

MANAGING DIVERSITY: HOW ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORTS TO SUPPORT DIVERSITY MODERATE THE EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ON AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

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Using the interactional model of cultural diversity, we examined whether the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment can be mitigated by perceived organizational efforts to support diversity. Across 3 studies, we found that perceptions of workplace racial discrimination are negatively related to affective commitment. In 2 out of 3 studies, this negative relationship was attenuated as employees perceived more organizational efforts to support diversity. Studies 1 (mostly Whites) and 2 (mostly Hispanics) showed that organizational efforts to support diversity attenuate the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment. However, in Study 3 (African Americans), results showed that when organizational efforts to support diversity are high, the negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination and affective commitment became stronger. Studies 2 and 3 also extended these results by showing that the interaction of perceived racial discrimination and organizational efforts to support diversity indirectly influences turnover intent.

Much evidence indicates that discrimination in the workplace exists (Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Goldman, Gutek, Stein, & Lewis, 2006). Aside from being ethically wrong (Dipboye & Colella), discrimination is also illegal. In 2008, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) received over 95,000 discrimination charges, almost 34,000 of

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which were race related (EEOC, 2009). Whether real or perceived, workplace racial discrimination is a problem for both the organization and the individuals it employs and can lead to lawsuits. When discrimination suits are filed, a company's legal expenses can be as high as hundreds of millions of dollars (King & Spruell, 2001), with examples including a racial discrimination suit against Coca-Cola settled for \$192.5 million, another against Texaco settled for \$176.1 million, and another against Shoney's settled for \$132 million (King & Spruell, 2001). When individuals perceive that they have been discriminated against, even if they do not file lawsuits, they suffer dissatisfaction with work, increased stress, and higher turnover (Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Gee, 2002; Robinson & Dechant, 1997).

Because perceived racial discrimination at work persists and has serious effects on both employee and organizational well-being (Cox, 1993; Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Goldman et al., 2006), understanding what to do about racial discrimination at work is important. However, there is little research that examines what organizations can do to mitigate the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on employee attitudes. Because turnover rates are particularly high for those employees most likely to experience discrimination (Griffeth & Hom, 2001; McKay et al., 2007; Robinson & Dechant, 1997), we focus in this study on the effects of perceived racial discrimination on two proximal indicators of turnover, affective commitment and turnover intent (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000), and what may mitigate the effects of perceived racial discrimination on these attitudes.

Over the past 15 years, a great deal of research has been conducted on the effects of organizational diversity on various individual and organizational performance indicators (Kochan et al., 2003; Kulik & Roberston, 2008), the efficacy of various diversity management programs (e.g., Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006), and the impact of employee perceptions of diversity climate on individual reactions (e.g., Kossek & Zonia, 1993; McKay et al., 2007; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998; Mor Barak & Levin, 2002). What has been relatively ignored in the diversity literature is whether diversity management can attenuate the harmful effects of perceived racial discrimination on employee attitudes (Smith, Brief, & Colella, 2010). In fact, Smith et al. argue that to some extent the focus on diversity research has taken attention away from the more contentious topic of discrimination. Some research has integrated the two issues by implying that those who are most likely to experience discrimination based on gender, race, or ethnicity are the most likely to be positively affected by healthy diversity environments (Avery & McKay, 2006; McKay et al., 2007). What is not well understood, however, is the extent to which organizational support for diversity can mitigate the negative effects of

perceived racial discrimination. Our study addresses this issue. We examine the extent to which people who perceive that they have experienced racial discrimination from individuals they interact with at work still feel affectively committed to the organization provided that the organization as a whole is seen as supporting diversity.

This study is important for three reasons. First, we make a theoretical contribution to the diversity literature by uncovering an important moderator in the relationship between racial discrimination and organizational commitment. We use Cox's (1993) interactional model of cultural diversity (IMCD) as our theoretical framework. Cox's model proposes a process where diversity climate influences individual affective career outcomes and ultimately organizational effectiveness. Cox defines diversity climate as encompassing individual-level factors (e.g., identity, prejudice/discrimination, stereotyping, and personality), group-level factors (e.g., culture, ethnocentrism, and intergroup conflict), and organization-level factors (e.g., culture, institutional bias in the human resources system). Cox also examines a number of individual attitudinal outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment). In addition, Cox includes organizational outcomes such as employee attendance, turnover, and productivity. In this study, we examine a subset of Cox's model: individual perceptions of discrimination and institutional support for diversity, individual commitment, and individual turnover intent. We extend Cox's model by demonstrating that perceived support for diversity is an important moderator of the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and affective commitment. This represents an important theoretical extension to the IMCD that has not been empirically tested before.

Second, our study makes important practical contributions. Because organizations cannot control all of the individual-to-individual interactions that may be perceived as being discriminatory, it is important to examine what an organization can do to mitigate the harmful effects of such discriminatory encounters. Third, this study makes an empirical contribution to the diversity literature. Across three very different samples, this study provides evidence that perceptions of organizational support for diversity sometimes mitigate the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment. In two of the samples (Study 1 with mostly Whites and Study 2 with mostly Hispanics in a largely Hispanic community), perceived organizational support for diversity mitigated the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment. However, in Study 3 (African Americans), the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment were actually exacerbated by organizational efforts to support diversity. These empirical findings have not been shown before in the diversity literature.

Theory and Hypotheses

We first propose a negative relationship between discrimination, defined as denying certain people equality of treatment based on their group membership (Allport, 1954), and work attitudes. The IMCD provides a general framework for understanding how diversity climates within organizations influence individual outcomes and, ultimately, organizational outcomes (Cox, 1993). It is important to note that although the IMCD specifically refers to cultural diversity in its title, Cox intended for this model to generalize to many forms of diversity including racial/ethnic diversity, gender diversity, and other forms of diversity (Cox, 1993). The IMCD maintains that experiencing discrimination in the workplace should lead to a decrease in attitudinal outcomes (Cox, 1993). One such outcome is affective commitment to the organization. Affective commitment is defined as “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). As people experience negative acts at work, such as racial discrimination, they are likely to associate work with negative feelings and become less affectively committed to their employer. Previous research has shown that perceived discrimination at work is negatively related to affective commitment (e.g., Goldman, Slaughter, Schmit, Wiley, & Brooks, 2008). Consistent with previous research, we also expect that perceived racial discrimination at work will be negatively related to affective commitment.

