Beyond One-Size-Fits-All:

Tailoring Diversity Approaches to Social Groups

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Abstract

We develop and test a theory regarding when and why diversity approaches—frameworks for understanding and responding to diversity—help underrepresented groups succeed in organizations. We propose that these approaches are most effective when they fit societal perceptions of whether it is appropriate to acknowledge an individual’s salient group membership. To evaluate this, we employ a mixed-method approach, focusing on women and racial minorities. In Study 1, a survey demonstrated that people perceive acknowledging racial differences as less appropriate than acknowledging gender differences. In Study 2, a field study content-coded the diversity statements of 151 major U.S. law firms and examined the relationship between these statements and employees’ job persistence. Results revealed the presence of two overarching diversity approaches, value in difference and value in equality, which vary according to their emphasis on the importance of group differences versus equality. Furthermore, alignment between these diversity approaches and perceptions of how to appropriately respond to individuals’ salient group membership predicted job persistence: emphasis on value in difference predicted lower attrition rates among women, whereas emphasis on value in equality predicted lower attrition rates among racial minorities. In Studies 3 and 4, experiments exposed participants to either value in difference or value in equality statements. These studies replicated the general pattern of results above and established causality using a performance task that demands persistence. Study 4 also clarified the theorized process, demonstrating that effectively tailoring diversity approaches requires identifying which social group membership is salient in a given situation.

Keywords: diversity, race, gender, equality, differences
Beyond One-Size-Fits-All: 

Tailoring Diversity Approaches to Social Groups

To contend with the demands of an increasingly global and diverse workforce, organizations need to develop diversity approaches—frameworks for understanding why diversity matters and how people should respond to it. Research in psychology and organizational behavior suggests that these diversity approaches are critical for cultivating inclusive cultures in which underrepresented groups can realize their potential (Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Kaiser et al, 2013; Plaut, 2010; 2014; Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Diltman, & Crosby, 2008; Schmader & Hall, 2014). Yet which diversity approach is most effective in achieving this objective remains unclear. We suggest here that the challenge of identifying the optimal diversity approach may stem, in part, from the fact that it is not feasible to pinpoint a one-size-fits-all message that will resonate uniformly with all underrepresented groups. Rather, it may be necessary to broaden existing conceptualizations of what constitutes an effective diversity approach by considering which social group is targeted by these efforts.

We propose a fit theory that distinguishes between diversity approaches based on their emphasis on the importance of group differences versus the importance of equality, and then uses this theoretical distinction to explain when and why approaches are likely to encourage positive outcomes for different underrepresented groups. Past research suggests underrepresented groups face particular challenges in organizations that can detract from their job satisfaction and commitment (Mueller, Finley, Iverson, & Price, 1999; Riordan & Shore, 1997), performance (Chatman & Flynn, 2001), and persistence (Sorenson, 2000). We develop and test this theory in the context of professional firms in the United States by focusing on two of the social groups
most often targeted by diversity-related efforts: women and racial minorities. Our theory highlights three key factors for determining whether a given diversity approach will help women and racial minorities thrive.

First, we consider whether it is appropriate to acknowledge the salient social group membership of the individuals targeted by the diversity approach. Here, we expect that people in the U.S. will view acknowledging gender differences more appropriate than acknowledging racial differences. Second, we consider the content of diversity approaches; namely, whether they emphasize group differences or equality. Third, we consider whether this content emphasized by the diversity approach fits societal perceptions of whether it is appropriate to acknowledge gender and racial differences.

Accordingly, we argue that diversity approaches will yield more positive outcomes for women when they emphasize the importance of differences (fitting the perception that it is relatively appropriate to acknowledge gender differences). By contrast, we argue that diversity approaches will yield more positive outcomes for racial minorities when they emphasize the importance of equality (fitting the perception it is relatively inappropriate to acknowledge racial differences).

**Diversity Approaches**

It is clear from past research that underrepresented groups are more satisfied and exhibit greater engagement in organizations with supportive compared with unsupportive diversity climates (Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Tonidandel, 2007; Kossek & Zonia, 1993; McKay et al., 2007; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). What is less clear, however, is how organizations can cultivate supportive environments that will increase underrepresented groups’ opportunity to succeed. To create conditions in which underrepresented groups feel supported and are likely to
reach their potential, organizations often rely on structural interventions such as changing formal policies and creating new programs. For example, organizations may implement affirmative action plans to increase representation of underrepresented groups, create affinity groups that provide these individuals with a forum to engage social and work-related challenges, provide flexible work arrangements, or offer training and sponsorship programs (Harrison et al., 2006; Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006; Kravitz, 2008; Moen, Kelly, & Hill, 2011). While these structural interventions may be necessary for underrepresented groups to have an opportunity to thrive, so too is an inclusive organizational culture. Here, we argue that tailoring diversity approaches represents one powerful lever that organizations can utilize to create these supportive cultures for members of underrepresented groups.

Generally speaking, diversity approaches answer the questions of what diversity is, why diversity matters, and how its benefits should be realized. They therefore present organizations with a critical opportunity to take account of and include the particular experiences, values, and concerns of different underrepresented groups. Diversity approaches not only provide a blueprint for how employees of different groups should interact, but also for how organizations should administer various programs, policies, and procedures related to diversity. Literatures in intergroup relations and team and organizational diversity have identified conceptually similar constructs. For example, in research on intergroup relations, social psychologists have examined diversity structures (Kaiser et al., 2013), diversity philosophies (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008), diversity ideologies (Knowles et al., 2009), and models of diversity (Plaut, 2002). In research on team and organizational diversity, scholars have examined diversity perspectives (Ely & Thomas, 2001) and diversity mindsets (van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, & Homan, 2013). We use
diversity approaches as broad and inclusive term in order to integrate key aspects of these related constructs.

One important contribution of social psychological research regards the importance of considering how diversity approaches deal with the salience of social group differences—a focus that is perhaps most evident in the growing body of work comparing multiculturalism and colorblindness (Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012; Plaut, 2002; 2010). Multiculturalism underscores the importance of recognizing (even celebrating) salient group differences to promote positive intergroup relations, whereas colorblindness underscores the importance of deemphasizing or disregarding salient group differences to achieve the same objective (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008; Wolsko et al., 2000). Exposing participants to these different intergroup models influences a range of behavioral outcomes, from the ease of interracial interactions (Holoien & Shelton, 2012) and underrepresented groups’ job preferences (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008) to majority groups’ expression of bias (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004) and reporting of discrimination (Apfelbaum et al., 2011). While most past work in this area suggests multiculturalism is more beneficial than colorblindness for underrepresented social groups, the literature is not conclusive, and a number of important issues remain (Plaut, 2014).

First, some studies reveal contexts in which colorblindness is more beneficial than multiculturalism (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008; Correll, Park, & Smith, 2008; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008; Wolsko et al., 2000), suggesting that the effectiveness of these models is moderated by other factors—a possibility that has yet to be explored. Second, multiculturalism and colorblindness have become increasingly broadly-defined constructs, which has made drawing general conclusions about their effects more challenging. For instance, colorblindness has been used both to describe efforts to ignore differences and ones to promote equality, despite
the potential for these to signal different messages to targets depending on the context. Third, we do not know whether, and to what degree, the themes and language used to manipulate multiculturalism and colorblindness in experimental paradigms map onto the ways in which diversity approaches are conveyed in actual organizations and other real world settings.

Though notions of multiculturalism and colorblindness are not central to the organizational diversity literature, research in this domain provides a context-specific understanding of how organizations describe and justify diversity in the workplace (Cox, 1994; Davidson, 2011; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Thomas and Ely, 1996). Integrating these complementary literatures informs the content of two overarching, yet fundamentally different, approaches organizations may take to create a supportive environment for underrepresented groups: value in difference and value in equality.

Value in difference and value in equality approaches differ primarily in how they understand group differences and how they suggest responding to such differences. The value in difference approach suggests there are a range of potential benefits gleaned from recognizing and leveraging employees’ group differences. Organizations that employ the value in difference approach might convey that employees from different social groups bring different experiences with them to the organization and that these differences should be embraced in order to contribute to a wider range of perspectives, foster an inclusive culture, or advance business objectives (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Davidson, 2011; Page, 2007). In contrast, the value in equality approach does not highlight group differences, but rather unifies employees by underscoring the importance of equity, fairness, and standards of excellence. Organizations that employ the value in equality approach might convey that the processes involved in evaluations are just; that all
employees receive equal access, opportunities, and rewards; or that efforts are made to eliminate potential sources of bias (Cox, 1994; Ely & Thomas, 2001).

