

## Linkages Between Racioethnicity, Appraisal Reactions, and Employee Engagement

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Because diversity is vital to many businesses, it is important to understand prospective racioethnic differences in employee engagement. Using survey data collected from a large ( $N = 5,537$ ), diverse sample of retail employees, we found that more favorable appraisal reactions corresponded with more favorable psychological diversity climate perceptions; thus, higher levels of engagement. This indirect relationship was significantly stronger for ethnic minority employees (Blacks and Hispanics) than for White employees, indicating that members of traditionally disadvantaged groups respond differently to perceptions of appraisal systems. Finally, an exploratory assessment found that the hypothesized effects for racioethnicity do not generalize to sex, as the indirect effect of appraisal reactions on engagement was slightly, but not significantly stronger for women than for men.

A number of scholars have discussed the prospective benefits of employing a racioethnically diverse workforce. In particular, some (e.g., Bassett-Jones, 2005; Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991) have claimed that diversity, compared to homogeneity, produces a wider range of perspectives and, thus, more creativity. Others have asserted that diverse employees provide organizations with greater access to and legitimacy with a broader array of clientele (cf. Joshi & Jackson, 2003; Thomas & Ely, 1996). This growing literature, in conjunction with similar arguments put forth in the popular press, has undoubtedly led many researchers and practitioners to view demographic diversity as a potential source of sustained competitive advantage.

If companies are to capitalize on diversity's potential upside, however, they must realize that racioethnically diverse personnel likely bring different values, expectations, and experiences to their workplaces than do White employees. As discussed by Alderfer, Alderfer, Tucker, and Tucker (1980), racioethnic groups' values differ because each uses different theories to explain organizational life. This foundation of differing values is exacerbated

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