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The Role of Race in Organization Choice: Are Differences Black & White?

by

Derek Reynold Avery

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
Doctor of Philosophy

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

Miguel A. Quiñones. Associate Professor. Chair
Psychology

Robert L. Dipboye. Professor
Psychology

Michelle R. Hebl. Assistant Professor
Psychology

Jennifer M. George.
Mary Gibbs Jones Professor of Mgmt.
Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Mgmt.

Houston. Texas

April. 2001
ABSTRACT

The Role of Race in Organization Choice:
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Several recent findings suggest that there are racial differences in organizational attraction. This study examines these differences using a sample of 258 undergraduate and graduate students. In an Internet “virtual site visit” to a fictional company, the level of racial structural integration (SI), salary, and the presence/absence of a diversity management program (DMP) were manipulated. SI, proposed by Cox (1991), is a means of describing the racial/ethnic diversity present among the employees of a firm, whereas diversity management programs are the successors to affirmative action plans. Black participants were most attracted to the organization with the highest level of SI. Furthermore, a type of ethnic identification, other-group orientation (OGO) significantly interacted with SI and participant race to predict organizational attraction. For Whites with low OGO, SI had a negative effect on attraction. For Blacks with high OGO, organizations high and low in SI (but not moderate) were the most attractive.
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The Role of Race in Organization Choice: Are Differences Black and White?

"Companies that ignore diversity will struggle to flourish in the global marketplace during the 21st century (Fletcher, 2000, F77)." This recent statement by affirmative action pioneer Arthur Fletcher illustrates the importance of organizations addressing issues of growing diversity. As American workplaces become increasingly heterogeneous (Cox, 1991; Triandis, Kurowski, & Gelfand, 1994), organizations must take a proactive stance on minority affairs. Many organizations have recognized this need for increased attention to diversity. For example, Coca-Cola chief executive Doug Daft recently announced that executive salaries would be tied to the attainment of diversity goals (Coke, 2000). Further, an overwhelming majority of the 50 largest U.S. companies have employed diversity directors (Affirmative Action, 1995). Thus, it is evident that determining the optimal method for handling diversity is rapidly becoming a premier concern facing organizations.

Within the scope of dealing with diversity, a pressing issue is the recruitment of qualified minority applicants (Cox, 1994; Cox & Blake, 1991; Landau, 1995; Wiley, 1992). As Schneider and Northcraft (1999) succinctly note, "to reap the potential benefits of diversity, organizations must first become diverse and then must maintain that diversity (p. 1462)." Consequently, corresponding with the impending increase in workplace diversity cited above, researchers have begun to explore the efficacy of various methods of minority recruitment (e.g., Highhouse, Stierwalt, Bachiochi, Elder, & Fisher, 1999; Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000; Thomas & Wise, 1999; Williams & Bauer, 1994). This area of research is highly important given previous findings suggesting that racial/ethnic groups differ in perceptions of organizational attractiveness
(Horvath, Ryan, & Kriska, 2000; Thomas & Wise, 1999), which subsequently influence job choice decisions (Turban, Campion, & Eyring, 1995). However, despite these initial findings, much about these racial/ethnic group differences remains unexplained (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

To address this gap, the present study integrates various existing literatures (e.g., organization choice, organizational attractiveness, person-organization fit, recruitment, managing diversity, and relational demography) in an effort to investigate the validity of and explain these differences. Building on research examining market signaling (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973; 1974), between- and within-race differences in applicant organization choice processes will be proposed and empirically tested. Contrary to previous research attempts in this area, I contend that differences in the applicant attraction process are due to differences in the inferences that these applicants draw (attributions) from identical organizational characteristics. This marks an important contribution to the literature, as previous research on race has often been plagued by a lack of theoretical development and has ignored the role of race in decision-making processes (Cox & Nkomo, 1991; Helms & Piper, 1994; Lawrence, 1997; Nkomo, 1992; Thomas, Phillips, & Brown, 1998; Triandis et. al, 1994).

However, it is beyond the scope of a single study to simultaneously examine the organization choice processes of all minority groups. Recent organizational research has revealed attitudinal differences among minority groups (e.g., Parker, Baltes, & Christiansen, 1997; Riordan & Shore, 1997), thereby demonstrating the need for independent consideration of each ethnic and racial group. Consequently, the present
study will focus on differences between Black and White applicant perceptions of organizational attractiveness.

Blacks were chosen for several reasons. First, Black applicant behavior has been studied more extensively than any other ethnic minority group (e.g., Hightower et al., 1999; Perkins et al., 2000), thus better lending itself to the development of sound theoretically derived hypotheses. Second, Blacks are the largest underrepresented minority group, and in conjunction with Hispanics and Asians are one of the fastest growing ethnic minority groups in the United States (Day, 1992). Finally, there has been a call for research investigating Black-White differences in job preferences (Weaver, 1992). In fact, Weaver (1992) noted that the reasons underlying the differences between these two groups remain unexplained and deserve scholars’ attention (p. 1090).

Theoretical Background

The present study attempts to build on the recent finding that Black applicants may be attracted to organizations by different factors than White applicants (Thomas & Wise, 1999). In a survey assessing the valences Master of Business Administration (MBA) students placed on job, organizational, diversity, and recruiter factors when evaluating potential employers, Thomas and Wise (1999) found that Black and White respondents differ in the amount of importance that they place on recruiter and diversity characteristics. Specifically, their results indicated that Black participants place significantly more importance on diversity and recruiter characteristics than did Whites. Although on the whole, these characteristics were rated as less important than job and organizational characteristics, research has shown that characteristics initially deemed less important are often the most influential when actual job choice decisions are made
(Osborn, 1990). However, it should be noted that the data collected by Thomas and Wise (1999) did not permit them to investigate why such racial/ethnic differences exist.

**Market Signaling.** “Finding (racial) differences is a start, but has limited utility unless we can explain why differences exist and what their implications are for management practice (Cox & Nkomo, 1991, p. 426-427).” One potential reason for these differences can be explained using a market signaling approach (Spence, 1973; 1974). In fact, much of the recent research investigating the effects of organizational recruitment efforts on applicants’ perceptions of organizational attractiveness has relied on signaling (e.g., Goltz & Giannantonio, 1995; Turban & Greening, 1997), which Rynes (1991) adapted to explicate the mechanism intervening the effects of recruitment practices on applicant outcomes.

In defining market signaling, Spence (1973; 1974) claimed that during the dual processes of organizations selecting employees and applicants choosing organizations, each knows relatively little about the other. As a result, observable attributes are used to surmise the unknown. In the case of the present study, the issue of concern is applicants’ decision-making processes, thereby limiting the focus of market signaling to the applicant perspective. Thus, signaling suggests that when applicants know little information about the organization’s position/policy on certain issues, relevant recruitment cues (e.g., recruiter preparedness or dining extravagance) are used as signals to draw inferences about the company (Rynes, 1991).

In a detailed qualitative study, Rynes, Bretz, and Gerhart (1991) found evidence of market signaling. The authors conducted 82 structured interviews where participants were allowed to explain their job search and choice decisions in their own words. Their
results revealed that the participants used their recruitment experiences to draw inferences regarding broader organizational characteristics. Subsequently, many quantitative studies have also yielded support (e.g., Goltz & Giannantnio, 1995; Turban & Greening, 1997), thereby establishing market signaling as a viable explanation for applicant reactions to recruitment experiences.

The hypotheses derived in the present study rely on signaling as an explanation of how and why racial groups differ in the formation of perceptions of organizational attractiveness by testing for between group variance in the variables that mediate organization choice processes. The use of signaling in this capacity follows the call for empirical investigation of the symbolic consequences of observable organizational diversity (Milliken & Martins, 1996).

In addition to forming perceptions regarding unknown organizational characteristics, Rynes (1991) also suggested that applicants use observable cues to form expectations about the recruitment process. For example, Blacks may use organizational characteristics (e.g., the number of Black employees) to formulate expectations regarding their group’s employment opportunities with the organization. The absence of Black employees may lead them to believe that the company discriminates against Blacks in personnel selection decisions. Thus, Black applicants may conclude that their job pursuit efforts with the organization at hand would be in vain.

One way of thinking about discrimination of this type is in terms of equity. Equity refers to the perceived fairness of the ratio between an individual’s input and the outcomes received in exchange for those efforts (Adams, 1965). If cues observed during the recruitment process lead minorities to draw different conclusions about the equity of
that organization’s human resource (HR) practices. Employment discrimination has been perceived. Put another way, a lack of racial diversity may lead Black applicants to conclude that the ratio of outcomes (i.e., job offers) that members of their group will receive in reward for their inputs (i.e., qualifications) will be disproportionately lower than their White counterparts. This perceived discrimination is likely to have a negative impact on their attraction to the organization.

Although equity theory is commonly thought of as involving a comparison of an individual’s own ratio of outcomes to input to that of a comparison other. Adams (1965) also suggested that s/he might use him/herself as a referent. This consideration is important because information regarding other applicants’ inputs and outcomes is often unavailable to applicants. Recently, research has confirmed that a comparison other is not always necessary to form judgments of equity (Kulik & Ambrose, 1992; van de Bos, Lind, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997). In fact, results of one study suggest that individuals use self-future referents to formulate perceptions of equity (Oldham, Kulik, Ambrose et al., 1986). Hence, equity theory may aid in explaining racial differences in applicant processes in the manner described above.

