



Effects of Race on Organizational Experiences, Job Performance Evaluations, and Career Outcomes

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EFFECTS OF RACE ON ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCES, JOB PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS, AND CAREER OUTCOMES

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This study examined relationships among race, organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes for black and white managers from three work organizations. Compared to white managers, blacks felt less accepted in their organizations, perceived themselves as having less discretion on their jobs, received lower ratings from their supervisors on their job performance and promotability, were more likely to have reached career plateaus, and experienced lower levels of career satisfaction. We examined direct and indirect effects of race on job performance evaluations and career outcomes. Suggestions regarding areas for future research are offered.

The number of black people occupying managerial positions in the United States has grown considerably in recent years. The percentage of managers who are members of minority groups increased from 3.6 percent of the national total in 1977 to 5.2 percent in 1982 (Jones, 1986), and in 1986 blacks represented 6 percent of all managers (Williams, 1987). Despite these recent gains, however, many observers have commented on the presence of an invisible barrier, or “glass ceiling,” that prevents blacks (as well as members of other minority groups and women) from advancing beyond lower- or middle-management positions (Crotty & Timmons, 1974; Davis & Watson, 1982; Dickens & Dickens, 1982; DiTomaso, Thompson, & Blake, 1986; Jones, 1986; Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1987). Thus, although blacks have gained greater access to managerial jobs, there is still cause for concern that black managers may face “treatment discrimination.”

Unlike “access discrimination,” which prevents members of a subgroup of the population from entering a job or an organization, treatment discrimination occurs when subgroup members receive fewer rewards, resources, or

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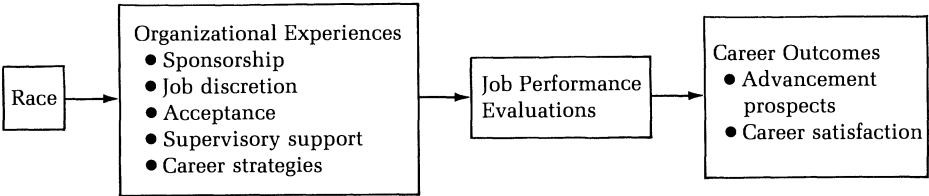
opportunities on the job than they legitimately deserve on the basis of job-related criteria. Thus, such discrimination represents a situation in which the treatment of employees is based more on their subgroup membership than on their merit or achievements (Levitin, Quinn, & Staines, 1971). Treatment discrimination can affect not only such tangible phenomena as position assignments, training opportunities, salary increases, promotions, terminations, and layoffs, but also such subtle issues as acceptance into a work group or the availability of career-enhancing and psychosocial support from supervisors and others (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986). In effect, subgroup members who are exposed to treatment discrimination encounter organizational experiences that are less favorable to their careers than are the experiences members of a dominant group encounter within an organization.

In an early theoretical examination of organizational discrimination, Kanter (1979) argued that minority members, women, and other token employees have low access to opportunity and power within organizations. She viewed opportunities as growth prospects stemming from a present job and suggested that employees with restricted opportunities ultimately lower their aspirations and commitment and engage in behaviors that reinforce negative opinions about their potential contributions to an organization. Additionally, restricted access to power—through routine task assignments or exclusion from informal social networks—produces a cycle of disadvantage for minority members who are unable to influence organizational actions or the course of their own careers (Kanter, 1979). Kanter suggested that the provision of less favorable experiences and opportunities for minority employees than for nonminority employees indicated institutional racism in organizations.

Much of the prior empirical research on treatment discrimination has focused on the experiences of working women. There is evidence of discrimination against women in compensation (Levitin et al., 1971; Terborg & Ilgen, 1975), prospects for promotion (Olson & Becker, 1983; Stewart & Gudykunst, 1982), assignments to challenging tasks (Mai-Dalton & Sullivan, 1981; Terborg & Ilgen, 1975), access to authority and responsibility on the job (Harlan & Weiss, 1982; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979), and opportunities to cultivate developmental relationships with mentors, sponsors, and peers (Fernandez, 1981; Rosen, Templeton, & Kichline, 1981).

Applying the research findings on gender discrimination to racial minorities, Ilgen and Youtz (1986) suggested that minority members may experience treatment discrimination in a number of respects and that such unfavorable experiences can have dysfunctional consequences for their career success. Specifically, those authors posited that treatment discrimination experienced by minorities may reduce their job performance and career prospects, since they would receive fewer opportunities to enhance work-related skills and develop supportive relationships within an organization than other employees. These lost opportunities, which may be reflected in the absence of a powerful sponsor or the assignment of routine tasks, can depress minority employees' ability, motivation, or both, and thereby di-

FIGURE 1
Proposed Relationships



minish the effectiveness of their job performance. In effect, Ilgen and Youtz (1986) proposed that race differences in job performance can be explained—at least in part—by the differential treatment people in different groups experience. Those authors further suggested that minority members may internalize an organization’s negative evaluations of them and engage in “self-limiting behaviors”—for example, refusing a challenging job assignment or declining an opportunity for additional training—that perpetuate performance differences between minority and nonminority employees.