Organizations need to do whatever they can to counteract the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment. In this line of research, McKay et al. (2007) argued that diversity climate perceptions at work should increase organizational commitment. Furthermore, they argued that the strength of this relationship should be strongest for Blacks, followed by Hispanics, and then Whites. The reason for this prediction is that those who are most likely to be discriminated against care the most about diversity. In terms of racial identities, research has found that the order of strength of racial identification is that Blacks have the strongest identification, followed by Hispanics, Asians, and then Whites (Phinney, 1992). This corresponds to the ordering of experiences of discrimination among each demographic group (Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002). Thus, McKay et al. (2007) argued that the workplace diversity climate perceptions of Blacks should be more strongly related to organizational commitment and turnover intent than those of Hispanics and Whites (in descending order). Their results only partially supported their hypotheses in that the relationship between workplace diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment to the organization was actually stronger for Whites than for Hispanics. These mixed results are possibly associated with McKay et al.’s assumption that individuals had differing

experience with discrimination based on their demographic group, without measuring employee perceptions of discrimination at work. In contrast, we *do* measure perceived racial discrimination at work in this study.

We argue that the negative relationship between perceived discrimination at work and affective commitment to the organization will be weaker when the employee also perceives that organizational efforts to support diversity are high. In this study, we define *organizational efforts to support diversity* as an employee's perceptions that the actions of the organization demonstrate that the organization values and promotes diversity. This definition is based on previous research investigating diversity climate, a related topic (Cox, 1993; Kossek & Zonia, 1993; Mor Barak et al., 1998). However, our definition of organizational efforts to support diversity is narrower than definitions of diversity climate. As previously stated, Cox's (1993) seminal work on diversity climate in organizations encompasses many phenomena including individual identity as well as group and organization-level culture. Furthermore, diversity climate has also been defined to include individual attitudes (Kossek & Zonia, 1993) and acts by managers directed at minority group members (Mor Barak et al., 1998). We make no claims of representing this broad spectrum of climate facets with our measure. Instead, we focus on employees' overall perceptions of organizational practices pertaining to diversity management.

The IMCD argues that experiencing discrimination from individuals at work can influence an employee's affective outcomes (e.g., affective commitment), which ultimately influences organizational effectiveness. We agree with this model, but we also propose an important extension to the model. Rather than looking at perceived institutional-level bias as a predictor, we look at perceived institutional-level support for diversity (i.e., organizational efforts to support diversity). We propose that perceived institutional-level support for diversity interacts with perceived racial discrimination to attenuate the negative effects of racial discrimination on affective commitment. When employees believe the organization is making an effort to value all employees, they are more likely to feel an affective connection with their employers (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This can then help override negative feelings associated with specific discriminatory incidents from certain individuals at work, thus preventing negative reactions toward the perpetrator of the discrimination from generalizing to the organization. However, when organizational efforts to support diversity are not evident, negative reactions resulting from discriminatory incidents can generalize to influence affective commitment toward the organization as a whole. Therefore, based on theory and related empirical evidence (Cox, 1993; McKay et al., 2007), we state that:

Hypothesis 1: The negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination at work and affective commitment will be attenuated when employees perceive that organizational efforts to support diversity are high.

Method

Below we present three studies. We begin with a largely White sample in Study 1 because this is the largest ethnic group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Importantly, not only are Whites the dominant group in the United States, but they also filed many charges with the EEOC in 2005. Of all the charges filed in 2005 seeking protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Whites filed 25%, Blacks filed 48%, and the rest were filed by other races or people who did not specify their race (Goldman et al., 2006). Next, we sampled mostly Hispanics in Study 2 because this group represents the largest minority group in the United States (15.1% of the population in 2007), and its representation will grow in the coming years to over 24% of the population by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Finally, we sampled African Americans in Study 3 because this is the ethnic group in the United States that has experienced the most discrimination (Feagin & Sikes, 1994) and the group that files the most discrimination charges based on race (Goldman et al., 2006).

Study 1

Participants and Procedure

Employees were recruited through StudyResponse to answer an Internet survey. StudyResponse is a service with more than 95,000 registered individuals who agree to answer surveys in exchange for prizes such as gift certificates to Amazon.com. Participants had to be U.S. residents and employed. A total of 1,150 people, of whom 179 answered the survey, were randomly selected from the StudyResponse database and invited to participate. The response rate was 15.57%, which is similar to other Internet research (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006).

Because of the number of nonrespondents, we ran analyses to check for nonresponse bias (checking whether there were any significant differences between those who responded to the survey and those who did not among the 1,150 employees who were solicited in the original StudyResponse e-mail). A *t*-test indicated that those who responded to the survey were older ($M = 37.97$, $SD = 10.26$) than those who did not respond ($M = 35.06$, $SD = 10.28$), $t(1,148) = -3.47$, $p \leq .01$. Women were more likely to answer the survey than men, ($\chi^2(1) = 19.42$, $p \leq .01$). The response

rate was 10.45% for men and 20.03% for women. Whites were more likely to answer the survey than non-Whites ($\chi^2(1) = 13.69, p \leq .01$). The response was 17.41% for Whites and 6.93% for non-Whites.

The variables in Study 1 were collected as part of a larger data collection that was conducted in two phases. With the exception of the demographics, none of the variables used in Study 1 overlap with the other research project. Demographics were collected in Phase 1. Two weeks later, 103 of the employed participants from Phase 1 completed Phase 2 that included our measures for Study 1. This was our final sample. Women constituted 73% of the sample. Most participants were White (94%). The average age was 39 years and 100% of the participants were employed full time. Average full-time work experience was 18 years and average tenure at the current company was 7.5 years. In terms of education, 51% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Finally, 8% of the sample had a disability.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, participants answered how much they agreed or disagreed with all items on a six-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*).

