

Impact of Leader Racial Attitude on Ratings of Causes and Solutions for an Employee of Color Shortage

By: E. Holly Buttner, Kevin B Lowe, Lenora Billings-Harris

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Abstract:

Diversity scholars have emphasized the critical role of corporate leaders for ensuring the success of diversity strategic initiatives in organizations. This study reports on business school leaders' attributions regarding the causes for and solutions to the low representation of U.S. faculty of color in business schools. Results indicate that leaders with greater awareness of racial issues rated an inhospitable organizational culture as a more important cause and cultural change and recruitment as more important solutions to faculty of color under-representation than did less racially aware respondents. Aware leaders also rated individual minority-group member responsibility for performance a less important solution than did less racially aware respondents. Implications are discussed.

KEY WORDS: diversity, employee shortage, leader's racial attitude, racial awareness, organizational climate

Article:

Introduction

The U.S. population is becoming increasingly diverse (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). By the year 2010, the Census Bureau estimates that minorities will comprise 34% of the U.S. population. Many companies recognize the need to manage their diverse workforces as evidenced by the proliferation of diversity programs being implemented in multinational corporations (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001; Wentling and Palma- Rivas, 2000). Recognizing these evolving workplace trends, numerous scholars have addressed organizational diversity issues (e.g. see Carter, 2000; Chemers et al., 1995; Cox, 2001). Some of these issues include the recruitment, development, and retention of employees of color (Williams and Bauer, 1994). This study examines the extent to which leaders' awareness of racial issues influences their perceptions about the causes for and potential solutions to low minority- group representation in their organizations. We seek to extend the research literature on the effect of racial awareness on the decision-making process of corporate leaders to the higher education industry. We make this extension by investigating the relationship between higher education leaders' awareness of racial issues and their perceptions about causes of minority faculty under-representation and potential solutions to these shortages in U.S. business schools.

Race relations have changed over the past 30 years in the U.S. with research suggesting that many white Americans appear to reject negative stereotypes of blacks, endorse qualified black leaders, and support the ideal of equal opportunity for all Americans (e.g. see Dovidio and Gaertner, 1996). While recognition of the existence of overt racism and prejudice has evolved over time, efforts to attenuate the effects of more subtle racism continue to be a significant challenge. Research shows that racism, albeit more indirectly implemented, continues to exist in U.S. society today (Bell and Nkomo, 2001; Feagin and Sykes, 1994). This racism exists on structural and ideological levels and favors whites over minorities (Neville et al., 2000). For example, recent multimillion dollar lawsuits alleging discrimination have been found for minority-group member plaintiffs at Texaco (Bernstein, 2001), Coca Cola (McKay, 2000), and Shoney's Restaurants (Watkins, 1993).

While blatant evidence of racism that results in multimillion dollar awards may be less prevalent over time, a more subtle form of racism, termed aversive racism (Dovidio, 1993), persists. The aversive racism perspective has been defined as "a modern form of prejudice that characterizes the racial attitudes of many whites who endorse egalitarian values, who regard themselves as non-prejudiced, but who discriminate in subtle, rationalizable ways" (Dovidio and Gaertner, 1996: 55). Evidence of aversive racism and its deleterious effects has been demonstrated in numerous studies (Brief and Hayes, 1997; Dovidio and Gaertner, 2000; Hodson et al., 2002; Kluegel, 1990; Murrell et al., 1994). Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) argue that white Americans are subject to cultural forces and cognitive processes such as in-group out-group organization of perceptions that continue to result in racism and prejudice.