**Tailoring Diversity Approaches to Social Groups**

We propose that distinguishing between diversity approaches according to their emphasis on value in difference and value in equality is functionally important because it can illuminate when and why a given diversity approach will be effective. We propose that these approaches are most effective when they fit with societal perceptions of whether it is appropriate to acknowledge individuals’ salient group membership. We evaluate this argument by focusing on women and racial minorities. These two groups are ideal for the development of our theory because they are typically underrepresented and occupy lower status positions in organizations (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Steele, 2011), and, thus, are frequently the targets of organizations’ efforts to manage diversity. Despite these shared experiences, we suggest that people’s general perceptions of how to appropriately respond to race versus gender will diverge.

Consider, for instance, empirical work documenting the developmental trajectory through children in the U.S. learn to respond to race and gender. Though race and gender are both perceived almost instantaneously (Ito & Urland, 2003), at approximately 10 years of age, children begin to purposefully avoid mention of race, but continue to openly acknowledge gender (Apfelbaum et al., 2008). This differential comfort with talking about race versus gender is also true of adults (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008; Norton et al., 2006) and extends beyond Whites to include Blacks, Latinos, and Asians (Pauker, Apfelbaum, & Spitzer, 2015). This work suggests a difference in the societal appropriateness of acknowledging race versus gender—perceptions that appear to be broadly recognized by individuals in the U.S., irrespective of their own racial or ethnic background.
Though past work has not yet considered the benefits of tailoring diversity approaches to social groups, the literature on culture-person or culture-organization fit provides evidence generally consistent with the claim that aligning employees’ everyday experiences outside the workplace and their social experience in the workplace will be beneficial (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail, 1994). Specifically, research suggests that aligning organizations’ diversity approaches with societal perceptions of how to appropriately respond to individuals’ salient group membership will increase underrepresented groups’ engagement and performance (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; Cross and Vick, 2001; Oyserman and Destin, 2010; Stephens et al., 2012; Stephens, Townsend, Markus, and Phillips, 2012).

Based on our synthesis of the literatures reviewed the sections above, we propose two complementary hypotheses regarding when diversity approaches will promote positive outcomes for women and racial minorities’ in organizations. Specifically, given societal perceptions that it is relatively appropriate to acknowledge gender differences, we expect that women will exhibit greater persistence and performance when organizations emphasize a value in difference approach to diversity. By contrast, given societal perceptions that it is relatively inappropriate to acknowledge racial differences, we expect that racial minorities will exhibit greater persistence and performance when organizations emphasize a value in equality approach to diversity.

**Research Overview**

Over the course of four studies, we enlist a mixed-method approach to develop and test our theory. In Study 1, we survey a diverse sample of adults to test whether people perceive acknowledging racial differences as less appropriate than acknowledging gender differences. In Study 2, we content-code the diversity statements from 151 major U.S. law firms according to their emphasis on the value in difference and value in equality approaches we theorize. We then
assess whether alignment between diversity approaches and societal perceptions of how to appropriately respond to gender and race affects job persistence. Specifically, we examine whether firms’ statements that emphasize value in difference are associated with reduced turnover among female attorneys, whereas statements that emphasize value in equality are associated with reduced turnover among racial minority attorneys. In Study 3, to establish causality, we randomly assign women and racial minority professionals to review a diversity statement, emphasizing either the value in differences or value in equality, and then assess their performance on a behavioral task. Finally, in Study 4, we test a key assumption underlying our theorized process: that the beneficial effects of tailoring diversity approaches hinge on determining which social group membership is salient in a given situation. Specifically, we increase the salience of Black women’s gender or race and then examine how diversity approaches affect their task performance.

**Study 1: Societal Appropriateness of Acknowledging Race and Gender**

In Study 1, we test the prediction that people generally perceive acknowledging racial differences as less appropriate in society than acknowledging gender differences. To test this hypothesis, we constructed a series of questions focused on the appropriateness of recognizing racial and gender differences in the workplace and in general.

**Method**

**Participants**

We surveyed 324 adults online about their “social and organizational beliefs” in exchange for payment.¹ Participants varied with respect to a number of demographic

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¹ We used Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (www.mturk.com). Recent research in psychology, political science, and sociology indicates these participants are significantly more diverse and representative of the general population than convenience samples of adults or college students (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012; Buhrmester, Kwang, &
characteristics, including gender (205 men and 119 women) and race/ethnicity (256 White, 24 Black, 28 Asian, 11 Latino, 1 Native American, and 4 multiracial individuals). The average age was 30.84 years ($SD = 10.39$ years) and the average amount of work experience was 9.81 years ($SD = 9.96$ years). Respondents also varied in terms of their level of educational attainment: 6.8% held an advanced graduate degree (e.g., PhD, MD, MBA, JD), 39.5% held a four-year college degree (BS or BA), 9.0% held a two-year college degree (AA), 26.9% had completed 1-2 years of college, 17.0% held a high school diploma, and 0.9% completed some high school or less.

**Procedure**

The survey asked participants to rate their agreement with the pairs of items listed in Table 1. These items asked participants to compare the appropriateness of acknowledging gender to racial differences. The content of item pairs was identical, but one item always referenced differences between men and women while the other item always referenced differences between White people and racial minorities. Participants were asked to respond to each item using a 7-point scale ($1 = $strongly disagree$, 4 = neither agree nor disagree$, $7 = $strongly agree$). To mitigate social desirability concerns with responding to these items, participants were reminded that there were no right or wrong answers and asked to simply provide the first response that came to mind. After completing these items, participants provided basic demographic information. They were then debriefed, thanked, and paid for their participation.

**Results**

We factor analyzed responses to the survey items to determine people’s perceptions regarding the appropriateness of acknowledging racial and gender differences. Results from an

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Gosling, 2011) and yield data of comparable quality to population-based panels (Weinberg, Freese, & McElhattan, 2014).
exploratory factor analysis revealed three distinct dimensions to societal perceptions of appropriateness: *comfort recognizing differences*, *necessity of recognizing differences in the workplace*, and *differences are essential*. The three factors were extracted using the maximum likelihood method and the initial factor solution was rotated to allow the underlying factors to be correlated. The first factor explains 31% of the covariance, the second factor explains 15% of the covariance, and the third factor explains 10% of the covariance.  

Paired-samples *t*-tests revealed that people’s beliefs about the societal appropriateness of acknowledging gender or racial differences varied consistently across all three factors. As shown in Table 1, with regard to the *comfort recognizing differences* factor, participants reported that most people feel greater comfort talking about differences and acknowledging the different experiences and perspectives of men and women (versus between Whites and racial minorities). Paralleling this pattern, the *necessity of recognizing differences in the workplace* factor revealed that participants perceived acknowledging gender differences in the workplace as more appropriate than acknowledging racial differences. For example, participants viewed efforts to ignore gender differences in the workplace and to create a gender-blind organization as less tenable than identical actions to suppress acknowledgment of racial differences. Finally, results for the *differences are essential* factor demonstrated that participants reported that recognizing gender differences was more natural and automatic than recognizing racial differences.  

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2 While we focus on the results from the exploratory factor analysis in the text, we used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the extent to which the different items in Table 1 represent distinct factors. CFA results indicate a reasonable fit to a three factor structure (RMSEA = .072).  

3 Given the focus on acknowledging race and gender, it also is possible that participants’ demographic characteristics influenced these perceptions. To examine this possibility, we used results from a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to create a summary score for each factor for each respondent. The CFA of the items in Table 1 had a reasonable fit (RMSEA = .072, lower bound = .066 and upper bound = .089). For each participant, scores for each factor were estimated and then regressed on an indicator variable that was set equal to zero if the focal item focused on gender differences or 1 if the question focused on racial differences. The regression also included interactions terms between the indicator variable and the demographic characteristics of our participants. These regression
Study 2: Diversity Statements Predict Attrition among Women and Minorities in Law Firms

In Study 2, we analyzed the content of diversity statements from 151 major U.S. law firms to examine two key issues. First, we evaluated whether the value in difference and value in equality approaches we theorize represent key dimensions of these diversity statements, and if so, how organizations articulate them. Second, to assess the possibility that there are beneficial effects of tailoring diversity approaches, we then examine whether an emphasis on value in differences versus an emphasis on value in equality is associated with attrition among women and racial minorities working at these firms. We expected that female employees would be more likely to persist in their jobs to the degree that firms emphasize the importance of group differences, whereas racial minority employees would be more likely to persist to the degree that firms emphasize the importance of equality.