At least one study has yielded some preliminary support for this logic (Thomas, 1993). Thomas (1993) found that race moderated the relationship between recruiter race and expectations of organizational interest, such that minorities were more likely to perceive a job offer to be forthcoming when the recruiter was also a minority. One explanation for this finding could be that minority applicants used the recruiter’s race to formulate expectations regarding employment equity. When the recruiter was a minority, minorities probably concluded that the organization’s personnel selection practices were
unlikely to be discriminatory (at least with respect to race) and therefore believed their chances of receiving an offer to be enhanced.

Similarly, it can be anticipated that other organizational, or job characteristics may be weighed differently by members of minority groups when determining their expectations for equity in the recruitment and future employment processes. Based on this logic, hypotheses will be formulated suggesting that between-group differences in the effects of organizational characteristics on perceived attractiveness can be explained by differences in the intervening role of recruitment and expectations of equity in organizational practices. One characteristic that may elicit such racial differences in attraction is organizational racial diversity (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

Organizational Racial Diversity

One of the diversity factors examined by Thomas and Wise (1999) was the demographic composition of the organization. Cox (1991) provided a model for capturing the various components of an organization's racial diversity. He suggested that with respect to diversity, there are three types of organizations: monolithic, plural, and multicultural. Monolithic organizations are characterized by a lack of racial/ethnic diversity and a high degree of cultural bias against members of ethnic minority groups. Plural organizations are more diverse than monolithic organizations, but the company still lacks a true commitment to diversity that is present in multicultural organizations.

Cox classified organizations into these categories using six dimensions of integration: form of acculturation, degree of structural integration, integration into informal organization, degree of cultural bias, levels of organizational identification, and degree of inter-group conflict. Of these six dimensions, perhaps the most easily
detectable for potential applicants is structural integration. "Structural integration refers to the presence of persons from different cultural groups in a single organization (Cox, 1991, p. 36)." Three levels of structural integration are delineated: minimal, partial, and full. Minimal integration is characterized by a virtual absence of minority presence. When an organization is partially structurally integrated, there are more diverse employees and steps are taken to be more inclusive of minorities. However, partial structural integration allows minorities entry, while simultaneously denying them opportunities for advancement. Conversely, full structural integration entails racial/ethnic diversity at all organizational levels.

Numerous researchers have investigated the effects of diversity on organizational outcomes, such as organizational attractiveness (cf. Milliken & Martens, 1996). Consequently, a review of this research is provided in the sections that follow. Specifically, studies examining the effects of employee racial composition, managerial heterogeneity, and diversity management programs are discussed, leading to the formulation of research hypotheses.

**Employee Racial Composition.** Approximately 30 years ago, Richard Young wrote perhaps the first scholarly effort devoted to fostering recruitment of minority personnel (Young, 1969). In this book, Young described how past discrimination had led to minorities' reluctance to apply for certain jobs and employment with certain organizations. He also provided several recommendations for organizations wishing to recruit minorities. First, he emphasized the importance of minority applicants seeing faces of color representing the company, whether a recruiter, employee, or even a minority employee's picture in the company's recruitment literature. Young also asserted
that companies should not verbally stress their commitment to equal employment opportunity because that might cause minority applicants to question the employer’s motives for interviewing them.

Since 1969, many of Young’s suggestions have been empirically investigated. For instance, researchers have examined the effect of recruiter race (Hernandez, Avery, & Hebl, 2000; Taylor & Bergman, 1987; Thomas, 1993; Thomas & Wise, 1999; Wyse, 1972; Young et. al, 1997), diversity portrayed in company ads (Perkins et al., 2000), and advertisement of equal opportunity policy (Highhouse et al., 1999; Williams & Bauer, 1994) on applicant reactions. Nevertheless, the idea that has received the most attention is his notion that the presence of minority employees will increase the attractiveness of the organization to applicants of like minority status.

Conceptually similar to Young’s idea is the attraction phase discussed in Schneider’s (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory. Borrowing from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), Schneider suggested that individuals are attracted to organizations that they perceive to be similar to themselves, a process that eventually helps to lead to organizational homogeneity. Subsequently, Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) proposed another related theory known as relational demography. Relational demography postulates that individuals will be more attracted to groups that contain a greater number of individuals that they perceive to be demographically similar to themselves. Thus, according to the predictions of ASA and relational demography, a Black applicant presented with two organizations will, in the absence of further defining information, be more attracted to the organization containing more Black employees.
Recent findings have yielded preliminary support for this assertion (Horvath et al., 2000; Perkins et al. 2000; Thomas, 1993; Thomas & Wise, 1999). For example, results of a policy study revealed that for minority MBA students, demographic composition of an organization affected attraction as well as perceptions of their likelihood of receiving a job offer (Thomas, 1993). In another study, Perkins et al. (2000) examined the effect of minority employees portrayed in advertisements for a company on applicant perceptions of organizational attractiveness. They found that Blacks were more attracted to and felt greater compatibility with companies that had Blacks in their ads. suggesting that knowledge regarding the presence of Black employees heightens not only the attractiveness of the organization, but also Black applicants' perceptions of fit and compatibility. Consistent with these findings, Thomas and Wise (1999) collected survey data that indicated that Blacks place greater importance on diversity factors, such as demographic composition of the organization, when formulating perceptions of attractiveness. Finally, in a field study, Horvath et al. (2000) found that gender and fit perceptions (self-assessments of congruence with the company) did not account for significant incremental variance in application behavior compared to a model containing only race and organizational familiarity.

It should be noted, however, that not all findings suggest that demographic similarity predicts applicants' perceptions of the organization. For example, Cable and Judge (1996) conducted a study assessing the roles of value and demographic congruence in the formation of applicants' perceptions of person-organization fit and found no significant effect for demographic similarity. However, their measure of similarity was a composite of several variables including gender, race, age, number of children.
undergraduate education (major and university), and socioeconomic status.
Consequently, it is quite possible that the presence of racial similarity effects went
undetected due to the absence of significant effects of the other five variables. Further,
individual minority groups were not independently investigated. This leaves the
alternative explanation that racial similarity effects exist only for specific groups,
unexplored.

Based on the tenets of social identity theory as well as the findings discussed in
this section, it is expected that Blacks will be more attracted to organizations containing
more Black employees. On the other hand, Whites' perceptions of the organization's
attractiveness are unlikely to be affected by racial composition unless the number of
Black (and other minority) employees exceeds a threshold of around 60% (Perkins et al.,
2000; Riordan & Shore, 1997). This assertion is further supported by the fact that race
has been shown to be more salient for Blacks than Whites in the selection of group
members (Davis & Burnstein, 1981). Moreover, at least one study has found that Whites
also tend to be more attracted to racially diverse organizations than firms employing only
White employees (Thomas, 1993). Nevertheless it is important to demonstrate that
organizational characteristics (i.e., a substantial, albeit minority presence of Black
employees) that may attract Blacks do not adversely affect the attraction of potential
White applicants.

Hypothesis 1: The relationship between organizational racial composition
and perceptions of that organization's attractiveness will be moderated by
the race of the potential applicant. Specifically, Blacks' perceptions of
organizational attractiveness will be enhanced by a greater number of
Black employees whereas Whites’ perceptions of organizational attractiveness will be unaffected by employee racial composition, so long as Blacks remain the numerical minority.

Although the experimental studies that have been discussed did not report formal tests of mediation, the race effects on attraction reported in both studies (Perkins et al. 2000; Thomas, 1993) were likely due to intervening processes (Cox & Nkomo, 1990; Lawrence, 1997; Nkomo, 1992). More specifically, in Thomas’ (1993) study, Blacks probably viewed the organization as more attractive because the presence of Black employees increased their expectations of the likelihood of receiving an offer. Holzer (1998) supports this argument by suggesting that an organization’s minority application rates are influenced by the perceived likelihood that members of the group will be hired by the organization. Similarly, Blacks’ higher levels of attraction to the organization portraying Black employees in their ads reported by Perkins et al. (2000) were likely due to the mediating effect of perceived fit, which was highly significantly correlated to attraction. This failure to explore the mechanism through which race affects organizational outcomes is a common shortcoming of research examining organizational demography (Lawrence, 1997). The presence alone of a significant race effect does little to explain why the effect occurs.

As the preceding discussion suggests, the racial composition of an organization could signal many different things to a Black applicant. For example, a Black applicant could infer, based on a high percentage of Black employees, that the organization places a premium on diversity, is likely to hire him/her (Thomas, 1993), and that s/he would fit in well with the organization (Perkins et al., 2000). Similarly, all three of these beliefs
could in turn affect the applicant's perceptions of organizational attractiveness (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

Another variable likely to intervene in the diversity-attraction relationship is the anticipation of stress. It has been suggested that Blacks in organizations are likely to experience unique stress (token stress) due to their minority status (Fernandez, 1981; Pettigrew & Martin, 1987). These authors claim that being solo, or in the numerical minority, increases the salience of the employee's race, thereby creating heightened performance expectations. Thus it is probable that Black applicants will anticipate greater levels of token stress at an organization that employs few Black employees. In support of this notion, a recent empirical investigation found that token stress was inversely related to the number of minorities employed by the organization (Jackson, Thoits, & Taylor, 1995).

