

Broadening the Scope of Diversity: Implications for the Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty

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Research on recruiting and retaining diverse faculty in higher education includes a traditional definition of diversity, mainly intergroup differences. Intragroup differences are omitted, in spite of research on intraracial diversity among minorities. As institutions of higher education seek to recruit and retain minority faculty, they must consider broadening the scope of diversity. This literature review examines the need to link intragroup diversity to the body of research on diverse faculty in higher education.

Keywords: Diversity, Minority Faculty, Recruitment and Retention

Introduction

Institutions of higher education are required to develop affirmative action plans to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination, and to ensure that a diverse pool of applicants are employed and treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Subsequent diversity initiatives may include recruitment strategies for obtaining qualified racial and ethnic minorities and women, development of programming to address diversity issues within the institution, and on-going climate assessments to determine the effectiveness of the affirmative action plans. The term “diversity”, when considered in the development of these initiatives, usually reflects intergroup differences. Attention is given, for example, to the ways in which members of various racial and ethnic groups can begin to understand and benefit from the contributions of those different from themselves, i.e. cross-cultural and multicultural initiatives. The focus is rarely, if at all, on intragroup diversity, differences within similar groups. However, this form of *homogeneous* group diversity deserves consideration, particularly in light of the literature on the existence of intraracial discrimination in the workplace (Sims, 2004, Mirza, 2003, Turner, 1995; Russell, K., Wilson, M., & Hall, R., 1992). The current narrow view of diversity limits the type of diversity work that is done within colleges and universities, which may impact hiring and retention of diverse faculty.

Although intergroup diversity is an essential focus when addressing issues of employment discrimination and promoting effective relations among diverse groups, there is usually an omission of the need for work in these areas within similar groups. “It is often easy to ignore the diversity that exists within race and gender, but this is a diversity [dimension] that we ignore to our detriment” (Malveaux, 2005, p. 31). A myriad of workplace problems can result from intragroup differences, including inequitable hiring and promotion practices, biased supervision, and a race-based hierarchy (Sims, 2004). The workplace climate can become hostile, creating strained employee relations, low employee morale and confidence, and poor job performance, all of which can trigger turnover.

Intraracial discrimination is an intragroup phenomenon in which people from the same race use factors such as skin tone, physical features, class, and communication, to name a few, to create social caste systems and workplace hierarchies (Sims, 2004; Russell et al., 1992). Literature shows racial minorities use this form of intragroup discrimination on college campuses and in the workplace to the detriment of relationships and communication. Examples include Asian American college students who marginalize Asian immigrants for “clinging to their ethnic heritage” (OCA-Seattle, 2005) or light-skinned African Americans who disassociate themselves from darker-skinned African Americans in the workplace. These intragroup diversity issues are not considered during diversity work on college campuses. Colleges must begin to extend their view of diversity to include homogeneous group diversity issues because increased campus diversity means the range of diversity issues increases, which may have implications for hiring and retaining minority faculty. It should not be assumed that increased hiring and training among different racial and ethnic groups is sufficient. Diversity work that educates college personnel to communicate effectively with Latinos and Asians, for example, is pertinent. However, training that addresses the communication problems within the Latino culture (Puerto Ricans versus Mexicans) or Asian culture (Japanese versus Koreans) is just as important. In order to be inclusive of various homogeneous diversity issues within institutions of higher education, there is a need to broaden the scope of diversity and diversity work.

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Statement of the Problem

Research on diversity initiatives in higher education is limited to intergroup differences. Intragroup diversity issues are not considered in this literature base. Since intraracial discrimination can be a barrier to minority groups in the workplace, colleges must consider broadening the scope of diversity work as they increase minority faculty.

Research Question

Is there a need to connect research pertaining to intragroup diversity, and specifically intraracial discrimination, to the literature base of diversity initiatives in higher education?

Rationale

Discrimination amongst members of the same race is an increasing phenomenon in the workplace, particularly among minority populations. As a result, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission statistics show an increasing number of skin tone discrimination charges, which increased by 125% since the mid-1990s (EEOC, 2005). Many employers “fail to include [intraracial discrimination] in their prevention efforts” (Mirza, 2003, p. 65). This form of discrimination is not considered in the literature as a problem within specific contexts, mainly colleges and universities. As institutions of higher education seek to increase the diversity of its faculty, they must begin to consider various forms of diversity issues to create or maintain effective hiring and retention practices. Since intraracial discrimination is illegal and complaints in this area are growing, it should be researched more intently and linked to diversity initiatives in higher education.