Method

Law Firm Database

Our law firm data comes from Building a Better Legal Profession (BBLP), a non-profit corporation established in 2007 that aggregates, analyzes, and publicizes law firm employment results were consistent with the paired \( t \)-test results reported above. The interaction terms revealed few between group differences, indicating that perceptions regarding what differences should be acknowledged were endorsed broadly by our participants, independent of their demographic characteristics. With regards to gender, perceptions of male and female participants were similar across the three factors. There was, however, some variation in perceptions with respect to participants’ racial background: Asian participants were more likely than White participants to feel comfortable recognizing racial differences. Furthermore, compared to Whites, Black participants perceived racial differences as more essential than gender differences, but this effect was only marginally significant. Overall, the results of Study 1 support the hypothesis that participants generally perceived acknowledging racial differences as less societally appropriate than acknowledging gender differences.
statistics from the National Association for Law Placement (NALP). NALP maintains an extensive public directory of employment data, including, among other factors, the degree to which firms’ retention of lawyers differs by race and gender. BBLP is designed to facilitate legal career counseling and planning by organizing these data in a manner that allows for comparisons among firms. BBLP reports employment data for every major law firm office in six major legal markets: New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Southern California, Northern California, and Boston—and five subsidiary markets: Atlanta, Miami, Pacific Northwest, Philadelphia, and Texas. All law firm offices employed at least 50 attorneys.

Coding and Analysis of Diversity Statements

We collected the public diversity statements from the websites of every firm that was included in the BBLP database as of 2011. We started with 160 firms, but 9 firms did not have a diversity statement, which left 151 statements for analysis. We developed a series of items designed to capture the degree to which diversity statements emphasized the importance of differences or equality. Table 2 provides a list of these 12 items, their definitions, and examples from diversity statements. We asked two research assistants—blind to our research objectives—to independently code 80 randomly-selected diversity statements for the presence or absence of these 12 items. If after reading a statement, an assistant determined an item was present, a value of 1 was assigned to that statement; if the item was not present, a value of 0 was assigned. To provide additional structure to the coding procedure, we gave the research assistants specific keywords and phrases associated with each of the items listed in Table 2. Analyses indicated our two coders evaluated the statements similarly. Inter-rater reliability was sufficient (M kappa=.72; kappa range=.56-1.00; Landis and Koch, 1977) and disagreements were resolved through
discussion. After achieving inter-rater reliability, each coder then independently coded half of the remaining diversity statements.

We then examined the extent to which the 12 items corresponded to the two general diversity approaches we theorized. To investigate this, across the 151 firms, we calculated the distances between the 12 items and subjected those distances to a multidimensional scaling algorithm. The results are illustrated in Figure 1. In this figure, items that appear close to one another tended to co-occur in the same statements. The empirical results are consistent with our theoretical prediction, suggesting that there are two general diversity approaches—one associated with the value in differences and a second associated with the value in equality. The value in difference cluster contained items that provide a rationale for why group differences are important. Specifically, the value in difference cluster conveyed that group differences should be embraced for their capacity to broaden employees’ way of thinking, advance business objectives, foster an inclusive firm culture, and facilitate community outreach. In contrast, the value in equality cluster contained items that provide a rationale for why equality and fairness are important. Specifically, items in the value in equality cluster conveyed that it was important to satisfy a moral responsibility by making processes fair, providing equal opportunities and access to all employees, and eliminating bias. Interestingly, two of the items we coded—merit and individual focus—could not be classified with either the value in difference or value in equality cluster and therefore were not included in subsequent analyses. Merit and individual focus thus appear to be ambiguous themes, and could be used to support either diversity approach.4,5

4 Empirical results to be presented would lead to the same substantive conclusions if the merit and individual focus items are included in either the value in difference or value in equality clusters.

5 To bolster our confidence in the reliability of our coders, we employed an additional word count approach to coding the diversity statements. We counted the keywords associated with the 12 items and focused on the extent to which they co-occurred in diversity statements. Specifically, we counted the number of times these keywords co-occurred in the same paragraphs of our diversity statements and used those counts to calculate the conditional probability of two items being discussed at the same time in a given diversity statement. Items discussed at the same
For every diversity statement, we created two variables: one measured the degree to which a firm’s statement emphasized elements of the value in difference approach and a second measured the degree to which the statement emphasized elements of the value in equality approach. Our value in equality variable is a count of the number of times a firm’s diversity statement included items from the value in equality cluster in Figure 1. Our value in difference variable is a count of the number of times a firm’s diversity statement included items from the value in difference cluster. Summary statistics for the two variables are presented in Table 3. The summary statistics indicate that diversity statements contained more items related to the value in difference approach, suggesting that overall firms endorsed a value in differences approach more often than a value in equality approach.

< Insert Figure 1, Table 2 and Table 3 about here >

Attrition Estimates

Next we analyzed the extent to which law firms’ emphases on value in difference and value in equality approaches in their diversity statements were associated with turnover among women and racial minority at these firms. We focused our empirical analysis on associate attorneys. Associates are relatively early in their job tenure and therefore are still evaluating their time would presumably represent two elements of a broader diversity approach. We cluster analyzed these probabilities and the empirical results provided support for the two approaches we have discussed thus far, revealing a cluster that generally contained the items associated with the value in difference approach and second cluster which generally contained the items associated with value in equality approach. Indeed, the position of an item in our initial coder MDS had a .78 correlation with its position in the word count MDS. There were, however, some differences. First, in the word count solution, “diverse perspectives” was a more ambiguous concept and second, “merit” was closer to the value in equality cluster. However, the biggest difference between the two MDS solutions occurred for the “equal opportunity” item which was classified as part of the value in equality cluster in initial coder solution, but appeared as part of the value in equality cluster in the word count solution. Despite these differences, these results suggest our coders were reliable. Moreover, we give priority to the research assistant approach given their ability to understand keywords in context as opposed to merely counting their occurrence and co-occurrence. Finally, if we define value in difference in terms of the four items which occurred in both MDS solutions (promotion focus, inclusive culture, business case, and community and society) and value in equality in terms of the four items which occurred in both solutions (fairness, prevention focus, blind to diversity, and moral responsibility), we obtain the same pattern of results to be reported.
fit with the culture of the firm (Caldwell & O’Reilly, 1990; Jovanovic, 1979; Meitzen, 1986).

Given the similarity in work across law firms for associates, fit with any one firm can be expected to influence an associate’s decision to continue with or leave a firm (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). While BBLP does not provide individual turnover data, it does offer attrition estimates that approximate associate attrition rates for each firm in their database. Specifically, BBLP provides four separate associate attrition estimates for women, men, racial minorities and White individuals.

We focus on the tendency for women to leave a firm at a higher rate than men and for minority associates to leave at a higher rate than White associates. For each firm, we computed a relative attrition score for women by dividing the attrition estimate for women by the attrition estimate for men and took the natural log of this ratio. The variable is negative if women turnover at a lower rate than men but positive if women leave at a higher rate. For example, if 20 percent of the female associates turnover while 30 percent of the male associates turnover, our female attrition variable would equal, \(-0.40 (\ln(0.2/0.3))\) which would indicate a tendency for women to turnover at a lower rate than men. We also calculated a relative attrition score for racial minorities at a firm by dividing their score by the estimated attrition rate of White individuals.

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6 BBLP’s attrition estimates are based on the increase or decrease in the expected number of associates at a firm for each year. BBLP estimates attrition at a firm in a particular year based on the standard industry practice of hiring summer associates from the previous year. While a small portion of firms may not hire their summer associates, the prevailing industry standard is to do so, particularly among the large firms included in the BBLP database. Accordingly, attrition is estimated by comparing the current year’s associate count with the previous year’s associate and summer associate count. The number of associates present at the firm in 2011 should equal the number of 2010 associates plus the number of 2010 summer associates. Thus, the BBLP attrition estimate indicates the proportion of associates from the previous year which were “missing” from the associate pool this year. More precisely, BBLP subtracts the number of associates in 2011 \((A(t))\) from the number of associates and summer associates in 2010 \((A(t - 1))\) and divides that difference by the number of associates and summer associates in 2010: \([A(t - 1) - A(t)]/A(t - 1)\). For example, if there were 10 associates and summer associates in 2010 but only 8 associates in 2011, this would suggest that 20 percent of the associates “left” the firm.

7 BBLP breaks down attrition estimates by race or by gender, but not by race and gender simultaneously. In the context of this study, therefore, we focus on modal differences between women and racial minorities. We directly examine the case of racial minority women in Study 4.
associates and took the natural log of this ratio. Logging these proportions gives more weight to differences in attrition between groups when attrition at a firm is low versus high. The empirical results we present below are the same if we simply use attrition for men as a control in the female attrition equations and attrition for Whites as a control in the minority attrition equations.