Perceived workplace racial discrimination. We used five items from James, Lovato, and Cropanzano's (1994) Workplace Prejudice/Discrimination Inventory. These items were selected for their high factor loadings in James et al.'s original scale and because they most clearly tap racial discrimination directed toward oneself. A sample item is "At my present place of employment, people of other racial/ethnic groups do not tell me some job-related information that they share with members of their own group." Reliability was $\alpha = .85$.

Perceived organizational efforts to support diversity. We used the three-item Managing Diversity factor from Hegarty and Dalton's (1995) Organizational Diversity Inventory. The items are "My organization has sponsored classes, workshops, and/or seminars on managing the diverse workforce," "Managing diversity has helped my organization to be more effective," and "My company accommodates the needs of disabled persons." Reliability was $\alpha = .75$.

Affective commitment. We used Allen and Meyer's (1990) eight-item measure ($\alpha = .89$). A sample item is "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization."

Controls. Previous research shows that lower status group members who tend to experience more discrimination also tend to react more positively to diversity efforts than men and Whites (Mor Barak et al., 1998; Mor Barak & Levin, 2002). Therefore, we controlled for participants' gender and their racial majority status (i.e., White). Gender was coded

as 0 = *female* and 1 = *male*. Race was coded such that 0 = *non-White* and 1 = *White*. Also, because Hegarty and Dalton's Managing Diversity scale specifically asks about disabled persons, we controlled for whether participants had a disability. Disability was coded as 0 = *disability* and 1 = *no disability*.

Preliminary Analyses

We ran a confirmatory factor analysis in LISREL (8.52) to show the discriminant validity of the measures. A three-factor solution (perceived workplace racial discrimination, perceived organizational efforts to support diversity, and affective commitment) was an adequate fit for the data (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005) ($\chi^2 = 224.40$, $df = 101$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .91, incremental index of fit (IFI) = .92, standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) = .10). A three-factor solution was a better fit than a two-factor solution where perceived workplace racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity were merged onto one factor ($\chi^2 = 307.97$, $df = 103$, CFI = .86, IFI = .86, SRMR = .13; $\Delta\chi^2 = 83.57$, $df = 2$, $p \leq .05$). A three-factor solution was also better than a one-factor solution ($\chi^2 = 498.29$, $df = 104$, CFI = .72, IFI = .73, SRMR = .17; $\Delta\chi^2 = 273.89$, $df = 3$, $p \leq .05$). We also found support for the discriminant validity of our variables using Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) technique where each possible pair of variables is estimated with the relationship between them fixed to 1 in one analysis and freely estimated in another analysis (available from first author).

Hypothesis Testing

See Table 1 for means, standard deviations, and inter correlations. We ran a hierarchical multiple regression analysis to test Hypothesis 1. Following Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), the variables in the interaction term were centered. As shown in Step 2 (see Table 2), perceived workplace racial discrimination is negatively related to affective commitment. As shown in Step 4, the interaction term was significantly related to affective commitment, supporting Hypothesis 1. See Figure 1A for the interaction. As predicted, the negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination at work and affective commitment is attenuated when perceived organizational support for diversity is high.

Discussion

Results supported our hypothesis. One limitation of Study 1 is that the sample was fairly racially homogenous (94% White). This limits the

TABLE 1
Study 1 Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Sex ^a	.27	.45					
2. Race ^b	.94	.24	-.13				
3. Disability ^c	.92	.27	.01	.08			
4. Perceived workplace racial discrimination	2.37	1.24	.04	-.07	-.03		
5. Perceived organizational support for diversity	4.20	1.45	.09	.01	-.04	-.14	
6. Affective commitment	4.31	1.38	-.16	-.01	-.10	-.37**	.24**

Note. *N* = 103.

^aSex was coded as 0 = *female*, 1 = *male*.

^bRace was coded as 0 = *non-White*, 1 = *White*.

^cDisability was coded as 0 = *disability*, 1 = *no disability*.

***p* ≤ .01. Two-tailed tests.

generalizability of Study 1. Although our sample is not representative of the broader population, Goldman et al. (2006) state that nonrepresentative samples can be valuable because they shed light on a sensitive subject where data are difficult to collect. Still, we acknowledge that other racial groups may respond to perceived discrimination and organizational efforts to support diversity with different levels of intensity (McKay et al., 2007). Therefore, our results are best generalized to Whites working full-time in the United States. Because of this, we sought to enhance the generalizability of our findings by conducting two more studies sampling racial minorities.

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to replicate the hypothesis test of Study 1 with a predominantly minority sample. In addition, we also extended Study 1 by including turnover intent as a dependent variable in Study 2. Note that the relationships proposed in Study 2 will be tested using two different samples (Study 2 that presents a mostly Hispanic sample and Study 3 that presents an African-American sample). The nature of the predicted effects is expected to be consistent across the two studies.

Consistent with the IMCD (Cox, 1993) that argues that perceived discrimination influences individual affective outcomes and, ultimately, organizational outcomes such as turnover, we believe that the effect of perceived workplace racial discrimination on turnover intent is likely to be mediated by affective commitment. This is consistent with meta-analyses that have shown that affective commitment is a proximal indicator of turnover intent (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Discrimination leads employees

TABLE 2
Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affective Commitment for Study 1

Step	Variable	Standardized β	Unstandardized b (standard error)	R^2	ΔR^2
1	Sex ^a	-.16	-.48 (.31)	.04	
	Race ^b	-.02	-.10 (.58)		
	Disability ^c	-.10	-.50 (.51)		
2	Sex	-.15	-.45 (.29)	.17**	.13**
	Race	-.04	-.25 (.55)		
	Disability	-.11	-.54 (.47)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.37**	-.41 (.10)**		
3	Sex	-.16	-.51 (.28)	.21*	.04*
	Race	-.05	-.26 (.54)		
	Disability	-.10	-.49 (.46)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.34**	-.38 (.10)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.20*	.19 (.09)*		
4	Sex	-.19*	-.59 (.28)*	.24*	.03*
	Race	-.04	-.21 (.53)		
	Disability	-.11	-.58 (.46)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.28**	-.31 (.11)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.21*	.20 (.09)*		
	Efforts to support diversity \times workplace racial discrimination	.19*	.12 (.06)*		

Note. $N = 103$.

