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MIXED SIGNALS AT THE INTERSECTION:  
THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMPOSITION ON  
RATINGS OF BLACK WOMEN'S MANAGEMENT SUITABILITY

by

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B.A. University of Alabama in Huntsville, 2000

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of Psychology  
in the College of Sciences  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

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Major Professor: Barbara Fritzsche

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## **ABSTRACT**

Historically, Black women's workplace experiences have been understudied, partially due to an implicit assumption that their experiences are subsumed by research on Black men and/or White women. This oversight is even more evident in the field of management. However, considerable attention has been given to the debate about whether Black women are at a double advantage (i.e., as supposed affirmative action "two-for-one bargains") or at a double disadvantage due to their double marginalizing characteristics. Empirical research in the area has found support for each side, furthering the debate, but also advancing an overly simplistic explanation for a set of experiences that is certainly much more complicated. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the conditions under which Black women, when seeking managerial employment, are at a double advantage or disadvantage, using Critical Race Feminism, Cox's Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD; 1994), and theories of social categorization as the theoretical foundation.

A 2 (sex) x 2 (race) x 2 (demographic composition of the workplace) between-subjects design was used to test the hypotheses that the Black female applicant would have a double disadvantage in a more demographically balanced organization and double advantage in an organization that is more White and male. Participants (N = 361) reviewed information about an organization (where demographic composition was manipulated) and three available management positions. They also reviewed a fictional professional networking profile of a job applicant where race and sex were manipulated

through photos, and job qualifications and experience were held constant. Based on all of the information, they rated the applicant on his/her suitability for the jobs.

Results of planned contrasts and ANOVAs showed partial support for the hypotheses. In the balanced organization, the Black female applicant was rated lower in suitability for entry-level management than the Black male and White female applicants. Likewise, she was rated higher than the Black male and White female applicants in the less diverse organization, when evaluated for upper-level management. Thus, the study clarifies the theories of double advantage and double disadvantage by identifying organizational composition as a moderator of the relationship between applicant race/sex and employment outcomes (i.e., management suitability ratings). The implications of these findings are discussed.

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, CSM Glenn S. and Velvalene Bowens, who instilled in me the importance of education and worked tirelessly to provide me with all of the support necessary to achieve my educational goals.

I love you both so very much.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

Traditionally, management studies have reflected a lack of consideration of women and women's issues as legitimate or pressing topics of discussion. This exclusion was sometimes an explicit error of commission, as was the case with so-called "Great Man" theories of leadership. More often, however, it was an error of omission, which simultaneously contributed to, and capitalized upon, the tendency to "think manager, think male" (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). The emergence of research specific to women in management reflected the growing frustration with this exclusion (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). Hence, studies on women in management sought to address the oversight. Ironically, some women of color began to feel just as frustrated with the seeming exclusion of their issues and concerns from this newly developing research area (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). This was largely because of the implicit generalization of the managerial experiences of White women to those of women of color (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993; Burgess & Horton, 1993). Given this, Bell, Denton, and Nkomo (1993) encouraged researchers to engage in more inclusive research regarding women in management—research that acknowledges the myriad of complex challenges that can differentially impact women depending upon their race, class, or other characteristics. In this study, Black women were the focal group, thereby exploring the impact of this particular race-gender interaction on their experiences in acquiring management positions.

The life experiences of African American women are mired in an inextricable web of complexity. The intersection of race and gender, possibly in conjunction with other potentially marginalizing characteristics (e.g., low socioeconomic status), and the historical mistreatment of African Americans presents them with unique challenges that, very likely, no other group in America fully understands. The mental health, physical well-being, domestic issues, and leisure activities of Black women remain understudied (Carrington, 2006). The paucity of research is not limited to these areas, however. There is also a lack of extensive research on African American women's workplace experiences. The available research shrinks even more when the focus is on management. A brief exposition of the history of Black women's work in America offers context as this study seeks to expand the small body of research that pertains to their workplace experiences.

Since being brought to this country and forced into slave labor, the work experiences of American women of African descent have been unlike those of any other group (Williams, 2002). As slaves, African American women worked arduously for the sole benefit of the slaveholders (Harley, Wilson, & Logan, 2002). Once freed, most African American women were still forced to work under adverse conditions out of economic necessity for the survival of their families (Harley, Wilson, & Logan, 2002). Moreover, they faced blatant exclusion from jobs that offered better conditions. Many decades later, gains from the Civil Rights movement provided African American women with better opportunities and more legal protections from unfair discrimination. This enabled Black women to make considerable professional strides. Contrarily, it also

contributed to some people developing certain potentially damaging views about them. As these views have persisted, they have metastasized within the minds of many people into an overall negative idea of Black women in the world of work.

The general views that many people have of Black women and work are, all too often, comprised of particular stereotypes and assumptions, some of which are experienced to a much lesser degree by Black men or White women, if experienced by these groups at all. For example, Black women are often stereotyped as uneducated, unwed mothers (Browne & Kennelly, 1999; Shih, 2002) which contributes to an assumption that whatever advances they make in employment contexts are due to government-sanctioned social programs. This serves as the basis for a common misperception that African American women usually receive positive work outcomes (e.g., employment, promotion) due to reasons other than bona fide occupational qualifications (Harley, Wilson, & Logan, 2002). That is, Black women are sometimes seen as unqualified workers whose advancement, by benefit of affirmative action, has surpassed Black men and White women. This type of accusation could be raised against members of any historically underrepresented group. However, for Black women the allegation of undeservedly obtaining positive outcomes is more insidious, because it subjects them to blame from, and places them in undue competition with, Black men and White women. This diverts attention away from the considerable leverage maintained by White men (Sokoloff, 1992).

Overall, the abovementioned view of Black women and work is indicative of a common view that they have a double advantage over Black men and White women in

the workplace because they are African Americans and women (i.e., two “minority” statuses in one person). This forms from an assumption that organizations wanting to minimally comply with federal equal employment opportunity mandates or to create a semblance of diversity are more apt to select the “best bargain,” so to speak—the “two for one” deal. Not surprisingly, there is strong opposition to this “double advantage” idea. It has sparked serious debate given its potentially damaging implications and lack of evidence in workforce data (Sokoloff, 1992).

To counter the notion that Black women enjoy a privileged status in workplace contexts, some researchers have asserted that Black women are, in fact, at a double disadvantage because they are members of two marginalized groups (Sanchez-Hucles, 1997). Furthermore, these scholars argue, the disadvantage experienced by Black women permeates practically every aspect of their professional and personal lives (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003). The double disadvantage proponents also assert that, rather than a “twofer” bonus status, Black women experience the “double whammy” of racism and sexism. For some Black women, this whammy can further multiply when one factors in other “isms” (e.g., classism, colorism; Jackson, 1990). Overall, according to these researchers, the marginalization faced by Black women due to their intersected race and sex places them at a disadvantage that is experienced by neither White women nor Black men.

Proponents on both sides present what are, debatably, plausible arguments. The double disadvantage proponents question why, if Black women are at a double advantage, is this not evident from analysis of labor force data. In contrast, the double

advantage proponents question why, if Black women are not at a double advantage, have they made such significant professional strides in recent years, beyond that which has been experienced by White women and Black men. The issue is further complicated by those who claim there is neither a double advantage, nor a double disadvantage for Black women. Despite the vehemence with which any side makes its claims, heretofore, there has been scarce empirical research that offers sound evidence of either a double advantage or a double disadvantage for Black women.

Given the conflicting findings, a pressing question is: Are Black women advantaged or disadvantaged in workplace contexts? It is highly improbable that in every employment context and in all workplace situations, Black women will experience positive outcomes above that of White women and Black men (i.e., double advantage). Likewise, it is also unlikely that they always experience negative outcomes beyond that of White women and Black men (i.e., double disadvantage). Therefore, this warrants asking: If Black women are clearly at a double disadvantage or advantage, under what conditions are either of these conditions most likely to occur? An appropriate method of addressing this question is by investigating potential moderators in an experimental context.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to investigate whether Black women are “doubly” (i.e., beyond White women and Black men) advantaged or disadvantaged in the context of a managerial suitability decision and to consider a possible moderator of the relationship between applicant race and sex and employment outcomes, e.g., job suitability ratings. The primary goals of this investigation were to test the double

advantage/disadvantage theories and explore potential conditions under which Black women are at a double advantage and those under which they are at a double disadvantage. Cox's (1994) Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD) was used as a guide for considering possible, pertinent moderators of the aforementioned relationship. Theories on social categorization—specifically multiple categorization and crossed categorization (e.g., Crisp, 2002)—contributed to the development of the experimental hypotheses. A secondary goal was to frame the analysis with a theory that, despite its relevance to the field, has not been widely considered in Industrial and Organizational psychology contexts—namely, Critical Race Feminism.

In order to establish the foundation for the study, the double advantage and double disadvantage theories, which are central to this investigation, are covered in Chapters 2 and 3, respectively. Then, further laying the groundwork for the investigation, Chapter 4 offers the possibility of neither double advantage nor double disadvantage as adequate theories of Black women's experiences. Building upon this basis, Chapter 5 offers an explanation of Critical Race Feminism. Further framing the investigation, Chapter 6 presents an overview of the Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD; Cox, 1994). Then, Chapter 7 integrates all of the abovementioned topics before detailing the theories of social categorization and presenting the study hypotheses. Chapter 8 describes the method by which the experiment was performed. Finally, Chapters 9, 10, and 11 present the results, discuss the findings, and offer conclusions, correspondingly.



## CHAPTER TWO

### The Origin of the Double Advantage Theory

Although it has been nearly 46 years since Executive Order 11246 was issued by President Johnson, there is still considerable confusion about what is, arguably, its most controversial component—the requirement for federal agencies, contractors, and subcontractors to develop and adhere to an affirmative action plan (Cascio, 1998). Overall, Executive Order 11246 prohibits federally funded entities from discriminating based on race, color, religion, or national origin. Subsequent Executive Orders, 11375 and 11478, extend the prohibition against discrimination to also cover sex, political affiliation, marital status, and physical disability. The stipulation for affirmative action requires agencies and contractors to set goals and establish timetables by which to increase the representation of historically disadvantaged or underrepresented groups (Cascio, 1998). Bureaus that fail to comply with the orders can face criminal proceedings, cancelled contracts, and disqualification from bidding on future contracts (Cascio, 1998). These punitive actions can be very expensive; therefore, it behooves any agency, contractor, or subcontractor to be in full compliance.

As suggested by some double advantage proponents, some people might have resorted to “double-counting” Black women, in an attempt to ostensibly comply with the affirmative action plan requirement and avoid costly punishment. That is, in reporting demographic information to the requisite oversight committees (i.e., Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs [OFCCP], Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

[EEOC]), some see Black women as encompassing two underrepresented groups in one person. That is, although hiring (or recruiting, promoting, etc.) a Black man or White woman would “look good” for reporting purposes, the agency could only count the Black man as “Black” or the White woman as “woman.” However, theoretically, a Black woman is better for reporting purposes because the agency can then report that they hired an African American *and* a woman. Moreover, the Black woman can be hired without the agency sacrificing financially or losing their overall homogeneity, as could be the case if multiple “minorities” are hired (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003). Basically, this affords the organization two (“minorities,” that is) for the “price” of one—succinctly expressed as a “twofer.”

Currently, it is thought that this practice even occurs among organizations that are not federally funded and, thus, not mandated by Executive Order to develop an affirmative action plan (however, such organizations must obey all employment nondiscrimination laws and are accountable to the EEOC). Companies realize that there are monetary benefits to being diverse or, at least, appearing to be more diverse. For this diversity, the two-for-one deal supposedly provided by Black women is ideal.

Of course, there is contention regarding the purported practice of double-counting Black women, with some believing that this is merely a myth that persists due to increasing backlash against affirmative action (Evans & Herr, 1991). What is more difficult to dispute and dispel is the widespread, assumed veracity of the “Black women as an employment twofer” concept. This notion exists even when the Black woman of discussion is exceedingly qualified, such as when the former Secretary of State,

Condoleezza Rice, was promoted to Provost at Stanford University. Former Stanford President Gerhard Casper, in reference to the Rice's appointment remarked, "It would be disingenuous for me to say that the fact that she was a woman, the fact that she was black ...weren't in my mind. They were" (Lemann, 2002). Anecdotes such as this, in which the race and gender of such a highly qualified person were considered a "bonus," seem to support the idea that Black women have an advantage over Black men and White women. However, it is not just the general concept of the twofer that is so pervasive. The actual term has become quite a common expression in the vernacular of many people—possible negative connotation notwithstanding. The term surfaced quite conspicuously in the context of the 2008 Presidential election—again in reference to Former Secretary Rice. Prior to the official selection of any vice presidential candidates, several political pundits, via television and online/print media sources (e.g., Hoffman, 2008; Richter, 2008), suggested that Condoleezza Rice would be an ideal running mate on the ticket with the Republican presidential nominee, John McCain. The primary reason offered for this suggestion was that she could present the best challenge to a possible Barack Obama/Hillary Clinton ticket by encompassing Obama's "blackness" and Clinton's "woman-ness" in one person. The following comments provide examples:

"Besides being the greatest two-for in GOP history, Rice brings other huge pluses...For a party that up to now has been clueless about how to run against either a woman or a person of color, Condoleezza Rice is pure political gold...[she] provides them with cover against charges of sexism or racism (Hoffman, 2008).

"...they believe Rice is the best running mate for McCain...they also think she's the perfect antidote to either a Sen. Hillary Clinton or Sen. Barack Obama candidacy. 'She's black and she's female and that's a huge change,' said Holt. 'With Condi we have a real unity ticket,' adds Dueker." (Davis, 2008).

“In one person, she offers both of the factors that are credited to have greatly enhanced turnout for the Democrats in their primaries — featuring a black and a woman” (Richter, 2008).

Not only do the above examples illustrate the pervasiveness of the twofer notion, they also reiterate the belief held by some that Black women are doubly advantaged, in comparison to Black men and White women. It is important to note that it is not only mainstream media sources that perpetuate this idea. Moreover, it is conceivable that the mainstream media is not completely off base with this idea. Qualitative and empirical research also provides support that bolsters the suggestion that Black women are advantaged by virtue of their doubly marginalized status. This research is discussed in depth below.

*Epstein (1973)*

Epstein’s seminal 1973 article presented findings from interviews with 31 women of color (i.e., African American and West Indian). The results of those interviews contradicted the assumption that Black women suffer a cumulative disadvantage with regards to the workplace. In fact, the participants in the study reflected those for whom being Black and female comprised a “positive matrix for a meaningful career” (p. 913). Epstein attributed their, and other successful Black women’s, success to three trends: 1) One (either) of the negative statuses served to cancel the negativity of the other, 2) The conjunction of the two statuses formed a distinct, yet to be categorized, new status, and 3)

Their exclusion from the “normal opportunity structure” (p. 914) enabled, or forced, them to adopt an alternate lifestyle.

In clarifying the abovementioned trends, Epstein explained the purported preference of Black women to Black men as resulting from Black women’s traditionally greater access to White society. This greater access arose from White society not perceiving them as potentially powerful or threatening, such as how they might perceive African American men. Additionally, whereas being a woman decreased others’ apprehension about their race, being Black reduced others’ perceptions of them as stereotypically feminine or as sexual objects. Epstein also refuted the stereotype of Black society as strictly matriarchal because of Black women’s supposed emasculating behaviors towards Black men. Instead, she found that the women in her sample came from intact, egalitarian families. Essentially, Black women worked, not as a way of usurping the man’s traditional role, but out of necessity for the survival of the family. Moreover, she concluded that Black women are sometimes in a better position than White women or Black men in terms of their occupational opportunities due to their “middle class values” (p. 919), self-confidence, familial support for advanced education, and lower societal pressure to marry.

Although critics might argue that Epstein merely imparted her own perceptions onto the respondents’ comments, it is important to note that some of the respondents even suggested that they believed they were at an advantage in employment because of their dual marginalized status. Indeed, all of the attorneys in the sample ( $n = 8$ ) believed that, possibly due to society’s new awareness of, and changing attitudes towards,

discrimination, they were afforded additional possibilities that might not have been given to them if they were “only” Black or “only” women. Some even supported the idea that “they were useful because an employer could kill two birds with one stone by hiring a black woman...” (p. 931).

Overall, Epstein’s research revealed that for her sample, “the effect of mechanisms within the larger stratification system (which operate to keep Blacks and women down)...made it possible for some to rise within the professional structures” (p. 933). It also sparked interest in this topic and led to subsequent research about Black women’s experiences in the world of work. However, as presented in the next study, the research that followed did not always investigate Black women who were already successful professionals. Rather, some research sought to understand the experiences of Black women seeking employment or promotions.

*Hosoda, Stone, and Stone-Romero (2003)*

Hosoda, Stone, and Stone-Romero (2003) experimentally investigated the interactive effects of the cognitive demand of the job, applicant race, and applicant gender on job suitability ratings and selection decisions. They hypothesized that for low cognitive demand jobs, main effects would reveal well-qualified Black applicants and well-qualified female applicants would be rated more suitable than, and selected more than, equally qualified White applicants and equally qualified male applicants, respectively. The opposite trend was expected for high cognitive demand jobs, with White applicants and male applicants expected to be rated more suitable than, and

selected more than, Black applicants and female applicants, respectively. In terms of interactions, they hypothesized that White men and Black women would be rated more suitable than, and selected more than, White women and Black men for jobs high in cognitive demand. In other words, they expected Black women to be at a double advantage for jobs that were high in cognitive demand. This hypothesis was based on extant literature that suggests that highly educated, businesslike Black women might counteract negative stereotypes of African Americans and women. This would then contribute to observers engaging in attributional augmenting of Black women's competence and motivation.

Two hundred, ninety-eight university students participated in the experiment, which was described to them as a study on selection decision making. Playing the role of a human resource manager, the participants read information about a fictitious organization and a fictitious job before reviewing the application forms of two hypothetical job-seekers. After reviewing each one, the participants completed a 12-item job suitability questionnaire and an assessment of the applicant's traits comprised of 17 semantic differential items. After reviewing both applicants, the participant made a selection decision. The race and gender of the applicants were manipulated via photos attached to the application forms, as was the cognitive demand of the job via the job description.

The results showed that Black women were rated more suitable than Black men for the high cognitive demand job and were selected for it more than Black men. Black women were rated just as suitable as White women for the high cognitive demand job but

were selected more than White women for this same job. Perhaps most curious was the finding that Black women were rated more suitable than White men for the high cognitive demand job.

This finding of Black women being considered more suitable than equally qualified White men, White women, and Black men for jobs requiring high levels of cognitive demand seems to provide considerable evidence of a double advantage for Black women. The experimental nature of this study bolsters the credibility of this evidence. And, as is shown in the following study, such an advantage is also observable outside of laboratory settings.

*Powell and Butterfield (2002)*

Powell and Butterfield (2002) asked the question, “What are the influence of the race and gender of individual decision makers and the race/gender composition of decision-making teams on promotion decisions about applicants of diverse race and gender for top management positions?” (p. 405). The researchers considered theories of discrimination, jobholder schemas, similarity-attraction processes, social identities, status, and organizational culture regarding equal employment opportunity as possible explanations for the glass ceiling. Additionally, they suggested that the lack of a unifying theoretical model of the glass ceiling contributes to the ambiguity of the double advantage vs. double disadvantage ideas. Consequently, to answer their research question and pinpoint which theory would be supported, they reanalyzed archival data used in their 1994 and 1997 studies on the promotion decisions for top management positions



(i.e., for the Senior Executive Service [SES]) within the federal government. These data were used in conjunction with newly obtained data of SES promotion decisions.

The promotion process involved two steps. In the first step, review panels (of 1-4 members) decided on which applicants to refer to a selecting official. In the second step, the selecting official decided who s/he believed to be best for the top management position (i.e., selected the applicant[s]). Thus, the criteria were the review panels' yes/no decisions about an applicant's referral and the yes/no decision of the selecting official. The predictors in the study were applicant race, applicant gender, and three measures of applicant qualifications.

The promotion panels varied in size and in racial and gender composition. (Analyses revealed that the size of the panel was not significantly related to any of the criteria; hence, it warrants no further discussion.) The different panel member configurations were: all White men, all White men and White women, all White and Black men, all White and Black women, mixed-gender White and Black, and mixed-gender White and Hispanic. These decision-making panels were responsible for determining who, among the 357 applicants, to refer to the selecting official. The logistic regression analyses revealed that, when considering all review panels combined, women were referred to a greater extent than men. Also, referral rates were higher for White applicants than Black applicants. The same trends were observed among homogeneous panels. Overall, Black men were referred less than any other group.

The selecting officials were White men, White women, Hispanic men, a Hispanic woman, and Black men. The results showed that women were selected to a greater extent

than men. Also, none of the ten Hispanic male applicants were selected. It is important to note that the applicants' qualifications also played a role in the decisions for certain panels and selecting officials, but the abovementioned findings were after qualifications were taken into account.

Overall the results show that women were advantaged, and Black and Hispanic men were greatly disadvantaged. All African American women in the sample ( $n = 7$ ) were referred by the promotion panels and selected for the top management positions. Although not discussed, it is, indeed interesting that all of the Black women were selected. They were not "doubly" advantaged, as they did not fare better than White women; however, they were clearly preferred over Black men. This trend of Black women being preferred over Black men is not isolated to this study, however. This was elucidated in the findings of the next study.

*Shih (2002)*

Shih conducted 145 in-depth, face-to-face interviews with hiring personnel from retail, hotel, furniture manufacturing, and printing industries in Los Angeles, CA. Her main research goal was to understand how employers compared Latinos and African Americans, in terms of their perceived "manageability." However, the interviews also revealed a general tendency for employers to make further distinctions based on nativity (i.e., Latino immigrants vs. U.S.-born Latinos) and gender (Black men vs. Black women). Of interest for the present discussion, however, is the finding that employers viewed African American women more favorably than African American men. That is, they

believed Black women were more manageable and more serious about their jobs. From this study, one cannot deduce how the employers would compare the manageability of Black women to White women. Therefore, akin to the previously discussed study, Shih's research does not reveal a double advantage. Nonetheless, also akin to Powell and Butterfield (2002), a clear preference is identified among employers for African American women, rather than African American men.