There is considerable evidence that raters evaluate the job performance of blacks less favorably than the job performance of whites, especially when the raters are themselves white (Kraiger & Ford, 1985). There is also evidence that black managers experience restricted advancement opportunities (Alderfer, Alderfer, Tucker, & Tucker, 1980; Brown & Ford, 1977; Fernandez, 1975; Irons & Moore, 1985; Nixon, 1985a) and report extensive dissatisfaction and frustration with their careers (Fernandez, 1985; Jones, 1986). However, the role of organizational experiences in producing these negative outcomes remains largely unexplored. The present research was conducted to address that gap in the literature on black managers’ careers.

Specifically, the goal of this study was to examine relationships among race, organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes. Figure 1 presents the conceptual model examined in this study. The model, which builds on the work of Ilgen and Youtz (1986) and Kanter (1979), posits that race influences job performance evaluations through its effects on the organizational experiences of black and white managers. In other words, organizational experiences mediate (James & Brett, 1984) the relationship between race and job performance evaluations. We posited that job performance evaluations in turn influence two important career outcomes—advancement prospects and career satisfaction. Thus, in the model we also propose that organizational experiences and job performance evaluations mediate the impact of race on career outcomes.

PROPOSED RELATIONSHIPS AND EFFECTS

The Impact of Race on Organizational Experiences

The first linkage shown in Figure 1 is between race and a series of organizational experiences. Each of the five experiences examined in this

study is a potential indicator or product of treatment discrimination. Sponsorship represents an aspect of an organization's opportunity structure (Kanter, 1979) that can foster career growth (Kram, 1985; Roche, 1979). Both Ilgen and Youtz (1986) and Kanter (1979) suggested that minority members are less likely than others to have access to these resources because potential sponsors or mentors, most of whom are likely to be white, tend to choose protégés who are similar to themselves in social background and with whom they can more readily identify. Although the prior research on sponsorship opportunities for black managers has yielded mixed results (Thomas & Alderfer, 1989), small samples or other methodological problems have plagued many of these studies. In line with the reasoning of Ilgen and Youtz (1986) and Kanter (1979), we predicted that black managers experience less extensive sponsorship opportunities than white managers.

Managers' careers may also be enriched by supportive relationships with their immediate supervisors (Baird & Kram, 1983). Such support may take the form of career guidance and information, performance feedback, and challenging work assignments that promote development. There is some indirect evidence that black managers receive relatively little career support from their supervisors. For example, Jones (1986) reported that only 15 percent of the blacks in his sample described their organizational climates as supportive for black managers. Moreover, black managers are less likely than white managers to feel that they have been provided with important career-related information (Alderfer et al., 1980; Fernandez, 1981). In light of these findings, we predicted that we would find that black managers received less extensive career support from their supervisors than white managers.

Kanter (1979) identified the amount of discretion a job occupant exercises as an important indicator of the individual's potential to have power within an organization and posited that power differentials are one aspect of the presence of institutional racism. Minority members may experience low levels of job discretion and influence as a result of their status as outgroup members in their organizations (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986). Fernandez (1975, 1981) presented evidence suggesting that black managers possess less power, discretion, and autonomy in their jobs than their white counterparts. In a similar vein, Slocum and Strawser (1977) observed that black certified public accountants (CPAs) reported greater deficiencies in the satisfaction of their needs for autonomy than white CPAs. Thus, we expected to find that black managers experienced less discretion in their jobs than white managers.

Relationships in informal social networks have also been identified as important factors likely to influence organizational advancement and promotion (Kanter, 1979; Tsui, 1984). Moreover, Ilgen and Youtz (1986) suggested that minority members, as outgroup members, may not be fully accepted into the informal networks in their organizations. Consistent with this reasoning is Nixon's (1985b) finding that 56 percent of the black managers in her sample perceived themselves as either partially or totally alienated from the formal or informal aspects of corporate life. Similarly, Fernan-

dez (1981) observed that many blacks believe that minority managers are likely to be excluded from informal work groups. Moreover, black managers have been reported to be less optimistic than whites about interpersonal relationships between blacks and whites in their organizations (Alderfer et al., 1980). Therefore, we predicted that black managers feel less accepted in their organizations than white managers.

Recent research has confirmed the importance of career strategies in promoting high levels of career success (Gould & Penley, 1984). Career strategies like seeking visible job assignments and working long hours can help employees reach their career goals and test the appropriateness of those goals (Greenhaus, 1987). However, subgroup members who are persistently exposed to unfavorable treatment may avoid success-producing activities and instead engage in self-limiting behavior (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986; Kanter, 1979). It is possible, therefore, that black managers display a less active approach to the management of their careers than their white counterparts. Although successful black managers have advocated an assertive approach to career management (Leinster, 1988), blacks who perceive their organizations as hostile and inequitable (Bhagat, 1979) and who have internalized their organizations' negative assessments of themselves (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986) may not see the benefit of engaging in career strategy behaviors. Thus, we predicted that we would find that black managers engaged in less extensive career strategy behaviors than white managers.