^aSex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male.

^bRace was coded as 0 = non-White, 1 = White.

^cDisability was coded as 0 = disability, 1 = no disability.

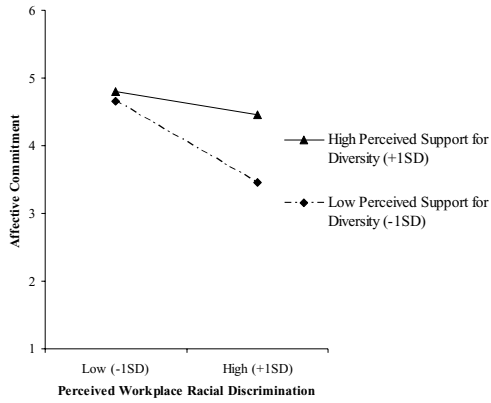
* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$. Two-tailed tests.

to feel less attached and committed to their organizations, which, in turn, influences turnover intent. However, because turnover intent is known to have other proximal antecedents including job satisfaction (Griffeth et al., 2000), we believe that affective commitment will only partially mediate this relationship. Therefore, we propose:

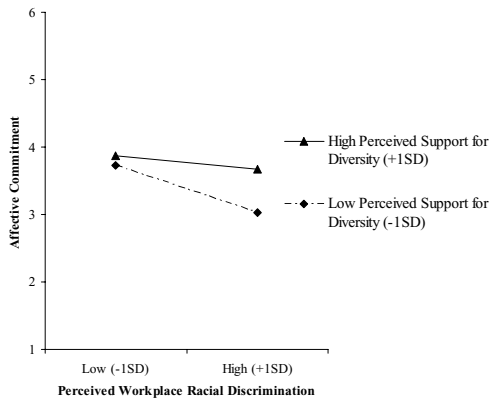
Hypothesis 2: Affective commitment will partially mediate the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and turnover intent.

Similarly, we also propose a mediated moderation whereby the interaction effect of perceived racial discrimination and perceived organizational

A) Study 1



B) Study 2



C) Study 3

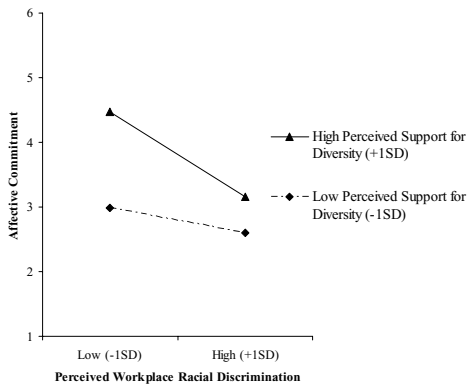


Figure 1: Interaction of Perceived Racial Discrimination and Support for Diversity on Commitment.

efforts to support diversity will be transmitted to turnover intent through affective commitment. As discussed in Hypothesis 1, we believe that the level of affective commitment for people who perceive racial discrimination will be dependent upon the level of perceived organizational efforts to support diversity. People who perceive racial discrimination but not organizational efforts to support diversity should have lower affective commitment, and this, in turn, will lead to higher turnover intent. On the other hand, people who perceive racial discrimination and do believe that the organization supports diversity are more likely to feel affectively committed to the organization and, in turn, have lower turnover intent. Again, because turnover intent has other proximal antecedents (Griffeth et al., 2000), we believe that affective commitment will partially mediate this relationship. Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 3: The interaction effect of perceived racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity on turnover intent will be partially mediated by affective commitment.

Participants and Procedure

Employees were recruited from master of business administration (MBA) classes and upper-division undergraduate business courses at a large public university in the southern United States. A majority of the residents in the city where the university is located are Hispanic. This university has an older than average student body, most of whom are employed. Researchers invited people to participate in the survey in exchange for extra credit and gave out a link to complete the Web survey. Of the 199 participants, 28 were not employed and were removed from the sample. Thus, 171 employees constituted the sample.

Most participants (89%) were minorities (Hispanic, African American, Native American and Asian American). A majority were Hispanic (80%), 11% were White, 4% were Asian American, 2% were Native American, 1% were African American, and 2% were biracial minorities. Most participants were men (56%) and graduate students (54%). The average age was 29 years. Average of full-time work experience was 8.6 years.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, participants answered how much they agreed or disagreed with all items on a six-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*).

Perceived workplace racial discrimination. We used the measure from Study 1. The reliability was $\alpha = .89$.

Perceived organizational efforts to support diversity. We used the first two items shown in Study 1. We decided to delete the third item that was presented in Study 1, "My company accommodates the needs of disabled persons." We became concerned that this item was more specific than the other two items and may not be essential in the operationalization of the construct because disability is just one of many facets of diversity. Therefore, we deleted this item and replaced it with a new third item, "My organization puts a lot of effort into diversity management." The reliability was $\alpha = .78$.

Affective commitment. We used the same measure as in Study 1. Reliability was $\alpha = .81$.

Turnover intent. We used Seashore, Lawler, Mirvis, and Cammann's (1982) three-item measure. A sample item is "I often think about quitting." Reliability was $\alpha = .82$.

Controls. As in Study 1, we controlled for sex (coded as 0 = *female*, 1 = *male*) and race (coded as 0 = *non-White*, 1 = *White*). We also controlled for whether the participant was a graduate (coded as 1) or an undergraduate (coded as 0) because higher-status individuals have more influence in organizations, may therefore experience less discrimination (Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Feagin & Sikes, 1994), and thus be more committed to the organization.