A similar subtle racism premise, the modern racism theory (McConahay, 1986) includes the belief that discrimination no longer exists, that blacks are pushing too hard, that the tactics employed are unfair and that there is now equal opportunity for all and therefore, recent gains of blacks are undeserved. Both theories argue that, in protecting self-image, aversive racists may be unaware of these perceptions and beliefs. Bias may be expressed in subtle and indirect ways, for example when a negative decision can be justified by some rationale other than race. When the situation is ambiguous, when clear guides for behavior are absent, racial prejudice may be expressed and explained using a nonracial justification. Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) in their analysis of selection decisions over the ten year period, 1989– 1999, found that participants' self-reported prejudice was lower in the later period. They further found that whites did not discriminate against black candidates relative to whites when the applicant's qualifications were clearly strong or weak, but did discriminate against blacks when the decision criteria were ambiguous. Similarly, Hodson et al, (2002) found that high prejudice-scoring participants weighed ambiguous, conflicting evaluative criteria in ways that justified discrimination against black applicants. Dovidio and Gaertner (1983) showed that biased decision-making could occur, also disadvantaging women. Together, these studies suggest that prejudice, while generally more subtle, continues and negatively influences perceptions and evaluations of minority group members in organizations. Further, the research evidence cited above demonstrates that (lack of) racial awareness influences decision-making in various dimensions of employment.

Diversity awareness and attitudes exist along continua and may change and evolve over time. Helms (1990) presented a model of racial identity awareness, proposing that racial awareness is a developmental process beginning with both a lack of awareness of one's racial identity and

limited exposure to others who are different. A more developed but still limited form of identity development is color-blindness. Color-blindness is a multi-component cognitive schema used to interpret racial stimuli. Paralleling modern racism theory, color-blindness incorporates the belief that racism is a phenomenon of the past and does not impact U.S. daily life (Neville et al., 2000). Higher levels of identity development than color blindness acknowledge that race does play a role in social relations in the U.S. today and involve replacement of stereotypes with more accurate information (Linnehan et al., 2002). Linnehan et al. (2002) found that racial awareness influenced participants' intentions related to diversity behaviors. Following this line of reasoning, racial awareness may affect leaders' perceptions about the causes of minority group faculty under-representation and consequently the leaders' views of potential solutions. That is, more racially aware leaders may be more likely to recognize the under-representation of faculty of color as a consequence of institutional racism and may be less likely to attribute under-representation to performance-related issues arising from individual differences. In the next section we expand on the logic and theory supporting this line of thought.

Diversity in U.S. Higher Education

African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Native American, and other minority group members have enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities at increasing rates over the past decade. These groups constituted 28% of college students in 2000 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) (DOE). However, according to the DOE (2002), only 14% of U.S. faculty in colleges and universities were minority group members in 1999. In U.S. business schools in 2002–2003, African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans comprised only 17% of undergraduate business students and 8% of MBA students (Shinn, 2003). A review of the literature on diversity trends in higher education indicates that business school leaders' perspectives about the reasons for under-representation of faculty of color and potential strategies for alleviating the shortage is an important but relatively unexplored domain. Consistent with the trend in business organizations to implement diversity training and other initiatives, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (DiTomaso et al., 1998) has called for assessments or audits, including surveys to assess the current diversity climate in business schools. This study provides important insights into a key determinant of diversity climate, the mental models of business school leaders. These mental models, about causes of and solutions to minority faculty under-representation, are likely to be important antecedents of diversity climate. The next section identifies possible causes of faculty of color under-representation in business schools and proposes three hypotheses.

Possible Causes of Minority Faculty Under-representation

Frankenberg (1993) argues that a dimension of a color-blind attitude is "power evasion", the belief that every person has the same opportunities to succeed. Individuals holding this power evasion perspective run the risk of making the fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977), seeing the individual minority member's failure to succeed as the sole responsibility of that person. A business school leader who is unaware of the advantages afforded by majority status might therefore believe that a minority faculty member's low performance was solely determined by the efforts and abilities of that individual. On the other hand, a leader with higher awareness of the advantages of majority status might be less likely to attribute failure to the individual and to accept that variable situational factors, such as inclusion in research and project networks, also may play a role. Thus we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: The business school leader's awareness of racial issues will influence his/her ratings of the importance of individual performance issues as a cause of minority faculty members' low representation on business school faculties. Leaders with higher awareness will rate the faculty member's performance as a less important cause of low representation than will leaders with lower awareness.

