

Latina Perceptions Of Diversity Climate In The Military

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Introduction

- Today, there are over 140,000 U.S. military active duty service men and women of Hispanic origin (Defense Manpower Data Center, 2007).
- Latinas move between the two worlds of Latino culture and their work (i.e., military) culture, which one Latina researcher described as “walking on eggshells” (Segura, 1992, p. 173).
- There has been an increased effort placed on the recruitment and retention of Latinas in the military (Alvarez, 2006).

Purpose

- The primary goal of this study was to examine the relationships among a pro-diversity climate, organizational effectiveness and transformational leadership for a population of Latina military personnel.

Study 1

Hypotheses

- H1: Diversity climate will be positively related to job satisfaction .
- H2: Diversity climate will be positively related to organizational commitment.
- H3: Diversity climate will be positively related to trust.

Method

Participants

- 233 Latina military personnel, 56% 22-30 years of age.
- 93% Enlisted.
- Air Force (1%), Army (39%), Coast Guard (2%), Marines (14%) and Navy (44%).

Measures

- Outcome Variables - DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS).
- Diversity Climate - Developed by authors.

Results

Correlations Between Study1 Variables

	1	2	3	4
1. Diversity Climate	-	-	-	-
2. Job Satisfaction	.67**	-	-	-
3. Org. Commitment	.53**	.53**	-	-
4. Trust in the Organization	.60**	.61**	.71**	-

N = 233; ** = $p < .01$

- Hypotheses 1-3 were supported.

Study 2

Hypotheses

- H4: Diversity climate will be positively related to organizational commitment.
- H5: Transformational leadership will moderate the relationship between diversity climate and organizational commitment.

Method

Participants

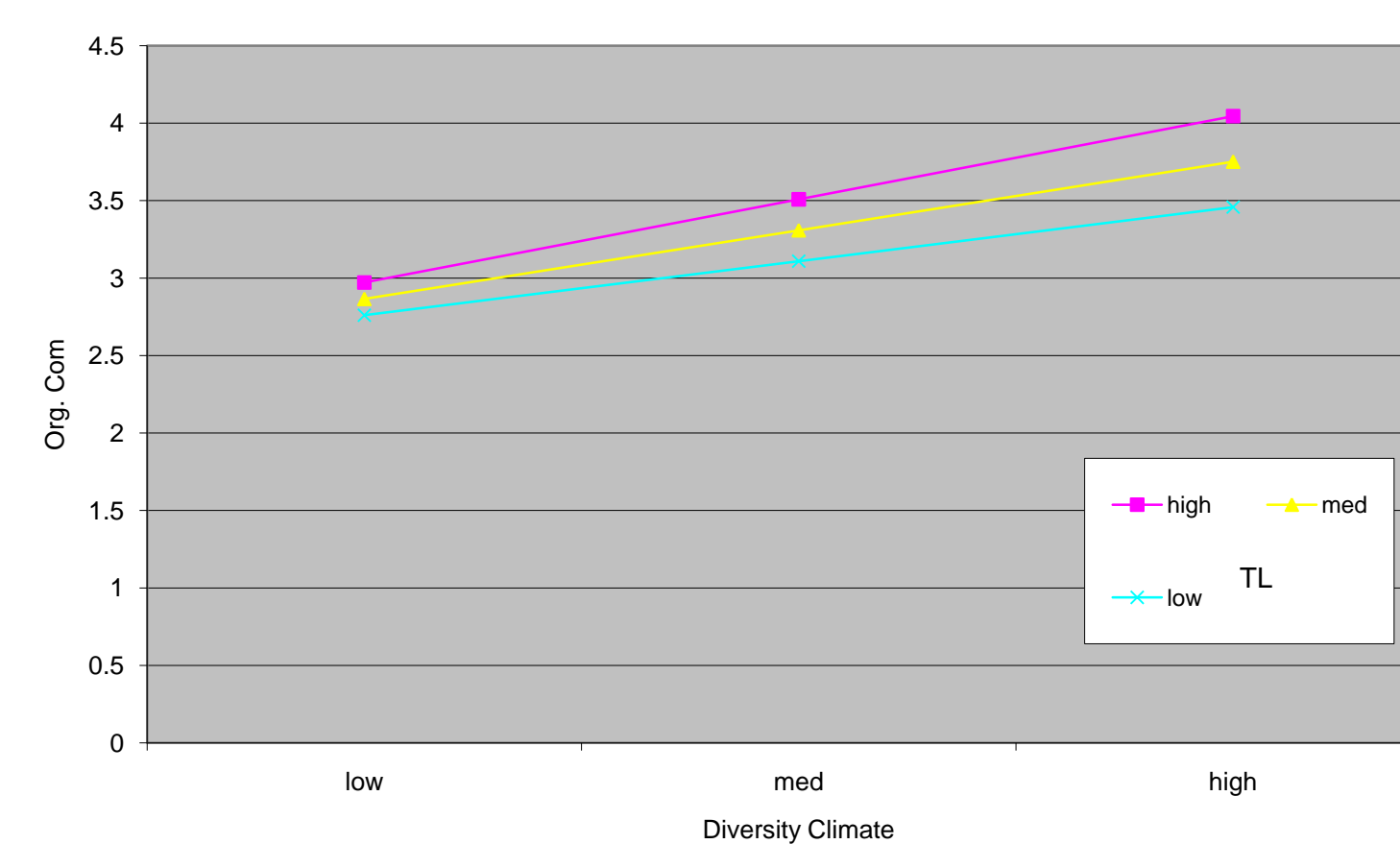
- 196 Latina military personnel, 49% 22-30 years of age.
- 92% Enlisted.
- Air Force (1%), Army (39%), Coast Guard (2%), Marines (14%) and Navy (44%).

Measures

- Same as Study 1, except added Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990).

Results

- Hypothesis 4 was supported ($r = .60, p < .01$), as was Hypothesis 5 (see graph below).



Key Points

- A pro-diversity climate was a significant predictor of organizational effectiveness dimensions.
- Transformational leadership moderated the relationship between diversity climate and organizational commitment.

Discussion

Findings

- The trends revealed in Study 1 confirmed that diversity climate is linked to job satisfaction and organizational commitment .
- In recruiting and retention efforts, the military can build upon Latinas' strong sense of community (Chong & Baez, 2005) by emphasizing that the military is a large, but close-knit family that takes care of the individual by providing fair treatment and personal development opportunities, consequently building trust between the military and the individual.
- In view of the fact that empowering the workforce is a characteristic of transformational leaders, the military should encourage Latinas to join networking groups such as the Association of Naval Services Officers (ANSO) (Carless, Wearing, & Mann, 2000; Firmin, 2002) or join a mentoring program.

Major Implication

- The findings from the study suggest that although training and socialization programs are important components in a pro-diversity climate, these programs require a transformational leader to inspire, communicate and maintain positive levels of trust, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