Preliminary Analyses

We ran a confirmatory factor analysis. A four-factor solution (perceived workplace racial discrimination, perceived organizational efforts to support diversity, affective commitment, and turnover intent) was a good fit for the data ($\chi^2 = 304.10$, $df = 146$, CFI = .94, IFI = .94, SRMR = .08). A four-factor solution was better than a three-factor solution where perceived racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity were merged onto one factor ($\chi^2 = 476.35$, $df = 149$, CFI = .88, IFI = .88, SRMR = .12; $\Delta\chi^2 = 172.25$, $df = 3$, $p \leq .05$). A four-factor solution was also better than a three-factor solution where affective commitment and turnover intent were merged onto one factor ($\chi^2 = 556.74$, $df = 149$, CFI = .85, IFI = .85, SRMR = .08; $\Delta\chi^2 = 252.64$, $df = 3$, $p \leq .05$). A four-factor solution was better than a two-factor solution where perceived racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity formed one factor, and affective commitment and turnover intent formed a second factor ($\chi^2 = 728.55$, $df = 151$, CFI = .79, IFI = .79, SRMR = .12; $\Delta\chi^2 = 424.45$, $df = 5$, $p \leq .05$). Finally, a four-factor solution was better than a one-factor solution

TABLE 3
Study 2 Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Sex ^a	.56	.50						
2. Race ^b	.11	.32	.09					
3. Graduate ^c	.54	.50	.10	.13				
4. Perceived workplace racial discrimination	2.12	1.07	-.10	.06	.15			
5. Perceived organizational support for diversity	3.68	1.16	.05	.02	.03	-.13 [†]		
6. Affective commitment	3.60	.91	-.06	-.09	.13	-.27**	.25**	
7. Turnover intent	3.55	1.37	.05	.04	-.10	.33**	-.20**	-.63**

Note. *N* = 171.

^aSex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male.

^bRace was coded as 0 = non-White, 1 = White.

^cGraduate was coded as 0 = undergraduate, 1 = graduate.

[†]*p* ≤ .10, ***p* ≤ .01. Two-tailed tests.

($\chi^2 = 1193.09$, *df* = 152, CFI = .62, IFI = .62, SRMR = .15; $\Delta\chi^2 = 888.99$, *df* = 6, *p* ≤ .05). We also found support for the discriminant validity of all possible pairs of variables (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Hypothesis Testing

See Table 3 for means, standard deviations, and inter correlations. We ran a hierarchical multiple regression to test Hypothesis 1 (See Table 4). Step 2 demonstrated that perceived workplace racial discrimination is negatively related to affective commitment. Step 4 showed that the interaction term was significantly related to affective commitment, supporting Hypothesis 1. See Figure 1B for the interaction. As in Study 1, the negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination at work and affective commitment is attenuated and becomes less negative when perceived organizational support for diversity is high.

To test Hypothesis 2 that proposed that affective commitment partially mediates the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and turnover intent, we conducted a path analysis. Because the model to be tested included both moderation and mediation, we relied on the work of Edwards and Lambert (2007), which provided guidelines about integrating tests of moderation and mediation in path analysis. See Figure 2A for the path model. Furthermore, to test for mediation, we initially followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step method. First, the independent variable must be related to the dependent variable (Step 1). Second, the independent variable must be related to the mediator (Step 2). Third, the mediator must

TABLE 4
Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affective Commitment for Study 2

Step	Variable	Standardized β	Unstandardized b (standard error)	R^2	ΔR^2
1	Sex ^a	-.07	-.12 (.14)	.03	
	Race ^b	-.10	-.29 (.22)		
	Graduate ^c	.15*	.28 (.14)*		
2	Sex	-.10	-.19 (.14)	.12**	.09**
	Race	-.08	-.24 (.21)		
	Graduate	.20**	.36 (.14)**		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.30**	-.26 (.06)**		
3	Sex	-.10	-.41 (.28)	.17**	.05**
	Race	-.09	-.02 (.54)		
	Graduate	.19*	.66 (.47)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.27**	-.29 (.08)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.22**	.20 (.09)**		
4	Sex	-.11	-.20 (.13)	.19*	.02*
	Race	-.08	-.22 (.21)		
	Graduate	.19	.34 (.13)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.24**	-.21 (.06)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.22**	.17 (.06)*		
	Efforts to support diversity \times workplace racial discrimination	.15*	.10 (.05)*		

Note. $N = 171$.

^aSex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male.

^bRace was coded as 0 = non-White, 1 = White.

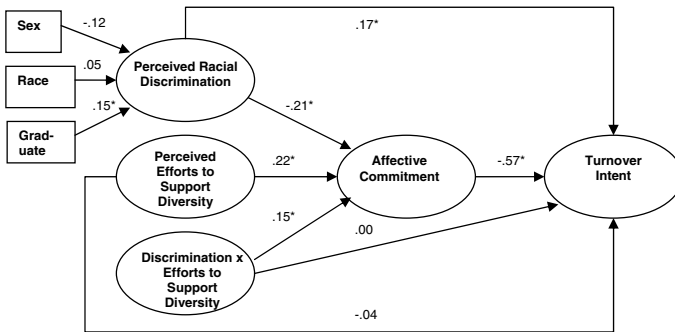
^cGraduate was coded as 0 = undergraduate, 1 = graduate.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$. Two-tailed tests.

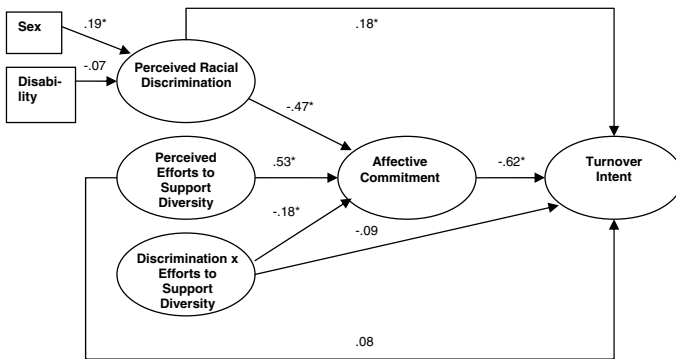
be related to the dependent variable while controlling for the independent variable (Step 3). Finally, a previously significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables must be reduced in the presence of the mediator (Step 4). In addition, we also followed the recommendation of Collins, Graham, and Flaherty (1998) and Shrout and Bolger (2002), who state that even if Step 1 of Baron and Kenny's method is not met it is still possible to test for an indirect effect (which does not require statistical significance in Step 1) as long as it makes sense theoretically to do so.

