as outlined above. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2. Employee engagement will be negatively correlated with level of perceived discrimination across respondents.

While we expect engagement to have a general ameliorative impact on perceived discrimination, the effect of racial identity may be even more powerful in this context. As noted by Cox and Nkomo (1993), individuals hold multiple memberships/identities in the context of the workplace (e.g., by race, gender, department, etc.). And while the degree and salience of racial self-identification certainly varies within groups (Wright & Littleford, 2002), it has been found to be a particularly potent force in the workplace (Polzer et al., 2002) and one that often trumps other self-applied membership labels in its relevance to individuals (Steele, 1997). Thus, we would expect that the relative positive effect of employee engagement on perceptions of discrimination to potentially be “trumped” by the influence of racial group identity. Previous investigations have established a hierarchy of racial identification ranging from Blacks (highest), to Latinos, to Asians, to Whites (lowest) (McKay et al., 2007; Wright &

Littleford, 2002). Additionally, other studies have found significant differences in degree of ethnic identification by Asian respondents compared to Black and Latino respondents (Wright & Littleford, 2002), in one case, and being statistically indistinguishable from White respondents in another. Taking the foregoing into account, then:

Hypothesis 3. Controlling for level of employee engagement, Black and Latino respondents will still report a significantly higher level of perceived discrimination compared with White respondents. The level of perceived discrimination reported by Asian respondents will still not differ significantly from that of White respondents.

Absenteeism

As is probably not surprising, experiencing real or perceived discrimination in the workplace can lead a person to suffer damage to his/her psychological well-being, for example with regard to lower job satisfaction (Chrobot-Mason, 2003; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994) and career satisfaction (Greenhaus et al., 1990). Under social exchange theory, this situation could be interpreted as a losing “transaction,” in terms of the interpretation of “fairness” in social exchange as an “intuitive assessment [that the] relationship is based on ‘good-faith’ recognition of each [transaction partner’s] contributions” (Organ, 1990, p. 63). It seems logical that the (perceived) diminution of oneself and one’s accomplishments by another on the basis of an immutable characteristic such as race would qualify as being unfair. The tenets of hedonic calculus, i.e., the desire to maximize gains while minimizing losses (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), would suggest that one way a worker suffering this unfair exchange might seek to minimize the loss would be to withdraw from the aversive stimulus, or put another way, to be absent from work. There is some empirical support for this purported “pain avoidance” model of

satisfaction-based absenteeism (McShane, 1984; Scott & Taylor, 1985; Withey & Cooper, 1989), which, based on the predictions about perceived discrimination in the present study, would lead to the conclusion that Blacks and Latinos would miss work to a greater extent than would Asians and Whites. An equity assessment would support this same inference, as one way to restore balance to a perceived inequitable ratio resulting from discrimination-based lesser outcomes (e.g., wages) would be to lower one's inputs, in this case by reducing one's presence at work (i.e., being absent). Hence:

Hypothesis 4. Black and Latino respondents will report a significantly higher level of absenteeism compared with White respondents. The level of absenteeism reported by Asian respondents will not differ significantly from that of White respondents.

Using the same logic as that supporting Hypothesis 2, we expect that higher levels of engagement will be associated with correspondingly lower levels of absenteeism in general. However, in line with the differential rates of racial identification among the four groups underlying the rationale for Hypothesis 3, we predict that the relative difference in reported absenteeism by Blacks/Latinos as compared with Asians/Whites will not be affected by employee engagement.

Hypothesis 5. Employee engagement will be negatively correlated with level of absenteeism across respondents.

Hypothesis 6. Controlling for level of employee engagement, Black and Latino respondents will still report a significantly higher level of absenteeism compared with White respondents. The level of absenteeism reported

by Asian respondents will still not differ significantly from that of White respondents.

Turnover Intent

Although there is some disagreement on the subject (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000), there is a fair amount of support in the management literature for the proposition that there is a greater tendency for non-white employees to quit their employment than there is for white workers (Cox & Blake, 1991; Greenhaus et al., 1990; McKay et al., 2007). As much of the basis for these findings rests on perceptions by minority workers of racial animus against them by their white colleagues (e.g., Foley, Kidder, & Powell, 2002; Wright & Littleford, 2002), and since our predictions for perceptions of discrimination and absenteeism in this study follow a similar construction, one might assume that we would predict a greater intent to quit for those predicted to experience more perceived discrimination (i.e., Blacks and Latinos). However, whereas psychological withdrawal based on negative affective states, and physical withdrawal by way of absenteeism are transitory in nature, the decision to quit has more serious and permanent consequences than the other two forms of withdrawal. This is particularly true for Blacks and Latinos, who, as indicated earlier occupy a generally disadvantageous position with respect to finances and labor market dynamics. For members of those groups, a volitional decision to end employment is not a practical alternative. We would expect that the dynamics of employee engagement that lead employees to “harness themselves to their work roles” (and, by extension, to their organizations) would lessen the desire of highly engaged workers to leave the employ of their companies, a relationship that as

has been found in large-scale studies of engagement's impact on business-level outcomes (Harter et al., 2002).