### Limitations of Double Advantage Studies

The abovementioned research seems to provide compelling evidence of the existence of a double advantage for Black women. The studies, nevertheless, are not without limitations. For instance, some studies (e.g., Epstein, 1973; Shih, 2002) were hampered by small samples and/or nonexperimental methods, contributing to the plausibility of rival explanations for the findings. Other studies due to practical experimental constraints could only focus on one possible moderator of the relationship between interacting race and gender and employment decisions (e.g., Hosoda et al., 2003). Furthermore, the jobs considered in most of the studies were not "high-power" positions. Instead, the jobs were limited in formal power, in terms of decision-making authority and influence over others. This presents an issue of failing to capture a complete picture of the abovementioned relationship—a feat that is, understandably, beyond the scope of any one study. Still, it beckons others to continue in pursuit of the missing pieces to the double advantage vs. double disadvantage puzzle.

## Conclusion

Possibly the double advantage proponents feel further vindicated in their position when articles surface in the mainstream media that seem to support their ideas. For example, a *Newsweek* magazine article (Cose & Samuels, 2003) described the successes of Black women in terms of their rising rates of graduation from higher education and their professional advances—especially as compared to Black men and White women. Nonetheless, there is a group of equally passionate researchers who are adamant that Black women are not advantaged by their dual marginalized status. Their position is discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Historical Context for the Double Disadvantage Theory

As discussed in the previous chapter, some researchers, having reviewed the history of Black women and work, consider the seemingly rapid workplace ascent of these women and the simultaneous antidiscrimination efforts and conclude that there is an advantage for those who are both female and African American. Other researchers peruse this same historical context, note the continuing barriers that confront Black women, perceive a retraction of sincere efforts towards workplace equality, and deduce that Black women's supposed advantage is merely a fabrication. For example, in a round-table discussion, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (a pioneer in critical race theory and critical race feminism) and colleagues referred to the twofer notion as a "corporate myth"—indeed, a "recent mythology" of Black women in the workplace ("The round table's response," 2000, p. 11). Other scholars (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003) affirm that being both female and Black in the world of work is not just disadvantageous, but doubly so. Therein is the impetus for the double disadvantage premise.

The theory of double disadvantage (also referred to as a double whammy or double jeopardy) suggests that the combination of Black women's dual marginalized statuses of race and gender presents them with a double negative (Evans & Herr, 1991; Levin, Sinclair, Veniegas, & Taylor, 2002). It is important to note that this is a relative determination—that is, one must make, at least, two comparisons in order to assert a double disadvantage for Black women (Jackson, 1990). One obvious comparison is

between Black women and Black men; the other is between Black women and White women. Sokoloff (1992) provided interesting insight into the care with which one must make these comparisons and suggested that they are actually not the only ones that should be made. For instance, she explained that, although some say that discrimination against Black women has decreased more rapidly than that against Black men, it merely seems this way because Black women are compared to White women (another disadvantaged group) rather than being compared to White men. On the other hand, Black men are compared to White men, which is an advantaged group. With regards to Black women being compared to White women, Sokoloff suggested that too much attention is directed to Black women's rate of increase in the professions, which has surpassed that of White women. However, what has not been considered is that Black women's starting point was so low, such that any progress made will seem much more substantial. Also, considerable focus has been on how much better represented Black women are in some professions, as compared to White women. However, this has, historically, always been the case. Finally, in considering if Black women seem to fare better in the world of work than do White women, Sokoloff says that the affirmative answers at which some people arrive are because they are comparing Black women to the more disadvantaged Black man, and White women to the more advantaged White men.

Another way of thinking about the discussion above is, historically, in the United States, the "norm" is "White male," and the standard for social comparison is White men (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). Black women are twice removed (i.e., in racial and gender status) from that normative standard. It is considered more normal to be White than Black

and more normal to be male than female (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). In that regard, Black women are double deviates from the “norm” in two ways. This double deviate, marginalized status often equates to a double disadvantage. Epstein (1973) supports this in her assertion that that Black women are strangers in the workforce, in that they do not fit the stereotypes of Black men, White women, or White men.

Perhaps Black women have a double disadvantage when seeking jobs into which they stereotypically do not fit (and a double advantage when seeking jobs into which they stereotypically do fit). Moreover, it is likely that the target person’s (i.e., the Black woman’s) perception of fit is not the determining factor. Rather, it is the perceptions of those with selection or placement decision-making power. Thus, the particular stereotypes that individuals associate with certain jobs or occupations, as well as the stereotypes that they hold regarding certain groups of people (e.g., Black women) can lead to skewed perceptions of who does and does not fit into the job. This can have a detrimental impact on the selection or placement of individuals with characteristics for which there are pervasive stereotypes. Therefore, to the extent that certain jobs are stereotypically considered to be jobs that are held by White men, Black women might be at a double disadvantage in attempts to be selected for or placed into those positions. The research covered below provides further support for the idea that Black women face a double disadvantage in the world of work.

*Sanchez-Hucles (1997)*

Sanchez-Hucles (1997) argued that the perception that African American women enjoy an advantaged status in the workplace is a myth that is not supported by labor force data or demographic and economic statistics. To support her position, Sanchez-Hucles cites research that demonstrates that Black women (a) are frequently in jobs with the lowest pay and status, (b) earn less than White men and women and Black men, and (c) are the group least likely to receive mentoring in the workplace. Moreover, she noted that traits stereotypically associated with women generally refer to White women and not to Black women. Unlike the stereotypes of White women, Black women are stereotyped as possessing traits which are usually associated with men, such as being assertive. This would seem to suggest that Black women would be at an advantage, relative to White women when seeking certain positions; however, research also shows that men are more influenced by or prefer, women who speak timidly. Although Sanchez-Hucles' (1997) argument that bonus status does not exist for African American women is compelling, she does not provide an empirical basis for this assertion.

*Crow, Fok, & Hartman (1998)*

In their experiment of a hiring scenario, in which participants were instructed to choose 6 out of 8 suitable applicants of varying race, sex, and sexual orientations for an accounting position, Crow et al. found that White female heterosexuals fared the best, followed by heterosexual Black women, Black men, and White men. Homosexual White women and men were third ranked in suitability. Finally, homosexual Black men and



women were rated the least suitable for a position. This data overall shows no double advantage for Black women; rather it shows they are further disadvantaged when they are members of another marginalized group.

*Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003)*

Jones and Shorter-Gooden conducted in-depth interviews with 71 Black women and analyzed surveys from 333 Black women as part of their “African American Women’s Voices Project.” The purpose of this research project was to explore the impact of racism and sexism on the various aspects of Black women’s lives. The interviewees and survey respondents represented a large cross section of Black women with varying backgrounds, occupations, etc. They found that, in the workplace as well as many other areas of life, Black women often have to engage in “shifting.” Shifting is defined as “an often automatic alteration of behavior to fit different situations.” Moreover, this behavior is used frequently at work as Black women try to counter negative stereotypes and confront a host of other challenges. The authors explained that rather than enjoying any advantages, Black women often have to do “double duty” in the workplace to be considered as capable or qualified as their Black male or White counterparts.

Research Applied to Management

Although the research above pertains to Black women as doubly disadvantaged in the workplace, in general, there is also a body of research that focuses on the double disadvantage as applicable to management. This is possibly due to the idea that the

primary level within an organization in which the double disadvantage of Black women would most likely come to bear is in higher status, male positions—namely, upper-level management positions. Such positions can be characterized as those having higher power, in terms of decision making, and supervision of other workers. They could also be considered more challenging positions.

Supporting this line of reasoning, Davidson (1997) suggests that sexual and racial discrimination causes African American women to be relegated to the very bottom of the managerial pyramid. This could be because of the general tendency to “think manager, think male” (Davidson, 1997). Not only does one “think manager, think male,” he or she probably also “thinks manager, thinks white male” (Davidson, 1997). This reiterates the double disadvantage that Black women are possibly faced with. Researchers have found support, albeit indirect support, for this double disadvantage of Black women seeking management positions.

In interviews with employers who were seeking employees for low-skilled labor, Shih (2002) found that employers perceived African American women as more stable, more willing to learn, and more willing to take orders, as compared to African American men. However, the primary reason for this seemingly positive view was that employers stereotyped African American women as single mothers who had to be responsible in order to provide for their children. This stereotype, while outwardly helpful in acquiring low-skilled jobs, may be harmful in obtaining professional or managerial jobs. This is because employers would likely view being a single mother as a hindrance to effective management. Furthermore, the employers considered African American women to be

more willing to take orders. This stereotypic characterization also runs counter to what is considered a desired managerial attribute.

Related research has also found that sex discrimination against women, especially against African American women, occurred for those seeking the position of an accountant (Firth, 1982). The fact that this is not a position that is clearly distinguished as a managerial job suggests that, even at intermediate occupational levels, African American women might be at a disadvantage. That is, the more that a position entails challenge, decision-making power, and supervision, the more likely it is that African American women might be considered unsuitable or unqualified for the job.

### Conclusions

The analysis of workforce data and the results of the aforementioned studies seem to provide incontrovertible evidence of a double disadvantage for Black women. This would seem to provide a direct counterpoint to the double advantage theories, thereby narrowing the debate to two opposing sides. However, there is an additional viewpoint that actually extends the debate by offering another consideration—that neither double advantage nor double disadvantage adequately explains the workplace experiences of Black women. This perspective is presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Neither Double Advantage nor Double Disadvantage

Providing a contrast to the theories of double advantage or double disadvantage, other researchers (e.g., Nkomo & Cox, 1989) suggest that neither position accurately depicts the work experiences of Black women—particularly as it pertains to Black female managers. Nkomo and Cox (1989) reviewed survey data from 238 African American respondents (165 men and 118 women) in management. They found that Black men and women reported similar levels of career satisfaction, upward mobility, and interracial social interaction within their organizations. Although the Black male respondents were, on average, older than the Black female respondents, and reported having higher levels of company seniority, they also reported lower levels of satisfaction with the rate of their advancement. Black women, on the other hand, had higher levels of job performance, but lower salaries. Based on their results, the researchers concluded that there was no conclusive evidence of double jeopardy or double bonus for Black women.

Other researchers have also suggested that double jeopardy does not exist in expected general discrimination or in actual discrimination (Levin, Sinclair, Veniegas, & Taylor, 2002). Compelling findings notwithstanding, there is necessarily ambiguity regarding the extent to which Levin et al. (2002) and Nkomo and Cox's (1989) findings generalize to situations in which Black women are seeking managerial employment. Perhaps an investigation of Black women's attempts to gain entry into managerial positions would offer the opportunity to address this concern.

## Sex and Race as Parallel Issues

In addition to the abovementioned research that has found no evidence of a clear double advantage or double disadvantage, there are also researchers who suppose that Black women are presented with advantages or disadvantages by virtue of their sex or race, but not necessarily both. Indeed, the very notion of their possible advantage or disadvantage being “doubled” seems to suggest that Black women experience sex and race as parallel (and, possibly, additive). Consequently, perhaps Black women are confronted with challenges of racism *or* sexism. This “either/or” focus in the research is partially attributable to the lack of “established guidelines for empirically addressing research questions informed by an intersectional framework” (Cole, 2009, p. 170). “Double” terminology aside, it *is* possible that, given the social context, Black women’s sex is more salient and, in other situations, their race is more salient. Therefore, a brief discussion of the separate research on sex and race is warranted and presented in the following sections.

### *Sex/Gender*

There is considerable research available that has examined stereotypes and discrimination based on sex/gender *or* race. Each of these areas of research is briefly reviewed below. The discussion of race-related stigmatization and stereotyping immediately follows the discussion of gender.

*Stereotyping.* Considerable research has investigated the impact of sex-based stereotypes on the organizational and workforce experiences of women. Dipboye (1987),

in his review of research on women in management explained that research has generally focused on two types of sex-based stereotypes: those based on sex characteristics and those based on sex roles. Stereotypes of sex characteristics refer to beliefs about traits of the “typical man” or “typical woman.” Sex role stereotypes, on the other hand, refer to prescriptive beliefs about men and women—that is, the traits they *should* possess and/or the ways they *should* behave. The stereotypes often overlap, further constricting perceptions of “acceptable” male or female behavior, thereby contributing to nontrivial differences in the workplace experiences of men and women.

According to Cohn (2000), occupation sex-typing can be defined as the tendency for “men to work in some jobs and women to work in others” (p. 15). In other words, men tend to work in jobs that are fundamentally “male,” whereas women tend to work in jobs that are fundamentally “female.” Although research shows that there are differences in occupations between the sexes (e.g., Cohn, 2000), in terms of who is most frequently found in certain positions, the stereotyping lies in the notion that there are fundamental, natural reasons for this difference. There are likely no such inherent differences that would preclude women from performing successfully at “male jobs” or men from performing successfully at “female jobs.” The exclusion of one group from jobs typically associated with the other group might be more of a function of the stereotypes held by the organizational decision makers, rather than true differences in job performance between the two groups on the job in question.

There are also clear stereotypes of men and women that impact whether or not they are considered appropriate for a given job. Men are generally stereotyped as being

more assertive, logical, ambitious, confident, and decisive (Dipboye, 1987; Triandis, Kurowski, & Gelfand, 1994). These are traits that are generally associated with better job performance. Women are stereotyped as being nurturing, sensitive, passive, emotional, patient, and understanding—traits typically associated with interpersonal relations (Dipboye, 1987; Triandis, et al., 1994). Although both sets of traits can be considered relatively positive, “male” traits are generally used in defining management and leadership, thus, putting women at a disadvantage.

People typically describe men as more like good managers than women (Cox, 1994). However, a closer inspection of the extant research suggests that this is likely misguided. Although nonmanagerial women and men have been found to exhibit traits and behaviors that are stereotypically feminine and masculine, respectively, these slight differences do not appear when comparing actual female and male managers (Dipboye, 1987). Still, sex-role stereotypes can contribute to nontrivial, negative organizational experiences for women, such as undervaluing their own capabilities and contributions (Dipboye, 1987) or having others underestimate their competence and qualifications (Lee, Castella, & McCluney, 1997). Consequently, sex-role stereotypes can ultimately prevent women from having access to “good” jobs (i.e., those in which there is higher status and more organizational power; Cohn, 2000).

*Discrimination.* The extant research on gender and management shows that the challenges faced by women are not solely attitudinal; these often extend into behavioral challenges, i.e., unfair discrimination. Although some researchers are beginning to affirm that the job of manager is becoming relatively balanced, Cohn (2000) asserts that when

one considers the various levels within management, it is evident that women are primarily relegated to the lowest levels of management (i.e., supervisors by name only, with limited power; also noted by Dipboye, 1987). Status segregation refers to the phenomenon of individuals being confined to low-status jobs (i.e., “poor” jobs) on the basis of their ascriptive status (Cohn, 2000). The segregation can be seen in office work, for example, in which 80% of clerical workers are women (Cohn, 2000). It is also evident in that women “comprise only 15 percent of entry-level management, 5 percent of middle management, and 1 percent of top management” (Triandis et al., 1994).

Taylor and Ilgen (1981) found that females were seen as more suitably placed in unchallenging, rather than challenging positions. Likewise, Dipboye (1987) found that, for management jobs, women can be faced with biases in a) hiring and recruiting (such as being perceived as less qualified), b) working conditions (i.e., poorer treatment if/once hired), and c) compensation. Thus, generally, the research on women and work supports the idea that, despite ongoing progress, women are still particularly disadvantaged when seeking high-status, male jobs (i.e., “good” jobs).

### *Race*

Akin to the research on gender, there is also a considerable amount of research that considers the interplay between race and management. It is a possibility, in the opinions of some, that Black women’s advantage or disadvantage might be due primarily to their race. There is research that shows that one’s race can cause that individual to



experience particular race-related stigmatization and stereotyping. Each of these is discussed in greater detail below.

*Stigmatization.* Stone, Stone, and Dipboye (1992) provided a comprehensive review of the stigma research on disabilities, physical attractiveness, and race; clearly, race is most pertinent to the present investigation. Stigmas are characteristics of an individual that “serve as the basis for him or her being perceived as atypical, aberrant, or deviant, and thus being discredited by non-stigmatized individuals...” (Stone et al., 1992; p. 388). Race is often a visually conspicuous characteristic that can also be considered a stigma for some individuals (e.g., African Americans); the stigma contributes to those individuals being stereotyped and unfairly discriminated against. In their review, Stone et al. (1992) concluded that racism is still problematic, albeit in a much more subtle form than the “old-fashioned” racism that plagued prior decades—the 1950’s and 1960’s, for example. They asserted that present-day racism is actually a “symbolic” racism that is best measured using unobtrusive techniques. However, most research on unfair discrimination uses techniques that are probably obvious to savvy research participants, leading those participants to respond in socially desirable ways and contributing to mixed or counterintuitive findings (Stone, Stone, & Dipboye, 1992). In studies in which inconspicuous measurement is used, there are generally clear findings of Black Americans being unfairly discriminated against.

*Stereotyping.* As previously discussed, occupational typing and status segregation are two sociological processes that address sex-role stereotypes within the workplace. However, they fit less clearly with occupational race stereotyping. That is, although

people generally might acknowledge that there are stereotypically “male jobs” and “female jobs,” a distinction between “Black jobs” or “White jobs” is more ambiguous. Nonetheless, by considering status segregation within occupations, the prevalence of racial stereotypes regarding who “should” be in certain positions is evident (Cohn, 2000). Cohn states that generally, “men and women tend to work in jobs that are distinctively male or female...” whereas “Blacks and Whites are likely to work in racially mixed occupations. High status jobs, however, have a lot of Whites and relatively few Blacks; low status jobs have fewer Whites and more Blacks” (p. 25).

The research of Stone and Stone (1987) suggests that it is highly likely that there are stereotypical beliefs regarding which races are better suited for a given position. Specifically, they found that Black Americans were rated as more successful than White Americans for a road-laborer position, but not for a cashier job. This might indicate that participants viewed Black Americans as more suitable for physical labor than White Americans—a stereotype that might disadvantage Black Americans when seeking professional jobs (Stone & Stone, 1987). Likewise, Stewart and Perlow (2001) found that for individuals with more race bias, Black Americans were seen as having a better fit with a low status job (i.e., janitor), but White Americans were seen as having a better fit with a high status job (i.e., architect). Providing further support, Braddock, Crain, McPartland, and Dawkins (1985) found that White American personnel officers assigned Black American male high school graduates to lower paying positions than those assigned to White American male high school graduates. A similar pattern was observed for Black American college females.

## Conclusion

The preponderance of research investigating either race/racism *or* sex/sexism seems to suggest that these are always distinct considerations. Likewise, the research goals of statistical and empirical parsimony seem to necessitate considering race or sex only as main effects, sometimes to the exclusion of considering the interaction between them. Despite this, there are researchers who stress that although women of color (e.g., Black women) can sometimes experience either racism *or* sexism, depending on the context, the intersection of their race and sex also presents them with unique challenges. These challenges are overlooked in “either/or” studies. As covered in the next chapter, Critical Race Feminists identify the problems with such oversight and emphasize the importance of considering the intersections of race and sex (and other potentially marginalizing characteristics).

## CHAPTER FIVE

Any theory can likely be best understood in the context of the theoretical framework from whence it developed. Such is the case for a discussion of critical race feminism; placing it in its proper context requires a discussion of its theoretical forerunner—critical race theory. Therefore, a brief explanation of critical race theory is offered below.

### Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) arose in the mid-1970s, when several legal scholars began to notice subtle rollbacks of some of the achievements of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Boris, 2004). The Civil Rights movement was a defining period in American history, during which time civil rights activists used collective action through marches, boycotts, and other forms of nonviolent protest in order to confront the race-based, government sanctioned subordination inflicted upon African Americans. Ultimately, their actions led to the end of formal (i.e., legal) discrimination in America in such important areas as education and employment. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (CRA) of 1964 exemplifies the cessation of formal racial barriers in employment. It stipulates that it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against an individual with regards to the individual's employment because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Because of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which was established to oversee adherence to the law and address complaints of violation, most employers

comply with the legal mandates of Title VII. However, the degree to which employers are in accordance with the spirit of the law is sometimes nominal.

In the U.S., during the time period of CRT's inception, there was an ever-increasing resistance to antidiscrimination laws and policies established to "level the playing field" for groups who, throughout history, have been disadvantaged (Boris, 2004). Such resistance, in isolation from, or in tandem with, the dissemination of racial myths and/or the avoidance of constructive discussion about racial issues, resulted in changes to our legal system, schools, and places of employment that were incremental. However, the ever-rising opposition to antidiscrimination laws also served as a major impetus for CRT (Boris, 2004). The field grew as the meaning of "equal opportunity" morphed into mere rhetoric (Wing, 2003). That is, although many employers claim to be "equal opportunity" employers, all too often, this means that they are dedicated to "colorblind" employment practices (which, in a society founded and focused on race, is impractical).

Critical race theorists (Crits) doubt the plausibility of colorblind policies and practices and refute the assertion that there is no longer race-based discrimination. Instead, Crits argue that the concept of race is socially constructed and consider the issues of race and racism to be so ingrained in American culture that it impacts every social structure within our society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). They also suggest that certain segments of society have little incentive to eradicate racism because, for them, it has a self-serving function (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Confronting this problem head on,

Crits are committed to bringing racial issues to the forefront, especially in the areas of law and education.

Although CRT provides a substantial development in legal analysis, it is, by definition (albeit, necessarily) limited in its focus on race and racial matters. Nonetheless, CRT serves as a sound basis for derivative critical analysis offshoots, such as Critical Race Feminism (CRF). When the focus of legal analysis includes persons with more than one marginalizing characteristic—namely race and sex (just one grouping out of an innumerable amount of possible configurations), CRF provides a more suitable theoretical framework.

### Critical Race Feminism

Critical Race Feminism (CRF) emerged in the 1990s, emphasizing particular tenets of CRT that expound upon the legal challenges faced by women of color. That is, as a spin-off movement from CRT, critical race feminism emphasizes “the legal concerns of...those who are both women and members of today’s racial/ethnic minorities...” (Wing, 2003, p. 1). As mentioned above, CRT is primarily concerned with racial matters; therefore, CRF presents a “feminist intervention within CRT” (Wing, 2003, p. 7). Likewise, feminist theory is often criticized as reflecting the issues and perspectives of White women; thus, CRF offers a “race intervention in feminist discourse” (Wing, 2003, p. 7). Perhaps, the primary topics within CRF are the related concepts of antiessentialism and intersectionality, which are discussed below.