Black applicants could also use the number of Black employees as a signal of other unknowns about the organization. For instance, if a Black applicant observes that an organization employs many Blacks, s/he may use this information to determine the level of discrimination present in the organization. The presence of a significant number of Black employees should suggest that Blacks possess equal, or near equal employment opportunities, making racial discrimination less likely to be perceived as an obstacle between the applicant and employment. As a result, s/he is likely to have higher expectations of equitable personnel selection processes than if the company had no Black employees.

Furthermore, social identity theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and ASA (Schneider, 1987) propose that individuals will be more attracted to organizations
containing others that are perceived to be demographically similar. Presumably, this is due to the applicant’s assumptions that demographic similarity leads to a better fit with the organization. Hence, Black applicants’ perceptions of fit with organizations likely intervene in the relationship between the organization’s racial composition and their attraction to the company. Based on this logic, it is hypothesized that inferences about the organization will mediate the relationship between organizational diversity characteristics and applicant perceptions of attractiveness.

Hypothesis 2a: For Black applicants, anticipated token stress will partially mediate the relationship between employee racial composition and organizational attractiveness. More Black employees will lead Black applicants to anticipate less token stress, thereby increasing organizational attractiveness.

Hypothesis 2b: For Black applicants, expectations of selection equity will partially mediate the relationship between employee racial composition and organizational attractiveness. More Black employees will lead Black applicants to expect equitable personnel selection processes, thereby increasing organizational attractiveness.

Hypothesis 2c: For Black applicants, perceived fit with the organization will partially mediate the relationship between employee racial composition and organizational attractiveness. More Black employees will lead Black applicants to perceive a better fit with the organization, thereby increasing organizational attractiveness.
Managerial Racial Heterogeneity. A facet of organizational diversity that has yet
to be empirically examined is racial/ethnic heterogeneity at the managerial level
(Milliken & Martens, 1996). Cox (1991) suggests that to fully understand the effects of
organizational diversity, researchers must look beyond simple organizational aggregates
of employee demographic distribution. This statement is based on the fact that there is
often a large disparity between the proportion of minorities in an organization's overall
workforce and the proportion in management (Cox, 1994; Morrison & Von Glinow,
1990). As a result of this type of discrepancy, when examining the effects of
organizational diversity, it is important to consider diversity at different hierarchical
levels.

There are several reasons why one might expect the presence of minorities at the
managerial level to increase Blacks' perceptions of organizational attractiveness. First,
research investigating the effects of racial diversity in the supervisor-subordinate
relationship has shown that Blacks reporting to Whites perceived less trust (Jeanquart-
Barone, 1993). Blacks reporting to Whites also experience less supervisory support,
fewer developmental opportunities, less procedural justice, lower assimilation, and more
discrimination and role ambiguity than those reporting to other Blacks (Jeanquart-
Barone, 1996; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). Thus for Black applicants, the presence of Black
managers is likely to be associated with the perception of a more productive
organizational experience for Black employees.

Second, the presence/absence of Black managers is likely to be used by Black
applicants to draw inferences about unknown organizational or job characteristics
(Milliken & Martins, 1996). For example, Black applicants could use the presence of
Black managers to infer the amount of value that the organization places on diversity. Third, the more Black managers employed by a company, the more potential Black mentors a Black applicant would have to choose from should s/he gain employment with the company. This is of special importance given that Black employees having Black mentors report receiving more career support while being liked more by their mentor (Dreher & Cox, 1996; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; Thomas, 1990a). This logic leads to the following hypothesis.

_Hypothesis 3:_ The relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and applicants' perceptions of organizational attractiveness will be moderated by the race of the potential applicant. Specifically, Blacks' perceptions of organizational attractiveness will be enhanced by a greater number of Black managers/executives. Whites' perceptions of organizational attractiveness will be unaffected by the presence/absence of Blacks in leadership positions, so long as Black leaders remain the numerical minority.

Again, to find a significant difference based on applicant race does not explain the mechanism through which Black applicants differ in forming impressions of organizational attractiveness (Cox & Nkomo, 1991; Lawrence, 1997). Therefore, the present study will seek to explicate the relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and Black applicant organizational attractiveness using signal theory.

A review by Milliken and Martins (1996) noted that only one study that had applied market signaling to organizational diversity characteristics. In that study, Ely (1994) suggested that diversity in top management groups is important because it
conveys the potential for advancement to diverse employees. Her results were in support of this assertion as female attorneys viewed other female attorneys’ promotion to partner as a signal of their own advancement potential. Subsequently, researchers have suggested the likelihood of similar processes involving race. As evidence, consider the following statement: “the low representation of African Americans in the management ranks may well have contributed to low attitudes of African Americans regarding advancement opportunities (Riordan & Shore, 1997, p.353).” To date, however, no studies have tested this possibility.

Furthermore, this signal (minority leaders) may be indicative of actual minority advancement opportunities (Hayes James, in press; Kanter, 1977; Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991; Rynes, et al., 1991; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998). For example, in an examination of educational institutions, Konrad and Pfeffer (1991) found that women and minorities’ chances of receiving an offer and being promoted were enhanced if the organization was more diverse, especially at higher levels. Similarly, Hayes James (in press) found that Black managers’ promotion rates were lower in an organization where they were racially dissimilar to other managers. Thus, the presence of racial diversity is conducive to more advancement opportunities for Blacks and other minorities.

With respect to applicant behavior, promotional opportunities are an important predictor of decision-making processes (Bretz & Judge, 1994). However, the cues used to draw inferences regarding promotional opportunities with a given firm may vary systematically as a function of applicant race. For instance, the presence of Black leaders is likely to convey to Black applicants that promotional decisions in that organization are unlikely to be affected by race. White applicants, on the other hand, are unlikely to pay
attention to the presence/absence of Black leaders unless they are (or approach being) the numerical majority. Hence, it is anticipated that Managerial heterogeneity will indirectly influence Black applicants’ perceptions of organizational attractiveness through its effect on expectations of organizational equity in promotional processes.

_Hypothesis 4:_ For Black applicants, expectations of promotional equity will mediate the relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and organizational attractiveness. Specifically, organizations with Black leaders will elicit greater perceptions of the promotional equity that will subsequently increase the attractiveness of the organization.

**Diversity Management Program**

Another of the diversity factors identified by Thomas and Wise (1999) was the presence of a diversity management program (DMP). Managing diversity involves the creation of a climate that allows all workers, irrespective of race, to fully develop and progress through the organization’s hierarchical structure (Thomas, 1990b). Diversity management has experienced a recent growth in popularity due in part to the negative connotations that have become synonymous with affirmative action plans (for a review, see Kravitz et al., 1997).

What separates DMPs from affirmative action plans (AAPs) is the organization’s intent. Whereas AAPs are typically implemented to comply with equal employment opportunity legislation, DMPs are voluntary efforts to increase diversity (Gilbert, Stead, & Ivancevich, 1999). It has been suggested that such efforts could lead to competitive advantage via increasing the company’s ability to attract talented minorities (Cox & Blake, 1991). Furthermore, DMPs can be instituted at a relatively low cost to
organizations considering the possible benefits to be reaped as a result (cf. Williams & Bauer, 1994).

However, the growth in popularity of DMPs has not coincided with an increase in empirical research investigating their advantages and disadvantages (Gilbert & Stead, 1999; Williams & Bauer, 1994). In fact, a review of the literature revealed only two studies investigating the effect of diversity management on applicant reactions (Gilbert & Stead, 1999; Williams & Bauer, 1994). For example, using a between subjects design, undergraduates reported that a company with the DMP was a more attractive potential employer than one without (Williams & Bauer, 1994). More recently, Gilbert and Stead (1999) examined the effect of DMPs from a different perspective. They found that women and minorities hired under a DMP were viewed as more qualified than those hired under an AAP. Thus it appears that in addition to applicants preferring organizations that have them. DMPs may not produce the negative stigma attached to being a beneficiary of an AAP (Heilman, Block, & Lucas, 1992).

Particularly relevant to the present study, Williams and Bauer (1994) found no support for their hypothesis that race and DMPs would interact in their effects on organizational attractiveness. It was anticipated that in addition to the positive main effect of DMPs on perceptions of organizational attractiveness, minorities would view organizations with DMPs more favorably than Whites. One reason that the interaction may not have been significant is that in an effort to increase power to a sufficient level, all racial/ethnic minorities were grouped to form one minority group. Grouping of this type is often done in organizational research (e.g. Thomas & Wise, 1999) despite evidence that the attitudes of members of different racial/ethnic groups vary significantly
(Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991; Parker, et al., 1997; Riordan & Shore, 1997). However, the authors acknowledge this limitation and suggest that future researchers focus on individual minority groups, a suggestion adhered to in the present study.

However, even after grouping the minorities in their study, non-whites only accounted for 15% of the sample. As a result, they may have lacked the power to detect a significant race x DMP interaction, a possibility that seems likely given the pattern of their data. Whereas DMPs had a positive effect on Whites' attraction to the organization, they had no effect for minorities. In fact, minorities in the DMP condition actually reported slightly less attraction to the organization relative to minorities in the no-DMP condition. This pattern may have constituted a significant interaction if their sample had included more minorities.