Organizational Experiences and Job Performance Evaluations

As noted earlier, black employees tend to receive lower ratings of job performance than white employees (Kraiger & Ford, 1985). Although some portion of the race difference in rated job performance may be attributed to rater bias, it is also possible that there are race differences in actual job performance. Ilgen and Youtz (1986) suggested that race differences in actual job performance may be due to pervasive differential treatment minorities experience within organizations. Disparate treatment that results in fewer and less favorable opportunities for minority members with regard to sponsorship, supervisory support, job discretion, and acceptance can affect their subsequent performance in a number of ways (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986).

For example, the assignment of routine, nonchallenging tasks, the lack of supervisory interest in a subordinate's career aspirations, and the infrequent provision of performance feedback are likely to stunt a manager's professional growth on the job (Greenhaus, 1987); an attendant decline in the manager's job performance is likely to occur. Moreover, a manager with little job discretion or autonomy has few opportunities to exercise decision-making skills that promote effective job performance, may display low levels of work motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), and may be seen by the organization as ineffective (Kanter, 1979). In addition, the absence of a sponsor and exclusion from an organization's informal networks can restrict the resources available to managers to help them perform effectively on their jobs. Finally, since career strategy behaviors can provide focus to managers'

efforts and increase the visibility of their accomplishments, low levels of participation in such activities can detract from job performance (Greenhaus, 1987). For these reasons, we predicted that the extensiveness of sponsorship opportunities, level of supervisory career support, feelings of organizational acceptance, degree of perceived job discretion, and participation in career strategy behaviors are all positively related to supervisory evaluations of managers' job performance.

Job Performance Evaluations and Career Outcomes

Career outcomes may be viewed from both an external perspective, as judged by an organization, and from an internal perspective, as judged by an employee (Schein, 1978). The present research examined two types of career outcomes identified as important in the literature on careers (FERENCE, Stoner, & Warren, 1977; Greenhaus, 1987; Hall, 1976). Managers' advancement prospects represent an externally defined career outcome, whereas managers' level of career satisfaction is an internally defined career outcome.

The model shown in Figure 1 proposes relationships between job performance evaluations and each type of career success outcome. We predicted a positive relationship between managers' job performance evaluations and the favorability of their advancement prospects. This prediction is based on the observation that the appraisal of current job performance often plays a significant role in an organization's assessment of an employee's promotability (Mobley, 1982; Stumpf & London, 1981). The model also predicts a positive relationship between managers' job performance evaluations and their level of career satisfaction. Supervisors who hold a negative view of a manager's job performance may give that individual smaller salary increments, less interesting assignments, and less recognition than other employees, all of which can detract from the manager's career satisfaction. Low levels of rated job performance, in other words, may restrict the frequency and magnitude of rewards received by a manager; this in turn, affects the manager's level of satisfaction (Porter & Lawler, 1968).

The present research was designed to contribute to the literature in several respects. First, this study compared the organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, advancement prospects, and career satisfaction of black and white managers. Although prior research has examined race differences in some of these variables, the present study represents a more comprehensive and integrated investigation of the role of race in the career-related experiences of black and white managers.

Second, the predicted relationships, taken together, represent linkages in a causal model that can explain race differences in job performance evaluations and career outcomes. Thus, an empirical test of the proposed model could indicate whether organizational experiences mediate the relationship between race and job performance evaluations, as Ilgen and Youtz (1986) suggested. In addition, we hoped to determine whether organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, or both mediated the relationships

of race with advancement prospects and career satisfaction. In path analytic terms, this study examined whether the impact of race on performance and career outcomes is indirect—through the mediating variables—or direct. Through the present research, therefore, we sought to contribute to the development of empirically grounded theory concerning the mechanisms by which race affects employees' job performance and career outcomes.

METHODS

Overview of Procedures

Three companies having extensive operations in the eastern United States and representing the communications, banking, and electronics industries agreed to participate in a comprehensive study of managerial career experiences with a special emphasis on the careers of black managers. Following Fernandez (1975), we defined managers as employees designated as managers, officials, and professionals according to the guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Our goal was to identify as many black managers as possible within each company and then obtain a matched group of white managers comparable in background to the black managers. Within each company, we identified all blacks who held managerial positions through company records. Then, we matched each black manager with a white manager who was as similar as possible in age, length of organizational service, job function, and organizational level. The purpose of the matching procedure was to assure that any observed race differences in organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes could not be attributed to differences in the background characteristics of the black and white managers.

A comprehensive survey was distributed through company mail to each manager selected to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary, and we assured participants that their individual responses would be treated as confidential. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter from a company official strongly encouraging participation in the study and a postage-paid envelope in which respondents were to return their completed surveys directly to us at our university address. In addition, the supervisor of each manager selected received a survey, cover letter, and return envelope. We affixed identical code numbers to the two surveys so that we could link managers' and supervisors' responses.

Respondents

Through the procedure described in the previous section, we chose 1,628 managers—814 blacks and 814 whites—and their supervisors to participate in the study. In response to the initial mailing and one follow-up reminder, we received completed surveys from 996 managers (a 61.2 percent response rate) and 1,273 supervisors (a 78.2 percent response rate). Paired data were available for 828 managers and their respective supervisors (50.8 percent). Of the 828 manager-supervisor pairs, 595 (71.8%) were from the

communications firm, 140 (16.9%) were from the banking firm, and 93 (11.2%) were from the electronics company.