Signifying a major point of departure from “traditional” feminists, critical race feminists emphasize antiessentialism. That is, critical race feminists oppose the idea that there is an essential “female voice.” Instead, they acknowledge the unique experiences of women of color (Wing, 2003). Although critical race feminists espouse antiessentialism, critics might argue that critical race feminists are also somewhat essentialist by discussing the experiences of women of color (e.g., African American women) as though there were an essential voice for that entire group (Wing, 2003). This is a criticism with which critical race feminists would possibly concur, acknowledging that a certain degree of strategic essentialism is necessary in a dialogue of women of color in order to avoid discussions so particular that they only pertain to individuals (Wing, 2003).

Critical race feminism also emphasizes the concept of intersectionality, which refers to the study of women of color in terms of the intersection of their sex and race (and certain other characteristics, such as socioeconomic class). The diverse permutations, or intersections, of demographic characteristics that can intersect with one’s gender preclude the acceptance of the notion of a single, overarching female voice. In that regard, intersectionality is closely related to the idea of antiessentialism; by considering the multiple facets of women of color, an antiessentialist perspective of their experiences is maintained (Wing, 2003).

W. E. B. Du Bois, in his classic work, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), asserted that Black people in America have “double consciousness.” This double consciousness, Du Bois argued, is the “sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others...” (p. 2). Moreover, it is the burden of the “two-ness” of being Black and

American—attributes that exist in, what seems is, frequent conflict with one another. The concept of double consciousness is also applicable to the discussion of intersectionality; however, for Black women the two characteristics of interest are the simultaneously intertwined and distinctive qualities of race and sex. Intersectionality addresses the problem of considering race and sex as “mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis” (Crenshaw, 2003, p. 23). Critical race feminists take issue with trying to arrive at conclusions about Black women’s work experiences by “adding” the challenges and experiences of White women to those of Black men. They argue that one cannot readily understand the experiences of Black women simply by combining the “Black experience” of Black men to the “woman experience” of White women. Richard Delgado, a noted CRT researcher echoes this point: “The world of the woman of color is unique; it is not a combination of the two worlds of black men and white women, A plus B equals C” (Delgado, 2003, p. xiv).

#### Relevance of CRF to this Study

The link between CRT and Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology is one that is grossly understudied, despite their reciprocal relevance. Usually, if I/O psychology is mentioned at all in CRT texts and articles, it is done so fleetingly. Moreover, CRT is rarely mentioned in I/O psychology texts. This is curious, given that the connections between law, education, and I/O psychology are clear. For example, CRT topics within education, such as standardized testing, connect to testing issues within employment selection (a major topic area within I/O psychology). Likewise, Title VII of the Civil



Rights Act is as important a concern in I/O psychology as it is in CRT. Because racism and sexism can be simultaneously embedded within organizational structures, CRT offers an interesting, but still limited, avenue for further inquiry in I/O psychology. Heretofore, Critical Race Feminism has rarely been considered in Industrial and Organizational Psychology contexts, even with regards to the study of workplace diversity. Its legal foundation and theoretical concepts (e.g., race consciousness [as opposed to “color-blindness”] and intersectionality) are not only related to most discussions of racial/ethnic diversity in the workplace, but are particularly relevant to this study. The concept of intersectionality is obviously applicable to this study, as it investigated Black women’s workplace experiences, albeit in a somewhat essentialist manner. Because of its focus on issues pertaining to women of color—in particular, intersectionality—CRF serves as a guiding framework for this study. The next chapter continues to build upon this framework by presenting another important part of the theoretical foundation—Taylor Cox’s (1994) Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity

The Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD) developed by Cox (1994) offers a sound basis for gaining understanding about organizational diversity issues, given that it attempts to clarify the effects of diversity on organizational outcomes. Cox developed the model after extensive review of the workplace diversity literature; the model diagrammatically summarizes that literature. Although the IMCD could theoretically apply to all cultural identities and various configurations thereof, Cox focused on race/ethnicity, gender, and nationality. Succinctly stated, the model posits that an organization's diversity climate impacts individual career outcomes, which then impact the organization's effectiveness. Each variable is discussed in greater detail below.

As stated above, Cox proposes that an organization's diversity climate can have an effect on the career outcomes of individuals within that organization. Individual-, group/intergroup-, and organizational-level factors all contribute to this diversity climate. The individual-level characteristics that can impact the diversity climate are identity structure, prejudice, stereotyping, and personality. Certain issues between or within groups can also impact the diversity climate—namely, cultural differences, ethnocentrism, and intergroup conflict. Finally, the culture and acculturation process, structural integration, informal integration, and institutional bias in Human Resource systems are all aspects of the organization that can affect the diversity climate.

The diversity climate, overall, can influence the career outcomes of individuals. These individual career outcomes are categorized into those which are affective or achievement-based. Individual affective career outcomes include job/career satisfaction, organizational identification, and job involvement. Conversely, achievement career outcomes include job performance ratings, compensation, and promotion/horizontal mobility rates.

The individual career outcomes affect the effectiveness of the organization. There are two levels of organizational effectiveness. The organization's first level effectiveness refers to attendance, turnover, productivity, work quality, recruiting success, creativity/innovation, problem solving, and work group cohesiveness and communication. The second level of organizational effectiveness includes market share, profitability, and achievement of formal organizational goals. In addition to the abovementioned relationships, certain aspects of the diversity climate can directly impact certain first level organizational effectiveness variables. Namely, cultural differences and the degree to which diversity is integrated structurally and informally within the organization can impact an organization's creativity/innovation and its work group cohesiveness and communication.

Overall, the IMCD proposes that the complex interaction of individuals and their environments plays a significant role in determining the impact of diversity on organizational outcomes. In so doing, it offers several relationships that are conducive for experimental inquiry. However, as a guiding framework for this study (to clarify the conditions under which Black women are at a double advantage or disadvantage in the

workplace), organizational level factors of the diversity climate (in particular, the “structural integration” variable) were considered in greatest depth in this study.

### *Structural Integration*

As discussed above, Cox identifies structural integration as an organizational level variable within the IMCD that indicates the extent to which diversity is integrated into the hierarchical structure of the organization. Specifically, structural integration “refers to levels of heterogeneity in the formal structures of the organization” (Cox, 1994, p. 177). It is measured along the two main dimensions of a) participation in the power structure of the organization and b) overall employee profile. In other words, to understand the degree to which there is racial/ethnic or gender diversity embedded in the structures of the organization, one should examine the organization’s power distribution and its overall employee profile. These dimensions are discussed in detail below.

### *Power Distribution*

The experiences of organizational members can be considerably impacted by the extent to which diversity is reflected in the formal power structure of the organization. In contrast to informal power, which consists of personal knowledge, personality, etc., formal power refers to “authority, or the right to make decisions and to direct others” (Cox, 1994, p. 182). One can understand a considerable amount about the power structure within an organization by analyzing its organizational levels, interlevel gaps, promotion

potential, and key decision-making bodies. The aspects that are particularly relevant to this investigation are the organizational level and interlevel gap analyses.

Analyzing the distribution of power by organizational level entails one studying how diversity is distributed within the upper hierarchical levels of the organization (e.g., how many Black women are in upper management). Similarly, the interlevel gap analysis involves comparing, across hierarchical levels in an organization, who holds formal power. Specifically, “the interlevel gap analysis refers to the difference between percentage representation of a group in the overall workforce (or at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy) and its percentage representation at various higher levels of authority” (Cox, 1994, p. 183). Cox’s usage of “organizational level analysis” and “interlevel gap analysis” refer to areas of inquiry to which one can attend in order to determine the extent to which diversity is integrated into the formal power structures of an organization. However, it is plausible for these terms to also correspond to variables that can be measured or manipulated in an experimental setting, as is the case in this study. Likewise, Cox’s description of the overall employee profile of an organization also provides potential variables to experimentally manipulate. Thus, this is discussed in the next section.

### *Overall Employee Profile*

The overall employee profile is the “proportionate representation of various culture groups in the total workforce of an organization” (e.g., the percent of women; Cox, 1994, p. 177). According to Cox, there are several lines of research that emphasize

the importance of proportionate representation within an organization, including studies on token representation, group composition, performance evaluation, or compensation. Although considering the totality of these lines of research provides one with a more comprehensive understanding of an organization's overall employee profile, the token representation and group composition research are most relevant to the present study.

*Token representation.* Kanter (1977) defined tokenism, presented some of the dynamics that take place when tokenism occurs, and described how tokens respond to such dynamics. Tokenism, according to Kanter takes place within skewed groups—those in which there is a large preponderance of one group (the dominant group) over another group (the token group), up to a ratio of about 85:15. Those persons in the smallest groups are considered tokens, as they are representatives of their groups (referring to the aspect[s] of their identity that distinguishes them from the majority group).

According to Kanter, the proportional rarity of tokens is associated with three perceptual phenomena—visibility, polarization, and assimilation (stereotyping). These phenomena are associated with certain interaction dynamics that generate typical token responses—performance pressures, boundary heightening, and role entrapment, respectively. Tokens experience performance pressures in terms of public performance, extension of consequences, fear of retaliation, and attention to their own discrepant characteristics. They typically respond to these pressures by either overachieving or attempting to limit their visibility. In terms of boundary heightening, the dominants exaggerate their commonality and the token's difference by exaggerating the dominants' culture, using interruptions as reminders of "difference," using overt inhibition (i.e.,

informal isolation), and subjecting the tokens to loyalty tests. The tokens respond to boundary heightening by accepting isolation or by trying to become insiders. Finally, role entrapment manifests itself through status leveling and stereotyped role induction. Kanter identified four role traps that female tokens can fall into—the mother, seductress, pet, or iron maiden. Tokens respond to role entrapment using a variety of conservative and low-risk responses (e.g., accepting the roles and minimizing contact with strangers). There is empirical support for the perceptual phenomena and responses proposed in Kanter's theory (Yoder, Adams, & Prince, 1983; MacCorquodale & Jensen, 1993). When people are tokens, they seem to experience certain negative outcomes that, possibly, they would not otherwise experience. Specifically, it seems that tokenism is not only related to more work stress and psychological symptoms for tokens than for non-tokens (Kanter, 1977; Jackson, Thoits, & Taylor 1995), but it also affects cognitive performance, overall achievement, and expectations about group interactions (Lord & Saenz, 1985; Saenz, 1994; Alexander & Thoits, 1985; Cohen & Swim, 1995).

It is important to note that research in which token men are considered rather than token women (e.g., male nurses) generally reveals that the dynamics experienced by male tokens are different from those experienced by female tokens, and the ways that men respond to the dynamics tend to be different (Heikes, 1991; Floge & Merrill, 1986; Fairhurst & Snavely, 1983; Snavely & Fairhurst, 1984; Crocker & McGraw, 1984). Consequently, critics of tokenism theory challenge the purported gender neutrality of tokenism theory (Ott, 1989; Zimmer, 1988). There has also been criticism of the manner in which tokenism theory focuses on numerical proportions (Yoder & Sennett, 1985;

Yoder, 1991; Yoder, 1994). Although it is not unreasonable to assert that tokenism does not capture the entire picture with its focus on proportions, it should not be disregarded entirely, as it still offers an invaluable explanation of what can and often does occur when some organizational members are “tokens.” Moreover, it is integral to an understanding of the overall employee profile within an organization.

*Group composition.* As explained in Cox (1994), the composition of groups within an organization can shape the experiences of different cultural groups within the organization. In particular, Black Americans and White Americans differ in terms of their preferred group proportions. Black Americans tend to prefer an equal representation norm, that in which groups have an equal representation of races. In contrast, White Americans favor a proportional representation norm, which refers to a group’s racial representation being consistent with its racial representation in the national population. As a group’s composition deviates from one norm or the other, group members of different races can have dissimilar, psychologically uncomfortable experiences. It is curious whether these preferences impact organizational decision-makers, in terms of their desire to maintain or create certain group compositions when considering various job applicants.

The research of Tolbert, Andrews, and Simons (1995) provides further insight about group composition by exploring intergroup relations. They conducted a study to compare social contact theories of intergroup relations and competition theories of intergroup relations. Social contact theories would suggest that a majority group is more likely to engage in discrimination against a minority group when the minority group is



small. Alternatively, competition theories would suggest that a majority group is more likely to engage in discrimination against a minority group as that minority group becomes proportionately larger. Overall, their findings provided support for the competition theories of intergroup contact. This further indicates that the majority-minority proportions in an organization can greatly impact the way organizational members interact. As elaborated upon in the next chapter, these intergroup interactions are largely impacted by the perceptions individuals have of one another based upon their relative demographic group memberships.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Summary of Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation that has been presented up to this point—including, the theory of double advantage, the theory of double disadvantage, Critical Race Feminism, and Cox’s (1994) Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity—has progressively narrowed in focus. This is shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.

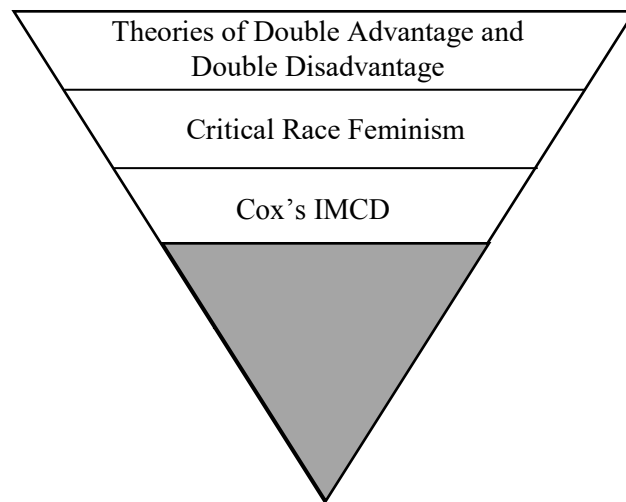


Figure 1. Diagram of the Theoretical Foundation for the Study – Part 1

The macro-to-micro level focus summarizes the theoretical path of the study—from posing the research question to forming the hypotheses. The research question arose from the ongoing debate of double advantage versus double disadvantage, as it pertains to Black women’s experiences in the workplace. That resultant research question was: Under what conditions are Black women at a double advantage or a double disadvantage?

The attention given to Black women as the focus of the inquiry was guided by the tenet of intersectionality, as presented in Critical Race Feminism.

Undoubtedly, there are many variables that contribute to whether Black women experience advantages or disadvantages in seeking managerial positions. Their physical characteristics, the attitudes of the selection decision-makers, and particular features of the job, position, or organization can be advantageous or disadvantageous depending upon their various permutations. Despite the plethora of variables to consider, experimental limitations preclude considering them all in one experiment. Therefore, the Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD) offered a sound basis for the selection, and consideration, of a possible moderator (i.e., one of several possible moderators shown in the model). Taking into account the framework of the IMCD, the intersectionality and antiessentialist perspectives of Critical Race Feminism, the double advantage/double disadvantage theories, and the present research questions, relationships among four key variables were investigated in this study. Those variables were applicant sex, applicant race, overall employee profile of the organization (i.e., racial/ethnic representation norms), and organizational power distribution.

#### General Overview of Study Design

In order to study the abovementioned variables, a 2 (Race: Black or White) x 2 (Sex: Male or Female) x 2 (Racial/ethnic and gender representation: Balanced or Less-than-Proportional) between-subjects design was used. Participants, instructed to take on the role of an employment staffing agent, reviewed information about a fictitious

organization, including viewing pictures of the organizational members. Incorporating the overall employee profile variable (in particular, group composition) of the IMCD, the pictures served as the racial/ethnic and gender representation manipulation. One set showed a racial- and gender-balanced organization and the other set showed an organization in which the race and sex composition was slightly less-than-proportional (for the sake of realism) in comparison to that of the overall U.S. population. Participants then viewed descriptions of open positions in entry-, middle-, and upper-level management at the organization, integrating the IMCD variable of power distribution. Finally, participants reviewed a fictitious professional networking profile of a job applicant with middle-level managerial qualifications. Bringing in the Critical Race Feminism concept of intersectionality, the race and sex of the applicant were manipulated (Black male, Black female, White male, White female) through photos featured on the mock professional networking profiles. Based on their perceptions of all of the information presented, participants responded to several items (e.g., suitability of the applicant for the management positions, perceptions of the organization's hiring process).

Overall, although the aforementioned theoretical components contributed to the development of the experimental stimuli and provided a general context to understand the societal and organizational levels of the issue, they are, arguably, far too broad to offer clarity about the cognitive processes underlying individuals' perceptions and judgments of the job applicants. This is an aspect that must be considered in order to attend to the issue more adequately. For this, theories of social categorization—specifically, the Multiple Categorization and Crossed Categorization paradigms—were considered,

offering the final theoretical component of the study (as shown in Figure 2) and leading to the development of the hypotheses.

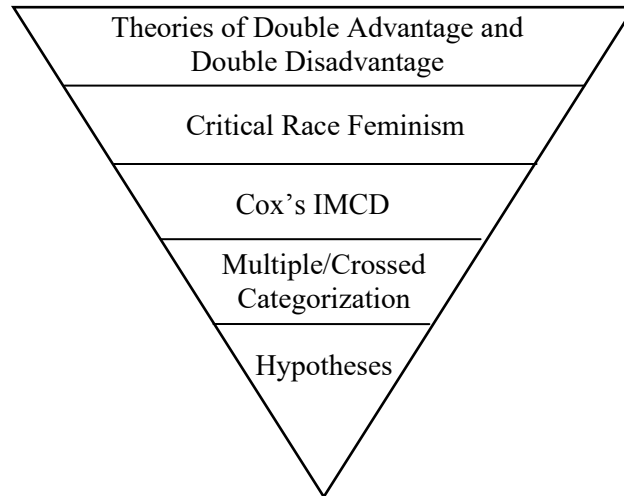


Figure 2. Diagram of the Theoretical Foundation for the Study – Part 2

### Multiple Categorizations Paradigm

The multiple categorizations perspective is based on the earlier work in the area of social categorization. That earlier work explains how individuals' perceptions of, and interactions with, other individuals is largely impacted by the social categories to which they mentally assign one another (Tajfel & Forgas, 2000). As a part of this categorization process, which is value-based and normative, people perceive greater differences between categories and more similarities within categories (Tajfel & Forgas, 2000).

The multiple categorizations line of research extends the social categorization literature by describing the cognitive processes underlying social categorization and perceptions of multiple categorizations (e.g., Crisp & Hewstone, 2001). It

acknowledges—akin to the tenet of Intersectionality—that an individual’s social identity is comprised of the multiple social categories to which he or she belongs (e.g., race, sex, religion, age, socioeconomic status), and is not necessarily based on just one seemingly overarching attribute (e.g., race). Moreover, the multiple attributes used for social classification can be simultaneously salient, and salience is largely determined by the social context (Crisp & Hewstone, 2001). One major aspect of this research is how intergroup bias can shift as consideration is given to the multiple categories to which an individual belongs—that is, when the categories are crossed (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Crisp, 2002).

#### Crossed Categorization Research

According to Crisp, Hewstone, Richards, and Paolini (2003), “crossed categorization describes the social context (and experimental paradigm) in which (at least) two dichotomous dimensions of group membership operate simultaneously in the representation and use of social categorization in (amongst other things) evaluative judgments” (p. 25). Consistent with the research from the broader area of social categorization/social identity, Crisp and Hewstone (2001) expected perceivers to “be motivated to enhance the status of their own group relative to the out-group” and to “engage in in-group enhancing strategies of information processing” (p. 48). Their findings were generally indicative of this tendency. However, the research regarding crossed categorization offers a promising avenue of inquiry for reducing such intergroup bias, by considering the numerous social groups to which an individual belongs (Crisp,

Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Crisp, 2002). Discouragingly, the decrease in bias is not as pronounced (or does not occur) when *only* two salient attributes are crossed. That is, if an individual is biased against another individual on the basis of one salient group dimension (i.e., simple categorization), the mere presence of a second salient dimension (on which the individuals might or might not differ; i.e., crossed categorization) is insufficient for reducing that bias and, in fact, might exacerbate it (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001). This is the case, even though research shows that people *can* and *do* perceive multiple categorizations simultaneously (Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Hall & Crisp, 2005). Moreover, even though making *more than* two categorical dimensions salient can reduce intergroup bias, it still does not eliminate it altogether (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001).

Promisingly, Crisp, Turner, and Hewstone (2010) found that, with regards to crossed categorization, one path to reducing bias was through increasing the complexity of the intergroup context. The perceived categorical complexity is negatively related to the perceived degree of categorical overlap. That is, the higher the degree of overlap that an individual perceives between categories (e.g., “men” and “managers”), the lower the category complexity. Low complexity, consequently, is associated with more bias. Alternatively, the lower the degree of overlap that an individual perceives between categories, the higher the category complexity, which is associated with less bias.

### *Group Member Distinctions*

The crossed categorization research largely focuses on the patterns of evaluation that occur as two salient attributes (e.g., race and sex) are crossed. The evaluations are from the perspective of a perceiver; a target individual's category memberships are generally evaluated in relation to those of the perceiver. Therefore, from the perceiver's perspective, the target individual can be perceived as a "double in-group" member if the perceiver and target share both attributes in common or a "double out-group" member if they differ on both attributes (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Crisp, 2002). Those individuals with whom the perceiver shares only one attribute are "mixed-group" members (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Crisp, 2002). For example, if the perceiver is a White male, then other White males are double in-group members; Black males and White females are in the mixed-group; and, Black females are double out-group members.

### *Evaluation Patterns*

Researchers have identified three patterns of evaluation associated with the different membership configurations, 1) an additive pattern, 2) a social inclusion pattern, and 3) an equivalence pattern. In the additive pattern, the degree of positive evaluation is highest for double in-group members (expressed symbolically as "II") and lowest for double out-group ("OO") members, whereas the degree of positive evaluation for the mixed-group ("IO" or "OI") members is in between the two extremes (Crisp, 2002). For the social inclusion pattern, II and IO/OI are perceived as equally favorable, and are both



seen as more favorable than OO (Crisp, 2002). Finally, in the equivalence pattern, all groups are perceived, and evaluated, equally (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001; Crisp, 2002).

Research on crossed categorization has repeatedly identified the additive pattern as the baseline condition (Crisp, Walsh, & Hewstone, 2006). Therefore, a considerable amount of research pertains to how perceivers can progress from an additive pattern of evaluation to one that is more inclusive, such as social inclusion or equivalence, with equivalence being the ultimate goal. It has been found to be more likely for perceivers to move away from an additive pattern when, a) more than two categorizations, especially those unrelated to a superordinate comparison, are made salient (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Hall & Crisp, 2005), b) the mood of the perceiver is positive (Crisp, Walsh, & Hewstone, 2006), c) the crossed category groups are of low importance *and* a common group identity is formed (Crisp, Walsh, & Hewstone, 2006), or d) in-group identification is weak (Crisp & Beck, 2005).