A further limitation to Williams and Bauer's (1994) study is that it confounded DMPs with AAPs. Both of the company descriptions included the phrase, "CaryCorp is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer" in italics at the bottom of the page (p. 300). Many majority group members hold less than positive attitudes regarding affirmative action (Kravitz, 1995). Thus, an alternative explanation for their findings is that the DMP simply ameliorated the negative effect of the AAP on White participants' perceptions of the organization's attractiveness. Since minorities are unlikely to have these negative feelings about AAPs, the consistency in their attractiveness ratings across conditions is understandable. Minorities are unlikely to perceive any real difference between AAPs and DMPs, whereas Whites are likely to denigrate AAPs unless explicitly told that equal opportunity for all is emphasized, such as in the DMP condition. This interpretation of their findings is supported by the fact that when affirmative action is
described in the context of equal opportunity, White men do not oppose it (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995; Parker, et al., 1997)

Based on these limitations to Williams and Bauer's (1994) study, it remains unclear as to whether DMPs differentially affect Blacks' and Whites' perceptions of organizations, as Thomas and Wise's (1999) results suggest. Further, it has also been demonstrated that minorities place greater value on employer efforts to promote diversity than non-minorities (Kossek & Zonia, 1993). Consequently, an aim of the present study is to improve on Williams and Bauer's study to determine the true relationship between DMPs, applicant race, and organizational attractiveness. To do so, the present study will eliminate the AAP confound and use a larger minority sample composed entirely of members of one minority group.

**Hypothesis 5:** The relationship between DMPs and organizational attractiveness will be moderated by race, such that the effect of DMPs on organizational attractiveness will be stronger for Blacks than for Whites.

Blacks' perceptions of organizations are likely to be influenced by the presence or absence of a DMP for a variety of reasons. For example, the positive emphasis placed on diversity and equity by an organization instituting a DMP is likely to lead Blacks to perceive that the organization is a good place for minorities to work. What's more, a DMP's explicit promise of equal opportunity at all organizational levels is likely to cause Blacks to believe that qualifications and performance will be rewarded equitably with a job offer and advancement opportunities respectively. Succinctly stated, DMPs can signal an environment of fairness and equality to Blacks that is likely to increase their perceptions of the organization's attractiveness.
**Hypothesis 6a:** For Blacks, expectations of selection equity will partially mediate the relationship between DMPs and organizational attractiveness. Specifically, organizations with DMPs will elicit greater perceptions of expectations of selection equity thereby increasing organizational attractiveness.

**Hypothesis 6b:** For Blacks, expectations of promotional equity will partially mediate the relationship between DMPs and organizational attractiveness. Specifically, organizations with DMPs will elicit greater perceptions of promotional equity thereby increasing organizational attractiveness.

**Within Group Differences**

Until now the current study has focused exclusively on between group racial differences. However, it is highly likely that a great deal of variance exists within members of the same ethnic group, whether majority or minority (Phinney, 1992; Thomas, Phillips, & Brown, 1998). One means of capturing such within group variance is to examine the role of ethnic identity in the recruitment process, as suggested by Thomas and Wise (1999). Essentially, ethnic identity measures the degree to which an individual's sense of self is related to his/her membership in an ethnic group (Phinney, 1992).

A decade ago, Phinney (1990) reviewed the literature pertaining to ethnic identity. She concluded that across groups, self-identification, a sense of belonging, and pride in one's group appear to be the central aspects of ethnic identity and that theoretical work vastly outnumbers empirical research on the subject. In addition, she asserted that when assessing ethnic identity, it is necessary to consider the individual's attitude toward the
majority group, an important distinction given that some theorists have proposed the two to be inversely related (e.g., Andujo, 1988).

The present study’s inclusion of ethnic identity follows the suggestion of previous researchers (Phinney, 1990; Thomas, Phillips, & Brown, 1998; Thomas & Wise, 1999). For example, Thomas and Wise state that, “the exploration of ethnic identity may prove more beneficial to our understanding of the influence of workforce diversity and recruitment (1999, p.388).” Specifically, the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of an individual low in ethnic identity are unlikely to be predicted by his/her racial group membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Therefore, the differences predicted in the hypotheses stated heretofore are contingent on the level of identification that individuals have with other members of their ethnic group.

Recently, Green (1999) made a similar argument pertaining to advertising. He predicted that the strength of Black participants’ ethnic identification would moderate the previously found effect of the racial composition of an advertisement on consumer attitudes (Whittler, 1991). Using a sample of 313 Black women, Green (1999) manipulated the racial composition of perfume and foundation advertisements and the source magazine of the ads. The results indicated that participants who identified more with their ethnicity exhibited a significantly stronger relationship between the ad’s racial composition and their perceptions of the ad’s favorability as well as their intentions to purchase the product (Green, 1999). In particular, strong identifiers were more likely to like ads and purchase products when Blacks were present in the ads.

This finding is particularly relevant to the present study given the similarities in the advertising and recruitment processes (Perkins, et al., 2000). Within both realms, the
goal of the organization is to convince outsiders to invest in its product. The major differences between the two are the product being sold and the nature of the consumer. Advertising aims to sell the company’s output to consumers in the marketplace, whereas the mission of recruitment is to sell applicants on the company such that consumers from the labor market are attracted to apply there for jobs. Thus, it is anticipated that applicants’ decision-making processes work similarly to those of consumers, thereby leading to the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7: For Blacks, the relationships specified in hypotheses 1, 3, and 5 will be moderated by ethnic identity such that individuals who identify more strongly with being Black will be more attracted by organizational diversity characteristics than those with low ethnic identity.

Furthermore, Whites may be attracted to organizational racial heterogeneity as well. In her examination of ethnic identity, Phinney (1992) proposed two components. The first involves an individual’s attitude toward his/her own group. To the contrary, the second component is concerned with the individual’s attitude toward members of other racial/ethnic groups. Furthermore, the construct also pertains to the amount of interaction that the individual desires with members of other ethnic/racial groups. To the extent that majority group members possess positive attitudes concerning minorities, they may even be positively influenced by organizational diversity characteristics. Or in other words, it is possible that some White applicants may seek racial diversity in their potential work environment.

In line with this argument, it is also probable that some Blacks may not be concerned with seeking diversity in their prospective workplaces. Many Blacks are faced
with being a solo or a token on a daily basis (Jackson, Thoits, & Taylor, 1995). Over time these individuals are likely to become acclimated to their solo status. Such an acclimation should be reflected in their attitudes toward members of other ethnic/racial groups. Attitudes that are likely to shape their perception of organizations. Consequently, there are likely to be Blacks who do not differentiate among potential employer on the basis of the organization’s racial composition.

_Hypothesis 8:_ Attitudes toward other racial/ethnic groups will moderate the relationship between the diversity characteristics in hypotheses 1, 3, and 5 and organizational attractiveness. Specifically racial heterogeneity will attract Whites with positive attitudes regarding minorities and homogeneity will not deter Blacks with positive attitudes regarding other racial/ethnic groups.

Although Thomas and Wise (1999) did not report any statistically significant racial differences in the amount of importance placed on job (e.g., pay, challenge) or organizational factors (e.g., opportunity for advancement, location), their design did not allow for them to test for the presence of interactions between factors. Hence, many important organizational recruitment dilemmas remain unresolved. For instance, the question remains as to whether a great salary would be enough to attract qualified Blacks to apply to a racially homogenous company. Also, to build on a question posed by Rynes (1991): If an organization is only able to offer a low salary, how can they still attract high quality minority applicants?
Salary/Pay

It is well accepted that pay is an important variable in the formation of organizational/job attractiveness (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Cable & Judge, 1994; Judge & Bretz, 1992). In fact, with few exceptions (e.g., Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997), pay level has consistently predicted applicants' perceptions of organizations (cf. Cable & Judge, 1994). However, the interactive effects of salary in attracting non-traditional applicants have yet to be investigated.

It is of both practical and theoretical importance to consider the potential impact of salary on the relationships hypothesized heretofore. If an organization desiring to attract Black applicants currently lacks racial diversity, perhaps high salaries can be used to entice Blacks to want to work there. However, such a scenario leads one to question why salary would influence the nature of the effects of organizational diversity characteristics (i.e., structural integration & DMPs).

One possible explanation involves the fact that Blacks have traditionally been paid less when performing the same jobs as White counterparts (Blau & Kahn, 1992; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990). In addition, this pay gap only widens with age (Barnum, Liden, & Ditomaso, 1995; Bratsberg & Terrell, 1998; Thomas, Herring, & Horton, 1994). Therefore, in anticipation of such wage discrimination Blacks may perceive the need to get as much up-front as possible, even at the expense of encountering racial isolation at work.

Weaver (1975) presented a somewhat similar argument when he suggested that racial differences in job preferences might be a product of differences in perceived job security. He found that Blacks were more likely to report preferring a high salary than
meaningful work, whereas the opposite was true for White respondents. In addition, for white collar jobs and jobs with higher prestige, he found that Blacks were more than twice as likely as Whites to indicate job security as the most important job characteristic. This led Weaver to suggest that, “knowing that having a job is at best tenuous, the Black worker may focus on the tangible, immediate security of income and be less mindful of the intrinsic satisfactions in his work (1975, p.441).” Although one might expect these results to be somewhat dated, a more recent replication of this study yielded similar findings (Weaver, 1992).