A leader with higher awareness of racial issues may be more likely to recognize the potential of institutional racism (Neville et al., 2000; Smith, 1995) as exemplified in the culture of the organization, to influence representation of minority group faculty members in business schools. Other research, which has demonstrated the impact of institutional racism, can be extended to the business school setting. For example, faculty of color facing an inhospitable organizational culture may feel isolated, be excluded from informal networks where critical information is exchanged, and be denied opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues as other research has shown (Kossek and Zonia, 1993; Pope and Thomas, 2000; Smith, 1996). We hypothesize that:

H2: Business school leaders with higher awareness of racial issues will rate the impact of organizational culture as a more important cause of the shortage of faculty of color in business schools than will leaders with lower awareness.

One component of school (organizational) cultures is the extent to which colleagues and students accept faculty of color. To the extent that colleagues and students fail to accept faculty of color (Kossek and Zonia, 1993; Neville et al., 2000; Pope and Thomas, 2000; Smith, 1995, 1996), these faculty members may have a more difficult time succeeding and staying in business schools. Leaders with higher levels of racial awareness may be more sensitive to the potentially corroding impact on performance of the absence of collegial support. We hypothesize that:

H3: Leaders with higher awareness of racial issues will attribute higher importance to inhospitable colleagues and students as a cause of faculty of color under-representation than will less aware leaders.

Shortage Solutions

A set of hypotheses, based on parallel reasoning, can be advanced for leaders' perceptions of the importance of various strategic solutions to faculty of color underrepresentation. That is, in recognizing institutional racism's effect, those leaders with higher awareness of racial issues may report that systemic cultural change within business schools is a more important solution than leaders with less awareness. Additionally, those leaders with higher awareness may rate recruitment of faculty of color as a more important solution than leaders who are less aware. Following the power evasion construct, the less aware leaders, in turn, may attach higher importance to providing feedback to faculty on the premise that it is the individual faculty member's responsibility to work to ensure his/her own success, in essence assuming that all faculty have the same access and opportunities to succeed. Three hypotheses follow:

H4: Leaders with higher awareness of racial issues will rate cultural change as a more important solution than will less aware leaders.

H5: Leaders with higher awareness of racial issues will rate recruitment of faculty of color as a more important solution than will less aware leaders.

H6: Leaders with higher awareness of racial issues will rate performance feedback and individual responsibility for success as a less important solution for faculty of color success than will leaders with lower awareness.

Finally, numerous previous studies have used participant sex or race as proxies for racial attitude (Beaton and Tougas, 2001; Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; Parker et al., 1997). These studies take a “surface level” rather than deep level diversity perspective (Harrison et al., 1998). Recent research by Linnehan et al. (2002) suggests that measurement of racial attitude may be a more direct predictor of diversity-related behavioral intentions than surface-level characteristics of race or sex. This study extends that line of research by controlling for the potential influence of surface level variables, including sex, age, and race to focus on the effects of deep level diversity on ratings of potential causes for and solutions to faculty of color under-representation. Additionally, the current research controls for the impact of participant time in position, school type (doctoral versus non-doctoral granting institutions) and the strategic priority of diversity at the university level.

Method

Procedure

The initial approach was to survey business school leaders at the 658 U.S. member schools of Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) through an online web survey instrument. A letter of introduction was mailed approximately one week before sending out the web survey. Coincident to the web survey “going live” in September 2003, a series of computer worms and viruses circulating across the internet resulted in system breakdowns at a number of government and private institutions. These technical difficulties precluded some respondents from accessing the survey via the web and made others wary about doing so. Given that the duration of the internet difficulties could not be determined at the time, the decision was made to close down the web site within two days of going live and to instead send the survey via traditional postal service. An email notice was sent to the entire sample indicating the closure of the web site and subsequent mailing of the paper version of the survey. The mailed survey was identical to the web version and arrived within two weeks of the Internet launch date. Of the 143 surveys returned to the researchers, 37 were posted to the web site in those first two days and the balance were returned via postage-paid first class mail. Analysis of the two sets of respondents indicated there was no difference between the survey data collected via the Internet and the survey data collected by mail on the respondents’ demographic characteristics of age, sex, race, time in position, or institution type. Therefore the two groups were combined in subsequent analysis.