#### Application of Categorization Research to the Current Study

Given the focus in the present study, on the interactions of race and sex (in addition to organizational composition), it is clear that most of the aforementioned conditions (for abandoning the additive pattern) were unmet. That is, race and sex/gender were the two categories of focus in this study; other categorizations (e.g., nationality, age) were not made salient. In most societies, including the U.S., these are both highly important and widely salient social categorizations, as well as categories with which most

people strongly identify. Therefore, it was expected that, in considering the job applicants, relative to the management teams, raters would almost exclusively exhibit the additive pattern of evaluation. That is, generally, they were expected to have the most positive evaluations for double in-group members and the least positive evaluations for double out-group members; those in the mixed groups were expected to be in the middle.

### *Mental Image as the Comparative Standard*

Revisiting a point from an earlier chapter, in the U.S., the normative standard has historically been “White male” (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). This normative standard extends to perceptions of managers, such that many people are still likely to “think manager, think (White) male,” even if they do not personally endorse this idea as the way management should necessarily be (Davidson, 1997). Because people have a mental picture (i.e., schema, stereotype) of managers as primarily being White men, in considering who is or is not suitable for management, that mental image serves as the comparative standard for others (e.g., those seeking managerial employment), thereby functioning as a proxy for in-group membership. Using this logic, given that managers are generally assumed to be White men, White male applicants for management positions are likely to be considered double in-group members, regardless of the personal categorizations of the perceiver (i.e., the rater). As applied to the present study, because the jobs under consideration were management positions, and management positions are stereotyped as “White, male” jobs, White men were expected to be considered the normative standard—members of the “in-group”—by raters (even if only at the raters’

subconscious levels of processing). Black men and White women were expected to be considered the mixed-group members, and Black women were expected to be seen as the double out-group members.

Furthermore, given that most raters would be expected to have the mental image of managers as White men, they would correspondingly be expected to perceive a high degree of overlap between the categories of “White,” “male,” and “manager,” contributing to an overall lower degree of category complexity. This lower complexity would be expected to result in more bias, manifested in the ratings of managerial suitability. This, however, was not assumed to be isolatable from societal norms or the organizational context.

### *Societal Norms*

Current societal norms in the U. S. preclude overt expressions of racism and/or sexism, especially in work-related contexts. Even without in-depth knowledge of equal employment opportunity laws, most people who are of the legal age to work are aware of the impropriety (if not aware of the outright illegality) of overt race- and/or sex-based discrimination. Thus, most people will avoid acting in a way that can be perceived as overtly racist and/or sexist, even in situations in which the discrimination would be against members of their own race and/or sex and, sometimes, even if there is little to no threat of the act being made public. Given this, it was considered likely that, in rating potential job applicants for management suitability, raters would act in accordance with an additive pattern of evaluation ( $II > IO/OI > OO$ ), but only when it seemed socially

acceptable to do so (i.e., when the act was less likely to be seen as unfairly discriminatory). If there was the possibility that certain decisions could be seen as unfairly discriminatory, raters were expected to demonstrate an additive pattern that is the exact reverse of what is “typical” (i.e.,  $OO > IO/OI > II$ ).

### *Organizational Context*

It was expected that the organizational context (i.e., demographic composition), in conjunction with the societal norms, would also contribute to biases in management ratings. When the organization was balanced, it was thought that participants would perceive a lower likelihood of appearing to make an unfair decision (i.e., one based on race and/or sex) because the demographic balance of the group would be assumed to render race and/or sex inconsequential. This was expected to manifest itself through an additive pattern of evaluation (double in-group, White males, notwithstanding), in that the “mixed-groups” of Black men or White women would be preferred over the double out-group, Black women.

When the organization was less-than-proportional, it was thought that participants would perceive a greater likelihood of appearing to make an unfair decision (i.e., one based on race and/or sex) because the demographic *imbalance* of the group would draw attention to the absence of certain people (e.g., Black women). This was expected to show itself through an additive pattern of evaluation that is exactly reverse of the normal pattern. Not considering the double in-group (White men), it was expected that the

double out-group, Black women, would be preferred over the “mixed-groups,” Black men or White women.

### Summary of Rationale for Hypotheses

The information presented in this section provides a synopsis of how the research on categorization led to the development of the hypotheses. Based on this research, it was expected that the raters would perceive the multiple categorizations of the job applicants. Though in a fictional context, the applicant would likely be understood to be someone with whom the rater would not actually have to work or interact. Therefore, rather than making self-referent categorizations of the applicant’s in-group or out-group status, the rater instead was expected to compare the applicant to the schema or mental image s/he held for managers. That is, the rater was expected to consider: Is this applicant, based on his or her categorizations, a double in-group member relative to the schema or a double out-group member relative to the schema? Another way of expressing this is: How far removed is the applicant from the “typical manager,” in terms of his/her race and sex (i.e., the salient characteristics)? Generally, one would expect that the farther removed the applicant is from the schema, the worse off s/he would be.

However, it was expected that the degree to which the rater would actually use an “applicant-to-schema” matching process would be dependent upon the demographic composition of the management teams. That is, the decision about the in-group or out-group status of the applicant would also depend on the salient categorizations of the members of the organization to which the applicant was seeking employment. This is

because different group proportions would be expected to activate different cognitive processes.

When the organization is balanced, unfair discrimination against Black applicants and White female applicants would not appear to be an issue warranting attention or in-depth cognitive processing. In this situation, the raters would be expected to rely on their management stereotype. Furthermore, when the organization is already diverse and stereotypes are used to make the decision of who is or is not suitable, the decision is seemingly easier to attribute to other factors. Thus, for the balanced organization, it was expected that the baseline condition—the additive pattern—would be demonstrated, though not in reference to the rater’s categorizations. Rather, the comparison would be made between the applicant and the rater’s stereotypical image of a manager. So, the Black male and White female applicants, as mixed-group members, would be considered more suitable for the position than the Black female applicant, the double out-group member.

On the other hand, when the organization is less-than-proportional, the lack of diversity brings potential issues of race- and gender-based discrimination to the forefront. Because those issues are more conspicuous, the rater becomes more cognizant of his or her personal categorizations and how they compare to the applicant’s categorizations. The different cognitive process activated by the lack of diversity takes precedent over the simple comparison to the management stereotype. Once the rater is focused on his/her personal categorizations, he/she becomes mindful of how the ratings and decisions could reflect on him/herself. Ideally, the rater wants his or her personal in-group to be seen

favorably. Thus, White raters would not want to appear unfairly discriminatory, and Black raters (or other raters of color) would not want to perpetuate the apparent unfair discrimination. These two different processes would lead to the same outcome, however: When the organization is not diverse, add “more” diversity. “More” diversity is ostensibly added by countering the stereotypical notion of a manager; that is, by countering the schema. This would mean, instead of an additive pattern in the “normal” direction (i.e., IO-OI [Black men and White women] > OO [Black women]), the reverse of that pattern would be employed (i.e., OO > IO-OI).

### Hypotheses

Following the rationale presented above, two hypotheses were put forth. They are stated below.

#### *Hypothesis 1*

The Black female applicant will have a double disadvantage (receive lower suitability ratings than Black male and White female applicants) when there is balanced racial/gender representation.

#### *Hypothesis 2*

The Black female applicant will have a double advantage (receive higher suitability ratings than Black male and White female applicants) when there is less-than-proportional racial/gender representation.

### Additional Considerations

It is important to note that White men were not considered in the hypotheses because the notions of “double” advantage or disadvantage for Black women do not necessitate consideration of their standing in relation to White men. This, however, is definitely a comparison worth further exploration. Also notable, to reiterate an abovementioned point, is that suitability ratings were measured separately for the three levels of management—entry-, middle-, and upper-levels—in order to incorporate the Cox (1994) IMCD variable of power distribution. Although specific hypotheses were not formed for each of the levels, the differentiation between the levels was expected to provide a possibility for a more detailed interpretation of the results.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Method

#### *Participants*

##### *Participant Characteristics*

The sample ( $N = 361$ ; 100 men, 259 women, 2 not reported) was comprised of students from a large university in the Southeastern U.S. Eighty-eight percent of the sample was 18-24 years old, and most of the participants (i.e., 63%) were White/Caucasian. More detailed information about the participant characteristics is presented in Table 1. About 90% of the participants were employed at the time of the study, though most did not have management experience ( $n_{\text{no mgmt. exp.}} = 258$ ; ~72%) or experience making hiring decisions ( $n_{\text{no hir. exp.}} = 287$ ; ~80%).

##### *Sampling Procedures*

Participants were recruited via the online research recruitment site approved by the Psychology department of the university. Essentially, participants selected themselves into the sample by choosing the experiment from among many available studies listed on the site. Thus, study enrollment *and* the actual research study took place online. The maximum allowable number of extra credit points was granted for participation in the study (in accordance with the university and departmental guidelines). Participation was limited to individuals with work experience who were age 18 or older. The treatment of

all participants was in accordance with the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association (APA).

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Age		Race/Ethnicity	
Groups	Percentages	Groups	Percentages
18-19	45	Hispanic/Latino	16
20-24	43	White/Caucasian	63
25-29	7	Black/African American	9
30-34	2	Asian/Pacific Islander	5
35-39	1	American Indian/Alaskan Native	1
40 or older	2	Bi-racial/Multi-racial	6

### *Research Design*

#### *Overview*

The relationships between applicant sex, applicant race, organizational overall employee profile, and organizational power distribution were investigated via a 2 x 2 x 2 (Applicant Sex: male or female x Applicant Race: Black or White x Racial/ethnic representation: Balanced or Less-than-Proportional) between-subjects design. The independent variables were manipulated using photos. The main dependent variables of

interest were items questioning the applicant's suitability for each of three management positions.

### *Sample Size, Power, and Precision*

A power analysis was conducted using the G\*Power 3 program (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) to determine the necessary number of participants for the study. With the alpha level set at .10, in order to achieve power of .90 and a medium effect size ( $f^2 = .25$ ), a sample size of 139 was required to detect a critical F-value ( $f[1,131] = 2.74$ ). The goal, however, was to collect data from 25 participants per condition (8 conditions), thereby providing several "extra" participants per condition to offset any incomplete or otherwise problematic data sets. This set the recruitment goal at 200 participants. The final sample of 361 participants (which was the full sample size prior to the elimination of multivariate outliers) considerably exceeded that goal.

### *Procedure*

Participants were recruited through the department-approved research recruitment website to participate in an experiment, ostensibly on the use of social networking profiles for job screening decisions. Upon signing up, participants were emailed a link to 1 of 8 websites, each representing a different experimental condition. Screenshots from one of the websites are presented in Appendix F. Once the participant clicked on the link to the experimental website, they were presented with the informed consent information. Participants had the right to decline consent or withdraw participation at any time by

leaving the experimental website and/or closing their internet browser; by clicking to continue from one screen to the next, participants indicated a willingness to participate. Given the participant pool, it was expected that all participants would be proficient in the English language. Thus, the consent process and all experimental materials were presented in English.

Participants were randomly assigned to 1 of 8 experimental conditions. Randomization was determined prior to participants signing up for the study, through use of a random number generator (Urbaniak & Plous, 2010). The instructions did not change for any of the conditions, and all data were collected online. Also, participant responses were anonymous (i.e., not connected to any personally identifiable information). After consenting to participate and continue with the study, the participants were informed that they would be assuming the role of a staffing agent, responsible for making screening decisions about an applicant based on the information presented. The purported importance or relevance of the study, as explained to the participants, was that because organizations are increasingly using social/professional networking sites to make initial screening decisions for job applicants, research is warranted on how such profiles can impact job-related decisions.

In their role as employment staffing agents, participants were instructed to make judgments about an applicant's suitability for each of three managerial jobs, considering all of the information provided. After being informed of their role and receiving comprehension questions to insure that they understood the instructions, the participants were presented with information on the hiring organization. This consisted of viewing a

company overview and brief paragraphs about, and pictures of, the upper-, middle-, and entry-level management teams. Afterwards, the participants were presented with brief descriptions of the positions for which the applicant was to be considered. The positions differed in their levels of requisite education and managerial experience, decision-making power, and number of subordinates. Specifically, the entry-level manager exemplified a low-power position. The job description for this position indicated that an entry-level manager reported to the middle-level management and did not direct or supervise anyone. The middle-level management position, as it was explained, reported to the senior-level management and directed the entry-level managers. The senior-level managerial position typified a high-power position, in that senior-level managers supervised all middle-level and, indirectly, all entry-level managers. Questions were presented after the briefing on the organization and the positions to verify participant comprehension.

Following the questions about the organization and job description, the participants were asked to carefully review the social/professional networking profile of a job applicant. The profile was presented to the participant as a screenshot from a professional networking site (akin to LinkedIn®) that was copied and pasted onto the present website. The profile contained information on the applicant's career objective, work experience, qualifications, skills, education, certification, and honors.

After reviewing the applicant's profile, participants were instructed to consider the applicant's information in conjunction with the organizational information and job descriptions in order to respond to several questions about the information presented. The participants were asked to answer questions about the organization, jobs, and applicant.

The participants were also asked to respond to demographic questions (e.g., current employment status, age, race, gender) about themselves. A manipulation check at the end of the series of questions assessed whether participants could correctly identify the race and sex of the applicant.

Upon completion of the experiment, participants were debriefed online. They were informed of the general purpose of the study and provided with contact information for any questions. A confirmation (of completion) page was presented after the debriefing information. The confirmation page instructed the participants to submit their names and personal identification numbers (PIDs) to the researcher via an email link. The information, though entered on and submitted from that page, was not linked to specific data sets in any way. Once this confirmation was received, the researcher assigned credit to the participant.

### *Independent Variables - Manipulations*

#### *Racial/Ethnic and Sex Representation*

The first manipulation was presented to the participants as they were presented with information about the organization. The demographic composition of the organization was manipulated in this information, in which the diversity within the organization indicated an equal (balanced) representation norm or a less-than-proportional representation norm. Participants viewed photographs that were ostensibly of the employees at the organization. In actuality, the pictures were all public domain, royalty free photos from the Microsoft Office online gallery. In one condition, the “less-

than-proportional (LTP)” condition, participants were presented with photographs showing a workplace in which the racial/ethnic diversity was consistent (actually, it was slightly less so for the sake of realism) with that of the overall U.S. population, and the gender diversity was consistent with the EEOC records on gender and management. That is, the LTP condition featured workers that were approximately 75% White, 12% Black, ~13% Latino, and 4% Asian. It also presented gender division in which there were approximately 2 – 2.5 times the number of men as women for White Americans and Latinos, respectively, and equal numbers of men and women for Black Americans. In the other condition—the “balanced” condition, participants were presented with photographs of a workplace in which the diversity of the workers was relatively balanced. That is, there were approximately equal numbers of races and genders.

#### *Applicant Race and Sex*

The applicant race and sex manipulations were presented through photos of the applicants that were featured on the professional networking profile. The race and sex combinations were Black/woman, Black/man, White/woman, and White/man. The applicants’ names were “hidden” (i.e., visually covered by a black bar), under the guise of identity protection. However, that also served to eliminate the possible confound of using a particular name. Other than this manipulated race and sex, the content of the professional networking profiles was the same. The qualifications and experience information on the profiles were typical of a middle-level manager.

## *Dependent Variables - Measures*

### *Entry-, Middle-, and Upper-Level Management Suitability*

After reviewing the job descriptions and the applicant's profile, participants considered the applicant's information in relation to the information on the job description and were instructed to use the information to determine the applicant's suitability for each of the three positions. On a screen presented with cues of the applicant's picture and the management team associated with the position under consideration, participants were asked, "How suitable do you think that applicant is for the entry level management position?" This same format was followed for the middle- and upper-level positions, with each presented on its own webpage. The ratings were made on a four-point scale, ranging from "1 - Very Unsuitable" to "4 - Very Suitable." Participants were then asked to indicate which position the applicant was most suited for (and least suited for) by selecting one from a drop-down list (1 - Upper Management, 2 - Middle Management, or 3 - Entry-level Management).

### *Perceptions of the Applicant*

Following the suitability questions, the participants were presented with several questions on their perceptions of the job applicant. Specifically, the participants were asked to rate the applicant on professionalism (Scale: 1 - Very Unprofessional to 4 - Very Professional) and qualification for any management position (Scale: 1 - Very Unqualified to 4 - Very Qualified). Another item questioned whether the applicant's professional



networking profile included any inappropriate or irrelevant information (1- Yes or 2- No). The final item questioned, “To which age group did the job applicant appear to belong?” There were four age range options: 19 or younger; 20-29; 30-39; and, 40 or older.

A few questions served as manipulation check items—to assess whether participants could correctly identify the race and sex of the applicant. To check the sex/gender manipulation, participants were asked, “What was the sex of the job applicant?” to which they were to respond 1 - Male or 2 - Female. The race manipulation check item was, “What race/ethnicity did the job applicant appear to be?” The response options were: 1 - Hispanic/Latino, 2 - White, 3 - Black/African American, 4 - Asian/Pacific Islander, 5 - American Indian/Alaskan Native, or 6 - Bi-racial/Multi-racial.

### *Perceptions of the Organization*

The participants were also asked questions pertaining to their perceptions of the organization. The first question asked, “Given what you have read/seen about the organization, how would you rate their hiring practices?” to which participants were to respond using a four-point scale of 1 - Very Unfair to 4 - Very Fair. The second item questioned, “Given what you have read/seen about the organization, how would you rate their diversity?” The response rating scale was 1 - Not diverse at all, 2 - Somewhat diverse, or 3 - Very diverse. A final question asked if the information provided on the organization's website clearly explained the qualifications needed for the available jobs (1 - Yes or 2 - No).

### *Scoring of Comprehension and Manipulation Check Items*

To obtain a measure of the participants' comprehension of the study instructions and related information, the comprehension-based items were summed. Analyses revealed that most participants (94%) correctly responded to, at least, half of the comprehension items. That is, they correctly answered 5 or more comprehension questions.

### *Pilot Test*

#### *Purpose*

The purpose of the pilot test and analyses was to select the photos of individuals (who were to be presented as the job applicants) who, other than their sex and race, were most similar to one another, in terms of perceived age, intelligence, professionalism, friendliness, and attractiveness. It was concluded that the most important dimensions for the actual study were age, intelligence, and professionalism. Friendliness and attractiveness, though important, are likely not as strongly and consistently correlated with perceptions of job suitability as age, intelligence, and professionalism. With regards to the management teams, the purpose was to enhance the believability of the team photos by identifying possible issues and rectifying those issues to strengthen the racial/ethnic representation manipulation.

### *General Procedure*

In order to carry out this study, the photos used for the professional networking profiles and the management teams were pilot tested. Participants (N = 100) for the pilot test study viewed a picture (a public domain, royalty free photo from the Microsoft Office online gallery) of a person, followed by several questions asking about the photographed individual's perceived age, intelligence, professionalism, friendliness, and attractiveness. This process of rating a picture on the five dimensions was repeated for 40 (i.e., 10 each for Black women, Black men, White women, and White men) pictures. For the management teams, participants viewed individual pictures (public domain, royalty free photos from the Microsoft Office online gallery) grouped together to represent a "team." The participants were asked to consider the group as a whole in rating its perceived average age, gender and racial balance, managerial level realism, and overall diversity. This was repeated for six (i.e., two for each management level) picture groupings. The numbers of people in each team differed by managerial level. The entry-, middle-, and upper- level management teams had 21, 15, and 10 people, respectively.

### *Results*

*Applicant Photos.* The pictures and associated data were organized by similarity into 12 four-person groups based on a general inspection of the descriptive statistics. Subsequently, the 12 groups were analyzed using ANOVA to determine if there were any significant differences. Based on these analyses, four photos were selected that were the most similar to one another on the five dimensions. The photos selected did not differ

significantly on the age dimension. However, they did differ in terms of statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ) on the Intelligence dimension ( $\eta_p^2 = .092$ ). Likewise, the difference on the Professionalism dimension was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ;  $\eta_p^2 = .060$ ). The photos also differed statistically for Friendliness ( $p = .003$ ;  $\eta_p^2 = .036$ ) and Attractiveness ( $p = .002$ ;  $\eta_p^2 = .039$ ). Given the large sample size, the significant differences were not considered to be practically significant. Therefore, despite some findings of statistical significance, four photos were selected for use as the fictitious job applicants' profile pictures, as shown in Appendix B. The specific means for the selected photos are shown below in Table 2.

Table 2. Means for Selected Job Applicant Photos

	Intelligence	Professionalism	Friendliness	Attractiveness	Age
Black Female	2.89	2.68	2.98	2.87	2.16
Black Male	2.74	2.52	3.15	2.88	2.20
White Female	2.77	2.44	3.04	2.54	2.21
White Male	2.39	2.23	3.24	2.85	2.03

*Team Photos.* The six groups were 1 - Balanced Upper Management, 2 - Less-than-Proportional (LTP) Upper Management, 3 - Balanced Middle Management, 4 - LTP Middle Management, 5 - Balanced Entry-level Management, and 6 - LTP Entry-level management. The teams are shown in Appendices C, D, and E. It is important to note that participants only saw the group numbers, not the descriptive titles of the groups. They were each rated on five dimensions: average age, gender balance, racial balance, realism

for particular (i.e., entry, middle, or upper) management level, and overall diversity.

The scale for average age was (1) 20-29, (2) 30-39, (3) 40-49, (4) 50 or older. Ideally, the groups would not be perceived as different on this dimension; however, the ratings indicated that this was not the case. Groups 1 and 2 differed ( $p < .001$ ) on this dimension. Specifically, Group 2 ( $M_{\text{age}} = 3.79$ ), the LTP Upper management group, was perceived as being older than Group 1 ( $M_{\text{age}} = 3.24$ ), the Balanced Upper management group. Groups 3 and 4 also differed ( $p < .001$ ) on Average Age. Group 3 ( $M_{\text{age}} = 1.49$ ), the Balanced Middle management group, was perceived as being older than Group 4 ( $M_{\text{age}} = 1.12$ ), the LTP Middle management group. Groups 5 and 6, the entry-level management teams, did not differ on the Average Age dimension. For Groups 1 and 2 and Groups 3 and 4, adjustments to the photo sets were made so that the groups' average ages would be seen as more similar.