Review of Literature

A review of the literature was conducted to examine intraracial discrimination as a homogeneous group diversity issue within institutions of higher education. Various databases were searched, including Academic Search Elite, ArticleFirst, Digital Dissertations, EBSCO Host, FirstSearch, LexisNexis Academic, OVID Databases, PsychInfo, Social Sciences Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, Wilson Select Full Text, and WorldCat. Subjects explored included intraracial discrimination in the workplace and higher education; skin tone bias; skin color discrimination; diverse faculty recruitment; diversity training; diversity management; diversity initiatives; diversity initiatives in higher education; and diversity definition and scope. An inductive analysis allowed the emergence of patterns and themes from the articles, books, magazines, and dissertations that were reviewed for this paper.

Diversity Definition and Scope

The definition and scope of diversity has been explored in the literature. Scholars suggest that the failure of many diversity initiatives is due to the lack of a comprehensive, universal definition and/or its narrow scope. Day (1995) said “...many of the problems associated with poor diversity training can be traced back to a lack of consensus as to the definition of the word “diversity,” and the ways in which diversity initiatives should be put into practice” (p. 24). Adams and Bargerhuff (2005) supported this idea as they discussed developing a “working definition of diversity” (p. 540) before developing diversity initiatives. They used the 2003 National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education’s (NCATE) definition, yet began to explore other popular definitions. They realized that “the professional literature does not address diversity as broadly as NCATE” (p. 540). Colleges, then, must begin to develop comprehensive definitions to encompass more factors.

Sometimes definitions are not consistent. Many colleges’ mission statements use terminology taken from Title VII of the Civil Rights Act because this follows the law. However, within the organization, there are many other factors of diversity that impact the workplace. Day (1995) asserted:

Stated definitions of organizational diversity recognize a wide range of characteristics—including race, religion, age, personality attributes, working style, organizational department, and many other factors. But in practice, many organizational diversity programs address only those traits that characterize groups protected by law from discrimination—such as race, religion, sex, age, and disabilities. In other words, there is a disconnect between the characteristics in the stated definition and those in the applied definition. That disconnect contributes to many problems for managers and trainers who are developing goals, objectives, curricula, and methods for conducting diversity training and demonstrating its success. (p. 24).

Definitions must be created to ensure the consistency in and success of diversity initiatives.

Campbell (2003) said “many diversity initiatives just scratch the surface. They are narrow in scope, superficial and ‘easygoing’”...[but] adopting a “deeper view of diversity could mean the difference between success and

failure for an organization, [and] can ensure that it becomes embedded in the life and culture of the organization (Campbell, 2003, 152). Increasing the scope of diversity makes it more inclusive and allows organizations to be better able to address a broader range of diversity topics.

Broadening the definition and scope of diversity may increase support for the initiatives. “By defining diversity broadly as being everything that makes us different from others—including race, gender, values, work styles, communication styles and characteristics—all employees can “buy in” to the value of building a culture that supports diversity” (Van Eron, 1995, p. 51). If stakeholders can agree on a comprehensive definition, objectives and goals are clearer and more easily integrated into the organization.

Intraracial Discrimination

Intraracial differences have always existed, potentially or intentionally causing exclusionary and discriminatory acts. Among Whites, women are seen as a weaker group, creating the glass ceiling in the workplace. Among the Latino community, Mexicans, Brazilians, and Puerto Ricans have different cultural norms and values, causing them to develop stereotypes about each other. African Americans are spread among different economic classes and have various skin tones, which is fertile ground for inequitable treatment among them. Asians and Pacific Islanders are also a diverse group with vast differences among the Japanese, Taiwanese, Samoan and Iranian, to name a few, that would allow for injustices to occur within the race. The conflicts that can arise within each of these racial groups can manifest in the workplace.

Workplace. Much of the literature devoted to intraracial discrimination centers on skin tone bias, or colorism, among minority groups, including African Americans, Latin Americans, Asians, and Native Americans (Hall, 2000; Russell et al., 1992; Sheriff, 2000; Sims, 2004). One area of common research focuses on the stratification of African Americans based on socioeconomic status, including income, education, and career advancement. Studies show that lighter skinned African Americans fare better than darker skinned African Americans in areas of adult socioeconomic status, educational attainment, and occupational success (Hill, 1999; Hunter, 1999). Also, “based on the color of their skin, dark-skinned Blacks historically have experienced more [workplace] discrimination—both from Whites and members of their own race—than lighter-skinned Blacks, according to the EEOC” (Mirza, 2003).