The results of the path analysis showed that the model fit was good ($\chi^2 = 21.33$, $df = 15$, CFI = .95, IFI = .96, SRMR = .06). The total effect of perceived racial discrimination on turnover intent was .29

A) Study 2



B) Study 3



A) $N = 171$.

* $p \leq .05$.

Sex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male. Race was coded as 0 = non-White, 1 = White. Graduate was coded as 0 = undergraduate, 1 = graduate.

B) $N = 131$.

Sex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male. Disability was coded as 0 = disability, 1 = no disability.

* $p \leq .05$.

Figure 2: Path Models With Standardized Path Coefficients.

($t = 4.03, p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 1 of Baron and Kenny's test. The effect of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment was $-.21$ ($t = -2.91, p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 2. The effect of affective commitment on turnover intent was $-.57$ ($t = -9.03, p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 3. Finally, the indirect effect of perceived racial discrimination on turnover intent through affective commitment was $.12$ and significant

according to Sobel's test ($-.21 \times -.57$; $z = 2.77$, $p \leq .05$) whereas, the direct effect was $.17$ ($t = 2.82$, $p \leq .05$), fulfilling Step 4. Therefore, the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and turnover intent was partially mediated by affective commitment, and Hypothesis 2 was supported.

The same process was used in order to test Hypothesis 3 that stated that the interaction effect of perceived racial discrimination and organizational efforts to support diversity on turnover intent would be partially mediated by affective commitment. The total effect of the interaction term on turnover intent was $-.08$, which was not significant ($t = -1.07$, $p \geq .05$). This means that Step 1 of the Baron and Kenny method was not supported and that mediation was not supported. However, whereas testing mediation using the Baron and Kenny method requires a significant direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable at Step 1, testing for an indirect effect does not require this step. This is the only difference between testing for mediation and testing for an indirect effect (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002). Sobel's (1982) product of coefficients formula tests for indirect effects and has been recommended when mediation cannot be fulfilled because Step 1 in Baron and Kenny's method is not supported (Collins et al., 1998; MacKinnon et al., 2002; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Therefore, we proceeded to test for an indirect effect. The indirect effect of the interaction term on turnover intentions was $-.08$ ($.15 \times -.57$), which is statistically significant according to Sobel's test ($z = -2.09$, $p \leq .05$). Therefore, we found mixed support for Hypothesis 3. Although mediation was not supported, we did find support for an indirect effect.

Discussion

Study 2 replicated the findings in Study 1 in a sample that was largely Hispanic. This provides more evidence for the generalizability of the finding that organizational efforts to support diversity can mitigate the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment. This finding is especially interesting in a sample of predominately minority employees because prior research has shown that those who are most likely to experience discrimination at work also tend to have higher turnover rates (Griffeth & Hom, 2001; McKay et al., 2007; Robinson & Dechant, 1997). Our findings suggest that this problem may be reduced if the employee perceives that the organization values diversity. Study 2 also extended the findings in Study 1 by showing that the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and turnover intent is partially mediated by affective commitment. Finally, Study 2 may be a conservative test because in the city where the survey was conducted, minorities

are the majority of the population and may thus have fewer instances of racial discrimination (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008).

Study 3

Participants and Procedure

Employees were recruited through StudyResponse to answer an Internet survey. African Americans living in the United States and employed either full-time or part-time were specifically targeted for Study 3. Participants answered the survey in exchange for a \$10 gift certificate to Amazon.com. A total of 608 people were invited to participate. We received complete responses from 131 participants (a 22% response rate). Most participants (77%) were female, average age was 37, and average years of full-time work experience was 8. Almost half (46%) had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 8% had a disability.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, participants answered how much they agreed or disagreed with all items on a six-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*).

Perceived workplace racial discrimination. We used the measure from Study 1 ($\alpha = .90$).

Perceived organizational efforts to support diversity. We used all of the items from Studies 1 and 2 (the three items from Study 1 plus the additional item we wrote in Study 2). The reliability was $\alpha = .76$. We also measured organizational support for diversity using Avery, McKay, Wilson, and Tonidandel's (2007) scale that was published after we began collecting data for Studies 1 and 2, $\alpha = .93$. These two measures were correlated at .74 ($p < .01$), and all results presented in Study 3 are consistent regardless of which of the two measures we use.

Affective commitment. We used the measure from Study 1. Reliability was $\alpha = .88$.

Turnover intent. We used the measure from Study 2. Reliability was $\alpha = .92$.

Controls. As in Studies 1 and 2, we controlled for sex (coded as 0 = *female*, 1 = *male*). In addition, because we included the item from Study 1 about disabled persons, we controlled for participant disability (coded as 0 = *disability* and 1 = *no disability*).

TABLE 5
Study 3 Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Sex ^a	.23	.42					
2. Disability ^b	.92	.27	-.19*				
3. Workplace racial discrimination	3.10	1.39	.18*	-.13			
4. Organizational support for diversity	3.91	1.15	.14	-.02	-.32**		
5. Affective commitment	3.38	1.20	.01	-.09	-.47**	.52**	
6. Turnover intent	3.62	1.68	.12	-.04	.46**	-.24**	-.64**

Note. $N = 131$.

^aSex was coded as 0 = *female*, 1 = *male*.

^bDisability was coded as 0 = *disability*, 1 = *no disability*.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$. Two-tailed tests.