The Gender Balance scale was: 1 – More men than women, 2 – Equal numbers of men and women, and 3 – More women than men. Groups 1 and 2, the upper-level managers, differed ( $p < .001$ ) on this scale. For the upper-level managers, the Balanced team was rated higher ( $M_{\text{GenBal}} = 1.94$ ) than the LTP team ( $M_{\text{GenBal}} = 1.08$ ), suggesting that participants saw the Balanced group as nearly equal in numbers of men and women and the LTP group as having more men than women. The entry-level managers, Groups 5 and 6, also differed ( $p < .001$ ) on the Gender Balance scale. The Balanced team ( $M_{\text{GenBal}} = 2.01$ ) was rated as approximately equal in numbers of men and women, whereas the LTP team was rated as having more men than women ( $M_{\text{GenBal}} = 1.25$ ). Groups 3 and 4

did not differ on the Gender Balance scale. Modifications were made to the Groups 3 and 4 to strengthen the distinction between them as Balanced vs. LTP.

The scale for Racial Balance was: 1 – More minorities than non-minorities, 2 – Equal numbers of minorities and non-minorities, and 3 – More non-minorities than minorities. The ratings of Racial Balance differed in the expected pattern ( $p < .001$ ) between groups at each management level. The rating ( $M_{\text{RaceBal}} = 1.76$ ) for the Balanced upper management team (Group 1) indicated that participants viewed it as almost racially equal, whereas the LTP Upper management team (Group 2) was perceived as having more non-minorities than minorities ( $M_{\text{RaceBal}} = 2.93$ ). Likewise, Group 3 – Balanced middle management team had an average rating of 2.24, indicating that participants saw it as mostly balanced, perhaps with slightly more non-minorities than minorities. Alternatively, Group 4 – LTP middle management team was rated 2.85, suggesting participants viewed it as more heavily comprised of non-minorities than minorities. Groups 5 and 6, the entry-level management teams, were rated as 1.82 and 2.72, respectively. Therefore, these groups' ratings were in a similar pattern as those discussed above.

The Realism item questioned how realistic participants thought the featured management team was for the managerial level that was reported (e.g., if they were shown the balanced upper management team, they were asked how realistic that team was for upper management). The response options were 1 – Very unrealistic, 2 – Unrealistic, 3 – Realistic, and 4 – Very Realistic. Groups 1 and 2 differed ( $p < .001$ ) in terms of perceived realism for upper management, with Group 2 (LTP) being rated as

more realistic ( $M_{\text{Real}} = 3.48$ ) than Group 1 (Balanced;  $M_{\text{Real}} = 3.09$ ). The size of this effect ( $\eta_p^2$ ) was .068, and the means were, arguable, in the appropriate pattern. Similarly, Groups 3 and 4 differed ( $p < .01$ ) on Realism, with  $\eta_p^2 = .036$ . Opposite of the pattern seen for Groups 1 and 2, however, Group 3 (Balanced) was rated as more realistic for middle management ( $M_{\text{Real}} = 2.87$ ) than Group 4 (LTP;  $M_{\text{Real}} = 2.62$ ). The entry-level management teams did not differ on the Realism dimension.

The fifth scale pertained to the overall diversity of each management team, with response options of 1 – not diverse, 2 – somewhat diverse, or 3 – Very diverse. The groups at each management level differed ( $p < .001$ ) on this dimension. All of the “Balanced” groups were rated as ranging between “somewhat” and “very diverse” ( $M_{\text{Grp1Div}} = 2.56$ ;  $M_{\text{Grp3Div}} = 2.16$ ;  $M_{\text{Grp5Div}} = 2.40$ ). Oppositely, all of the “LTP” groups were rated as ranging between “not” and “somewhat diverse” ( $M_{\text{Grp2Div}} = 1.18$ ;  $M_{\text{Grp4Div}} = 1.61$ ;  $M_{\text{Grp6Div}} = 1.63$ ).

### *Summary*

The results of the pilot test analyses suggest that the applicant photos selected were practically equivalent in terms of the applicant’s perceived age, intelligence, and professionalism. It was not expected that perceived friendliness or attractiveness would override these important characteristics. Also, the results support the strength of the racial/ethnic and gender representation manipulations, as evident from the findings on the group photos. The patterns observed for gender balance, racial balance, and overall diversity were the ones expected for both the Balanced and LTP groups. Necessary

modifications were made to correct for the differences in age. Overall, these analyses contributed to a greater confidence in the results of the actual study.



## CHAPTER NINE

### Results

#### *Multivariate Outlier Analysis*

All data were analyzed using version 17.0 of the SPSS software program. As a preliminary step, multivariate outlier analyses were performed by calculating Cook's *d* for each dependent variable. Basic scatterplots of Cook's *d* by Observation Number were used to visually inspect the data points. Based on examination of the scatterplots, using leverage and discrepancy as discriminating criteria, the specific observation numbers corresponding to outlying data points were identified and selected for elimination from analyses. The exclusion of these data resulted in 1 – 3 cases being eliminated per dependent variable. Therefore, the sample size ranged from 361 to 358 (depending on the number of outliers) for the various analyses.

#### *MANOVA vs. ANOVA*

Pearson correlations were calculated between the dependent variables of entry-, middle-, and upper-level management suitability ratings. Low-to-moderate correlations were observed between these variables, as presented in Table 3. Because Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) is most appropriate when *all* DVs are highly negatively correlated or moderately correlated in either direction (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001), univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) or Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were deemed more appropriate for the analyses.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix for Main Dependent Variables

		Entry	Middle	Upper
Entry	Pearson Correlation	1	.440	-.047
	Sig. (2-tailed)	---	.000	.373
	N	358	358	358
Middle	Pearson Correlation	.440	1	.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	---	.000
	N	358	361	361
Upper	Pearson Correlation	-.047	.204	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.373	.000	---
	N	358	361	361

*Overview of Analyses*

Bivariate correlational analyses were performed to determine the strength/significance of the relation between potential covariates and the dependent variables. The analyses indicated a significant positive relationship between entry-level suitability ratings and participant age,  $r(357) = .201, p < .001$ , and between entry-level suitability ratings and participant management experience,  $r(357) = .144, p = .006$ . Middle-level suitability ratings and participant gender were also significantly correlated,  $r(359) = .122, p < .021$ , in that women tended to give higher ratings than men. There was also a significant positive relationship between upper-level suitability ratings and participant gender,  $r(359) = .125, p < .018$ , as well as between upper-level suitability ratings and participant age,  $r(359) = -.114, p < .030$ . Again, in regards to participant gender, women gave higher ratings than men for upper-level suitability. Ultimately,

because the correlation between them was the strongest, only participant age was included in analyses as a covariate for entry-level suitability ratings. This conservative decision was made to avoid unnecessarily using degrees of freedom.

Therefore, for the middle- and upper-level suitability ratings dependent variables, 2 x 2 x 2 ANOVAs were used to analyze the data. Alternatively, for entry-level suitability ratings as the dependent variable, a 2 x 2 x 2 ANCOVA was performed. In order to more directly test the hypotheses, planned contrasts/comparisons were also analyzed. For the planned contrasts, only the Black female applicants were considered in contrast to the White female and Black male applicants. The White male applicant was not considered in the planned contrasts because the hypotheses did not directly predict how the Black female applicants would be rated in comparison to the White male applicants. For the entry-level suitability ratings, the planned comparisons were considered in conjunction with the participant age covariate.

The alpha level for the analyses (e.g., ANOVA or ANCOVA) was set at .10. This value, albeit a departure from the traditional .05 level, was deemed appropriate because of the tests of higher order interactions. According to Liakhovitski, Stone-Romero, and Jaccard (2008), increasing the alpha level is an acceptable strategy for increasing the power to detect the presence of higher order interactions.

#### *Entry-level Suitability*

A univariate ANCOVA was performed to test the effect of Gender, Race, and Composition on entry-level management suitability ratings, controlling for participant

age. As shown in Table 4, this resulted in a significant effect of Composition,  $F(1, 345) = 5.702, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .016$ , with applicants in the Balanced organization receiving higher ratings than those in the LTP organization. Respectively, the means were 3.31 ( $SD = .908$ ) and 3.12 ( $SD = 1.049$ ). However, this effect was clarified by the presence of a significant three-way interaction,  $F(1, 345) = 8.170, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .023$ , which is also shown in Table 4. In order to identify which mean differences were significant, post hoc analyses were necessary. Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) test revealed that among all of the pairwise comparisons, there were several significant mean differences. All means are presented in the graphs in Figure 3. For the balanced organization, the White female applicant was rated more suitable than the White male applicant ( $M_{DIFF} = .419, SE = .211$ ). In the LTP organization, the White male applicant was rated more suitable than the Black male applicant ( $M_{DIFF} = .398, SE = .200$ ). The White female applicant was rated higher in suitability in the balanced rather than the LTP organization ( $M_{DIFF} = .581, SE = .211$ ). Likewise, the Black male applicant was rated higher in suitability when the organization was balanced rather than LTP ( $M_{DIFF} = .493, SE = .203$ ). Perhaps most relevant to the present investigation was the finding that when the organizational representation was balanced, the White female applicant was rated higher in suitability than the Black female applicant ( $M_{DIFF} = .497, SE = .208$ ). This particular finding partially supports the first hypothesis that the Black woman would have a double disadvantage (i.e., receive *lower* suitability ratings than the Black man and White woman) when there was Balanced racial/gender representation. Particularly, the Black female applicant was rated lower than the White female applicant when the condition was

balanced. None of the abovementioned findings supported the second hypothesis, that the Black woman would have a double advantage (i.e., receive *higher* suitability ratings than the Black man and White woman) when there was less-than-proportional (LTP) racial/gender representation. In order to more closely examine this, planned contrasts were also considered.

#### *Contrast for Hypothesis 1*

The test of the planned comparison between Black female applicants in balanced organizations versus White female and Black male applicants in balanced organizations revealed a significant relationship,  $F(1, 126) = 5.658, p = .019, \eta_p^2 = .043$ . Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported for the entry-level management position. In balanced organizations, Black female applicants were rated lower ( $M = 3.13; SD = 1.036$ ) in suitability for entry-level management than White female applicants ( $M = 3.63; SD = .667$ ) and Black male applicants ( $M = 3.32; SD = .857$ ).

#### *Contrast for Hypothesis 2*

The test of the planned comparison between Black female applicants in LTP organizations versus White female and Black male applicants in LTP organizations showed a nonsignificant relationship,  $F(1, 134) = .593, p = .443, ns$ . Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported for the entry-level management position. In LTP organizations, Black female applicants were not rated higher in suitability ( $M = 3.15; SD$

= 1.122) for entry-level management than White female ( $M = 3.07$ ;  $SD = 1.033$ ) and Black male applicants ( $M = 2.94$ ;  $SD = 1.092$ ).

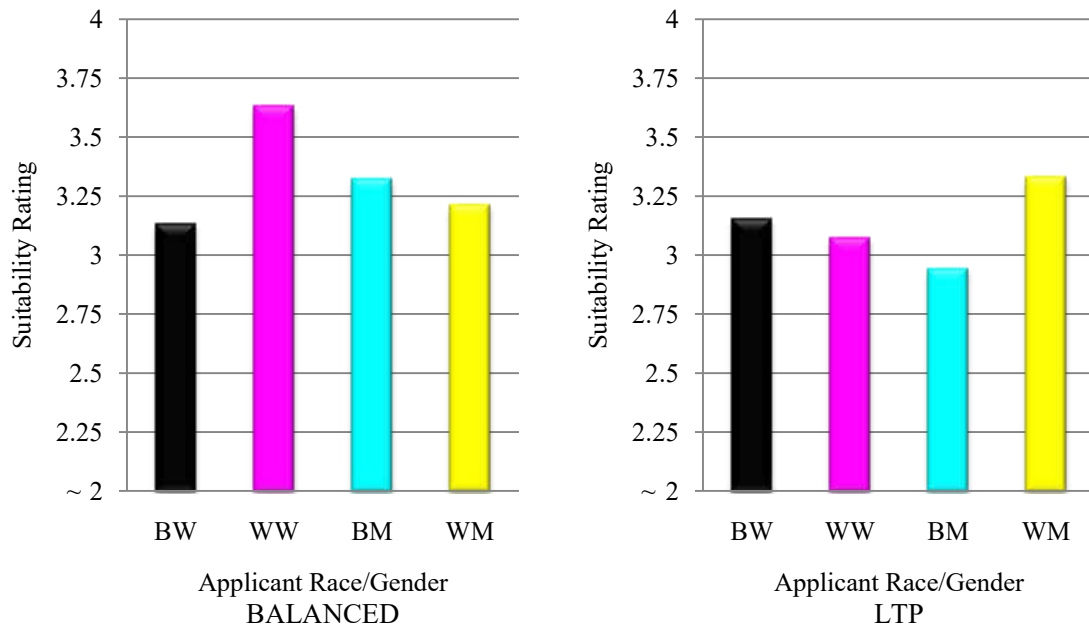


Figure 3. Suitability for Entry-level Management after Controlling for Participant Age

#### *Middle-level Suitability*

A univariate ANOVA was performed to test the effect of Gender, Race, and Composition on middle-level management suitability ratings. The result was a significant two-way interaction between Race and Composition,  $F(1, 351) = 3.136$ ,  $p = .077$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .009$  (shown in Table 4). Fisher's Least Significant Differences post hoc analysis indicated Black applicants for balanced organizations were rated lower in suitability than Black applicants for LTP organizations ( $M_{DIFF} = .216$ ,  $SE = .116$ ). Also, in balanced

organizations, Black applicants were rated lower in suitability than White applicants ( $M_{DIFF} = .225, SE = .118$ ).

The two-way interaction must be interpreted in light of the significant three-way interaction,  $F(1, 351) = 4.642, p = .032, \eta_p^2 = .013$  (shown in Table 4). Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) test revealed, as shown in Figure 4, that Black female applicants in balanced organizations were rated less suitable for mid-level management than Black female applicants in LTP organizations ( $M_{DIFF} = .338, SE = .163$ ). Also, in balanced organizations, Black female applicants were rated lower in suitability than White female applicants ( $M_{DIFF} = .370, SE = .168$ ). Again, this particular result seems to offer limited support for Hypothesis 1, but none of the findings seemed to support Hypothesis 2. In order to glean more information, planned contrasts were analyzed.

#### *Contrast for Hypothesis 1*

The value of the contrast for Hypothesis 1 for mid-level suitability,  $-.47 (SE = .287)$ , was not significant,  $t(351) = -1.625, p = .105, ns$ . Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported for the mid-level management position. For balanced organizations, Black female applicants ( $M = 3.13; SD = .934$ ) were not rated lower in suitability for middle management than White female ( $M = 3.50; SD = .634$ ) and Black male applicants ( $M = 3.23; SD = .743$ ).

*Contrast for Hypothesis 2*

The value of the contrast for Hypothesis 2 for mid-level suitability was .43 ( $SE = .283$ ), which was also not significant,  $t(351) = 1.523$ ,  $p = .129$ , *ns*. Hypothesis 2 was not supported for the mid-level management position. Therefore, Black female applicants ( $M = 3.47$ ;  $SD = .776$ ) were not rated higher in suitability than White female ( $M = 3.19$ ;  $SD = .824$ ) and Black male applicants ( $M = 3.32$ ;  $SD = .837$ ), when considering only LTP organizations.

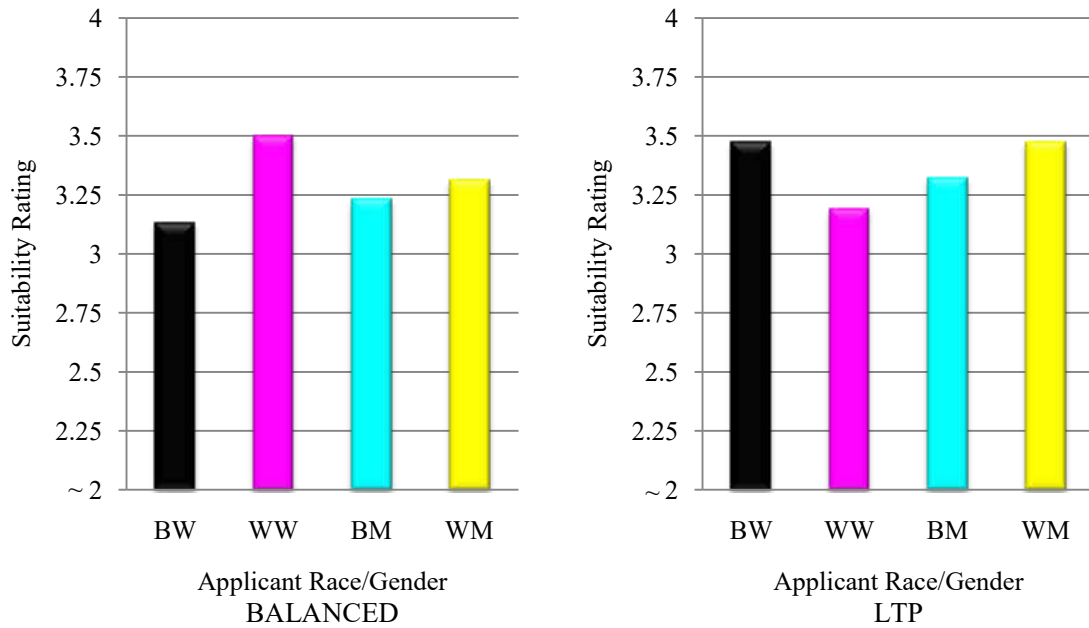


Figure 4. Suitability for Middle-level Management



### *Upper-level Suitability*

A univariate ANOVA was performed to test the effect of Gender, Race, and Composition on ratings of applicants' upper-level management suitability. The analysis revealed a significant effect of Composition,  $F(1, 352) = 4.768, p = .030, \eta_p^2 = .013$  (shown in Table 4). Applicants were rated as more suitable for the upper-level management position when the Composition was LTP ( $M = 2.83, SD = .868$ ) versus Balanced ( $M = 2.63; SD = .885$ ). However, considering the planned contrasts provided a more direct test of the hypotheses, as well as more information.

#### *Contrast for Hypothesis 1*

The value of the contrast for Hypothesis 1 for upper-level suitability was .36 ( $SE = .340$ ), which was not significant,  $t(83.845) = 1.061, p = .292, ns$ . Consequently, Hypothesis 1 was not supported for the upper-level management position. In balanced organizations, Black female applicants ( $M = 2.78; SD = .964$ ) were not rated lower in suitability for upper-level management than White female ( $M = 2.73; SD = .845$ ) and Black male ( $M = 2.48; SD = .902$ ) applicants.

#### *Contrast for Hypothesis 2*

The value of the contrast for Hypothesis 2 for upper-level suitability, .48 ( $SE = .259$ ), was significant,  $t(124.041) = 1.843, p = .068$ . Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported for the upper-level management position. For LTP organizations, Black female applicants

( $M = 3.00$ ;  $SD = .596$ ) were rated higher in upper management suitability than White female ( $M = 2.65$ ;  $SD = .897$ ) applicants and Black male applicants ( $M = 2.87$ ;  $SD = .900$ ). This is presented as a graph below in Figure 5.

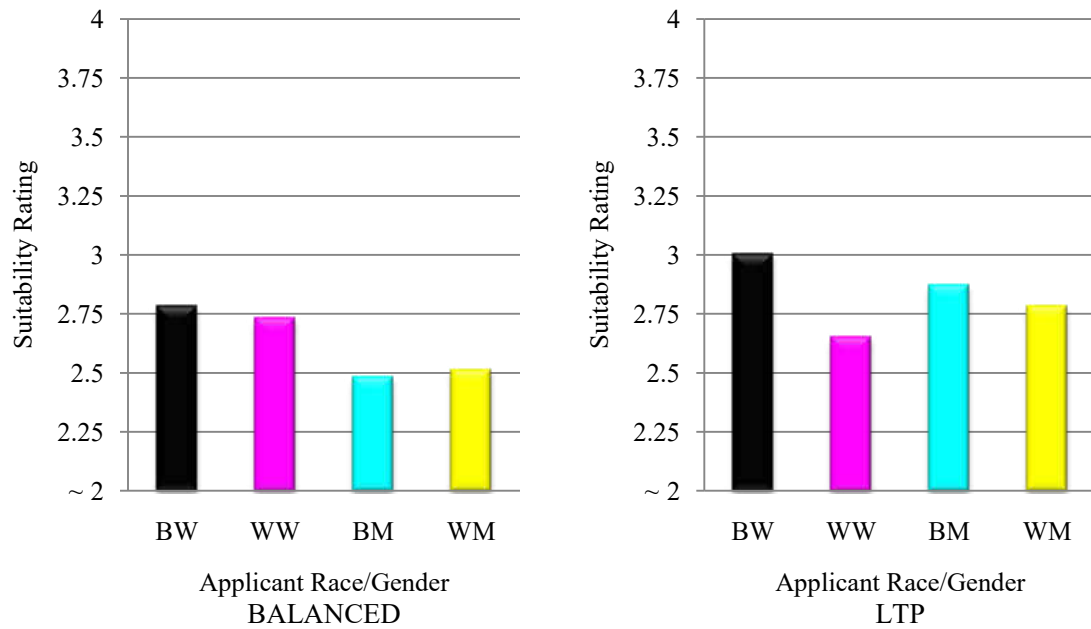


Figure 5. Suitability for Upper-level Management

Table 4. ANOVA Table for Main Dependent Variables

<b>Entry-level Suitability</b>						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	$\eta_p^2$
Corrected Model	26.759	8	3.345	3.641	.000	.078
Intercept	82.124	1	82.124	89.400	.000	.206
Participant Age	13.869	1	13.869	15.097	.000	.042
Sex	.050	1	.050	.055	.815	.000
Race	2.130	1	2.130	2.318	.129	.007
Composition	5.238	1	5.238	5.702	.017*	.016
Sex*Race	.260	1	.260	.283	.595	.001
Sex*Composition	.209	1	.209	.228	.633	.001
Race*Composition	.002	1	.002	.002	.962	.000
Sex*Race*Composition	7.505	1	7.505	8.170	.005*	.023
Error	316.925	345	.919			
Total	4002.000	354				
Corrected Total	343.684	353				
<b>Middle-level Suitability</b>						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	$\eta_p^2$
Corrected Model	6.153	7	.879	1.424	.194	.028
Intercept	3965.882	1	3965.882	6423.277	.000	.948
Sex	.009	1	.009	.014	.905	.000
Race	.570	1	.570	.923	.337	.003
Composition	.412	1	.412	.667	.415	.002
Sex*Race	.116	1	.116	.188	.665	.001
Sex*Composition	.280	1	.280	.454	.501	.001
Race*Composition	1.936	1	1.936	3.136	.077	.009
Sex*Race*Composition	2.866	1	2.866	4.642	.032*	.013
Error	216.716	351	.617			
Total	4194.000	359				
Corrected Total	222.869	358				
<b>Upper-level Suitability</b>						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	$\eta_p^2$
Corrected Model	9.768	7	1.395	1.836	.079	.035
Intercept	2671.132	1	2671.132	3514.197	.000	.909
Sex	1.535	1	1.535	2.019	.156	.006
Race	1.215	1	1.215	1.598	.207	.005
Composition	3.625	1	3.625	4.768	.030*	.013
Sex*Race	.663	1	.663	.872	.351	.002
Sex*Composition	1.523	1	1.523	2.003	.158	.006
Race*Composition	1.001	1	1.001	1.316	.252	.004
Sex*Race*Composition	.153	1	.153	.202	.654	.001
Error	267.554	352	.760			
Total	2956.000	360				
Corrected Total	277.322	359				

### *Exploratory Analyses*

Exploratory analyses were performed on other dependent variables, such as applicant professionalism and general managerial qualifications. Ratings of perceived organizational diversity and hiring fairness were also analyzed. As with the main dependent variables of entry-, middle- and upper-level suitability ratings, multivariate outliers were removed as needed for each of the abovementioned dependent variables. One to three cases were deleted for each of the variables discussed below, with the exception of Professionalism, for which none were removed.