Sample

Business school deans at the 658 U.S. AACSB member schools received a survey of diversity policies and practices. Responses were received from 143 leaders for a response rate of 22%. Demographic responses indicated that 73% of the respondents were male and 27% were female. Average age was 54.4 years ($SD = 6.5$). The female leaders were younger (mean age = 52.3 years, $SD = 6.9$) than the male leaders (mean age = 55.1 years, $SD = 4.9$, $t = 2.45$, $p < 0.02$). A total of 103 participants were white (82% of those responding), 3 (2%) were Hispanic, 11 (9%) were African American, 2 (2%) were U.S. born Asians, 2 (2%) were Native American and 5 (4%) were non-U.S.-born. Ninety-five participants (75%) indicated they were deans, 28 were assistant or associate deans (22%) and 4 (3%) indicated they were in some other position (e.g. program director). Average

time in current position was 4.7 years ($SD = 5.4$). The large standard deviation relative to the mean for time in position suggests considerable variability in the sample with more long and short tenured business school leaders than would be expected from a normal distribution. There was no significant difference in time in office between male and female school leaders. Of those 130 leaders indicating institution type, 52 (40%) were from doctoral granting universities and 78 (60%) were from non-doctoral degree granting institutions.

Comparison of the respondent sample with the population of AACSB school leaders indicated the sample was generally representative of the population. Data from AACSB International (AACSB, 2004) reported that the median age of 419 member deans who responded to the AACSB Business School survey in 2002 was 54 years compared to our sample where the average age was 54.4 years ($S.D. = 6.5$). Regarding gender, AACSB reported that 86% of deans from the U.S., Canada, and the U. K. were male, compared with 76% from our U.S. sample. Associate/Assistant deans were 60% male in the AACSB data while our respondents were 59% male. Average number of years in current position for deans in our sample was 4.1 ($S.D. = 4.4$) while the average for the AACSB sample was 5 years. No information in the AACSB data was available regarding ethnicity of business school leaders. Regarding institution type, doctoral-granting institutions were slightly over-represented in our sample (40%) compared to the AACSB member school population (36%). Overall, our sample reflects the AACSB leadership profile.

Measures

Demographic Variables. Participant sex was coded as a dummy variable where 0 = male and 1 = female. Race of the participant was coded as a dummy variable where 0 = white and 1 = minority.

University-level Diversity Priority. Two items were developed for purposes of this research to assess the climate for diversity at the university level: "Please rate the strategic priority of diversity at the university level of your university or college as evidenced by mission and objectives statements and other formal documents" and "Please rate the strategic priority of diversity at the university level of your university or college as evidenced by commitment of resources." Participants indicated their response on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = lowest strategic importance to 5 = highest strategic importance for each item. The two items were highly correlated ($r = 0.69$) so they were additively combined into one measure of university diversity priority (denoted UPRIOR). Reliability for this scale was acceptable (coefficient alpha = 0.82).

Awareness of Racial Issues. The Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (denoted CoBRAS (Neville et al., 2000) is a three subscale measure assessing the cognitive aspects of an individual's racial attitude. For this study the Awareness of Racial Privilege subscale (denoted RA), the most appropriate to measure participant's awareness of racial prejudice (Neville et al., 2000), was assessed on a Likert scale from 1 = disagree to 5 = agree. Sample statements included, "White people in the U. S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin" and "Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as white people in the U.S." The coefficient alpha, indicating reliability for this scale was .68 in the present study. Women participants

indicated higher awareness of racial issues ($t = 2.47, p < 0.02$) than men. Accordingly, subsequent analyses controlled for the effect of gender.

Potential Causes of Minority Under-representation. Questions about potential causes of faculty of color under-representation were developed, based on a review of past research (Cox, 2001; Knowles and Harleston, 1997; Kossek and Zonia, 1993; McKeen et al., 2000; Ragins et al., 1998; Smith, 1995). Participants were asked to rate, on a Likert scale with 1 = not at all important to 5 = very important, the importance of various potential causes of the low representation of faculty of color in business schools. The thirteen items rated included: (1) inhospitable school culture, (2) exclusion from informal networks, (3) social isolation, (4) overt prejudice and discrimination, (5) unwillingness of senior faculty to mentor, (6) lack of acceptance by students, (7) competition in the market, (8) better offers from other schools, (9) insufficient number of qualified candidates, and performance issues such as (10) lack of teaching skills, (11) insufficient research skills, (12) not fitting in the culture of the school, or (13) not fitting the traditional image of professor.