Although Weaver did not ask his respondents about the importance of organizational racial characteristics, his argument can be extended to include them. If economic security is the most important characteristic to Black applicants (Ganong, Coleman, Thompson, & Goodwin-Watkins, 1996; Weaver, 1975; 1992), then the effect of salary level will override the effects of other organizational characteristics on perceived organizational attractiveness.

Furthermore, salary may be expected to moderate the effects of organizational diversity characteristics for another reason - minorities may use salary as a coping mechanism in response to perceived discrimination (Sanchez & Brock, 1996). In a recent field study examining potential moderators of perceived discrimination, Sanchez and Brock (1996) found that salary moderated the association between perceived discrimination and both job satisfaction and work tension. Specifically, those with higher salaries were less likely to exhibit decreased job satisfaction and increased work tension in response to perceived discrimination.
Based on the findings discussed in this section, it is believed that salary may impact the relationships proposed in Hypotheses 1, 3, and 5. Therefore, the present study will explore this potential impact of salary. Specifically, the interactive effect of salary on the effects of employee racial composition, managerial racial heterogeneity, and DMPs will be examined.

Method

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted for two reasons: To confirm the pattern of relative importance that Black applicants placed on job and organizational characteristics reported by Thomas and Wise (1999) and to test for the presence of within-group differences. In this study, 19 Black students/recent graduates currently searching for jobs and those who have been in their jobs for one year or less acted as participants. In response to a survey, participants were asked to rate the importance of seven characteristics on a 9-point Likert-type scale: the job itself, location, salary, employee racial composition, Black managerial presence, whether they had a friend/acquaintance employed by the organization, and organization size.

As expected based on previous research (e.g., Holzer, 1998; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Thomas & Wise, 1999), the job itself was rated most important ($M = 8.26, SD = 1.05$), followed by salary ($M = 8.21, SD = .85$) and location ($M = 7.00, SD = 1.56$). However, the diversity characteristics were also seen as important although to a lesser extent (Black leadership: $M = 5.89, SD = 2.33$ and employee racial composition: $M = 4.26, SD = 2.08$). In addition, the large amount of variance in response to the importance of diversity supports the hypothesized within race variance in organization choice processes.
(hypotheses 7 & 8). Since applicants are likely to eliminate jobs that do not meet their primary criteria early in the organization choice process (Osborn, 1990) and geographic location does not consistently predict organizational attractiveness (e.g., Turban & Keon, 1993), the results support the larger study's the use of salary and diversity factors as independent variables.

Participants

The participants in this study were 138 Black (35% male) and 120 White (34% male) undergraduate and graduate students who were on average 20.25 years old with 3.31 years of work experience. More than half (56%) of the participants were currently looking for jobs, while another 7.4% had recently found one.

The participants were drawn from three southern universities. Undergraduates, who were solicited from psychology courses at the three sites, participated either to fulfill a course requirement or in exchange for extra credit. Graduate students, who were solicited through the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA), participated voluntarily. The type of university (one predominantly White University, one Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and one diverse institution with no clear majority) was coded in order to assess its potential effect on the dependent variables. The rationale behind this was that it has been suggested that managers may perceive graduates of HBCUs as being more ethnocentric than Black graduates of predominantly White institutions (Dreher & Chargois, 1998). Since the present study will measure ethnic identity, this relationship will be explored in addition to the specified hypotheses.
Experimental Design

The experimental design for this study was a $3 \times 2 \times 2$ between-subjects factorial design. There were three levels of organizational racial diversity (monolithic, plural, and multicultural), two levels of salary (moderate and high), two levels of diversity management (has program and no program). In addition, participants’ race (Black and White) was matched for each of the twelve conditions. Thus, a total of 12 different organizational descriptions were used.

Manipulations

Organizational Racial Composition. Using Cox’s (1991) framework, three types of organizations were depicted in an Internet “virtual site visit” (see Appendix B). Participants were presented with pictures of individuals who would be their coworkers and supervisors should they be offered and accept a position with the company. A monolithic organization displayed photos of all White employees and managers. A plural organization showed a number of Black employees (40%), but racial homogeneity at the managerial level. A multicultural organization included Black employees (40%) and managers (33%). The use of this framework in this manner follows the suggestion of previous research that future studies investigate the effects of vertical integration of minorities (Gilbert & Ones, 1998, p. 700).

Salary. Salary was manipulated by presenting either $30,000 or $42,000 as the company’s typical starting salary for associates. The numbers, taken from the National Association of Colleges and Employers, were the range endpoints for salary offers for students in business administration for the year 2000 (The Job Market. 2000, p. 8). The
low endpoint for business administration was used because it fell in the middle of the ranges for many liberal arts majors (e.g., History and Psychology).

**Managing Diversity Program.** Similar to previous research, managing diversity was manipulated by including or excluding a description of a managing diversity program in the organizational description given to the participants (Williams & Bauer, 1994; Gilbert & Stead, 1999). In the DMP condition, participants read the following statement:

**Commitment to Diversity.** Finally, at Essex (the fictional consulting firm), diversity is viewed as a competitive advantage, and as a necessary business tool for advancing into the 21st century. We make every attempt to hire the best person for the job, without regard to race, sex, disability, religion, or national origin. Essex seeks to actively recruit diverse individuals at all levels of the organization.

**Measures**

Respondents indicated their level of agreement with statements on a 7-point Likert-type scale for each of the measures described here.

**Organizational Attractiveness.** Participant's perceptions of organizational attractiveness were assessed using a five-item scale developed by Sinar and Highhouse (2000). A sample item is: "This company is attractive as a place for employment." This scale proved to be internally consistent (coefficient Alpha = .91).

**Expectations of Selection Equity.** A factor analysis revealed that two distinct factors were present among the four items intended to measure expectations of selection equity. Since neither set of two-item scales proved to be internally consistent (both
coefficient alphas < .6), the one item believed to best represent the construct was used in lieu of a scale: "My qualifications alone would determine whether they offer me a position."

**Expectations of Promotional Equity.** A reliability analysis revealed that one of the items intended to measure expectations of promotion equity was not internally consistent with the others. Thus the item was dropped. The remaining three items designed by the researcher were used to assess participants' expectations regarding the equity of promotional processes (coefficient Alpha = .76). A sample item is: "I believe that the people promoted there are generally the most qualified candidates."

**Perceived Fit.** One item developed by the researcher was added to a four-item scale used by Perkins et al. (2000) to assess applicants' perceptions of fit with the organization (coefficient Alpha = .84). A sample item is: "I would feel at home working for an organizational like this."

**Anticipated Token Stress.** A reliability analysis revealed that one of the items intended to measure anticipated token stress was not consistent with the others. Thus the item was dropped. The remaining three items adapted from Jackson et al. (1995) were used to assess participants' anticipations regarding token stress at the company (coefficient Alpha = .67). A sample item is: "I would likely feel isolated working there." Although the internal consistency of this scale was low, it approached the .7 criteria suggested by Nunnally (1967).

**Ethnic/Racial Identity.** Phinney's (1992) multigroup ethnic identity measure (MEIM) was used to assess ethnic/racial identity as well as participants' other-group orientation. Although, the internal consistency of many ethnic identity measures has been
quite low (Phinney, 1990), the MEIM has shown to be reliable, with alphas ranging from .81 to .90 (Phinney, 1992). In the present study, coefficient Alpha for ethnic identity was .92, compared to .75 for the other-group orientation scale. A sample item is: "I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means to me."

**Demographic Control Variables.** Several demographic variables were collected in order to control for their effects in the analyses. These variables include economic status, gender, age, work experience, and undergraduate/graduate classification. A 5-point ordinal scale was used for participants to indicate their economic status (see Appendix A. #46). To include gender as a covariate, it was necessary to test for homogeneity of regression, which in this case assumes that males and females are not differentially attracted by the manipulations. Gender did not moderate the effect of structural integration ($F(2, 234) = 2.53, p = n. s.$), DMPs ($F(1, 234) = .01, p = n. s.$), or salary ($F(1, 234) = .13, p = n. s.$); thus it was included in the analyses as a covariate.

**Procedure**

Data were collected via computer. After logging onto the study website, Black and White participants were randomly assigned to one of the twelve experimental conditions via a random number generator. This research utilized an Internet website presenting a fictitious company to manipulate the independent variables. In the company description and "virtual site visit" pictures, participants were informed about job and organizational characteristics and policies that were standardized for all experimental conditions. Only organizational racial composition, DMPs, and salary varied according to the participants' experimental condition.
After reading the organizational description and completing the "virtual site visit", each participant completed all of the measures. Finally, the participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations for the measured variables are reported in Tables 1 and 2. Before testing the research hypotheses, the effect of the participant's college of origin on the variables measured in the study was assessed to ensure that there were no differences across the three data collection sites. After controlling for economic status and race, the only significant effect to emerge was on other-group orientation for Black students (this effect is described in detail in the exploratory analysis section). Thus, it is unlikely that any of the results that follow were due to differences among the colleges and universities that were sampled. This test of compatibility is similar to that performed by Williams and Bauer (1994).