Hypothesis 7. Employee engagement will be negatively correlated with turnover intent across respondents.

Hypothesis 8. Controlling for level of employee engagement, there will be no significant difference in turnover intent based on race between respondents.

METHODS

Participants

In commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Gallup Organization conducted a nationwide telephone survey of United States employees to ascertain their perceptions of workplace discrimination and its effects on employee outcomes. A racially diverse sample of 1,252 individuals was interviewed (492 White; 302 Black; 310 Latino; 104 Asian; 44 "No Response"). Fifty-two percent of the respondents were male, with an average age of 42 years.

Measures

Respondents' race was self-reported by their response to the question, "What is your race?" If necessary, the interviewers conducting the survey were instructed to read the following statement to respondents: "The U.S. census categories are American Indian or

Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or White. You may provide more than one answer if appropriate.” If necessary (e.g., if the respondent asked what his/her choices were), the interviewers were further instructed to read the category labels to respondents in the following manner: first, “White, African American/Black;” second, “American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander;” finally, “Some other race.” If the respondent gave his/her race as being Hispanic/Latino, that choice was recorded. Of the available categories, sufficient responses for statistical analysis were received for only “White,” “African American/Black,” and “Asian.”

Respondents were also asked, “Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish background?” Responses were recorded as either “Yes” or “No.” We included “Yes” responses in our analyses as a “race” category.

The EEOC survey included 12 items (Q12[®]) that comprise our measure of employee engagement (e.g., “My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person;” “There is someone at work who encourages my development”; Please see the Appendix for a list of the Q12[®] items; NOTE – These items are proprietary and copyrighted by The Gallup Organization. They cannot be reprinted or reproduced in any manner without the written consent of The Gallup Organization. Copyright © 1992-1999. The Gallup Organization, Princeton, NJ. All rights reserved.). The Q12[®] items were each scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree), and the mean of the 12 individual item

scores constitutes the overall engagement score. The overall engagement measure demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's alpha reliability = .87).

The three focal variables (perceived discrimination, absenteeism, turnover intent) were measured with single items. Perceived discrimination was assessed by the open-ended response to an item asking, "Do you feel you have been discriminated against in your workplace in the past 12 months?" (1 = Yes; 2 = No). To gauge absenteeism, respondents were asked, "Thinking about the past 12 months, about how many days of work have you missed in total? Please do not include vacation days." Responses to this item were coded in actual number of days. Turnover intent was determined by the response to the statement, "I plan to be with my company one year from now" (Likert scale; 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). While not a measure of actual turnover, there is evidence employees' statement of intent to remain with their organizations can accurately predict whether they will, in fact, do so (Kraut, 1975)

We included age, education, job tenure, and income as control variables, as all have been found to be correlated with absenteeism and turnover intent (Griffeth et al., 2000; McBey & Karakowsky, 2001; Porter & Steers, 1973). Respondent age was measured by the response to an open-ended item ("Please tell me your age"), and recorded in years. Respondents' education level was indicated by their response to the open-ended question, "What is the highest level of education you have completed?" Responses were coded into one of six categories (1 = Less than high school graduate; 2 = High school graduate; 3 = Some college; 4 = Trade/Technical/Vocational training; 5 = College graduate; 6 = Postgraduate work/Degree). Tenure was assessed as the response to the open-ended question, "How long

have you worked with your current employer?” Responses were coded into one of nine categories (1 = Less than 1 year; 2 = 1 year to less than 3 years; 3 = 3 years to less than 7 years; 4 = 7 years to less than 10 years; 5 = 10 years to less than 15 years; 6 = 15 years to less than 20 years; 7 = 20 years to less than 25 years; 8 = 25 years to less than 30 years; 9 = 30 years or more). For the income item, respondents were asked, “Is your total annual income before taxes over or under \$25,000?” Based on the response (assuming it was not exactly \$25,000), they were given a set of sub-options. If the initial response was “under,” respondents were asked, “Is it over or under \$15,000. If the initial response was “over,” the respondents were given a choice of increasingly higher options (“Is it over or under \$15,000?”; “\$35,000?”; “\$55,000?”; “\$75,000?”; “\$100,000?”). Based on the answer at this point, the response was coded into one of eight categories (1 = under \$15,000; 2 = \$15,000 - \$24,999; 3 = \$25,000 - \$34,999; 4 = \$35,000 - \$44,999; 5 = \$45,000 - \$54,999; 6 = \$55,000 - \$74,999; 7 = \$75,000 - \$99,999; 8 = \$100,000 or more).