Potential Solutions to Minority Under-representation. Questions about potential solutions to faculty of color under-representation were developed for this study based on a review of the same literature as for causes of under-representation. Leaders rated the importance of potential solutions on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = not at all important to 5 = very important. The thirteen items rated included : (1) active recruitment of faculty of color, (2) recruitment of senior minority faculty, (3) diversity training for business school faculty, (4) broadening the range of acceptable research topics and methodologies, (5) provision of mentors, (6) incentives for senior faculty to mentor, (7) changing business school organizational culture to be more inclusive, (8) providing skill-building workshops for minority faculty, (9) providing minority faculty with information usually available only in informal networks, (10) clarification of performance expectations, (11) providing actionable performance feedback, and two statements that (12) minority faculty need to take increased responsibility for their success and (13) with time the number of qualified applicants will increase.

Finally, data was collected regarding the starting salary of recent faculty of color hired at the participant's school with the following question: "In a recent minority faculty hire, what percent above the average starting salary for faculty in a specific area (e.g. finance, operations, marketing, etc.) did you offer to recruit that qualified minority faculty member?" Participants indicated their schools offered a starting salary 13.1% (S.D. = 25.65) above the average starting salary in a specific area to recruit a prospective faculty member of color.

Analysis

Potential Causes of Minority Under-representation. Leader responses to the thirteen possible causes of the faculty of color shortage were moderately intercorrelated. When individual items are intercorrelated, factor analysis is appropriate to determine if the items can be combined into scales or factors (Hair et al., 1995). Use of these factors provides a more concise analysis of the relationships between the variables of interest, in this case the ratings of causes of the faculty of color shortage by the business school leaders. Principal components factor analysis using varimax rotation with a minimum eigenvalue greater than one indicated that there were four factors accounting for 68% of the variance, as shown in Table I. Consistent with Hair et al.

(1995), item loadings of 0.50 or greater on a factor were considered meaningful for interpretation. Items were assigned to a factor when they had loadings greater than .50 and low loadings on the other factors. For analysis of the items pertaining to the possible causes of faculty of color under-representation, the first factor contained items 1, 2, 3, and 4. This factor was subsequently labeled School Culture and had a reliability estimate (Cronbach alpha) of 0.84. The second factor, subsequently labeled Performance included items 10, 11, and 12. The combined 3-item performance scale had a reliability estimate (Cronbach alpha) of 0.79. The third factor subsequently was labeled Competition and included items 7, 8, and 9 with a reliability estimate of 0.68. The fourth factor, subsequently labeled Lack of Acceptance

TABLE I
Factor analysis of ratings of the causes of the shortage of minority business faculty

Variable	Factor 1: Culture	Factor 2: Performance	Factor 3: Competition	Factor 4: Lack of acceptance
1) Inhospitable school culture	0.79	0.15	-0.05	0.30
2) Exclusion from informal networks	0.89	0.02	0.04	0.15
3) Social isolation	0.86	0.13	0.18	0.02
4) Overt prejudice and discrimination	0.58	0.15	-0.20	0.36
5) Unwillingness of senior faculty to mentor	0.29	0.04	-0.16	0.83
6) Lack of acceptance by students	0.16	0.13	0.20	0.81
7) Competition in the market	-0.07	-0.16	0.82	0.08
8) Better offers from other schools	0.02	-0.03	0.71	0.06
9) Insufficient number of qualified candidates	0.08	0.03	0.78	-0.13
10) Lack of teaching skills	0.01	0.90	-0.03	0.06
11) Insufficient research skills	0.08	0.82	-0.07	-0.02
12) Not fitting in the culture of the school	0.19	0.76	-0.07	0.16
13) Not fitting the traditional image of professor	0.34	0.41	-0.00	0.35
Eigenvalue	3.98	2.13	1.65	1.05
Variance explained	0.31	0.16	0.13	0.08

included items 5 and 6. This factor had a Cronbach alpha = 0.71 indicating acceptable reliability. The remaining item, not fitting the traditional image of professor, did not load on any factor and had a low communality estimate, so it was deleted from further analysis.