Results

We obtained relative attrition scores for women and racial minorities for 2011 and 2010. Since we collected diversity statements in 2011, we focus on the relative attrition for women and racial minorities in 2011 and use relative attrition from 2010 as controls in our regression equation. We also included several firm-level variables: the number of attorneys employed at the firm, the number of offices each firm has, and the population of the city in which the office is located. There is one diversity statement for each firm, but some firms have more than one location, resulting in multiple observations. This kind of clustering violates the independence of observations assumption in regression analysis, which can artificially deflate standard errors, and therefore inflate the size of significance tests. We thus used the robust cluster option in STATA to adjust the size of our standard errors for non-independence of observations.

Attrition

Attrition of women. The relative rate of attrition for women in 2011 was regressed on the relative rate of attrition for women in 2010, the firm-level control variables, and each diversity approach variable (see Table 4a for the results for attrition of women). The results indicate that attrition of women decreased as a firm’s diversity statement highlighted more elements of the value in difference approach. However, the value in equality variable had no effect on attrition of women. It is possible that the effect of value in difference on attrition of women varied with the degree to which the firm also emphasized value in equality and vice versa. To examine this
possibility, we calculated an interaction between the two variables and included the interaction in our regression equation (see second column of Table 4a). The estimate for the interaction term was not significant. At least for women, the effect of value in difference on attrition did not vary according to how much a firm also emphasized a value in equality approach.

< Insert Table 3 about here >

**Attrition of racial minorities.** As before, the relative rate of attrition for racial minorities in 2011 was regressed on the relative rate of attrition for racial minorities in 2010, the firm-level control variables, and each diversity approach variable (see Table 4b for results for attrition of racial minorities). The results indicate that minority attrition decreased as a firm’s diversity statement highlighted more elements of the value in equality approach. However, the value in difference variable had no effect on minority attrition.

As before, we sought to examine the possibility that the effect of value in difference on attrition of racial minorities varied with how much the firm also emphasized value in equality and vice versa. To examine this issue, we calculated an interaction between the two variables and included the interaction in our regression equation (see second column of Table 4b). The interaction term was significant. To interpret this interaction, we calculated simple slopes to illustrate how the value in equality effect on attrition varied at different levels of value in difference and the how the value in difference effect on attrition varied across different levels of value in equality. The simple slopes indicated that the tendency for value in equality to reduce rates of attrition for racial minorities was particularly pronounced when it was the primary approach (b = -.96, SE = .27, p < .001)—when firms’ concurrent emphasis on the value in
difference was low (when value in difference equaled one). As a firms’ emphasis on value in difference became stronger (for example, when value in difference equaled four), an increase in value in equality still reduced minority attrition, but at a lower rate (b = -.21, SE = .07, p < .05). Furthermore, and consistent with this pattern, the relationship between value in equality and minority attrition rates disappeared when a firm simultaneously communicated the maximum level of emphasis on value in difference (b = .04, SE = .09, p = .67).

With respect to the value in difference variable, the results indicate that if a firm emphasized value in equality, an increasing emphasis on value in difference was associated with higher rates of attrition among racial minorities. Specifically, if the firm’s diversity statement included three or more value in equality items, a greater emphasis on value in difference was associated with an increase in minority attrition rates. For example, if the value in equality variable equaled three, an increase in the value in difference variable was positively associated with attrition of racial minorities (b = .45, SE = .19, p < .05). Finally, these results also suggest that conveying any emphasis on a diversity approach (irrespective of which approach is highlighted) was associated with more positive outcomes for racial minorities than no emphasis at all. Specifically, when a firm displayed the minimal level of emphasis on value in equality (value in equality equaled zero), increased emphasis on value in difference was associated with a reduced rate of minority attrition (b = -.29, SE = .15, p < .05).

Discussion

In Study 2, we content-coded the diversity statements of 151 major U.S. law firms. Supporting our theory, analysis of their content indicated the presence of two primary diversity approaches, one emphasizing the value in difference and a second emphasizing the value in equality. We also considered the functional importance of this distinction for understanding
when diversity approaches are effective in promoting persistence in one’s job. Specifically, we considered the effects of emphasizing value in difference and value in equality approaches on the attrition of women and racial minority associates in a firm.

Results indicated lower levels of attrition among women when firms emphasized the importance of group differences and lower levels of attrition among racial minorities when firms emphasized the importance of equality. These relationships are consistent with our theory, and with the societal perceptions obtained in Study 1, which demonstrated that acknowledging gender differences is considered more appropriate than acknowledging racial differences.

The results also suggested that, at least for racial minorities, it is important for firms to present a clear message about their understanding of and response to diversity. The effect of value in equality on reduced minority attrition was strongest when it was the primary message conveyed by the diversity statement. If the firm’s diversity statement contained any of the value in equality items, emphasizing value in difference actually increased minority attrition rates. Finally, the empirical results also illustrated that, at least for racial minorities, any emphasis on a diversity approach—irrespective of which was highlighted—was associated with better outcomes than no emphasis at all.

While the results of Study 2 are broadly consistent with our theory, the study is not without limitations. Though Study 2 demonstrates that a firm’s stated diversity approach is associated with differential rates of attrition among women and minorities, there are at least two alternative explanations for this relationship. The first alternative explanation is reverse causation. Firms may have adjusted the content of their diversity statement as a reaction to prior increases or decreases in attrition. This possibility would indicate that firms’ actions in this arena are considerably more sophisticated than previously thought (Dobbin, 2009). It would suggest,
first, that firms are attuned to distinct components of their diversity approach (i.e., value in difference and value in equality), and, second, that they strategically altered their approach in one manner in response to attrition among women and in another manner in response to attrition of racial minorities. In light of evidence that organizations often select diversity approaches with little proof or understanding of their effectiveness (Edelman, Uggen, & Erlanger, 1999), this alternative account seems somewhat unlikely. Nonetheless, this remains an open possibility. The second alternative explanation is that a third variable is responsible for Study 2’s results. While Study 2 controlled for some potential intervening variables relating to the size and location of the firm, there are undoubtedly other factors that could have influenced our results. To rule out these alternative accounts for Study 2’s results, and to directly establish the hypothesized causal pathway that is central to our theory, we conduct an experiment in Study 3.

**Study 3: Tailoring Diversity Approaches Promotes Performance among Women and Racial Minorities**

In Study 3, we conduct an online experiment in which we randomly assign White women and racial minorities to review a diversity statement from an organization that either endorsed a value in difference or value in equality diversity approach. We then assess their performance on a behavioral task (i.e., anagrams). Across both conditions, we portrayed this organization as equally committed to diversity, and later confirmed that participants perceived them as such.

**Method**

**Participants**

We recruited 204 adults to participate in an online survey. Seventy-six of the participants were White females and 128 were Black (65 of whom were female). Participants were recruited

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8 We used Survey Sampling International (SSI; www.surveysampling.com). SSI’s U.S. panel is comprised of approximately 1 million households. SSI recruits participants through various online communities, social networks,
“to evaluate messages that organizations were considering including on their company website” in exchange for payment. Participants were U.S. citizens, employed in professional occupations at the time of the experiment, and were on average 36 years old ($SD = 6.93$ years). All participants were college-educated; 23% held an advanced graduate degree (e.g., PhD, MD, MBA, JD), 74% held a four-year college degree (BS or BA), and 3% held a two-year college degree or only completed some college.

**Procedure**

This experiment sought to simulate how an employee might respond to an organization that promoted either a value in difference or value in equality diversity approach. After providing consent, participants were told that the research team needed their feedback on website content that they were evaluating for various organizations. Allegedly due to time constraints, participants were told that one organization would be randomly selected from a larger set. All participants were led to believe that this organization was Redstone & Company, Inc. Participants were then presented with a statement that familiarized them with Redstone. To increase its personal relevance to participants, the statement put participants in the mindset of a typical Redstone employee who had worked hard to earn a highly sought-after position:

You have worked tirelessly, through many years of schooling and numerous jobs and internships, to earn a position at an elite consulting firm, Redstone & Company, Inc. Redstone specializes in organizational change management, strategy development, technology implementation, and team skills coaching.

You applied for this position along with a pool of the most talented applicants in the field and you were one of a very small number to earn a spot. As a result of your impressive skills, qualifications, and hard work, you have already been quite successful in your time at the firm.