Because of the nature of our data (i.e., survey based) and the number and types of dependent variables examined, we utilized a variety of analytical methods. Based on the survey design, we used the survey regression mode in STATA to analyze the overall sample (stratified by race) to obtain an unbiased population estimate. Other regression modes that fail to account for the sampling design tend to underestimate standard errors, leading to “false positive” results.

For the specific dependent variable analyses, we used three different methods. Since perceived discrimination was assessed using a binary variable code we used the logit model for survey data to analyze the relationship between perceived discrimination and employee

engagement, setting the dependent variable equal to “1” if the respondent reported perceived discrimination, and “0” if no perceived discrimination was reported. For the analyses focusing on engagement’s effect on number of work days missed, we used an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model designed for survey data. Finally, to test the relationship between turnover intent and engagement, we utilized an ordered logit model, since the dependent variable (i.e., intent to remain) response options are given as five continuous levels (1-5, 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). For each of these three methods, we created population sub-samples in order to compare differences and similarities of effects across race/ethnicity groups.

RESULTS

Table 1 details the means, standard deviations and correlations for the study variables. Table 2 provides the means, standard deviations, and comparison of means for the dependent variables, by group, used to test Hypotheses 1 and 4. For the mean comparison test, we set “White” as the base group, and tested the significance of group differences with the other three race groups. As predicted in Hypothesis 1, Black and Latino respondents reported significantly higher levels of perceived discrimination than did White respondents. The level of perceived discrimination reported by Asian respondents did not differ significantly from that of White respondents (interestingly, Asians reported less perceived discrimination than did Whites). Hypothesis 4 was only partially supported. As seen in Table 2, Black respondents, as hypothesized, reported missing significantly more days of work than White respondents. However, contrary to our prediction, the number of reported days missed by

Latino respondents was not significantly higher than that of White respondents, while that of Asian respondents was significantly higher than the White respondents.

(place Table 1 about here)

(place Table 2 about here)

The regression coefficients for the logit regression analysis of perceived discrimination and engagement are presented in Table 3. As indicated by the significant negative coefficients for engagement regressed on perceived discrimination for each group, Hypothesis 2 is supported. To test Hypothesis 3, we created three dummy codes for race, and setting “White” as the base group, analyzed whether the relationship between engagement and perceived discrimination was significantly different for each of the dummy-coded groups in comparison with the base group. Supporting Hypothesis 3, Blacks and Latinos reported higher levels of perceived discrimination, even after controlling for engagement. After controlling for engagement, perceived discrimination for Asian respondents was still statistically indistinguishable from White respondents.

(place Table 3 about here)

Regression results for the OLS analysis of engagement and absenteeism are presented in Table 4. Hypothesis 5 was not supported, in that of all groups demonstrating a negative relationship between engagement and number of days missed (i.e., absenteeism), the

relationship was seen only for White and Black respondents. Asian respondents exhibited the predicted negative relationship, but not at a statistically significant level, and Latino respondents actually reported a positive (although insignificant) relationship. Hypothesis 6 was partially supported, as the comparison analysis showed that after controlling for engagement, Black respondents reported higher absenteeism than did White respondents, while Asian respondents did not significantly differ from Whites.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 made predictions relating to turnover intent, and how it might be impacted by respondent race and level of employee engagement. Table 5 lists the results of the ordered logit regression analysis used to test these hypotheses. As shown by the regression coefficients, engagement was positively related to intent to remain (i.e., negatively related to turnover intent) for all groups, providing support for Hypothesis 7. While not formally hypothesized, our assumption underlying Hypothesis 8, namely that there would be no difference across groups in turnover intent, was belied. As indicated in Table 2, Black, Latino, and Asian respondents were all significantly less likely to report an intent to remain with their employers for another year than were White respondents. As for Hypothesis 8 itself, partial support was found (Table 5), as Blacks and Latinos were not significantly more or less likely to intend to remain, after controlling for engagement than were Whites; Asians, however, contrary to the hypothesis were significantly less likely to report an intention to remain than were Whites.