Manipulation Checks

The effectiveness of the three experimental manipulations was evaluated. Participants in the diversity management plan condition reported significantly more agreement with the statement that "this company makes a concerted effort to ensure equal opportunity for all of its employees" (5.02 vs. 4.58, t = 3.00, p ≤ .01). As expected, the high salary condition reported greater salaries than the low salary condition ($37,760 vs. $28,281, t = 7.58, p ≤ .001). Finally, participants' responses to the racial structural integration manipulation check ("Black workers are employed at all organizational levels in this company.") differed for each level of the manipulation. This manipulation was tested using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the independent effects of the
Table 1

**Means and Standard Deviations for Measured Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work Experience</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Organizational Attractiveness</td>
<td>22.45</td>
<td>6.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Perceived Fit</td>
<td>22.27</td>
<td>6.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Expectations of Promotional Equity</td>
<td>15.73</td>
<td>3.48</td>
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<td>6. Expectations of Selection Equity</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Anticipated Token Stress</td>
<td>9.87</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Other-group Orientation</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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*Note. N = 258.*
Table 2

Correlations for all Variables

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<td>1. Female</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Age</td>
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<td>3. Family Income</td>
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<td>-.13*</td>
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<td>4. Work Experience</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td>5. Organizational Attractiveness</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>-.26***</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Perceived Fit</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.80***</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
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<td>7. Expectations of Promotional Equity</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.37***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Expectations of Selection Equity</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>9. Anticipated Token Stress</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>-.28***</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
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<td>10. Ethnic Identity</td>
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<td>-.32***</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.34***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
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<td>11. Other-group Orientation</td>
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<td>.15**</td>
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<td>.08</td>
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<td>1. Female</td>
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<td>6. Perceived Fit</td>
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<td>7. Expectations of Promotional Equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Anticipated Token Stress</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Ethnic Identity</td>
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<td>.29***</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Other-group Orientation</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>-.31***</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
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*Note: N = 258. * p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001*
three levels were discerned using a post hoc Tukey test. The effect of the ANOVA was statistically significant ($F(2, 257) = 28.80, p \leq .001$). Participants who saw the monolithic organization indicated significantly less agreement than those viewing the plural (2.25 vs. 3.25). Those who saw the multicultural organization indicated significantly greater agreement with the manipulation check than those exposed to the plural organization (3.74 vs. 3.25). Although none of the conditions elicited strong agreement with the item (the scale midpoint is 4), the pattern is consistent with what was expected. Furthermore, it accurately reflects the fact that in none of the conditions did the percentage of Black employees exceed a numerical minority.

Although none of the proposed hypotheses pertained to main effects, two statistically significant main effects were detected. First, irrespective of experimental condition, Blacks reported greater levels of organizational attraction than their White counterparts ($F(1, 230) = 21.60, p \leq .001$). Furthermore, there was a main effect of salary on organizational attractiveness such that higher salaries elicited high levels of attraction ($F(1, 230) = 5.39, p \leq .05$). However, both of these effects have been found in previous research (e.g., Williams & Bauer, 1994; Hernandez, Avery, & Hebl, 2001; Cable & Judge, 1996) and the effect of salary is intuitive. Thus, these effects receive no further discussion.

**Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis 1 proposed that the relationship between organizational racial composition and participants' perceptions of the organization's attractiveness would be moderated by the race of the participant. This hypothesis was tested using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for the effects of economic status, gender, age, and
work experience (see Table 3). The interaction between racial structural integration and participant race was not statistically significant ($F(2, 229) = 1.31, p = n.s.$). However, a graphical representation of the interaction appeared to suggest that Black participants were less attracted to plural than to monolithic organizations (see Figure 1). Consequently, separate analyses were conducted for Black and White applicants. These analyses revealed no significant differences between attraction to monolithic and plural organizations irrespective of the participant’s race. Hence, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

The second hypothesis predicted that for Black applicants, token stress (a), expectations of selection equity (b), and perceived fit (c) would each partially mediate the relationship between organizational racial composition and organizational attractiveness. Three statistical requirements must be met in order to conclude that mediation has occurred (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The first requirement is that the independent variable exert a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable. As previously reported, Black participants exhibited no effect of organizational racial composition (monolithic vs. plural organizations) on organizational attractiveness. As a result, hypothesis 2 was also not supported.

Similar to the first hypothesis, it was anticipated the effect of managerial racial heterogeneity (plural vs. multicultural organizations) on perceptions of organizational attractiveness would be moderated by the race of the participant (H3). Using ANCOVA, no statistically significant interaction between racial structural integration and applicant race was detected ($F(1,229) = 1.31, p = n.s.$). However, a graphic representation of the interaction appeared to indicate that Black participants exhibited an effect of managerial
Table 3

The Effects of Structural Integration, a Diversity Management Plan, Salary, and Applicant Race on Organizational Attractiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<tr>
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Note. $R^2 = .25$. Value in parentheses is mean square error.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$
Figure 1. The interaction between structural integration and applicant race on organizational attractiveness.
racial heterogeneity on attraction whereas White participants did not (see Figure 1). Consequently, separate analyses were conducted for Black and White applicants. Using ANCOVA, it was determined that Blacks exhibited a significant effect of structural integration ($F(2,129) = 3.21, p \leq .05, \eta^2 = .05$) whereas Whites did not ($F(2,111) = 0.27, p = \text{n.s.}$). The significant effect for Black participants was in the predicted direction as the multicultural organization was seen as significantly more attractive than the plural (26.09 vs. 23.16, $p \leq .01$). Thus, managerial heterogeneity exhibited a significant effect on Blacks' attraction and hypothesis 3 was partially supported.

The fourth hypothesis proposed a potential explanation for the relationship outlined by hypothesis 3. For Black applicants, expectations of promotional equity were expected to mediate the relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and organizational attraction. Given that Black participants exhibited an effect of managerial racial heterogeneity on organizational attraction, the first requirement of mediation was fulfilled (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In the second step of testing for mediation, an ANCOVA was performed to determine if there was an effect of structural integration on expectations of promotional equity for Black participants. Contrary to the hypothesis, there was no effect of structural integration for Black applicants ($F(2,129) = 1.14, p = \text{n.s.}$). Hence, although the pattern was in the predicted direction (expectations of promotional equity increased as a function of racial structural integration) hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that the effect of DMPs on organizational attraction would be moderated by the race of the participant. This hypothesis was tested using ANCOVA
(see Table 3). The interaction between DMPs and participant race was not statistically significant ($F(1,229) = 0.19, p = n.s.$). Hence, hypothesis 5 was not supported.

The sixth hypothesis proposed that participants' expectations of selection equity (a) and promotional equity (b) would each partially mediate the effect of DMPs on organizational attraction for Black participants. However, this hypothesis was not supported, as Black participants did not exhibit a statistically significant effect of DMPs on attraction ($F(1,122) = 2.48, p = n.s.$).

In addition to the prediction that salary would impact the relationships specified in hypotheses 1, 3, and 5, it was also anticipated that ethnic identity would moderate these relationships (hypotheses 7 and 8). To test hypothesis 7, a median split was performed on the ethnic identity scale and the resulting dichotomous variable was added to the ANCOVA used to test hypotheses 1, 3, and 5. Similarly, to test hypothesis 8, an other-group orientation variable (median split) was added to the ANCOVA used to test hypotheses 1, 3, and 5. Using ANCOVA allowed for a simpler interpretation of these interactions than would hierarchical linear regression, which would require several composite dummy variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Ethnic identity did not moderate the effect of the structural integration x race interaction ($F(2,207) = .39, p = n.s.$) nor the DMP x race interaction ($F(1,207) = .20, p = n.s.$), thereby failing to support hypothesis 7. Other-group orientation did not moderate the DMP x race interaction ($F(2,206) = 2.04, p = n.s.$), but it did moderate the structural integration x race interaction ($F(2,206) = 3.24, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$). For Black participants, there was no effect of other-group orientation for the plural and multicultural organizations. However, when the organization depicted was monolithic, Blacks with
higher other-group orientations rated the organization as significantly more attractive (26.80 vs. 23.44, \( p \leq .05 \)) than their low other-group orientation counterparts (see Figure 2). For White participants, there was no effect of structural integration for those with high other-group orientations. However, there was a negative relationship between the level of structural integration and organizational attraction for those with low other-group orientations (see Figure 2). Thus, hypothesis 8 was supported.

**Exploratory Analyses**

In addition to the hypotheses, the present study investigated the impact of salary on the effects of the diversity characteristics. This was accomplished by analyzing the interactions between the participant’s race, the starting salary offered by the prospective employer, and the organizational diversity characteristics that were manipulated (employee racial composition, managerial racial heterogeneity, and DMPs). This hypothesis was testing. However, an ANCOVA revealed that none of the salary 3-way interactions were statistically significant (see Table 3).

As mentioned briefly in the “participants” section of the current study, there is a belief among many managers that graduates of HBCUs are more ethnocentric than Black graduates of predominantly majority institutions of higher learning (Dreher & Chargois, 1998). However, this belief had yet to be empirically examined. Contrary to this assertion, Black participants at a predominantly majority institution actually identified more, albeit not significantly more, with their ethnicity than students at an HBCU (5.8 vs. 5.64, \( p = \text{n.s.} \)). Perhaps more important, given the support found for hypothesis 9, is that Blacks at the predominantly majority institution had significantly higher other-group orientations than their counterparts at the HBCU (5.83 vs. 5.44, \( p \leq .05 \)). This suggests
Figure 2. The interaction between race, structural integration, and other-group orientation on organizational attractiveness.
that Black students attending predominantly majority institutions might be easier for monolithic organizations to recruit.