Of the 828 managers who responded, 373 (45%) were black and 455 (55%) were white. There was a significant relationship between race and gender ($r = -.13$, $p < .01$): black managers were more likely than white managers to be women. The final group of respondents included 228 black women, 140 black men, 221 white women, and 231 white men (8 respondents did not report gender).

The mean age of the managers was 38.72 years ($s.d. = 8.20$), and the modal (41.1%) annual salary was \$30,000–\$39,999. Length of tenure in the current job averaged 3.44 years ($s.d. = 3.88$), and length of tenure in the organization averaged 15.09 years ($s.d. = 7.88$). The managers had reported to their current supervisors for an average of 2.24 years ($s.d. = 2.28$). About 75 percent of the managers had attended college, and 34 percent were college graduates. There was a considerable range in the number of subordinates reporting to the respondents (0–99), suggesting the group contained a balanced mix of managers and professionals in a wide variety of supervisory and nonsupervisory positions.

Preliminary analysis revealed that race was unrelated to age, organizational tenure, job function, or organizational level in any of the three companies, thereby indicating that the matching process was successful in producing demographically similar samples of blacks and whites. It should also be noted that the final group of respondents contained an unequal number of blacks (373) and whites (455). Because the selection procedure was successful in producing comparable groups of black and white managers, there was no need to limit the analysis to the original matched set of black and white managers, which would have substantially reduced the number of respondents in the study.

In summary, the managers in the present study represented diverse job functions within three organizations and a wide range of managerial, professional, and supervisory positions. Their educational and salary levels suggested that most of the managers studied held lower- to middle-level management and professional positions. The diversity of job functions and the high response rates suggest that the respondent group represented the population of black managers in the three companies. Perhaps most important, the black and white managers were comparable in terms of age, organizational tenure, job function, and organizational level.

Measures

Race and gender. Race was entered as a precoded digit (1 = black, 2 = white) that was part of the employee research number located on the cover page of the managers' survey. Gender was assessed with a fixed-response item (coded 1 = man; 2 = woman) included in the background information section of the survey.

Organizational experiences. Sponsorship was measured by two items included in a section of the managers' survey dealing with participation in

training and development activities (see the Appendix for the texts of these items and of other items written for this research). The items briefly described a mentor and a sponsor, focusing on the career-enhancing functions of such relationships rather than their psychosocial aspects (Kram, 1985). For instance, mentors were described as providing advancement opportunities, visibility, and advice to their protégés. Sponsors were said to offer favored status, special treatment, and increased power. Managers were asked to indicate the most recent year in which they had experienced each relationship. Because of the common element of career-enhancing functions inherent in both descriptions and the significant correlation between the two items ($r = .46$, $p < .01$), we created a combined variable called sponsorship. Managers who reported having experienced both a mentoring and a sponsoring relationship were coded 2; those who reported having experienced one of the relationships were coded 1; and those who reported having experienced neither relationship were coded 0.

In order to measure perceived supervisory support (see the Appendix), managers indicated their agreement or disagreement with nine items concerning the degree of career support they received from their immediate supervisor (e.g., "My supervisor takes the time to learn about my career goals and aspirations"). We averaged responses to the nine items to produce a total supervisory support scale ($\alpha = .93$). Perceived job discretion was measured with five items (e.g., "I have considerable decision-making power on my job") taken from a longer "job power" scale developed by Nixon (1985c: 18). We averaged these responses to produce a total job discretion score ($\alpha = .76$).

Perceived organizational acceptance was assessed with eight items (e.g., "I feel isolated from others in my work group," reverse-scored) taken from a longer "corporate fit" scale developed by Nixon (1985b: 20–21). We averaged responses, each made on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," to produce a total acceptance score ($\alpha = .79$). Career strategies were measured with eight items from Gould and Penley's (1984) Career Strategies Inventory. Managers indicated the frequency with which they had engaged in certain activities within the past year (e.g., "Made your boss aware of the assignments you want") on a 5-point scale ranging from "very frequently" to "never." Responses were averaged to produce a total career strategy score ($\alpha = .67$) in which high scores represented extensive use of career strategy behaviors.

Job performance evaluations. Managers' job performance was evaluated with a 23-item rating scale (Touliatos, Bedeian, Mossholder, & Barkman, 1984) included in the supervisors' survey. Using a 7-point scale ranging from "unsatisfactory" to "excellent," supervisors rated the managers on such characteristics as ability, cooperation, job knowledge, and quality of work. A factor analysis with varimax rotation produced two factors with eigenvalues of one or higher that accounted for 62.9 percent of the total variance. Factor 1, labeled relationship, accounted for 51.4 percent of the common variance, and included the following items, which are shown with their factor load-

ings: commitment to organization, .82; commitment to job, .78; attitude, .78; loyalty to organization, .76; cooperation, .76; loyalty to supervisor, .74; honesty, .64; punctuality, .57; interpersonal relationships, .52; and attendance, .49. These items were all associated with the satisfactoriness of the relationships employees had developed with their organization and its members. We averaged responses to the ten items comprising this factor to create a scale tapping the relationship component of job performance ($\alpha = .93$).