You continue to work extremely hard and for very long hours. The company culture is highly competitive, filled with bright and ambitious people. You are regularly evaluated based on your ability to make good decisions and successfully complete projects. You are fully confident in your skills, and with good reason. You are well-liked and have earned the respect of your colleagues.

and websites that allow it access to hard-to-reach groups, as in the present study. When deploying a study, SSI randomly selects panel participants to receive invitations to participate.
We designed the statement to serve both methodological and theoretical purposes. With respect to methods, it ensured that participants across both conditions received identical information about the broader company culture and their positive standing in the organization. With respect to theory, we used the statement above to rule out the potential influence of social identity threat and thereby isolate the effects of tailoring diversity approaches (Schmader, Johns, & Forbes, 2008; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Specifically, we explicitly affirmed all participants’ warmth (i.e., that they are well-liked) and their competence (e.g., that they are skilled, respected, and successful)—methods that can temper the effects of social identity threat in the workplace (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2013). Together, these steps allowed us to examine the degree to which a value in difference diversity approach facilitated performance among White female professionals while a value in equality diversity approach facilitated performance among Black professionals, holding constant information about the participants’ experiences with the organization, and assuming a low level of social identity threat.

After reading the statement above, participants were told that Redstone planned to release a new company-wide statement about the importance of diversity in an effort to raise awareness about the policies that aimed to support and encourage all employees to succeed. They were randomly assigned to read a diversity statement that emphasized either a value in difference or value in equality approach and were asked to carefully review this statement. After reading the statement, participants were then told that the research team needed their help to test a task to be used in a future study. The task was solving a series of challenging anagrams. Finally, participants completed two items that served as a manipulation check, and were debriefed and thanked for their participation.
**Diversity Statements.** Both versions of the diversity statement began by introducing information that spoke to the authenticity of the firm’s commitment to diversity: “Redstone’s strong commitment to diversity is reflected in its mission to attract, retain, and advance a diverse group of employees.” Both statements presented identical statistics regarding the representation of women and racial minorities in the firm and described external recognition the firm had received for its diversity efforts.

The two statements only differed on one critical dimension: how they characterized their diversity approach. To manipulate the firm’s diversity approach, we created prototypical value in difference and value in equality statements. Each of these statements was modeled after the actual diversity statements we collected in Study 2. The value in difference statement championed the importance of serving a broad range of clientele, creating a dynamic work environment, an inclusive culture, and promoting initiatives that involve the community and outside organizations. By contrast, the value in equality statement championed the importance of the firm’s commitment to equal opportunity, hard work, fair treatment, and evaluations that ensured all employees are recruited, hired, and promoted without regard to the social category to which they belong. For example, the value in difference statement declared, “our commitment to diversity contributes to our success as a company,” “clients receive the highest quality consulting services when our workforce mirrors the increasingly diverse marketplace,” and “we foster an inclusive and open-minded workplace that values differences.” Whereas, the value in equality statement declared, “our commitment to equal opportunity contributes to our success as a company,” “clients receive the highest quality consulting services when our workforce is comprised of the most qualified, hardworking, and ambitious individuals in the field,” and “all employees, regardless of background, are treated equally and fairly.”
**Anagram Task.** We examined participants’ task performance by asking them to work on a series of challenging anagrams. Participants were encouraged to solve as many anagrams as they could, but they were free to advance to the next part of the study at any time. Solving an anagram requires rearranging the letters of one word (e.g., “cone”) to spell another word (e.g., “once”). Though doing so requires some degree of skill, solving a series of anagrams is largely contingent on persistence as one must repeatedly struggle through failed attempts to recombine the letters of words (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998). Accordingly, anagram tasks have proven to be a useful behavioral measure of individuals’ resolve to pursue goals (Hollenbeck & Brief, 1987; Shah & Kruglanski, 2003) and performance on difficult tasks (Erez & Isen, 2002; Hamedani, Markus, & Fu, 2013; Stephens et al., 2012). Consistent with previous research, we gauged persistence by recording whether participants solved (0 = no, 1 = yes) each of the 12 anagrams presented in the task.

**Manipulation Checks.** Following the anagram task, participants indicated their agreement with two items that were designed to assess whether the manipulation of the firm’s diversity approach was effective. One item assessed whether participants perceived the organization’s commitment to diversity to be authentic: “Redstone cares about promoting diversity.” The second item assessed participants’ understanding of the diversity statement they received; namely, whether it focused on acknowledging demographic differences: “Redstone focuses on appreciating race/gender differences.” Participants responded to both items using a 7-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

**Results**

**Manipulation Checks.** To assess the effectiveness of our experimental manipulation, we first examined participants’ perception of the degree to which the organization cares about
promoting diversity. As expected, we found that participants in both the value in difference \( (M = 5.90, SD = 1.21) \) and value in equality \( (M = 6.05, SD = 1.21) \) conditions perceived the organization’s efforts to be highly authentic, and their perceptions did not vary by condition, \( t(202) = 0.87, p = .39 \).

Next, we examined whether the manipulation effectively conveyed the desired emphasis on value in difference versus value in equality. As expected, we found that participants perceived the value in difference message to focus more on appreciating group differences \( (M = 5.75, SD = 1.30) \) as compared to the value in equality message \( (M = 5.33, SD = 1.64) \), \( t(202) = 2.04, p < .05 \).

**Performance.** We then tested our hypotheses that the value in equality approach will promote performance among racial minorities, while the value in difference approach will promote performance among women. Our dependent variable was a binary variable that equaled 1 if an anagram was solved correctly and zero if not. We modeled our dependent measure using the logit command in STATA. Since each participant was asked to solve 12 anagrams, we have repeated observations for each participant. This kind of clustering violates the independence assumption in regression analysis and can reduce the size of our standard errors, thereby artificially increasing the significance of our tests. We therefore adjusted the size of our standard errors using the cluster option in STATA. In addition to estimating effects for the sample and diversity approach, we included a fixed effect for each anagram. These fixed effects control for unmeasured features of each anagram that could have affected its likelihood of being solved.

The logit equation contained a group indicator variable that distinguished White female professionals from Black professionals, a categorical variable that indicated the diversity approach (value in difference or value in equality), and an interaction between the two variables. As illustrated in Figure 2, the results support our hypotheses. White women were significantly
more likely to solve an anagram in the value in difference as compared with value in equality condition \((\Delta = .133, \ SE = .064, z = 2.07, p < .05)\). Specifically, White women had a .35 (SE = .04) probability of solving an anagram correctly in the value in equality condition versus a .48 (SE = .05) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition. By contrast, Black professionals were significantly less likely to solve an anagram in the value in difference compared with value in equality condition \((\Delta = -.113, \ SE = .053, z = -2.13, p < .05)\). Black professionals had a .34 (SE = .04) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition, but had a .46 (SE = .04) probability of solving an anagram in the value in equality condition.

If we consider Black women and Black men separately in our analysis, we observe that both Black women and Black men display a similar pattern. Black women had a .41 (SE = .05) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition, but a .51 (SE = .04) probability of solving an anagram in the value in equality condition. Black men had a .29 (SE = .05) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition, but a .39 (SE = .06) probability of solving an anagram in the value in equality condition. However, when we consider these groups separately, the differences between conditions do not reach traditional levels of significance. We consider this issue further in Study 4.

< Insert Figure 2 about here >

**Discussion**

Study 3 randomly assigned White female and Black professionals to review a value in difference or value in equality statement before directly assessing the effect each condition had
on their likelihood of solving challenging anagrams. The results of Study 3 were consistent with those obtained in Study 2: the value in difference approach promoted performance among White female professionals while the value in equality approach promoted performance among Black professionals. Thus, paired with the field data from Study 2, these results provide evidence of causation to further support our theory.

Study 3, however, does not rule out alternative explanations for our findings. In our studies thus far, we have assumed the salience of group membership (gender versus race) is what drives our divergent outcomes among women and minorities. It could be the case, however, that other attitudinal or experiential differences between women and minorities—besides their salient group membership—explain our patterns of results. Thus, a key goal of Study 4 is to isolate the importance of one key factor implicit in our theorized process: the social group membership that is salient to individuals targeted by diversity approaches. To do so, in Study 4, we recruit a sample of Black women to directly test whether group membership salience is a critical factor underlying our theory. Specifically, we manipulate the salience of either gender or race for Black women and then examine the effects of diversity approaches on their performance.