Conversely, there has been literature written that discusses intraracial discrimination against lighter-skinned Blacks. Mirza (2003) stated that “color discrimination can cut both ways” (p. 65). She quoted a Duke University Law School professor as saying “[lighter skinned Blacks] talk about being distanced by members of the African American community because of their lighter skin tone” (p. 65). Also, in 1995, Turner’s article was written to expose African American intraracial discrimination in the workplace, and he described three court cases that involved light-skinned African Americans suing their dark-skinned supervisors for skin color discrimination. Each lawsuit was a landmark case that helped shape employment discrimination laws, as they focused on the need to see color as a factor in discrimination charges. Although this article does not discuss the prevalence of African American skin color discrimination in the workplace, it makes a recommendation that African Americans communicate with each other about the “reality and impact of intraracial discrimination in the workplace and in other settings” (p. 684).

In her study to explore perceptions of the privilege associated with African Americans with light skin, Sims (2004) discussed the aforementioned unequal treatment amongst Blacks, as well as poor employee relations in the workplace. “Both light skinned and dark skinned African Americans described incidences that included frequent references to their skin tones and/or other physical features. They also have similar experiences with negative stereotyping via name calling and exclusionary acts [within the workplace]” (pg. 71).

Mirza (2003) and Wilson (2005) discussed intraracial discrimination as a phenomenon that exists among groups of Whites, also. Whites use physical features, skin tone, religion, class, and ethnicity as factors for discrimination against those who have the same skin color. Examples include judging fair-skinned Whites with blonde hair and blue eyes as superior to Whites with olive-colored skin and dark hair, Catholics who discriminate against Jewish, white collar workers versus blue collar workers, and Italians versus Irish. It is not unusual, however, to ignore these forms of discrimination in an effort to address more heterogeneous forms of diversity, that is, Whites versus Mexicans or males versus females.

As a result of intraracial discrimination charges, some companies have begun to offer training in this area. “Applebee’s has added a protection, along with cultural sensitivity training, against skin-tone discrimination to its antidiscrimination policies. In other words, the company must protect African-Americans from other African-Americans” (Maxwell, 2003). The amount of training that exists on this diversity issue, however, is minimal. Mirza (2003) cites three individuals, a CEO of a consulting group, an EEOC lawyer, and a chair of a law firm’s employer training function, to describe the lack of employer policies and training for color discrimination, which includes skin tone discrimination within similar groups.

Higher education. Although some literature describes cases of intraracial discrimination in the workplace, the contexts are mostly corporate or business environments (Turner, 1995; Mirza, 2003; and Harvard Law Review, 1990). In Sims's (2004) study, two-college faculty discussed their perceptions of intraracial discrimination in college settings and both believed it was a common phenomenon in colleges. They each agreed this form of discrimination should be explored more in academia.

At the University of California, an Asian student complained about the intraracial discrimination happening among Asians on campus (OCA-Seattle, 2005). She explained that 'white-washed', assimilated Asians discriminated and marginalized 'fresh-off-the-boat', immigrant Asians. They "can avoid this internal discrimination simply by recognizing that [they] are of two cultures-and that in itself creates new culture that should be fully celebrated" (OCA-Seattle, 2005). In her opinion, the resolution of this conflict should come from within the group versus college initiatives.

Hawkins (1992) described two college students' experiences with intraracial discrimination. "Courtney and Sherman, both students at Jackson State University in Mississippi, say they have often been treated unfairly by people of their own race who consider them "less Black" or "too Black" because of their skin tones. Both are the victims of intraracial discrimination. And contrary to what many may think, this is not just a problem of the past" (pg. 34). There is no mention of this phenomenon among faculty or staff, but it was of great concern to students.

A report, *Models of Diversity: Pursuing Tolerance in Colleges and Universities*, authored by University of Michigan education researcher Michael T. Nettles and his colleague Cynthia A. Hudgins, described the evaluation of 11 programs funded by grants of \$100,000 or less over two or three years, which had as their purpose to lessen racial and ethnic tensions on campus (Chenoweth, 1999). This report found intraracial discrimination existing at a predominantly African American college. The students at Bethune-Cookman were "intolerant and narrow-minded concerning people of different national and cultural backgrounds, despite the commonality of race. This [was] manifested in relationships and mutually insulting behavior" (Chenoweth, 1999, p. 35). Faculty relationships were not considered in this study.

Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty

Literature on the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty centers on minority populations, mostly using the traditional definition of diversity. A diverse faculty usually includes members of the traditional racial and ethnic minority groups, i.e. African-Americans, Asians, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders. Some of the literature used the terms "faculty of color" (Quezada & Louque, 2004; Smith, Turner, Osei-Kofi, & Richards, 2004; Alire, 2001; Turner, 1999) or "underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities (Price et al., 2005) to discuss diversity in academia. There is no language, however, that is specific about the diversity under the umbrellas of the traditional groupings. Studies that include exploring diverse faculty are not specific about what cultures are represented as Asian, i.e. Koreans, Taiwanese, etc. They are all considered one group. Carriuolo (2003) came close, as her article discussed the differences between colonized groups of minorities, who have traditionally been marginalized in the U.S. and immigrant minority groups, who have voluntarily come to the U.S. The language overall centers on intergroup differences.

Much of this literature described the reasons for the low recruitment and high attrition rate of minority faculty, citing small pools of qualified prospective faculty (especially in the science and engineering fields), absent mentoring and support programs on college campuses, high service involvement, feelings of isolation, and hostile and racist campus environments (Price et al., 2005; Quezada & Louque, 2004; Alire, 2001; Smith et al., 2004; Dunn, 2005). Some scholars dispute these reasons, giving statistics, for example, to support the contrary. Carriuolo (2003) highlighted the number of chemistry Ph.D.s awarded to African-Americans, which doubled since 1990, and Hispanics, and stated that there is a pipeline of qualified minority doctoral graduates from which universities can recruit, but these qualified individuals are recruited by their industries, historically black colleges and universities, and other employers. Pierce (2005) also dismissed the lack of a qualified minority pool as a valid, stating that there is "the influence of personal networking regarding the hiring of Ivy League faculty, as protégées of famous scholars receive many of those coveted tenure-track jobs. This particularly works to the detriment of minority female scholars, as most senior positions are still occupied by White men" (p. 106).

Others scholars believe the search and/or selection process utilized at colleges are faulty. Dunn (2005) critiqued her institution, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and stated that one of the obstacles for increasing minority faculty is "the rigor of MIT's selection process" (p. 16). Smith et al. (2004) explored the search processes of three large elite public research universities, which included 689 searches, to develop strategies that would be beneficial to colleges seeking to increase minority faculty. The study suggested that "intentional hiring strategies will be required to promote success in the hiring of most underrepresented faculty outside of ethnic studied departments...however...because faculty success is dependent on department support and mentoring, continued

research is needed to look at the success of faculty appointed with such interventions” (p. 155). The search and selection processes alone are not enough to ensure retention of minority faculty.

Some literature focused on how the organizational climate contributes to the attrition rate of minority faculty (Price et al., 2005). Quezada & Louque (2004) believed “schools and departments with high rates of attrition among faculty of color need to...recognize that something within their culture is causing faculty of color to leave” (p. 219). Dunn (2005) discussed the perception that MIT’s campus climate is not conducive to women and minorities. Alire (2001) suggested that minority faculty of color would benefit from a supportive environment of collegiality and emphasized the need for social and professional interactions. This literature considers the institutions’ climate and culture, that is, the ways in which minority faculty are welcomed, treated, and supported as major factors contributing to attrition.

Minority faculty are seen as assets during the recruitment and retention processes. Carriuolo (2003) cited her interview with Dr. JoAnn Moody, author of *Faculty Diversity: Problems and Solutions* (2004), as recommending that women and minorities be included as search committee members in order to increase minority higher education faculty. Once faculty are hired, there is a need to provide mentoring to ensure their success. Cochran, Dumas-Hines, & Williams (2001) agreed and stated some universities feel mentoring of [minority] faculty is important, with special consideration given to the stresses faced by minority faculty, particularly being overcommitted as the minority representative for committees and other programs. Quezada & Louque (2004) posited that there is “a need to develop networking with faculty of color through their own caucuses, providing mentoring through alignment of good matches” (p. 219). Although these ideas are promising, intraracial discrimination, which can hinder all of them, is not considered a potential barrier. Minority faculty who hold biased views and stereotypes about other minorities will have the opportunity, in these instances, to be exclusionary and discriminatory during the recruitment and retention processes.