Factor 2 included ratings of ability (.80), judgment (.74), accuracy (.73), job knowledge (.70), creativity (.69), and promotability (.66). This factor explained 48.6 percent of the common variance and represented a task component of job performance. However, we deleted the item assessing promotability in factor 2 because it overlapped with the promotability assessment variable (see below) and because conceptually, it appeared to be less task-related than the other five items loading on the factor. We averaged responses to the remaining five items to create a scale tapping the task component of job performance ($\alpha = .89$). We examined the two dimensions of job performance evaluations—relationship and task—separately in all subsequent analyses.

Career outcomes. Managers' advancement prospects were assessed in two ways. Supervisors made a promotability assessment through their response to the following item on the supervisors' survey: "What is the likelihood that the employee will be promoted to a higher position sometime during his or her career with the company?" Responses to this item were made on a 4-point scale ranging from "high likelihood" to "no likelihood."

Managers' advancement prospects were also measured in terms of whether they had reached a plateau in their career. This measure was based on the length of managers' tenures in their current jobs. Following Veiga (1981) and Gould and Penley (1984), we considered managers to be at a career plateau (coded 2) if they had been in their current job seven years or more. Although job tenure does not directly assess whether an individual has reached a plateau, it appears reasonable to assume that a long time in one position indicates limited prospects for upward mobility. In fact, seven years was more than twice the average length of job tenure (3.44 years) observed for the present group of managers. Significant relationships between this variable and (1) supervisory ratings of promotability ($r = -.20, p < .01$) and (2) managers' perceptions of their own advancement opportunities ($r = -.25, p < .01$) provide further support for our measure of plateau status.

Career satisfaction was measured with five items developed expressly for this study (e.g., "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals"). We averaged responses to produce a total career satisfaction score ($\alpha = .88$; see the Appendix).

Data Analyses

Preliminary analyses, conducted to determine whether we could combine respondents from all three companies in examining the causal model, revealed that the managers' demographic characteristics were quite similar

across the companies. In addition, correlational analyses revealed that the relationships among the variables shown in Figure 1 were substantially similar in all three companies. Thus, we conducted all subsequent analyses on the combined group.

Path analysis was used to determine whether the observed pattern of relationships among the variables was consistent with the causal model presented in Figure 1. Additionally, we took several steps to check for possible violations of the assumptions underlying path analysis (Billings & Wroten, 1978; Heise, 1969). Examination of the alpha coefficients indicated satisfactory levels of internal consistency reliability among the multiitem scales. Moreover, the intercorrelations among the study variables, ranging from $-.20$ to $.67$ (median $r = .08$), revealed no evidence of extreme multicollinearity (i.e., r 's $\geq .80$). We also calculated Durbin-Watson d -statistics for each dependent variable in the model to test for autocorrelations among the residuals of the dependent variables. In such a calculation, the closer d is to 2, the stronger the evidence that the residuals are uncorrelated (Dillon & Goldstein, 1984). In the present study, the distribution of the d -statistics ($\bar{x} = 1.97$, range = $1.87-2.09$) strongly indicated the absence of correlated residuals.

The omitted parameter test (James, Mulaik, & Brett, 1982) was used to determine whether the paths predicted in Figure 1 were statistically significant and whether the unpredicted paths were nonsignificant. This test involves the analysis of all direct paths among the variables in a model, whether predicted or unpredicted, and thereby facilitates identification of specific sources of confirmation and disconfirmation within a proposed model.

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed to conduct the omitted parameter test and to assess the direct and indirect effects of the causal variables on successive dependent variables. Accordingly, we first regressed each career outcome on gender as a control variable, adding race in step two, the five organizational experiences in step three, and the two job performance factors in step four. In a similar manner, we regressed each job performance factor on gender in the first step, adding race and the five organizational experiences in steps two and three respectively. Finally, we regressed each organizational experience on gender in the first step and added race in the second step. The initial beta weight of a variable when it first enters a regression analysis represents the total effect of that variable on the dependent measure, whereas the final beta weight, calculated after all variables have entered the analysis, represents the variable's direct effect. The difference between the total effect and the direct effect reflects the indirect effect of the variable on the dependent measure (Ross, 1975).

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables examined in this study. The correlations reveal that

TABLE 1
Intercorrelations Among Variables^a

Variables	Means	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Sponsorship	0.48	0.71												
2. Acceptance	4.02	0.64	.14**											
3. Job discretion	3.02	0.88	.14**	.36**										
4. Supervisory support	3.32	1.04	.12**	.42**	.32**									
5. Career strategies	3.04	0.62	.32**	.12**	.22**	.08								
6. Job performance, relationship	5.76	0.88	.05	.25**	.25**	.31**	.05							
7. Job performance, task	5.20	0.93	.03	.15**	.15**	.14**	.04	.65**						
8. Promotability assessment	3.07	0.90	.15**	.14**	.04	.11**	.11**	.37**	.42**					
9. Career plateau ^b	1.17	0.38	-.12**	.02	.07*	-.04	-.07*	-.07*	.03	-.20**				
10. Career satisfaction	3.38	1.02	.15**	.25**	.32**	.37**	.06*	.20**	.09**	.06	-.06*			
11. Race ^c	1.55	0.50	.03	.10**	.06*	.05	-.04	.14**	.23**	.09**	-.06*	.15**		
12. Gender ^d	1.55	0.50	.02	-.08*	-.08	-.04	.02	.03	.02	.04	-.07*	.05	-.13**	

^a Because of pairwise deletion of missing data, N ranged from 760 to 828.