(place Table 4 about here)

(place Table 5 about here)

DISCUSSION

Our study has added to the knowledge of demographic effects on employee attachment processes, and at different stages of that process. In addition, it provides further evidence that looking at all minority/non-white employees as a single entity can lead to misleading results. At the same time, though, there are some areas that require further research to resolve.

While our study provides new insights on the impact of race/ethnicity on workplace dynamics, our predictions were not all realized. For instance, while we expected employee engagement to be associated with reduced absenteeism as a general rule, that relationship only obtained for White and Black respondents. Similarly, our hypothesis that after controlling for engagement there would be no difference among groups for turnover intent was only partially supported. One reason for these contrary results, of course, is that our theoretical foundation was erroneous. Another potential alternative explanation, though, relates to the subtle confounds that can be encountered even when attempting the type of sub-group distinctions we utilized. For example, our respondent category of “Asian” did not account for growing evidence that the “Asian” experience in the United States is often shaped by whether the individual in question is an immigrant or a native-born American (Barringer, Gardner, & Levin, 1993). In addition, it is self-evident that with the many different nations comprising Asia, cultural differences between denizens from individual Asian countries could affect analyses incorporating the racioethnic category “Asian.” These differences (as between those of different Americans of African or Latino descent) need to be further examined and

explicated, lest we as researchers fall into the trap of letting stereotypical clichés (e.g., the conceptualization of Asians as a “model minority” (Wu, 1995)), rather than sound theory guide our investigation. Future research along these lines might also more directly explore whether the three elements of employee attachment we studied in a segmented manner are connected in an explicit sequential process that differs for different race and ethnic groups.

Our finding of differences in perceived discrimination based on racial group membership is in conflict with Ensher, Grant-Vallone, and Donaldson (2001). While not directly hypothesized in their study of the effects of perceived discrimination on desirable employee outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior), those researchers found no significant difference in perceived discrimination among their White, Black, Latino, and Asian respondents. One difference for these discrepant results is undoubtedly due to the different measures of perceived discrimination used in the two studies. While our measure focused on the perception of discrimination *per se*, Ensher and her associates (Ensher et al., 2001) segmented sources of perceived discrimination as arising from co-workers, supervisors, or the organization as a whole, and also as being based on race or gender. Our interest centered on the phenomenon of discrimination perceptions in general, and thus the particular type or source of discrimination was not paramount for our investigation. Nevertheless, there would be value in determining what impact, if any, there would be on our findings by framing discrimination perceptions in a multifaceted manner.

Ensher and her colleagues (Ensher et al., 2001) predicted that discrimination perceptions would be positively related to discrimination-based employee grievances. Their

hypotheses concerning this issue were based on both empirical research results (Allen & Keaveny, 1985) and E.E.O.C. data (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1998) similar to that we cited in this paper (Hastings, 2007), that suggest that employees who feel unfairly treated will lodge formal complaints against their perceived transgressors. Such action would also be congruent with the equity-restoring framework we cite in support of hypothesized racial differences in perceived discrimination. Ensher et al. (2001) did not find support for their predictions that perceived discrimination would predict grievances, but they did not include engagement as a mediating variable in their analyses. As we found that level of employee engagement was negatively correlated with discrimination perceptions, it's possible that inclusion of grievances as a dependant variable in our analyses might have demonstrated a significant relationship. Future studies should investigate that possibility, as well as actual levels of absenteeism and turnover as predicted by engagement and discrimination perceptions.

Another interesting area for further research on this topic would be an examination of whether the findings in this study would be similar in workplaces where employees are predominantly "minority" members. With numerous indicators of a 21st-century U.S. workforce comprising ever-shrinking numbers of White employees (e.g., Collison, 2002; Mathis & Jackson, 2006), it is not certain that the same interracial dynamics that characterize present-day organizations will hold.

While the nature of the causal relationships in our study is limited by the cross-sectional design, the use of a national random sample, with oversampling of multiple racial/ethnic groups provides for stronger generalizability to workers in the U.S. Rarely are

national studies of workers conducted which cross organizational, racial, and industrial lines. While these studies are typically more expensive to carry out, they have the advantage of not being biased by a single organization's culture or business practices. Thus, for any statistically significant pattern found in our data we can be reasonably confident that the same patterns would occur in other random samples at least 95 percent of the time or more.