Preliminary Analyses

We ran a confirmatory factor analysis. A four-factor solution (perceived workplace racial discrimination, perceived organizational efforts to support diversity, affective commitment, turnover intent) was an adequate fit for the data (Kline, 2005; $\chi^2 = 547.80$, $df = 164$, CFI = .90, IFI = .90, SRMR = .10). A four-factor solution was a better fit than a three-factor solution where perceived racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity were merged onto one factor ($\chi^2 = 675.55$, $df = 167$, CFI = .87, IFI = .87, SRMR = .13; $\Delta\chi^2 = 127.75$, $df = 3$, $p \leq .05$). A four-factor solution was also better than a three-factor solution with affective commitment and turnover intent loaded onto one factor ($\chi^2 = 762.79$, $df = 167$, CFI = .85, IFI = .85, SRMR = .11; $\Delta\chi^2 = 214.99$, $df = 3$, $p \leq .05$). A four-factor solution was better than a two-factor solution with perceived racial discrimination and perceived efforts to support diversity on one factor and affective commitment and turnover intent on another factor ($\chi^2 = 886.14$, $df = 169$, CFI = .82, IFI = .82, SRMR = .13; $\Delta\chi^2 = 338.34$, $df = 5$, $p \leq .05$). A four-factor solution was also better than a one-factor solution ($\chi^2 = 1099.45$, $df = 170$, CFI = .76, IFI = .76, SRMR = .13; $\Delta\chi^2 = 551.65$, $df = 6$, $p \leq .05$). We also found support for the discriminant validity of our variables using Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) technique (available from the first author).

Hypothesis Testing

See Table 5 for means, standard deviations, and inter correlations. We ran a hierarchical multiple regression to test Hypothesis 1 (See Table 6).

TABLE 6
Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affective Commitment for Study 3

Step	Variable	Standardized β	Unstandardized b (standard error)	R^2	ΔR^2
1	Sex ^a	-.01	-.03 (.25)	.01	
	Disability ^b	-.09	-.41 (.40)		
2	Sex	.07	.21 (.23)	.25**	.24**
	Disability	-.15	-.65 (.35)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.50**	-.43 (.07)**		
3	Sex	.00	-.01 (.21)	.39**	.15**
	Disability	-.13	-.58 (.32)		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.36**	-.31 (.07)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.40**	.41 (.08)**		
4	Sex	.04	.10 (.21)	.43**	.04**
	Disability	-.14*	-.63 (.31)*		
	Workplace racial discrimination	-.36**	-.31 (.06)**		
	Efforts to support diversity	.42**	.44 (.08)**		
	Efforts to support diversity \times workplace racial discrimination	-.20**	-.15 (.05)**		

Note. $N = 131$.

^aSex was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male.

^bDisability was coded as 0 = disability, 1 = no disability.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$. Two-tailed tests.

Step 2 demonstrated that perceived workplace racial discrimination is negatively related to affective commitment. Step 4 showed that the interaction term was significantly related to affective commitment. However, as shown in Figure 1C, the interaction is shaped opposite of our predictions, providing no support for Hypothesis 1. Unlike Studies 1 and 2, the shape of this interaction shows that the negative relationship between perceived workplace racial discrimination and affective commitment becomes stronger (i.e., is exacerbated) when perceived organizational efforts to support diversity are high.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were tested using a path analysis (see Figure 2B), as was done in Study 2. The results of the initial path analysis showed that the model fit was somewhat poor, and the modification indices showed that the error terms between perceived racial discrimination and efforts to support diversity were related. It is common for social psychological variables to have correlated error terms (Byrne, 1998). Therefore, the

model was reestimated with these two error terms freely estimated. This time the model fit was good ($\chi^2 = 22.28$, $df = 10$, CFI = .93, IFI = .93, SRMR = .07). The total effect of perceived racial discrimination on turnover intent was .46 ($t = 5.93$, $p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 1 of Baron and Kenny's test. The effect of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment was $-.47$ ($t = -6.10$, $p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 2. The effect of affective commitment on turnover intent was $-.62$ ($t = -5.58$, $p \leq .05$), which fulfills Step 3. Finally, the indirect effect of perceived racial discrimination on turnover intent through affective commitment was .29 ($z = 4.14$, $p \leq .05$), whereas the direct effect was .18 ($t = 1.96$, $p \leq .05$). Therefore, the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and turnover intent was partially mediated by affective commitment, supporting Hypothesis 2.

The total effect of the interaction term on turnover intent was .02, which was not significant ($t = .24$, $p \geq .05$). Thus, Step 1 of Baron and Kenny was not supported, and mediation was not supported. We proceeded to test for an indirect effect. The indirect effect of the interaction term on turnover intentions was .11 and significant ($z = 2.35$, $p \leq .05$). However, recall from our test of Hypothesis 1 above that the shape of the interaction term was contrary to expectations. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Discussion

Study 3 produced findings that were both similar to and different from those of Studies 1 and 2. Figure 1C shows that the negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination and affective commitment is stronger when perceived organizational efforts to support diversity are high. This result is inconsistent with those of Studies 1 and 2. We discuss this finding below.

General Discussion

Discrimination research has established that perceived discrimination at work leads to many negative outcomes for the victim (Gee, 2002; Robinson & Dechant, 1997). However, we found that perceived organizational efforts to support diversity can attenuate the negative effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment under certain circumstances. Consistent with previous research and with our expectations, we found that perceived racial discrimination is negatively related to perceived organizational support for diversity and affective commitment but positively related to turnover intent. Organizational support for diversity is positively related to affective commitment and negatively related to turnover intent.

It is interesting to note the nature of the interactions presented in the three studies. For the predominantly African-American sample (Study 3), high perceived organizational efforts to support diversity are associated with a stronger negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination and affective commitment. This is in contrast to the largely White sample (Study 1) and the largely Hispanic sample living in a Hispanic community (Study 2) where high perceived organizational efforts to support diversity attenuated the negative effects of perceived high racial discrimination on affective commitment. Mean reported discrimination in our three samples on a six-point scale was $M = 2.37$ ($SD = 1.24$) for Study 1, $M = 2.12$ ($SD = 1.07$) for Study 2, and $M = 3.10$ ($SD = 1.39$) for Study 3. Mean reported discrimination was highest in Study 3, which is consistent with research on the history of discrimination against African Americans in the United States (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). Blacks have also been shown to have the strongest racial identity (Phinney, 1992). We believe that when perceived organizational efforts to support diversity are high and perceived discrimination is also high, this adds insult to injury for the African American, and support for diversity is likely seen as hypocritical. It is when discrimination is low and support for diversity is high that Blacks are the most committed. By contrast, White participants (Study 1) and Hispanics living in a Hispanic community (Study 2) reported less discrimination in general, and when perceived discrimination is low they are not as attentive to organizational efforts to support diversity. However, when perceived discrimination is high (one standard deviation above the mean), support for diversity matters.