^b 1 = not plateaued, 2 = plateaued.

^c 1 = black, 2 = white.

^d 1 = man, 2 = woman.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed test.

** $p < .01$, one-tailed test.

black managers reported having less job discretion and lower feelings of acceptance than white managers. In addition, blacks were rated lower on both dimensions of job performance, received lower promotability assessments, were more likely to be at career plateaus, and were more dissatisfied with their careers than whites.

Table 2 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analyses testing the fully recursive model and indicates the total, direct, and indirect effects of the causal variables on the dependent measures. The data provide only limited support for the overall model proposed in Figure 1. Only 11 of the 21 predicted paths are statistically significant, whereas 13 of the 20 unpredicted paths are significant.

The analyses also identified specific sources of confirmation and disconfirmation of the proposed model. For example, the results provide partial support for the hypothesis that blacks will report more negative organizational experiences than whites. As the results shown in Table 2 indicate, race had significant effects on job discretion and acceptance. Blacks perceived themselves as having less discretion in their jobs and reported lower organizational acceptance than did whites. Contrary to the model's predictions, race had no effects on sponsorship, supervisory support, or career strategies.

With regard to the relationships between organizational experiences and job performance evaluations, three of the organizational experiences—job discretion, acceptance, and supervisory support—had positive effects on the relationship dimension of job performance. The model also predicted that race would have an indirect effect on job performance, with organizational experiences mediating the relationship between race and performance. Although Table 2 indicates that race had an indirect effect on the relationship dimension of job performance, it is clear that the direct effect (.13) was substantially stronger than the indirect effect (.03).

A similar pattern of results emerged in the prediction of the task dimension of job performance. The causally prior variables explained 9 percent of the variance in this dependent variable, and two of the organizational experiences, job discretion and support, had significant effects on this dimension of job performance. Although race had both direct effects and indirect effects (through job discretion) on the task dimension of job performance, the direct effect (.22) was considerably stronger than the indirect effect (.01).

With regard to the prediction of career outcomes, the variables in the model explained 22 percent of the variance in promotability assessments, 6 percent of the variance in career plateau status, and 22 percent of the variance in career satisfaction. As Table 2 shows, the results provide moderate support for the hypothesized linkage between job performance evaluations and career outcomes. Performance evaluations had direct effects on promotability assessments and career plateau status but not career satisfaction. Contrary to our predictions, several organizational experiences had direct effects on career outcomes. For example, sponsorship was associated with favorable assessments of promotability, low incidence of career plateauing,

TABLE 2
Direct and Indirect Effects of Antecedent Variables

(a) Organizational Experiences				
Antecedent Variables	Sponsorship	Discretion	Acceptance	Career Strategies
Gender ^a	.02	-.08*	-.08*	-.05
Race ^b	.04	.07*	.11**	.05
R ²	.00	.01**	.02**	.00
(b) Job Performance Evaluations				
Antecedent Variables	Relationship Dimension		Task Dimension	
	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total
Gender	.03	.07*	-.04	.03
Race	.16	.13**	.03	.23
Sponsorship	-.02	-.02	.00	-.02
Job discretion	.14	.14**	.00	.08
Acceptance	.09	.09*	.00	.06
Supervisory support	.23	.23**	.00	.08
Career strategies	.02	.02	.00	.04
R ²	.15**			.09**

TABLE 2 (continued)

(c) Career Outcomes		Promotability Assessments			Career Plateau ^c			Career Satisfaction		
Antecedent Variables	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	
Gender	.03	.00	.03	-.07	-.06*	-.01	.04	.09**	-.05	
Race	.10	.00	.10	-.08	-.10**	.02	.18	.14**	.04	
Sponsorship	.11	.12**	-.01	-.13	-.13**	.00	.08	.09**	.04	
Job discretion	-.05	-.10**	.05	.12	.13**	-.01	.21	.21**	.00	
Acceptance	.08	.04	.04	.03	.04	-.01	.05	.05	.00	
Supervisory support	.08	.02	.06	-.07	-.04	-.03	.26	.25**	.01	
Career strategies	.08	.06*	.06	-.05	-.05	.00	-.06	-.06*	.00	
Job performance, relationship	.16	.16**	.00	-.16	-.16**	.00	.06	.06	.00	
Job performance, task	.31	.31**	.00	.14	.14**	.00	-.03	-.03	.00	
R ²	.22**			.06**			.22**			

^a 1 = man, 2 = woman.
^b 1 = black, 2 = white.
^c 1 = not plateaued, 2 = plateaued.
* $p < .05$, one-tailed test.
** $p < .01$, one-tailed test.

and high levels of career satisfaction. Job discretion was associated with relatively unfavorable advancement prospects but high levels of career satisfaction. Career strategy behaviors were positively related to assessments of promotability but negatively related to career satisfaction.