#### *Professionalism*

With ratings of applicant professionalism as the dependent variable, an ANOVA revealed no significant impact of the independent variables of Gender, Race, and Composition. That is, regardless of their gender or race or the organizational composition, applicants were not rated differently on professionalism. However, as presented below, these nonsignificant findings are in contrast to the results for the other variables.

#### *Qualifications*

An ANOVA was performed in which Gender, Race, and Composition were the independent variables and the rating of applicant “qualifications for any management position” was the dependent variable. The results showed a significant Gender by Race

interaction,  $F(1, 350) = 2.835, p = .093, \eta_p^2 = .008$ . Seemingly, the largest difference was between Black female and Black male applicants, with means and standard deviations of 3.45 (.747) and 3.29 (.704), respectively. However, closer inspection of the Gender\*Race interaction via post hoc analyses did not reveal any significant differences amongst the means.

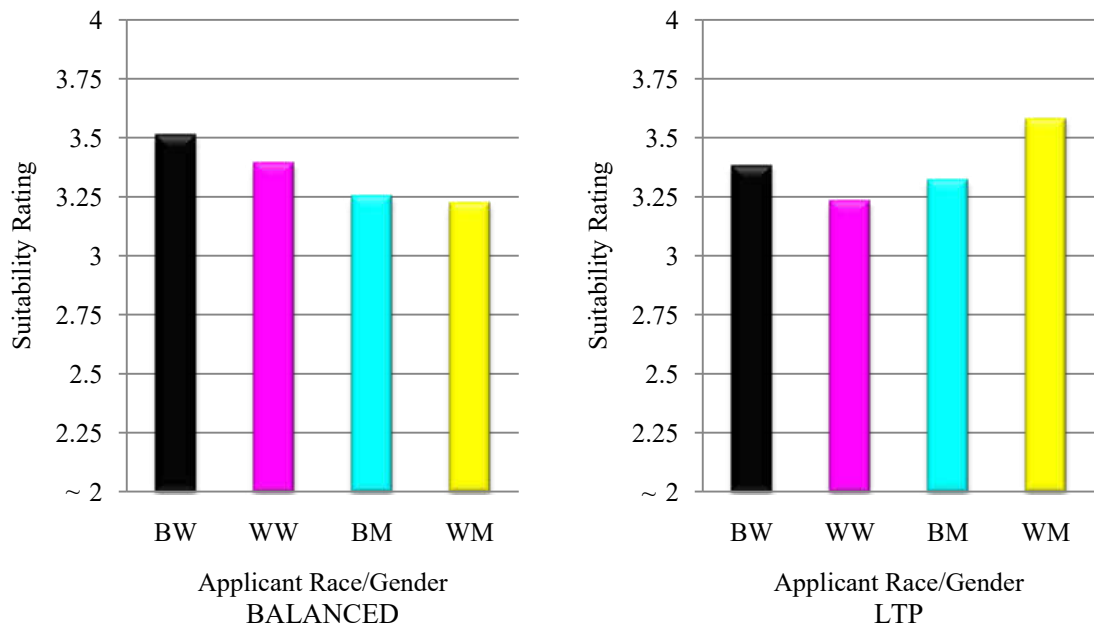


Figure 6. Ratings of Managerial Qualifications

With Qualifications as the dependent variable, there was also a significant Gender by Composition interaction,  $F(1, 350) = 5.507, p = .020, \eta_p^2 = .015$ . The means are shown in Figure 6. Fisher's Least Significant Difference test showed that, for balanced organizations, women ( $M = 3.45; SD = .707$ ) were rated as more qualified for management than men ( $M = 3.24; SD = .658$ ). The mean difference of .213 ( $SE = .107$ )

was significant at  $p = .048$ . Moreover, male applicants to LTP organizations ( $M = 3.44$ ;  $SD = .655$ ) were rated more qualified for management than male applicants to balanced organizations. The mean difference of .208 ( $SE = .107$ ) was significant at  $p = .052$ .

### *Fairness*

A univariate ANOVA tested the effect of Gender, Race, and Composition on perceptions of the organization's hiring fairness. As presented in Figure 7, the results showed a significant Gender\*Race\*Composition interaction,  $F(1, 350) = 3.548$ ,  $p = .060$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .010$ . Fisher's Least Significant Difference test indicated that participants rated an organization's hiring practices as fairer when the organization was balanced and the applicant was a White female versus when the organization was balanced and the applicant was Black male ( $M_{DIFF} = .227$ ,  $SE = .110$ ). Similarly, organization's hiring practices were rated fairer when the organization was balanced and the applicant was a White female as opposed to when the organization was less-than-proportional and the applicant was a Black male ( $M_{DIFF} = .219$ ,  $SE = .108$ ).

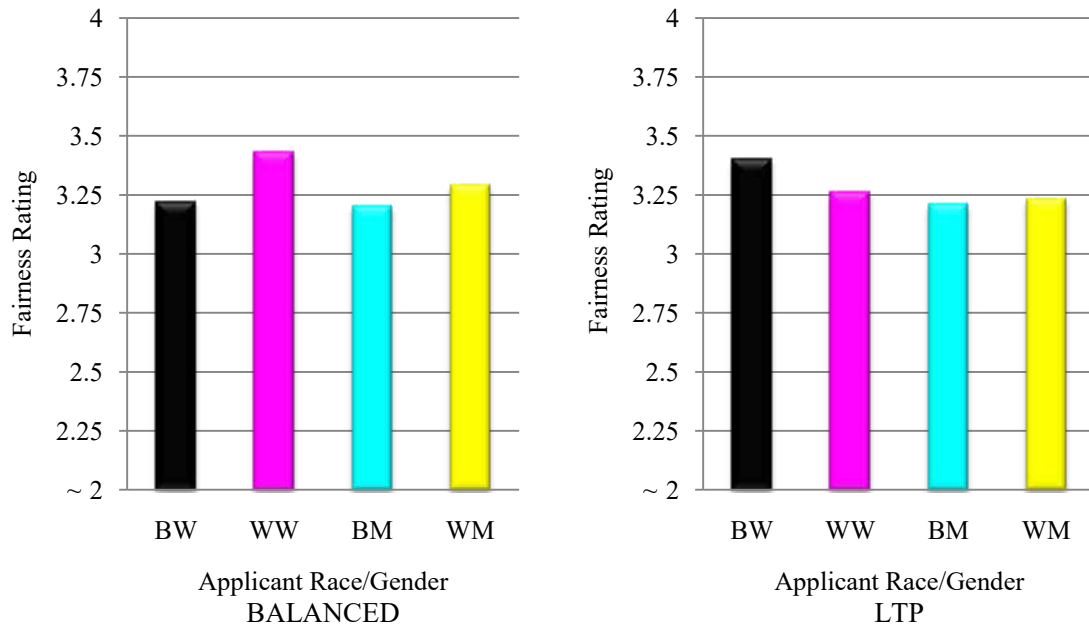


Figure 7. Ratings of Organizational Hiring Fairness

### *Diversity*

Finally, an ANOVA was also performed in which organizational diversity was the dependent variable, and Gender, Race, and Composition were the independent variables. Expectedly, the results showed a significant effect of Composition,  $F(1, 350) = 43.562, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .111$ , with balanced organizations appearing more diverse than LTP organizations. However, a three-way interaction among Gender, Race, and Composition,  $F(1, 350) = 3.514, p = .062, \eta_p^2 = .010$ , expounded upon that main effect. Scheffé post hoc analyses indicated that, when shown LTP organizations and White female applicants, participants rated organizations lower in diversity than when shown balanced organizations and White female ( $M_{DIFF} = .442, SE = .112$ ) or Black male ( $M_{DIFF} = .449, SE = .112$ ) applicants. Likewise, organizations were rated lower in diversity when the

organization was less-than-proportional and the applicant was a White male versus when the organization was balanced and the applicant was a White female ( $M_{DIFF} = .452$ ,  $SE = .111$ ) or Black male ( $M_{DIFF} = .460$ ,  $SE = .110$ ). Organizations were also rated lower in diversity when they were less-than-proportional with a Black male applicant, as opposed to balanced with a Black male ( $M_{DIFF} = .490$ ,  $SE = .109$ ) or White female ( $M_{DIFF} = .483$ ,  $SE = .110$ ) applicant. The means are presented in Figure 8.

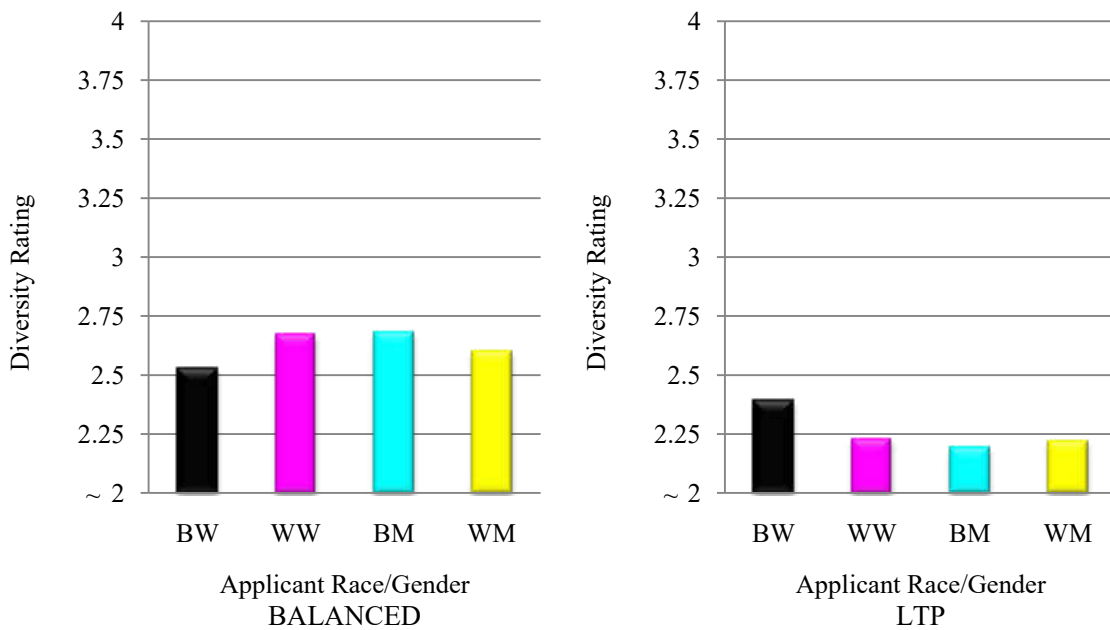


Figure 8. Ratings of Organizational Diversity



## CHAPTER TEN

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand, and possibly clarify, the conflicting findings of Black women as doubly advantaged or doubly disadvantaged in workplace contexts. Guided by the Critical Race Feminism tenet of intersectionality, the study focused primarily on the intersection of applicant race and applicant sex (e.g., Black women). This focus was contextualized by Cox's (1994) Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD), in the manipulation of the hypothesized moderator, organizational race/sex composition, and the measurement of suitability ratings for different managerial levels. The research on crossed categorization (e.g., Crisp, 2002) guided the development of the hypotheses.

Importantly, the present study demonstrated that whether Black women are at a double advantage or a double disadvantage is partially contingent upon the composition of the organization. That is, organizational composition was found to be a moderator of the relationship between applicant race/sex and employment outcomes, e.g., job suitability ratings. The following paragraphs expound upon this finding, giving particular attention to the crossed categorization research for possible explanations.

### *Balanced Organizations*

The first hypothesis, positing the Black female applicant's double disadvantage in balanced organizations, was partially supported. When the organization was race- and gender-balanced, the Black female applicant was at a double disadvantage for the entry-level management position. That is, she was rated lower in suitability than the Black male and White female applicants. The Black female applicant was also rated lower than the White female applicant for mid-level management in balanced organizations, partially supporting the hypothesis. This suggests a disadvantage, albeit less pronounced than for the entry-level position.

These findings lend credence to predictions based on the crossed-categorization research. That is, it appears that participants might have considered White women (and, to a lesser extent, Black men) as mixed-group members, sharing one of the salient attributes of the "typical" manager. Likewise, they might have also considered Black women to be double out-group members—twice removed from the implicit "White male as manager" standard. There seems to be support at the entry-level for the additive pattern (with reference to the mixed-group and double out-group members). That is, it is possible that the groups "most similar" to the manager stereotype, based on race/sex categorizations, were preferred to the group least similar, demographically, to that stereotype.

The results for entry-level are also fairly consistent with that of Crow et al. (1998) who found that heterosexual White women were rated the most suitable for an accounting

job, followed by heterosexual Black women, Black men, and White men, in that order. Likewise, Powell and Butterfield (2002) found that Black women were not preferred over White women for promotion and selection decisions. Similarly, in this study, the White female applicant was preferred over the Black female (and White male) applicants for the entry-level position in the balanced organization. In contrast, whereas the research of Powell and Butterfield (2002), Shih (2002), and Hosoda et al. (2003), revealed a preference for Black women over Black men, in the present study this preference was not found in balanced organizations.

One possible perspective is that the preference for the White female applicant for the entry-level position is not necessarily positive for the White woman (and, by contrast, not necessarily negative for the Black woman). Even though a managerial position, the entry-level management job was still the lowest position for the organization in this study. Moreover, arguably, the entry-level position was a managerial position in name only. This would suggest that the finding is consistent with Cohn (2004) who found that White women were generally relegated to the lowest levels in organizations. However, the more advanced qualifications required for middle management and the inclusion of actual oversight of other employees demonstrates that the middle-level position was not “management in name only.” Still, in balanced organizations, the White female applicant was preferred over the Black female applicant for the mid-level job. This suggests that the White female applicant might not have been considered more suitable for the entry- and middle-level positions in balanced organizations just because they lacked status and/or power, i.e., were not actually management positions. There was probably more

under consideration than just relegating the White woman to the lowest levels in the organization. Braddock et al. (1985), in explaining some of their results, offered an explanation that is also helpful in understanding the abovementioned preference of the White female applicant (as opposed to the Black female applicant) found in the present study. They stated,

...an employer presented with a white woman may see this as an opportunity to move a minority (woman) candidate into a low- or middle-management position previously held by a white male; he has no additional incentive to bring a black woman into that position, so there is nothing to offset any resistance to doing so (p. 31).

This view might have been manifested in an even more pronounced way in the current study. In considering the entry- and middle-level positions in the balanced organizations—when there was already considerable diversity in the organization—there might have been little motivation to add to the racial diversity by selecting the Black woman. This might have contributed to the development of, or acted in confluence with, a perception of the White female applicant as a better fit for the balanced organization. In general, it is also indicative of the possibility that the shared categorization between White men and White women contributed to the White female applicant being perceived as more suitable.

In addition to loosely supporting what one might predict based on the categorizations research, the findings also illustrate that the pre-employment experiences of Black women cannot be assumed to be equivalent to those of Black men or White women (although it also cannot be assumed that all Black women's experiences are the same). The perceptions that people have of Black men, as they pertain to work, are not

necessarily indicative of the perceptions those same people have of Black women. Likewise, perceptions of White women and work, quite likely, differ considerably from perceptions of Black women and work. As expressed by Sanchez-Hucles (1997), the stereotypes of Black women are not necessarily the same as those of White women, which is another factor that might explain their difference in suitability ratings. Although this study did not directly measure participants' stereotypes of any particular group or applicant, one can suppose that there were complex underlying reasons why the applicants, despite identical qualifications, were not seen as equally suitable for all management positions. The difference in suitability between the Black applicants and the White female applicant seems consistent with the current, apparent anti-diversity sentiment in the U.S., in which increasing racial/ethnic diversity in the workforce and workplace is often attacked as being indicative of "reverse discrimination," whereas increasing gender equality is not currently as vehemently or, at least, as vocally opposed.

Interestingly, in balanced organizations, the White male applicant was not the most preferred. This seems to negate the preference in the additive pattern associated with his presumed double in-group status (i.e.,  $II > IO-OI > OO$ ). Conversely, this is likely indicative of a different cognitive process that took place when the participants saw such an atypical (in terms of diversity) organization; rather than altering their stereotype of the "typical manager," the participants' perception of the value of the position changed. Generally, as positions become more diverse (usually in reference to increasing gender equality, but likely also applicable to increasing racial diversity) the status of the position is perceived as lower (Cohn, 2000). This would explain why, in the balanced

organization, the White male applicant was rated lower in suitability for entry-level management than the White female applicant and why he was rated higher in suitability for entry-level management in the LTP organization than in the balanced organization. Perhaps, he was not perceived as an adequate fit for the position in the balanced organization because its status was ostensibly too low.

### *Less-than-Proportional (LTP) Organizations*

The second hypothesis, of the Black female applicant's double advantage in less-than-proportional organizations, was also partially supported. In the LTP organization, the Black female applicant was rated more suitable than the Black male and White female applicants for upper-level management. That is, she appeared to have a double advantage. Furthermore, for middle management, the Black female applicant was rated more suitable when the organization was less-than-proportional rather than balanced. These results seem to support the supposition that, given an obvious lack of diversity, participants would be more inclined to counter their stereotype of a typical manager and act in a manner contrary to the additive pattern (by preferring the individual most demographically dissimilar from the stereotype). That is, it seems that participants preferred Black women (i.e., the double out-group members) to Black men and White women (i.e., mixed-group members) when the organization was less-than-proportional, albeit only for upper management.

The Black female applicant's double advantage for upper-level management in the LTP organization partially supports Hosoda et al. (2003), in their finding that Black

women were selected over White women and Black men for the high cognitive demand job (to the extent that the upper-level management job in the current study could be considered a high cognitive demand job). The double advantage in the current study also somewhat supports Powell and Butterfield (2002) who found that all of the Black women under consideration for promotions were recommended and actually selected for the upper-level positions in the organization (though selected more than Black men, but not more than White women). The finding of double advantage for the Black female applicant in the LTP organization also seems to support the tokenism research, while also demonstrating that the tokenism phenomenon is likely not race- or gender-neutral. Thus, although upper management has higher status and more formal power, if the organization (or that particular level) is less-than-proportional, Black women are still apt to experience the problems associated with tokenism (e.g., visibility, polarization, assimilation).

In contrast to the studies above, the findings in the present study for upper-level management seem to contradict McRae's (1994) assertion that the notion of "manager as masculine" expands across racial lines. From the present study, it appears that this notion might vary by sex and management level. Consistent with Powell and Butterfield (2002) and Shih (2002), if the organization is less-than-proportional, it seems that Black women are more likely than Black men to be perceived as upper management material. However, this finding of a seeming preference for Black women over Black men is inconsistent with Braddock et al. (1985) who asserted that such a preference was possibly only true for high-school graduates (i.e., not college graduates). Regarding the female applicants, the results of the current study also contradict research findings that, among women with

college degrees, White women are at an advantage over Black women in terms of being placed into higher paying, higher status jobs (Braddock et al., 1985).

Interestingly, research has shown that some of the stereotypes of Black women are more akin to stereotypes of White men than they are to stereotypes of Black men or White women (Dorio & Fritzsche, 2004). It is possible that such stereotyping manifested itself in a seemingly positive way for the Black female applicant, in terms of the upper management position in LTP organizations. That is, the Black woman might have been rated more suitable, given that she could provide the characteristics of a “good manager” while simultaneously increasing diversity (without actually compromising the power and influence of the majority group).

### *Limitations*

There are several limitations to the study that warrant mention. These limitations are discussed in detail below and are organized by the topic areas of a) measures, b) manipulations, and c) generalizability.

### *Measures*

*Power Distribution.* One possible limitation concerns the operational definition of “participation in the organizational power structure,” one of the dimensions along which the IMCD structural integration variable can be assessed (Cox, 1994). In the study, the differentiations in power were thought to be reflected in the job descriptions and



emphasized by having participants rate the applicants' suitability for the management positions at the three different hierarchical levels. However, it is possible that these measures were not truly representative of organizational power and how diversity can be distributed differently across the organizational power structure. Furthermore, it is questionable whether maintaining the same organizational representation across the management levels was a faithful translation of the analysis by organizational level or the interlevel gap analysis (i.e., comparing hierarchical levels in an organization to examine who holds formal power; Cox, 1994).

*Mono-Method Bias.* It is possible that mono-method bias (Cook & Campbell, 1979) was a problem in the present study, given the lack of variety in measurement method. In the study, each comprehension item and suitability rating was presented in a "radio button" form and most had four response options. In terms of the suitability ratings, the response options were also presented with similar wording. This means there was possibly a problem in which, "the method is itself an irrelevancy whose influence cannot be dissociated from the influence of the target construct" (Cook & Campbell, 1979, p. 66).

*Single-item Suitability Measure.* In this study, applicant suitability was measured for each position using one item: "How suitable do you think the applicant is for this position?" This is potentially problematic, in that single-item measures are often criticized as being unreliable and inadequate for capturing multi-dimensional constructs. However some researchers argue that

"a single-item measure is sufficient if the construct is such that in the minds of raters (e.g., respondents in a survey), (1) the object of the construct is "concrete

singular,” meaning that it consists of one object that is easily and uniformly imagined, and (2) the attribute of the construct is “concrete,” again meaning that it is easily and uniformly imagined” (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007, p. 176).

