

Diversity and Inclusion:

Building Workforce Engagement
and Improving Outcomes in Health Care



Overview

Leaders should track diversity and inclusion metrics to identify risk areas, set goals, and drive improvement.

Perceptions of diversity and inclusion in the health care workforce correlate closely with staff engagement, according to analyses summarized in this report. Because excellence across safety, quality, experience, and financial outcomes in health care depends on engaged and aligned team members, health care leaders should make diversity and inclusion an organizational priority.

These new analyses of Press Ganey workforce engagement data show that clinician and employee engagement is higher when individuals believe their organization values diversity and is committed to ensuring an inclusive environment. The data also reveal that the association is preserved across employee race, gender, and job type groupings.

Health care leaders committed to ensuring that all employees feel engaged and supported in their work should track key diversity and inclusion metrics as part of a comprehensive improvement strategy.

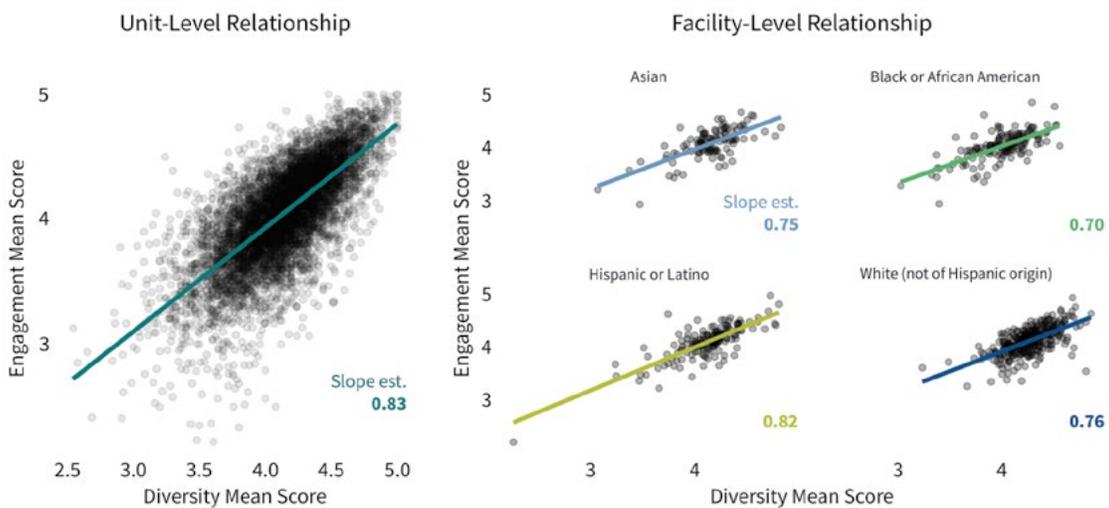
Understanding the Diversity/Engagement Connection

To gain insight into the association between workforce engagement and its perceptions of diversity and inclusion, researchers analyzed responses to Press Ganey engagement surveys from **113,800 caregivers at 533 facilities across the country**. All of the surveys included Press Ganey’s Diversity module, which is a set of five questions added to the core engagement survey or on-demand pulse platform. The questions assess employees’ perceptions of equality of treatment by managers, organizational commitment to workforce diversity, equality of growth opportunities, and organization and co-worker valuing of differences.

The illustration in Figure 1 shows a strong positive correlation between composite engagement and Diversity module scores for the overall study population. At both the facility and unit levels, higher scores for perceptions of diversity and inclusion were associated with higher engagement, regardless of racial group membership. Similar findings were found across all combinations of race and gender.

Higher engagement levels are achieved when individuals have more favorable views of diversity and inclusion. This is true across racial groups.