**Study 4: Tailoring Diversity Approaches to the Group Membership that is Salient**

We have argued that the benefits of tailoring diversity approaches to social groups hinge on understanding which social group membership is salient among the individuals being targeted by these efforts. Indeed, although we have focused on group memberships defined by a single demographic characteristic (i.e., gender or race), all individuals belong to multiple social groups and may experience one or more of these group memberships as relevant in a given situation (Deaux, 1996; Hewstone, 1996; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Vignoles, 2009). Situational factors can make specific group memberships (e.g., gender or race) more
psychologically salient to individuals and thus more likely to influence their subsequent behavior (Brewer, 1991; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2004; Mussweiler, Gabriel, & Bodenhausen, 2000; Roberts, 2005; Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999).

In Study 4, we seek to clarify the process underlying our theory by making either gender or race salient for Black women and then examining the effects of diversity approaches on their performance on an anagram task. Previous research indicates that, in organizational contexts, Black women’s racial group membership is typically more central to their experience than their gender (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2009; Levin et al., 2002), and this may be especially likely when they are highly underrepresented (Shelton & Sellers, 2000). These past findings are consistent with Study 3, in which we observed a similar pattern of results for Black men and Black women. Accordingly, we expect that race is, by default, already a salient group membership for Black women in the present context. When race (versus gender) is made salient, we thus expect Black women to respond in way that is consistent with the outcomes observed among racial minorities in Studies 2 and 3—exhibiting relatively greater performance in response to the value in equality compared with value in difference approach. However, when gender (versus race) is made salient, we expect Black women to exhibit relatively greater performance in response to the value in difference compared with value in equality approach.

Method

Participants

We recruited 256 Black women to participate in an online survey. As in Study 3, participants were recruited “to evaluate messages that organizations were considering including on their company website” in exchange for payment. All participants were U.S. citizens,

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9 SSI; www.surveysampling.com.
employed, and college-educated: 23% held an advanced graduate degree (e.g., PhD, MD, MBA, JD), 64% held a four-year college degree (BS or BA), and 13% held a two-year college degree or only completed some college. We recruited participants from professional jobs and a broader range of occupations: 31% professional, 16% health care, 13% clerical, 11% education, 8% management, 6% sales, 5% customer service, 4% government, 2% arts, and 4% other.

Procedure

Study 4’s procedure was identical to that of Study 3 with one exception: before exposure to the diversity statement from Redstone & Company, Inc., participants completed a short survey that was used to manipulate the salience of gender or race. We adapted this procedure from established psychological methods for manipulating the salience of social group memberships (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Rydell, McConnell, & Beilock, 2009; Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999; Shih, Pittinsky, & Trahan, 2006). To reduce suspicion about the purpose of the survey, participants were told that the survey was unrelated to the present study. It was entitled “Market Research” and was described as for use in a future project.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: a condition that made gender salient or a condition that made race salient. Both conditions presented a series of four open-ended questions. The content of the first question was the same across both conditions, but the final three questions differed to manipulate the salience of race or gender. To lend support for our cover story about the purpose of the study, the first “filler” question was neutral to group membership and asked: “What role do you think the internet should play in university education?” After this question, the final three questions followed the same general structure, but varied in whether they prompted participants to think about topics that were relevant to either gender or race. For example, in the gender salient condition, participants were asked: “What are
three educational benefits to students from learning in a coed versus single-sex environment?” In the race salient condition, by contrast, participants were asked: “What are three educational benefits to students from learning in a racially diverse versus homogeneous environment?” The other salience manipulation items were: “In your opinion, should companies be permitted to market sugary cereals to [young children/low income communities]?” and “Which occupation do you think requires more natural creativity: being a [kindergarten teacher or a nurse/musician or a poet]?” Participants recorded their open-ended responses in text boxes. After completing the items, we thanked participants for their assistance and informed them that the main study would begin momentarily.

After this manipulation, the experiment proceeded exactly as in Study 3. Specifically, participants were led to believe that the project sought feedback on various organizations’ web content and that they had been assigned to review content from Redstone & Company, Inc. After reading the same statement, which described the culture of Redstone and the path of a typical employee in the organization, participants were again randomly assigned to review either a value in difference or value in equality statement. Participants then completed the same anagram task. Finally, participants completed the same two manipulation checks as in Study 3.

Results

Manipulation Checks. As in Study 3, participants in both the value in difference (M = 6.12, SD = 1.17) and value in equality (M = 6.03, SD = 1.25) conditions perceived the organization’s efforts to be highly authentic, and their perceptions did not vary by condition, t(254) = 0.59, p = .55. Further supporting the effectiveness of our manipulation, analyses indicated that participants perceived the value in difference statement to focus more on
appreciating group differences \((M = 5.92, SD = 1.20)\) as compared to the value in equality message \((M = 5.60, SD = 1.34)\), \(t(254) = 2.04, p < .05\).

**Performance.** We examined whether the effect of the value in difference and value in equality approach on performance depended on whether Black women’s gender or racial group membership was salient. As in Study 3, our dependent variable was a binary variable that equaled 1 if an anagram was solved correctly and zero if not. We modeled our dependent measure using the same analytic approach as in Study 3.

We estimated a model that included main effects for the salient group membership (gender or race), diversity approach (value in difference or value in equality), and their interaction. The results provide significant support for our theory. When Black women’s racial group membership was made salient, they were significantly more likely to solve anagrams in the value in equality condition than in the value in difference condition \((\Delta = -.100, SE = .060, z = -2.24, p < .05)\). Specifically, when race was made salient, Black women had a .47 (SE = .03) probability of solving an anagram in the value in equality condition and a .37 (SE = .03) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition.

When gender was made salient, Black women were no more likely to correctly solve an anagram in the value in equality as compared with value in difference condition \((\Delta = .011, SE = .050, z = -0.23, p = .81)\). Specifically, Black women had a .47 (SE = .03) probability of solving an anagram in the value in equality condition and a .48 (SE = .03) probability of solving an anagram in the value in difference condition. This finding provides partial support for our prediction. While making gender salient did not lead Black women to exhibit greater persistence in the value in difference compared with value in equality condition, it did significantly increase the degree to which the value in difference message promoted performance (as compared with
the race salient condition), \( p < .05 \). In other words, making gender salient rendered the value in difference approach as effective for Black women as the value in equality condition, thus the lack of difference between conditions.

**Discussion**

By manipulating the salience of either gender or race for Black women, Study 4 directly tested (and obtained support for) the argument that effectively tailoring diversity approaches requires identifying which group membership is salient in a given context. The results of Study 4 were consistent with those obtained in Studies 2 and 3. Moreover, they also sharpen our understanding of theorized process, indicating that the salience of group membership (gender versus race)—rather than other attitudinal or experiential differences between women and racial minorities—drive our effects. Specifically, when race was made salient, Black women performed better after exposure to the value in equality message as compared with the value in difference message. However, when gender was made salient, Black women were no more likely to correctly solve an anagram in the value in equality as compared with value in difference condition. Making Black women’s gender (versus race) salient increased the degree to which the value in difference message promoted performance such that it became just as effective as the value in equality message. These results suggest that heightening the salience of gender did not eliminate the relevance of Black women’s racial group membership. Instead, the gender salience manipulation appears to have made gender and race simultaneously salient for Black women, and in turn, made them equally receptive to the importance of valuing differences and equality.

**General Discussion**

With converging evidence from survey, field, and laboratory studies, the current research tests and provides support for our theory of when and why diversity approaches are likely to help
underrepresented groups succeed in professional settings. Our argument highlights three key factors for determining whether a given diversity approach will promote persistence and performance. First, we consider the perceived appropriateness of acknowledging the salient social group membership (i.e., gender or race) of the individuals targeted by diversity approaches. Second, we consider whether diversity approaches emphasize the importance of group differences or equality. Third, we consider the potential benefits of fit between the content emphasized by these diversity approaches and societal perceptions of whether it is appropriate to acknowledge gender and race.