Diversity Initiatives in Higher Education

Literature in this area focuses on activities that should happen before programs and policies are developed to implement diversity missions in colleges. Some scholars believe it is important to assess and analyze the climate, culture, and systems of the college before developing new diversity initiatives. “A cultural diversity assessment is a process that provides an analysis of an organization’s culture...[and] identifies the organization’s assumptions, norms, systems and practices to determine if they are supportive of the company’s vision for diversity. The main purpose of the assessment is to identify what needs to be changed to create an environment more likely to allow all employees to do their best work, be more productive and achieve their potential” (Van Eron, 1995, p. 51). This type of assessment should include feedback from all stakeholders to ensure everyone has a voice and various issues are discussed. “Involving managers and employees in the assessment will increase their level of commitment to working toward the diversity goals and vision. If the assessment is bypassed, companies are likely to implement diversity initiatives that do not directly address the key issues or to implement programs that, in fact, continue to reinforce the current culture” (Van Eron, 1995, p. 52). Day (1995) agreed and stated “In order to accept and commit to a diversity initiative, the entire workforce must understand the issues and goals of the initiative and know how those goals relate to individual employees on the job” (p. 27).

Systems analysis is a key component that must happen before diversity initiatives are developed and implemented. In regards to addressing inclusion, for example, it is not sufficient to simply develop policies that target hiring more diverse faculty. Hansman et al. (1999) stated:

In order to truly address the real issues, the focus must go beyond the policy changes that lead to the presence or representation of diverse cultures in educational institutions and the resultant strategies that were aimed at the overt racism of the past. All too frequently the presence of diverse cultures has equaled the assumption of no institutional racism, but this view is superficial at best and blocks the ability to look at the real issues. The focus now needs to be on understanding the system and processes that were developed when the maintenance of an overt racist structure was the intention. (p. 18)

Consideration of the systems in place will provide a framework for developing applicable and appropriate diversity initiatives, which move beyond quota-seeking practices. Day (1995) supported this idea and posited that “valuing diversity means more than hiring a certain number of minorities—that approach merely perpetuates the notion that diversity and affirmative-action efforts are the same. Organizations must establish and practice methods that encourage understanding and acceptance of diversity among employees in the day-to-day work environment” (p. 27).

Campbell (2003) described systems analysis as a means to “identify and seek to eliminate policies and practices that obstruct peoples’ natural desire and ability to grow and learn” (p. 152). The ultimate goal is to create initiatives that ensure employees work in a climate that is conducive to learning, performance, and creativity.

Coker-Kolo (2002) states “systems analysis... suggests a comprehensive approach with a built-in evaluation process. It is also cyclical in nature, which means there is a constant maintenance activity and planning for eventual new solutions as old remedies becomes obsolete. Colleges cannot become complacent with their diversity programs and policies because diversity in the workplace will continue to change. Hankins, Sanders, and Situ (2003) maintain “diversity initiatives address systemic problems, offering concrete steps to resolving barriers, devising a plan of action, follow up, and accountability” (p. 308).

Conclusions and Implications for Research and Practice

This literature review suggests research that connects intragroup diversity, and specifically intraracial discrimination, to research on diversity initiatives in higher education is sparse. The literature discussing the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty centered on the lack of minority faculty on college campuses, and made suggestions for increasing this population. However, there is no consideration for intraracial discrimination as a cause for the lack of minority faculty or as a problem impacting retention. Although there is research that discusses intraracial discrimination on college campuses, none of it focuses on intraracial discrimination as a diversity issue that impacts recruitment and retention of minority faculty. This gap in the literature base hinders theory building and program development in the area of diversity work in colleges and universities.

The inclusion of homogeneous group diversity in the diversity initiatives of institutions of higher education can be useful to ensure effective hiring and retention of minority faculty. Expanding the scope of diversity to include differences within groups allows for the creation of more comprehensive diversity work. Human resource development scholars and practitioners must begin to consider intragroup diversity issues a major factor worth consideration when researching, designing, and assessing diversity training, recruitment, hiring, and retention practices, organizational climate, and performance. Bierema and Cseh (2003) state, “HRD researchers must...reflect on areas yet unexplored, and question the value of HRD research according to its impact on theory, practice, organizations, communities, and employees” (p. 7).

More minority faculty, staff, and students must participate more intentionally in the exploration and elimination of discrimination, as well as the recruitment and retention process of minority faculty, which can be emancipating for employees (Fenwick, 2004). A work environment free of discrimination and power inequities is conducive to learning, better service, and better employee relations.

Institutions of higher education must be reflective of their practices and conscious of their organizational climate. Policies must be developed, and some abolished, to ensure the success of diversity initiatives. In order to show true commitment to increasing diverse faculty, colleges and universities must demonstrate an understanding of the diverse needs and concerns of minority faculty. By expanding the scope of diversity, knowledge of their issues can be enhanced.

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