In the current study, the “object” in question was the job applicant, and the attribute of interest was the applicant’s suitability, in general, for the specified management position. In this sense, the measure was of a “doubly concrete” construct (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007). Therefore, it is likely that the single-item measure of suitability was sufficient for the purposes of the study.

*“Ranking” Item.* Participants were asked, “Which position is the applicant MOST suited for?” and “Which position is the applicant LEAST suited for?” In addition to their ungrammatical structure, it is likely that these items were also too general. That is, although the items were intended to cause participants to make a definitive choice based on their perceptions of the applicant’s suitability (to serve as a proxy for placement decisions), the wording of the items was not precise enough to render or reveal any differences.

### *Manipulations*

*Composition.* The operational definition of group/organizational composition, which was based on the IMCD overall employee profile variable, is also possibly problematic. In the study, the organizational representation (i.e., composition) manipulation was intended to reflect the overall employee profile construct. Cox (1994) described overall employee profile as a dimension along which structural integration is measured. In actual organizations, it is common for the composition of the groups at the

various hierarchical levels to vary. For example, lower levels tend to be more diverse, and upper levels tend to be more homogeneous. This is problematic for this study because holding the demographic composition constant across all levels of the organization does not necessarily offer a complete representation of the construct, as described by Cox (1994), nor does it reflect the way in which diversity is often distributed in organizations outside of laboratory settings.

*Applicant Photos.* The photos used to manipulate applicant race and applicant sex also present a potential problem for the study. Because only one photo was used for each applicant, that photo served as the only exemplar of each race-sex combination (e.g., one Black woman, one White man). Therefore, the photo, itself, was arguably confounded with race and sex, such that participants might have been responding to the particularities of the individuals in the photo, rather than the particular race-sex combinations (e.g., Black women, in general or White men, in general).

Another issue with the applicant photos is their apparent difference at the outset (i.e., based on the pilot study results), to which some might attribute the findings. It is important to note that the applicants, based on the photos, were all seen as the same age. Also, despite differences in professionalism for the pilot study, there were no differences in perceived professionalism in the actual experiment. The large pilot study sample size (N = 100) likely contributed to statistically significant differences on the other variables that were not of practical importance. Furthermore, the pattern of differences observed for the photos does not match the pattern one would expect for the results (if the results were truly attributable to differences at the outset).

*Team Photos.* One glaring issue in the study is the perceived difference in age for the upper-level management teams versus the entry- and middle-level management teams. Based on pilot study data, it is evident that the upper-level management team members were seen as approximately 40-49 years old, whereas those for the entry- and middle-level were all seen as about 20-29 years old. Moreover, most participants (n = 298) perceived the applicants as being about 20-29 years of age. Therefore, it seems that participants might not have seen any of the applicants as truly suitable for upper level management due to their age, at least not as suitable as they were for entry- and middle-level management. This suggests a possible range restriction issue for the upper level management suitability ratings. Because range restriction attenuates relationships, it is possible that the findings would have been more pronounced for upper-level management had this not been an issue.

### *Generalizability*

*Student Sample.* One of the most common criticisms of laboratory studies pertains to the use of student samples and their threat to generalizability; expectedly, this is a concern for the current study. It is often argued that students do not serve as adequate proxies for organizational decision makers (for whom workplace decisions can have actual consequences) due to the participants' lack of experience making employment decisions and consequences for their decisions. Admittedly, most of the students in the study were age 18-24 without much, if any, management or hiring experience. Due to their inexperience in making employment-related decisions and, perhaps without

knowledge of exactly to which information to attend, the participants instead relied on their stereotypes of others—possibly to a greater degree than others who are more experienced in that area.

Another issue is that the participants might have been unaware of the Title VII/EEOC guidelines for employment. Thus, attributing the findings to a double advantage or double disadvantage might be nominally inappropriate, given that these terms are usually used in reference to employment law and affirmative action. Also, it is uncertain how the findings would differ for those who are aware of, and held accountable for, making decisions in accordance with federal law and organizational diversity efforts.

*Lack of Realism.* In any laboratory study, there is a tradeoff made between maintaining experimental control and enhancing realism. The present study was designed to maximize experimental control, thereby facilitating proper statistical analysis. However, this likely also compromised the realism of the study. The degree to which participants were able to psychologically experience the decision-making process just as they would in actual workplace settings is questionable. Consistent with this, as mentioned in the previous section, a major problem is that there were no actual consequences for decisions made by the participants. Still, the tests of the hypotheses were based on the participants' ratings of applicant suitability for each of the management positions. Participants might have simply made one rating in relation to another (e.g., suitable for all, suitable for none) or otherwise responded haphazardly. This lack of personal/professional investment in the decisions might cause one to question the verity of the suitability ratings.

*One Applicant, Multiple Jobs.* Also connected to the problem of the lack of realism and generalizability is the atypicality of the experimental task. Especially in the job market of today, it is rather unlikely that one applicant would be considered for multiple management positions at varying hierarchical levels. Therefore, this task might not reflect the complexity of actual job screening processes.

*Management Only.* Also possibly detracting from the study realism, the jobs under consideration were restricted to management positions. It is arguably quite unlikely that one applicant (with the qualifications described on the mock professional networking profile) would be considered for management ranging from entry-level to upper-level, as these positions are vastly different in most organizations. Perhaps it is also more likely that an organization would use a staffing agency for nonmanagerial jobs or jobs at lower management levels, as opposed to upper-level management jobs.

*Black-White Analysis.* One final external validity issue is that the race of applicants was limited to Black and White. That is, to keep the manipulations to a feasible level, only Black and White applicants were considered. This “black-white dichotomy as a research focus” is seriously criticized among Critical Race Theorists and Critical Race Feminists. Furthermore, it is not realistic in an increasingly diverse workforce and does not reflect the actual applicant pool likely seen by job placement services.

*Considerations for Generalizability Issues.* The limitations to the study in terms of generalizability call into question the extent to which one could expect the same findings outside of laboratory settings. Even though this study does not provide an

unequivocal explication of the employment selection process in its entirety, it might “reflect the initial screening process used to limit the applicant pool” (Stone, Hosoda, Lukaszewski, & Phillips, 2008). Moreover, though the participants did not have considerable management or hiring experience, it is possible that they could (in only a few years) be in positions to make pre-screening decisions similar to the one in this study, albeit under possibly more complex conditions. Consequently, the findings should not simply be disregarded based on the sample or the task.

Importantly, Mook (1983) argues that generalizability (e.g., of persons or settings) is not necessarily the intended purpose of all laboratory studies. Consideration should also be given to the fact that a laboratory study can demonstrate the existence or power of a phenomenon (Mook, 1983). In that sense, understanding and possibly generalizing theory becomes the higher aim. Accordingly, this study’s contribution of providing further understanding of conditions under which Black women might be “advantaged” or “disadvantaged” and offering a possible explanation for the underlying cognitive processes, should not be overshadowed by the inability of the study to generalize to *all* organizational selection decisions. Thus, although all of the study limitations are worthy of consideration, they do not completely negate the findings, nor relegate them to file drawer obscurity. Rather, they simply offer several ideas and paths for future research in this area.

### *Study Importance*

Liakhovitski et al. (2008) detailed the complexity of detecting joint moderator variables. They explained that "...a joint moderating effect exists whenever three independent (predictor) variables interactively explain variance in the values of a dependent (criterion) variable...joint moderation entails three-way interaction effects" (p. 165). In spite of this widely known difficulty, in this study, interactive effects of applicant race, applicant sex/gender, and organizational composition on job suitability ratings were detected. Moreover, these effects were found in spite of the study limitations such that, without the limitations, the findings might be even stronger. Therein is the primary importance of this study; it offers some clarity to the arguments of double advantage and double disadvantage by showing that organizational composition is a moderator of the relationship between applicant race, applicant sex, and job suitability ratings. That is, the effect that an applicant's race and sex has on perceptions (as revealed in ratings) of their suitability for a job depends, in part, on the demographic composition of the organization. By extension, this study is also important because it proposes an explanation of the cognitive processes underlying the impact of the organizational composition moderator.



## *Scientific Contributions*

### *Double Advantage vs. Double Advantage Theories*

The primary contribution of this study is that, by identifying organizational composition as a moderator, it helps to further explain the double advantage or double disadvantage of Black women in the workplace. That is, it demonstrates that neither standpoint can adequately explain the totality of Black women's workplace experiences, given the complexity of those experiences. This adds to the extant research which suggests that the cognitive demand of the job (Hosoda et al., 2003) and the sexual orientation of the applicant (Crow et al., 1998)—likely in addition to many other factors, including organizational composition—can have an impact on how Black women are perceived and evaluated. Thus, this study adds to the relatively small body of research in the study of Black women and work and, in so doing, presents paths for further inquiry.

### *Critical Race Feminism*

The study also contributes to the field of Critical Race Feminism by offering an empirical basis for the tenets of antiessentialism and intersectionality. That is, although one can say that there is no essential “woman experience” or “Black experience,” this study adds to the body of empirical support for this claim. It also provides support for the relevance of Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Feminism to the field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

### *Cox's Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity*

Another scientific contribution of the study concerns Cox's (1994) Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity. By testing particular variables as delineated in the IMCD, this study offers additional empirical support for some of the connections in the model, while also demonstrating its continued relevance to studies on organizational diversity. Although the model in its entirety is very comprehensive and beyond the scope of this study, the study's findings do suggest that an organization's diversity climate (or, aspects of it, e.g., composition), can indeed influence an individual's achievement-based career outcomes (e.g., suitability ratings).

### *Crossed Categorization*

Finally, the study contributes to the research on crossed categorization, in that the results emphasize the complexity of the cognitive processes underlying categorization. The findings also reiterate the importance of the larger social context in how individuals categorize one another and suggest that the patterns of evaluation might be even more complex than previously thought. For example, if it were the case that participants only (or primarily) made self-referent categorizations, one might expect that White women would have been rated the most favorably across all conditions (given that the largest subgroup in the sample was White women), followed closely by White men (the next largest subgroup). However, this was not the pattern for the results, suggesting the influence of other variables (e.g., the composition of the group, the organizational level). This presents an interesting avenue for additional study in this area.

## *Practical Implications*

### *Pre-Screening in Balanced Organizations*

Overall, the results have several interesting practical implications. To begin with, they imply that Black women might be more likely than Black men or White women to be screened out of employment consideration at the outset (i.e., for entry-level management) for organizations with more diversity. Perhaps there is a point at which decision-makers either consciously or subconsciously perceive that there is “enough” diversity, such that some applicants might face fewer opportunities for organizational entry in the very types of organizations where they would assume there was a fair chance at employment. Also, it is likely that diverse organizations, especially if the diversity is presented as a “selling point” of that organization (e.g., in job advertisements) would be the very organizations to which a Black female applicant might be attracted (Avery, 2003). Especially in times when the job market is very competitive, an applicant being haphazardly screened out during early phases of the job search process can be very detrimental to the individual’s ability to gain and/or maintain financial stability.

Furthermore, African Americans tend to use formal methods of identifying employers with job openings, such as job placement services. This places them at a disadvantage, in terms of missing out on opportunities that others know about through informal social networks (Braddock & McPartland, 1987). To the extent that individuals making job screening decisions rate Black female applicants as less suitable than other applicants, the disadvantage Black women face by using such formal methods might be compounded.

## *Diversity Dilemmas*

The aforementioned issue regarding Black women being screened out of balanced organizations begs the question of how a diverse organization would become so diverse were it not for a sincere commitment to diversity. Stated another way, one would assume that demographically balanced organizations are that way because they have made a conscious effort to bring in talent from diverse groups; therefore, it is curious that they would do this *and* intentionally screen out Black women. This line of reasoning would seem to negate the findings for entry-level management.

Actually, it is important to consider that there are many reasons why an organization would want to appear to value diversity, but not be truly committed to diversity (e.g., for a business advantage or to redress previous unfair discrimination). It is plausible that an organization with such superficial attention to diversity would also not want to create an organization that is imbalanced in the direction of *more* “minorities,” perhaps, especially, Black women. Moreover, the representation of the “minority” group would only need to exceed 20% before the “majority” group experienced discomfort associated with the increase (Cox, 1994). Organizations that are focused on diversity for superficial reasons likely have little to no support from upper management levels for sincere diversity efforts; thus, at lower levels they might be more likely to screen out certain people when it is believed that a “satisfactory” level of diversity has already been achieved. Finally, changes in organizational leadership can also contribute to an organizational diversity climate changing from one in which diversity is valued to one in which diversity is tolerated.

Because of the apparent screening out occurring for balanced organizations, some might wrongly think that the findings of this research argue *against* organizational efforts to increase diversity (e.g., affirmative action, EEO statements on job postings). It is of the utmost importance to understand that this is not what is suggested by these findings. Instead, they suggest the need for better and more in-depth training of organizational decision makers to ensure that they are making every effort to provide all people who have the necessary qualifications to successfully perform a job with an equal opportunity to compete for that job.

#### *Pre-Screening in Less-than-Proportional Organizations*

Based on the results of the study, it does not seem as though Black women are necessarily more likely to be “screened in” at the outset for organizations that are more demographically typical (i.e., LTP). That is, the finding for balanced organizations is not somehow “comfortably” offset by a double advantage for the Black woman for entry management in less diverse organizations. This raises the question of how Black women can ever gain access into an organization enough to work their way up to the top to be considered for upper-level management. Unfortunately, this is not something that can be answered by the present study. Perhaps the psychological processes underlying this quandary offer a potential explanation for why there is not an overabundance of Black women at the uppermost ranks in companies (or even at the lower managerial ranks). Additionally, it renders unfounded the argument that some might make against efforts to

increase organizational diversity based on the findings for entry management in balanced organizations.

### *The Disadvantage of a Perceived Advantage*

Ostensibly, Black women's higher suitability ratings for upper-level management in less-than-proportional organizations are advantageous, especially considering the "double disadvantage" found for entry-level management in balanced organizations. However, in actual organizational settings, if it is perceived that such a position was obtained undeservedly, then the recipient of the assumed unmerited position (e.g., the Black woman) might face considerable backlash from other organizational members. Such backlash is even more likely if an organization has an affirmative action plan that has not been clearly explained (and employees assume it involves strong preferential treatment) and has been justified as necessary for increasing the representation of underrepresented groups (Harrison, Kravitz, Mayer, Leslie, & Lev-Arey, 2006).

### *Unfair Discrimination*

*White Men.* If White women and Black men are preferred over Black women in balanced organizations (for entry-level management) and Black women are preferred over White women and Black men in less-than-proportional organizations (for upper-level management), some people might question what this means for White men. Although it might be assumed that this indicates unfair discrimination against White males, such an interpretation is not supported by the results. The patterns of the means

(including non-significant differences) show that White men were not rated the lowest for any position, regardless of the organizational composition. Therefore, it does not appear that White men were disadvantaged in comparison to the other groups.

*Participant Race.* In order to reduce the potential influence of the demand characteristics they can elicit, certain individual difference variables (e.g., racism or authoritarianism) were not measured in this study. Therefore, the degree to which the ratings of suitability correlate with those rater attributes is unknown. Moreover, participant race was not correlated with any of the dependent variables. Analysis of the data for White participants, only, ( $n = 225$ ) indicates findings similar to those for the sample overall, with regards to the preference for White women in balanced organizations at entry-level management and a very slight double disadvantage for Black women at mid-level. Differing slightly from the findings for the overall sample, for upper-level management, White participants rated women higher than men in balanced organizations. Although such findings must be interpreted cautiously, given that analyzing subsets of the larger sample disrupts random assignment, they indicate that racial differences between the participants do not seem to account for the results.

*“Old-fashioned” Racism/Sexism.* An interesting point arises from the finding that participant race was not correlated with suitability ratings. Although this seems to support the proposed idea that similar cognitive processes can take place between raters regardless of race, it might also be interpreted as suggesting that unfair discrimination based on racism, sexism, or both is, consequently, unimportant. However, the results of this study do not negate the continued negative impact of racism and/or sexism. The

study, arguably, provides an indication of processes that can take place *in addition to*, not necessarily *instead of*, racism and sexism. It is inappropriate and inaccurate to conclude, based on this study, that racism and sexism do not (or cannot) impact employment decisions, especially given that individual differences on racism and sexism were not measured.

### *Recommendations*

*Applicants.* The results of the study suggest that placing non-job-related information (e.g., personal pictures) on professional networking sites (or using video resumes) can contribute to such information being misused by organizational hiring personnel, whether intentionally or unintentionally. In seeking employment, it is preferable for applicants to only include information that presents their job-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities. When using more formal methods for their job search (e.g., employment staffing agencies), job-seekers are advised to, not only research the company to which they are applying, but also review the practices of the employment agency.

*Organizations.* As technology progresses and professional networking sites (or other applicant screening sites) are used with increasing frequency for narrowing a very expansive applicant pool, it is quite predictable that this will introduce a new area to be addressed by employment law. It behooves organizations to exercise caution in the use of such technology. If the design of the web-based system is within the control of the organization, internet-based applicant screening could be designed to remove potentially



biasing, personally identifiable information that is not relevant to the job. One strategy could be for applicants to be assigned unique codes to associate their name and contact information to their job-related information, only at later stages of the job screening process. The decision-maker would only see the applicant code and corresponding job-related information (e.g., educational background, work experience). Ideally, the initial screening decisions would be made based on this information. Based on the review of the applicant's qualifications, if the organization wanted to contact the applicant, an interview could be scheduled (and the applicant contacted via email) using the code. Although this can be criticized as being too highly depersonalized, at this early stage of the process, it might be ideal for preventing qualified applicants from being screened out based on characteristics not related to the job.

Moreover, such a system does not absolve the organization of ensuring that their recruitment efforts target qualified prospective employees of diverse backgrounds and from various areas. In order to thwart biases from contaminating subsequent stages when the demographic characteristics of the applicant are known, hiring personnel (or other decision makers) must be properly trained to understand how biases can impact organizational decisions and negatively impact organizations. Additionally, training must be provided on how to recognize and avoid such biases. In general, organizational processes (e.g., interviews, performance reviews) should be structured and related to specific job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and other job-relevant characteristics. Organizations that use employment agencies for their applicant screening should verify

that the agencies are committed to ensuring that qualified applicants are not screened out based on factors not relevant to the job.

If organizations want to create or maintain a diverse workplace (i.e., not necessarily disregard the applicants' demographic characteristics), they should be aware of the importance of clearly communicating the details of diversity efforts to all employees. To foster support for such efforts, organizations must be careful to frame diversity initiatives properly—as opportunities, rather than hurdles (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004). Furthermore, if the organization has an affirmative action plan that is opportunity-oriented (i.e., focused on opportunity enhancement or equal opportunity), the details of the plan should be explained to organization members (Harrison et al., 2006). Specifically, employees should be informed that the plan is for the purposes of increasing organizational diversity or remedying past discrimination, not for negating the principles of fairness/merit or simply increasing the presence of underrepresented groups (Harrison et al., 2006). Overall, organizations must recognize that, although there is no “one best way” to manage diversity, the success of diversity endeavors depends on top management support, a clearly defined need-based strategy, and proper evaluation (Jayne & Dipboye, 2006). Perhaps most importantly, the organization must have a sincere (i.e., not just a focus on “numbers”) commitment to diversity and making sure that all employees are provided with the necessary support to thrive in the organization.

### *Future Research*

The questions that remain unanswered by this research offer several paths for further inquiry. For example, in order to provide more explanation for why participants might have rated an applicant favorably or unfavorably, future research should include individual difference questionnaires and/or open-ended items probing why certain ratings were given. Such questionnaires were not given during this study, to reduce the threat to construct validity that could have arisen from demand characteristics. Consequently, excluding such questionnaires contributed to more ambiguity in the interpretation of the results.

Future research should replicate this study, making needed modifications to enhance its overall realism. The optimal way to enhance the study's realism is by replicating the study in the field. Although this will possibly reduce the experimental control, it also has the potential to further investigate organizational composition as a moderator of the relationship between applicant race/sex and career outcomes (e.g., pre-employment screening decisions).

For laboratory studies, to explore the double advantage vs. double disadvantage theories more realistically, researchers should use a sample of individuals who are possibly more experienced in making employment-related decisions (e.g., M.B.A. students) to see if and/or how the findings differ. Also, researchers should expand inquiry in this area to consider other permutations of intersecting characteristics, such as women of other racial/ethnic groups (i.e., not only Black and White women). Each racial/ethnic

group differs, in terms of the stereotypes, challenges, etc. associated with it; thus, to attempt to generalize from Black women to all women of color is quite likely inappropriate. Specifically, it would be very interesting to more closely analyze Latinas and employment decisions, given the increasing Latino population and current high “anti-immigration” sentiment expressed by some in the U.S. (largely based on the misperception that Latinos are in the U.S. illegally).

Although this study did not directly test or inquire about the gender- and/or race-based stereotypes possibly held by participants, there were clearly differences in how the Black woman and man were perceived, as evident from the different suitability ratings. Moreover, exploratory analyses revealed that organizations’ hiring practices were rated less fair when the applicant was a Black male, as opposed to a White female. Therefore, future research should more closely examine the workplace experiences of Black men. For researchers to simply group Black men and women together as one monolithic group very likely causes important distinctions to be missed and the workplace experiences of each group to be inadequately described.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Conclusion

Despite the study's limitations, it has offered another small piece of a very large, complex puzzle. The results suggest the need to reconsider some of the narratives of employment that are often accepted as truth without much, if any, empirical evidence. This study did not show an unequivocal double advantage or a double disadvantage for Black women. Instead, Black women's workplace experiences, especially as they pertain to seeking employment in management, are likely to vary with several factors. Thus, the issue is much more complex than can be expressed through the terms, "double advantage" or "double disadvantage."

The study findings also emphasize the antiessentialist position put forth by Critical Race Feminists. That is, the experiences of White women and Black women are not necessarily the same; likewise, the experiences of Black men and Black women are not automatically identical. Consequently, in research on "women in the workplace" or "African Americans in the workplace," considering the experiences of one group as indicative of the experiences of all other groups is quite likely inappropriate. The consideration of the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender, and other potentially marginalizing characteristics is integral in developing a more comprehensive understanding of the many groups who comprise an increasingly diverse workforce.