A number of practical implications arise from this study as well, including the need for organizational managers to continue to try to better understand why and how "race and racial and ethnic differences influence work behaviors" (Cox & Nkomo, 1993) such as absenteeism and turnover, and their potential antecedents (e.g., perceived discrimination). With the knowledge that members of different races perceive discrimination in different ways and frequencies, and in light of the demonstrated high financial costs of absenteeism/turnover, it becomes more important than ever to ascertain both why and when employees have such beliefs. One typical way to glean this information is through the exit interview process (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). However, because departing employees, in order to not harm their opportunities for good references or possible reemployment, often are reluctant to raise controversial subjects in the exit interview (Hansen, 2002), the reliability of such information is questionable. In addition, exit interviews are at heart a reactive practice, whereas more proactive approaches might hold more value in stemming the costs associated with perceived discrimination. One such approach might involve incorporating cultural diversity training into the orientation process. Orientation of new employees is key in getting "the person [to] psychologically join the organization from the first day" (Garvey, 2001, p. 111), and is a critical element of socialization into the company culture (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein,

& Gardner, 1994). If we acknowledge that individuals of different national cultural backgrounds may interpret the organizational cultural context through the lens of those different backgrounds (Jones & Lewis, 2003), then we might assume that what may seem to be a “reasonable” action to one person may be perceived to be discriminatory in nature to another. We recommend that managers make efforts to understand, and incorporate into the orientation process, the ways that cultural background help shape one’s goals and values, and why those goals and values may sometimes seem divergent, but might actually be congruent with the company’s perspective. Such action should reduce the potential for misunderstandings further down the line that could be detrimental for both the employee and the organization.

Ongoing and periodic diversity training is already in widespread use in organizations as a means to, by raising cultural awareness, minimize discrimination (and potential lawsuits) (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). The results of such programs have not always been salutary, for a variety of reasons, including resentment by members of the “majority” for being made the “villain” (Von Bergen, Soper, & Foster, 2002), beliefs by employees of all racial backgrounds that diversity programs are intended to benefit only particular minority groups (Frase-Blunt, 2003), and the feeling by minority group employees that they are patronized and stigmatized by the very programs ostensibly designed to assist them (Frase-Blunt, 2003). Clearly, diversity management programs in and of themselves are insufficient to gain the optimal, maximal results potentially available from an increasingly heterogeneous workplace.

Our study’s results provide evidence that building an engaged workforce can provide the relational context wherein those programs can flourish. One of the oft-stated goals of

diversity management is to enhance “personal effectiveness and interpersonal communications among employees” and build “a climate of fairness and equity” (Von Bergen et al., 2002).

Engaged employees “know what is expected of them, have opportunities to feel an impact and fulfillment in their work, [and] *perceive that they are part of something significant with coworkers whom they trust*” (Harter et al., 2002, p. 269; emphasis added. In such an environment, much of the cynicism associated with diversity programs detailed above would likely not occur.

Indeed, a recent study found that in highly engaged workplaces, the mere establishment of diversity policies and concerted efforts to make employees aware of them, negated the effects of perceived discrimination on affective outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, company loyalty, turnover intent) (Gallup Organization, 2005; Wilson, 2006). Hence, prior to instituting diversity management initiatives, organizational resources might be more efficiently utilized by establishing managerial practices that increase employee engagement. For example, as Harter and his colleagues (Harter et al., 2002) pointed out, by helping their employees see how the materials and equipment they use in their job (Q12[®] Item 2) relate to organizational outcomes, managers are better equipped to engender cohesion in the work group, while at the same time increasing the prospects that employees will perceive equity in the administration of resources. Similarly, by designing the selection process to specifically seek conscientious employees, making performance goals as interdependent as possible, and designing work to maximize the opportunities employees have to interact and discuss their joint accomplishments, managers can directly affect their employees’ level of respect for one another (Q12[®] Item 9).

Our study has buttressed previous findings demonstrating the value of employee engagement for desired organizational outcomes, but there is much more to be learned. Continued efforts to refine our understanding of the interactive process of demography and psychological attachment can only help to achieve that worthy goal.

References

- Abramson, L. Y., Garber, J., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1980). Learned helplessness in humans: An attributional analysis. In J. Garber and M. E. P. Seligman (Eds.), *Human Helplessness* (pp. 3 – 35). New York: Academic Press.
- Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.) *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, Vol. 2* (pp. 267-299). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Allen, R. E., & Keaveny, T. J. (1985). Factors differentiating grievants and nongrievants. *Human Relations, 38*, 519-534.
- Barringer, H., Gardner, R. W., & Levin, M. (1993). *Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Bateman, T. S. & Strasser, S. (1984). A longitudinal analysis of the antecedents of organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Journal* , 27, 587-595.
- Branham, L. (2006). *The 7 hidden reasons employees leave: How to recognize the subtle signs and act before it's too late*. New York, NY: AMACOM.
- Chao, G. T., O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Wolf, S., Klein, H. J., & Gardner, P. D. (1994). Organizational socialization: Its content and consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 79*, 730-743.
- Chrobot-Mason, D. L. (2003). Keeping the promise: Psychological contract violations for minority employees. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18*, 22 – 45.
- Collison, J. (2002). 2002 workplace demographic trends survey. *SHRM Research, 2002*, 8.
- Cose, E. (1993). *The rage of a privileged class*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Cose, E. (1999, June 7). The good news about black America. *Newsweek* 133, 28-40.
- “Cost of Lost Productivity During Absences is Higher than Cost of Benefits.” 2000, July 20. *Bulletin to Management, 27*.