Across four studies, we found evidence to support our theory: that a given diversity approach—value in difference or value in equality—differs in its effectiveness for women versus racial minorities. Drawing on both controlled lab studies and field data, we found that diversity approaches that emphasize the importance of group differences promote positive outcomes for women, whereas diversity approaches that emphasize the importance of equality promote positive outcomes for racial minorities. In Study 1, a survey with a diverse sample of adults indicated that people perceive acknowledging racial differences as less societally appropriate than acknowledging gender differences. In Study 2, content-coding the diversity statements of 151 major U.S. law firms distinguished the value in difference and value in equality frameworks as two overarching diversity approaches evident in organizations’ diversity statements. Drawing on this basis for differentiating diversity approaches, Study 2 further revealed that firms’ diversity statements predict reduced attrition among women when they emphasize the importance of differences (consistent with the perception that is relatively appropriate to acknowledge gender differences), but predict reduced attrition among racial minorities when they emphasize the importance of equality (consistent with the perception that it is relatively
inappropriate to acknowledge racial differences). In Study 3, White female and Black professionals were randomly assigned to review a prototypical value in difference or value in equality statement and were then presented with an anagram task. This experiment replicated the general pattern in Study 2 and established causality. Specifically, White women were more likely to solve challenging anagrams after exposure to the value in difference (versus value in equality) approach. However, Black professionals were more likely to solve anagrams after exposure to the value in equality (versus value in difference) approach. In Study 4, with a sample of Black women, we test a key assumption underlying our theorized process: harnessing the benefits of tailoring diversity approaches to social groups requires understanding which social group membership is salient in the organizational context. We experimentally increased the salience of gender or race for a sample of Black women and then examined the effects of value in difference and value in equality approaches on performance. Making race salient for Black women produced the same general pattern of results in Studies 3 and 4: Black women exhibited greater performance after exposure to the value in equality message as compared with the value in difference message. Making gender salient did not lead Black women to exhibit greater performance in the value in difference compared with value in equality condition; however, it did increase the effectiveness of the value in difference message, rendering it just as effective as the value in equality message. These results indicate that heightening the salience of gender led Black women to be equally receptive to the importance of valuing differences and equality.

**Theoretical Contributions**

Overall, that our general results replicated over the course of three studies—drawing on a combination of field data and experiments—provides strong support for the external and internal validity of our theory. To our knowledge, this research offers the first empirical evidence that
diversity approaches may carry different, even divergent, outcomes for underrepresented groups; in this case, for women and racial minorities. Our findings suggest that harnessing the benefits of diversity approaches can depend, in large part, on the degree to which they are tailored to the perceptions and experiences of the particular social groups targeted by these efforts. While the appropriateness of acknowledging group differences may differ across cultural contexts or change over time, there is reason to believe that both the specific diversity approaches we identify and the broader theoretical framework we present may generalize. Of course, additional research is necessary to evaluate the scope of our theory.

Future research may examine whether our theory promotes success among underrepresented groups outside the workplace, such as academic contexts. This work may also consider the role of individuals’ level of comfort with acknowledging differences or group identification among individuals within a single underrepresented group. For instance, as the results of Study 4 suggest, it may be that the value in difference approach is especially effective among women for whom gender is a particularly important social group membership.

One key contribution of the present research is that it provides a blueprint for how to classify and evaluate actual diversity approaches used by organizations. In particular, our results highlight that organizations’ decision to emphasize the importance of group differences or equality is a major factor that can influence whether underrepresented groups will feel supported and be engaged. Related research in social psychology that has examined the effectiveness of multiculturalism and colorblindness has typically relied on relatively abstract and conceptual manipulations of these intergroup ideologies. The present investigation not only provides direct evidence from the field that these broader emphases on valuing differences and equality are central to real diversity approaches, but also is among the first to reveal specifically how they
convey these messages—precisely what language and themes presented in organizational diversity statements are indicative of these approaches.

Beyond illuminating this critical source of variation in diversity approaches, our research also suggests the need for a shift in the way that scholars and laypeople alike conceive of the optimal approach to diversity. In response to the quintessential question of what makes for an effective diversity approach, we must first ask: effective for whom? Future scholarship should focus on further specifying the various contextual, cultural, and situational factors that determine whether it is better to emphasize the importance of differences or equality; here, we discuss the significance of two possible moderating factors.

One possibility is that the value in equality approach resonates with racial minorities in our professional setting (where the proportion of racial minorities is extremely low) because being treated like an equal or eliminating bias is the central concern when one’s group is has token status (see Kanter, 1977). However, as previous research suggests (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Plaut, 2010; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008), it could be the case that in diverse contexts where one’s group can expect more equal treatment, these preferences shift more toward a desire to have one’s differences recognized, included, and valued by the organization. Using the same logic for women, the value in equality approach may have greater appeal in organizational and academic contexts in which women are significantly underrepresented (e.g., among high-level corporate executives or in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics).

Another possible moderating factor of the effects of tailoring diversity approaches is the authenticity of a diversity approach. In the present context, we went to great lengths to ensure that participants would perceive both the value in difference and value in equality approaches as authentic attempts to support underrepresented groups. Yet, it is possible that people would
interpret and respond quite differently to these approaches if they were not perceived as authentic (see Brady, Kaiser, Major, & Kirby, 2015; Kaiser et al., 2013). Consider, for instance, research demonstrating that racial minorities perceive Whites’ claims that they are colorblind or “don’t see race” as disingenuous and inauthentic. Such efforts to appear colorblind have been found to increase (not decrease) discomfort and concerns of bias (Apfelbaum et al., 2008). In a similar vein, in the workplace, the more racial minorities perceive that their White colleagues motives for decreasing the salience of group differences are associated with bias, the less minorities report being engaged (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009).

Another major contribution of this research is that it presents an important theoretical, empirical, and conceptual departure from interdisciplin ary literatures on group diversity and the experience of underrepresented groups. In the group diversity literature, a common practice is to aggregate differences between gender, race, ethnicity, and other social group characteristics to form a single index of group diversity (Chatman and Flynn, 2001; Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995; Joshi & Roh, 2009; Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Pelled, 1996; Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002; Schippers, Den Hartog, Koopman, & Wienk, 2003; Van der Vegt & Janssen, 2003; Webber & Donahue, 2001). Some diversity research does distinguish between types of diversity, but this work typically differentiates task-related diversity (e.g., education, tenure, function) from social-related diversity (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity; see Joshi & Roh, 2009 for a review). While such diversity indices are more parsimonious and can speak to general theories of difference, implicit in using these aggregate measures is the assumption of empirical and theoretical equivalence between different underrepresented groups—with respect to gender, race, or other social characteristics (Ely, Padavic, & Thomas, 2012; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Yet our research suggests that
considering the heterogeneity among underrepresented groups’ experiences is critical for understanding which diversity approach will be effective.

In a similar vein, accounting for the different experiences among underrepresented groups may sharpen interdisciplinary literatures that rely on theories of power and status to explain the differential outcomes among minority (versus majority) group members. Specifically, the worse outcomes evident among many different minority (versus majority) groups in organizations and other institutions are often thought to generalize because these minority groups share relatively lower status and power (Kanter, 1977; Ridgeway, 2009; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999; Ragins, 1997). However, our data suggest that considering a social group’s status alone may be insufficient to craft an optimally effective approach to diversity. Critically, if status alone were sufficient to explain women and racial minorities’ experience in professional settings, then these two groups should display similar—not divergent—responses to a given diversity approach. Power and status clearly are useful for understanding many important between-group outcomes, but a given group’s behavior may be most accurately understood by considering these factors in tandem with the distinct concerns and experiences among underrepresented groups (Stephens & Townsend, 2013; Turco, 2010).

The current studies may also help resolve the tension between literatures on social identity threat and on colorblindness versus multiculturalism. Specifically, a general conclusion taken from social identity research is that drawing attention to social differences is harmful (e.g., that it can foster bias and undermine performance; Brewer & Miller, 1984; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gurin & Nagda, 2006; Gurin, Nagda, & Zuniga, 2013; Inzlicht & Schmader, 2012; Markus, 2008), whereas a parallel literature on colorblindness and multiculturalism seems to suggest the opposite—that acknowledging and embracing social group differences produces
more positive outcomes (Plaut, 2010; Plaut et al., 2009; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004). Our results lend credence to—and suggest boundary conditions of—both perspectives, at least among underrepresented groups who recognize they are liked and respected. With respect to the social identity literature, our findings suggest that emphasizing differences need not be a threatening experience; for women in our context, an emphasis on the importance of group differences was associated with greater performance. With regard to the literature on colorblindness and multiculturalism, our findings suggest that emphasizing equality, as colorblind messages sometimes do, need not be detrimental; for racial minorities, an emphasis on the importance of equality was associated with greater performance. Thus, our findings may have potential to reduce the tension between common conclusions in these literatures. They highlight that emphasizing differences or equality is not uniformly associated with positive or negative outcomes, but rather that each approach comes with potential risks and rewards depending on the context.