**APPENDIX A:  
UCF IRB APPROVAL LETTER**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

**From:** UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

**To:** Laticia D. Bowens

**Date:** March 18, 2010

Dear Researcher:

On 3/18/2010, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	The Use of Social Networking Websites for Job Screening Decisions
Investigator:	Laticia D. Bowens
IRB Number:	SBE-09-06608
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 03/18/2010 10:45:51 AM EST

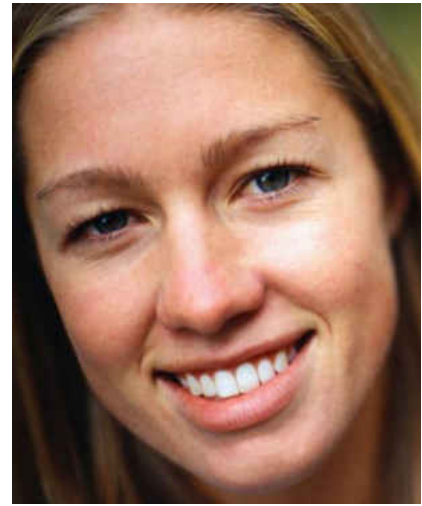
IRB Coordinator

**APPENDIX B:  
JOB APPLICANTS**





Black Male



White Female



White Male



Black Female

**APPENDIX C:  
UPPER-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAMS**



Balanced



Less-than-Proportional

**APPENDIX D:  
MIDDLE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAMS**



Balanced



Less-than-Proportional

**APPENDIX E:  
ENTRY-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAMS**





Balanced



Less-than-Proportional

**APPENDIX F:  
STUDY WEBSITE PAGES  
(CONDITION: BLACK FEMALE – BALANCED ORGANIZATION)**





## USING SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES FOR JOB SCREENING DECISIONS

### GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS STUDY

You are being invited to take part in a research study.

Your participation is voluntary (i.e., whether you take part is up to you).

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

**Principle Investigator:**  
**L. Bowens, Graduate Student**

Faculty Supervisor:  
B. Fritzsche, Ph.D.

UCF Department of Psychology

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Organizations are increasingly using social networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn®, Facebook®, BrightFuse®) to make initial screening decisions for job applicants. Therefore, it is important to understand how organizational decisions might differ depending on viewing a job applicant's social networking profile versus viewing their traditional résumés. The purpose of this research is to investigate how social networking profiles can impact job screening decisions.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO IN THE STUDY: YOUR ROLE

Employment staffing agencies can be very helpful in matching applicants and employers. In order to make well-informed selection decisions, the staffing agents must familiarize themselves with the organizations seeking employees, the positions the organizations have available, and the applicants seeking work. For this study, you will take on the role of an employment staffing agent. Please carefully review all of the information presented to you to help you effectively perform this role.

- Remember that, as a staffing agent, it is important to make careful decisions because selecting an applicant who is unqualified for the job or who is a poor fit for the organization can cause the organization to waste time and resources. It can also compromise the integrity and reputation of the employment staffing agency.
- Also, make your decisions carefully, as the results of this study may be used to make recommendations to job applicants and local staffing agencies.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO IN THE STUDY: TASK OVERVIEW

In this study, you will be asked to

- review information about an organization, job descriptions for open positions at that organization, and a job applicant's social networking profile.
- answer comprehension questions after reviewing each section of information.
- use all of the information given to you to make judgments about the applicant's profile, including their suitability for the position.
- complete questionnaires about you and your opinions.

You do not have to answer every question or complete every task. You will not lose any benefits if you skip questions or tasks. The research will take place online.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous webpages.

1. In this study, you will take on the role of a(n):

- job applicant
- organizational CEO
- employment staffing agent
- manager

2. You will review:

- the description of an organization
- information about a job applicant
- job descriptions
- all of the above

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## RECAP OF ROLE AND TASKS

You will review:

- a description of the company of interest for this study (to give you an idea about what type of organization it is).
- three job descriptions for open positions at the company.
- a screenshot of an applicant's social networking profile.

You will answer questions about:

- the company, the jobs, and the applicant's profile.
- you and your opinions.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## TIME REQUIRED

We expect that this research study will take no longer than 60 minutes to complete.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## STUDY CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR TO REPORT A PROBLEM

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to:

L. Bowens, Graduate Student  
Industrial and Organizational Psychology Program  
College of Sciences  
Phone: 407-823-5350  
Email: [ucfpsychologystudy@gmail.com](mailto:ucfpsychologystudy@gmail.com)

or

B. Fritzsche, Ph.D., Faculty Supervisor  
Department of Psychology  
Phone: 407-823-5350  
Email: [bfritzsc@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:bfritzsc@mail.ucf.edu)

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## IRB CONTACT ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS IN THE STUDY OR TO REPORT A COMPLAINT

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact:

Institutional Review Board  
University of Central Florida  
Office of Research and Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway  
Suite 501  
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

Phone: 407-823-2901

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## INFORMED CONSENT

By clicking to proceed to the next slide, you are agreeing to the following statements:

I have read all of the preceding information.

I understand all of the preceding information.

I consent to participate in this study.

**If you do not agree to participate, please close your browser now.**

There is no penalty for not participating.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

For a printer-friendly version of information about the study, click here.

## THE COMPANY: FDO CONSULTING

Here is a screenshot of the company overview. Review the information to better understand the company.



**FDO Consulting... Our Company**

**fdo** is a full-service business development and consulting firm focused on small, privately-held companies in the U.S. **fdo** has helped numerous businesses to increase profits and control costs, allowing the employees of those businesses to make the most of their work and their lives. We are regarded as one of the top business consulting companies in our market segment and have considerable experience in providing quality consulting services to the owners of small businesses. We have analyzed many businesses and provided invaluable services to business owners. Known for delivering a broad array of professional services to the small business marketplace, we are proud to operate according to our core company values:

Integrity, Responsibility, and Dependability.

**fdo**

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT FDO CONSULTING EMPLOYEES

Here is a second screenshot, which describes the employees of FDO. Read this information before proceeding to the next page.



**FDO Consulting... Our Employees**

At **fdo**, our employees have business management experience and know "the business of business." A significant number of our staff have Bachelor's, Master's, and Ph.D. degrees. Many are professionally certified. All of our team members possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to help any small to mid-sized business to maximize profitability. At **fdo**, we believe that our employees are the primary reason for our success and for making possible the success of our clients' businesses.

**fdo**

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous two webpages.

1. What kind of company is FDO?

- construction
- marketing
- consulting
- communications

2. What is the primary reason for FDO's success?

- the employees
- the clients
- the CEO
- the community

Proceed to the next page

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT FDO CONSULTING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Review the screenshot below, which provides an overview of the positions that are open at FDO. On the following pages, you will be given more details about each position.



**FDO Consulting...Job Opportunities**

FDO is currently seeking highly qualified individuals to join our team of accomplished professionals. There are currently openings for management positions at entry-, middle-, and upper-levels. More information is available in the job descriptions for each position, which are available on this site.

**FDO**

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE UPPER-LEVEL MANAGEMENT JOB AT FDO

Carefully read the information in the screenshot below.  
It explains what qualifications are needed for the upper management position.



**FDO**

### FDO Consulting...Job Opportunities

#### Upper-Level Manager

**FDO** is currently seeking experienced, take-charge, outgoing professionals for the position of Upper-Level Manager. The Upper-level management team at **FDO** is comprised of some of the brightest management minds in business, who are familiar with the "psychology of management." All have practical, hands-on business management experience. To qualify for this position, we require a Bachelor's Degree (or higher degree), 3+ years of management or supervisory experience, and basic computer skills (knowledge of Word and Excel required). Upper-level management team members must have excellent communication, time management, and problem-solving skills. Also, they must be able to delegate tasks and direct others. Upper-level managers make decisions that impact all of our other team members, as well as our clients.

## THE UPPER-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAM AT FDO

These 10 people are the current Upper-level Managers at FDO.  
In addition to looking at the photos, review the information provided.



**FDO**

### Upper Management Team



Our Upper Management Team is comprised of an elite group of individuals who, through their visibility, decision-making, leadership, and professionalism, demonstrate the core values of the company. This team of experts continues to steer the company in the direction of success by their commitment to quality and determination to stay a step ahead of the competition.



## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous three webpages.

1. To qualify for the Upper-level management position, an applicant must have what type of degree?

- Associate's
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctoral (Ph.D.)

2. How many managers currently make up the Upper Management Team?

- 5
- 8
- 10
- 12

Proceed to the next page

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MIDDLE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT JOB AT FDO

Now, read the information from this screenshot, which explains the requirements for the middle management position.

**fdo**

**fdo Consulting...Job Opportunities**

**Middle-Level Manager**

**fdo** is looking for goal-oriented and self-motivated professionals to join our Middle-level management team. The successful middle manager has excellent "people skills," has a positive attitude, and does not mind taking directions from others. The mid-manager must be able to explain our services and solutions in a clear and concise manner to our clients. Following our philosophy of "cooperative hierarchy," middle managers report to the Upper-level team and are responsible for overseeing the activities of the Entry-level management team members. The minimum requirements to qualify for this position are an Associates degree (or higher) from an accredited college, 2-5 years of management experience, basic computer skills, and general business knowledge.

## THE MIDDLE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAM AT FDO

Here are the 15 middle managers currently at FDO. Look at the photos and review the information.



**fdo** Middle Management Team

Our Middle Management team is made up of professionals who are responsible for seeing that day-to-day operations are carried out in a way that meets the expectations of our upper management team and most importantly, our clients.

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous two webpages.

1. The middle managers report to the:
  - entry-level managers
  - upper-level managers
  - other middle managers
  - staffing agency
2. What is the minimum required years of management/supervisory experience for middle managers?
  - 2
  - 4
  - 6
  - none

Proceed to the next page.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ENTRY-LEVEL MANAGEMENT JOB AT FDO

This is a screenshot of the description for the entry-level management position.  
Review the information to see what is required for this position.

**fdo**

### fdo Consulting... Job Opportunities

#### Entry-Level Manager

**fdo** currently has openings for enthusiastic individuals with general business backgrounds to join our Entry-level management team. The Entry-level management team members perform a variety of essential duties to keep our company running smoothly on a daily basis. Entry-level managers gather all of the information necessary to effectively help clients. Therefore, they must be dependable and organized, and always display a high degree of professionalism. They must have a strong understanding of the services provided by **fdo**. The minimum qualifications are one (or more) year experience in a business setting (e.g., management, customer service), High School diploma/GED (college degree a plus), and good interpersonal skills. Our Entry-level managers report to the Middle-level managers, but do not directly oversee other employees.

## THE ENTRY-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAM AT FDO

This is the current entry-level team, which consists of 21 managers.  
Review the photos and information provided.

**fdo** Entry-Level Management Team

Our Entry-level Management Team is the heartbeat of the company, managing the local offices on a daily basis. Members of the Entry-level Management Team are paired up with an efficient and effective staff to bring the company's core values to life.

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous two webpages.

1. Entry-level managers oversee:

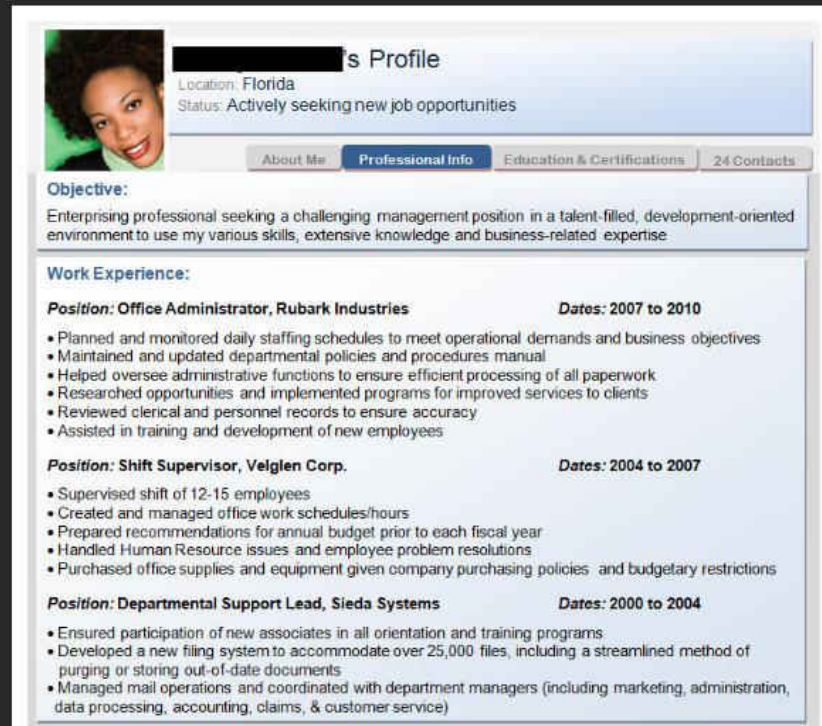
- non-management employees
- other entry-level managers
- middle-level managers
- no other employees

2. How many entry-level managers are there?

- 10
- 21
- 15
- 30

## THE APPLICANT

Now that you have read the information about the company and the job openings, carefully review the profile of the job applicant, as presented in the screenshot below. Some information has been blocked out to protect the privacy of the applicant.



**[Redacted] s Profile**  
Location: Florida  
Status: Actively seeking new job opportunities

[About Me](#) [Professional Info](#) [Education & Certifications](#) [24 Contacts](#)

**Objective:**  
Enterprising professional seeking a challenging management position in a talent-filled, development-oriented environment to use my various skills, extensive knowledge and business-related expertise

**Work Experience:**

**Position: Office Administrator, Rubark Industries** **Dates: 2007 to 2010**

- Planned and monitored daily staffing schedules to meet operational demands and business objectives
- Maintained and updated departmental policies and procedures manual
- Helped oversee administrative functions to ensure efficient processing of all paperwork
- Researched opportunities and implemented programs for improved services to clients
- Reviewed clerical and personnel records to ensure accuracy
- Assisted in training and development of new employees

**Position: Shift Supervisor, Velglen Corp.** **Dates: 2004 to 2007**

- Supervised shift of 12-15 employees
- Created and managed office work schedules/hours
- Prepared recommendations for annual budget prior to each fiscal year
- Handled Human Resource issues and employee problem resolutions
- Purchased office supplies and equipment given company purchasing policies and budgetary restrictions

**Position: Departmental Support Lead, Sieda Systems** **Dates: 2000 to 2004**

- Ensured participation of new associates in all orientation and training programs
- Developed a new filing system to accommodate over 25,000 files, including a streamlined method of purging or storing out-of-date documents
- Managed mail operations and coordinated with department managers (including marketing, administration, data processing, accounting, claims, & customer service)

## THE APPLICANT

This is the second screenshot of the applicant's social networking profile.  
Review the information before proceeding to the next page.



### Qualifications:

- Streamlining business and office procedures
- Preparing correspondence, presentations, and proposals
- Researching and implementing improved business programs
- Establishing and maintaining budgetary guidelines to promote business development

### Skills:

- Effective Public Speaking
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Outstanding time management skills
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

About Me

Professional Info

Education & Certifications

24 Contacts

### Education:

- [Redacted] University – [Redacted]
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration

### Certifications:

- Krefwell Institute Professional Leadership Certification

### Honors:

- 3.8 G.P.A (Collegiate, cumulative)
- Graduated with honors (*cum laude*)
- Awarded "Business Professional of Promise"

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the previous two webpages.

1. Which of the following is NOT one of the job applicant's previous employers?

- Velglen Corp.
- Rubark Industries
- Dynastar, Inc.
- Sieda Systems

2. The applicant has certification in what?

- Business
- Human Resources
- Training
- Leadership

[Proceed to the next page.](#)

## INSTRUCTIONS

At this point, you should have an understanding of what type of company FDO is. You have reviewed the descriptions of each job opening and were able to see the current FDO managers. Having also reviewed the social networking profile of the job applicant, you are now ready to make some decisions. Go to the next page to make the first decision.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)



## DECISION # 1

Considering all of the information you have been given, answer the question below.  
The photos are presented to refresh your memory of the applicant and the position.



1. How suitable do you think the applicant is for the **ENTRY** level management position?

- Very Unsuitable
- Unsuitable
- Suitable
- Very Suitable

## DECISION # 2

Considering all of the information you have been given, answer the question below.  
The photos are presented to refresh your memory of the applicant and the position.



1. How suitable do you think the applicant is for the **MIDDLE** level management position?

- Very Unsuitable
- Unsuitable
- Suitable
- Very Suitable



## DECISION # 3

Considering all of the information you have been given, answer the question below.  
The photos are presented to refresh your memory of the applicant and the position.



1. How suitable do you think the applicant is for the **UPPER** level management position?

- Very Unsuitable
- Unsuitable
- Suitable
- Very Suitable

## RANK ORDERING

Considering the company profile, job descriptions, and job applicant, how would you rank the applicant in terms of her suitability for the jobs?

Give the highest ranking (1st place) to the position that you think the applicant is **MOST** suited for.

Give the lowest ranking (2nd place) to the position that you think the applicant is **LEAST** suited for.

1st Place: Which position is the applicant **MOST** suited for?

Select one

2nd Place: Which position is the applicant **LEAST** suited for?

Select one

Upper Management  
Middle Management  
Entry-level Management

Proceed to the next page.

## QUESTIONS

On the next pages you will be asked some additional questions. Please respond as accurately as possible.

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICANT

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the job applicant's social networking profile.

1. Given what you have read/seen about the applicant, how would you rate her professionalism?
  - Very Unprofessional
  - Unprofessional
  - Professional
  - Very Professional
2. Given what you have read/seen about the applicant, how would you rate her qualifications for any management position?
  - Very Unqualified
  - Unqualified
  - Qualified
  - Very Qualified
3. Did the applicant's social networking profile include any inappropriate or irrelevant information?
  - Yes
  - No

## QUESTIONS ABOUT FDO

Answer the questions based on the information presented on the screenshots from FDO's website.

1. Given what you have read/seen about the organization, how would you rate their hiring practices?

- Very Unfair
- Unfair
- Fair
- Very Fair

2. Given what you have read/seen about the organization, how would you rate their diversity?

- Not diverse at all
- Somewhat diverse
- Very diverse

3. Did the information provided on FDO's website clearly explain the qualifications needed for the available jobs?

- Yes
- No

## QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU (THE PARTICIPANT)

Please respond to the items below.

1. Your Age:

- 18 - 19
- 20 - 24
- 25 - 29
- 30 - 34
- 35 - 39
- 40 or older

2. Your Gender:

- Male
- Female

3. Your Race/Ethnic Identification:

- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Black/African American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Bi-racial/Multi-racial

4. Are you currently employed?

- Yes
- No

5. Do you have experience making hiring decisions?

- Yes
- No

6. Do you have management experience?

- Yes
- No

Proceed to the next page.

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Please respond to the items below.

1. What was your role in the current study?

- job applicant
- organizational CEO
- employment staffing agent
- manager

2. How many organizational levels are there at FDO?

- one
- two
- three

3. What kind of company is FDO?

- consulting
- construction
- communications
- marketing

4. What was the gender of the job applicant?

- Male
- Female

5. What race/ethnicity did the job applicant appear to be?

- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Black/African American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Bi-racial/Multi-racial

6. To which age group did the job applicant appear to belong?

- 19 or younger
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40 or older

Proceed to the next page.

## DEBRIEFING INFORMATION

The purpose of this study was to explore how decisions (e.g., job screening decisions) regarding employment outcomes can possibly be impacted by non-job-related attributes (e.g., applicant appearance). The significance of this line of inquiry is that it contributes to the existing research on job placement and selection through its possible applicability to the use of photos on preliminary job screening tools (such as resumes and social networking profiles).

Because the study is ongoing, it is very important that you not discuss the study, including this debriefing information, with other people.

If you have questions about the study, would like to comment on the study, or would like to receive a more detailed report of the findings from this study once it has been completed, you are invited to email the researcher, L. BOWENS, at [ucfpsychologystudy@gmail.com](mailto:ucfpsychologystudy@gmail.com).

[Click here to proceed to the next page.](#)

## Confirmation

You have completed the study. In order to receive credit for your participation, click on the link below to send your NAME and PID to the researcher.

\*This information will not be connected to your data and will only be used for the purpose of assigning research credit.

For your participation in this study, you will receive .5 points (the number of credit points stipulated by the UCF Psychology Department for 60 minutes of online participation). The credit points will be input manually within two business days.

First Name   
Last Name   
PID

[Save Your Name and PID for Research Credit](#)

[Click here to return to the previous page.](#)

## THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Thank you for completing the study. Your information has been submitted to the researcher.  
Your credit will be issued within 24 hours.

IMPORTANT: The University of Central Florida Psychology Department requires all students to complete the Psychology Experience Evaluation form after participating in a research study. Click on the link below to access the form. Then, print, complete, and return it to the Psychology Department main office.

[Click here to proceed to the evaluation form.](#)

### Psychology Research Experience Evaluation Form for Participants

Please print and complete this form to evaluate your experience as a participant in the "USING SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES FOR JOB SCREENING DECISIONS" Study conducted by L. Bowens (Researcher).

Your Current Psychology Course(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This is important to our educational efforts and the feedback you provide will aid in the evaluation and possible modification of the research participation experience. Your answers are anonymous. **When you have completed this form, return it to the Psychology Department Main Office (Psychology Building – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor).**

For each question, please circle the statement that best indicates your response.

Do you clearly understand the purpose of this study?

The researcher did not explain the purpose. I did not receive a written or oral explanation of the study.	The researcher explained the purpose or gave me a written explanation of the study, but did not give me a way to ask further questions.	The researcher explained the purpose, gave me a chance to ask questions, and answered the questions I had.	The researcher explained the purpose, gave me a chance to ask questions, and answered the questions I had, and made sure I understood the purpose and implications of the study.
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Was participating in this study a learning experience for you?

I completed the study, but did not receive any additional information.	I furthered my learning about the research process (informed consent, debriefing, etc.) OR this specific study (not both).	I gained information about the research process and this specific study.	I gained information about the research process, this specific study, and research that supports this study.
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Were you treated with courtesy and respect?

The researcher <b>did not</b> treat me with courtesy and respect.	The researcher treated me with <b>some</b> courtesy and respect.	The researcher treated me with an <b>acceptable level</b> of courtesy and respect.	The researcher treated me with a <b>great deal</b> of courtesy and respect.
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Additional comments (continue on back if necessary):

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