**Discussion**

Despite the failure to support several of the study’s hypotheses, the results demonstrate that race is involved in the organization choice process. An organization’s level of racial structural integration, the race of potential applicants, and potential applicant’s orientation towards members of other ethnic/racial groups interact to impact perceptions of organizational attractiveness. These findings extend those of Thomas and Wise (1999) by experimentally demonstrating racial and ethnic differences in organizational attraction.

**Organizational Diversity Characteristics**

Two organizational diversity characteristics were hypothesized to influence organizational attraction: racial structural integration and the presence/absence of a diversity management plan. Although the data did not support all of the hypotheses regarding the effects of these characteristics, the results still bear important lessons for practitioners and provide useful direction for future research.

**Racial Structural Integration.** The results revealed that an organization’s level of structural integration both attracts and detracts applicants depending on their race and level of other-group orientation. Perhaps the most intriguing finding is that monolithic organizations are highly attractive to Black applicants with high other-group orientations. For many traditionally racially homogenous organizations, attracting diverse applicants remains a major challenge (Cox, 1991). This finding of the current study suggests that such organizations need not be overly concerned with the prospect of their homogeneity
impeding their ability to attract diverse applicants, as not all Blacks are in search of a heterogeneous work environment. Furthermore, the results of the exploratory analyses imply that recruiting at predominantly majority institutions may provide exposure to a greater number of Blacks with high other-group orientations than recruiting at HBCUs.

The most surprising finding was that Black participants did not prefer plural over monolithic organizations (see Figure 1). Based on previous research (e.g., Davis & Burnstein, 1981; Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000; Thomas & Wise, 1999), it was anticipated that the presence of Black workers at a firm would enhance its attractiveness to prospective Black applicants. In fact, in response to a recent survey, “diversity experts indicated that, both consciously and unconsciously, people generally tend to feel more comfortable around people who are like themselves (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998, p. 239).” However, this was simply not the case in this study. Irrespective of their level of other-group orientation, the Black participants did not rate the plural organization as more attractive than (or even equivalent to in some cases) the monolithic organization (see Figures 1 & 2).

One potential explanation for this finding is that Black applicants may associate some advantages with occupying solo status within an organization. Being a minority in the numerical minority increases one’s visibility (Kanter, 1977), which may not always be negative. Take for instance the results of one recent study (Craig & Rand, 1998). Craig and Rand (1998) investigated the effects of solo status for Blacks and Whites in task groups. Their dependent measures included leadership ability, percentage of task contribution, warmth, and friendliness. Their results revealed that, “African American solos were judged more favorably and were more often selected to be leader than were
White targets in both African American and White majorities (p. 339).” Thus, to the extent that Black applicants anticipate a similar occurrence, they may even opt for solo status with the hopes of facilitating their advancement within the company.

Another possible explanation could involve a pattern of cynical responses by the Black participants. Perhaps the racial diversity in entry-level positions accompanied by the lack of racial diversity in the managerial ranks implied that the organization’s commitment to diversity was insincere. Previous researchers have suggested that diversity in the upper echelons of organizations may be more important than diversity at lower hierarchical levels (Cox, 1991; Ely, 1996), a position supported by the findings of the current study.

Diversity Management Programs. Although the manipulation check clearly indicated that participants detected the presence of the DMP, none of the hypothesized interactions involving that variable were detected. In fact, DMPs did not even exhibit the positive main effect on organizational attraction reported by Williams and Bauer (1994). Based on these results, it appears that DMPs have minimal involvement in applicants’ organization choice process. This is surprising given a recent study’s finding that Blacks rated diversity management as significantly more important in evaluating an organization than did White participants (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

Although DMPs may not aid in recruiting diverse applicants, they can help to ensure that new female and minority hires are not negatively stigmatized, as often occurs under the auspices of affirmative action (Gilbert & Stead, 1999). Moreover, they help to ensure equal opportunity for advancement (Gilbert & Ones, 1998) and are believed to enhance retention (Cox & Blake, 1991). Consequently, the results of the present study
should not be interpreted as suggesting that DMPs are not productive or useful to organizations. Rather, the findings suggest that DMPs do not provide an advantage (or disadvantage) in the recruitment process.

**Mediating Effects.** Although several mediators were proposed as potential mechanisms for the effects of organizational diversity characteristics on attractiveness, no significant mediation was detected. The primary culprit for the failure to detect mediation was that two of the three proposed effects of diversity on attraction were not statistically significant. For the one predicted effect that was detected (managerial racial heterogeneity), expectations of promotional equity were expected to mediate this effect. However, Black participants did not use managerial racial heterogeneity to formulate their expectations of promotional equity.

One interpretation of this non-significant finding incorporates the personal/group discrimination discrepancy (Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, & Ladonde. 1990: Taylor, Wright, & Porter, 1994). This discrepancy describes the tendency of individuals to perceive a higher level of discrimination directed toward their group as opposed to at themselves directly (Taylor et. al. 1990). The measure of expectations of promotional equity focused on whether the individual believed that s/he would personally experience promotional discrimination. Thus, Blacks who “virtually” visited the plural organization may have believed that promotional discrimination was present, but concluded that they did not personally expect to encounter it. Such an explanation would account for the absence of a relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and expectations of promotional equity for Black participants.
Ethnic Identity

Following the call of previous research (Thomas, Phillips, & Brown, 1998; Thomas & Wise, 1999), the role of ethnic identity in the recruitment process was investigated. It was hypothesized that the extent to which participants identified with being a member of their ethnic/racial group would influence the effects of the organizational diversity characteristics on their perceptions of the organization's attractiveness. Surprisingly, the ethnic identity variable had no impact whatsoever on organizational attraction for Black or White participants.

Although the ethnic identity construct did not prove useful in explicating the role occupied by race in organization choice, the related construct other-group orientation did. As hypothesized, other-group orientation moderated the structural integration x applicant race interaction on organizational attractiveness. This finding illustrates that Thomas and Wise (1999) were correct in asserting that ethnic identity could contribute to understanding of the relationship between diversity and recruitment.

Furthermore, by examining the effects of other-group orientation, this research examined within race differences. Although examination of within race differences is commonplace for research focusing on White applicant behavior, this approach is novel with respect to examining Black applicant behavior (Cox & Nkomo, 1990; Nkomo, 1992; Thomas & Wise, 1999). Thus, an important finding of this study was that both Blacks and Whites showed within race variance as a function of their other-group orientation thereby demonstrating the importance of considering within group differences when studying the effects of race in organizational research.
Salary

Drawing on previous work by Weaver (1975; 1992), the interactive effect of salary on the diversity characteristics-organizational attractiveness linkages was explored. None of the 3-way interactions involving salary were significant. Hence, the level of salary offered by the organization did not alter or enhance the effects of any of the interactions between participant race and the organizational diversity characteristics.

One possible explanation is that the salary manipulation appeared to have different effects for the applicants based on race. Although no significant salary x race interaction on attraction was detected, there was evidence of group differences. Black participants showed no effect of salary, rating the organization highly attractive regardless of the salary offered. On the other hand, White participants rated the organization as significantly more attractive when the salary level was high compared to when it was low. Thus, it appears that the same salary elicits different effects on attraction as a function of the participant’s race. If salaries that are regarded as too low by prospective White applicants are simultaneously deemed sufficient by Black prospective applicants, that could potentially explain the persistence of the Black-White pay gap (Barnum, Liden, & DiTomaso, 1995). This finding echoes the need for further research investigating individual differences in the meaning attached to money cited by Mitchell and Mickel (1999).

Limitations & Directions for Future Research

One of the major limitations of this research was that the structural integration manipulation was limited (for practical reasons) to only three conditions. Although these conditions represent all of those presented by Cox’s (1991) model, there are an infinite
number of variations that could occur within the boundaries of plural and multicultural organizations. By definition, the plural organization is racially/ethnically diverse at lower hierarchical levels. However, this diversity could be construed in a myriad of different ratios. For instance, it could be that the 40% ratio utilized in the present study elicited a different response pattern than would have been observed if it had been a 20% or 60% ratio. Future research should examine other possible ratios to determine if the results reported here are consistent with those of other types of plural and multicultural organizations.

Furthermore, it is possible that the participants considered the pictures to be “staged”, as the employees and managers were clearly posing for some of the pictures (see Appendix). However, the pictures used in this study are similar to those found on actual company websites advertising occupational opportunities. Thus, the results presented here should generalize to actual organizational Internet sites geared toward attracting potential applicants.

There were also potential issues with the other two manipulations. The salary manipulation elicited different response patterns from Black and White participants. Although the strategy for selecting the two salaries used in this study was well justified, this finding raises the question as to whether or not more appropriate salary levels could have been used. It remains unclear whether the differential effect of salary is a product of the manipulation or a real racial difference in how starting salaries are perceived. Future research should focus on investigating racial differences in the perception of salaries.