- Cotton, J. L., & Tuttle, J. M. (1986). Employee turnover: A meta-analysis and review with implications for research. *Academy of Management Review*, 11, 55 – 70.
- Cox, T. H., & Blake, S. (1991). Managing cultural diversity: Implications for organizational competitiveness. *Academy of Management Executive*, 5, 45 – 56.
- Cox, T. H., & Nkomo, S. M. (1990). Invisible men and women: A status report on race as a variable in organizational behavior and research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 11, 419 - 431.

- Cox, T. Jr., & Nkomo, S. (1993). Race and ethnicity. In R. T. Golembiewski (Ed.), *Handbook of Organizational Behavior* (pp. 205-229). New York, NY: Marcel Dekker.
- DiversityInc (2006, November 14). *Census Report: Broad Racial Disparities Persist*. Retrieved November 11, 2006, from <http://www.diversityinc.com/members/800print.cfm>.
- Dixon, K. A., Storen, D., & Van Horn, C. E. (2002). *A workplace divided: How Americans view discrimination and race on the job*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development.
- Ensher, E. A., Grant-Vallone, E. J., & Donaldson, S. I. (2001). Effects of perceived discrimination on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and grievances. *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 12, 53-72.
- Fine, M. (1994). Keynote address to Columbia University Teachers College Winter "Roundtable on Cross-Cultural Counseling and Psychotherapy: Race and Gender." February 18, 1994, New York.
- Finn, J. D., & Rock, D. A. (1997). Academic success among students at risk for school failure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82 (2), 221-234.
- Foley, S., Kidder, D. L., & Powell, G. N. (2002). The perceived glass ceiling and justice perceptions: An investigation of Hispanic law associates. *Journal of Management*, 28, 471 - 496.
- Frase-Blunt, M. (2003). Thwarting the diversity backlash. *HR Magazine*, 48(6), 137-144.
- Gallup Organization. (2005). *Employee discrimination and engagement in the workplace*. Washington, D.C.: Author.
- Garvey, C. (2001). The whirlwind of a new job. *HR Magazine*, 46(6), 110-118.
- Gentile, M. C. (1996). Ways of thinking about and across difference. In M. C. Gentile (Ed.), *Managerial Excellence Through Diversity: Text & Cases* (pp. 12 - 34). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

- Greenhaus, J. H., Parasuraman, S., & Wormley, W. M. (1990). Effects of race on organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33, 64 – 86.
- Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management*, 26, 463 – 488.
- Hansen, F. (2002). Weighing the truth of exit interviews. *Workforce*, 81, 37.
- Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 268 – 279.
- Hastings, R. R. (2007, March 15). *EEOC: Race still leads the discrimination pack*. Retrieved March 23, 2007 from http://www.shrm.org/hrnews_published/articles/CMS_020801.asp#P-8_0.
- Johnson, C. (2000, July). Capturing turnover costs. *HR Magazine*, 107-109.
- Jones, J. R., & Harter, J. K. (2005). Race effects on the employee engagement - turnover intention relationship. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 11, 78 – 88.
- Jones, J. R., & Lewis, D. M. H. (2003). “Mending fences on the immigrant frontier”: A call for better integration of demographic information in human resource management practice and theory. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 10, 89 – 97.
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33, 692-724.
- Kraut, A. I. (1975). Predicting turnover of employees from measured job attitudes. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 13, 233 – 243.
- Markham, S. E., & McKee, G. H. (1995). Group absence behavior and standards: A multilevel analysis. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 1174-1190.