The model predicted that race would have indirect effects on the career outcomes specified, with organizational experiences and job performance evaluations mediating the relationships between race and outcomes. Although race was significantly related to each career outcome, the effect varied somewhat across outcomes. In line with the proposed model, the effect of race on promotability assessments (.10) was entirely indirect (see Table 2), operating through job discretion and the two job performance evaluation variables. Failing to fit the model, however, were direct race effects on career plateau status and career satisfaction. As indicated in Table 2, the direct effects of race on plateau status ($-.10$) and on career satisfaction (.14) were substantially stronger than the respective indirect effects (.02 for career plateau status and .04 for career satisfaction).

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine relationships among race, organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes. In particular, the research sought to determine whether organizational experiences mediated race differences in job performance evaluations and whether organizational experiences and job performance evaluations mediated race differences in career outcomes. The results provided limited support for the mediational processes specified in the model and revealed that race had direct effects on job performance evaluations, career plateauing, and career satisfaction.

Significant race effects were observed for both job performance dimensions: supervisors rated blacks lower than whites on both the relationship and the task components of performance. These results are remarkably consistent with the results of Kraiger and Ford's (1985) meta-analysis. They found that the best estimate of the population effect in field studies with white raters was .192, which indicates that race explained approximately 3.7 percent of the variance in job performance ratings. In the present field study with predominantly (93.3%) white raters, race accounted for 2.5 percent of the variance in the relationship component of performance and 5.5 percent of the variance in the task component. Averaged across components, race explained 4 percent of the variance in job performance evaluations. Thus, bearing out Kraiger and Ford's findings, the effect of race on job performance evaluations in the present study was significant and modest in magnitude.

Ilgen and Youtz (1986) suggested that the differential treatment minority members experience may explain race differences in job performance. The finding that a portion of the race effect on job performance operated indirectly through job discretion and acceptance provides some support for this assertion. Thus, the less favorable job performance evaluations received by

black managers are partially attributable to the lower levels of job discretion blacks experienced and their lower level of organizational acceptance. The race differences in job discretion and acceptance found in this study are consistent with the findings of Fernandez (1975, 1981) and Nixon (1985b). The results of the present study, with its demographically comparable samples of blacks and whites, strengthen the conclusion that blacks may be excluded from opportunities for power and integration within organizations and that such exclusion may be detrimental to their job performance.

However, it should be recalled that the effects of race on job performance evaluations were primarily direct. We can offer several explanations for this direct effect. It is possible that other organizational experiences, unexamined in the present research, were responsible for the race differences in job performance evaluations. This explanation assumes that race's effect on evaluations reflects actual performance differences between blacks and whites and that differential treatment and experiences within the organizations caused these performance differences. In a similar vein, it is possible that differential experiences before entering the organizations studied, such as early educational experiences and socialization processes, are responsible for race differences in work effectiveness. Future research should examine a range of organizational and extraorganizational experiences that may impede the performance of black managers.

Alternatively, it is possible that race differences in job performance evaluations do not reflect differences in actual job performance but instead indicate the presence of bias in the rating process. Since race explained more variance than organizational experiences in job performance evaluations, it is possible that the predominantly white supervisors used race rather than work-related cues in assessing the managers' job performance. Some previous studies have indicated the presence of rater bias, the most prominent illustration of which is the tendency of raters to give higher ratings to same-race ratees revealed in Kraiger and Ford (1985). Researchers should examine stereotyping, information selection and use, and judgment processes (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986) as potential sources of bias in future work. Such research should also include objective measures of job performance like sales volume and task goal accomplishment to determine more precisely the presence of bias in job performance evaluations.

Race differences were also observed for each of the career outcomes under investigation. Blacks received less favorable assessments of promotability from their supervisors, were more likely to have plateaued in their careers, and were more dissatisfied with their careers than whites. These findings are consistent with prior research suggesting that black managers experience restricted advancement opportunities and career dissatisfaction (Alderfer et al., 1980; Brown & Ford, 1977; Fernandez, 1981; Jones, 1986).

The effect of race on promotability assessments was entirely indirect, operating primarily through job performance evaluations: black managers were seen as having relatively restricted promotion opportunities because they received lower performance ratings than whites. This finding under-

scores the urgency of understanding sources of race differences in rated job performance, since performance ratings played such a prominent role in supervisors' assessments of managers' promotability.

The effect of race on career plateauing was predominantly direct. Moreover, the impact of race on plateau status is not likely to be an artifact of the sampling procedure used here, since the black and the white managers were similar in age, organizational tenure, job function, and organizational level. In addition, although it has been argued that blacks are assigned to dead-end jobs, the present data do not support that assertion. We measured "career path elasticity" (Veiga, 1981), an assessment of the extent to which the previous incumbent of a particular position has been mobile within an organization. The absence of a significant relationship between race and career path elasticity among the present respondents ($r = -.06$) suggests that other factors are responsible for the long job tenures of the black managers. Future research should examine the extent to which race differences in career plateauing are due to organizational decisions to keep a manager in a specific position as opposed to managers' decisions to remain in their jobs.