The DMP manipulation was not as strong as it could have been. For instance, a stronger manipulation might have involved descriptions of actual programs (i.e., targeted
recruitment, training, mentoring, etc.) used by the company to ensure equal opportunity for its employees. Perhaps the subtle nature of the manipulation contributed to the failure to detect a significant effect on organizational attractiveness. However, it is important to note that despite its subtlety, the manipulation check indicated that the participants did perceive the presence/absence of the DMP.

Another limitation is that the participants took a “virtual site visit” to a fictional organization. It is unclear to what extent these results might generalize to actual site visits to real organizations. Future research should examine the hypotheses presented here in an “actual” field setting. However, the role of the Internet in personnel recruitment is steadily increasing and many companies now use their websites as a primary recruiting tool (Martinez, 2000). Consequently, this limitation might limit the external validity of the study’s findings, but it in no way renders them any less important.

There were also statistical and methodological limitations in this study. First, the internal consistency of the token stress scale was less than the suggested .7, thus indicating a relatively high degree of measurement error. Second, the use of a single item to represent expectations of selection equity does not allow the estimation of reliability, which is problematic. Third, it is possible that sampling bias occurred. In particular, since the study used the Internet, some individuals may have been less inclined or discouraged from participating.

Finally, the proposed mediator failed to explicate the observed relationship between managerial racial heterogeneity and organizational attraction for Black participants. As a result, the current data do not provide an adequate explanation for the mechanism underlying this effect. One possible avenue for research could involve
examining the effects of applicants' beliefs regarding the availability of mentors. Experts have suggested that mentors are imperative to the success and advancement of Black employees (Wenting & Palma-Rivas, 1998). Thus, it could be that Blacks prefer multicultural organizations because they perceive a higher availability of potential mentors than plural organizations where vertical ethnic/racial integration is minimal.

Implications & Conclusions

Despite its weaknesses, this study had several strengths. The findings are likely to have a high degree of external validity due to the fact that many organizations actively recruit college seniors and more than half of the students sampled were actively searching for jobs. Further, the sample size was sufficient ($N = 258$) to simultaneously test the effects of multiple independent variables without compromising power. It was also comprised of a near equal split between Blacks and Whites. Lastly, the research design was innovative in that it was on-line, and focused on growing but understudied part of the recruitment process – Internet recruiting.

In addition to these strengths, the results contribute to the existing literature on race and recruitment. First, the findings demonstrate that the racial structural integration of an organization affects individuals' perceptions of its attractiveness. This finding is encouraging for organizations wishing to racially diversify or continue diversification. If an organization is multicultural, all applicants irrespective of race or other-group orientation are likely to find the organization attractive. For monolithic organizations, White applicants and Black applicants with high other-group orientations are likely to respond favorably to employment opportunities. It appears that the greatest challenge may be faced by plural organizations, which are seen as significantly less attractive than
multicultural organizations to Blacks. For these organizations, it is key to ensure the commitment to diversity is real and not simply an effort to avoid litigation (Cox, 1991). If the company is sincere about creating an environment of equal opportunity, then becoming a multicultural organization is an attainable goal (Cox & Blake, 1991).

The second major contribution of the present study is that it adds sheds more light on the effect of DMPs on organizational attraction. Previous research indicated that DMPs were significantly more important to minorities in one study (Thomas & Wise, 1999), and that they increased attraction across the board in another (Williams & Bauer, 1994). The present study suggests that in the context of other factors, DMPs may occupy a minimal role in attracting applicants. Further, there were no interactions indicating racial differences in the appeal of DMPs to potential applicants. Consequently, though Blacks may report that DMPs are more important to them in judging potential employers, when they are actually evaluating an organization, DMPs appear to make little difference.

Finally, researchers and organizations should be aware that race alone is not sufficient to determine an individual’s reaction to a potential employer. There is a substantial amount of variance among the members of each individual racial group. The process used to determine the suitability of a potential employer varies across races as well as within each race. Simply put, differences in organization choice processes are more than just “Black and White.”
References


Appendix A

Organizational Attractiveness

1. This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.

2. For me, this company would be a good place to work.

3. I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort.

4. I am interested in learning more about this company or others like it.

5. A job at this company is very appealing to me.

Perceived Fit

6. I would feel at home working for an organization like this.

7. I doubt that I would fit in with the employees there.

8. This organization would likely meet my desires and needs.

9. I would have no problems adjusting to this organization.

10. I am not compatible with the company that I visited.

Expectations of Selection Equity

11. A good interview would definitely get me a job offer.

12. Great credentials would not be enough to get me an offer from Essex.

13. I would have to be the best candidate for them to even consider me for the position.

14. My qualifications alone would determine whether they offer me a position.

Anticipated Token Stress

15. I would probably encounter multiple demands due to my ethnicity.

16. I would likely feel isolated.

17. I would have to demonstrate more competence than my coworkers to be accepted.

18. I'd probably lose part of my identity working there.
Expectations of Promotional Equity

19. Hard work will get me promoted.

20. My opportunities for advancement with this company would be limited no matter how well I perform.

21. Doing my job well would probably not lead to a promotion at this company.

22. I believe that the people promoted there are generally the most qualified candidates.

Phinney's (1990) Multi-Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)

23. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

24. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

25. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

26. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.

27. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

28. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

29. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together.

30. I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life.

31. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.

32. I really have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group.

33. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
34. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.

35. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

36. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.

37. I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.

38. I participate in cultural practices of my own group such as special food, music, or customs.

39. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.

40. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

41. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.

42. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

Demographic Control Variables

43. My ethnicity is:

   a) Asian, Asian American, or Oriental

   b) Black or African American

   c) Hispanic or Latino

   d) White, Caucasian, European, not Hispanic

   e) American Indian

   f) Mixed; parents are from two different groups

   g) Other

44. My gender is:

   a) Male
b) Female

45. How old are you?

46. Please indicate your family’s economic status below:
   a) < $20,000
   b) $21-45,000
   c) $46-65,000
   d) $66-85,000
   e) > $85,000

47. How many years have you worked?

48. Was your work experience primarily part-time or full-time?

49. What degree are you currently seeking?
   a) B.A./B.S.
   b) MBA/Master’s
   c) Ph.D.
   d) MD
   e) Other

50. What school do you attend?

51. Are you currently, or soon-to-be looking for a job?

52. The company takes formal steps to create an environment of equal opportunity.

   (DMP Manipulation Check)

53. The company that I visited had a lot of Black employees. (Racial Structural Integration Manipulation Check)
54. What was the typical starting salary for the company that you went on the virtual visit for? (Salary Manipulation Check)

55. In one sentence, what was this study about? (Suspicion Check)
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1) Challenging work. Our associates are given challenging work assignments that allow them the opportunity to display their unique skills and abilities and grow as professionals.

2) Strong Benefits and compensation packages. We provide a competitive benefits package that includes medical, dental, and traveler’s insurance. The typical starting salary for our associates is $42,000.

3) Commitment to Diversity. Finally, at Essex, diversity is viewed as a competitive advantage, and as a necessary business tool for advancing into the 21st century. We make every attempt to hire the best person for the job, without regard to race, sex, disability, religion, or national origin. Essex seeks to actively recruit diverse individuals at all levels of the organization.

We firmly believe that our people are our strongpoint. Our associates make Essex the dynamic, growing firm that it is today.

To begin your "virtual office visit" Click here
VIRTUAL OFFICE VISIT

Welcome to Essex Consulting. For your visit, you will get to visit the branch office where you would be working and meet the consultants and the managing partners who work there.

This is the office space that our wonderful consultants share. However, since they are often on site at clients' offices, many of them tend to have offices there as well. Click here to Continue
This is the group of consultants that you would be working with. They are Richard Benson, Tanya Brown, Julie Benton, Andy Tate, and Chris Tyson. Together, they comprise one of our most productive offices. Last year, they acquired more new clients than any of our other branches. This year, we expect more of the same.

Although we encourage our employees to have fun (i.e., planned recreational events, posing for pictures here), they do actually work too.

As you can see here, when discussing strategy, they get much more serious. This is one of the weekly meetings where the group gathers to discuss the particulars of their clients' various needs. These meetings help to ensure that we get everyone's input in order to provide our clients with the best possible solutions.
This group would be your supervisors at Essex. From left to right, they are Bradley Hanover, Michelle Conlon, and James Williams. They are the managing partners assigned to this branch office. Under their leadership, this office has enjoyed phenomenal growth over the last 3 years. This concludes your site visit. We hope that you have enjoyed what you've seen at Essex and will consider us as a place of employment.

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Multicultural Organization. DMP. High Salary
About Essex

Essex Consulting is a growing Organizational consulting firm with several areas of specialization. With more than 500 associates working across the country, Essex is well-equipped to meet the challenges facing today’s workforce. Our associates have been instrumental in developing innovative solutions that have helped our clients become some of the most successful companies in the world. Today, our growing client roster already includes several of the Fortune 500 and one Global 500 company. For the past 6 years, Essex has been pioneering ideas, services, and products -- giving tangible form to ideas that improve our clients’ business results. As we continue to grow, we expect to assume a position among the leaders in Organizational consulting. Count on us to think beyond the traditional, to establish industry standards, to lead the competition, and to deliver measurable results.

Working @ Essex

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