

# Sacrifices of Success:

## An analysis of racioethnicity in the workplace

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### METHODOLOGY

**MOTIVATION FOR METHODOLOGY:**

- It is believed that racioethnic research is “inherently biographical and autobiographical ...[and] the relative absence of well-established theoretical foundations requires more in-depth data collection to promote theory construction”(Cox, 2004).
- Additionally, “studying hot topics may require abandoning the standard rules of the research game derived from the traditional scientific method” (Sutton & Schurman, 1998; p. 342).

**PARTICIPANTS:**

- N=15 Ethnic Minorities
- Members of “up or out” organizations in which their racioethnicity is a numerical minority
- 80% Black and 20% Hispanic
- All participants were residents in a southwest metropolitan city

**PROCEDURES:**

- For validity and reliability purposes, I conducted three pilot interviews to inductively test and modify the questions.
- I identified minority graduate student organizations in the southwest metropolitan area for participant solicitation.
- For the main study, I targeted local minority professional organizations, such as MBA, Law, and faculty associations.
- I utilized a snowball method to recruit future participants. This sampling frame will provide a sufficient amount of variability to understand the ethnic identity phenomena (Patton, 1990).
- A total of 22.5 hours were used in data collection via semi-structured interviews.

**DATA COLLECTION:**

- I utilized the interviews to inform the participants about what would take place for the duration of the study. I also detailed what my expectations were of them and what their expectations should be of me. Their confidentiality was assured.
- I allowed time for the participants to share any relevant information with me and ask any questions.
- I tape-recorded all of the interviews and they were transcribed verbatim.
- The protocol questions were organized by concept of ethnic identity, workplace context, ethnic identity change motivators, ethnic identity change dynamics, outcomes of identity change, social context of identity change, and emotional reactions.

**DATA ANALYSIS:**

- A content analysis was performed from the interview transcriptions
- A colleague assisted in coding the interview data in order to account for and minimize researcher bias
- Data was also organized through the use of matrixes and mind maps
- Emergent constructs and themes within the data were explored then aggregated
- A cross-case analysis was conducted
- Neuendorf’s (2001) content analysis process guided the analysis

### RESULTS

Using an inductive and emergent coding scheme, derived from data, the following (potential) overarching themes were used to guide the content analysis:

- ethnic self concept,
- organizational context,
- motivators of ethnic identity management, identity management dynamics,
- consequences of ethnic identity management, and
- affective influence.

**EXAMPLES OF EMERGENT CONCEPTS:**

*Racioethnic Self Concept:*

- Ancestry
- Social Exchanges
- Cultural Expressions
- Affective Orientations
- “Expectational Conflict of Professionalism”

*Duality of Self Metaphors*

- “Balancing Act”
- “Switching it up”
- “Flipping it”
- “Chameleon”
- “Schizophrenic identity”

*Identity Change Motivators:*

- Need for likeability
- Need for assimilation
- Need for career advancement
- Need for acceptance
- Eurocentric work environment
- Political work environment
- Group pressures to conform
- Dissimilar work group
- Strong performance expectations

*Identity Change Resistors:*

- Desire to be unique
- Apathy toward the perceptions of others
- Faith and religion
- Seeking individual positive distinction
- Work environment that facilitates self expression
- Relaxed work environment
- Flexible rule structure
- Small work groups