In order to further explain the contrasting findings between Studies 1 and 2 and Study 3, it is helpful to examine the work of Chrobot-Mason (2003), which shows that minority employees report cynicism toward their organizations (meaning that they believe the organization is two faced in saying one thing but doing another) when they feel that the organization has not fulfilled its diversity promises. This is consistent with the finding in Study 3, which suggests that African Americans may believe the organization is hypocritical if organizational efforts to support diversity are high but they also perceive high racial discrimination at work. Because African Americans have traditionally been exposed to the most discrimination in the United States and also have the strongest racial identities (McKay et al., 2007; Phinney, 1992; Utsey et al., 2002), it is possible that they might be the most likely to see organizational support for diversity as hypocritical and blame the organization for discriminatory encounters when they personally feel that they have experienced discrimination at work. In fact, Chrobot-Mason (2003, p. 40) states that minorities may be "more likely to attribute broken diversity promises more negatively than others" and have "a deeper visceral reaction . . . which is related to

stronger affective reactions such as hopelessness typically used in defining employee cynicism.”

For our other two demographic groups (predominantly Whites and Hispanics in a majority Hispanic community), the mean reported racial discrimination was lower than that of the African-American sample, and the interaction effects show that high perceived organizational efforts to support diversity combined with higher levels of racial discrimination actually made affective commitment higher for them, not lower. Taken together, this demonstrates that diversity management is complex. For groups that experience lower amounts of discrimination, organizational efforts to support diversity seem to help improve feelings of affective commitment. For groups that experience higher amounts of discrimination, organizational efforts to support diversity may be seen as hypocritical and actually make them more cynical toward the organization, thereby reducing affective commitment.

Implications of the Study

Our findings extend the IMCD by suggesting that perceived organizational support for diversity is an important moderator of the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and affective commitment, which can lead to positive outcomes for organizations under the right conditions. Affective commitment has repeatedly been shown to relate to numerous positive organizational outcomes including job satisfaction, job involvement, motivation, and job performance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). By mitigating the negative effects on affective commitment for employees who perceive racial discrimination at work, organizations make it more likely that these employees will feel good about the organization and continue to be productive members of the organization (Cox, 1993). Interestingly, our findings also show that the effects of perceived organizational efforts to support diversity differ across different racial/ethnic groups. Thus, it may be easier to offset discrimination at lower levels (as we saw in Studies 1 and 2) than at higher levels (as we saw in Study 3).

Our findings have practical implications because the business case for diversity has been called into question (e.g., Kochan et al., 2003). Our findings suggest that it can be beneficial to implement organizational diversity practices provided that these practices are implemented concurrently with a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination to avoid the diversity practices seeming hypocritical. This is consistent with research suggesting that in order for diversity management practices to work, they need to have top management support and managers need to be held responsible for diversity (e.g., Catalyst, 2006; Cox, 1993; Kalev et al., 2006; Kossek & Zonia, 1993). According to a recent report by Catalyst (2006), the most

common diversity programs target sex, race, sexual orientation, working parents, disability, part-time workers, generational/age issues, nationality, and religion. Common diversity practices implemented to target these groups include observing religious/cultural holidays, engaging in diversity recruiting, conducting employee engagement surveys, and holding community outreach and cultural events as well as conducting stereotype and bias avoidance diversity training (Catalyst, 2006). These are some of the practices that companies can implement in order to mitigate the damaging effects of perceived discrimination on affective commitment and turnover intent.

Limitations and Future Research

This study answers calls for discrimination research to be conducted with employees as opposed to in laboratory settings (Dipboye & Colella, 2005). Employee samples are important because participants respond on the basis of real-world experiences not fictitious scenarios. However, in spite of our employee samples, the three studies in this research have limitations. Our goal was for the weaknesses of one study to be offset by the strengths of another study, thus providing more confidence in our findings (McGrath, 1981). One limitation of Study 1 was the predominately White sample, which limited the generalizability of the findings. To offset this limitation, we collected predominately Hispanic and African-American samples in Studies 2 and 3. Another limitation is that in Study 2 we collected data with Hispanics in a Hispanic-majority setting. Future research should sample Hispanics in settings in which they are the minority.

One limitation shared by Studies 1–3 was that the data collections were cross sectional, which precluded us from establishing causal relationships between the variables. However, there are at least two reasons for us to have confidence in our findings. First, there is meta-analytic evidence that affective commitment is an antecedent to turnover intent (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Second, there is no theoretical reason to expect spurious interaction effects due to common method variance (Evans, 1985; Schmitt, 1994). Still, future experimental work can build upon our work and establish causal relationships with more certainty.

Another limitation of Studies 1–3 is that the data are self-reported. However, when the dependent variable is an attitudinal variable such as affective commitment or turnover intent, individual perceptions are valid (Spector, 1994). Future research may wish to probe how diversity policies across organizations affect the attitudes of groups within those organizations.

One final limitation of our study is that we had a relatively low base rate of reported discrimination across our three studies. As noted in Cohen

et al. (2003), results should only be interpreted within the range of the data. Therefore, our results should be interpreted with this low range of amounts of perceived racial discrimination in mind.

Conclusion

Previous research has shown that perceptions of discrimination at work have many negative outcomes for the victim as well as the organization (Dipboye & Colella, 2005). As a result, it is critical for organizations to reduce the harm caused by discrimination by any means possible. Our empirical findings suggest that one of these means is showing strong and clear support for diversity. The more an organization shows a clear commitment to support diversity and endorses the idea that diversity is an opportunity and not a problem (Cox, 1993), the less likely it is to have problems resulting from perceived discrimination at work. Our data show that organizational efforts to support diversity can potentially mitigate the harmful effects of perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment and turnover intent. However, to maximize their effectiveness, these diversity management practices must also be combined with a zero tolerance policy against discrimination. Otherwise, it is possible that high perceived discrimination combined with high support for diversity could exacerbate the situation.

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