Race had a small indirect effect on career satisfaction. One reason blacks reported lower career satisfaction than whites was because the blacks perceived less discretion and autonomy on their jobs than the whites. However, the direct effect of race on career satisfaction overwhelmed the indirect effect. Additional research needs to identify the determinants of career satisfaction so that race differences in career satisfaction can be better understood. Since the career concept is ultimately related to time (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989), perhaps time-related variables like the attainment of career goals and promotion history would be potent predictors of career satisfaction and would provide a deeper understanding of race differences in career satisfaction.

Several other findings deserve brief discussion. It is heartening that we found no race differences in sponsorship and supervisory support. This absence is especially noteworthy since support seemed to promote effective job performance and career satisfaction, and sponsorship had direct effects on promotability, career plateau status, and career satisfaction. Further research is needed to determine why minority members may experience disparate treatment in some domains (job discretion, acceptance) and not others (sponsorship, support). In addition, blacks were as likely as whites to participate extensively in career strategy activities. Thus, there was no evidence that black managers engaged in self-limiting behaviors regarding the management of their careers. The possibility of race differences in other manifestations of self-limiting behavior should be examined in future research.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the present study provided only limited support for the proposed model. It appears that the relationships among the model variables

are more complex than we initially proposed them to be and that a “complete mediational model” (James & Brett, 1984: 308) may represent an oversimplification of the mechanisms that explain race differences in job performance evaluations and career outcomes. Thus, the model should be revised to incorporate additional organizational experiences, such as receiving challenging task assignments with high visibility, as well as extraorganizational variables like educational experiences and personal characteristics that may be relevant to understanding the job performance and career outcomes of members of different subgroups. Such a revised model should also examine both the full and partial mediational processes that may be operating and explore the possibility of bias in the performance rating process. We hope the results of the present study will encourage scholars to conduct programmatic research to further examine the network of variables that impinge on the job performance evaluations and career success of both black and white managers.

Such research should be conducted in a broad range of work organizations. Most of the data in the present study came from one large communications company. Although correlational analyses suggested that the findings were similar across all three companies studied, it is still possible that characteristics of the largest company molded the present results. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings to other companies and industries needs to be established. Moreover, blacks and whites representing a broad range of managerial levels should be represented in future studies. Members of the present sample occupied predominantly lower- and middle-level managerial and professional positions. Thus, the generalizability of these findings to upper-level executives and professionals awaits confirmation through additional research.

Although the race effects in the present study were modest in magnitude, the consistent direction of these differences should caution employers to be vigilant in their attempts to assure equal opportunity. The observed race differences in perceived job autonomy and acceptance suggest that supervisors should be sensitive to the potential for disparate treatment of minority subordinates and should examine their own behavior for possible bias. The present results also suggest that organizations should periodically examine managers' job performance evaluations, advancement experiences, and career attitudes for possible differences based on race. The presence of race differences in any of these variables should be carefully scrutinized to identify their underlying causes and to determine whether these differences reflect unfair treatment. The importance of establishing an unbiased performance rating system cannot be overemphasized, given the dominant role of ratings in shaping future advancement opportunities.

A work environment conducive to equal employment opportunity should produce minimal race differences in work-related experiences and outcomes. Considerable research is necessary to identify the potential for race differences in these variables and to understand the determinants and

consequences of those differences that do exist. The current study represents a first step in that direction and constitutes a significant building block toward the development of theory concerning the role of race in career dynamics.

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APPENDIX

Previously Unpublished Measures Used in This Study

Sponsorship

Managers were provided with the following definition of a mentoring relationship: “A relationship with a more experienced colleague in order to provide you with increased opportunities for advancement, corporate visibility, guidance and advice, and ‘running interference.’” A sponsoring relationship was defined as “A relationship with an individual of higher status or greater influence in the organization that provides you with ‘favored status,’ special treatment, or increased power and influence.”

Supervisory Support

Managers indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements, responding on a 5-point scale where 5 = strongly disagree, 4 = disagree to some extent, 3 = uncertain, 2 = agree to some extent, and 1 = strongly agree. Responses were reverse-coded so that high scores reflected extensive perceived career support.

1. My supervisor takes the time to learn about my career goals and aspirations.
2. My supervisor cares about whether or not I achieve my career goals.
3. My supervisor keeps me informed about different career opportunities for me in the organization.
4. My supervisor makes sure I get the credit when I accomplish something substantial on the job.
5. My supervisor gives me helpful feedback about my performance.
6. My supervisor gives me helpful advice about improving my performance when I need it.

7. My supervisor supports my attempts to acquire additional training or education to further my career.
8. My supervisor provides assignments that give me the opportunity to develop and strengthen new skills.
9. My supervisor assigns me special projects that increase my visibility in the organization.

Career Satisfaction

Managers indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements, using the same 5-point, reverse-coded scale as for the supervisory support items.

1. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.
3. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.
4. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.
5. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

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