- Mathieu, J. E., & Zajac, D. M. (1990). A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108, 171 – 194.
- Mathis, R. L. & Jackson, J. H. (2006). *Human resource management*. Mason, OH: South-Western.
- May, D. R., Gilson, R. L., & Harter, L. M. (2004). The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety, and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77, 11-37.
- McBey, K., & Karakowsky, L. (2001). Examining sources of influence on employee turnover in the part-time work context. *Career Development International*, 6, 39 – 47.
- McKay, P. F., Avery, D. R., Tonidandel, S., Morris, M. A., Hernandez, M., & Hebl, M. R. (2007). Racial differences in employee retention: Are diversity climate perceptions the key? *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 35 – 62.
- McShane, S. L. (1984). Job satisfaction and absenteeism: A meta-analytic re-examination. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 1, 61 – 77.
- Mount, M. K., Colbert, A. E., Harter, J. K., & Barrick, M. R. (2000). *Does job satisfaction moderate the relationship between conscientiousness and job performance?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Human Resource Management Division, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1982). *Organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Nkomo, S. M. (1992). The emperor has no clothes: Rewriting ‘race’ in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 17, 487-513.
- Organ, D. W. (1990). The motivational basis of organizational citizenship behavior. In B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (pp. 43-72). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

- Polzer, J. T., Milton, L. P., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2002). Capitalizing on diversity: Interpersonal congruence in small work groups. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47, 296-324.
- Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1973). Work and personal factors in employee turnover and absenteeism. *Psychological Bulletin*, 80, 151-176.
- Rentsch, J. R., & Steel, R. P. (1998). Testing the durability of job characteristics as predictors of absenteeism over a six-year period. *Personnel Psychology*, 51, 165-190.
- Robinson, S. L., & Rousseau, D. M. (1994). Violating the psychological contract: Not the exception but the norm. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 15, 245 - 259.
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25, 293-315.
- Scott, K. D., & Taylor, G. S. (1985). An examination of conflicting findings on the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism: A meta-analysis. *Academy of Management Journal*, 28, 599 - 612.
- Steele, C. M. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance. *American Psychologist*, 52, 613 - 629.
- Steers, R. M., Bischoff, S. J., & Higgins, L. H. (1992). Cross-cultural management research: The fish and the fisherman. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 1, 321 - 330.
- Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W. (1991). Employee attachment to organizations. In R. M. Steers & L. W. Porter (Eds.) *Motivation and work behavior* (pp. (288-289). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Research, Information, and Planning (1998). <http://www.eeoc.gov/stats/race.html>
- Von Bergen, C. W., Soper, B., & Foster, T. (2002). Unintended negative effects of diversity management. *Public Personnel Management*, 31, 239-251.

- Wilson, D. C. (2006). *How employee engagement mediates the negative effects of perceived discrimination*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Withey, M. J., & Cooper, W. H. (1989). Predicting exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 34, 521 – 539.
- Wright, M. O., & Littleford, L. N. (2002). Experiences and beliefs as predictors of ethnic identity and intergroup relations. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 30, 2 – 20.
- Wu, F. (1995). Neither black nor white: Asian-Americans and affirmative action. *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, 15, 225 – 284.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for All Study Variables

Variable	Mean	S.D.	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age (years)	41.97	12.39	965	###							
2. Education	3.80	1.69	980	.14***	###						
3. Tenure	3.76	2.15	978	.49***	.09***	###					
4. Income	4.84	2.31	935	.17***	.47***	.24***	###				
5. Perceived Discrimination (1 = Yes; 0 = No)	0.17	0.38	977	-.04	-.08**	-.03	-.06	###			
6. Absenteeism	4.45	9.81	981	.03	-.00	.02	.01	.12***	###		
7. Turnover Intent (Intent to Remain)	4.11	1.40	976	.18***	.03	.23***	.16***	-.15***	.01	###	
8. Employee Engagement	3.85	0.83	928	.04	.06	.02	.06	-.28***	-.07**	.42***	###

* $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Mean Estimation Analysis Correlations for Dependent Variables by Group

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	Means Test
Perceived Discrimination	White	0.14	0.02	----
	Asian	0.09	0.03	Prob. > F = 0.4022
	Black	0.25	0.03	Prob. > F = 0.0000
	Latino	0.19	0.26	Prob. > F = 0.0400
Absenteeism	White	3.39	0.35	----
	Asian	7.00	1.92	Prob. > F = 0.0615
	Black	5.75	0.89	Prob. > F = 0.0042
	Latino	4.12	0.55	Prob. > F = 0.1937
Turnover Intent	White	4.24	0.07	----
	Asian	3.75	0.18	Prob. > F = 0.0062
	Black	4.09	0.10	Prob. > F = 0.0945
	Latino	3.98	0.10	Prob. > F = 0.0300

Table 3

Regression Analysis of Engagement and Perceived Discrimination (Logit Model)