Figure 1. Diversity and Engagement are Strongly Related

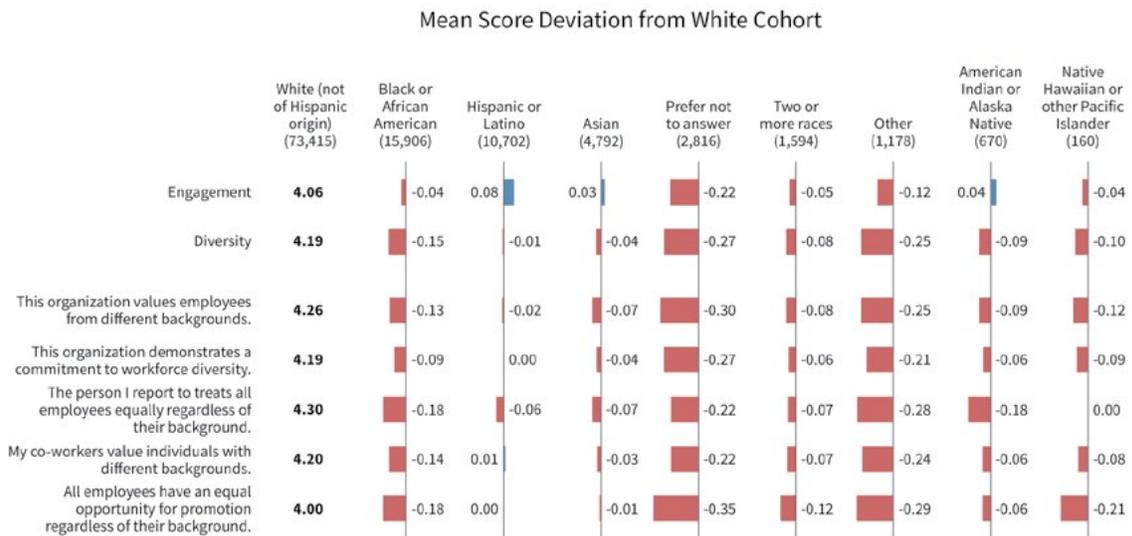


The Influence of Race on Perceptions of Diversity and Inclusion

The influence of racial group on perceptions of diversity and inclusion within an organization is shown in Figure 2. Respondents who identify as being White had higher average scores for almost all measures as compared to other racial groups. The red bars indicate lower ratings for each group compared to respondents who identified as being White, while blue bars indicate higher average ratings for these non-White cohorts. The most negative variation in scores is seen in the cohorts of employees who identify as Black or African American, for respondents who “prefer not to answer,” or who identified as “other” when presented with racial group options.

Different racial groups perceive diversity and inclusion very differently.

Figure 2. Differences in Evaluations of Diversity and Inclusion by Race

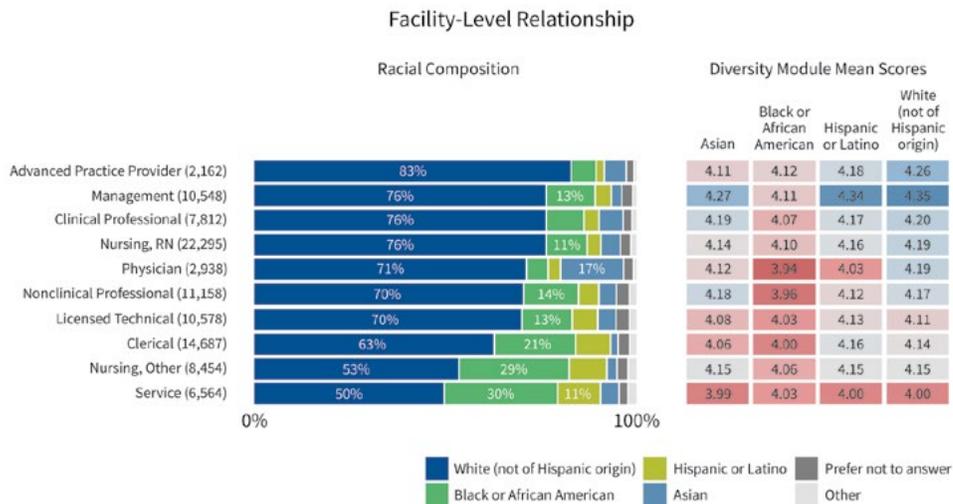


Diversity, Perceptions of Diversity and Inclusion, and Job Role

Racial group membership influenced perceptions of diversity and inclusion even when job type was taken into account. The data (shown in Figure 3) show that employees who identify as Black or African American have lower perceptions of diversity and inclusion for every job category. Additionally, the job category with the most racial diversity is service jobs, which includes positions in areas such as security, nutrition services, environmental services, facilities, and customer service. Respondents in service jobs had the lowest perception of diversity and inclusion scores across all racial group cohorts.

Service workers have the lowest scores for perception of diversity and inclusion. They are also the most diverse.

Figure 3. Top Job Categories



The Gender Gap in Engagement and Perceptions of Diversity and Inclusion

In the overall employee sample, perceptions of organizational diversity and inclusion did not vary significantly by gender, but a closer look at key segments reveals some large gaps. Among physicians, the gap between male and female clinicians is quite wide, as shown in Figure 4. Female physicians report less favorable engagement and perceptions of diversity and inclusion across all measures. Smaller gender gaps can be seen within the RN segment, which shows patterns in the opposite direction: female nurses have more favorable perceptions of diversity and inclusion for nearly all measures.

Female physicians report less favorable engagement and perceptions of diversity and inclusion across all measures.