Practical Implications

Our research suggests that before leaders, organizations, and institutions employ a particular diversity approach, they should first consider who they are targeting, and second, how different underrepresented groups are likely to understand and respond to the messages conveyed by that approach. Just as this insight begins to disentangle some mixed results in the diversity literature and offers promising directions for advancing theory, it also brings to light important new questions and complexities. Perhaps, mostly notably, our work highlights the challenge that contemporary organizations and institutions face with managing populations comprised of multiple underrepresented groups who have needs and concerns that may not align, or even conflict with one another. Such situations can put key decision makers in a precarious position,
in which addressing the concerns of one group may come at the expense of another. In some respects, it may seem troubling that no single approach to diversity represents a panacea. Yet at the same time, we believe the fact that one size does not fit all reflects the actual complexity of managing diversity in contemporary society. Armed with this insight and the proposed theoretical framework, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers will be better equipped to meet the challenge of creating inclusive cultures in which a wider range of social groups have an opportunity to thrive.
References


### Table 1

*Perceptions of the Societal Appropriateness of Recognizing Gender and Racial Differences (Study 1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item Pairs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t(323)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comfort Recognizing Differences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people feel comfortable talking about differences between men and women.</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>21.23***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people feel comfortable talking about differences between White people and racial minorities.</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people would openly acknowledge that men and women are different.</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>16.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people would openly acknowledge that White people and racial minorities are different.</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men and women often have different perspectives.</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>9.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White people and racial minorities often have different perspectives.</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Necessity of Recognizing Differences in the Workplace</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s no way to avoid dealing with issues of gender differences in the workplace.</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>7.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s no way to avoid dealing with issues of racial differences in the workplace.</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A well-managed organization can get its employees to be gender-blind when interacting with one another.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>3.85***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A well-managed organization can get its employees to be race-blind when interacting with one another.</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If people try hard enough, they can ignore differences between men and women.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>6.38***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If people try hard enough, they can ignore differences between White people and racial minorities.</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When people interact in a fast-paced work environment, sometimes they may not even notice the gender of their co-workers.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>8.04***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When people interact in a fast-paced work environment, sometimes they may not even notice the race of their co-workers</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differences are Essential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young children probably learn to categorize people by gender automatically without much help from adults.</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>13.52***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children probably learn to categorize people by race automatically without much help from adults.</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s natural to notice a person’s gender.</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>6.72***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s natural to notice a person’s race.</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average person is highly accurate at identifying people by gender.</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>14.64***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average person is highly accurate at identifying people by race.</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Participants indicated their agreement with each item based on a 7-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Paired-sample *t*-tests were used to test the significance of the difference between each pair of items. ***p < .001
Table 2.
Content-Coding of Diversity Statements for Emphasis on Value in Difference and Value in Equality (Study 2)

### VALUE IN DIFFERENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Perspectives</td>
<td>Diversity shapes people’s mindset, perspective, or understanding</td>
<td>“We recognize that everyone benefits from broad, creative thinking and the perspectives that result from understanding and utilizing the knowledge and experience of diverse cultures.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Case</td>
<td>Diversity improves profit, client relations, or performance</td>
<td>“In today's increasingly mobile, multicultural world, many of our clients recognize that diversity and inclusion are not only beneficial social values, but also vital ingredients in business innovation and success.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Culture</td>
<td>Internal culture of openly embracing differences</td>
<td>“At [Name of firm], we strive to create a culture of inclusiveness, one open to differences in people, backgrounds and ideas.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Focus</td>
<td>Focus on promoting diversity</td>
<td>“We actively promote a diverse culture through our recruitment, mentoring, training, professional development and public service programs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Society</td>
<td>Diversity serves community and guides societal outreach</td>
<td>“[Name of firm] demonstrate a commitment to diversity through various activities, including community-building events for [Name of firm] lawyers of diverse heritage and experience, outreach programs to students from an array of cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds, and training and event programs focused on issues of diversity.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VALUE IN EQUALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blind to Diversity</td>
<td>Disregard social category differences</td>
<td>“At [Name of firm], all persons, without regard to differences among them that do not matter in the workplace, shall be respected and valued fully, so that each person may maximize his or her potential to contribute to the common good of our firm...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Processes that are fair or provide the same chances to everyone</td>
<td>“At [Name of firm], our mission in the area of diversity and inclusion is to create equal and fair access to all aspects of firm life...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Equal Opportunity     | Equal employment opportunities provided to                                  | “Our commitment to equal opportunity enables [Name of firm] to draw from a remarkable wealth of talent to recruit and retain the best lawyers, professional
all individuals staff and paralegals to create one of the world's leading law firms.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention Focus</th>
<th>Focus on preventing inequity</th>
<th>“…the right to work in an atmosphere free from discrimination and prejudice are important principles of the [Name of firm].”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral Responsibility</td>
<td>Moral responsibility to uphold diversity principles</td>
<td>“We believe that a respectful, collegial, and equal-opportunity work environment is a moral imperative…”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AMBIGUOUS THEMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Categories</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>Processes and values that emphasize merit and qualifications</td>
<td>“Every attorney and staff member deserves a supportive, merit-driven environment in which people of all backgrounds are given the opportunity to excel and thrive.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Focus</td>
<td>Individualized approach to development, evaluation, and behavior</td>
<td>“[Name of firm] seek, through its diversity policy, to promote the treatment of every person with dignity and respect, value the contribution that each person makes as an individual, enable our colleagues to be comfortable being themselves, and encourage every person to realize his or her potential.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Variables (Study 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Attrition of Women (vs. Men) in 2011</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Attrition of Women (vs. Men) in 2010</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>-0.1077 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Attrition of Racial Minorities (vs. Whites) in 2011</td>
<td>-.053</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.1946 0.0116 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Attrition of Racial Minorities (vs. Whites) in 2010</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.0249 0.0959 -0.2252 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attorneys</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>0.0058 0.0249 -0.0406 -0.0223 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of offices</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>-0.1634 -0.0315 -0.0244 -0.0636 -0.0098 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City population /1,000,000</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.0195 -0.0378 -0.0598 -0.0362 0.3790 -0.0012 1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Equality</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>-0.0674 0.0549 -0.1024 0.0245 -0.0759 0.0397 -0.1526 1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Difference</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-0.1546 -0.0547 -0.0473 0.0090 -0.0244 0.0250 -0.0882 0.247 1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables 4a and 4b

Linear Regression Models Predicting the Rate of Attrition of Women vs. Men (4a) and Racial Minorities vs. Whites (4b) in 2011 (Study 2)

4a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attrition of Women (vs. Men) in 2011</th>
<th>Coefficient b (Robust Standard Error)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Attrition of Women (vs. Men) in 2010</td>
<td>-.184 (.093)**  -.183 (.092)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attorneys</td>
<td>.006 (.368)  .047 (.375)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of offices</td>
<td>-.016 (.008)**  -.016 (.008)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City population/1,000,000</td>
<td>.001 (.026)  .001 (.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Difference</td>
<td>-.219 (.105)**  -.264 (.139)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Equality</td>
<td>-.024 (.053)  -.224 (.290)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Difference × Value in Equality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.24 (.508)**  1.41 (.618)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.067  .068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4b.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attrition of Racial Minorities (vs. Whites) in 2011</th>
<th>Coefficient b (Robust Standard Error)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attrition of Racial Minorities (vs. Whites) in 2010</td>
<td>-.282 (.100)**  -.267 (.097)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attorneys</td>
<td>-.246 (.536)  -.023 (.540)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of offices</td>
<td>-.004 (.006)  -.002 (.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City population/1,000,000</td>
<td>-.039 (.037)  -.037 (.037)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Difference</td>
<td>-.047 (.122)  -.294 (.139)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Equality</td>
<td>-.126 (.071)*  -1.21 (.371)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value in Difference × Value in Equality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.530 (.551)  1.46 (.614)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.071  .097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **p < .05, *p < .10
**Figure 1**
*Multidimensional Scaling of Coded Items from Diversity Statements (Study 2).*

*Note:* This figure illustrates the results of a multidimensional scaling of the Euclidian distances between coded items in the diversity statements. Statistics indicate fit between the observed distances and the distances from the two dimension solution illustrated above. Kruskal’s Stress = .067, which is less than .10. Moreover, the squared correlation between the observed and the transformed distances = .97. Finally, Dispersion Accounted For and Tucker’s Coefficient of Congruence = .993 and .996 respectively, with values closer to 1 denoting superior fit. The dashed lines demarcate the value in difference and value in equality approaches to diversity. The three clusters illustrated in Figure 1 were confirmed in a k-means cluster analysis. The items merit and individual focus reflect ambiguous themes in the sense that they are not systematically associated with a single approach.
Figure 2
White Female and Black Professionals’ Performance after Exposure to a Value in Difference or Value in Equality Approach to Diversity (Study 3)