Variable	White	Asian	Black	Latino	Dummy Effect
Employee Engagement	-1.151 (0.271)***	-4.292 (2.470)*	-0.707 (0.200)***	-0.845 (0.237)***	-1.030 (0.183)***
Age	0.014 (0.024)	-0.392 (0.248)	0.011 (0.016)	0.004 (0.020)	0.011 (0.016)
Education	-0.156 (0.125)	5.894 (3.625)	-0.171 (0.121)	0.149 (0.155)	-0.093 (0.091)
Tenure	0.019 (0.129)	2.084 (1.213)*	-0.073 (0.090)	-0.006 (0.154)	0.034 (0.092)
Income	0.097 (0.118)	-0.055 (0.608)	0.156 (0.086)*	-0.157 (0.116)	0.077 (0.077)
Dummy Code 1 (Asian)					0.864 (0.735)
Dummy Code 2 (Black)					1.100 (0.321)***
Dummy Code 3 (Latino)					0.701 (0.348)***
Constant	1.468 (1.323)	-12.539 (12.271)	1.347 (0.968)	1.694 (1.048)	1.021 (0.935)
N	341	69	209	227	845

Standard errors in parentheses

* Add discrimination as a IV.

* Main effects (model 1), race dummy x engagement & race x discrimination & discrimination x engagement: 7 interaction (model 2), 3-way, race x engagement x discrimination (model 3)

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01

Table 4

Regression Analysis of Engagement and Absenteeism (OLS Model)

Variable	White	Asian	Black	Latino	Dummy Effect
Employee Engagement	-1.402 (0.674)**	-1.043 (1.837)	-4.657 (2.362)**	0.143 (0.391)	-1.617 (0.593)***
Age	0.052 (0.067)	-0.397 (0.203)*	-0.060 (0.103)	-0.021 (0.054)	0.032 (0.050)
Education	-0.496 (0.495)	0.246 (1.221)	0.381 (0.957)	-0.278 (0.365)	-0.377 (0.385)
Tenure	-0.398 (0.582)	-0.396 (0.786)	0.747 (0.488)	0.117 (0.221)	-0.182 (0.457)
Income	0.143 (0.174)	0.006 (0.619)	0.707 (0.848)	0.253 (0.238)	0.258 (0.172)
Dummy Code 1 (Asian)					2.306 (1.965)
Dummy Code 2 (Black)					3.628 (1.699)**
Dummy Code 3 (Latino)					0.116 (1.067)
Constant	9.199 (3.897)**	-6.314 (13.371)	20.364 (9.452)**	3.089 (2.591)	8.965 (3.243)
N	342	69	210	228	848
R ²	.04	.15	.10	.01	.05

Standard errors in parentheses

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01

Table 5

Regression Analysis of Engagement and Turnover Intent¹ (Ordered Logit Model)

Variable	White	Asian	Black	Latino	Dummy Effect
Employee Engagement	1.459 (0.220)**	1.453 (0.772)*	1.028 (0.262)**	1.263 (0.264)***	1.346 (0.164)***
Age	0.016 (0.019)	0.002 (0.053)	0.013 (0.019)	0.055 (0.024)**	0.020 (0.014)
Education	-0.105 (0.109)	-0.410 (0.383)	-0.094 (0.150)	-0.144 (0.154)	-0.103 (0.086)
Tenure	0.208 (0.085)**	0.546 (0.237)**	0.293 (0.142)**	0.218 (0.143)	0.228 (0.067)***
Income	-0.040 (0.092)	0.315 (0.256)	0.369 (0.116)***	0.049 (0.107)	0.031 (0.067)
Dummy Code 1 (Asian)					-0.835 (0.361)**
Dummy Code 2 (Black)					-0.213 (0.293)
Dummy Code 3 (Latino)					-0.310 (0.321)
N	339	69	210	228	845

1: Turnover intent expressed as “intent to remain”

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Appendix

Items Comprising the Gallup Q12®

Overall Satisfaction - On a five-point scale, where “5” is *extremely satisfied* and “1” is *extremely dissatisfied*, how satisfied are you with (Name of Company) as a place to work?

1. I know what is expected of me at work.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my job right.
3. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
7. At work, my opinions seem to count.
8. The mission/purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
9. My associates (fellow employees) are committed to doing quality work.
10. I have a best friend at work.
11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Note. These items are proprietary and copyrighted by The Gallup Organization. They cannot be reprinted or reproduced in any manner without the written consent of The Gallup Organization. Copyright © 1992-1999. The Gallup Organization, Princeton, NJ. All rights reserved.