Figure 4. Gender Score Gap: All Items, by Job Category



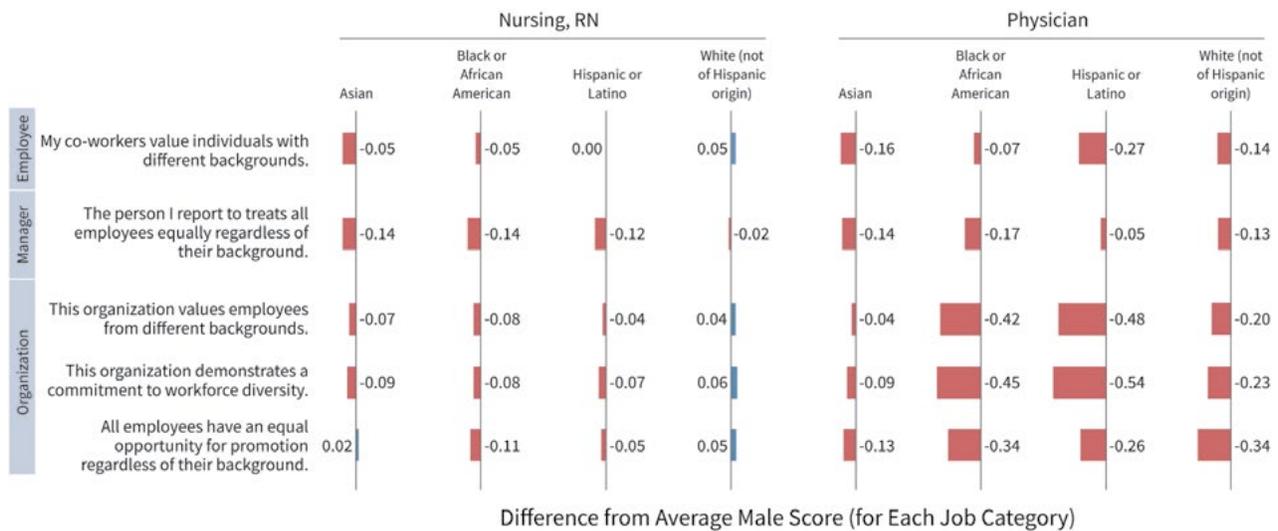
Gender Differences by Race

Looking at gender differences within racial and ethnic groups reveals additional nuances, as seen in Figure 5. The findings identify that female nurses who identify as being White and not Hispanic have more favorable perceptions of diversity and inclusion than male nurses. For the other racial and ethnic identities, female nurses have more negative perceptions of diversity and inclusion than male nurses for nearly every measure. The magnitude of these differences is relatively consistent across measures and across racial and ethnic cohorts.

For physicians, different patterns emerged. Perceptions of diversity and inclusion were lower for female physicians than male physicians for every racial and ethnic group. But the magnitude of those differences was more pronounced for physicians who identify as being either Black/African American or Hispanic/Latino respondents. The largest disparities can be seen in the measures related to organizational culture.

Perceptions of diversity and inclusion were lower for female physicians than male physicians for every racial and ethnic group.

Figure 5. Gender Differences by Clinician Group



Conclusion

The Benefits of Analyzing Perceptions of Diversity

Top-performing organizations embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as key components of a comprehensive workforce engagement strategy, and ultimately as a way to drive better outcomes in quality, safety, and patient experience. Tracking and segmenting meaningful metrics such as these is essential for defining DEI goals, targeting opportunities, designing highly reliable strategies for improvement, and evaluating progress.

These measures create management accountability for cultural inclusivity and enable organizations to integrate DEI measures with other performance measures, including employee engagement, recruitment, and retention; flight-risk assessments; workforce and patient safety; clinical quality; patient experience; and financial outcomes.

These findings highlight the importance of measuring and meeting the varying needs and experiences of all segments of the employee population to improve and promote DEI across the workforce.

Why It Matters

Among the profound benefits of measuring perceptions of diversity and inclusion in the workforce, the following have the greatest potential to powerfully influence organizational culture.

- Provide the actionable insights needed to develop targeted improvement programs.
- Engage stakeholders in improvement efforts and enhance leadership commitment.
- Strengthen the organization's employer brand and reputation in the marketplace.
- Enable progress toward creating an equitable, inclusive culture for a diverse workforce.
- Drive excellence in safety, quality, experience, and financial outcomes.

Best-Practice Recommendations

To set direction for DEI in the workplace, leaders must be authentic in their desire to understand and improve the culture of the organization. The following guidance can help advance efforts to support DEI in the workplace:

Align DEI to the mission, vision, and values of the organization; develop narrative to support DEI and make direct connections to the organization's strategic plan.

Expand recruitment efforts for board members, leadership positions, and caregivers to achieve greater diversity.

Conduct training for leaders, employees, and medical staff on DEI topics such as recognizing implicit bias, reducing microaggressions, and nurturing cultural competency.

Ensure that recruitment, performance management, leadership assessment, and training strategies support a more diverse and inclusive organization.

Collect robust demographic patient and employee data on race, ethnicity, and other key characteristics, and segment key outcomes data.

Measure perceptions of diversity and inclusion among patients and employees, and segment the findings by demographics to understand where to focus.

Glossary

Diversity encompasses the ways individuals or groups differ, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, culture, physical appearance, ability status, and political perspective.

Equity describes the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement of all individuals and the elimination of barriers that have limited, and continue to limit, all of these.

Inclusion refers to the creation of environments in which all individuals and groups feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.



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