Potential Solutions to Minority Under-representation. Similar to the causes of under-representation, items pertaining to possible solutions were moderately correlated and therefore factor analyzed to identify themes for more parsimonious analysis. Factor analysis with varimax rotation yielded three factors meeting the minimum eigenvalue criteria of 1.0, as shown in Table II. These three factors accounted for 60% of the variance. The first factor, subsequently labeled Cultural Change included items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 and had an acceptable reliability estimate (Cronbach alpha = 0.85). The second factor, subsequently labeled Recruitment included items 1 and 2, with acceptable reliability (Cronbach alpha = 0.73). The third factor, included items 10, 11 and 12 and was subsequently labeled Performance Feedback (alpha = 0.74). Item 13, “with time the number of qualified applicants will increase”, did not load on any of the factors and had a low communality estimate, so it was deleted from further analysis.

For the first hypothesis, a regression equation was employed to determine whether after controlling for the leader's demographic characteristics of sex, age, race, time in position, school type and the university diversity priority (UPRIOR), leaders with higher awareness of racial issues (RA) will rate faculty members' (inadequate) individual performance as a less important cause of under-representation than will leaders with lower awareness. To test this hypothesis, leader sex, age, race, time in position, school type, and university diversity priority in the first block and Racial Awareness (RA) in the second block were regressed on leader ratings of Performance importance. Similar analyses were performed to test hypotheses 2 and 3, with importance ratings of School Culture and Lack of Acceptance by colleagues and students as dependent variables.

To test Hypothesis 4, a regression analysis was conducted to determine if, after again controlling for participant's demographic characteristics, school type and university diversity priority (UPRIOR), leaders with higher awareness of racial issues (RA) would rate Cultural Change as a more important solution than would less aware leaders. To test this hypothesis, the participant's age, sex, race, time in position, school type, and university diversity priority measure (UPRIOR) in the first block and racial awareness

TABLE II
Factor analysis of the ratings of solutions to the shortage of minority business faculty

Variables	Factor 1: Cultural change	Factor 2: Recruitment	Factor 3: Feedback
1) Active recruitment of minority faculty	0.14	0.78	0.05
2) Recruitment of senior minority faculty	0.29	0.79	-0.06
3) Diversity training for business school faculty	0.79	0.23	0.01
4) Broadening the range of acceptable research topics and methodologies	0.74	0.24	0.04
5) Provision of mentors	0.50	0.19	0.32
6) Incentives for senior faculty to mentor	0.58	-0.06	0.44
7) Changing business school organizational culture to be more inclusive	0.85	0.29	-0.04
8) Providing skill-building workshops for minority faculty	0.60	0.03	0.49
9) Providing minority faculty with info available only in informal networks	0.53	0.37	0.39
10) Clarification of performance expectations	0.39	0.49	0.58
11) Providing actionable performance feedback	0.36	0.53	0.54
12) Minority faculty need to take increased responsibility for their success	-0.13	0.20	0.72
13) With time the number of qualified applicants will increase	0.09	-0.15	0.38
Eigenvalue	5.27	1.28	1.17
Variance explained	0.41	0.10	0.09

(RA) in the second block were regressed on ratings of the importance of Cultural Change as a solution to the faculty of color shortage. Similar regressions controlling for demographic effects, school type and UPRIOR were conducted to test hypotheses 5 and 6, with Recruitment and Feedback as dependent variables.

In reviewing the pattern matrix of the factor analysis for solutions to the shortage, we noticed that while the three performance items loaded onto one factor, it seemed plausible based on the face validity of the items that respondents may have interpreted the responsibility for

performance item slightly differently than the two feedback items, so we elected to conduct post hoc exploratory analyses for Hypothesis 6 that considered performance and performance feedback as conceptually distinct outcomes. This post hoc analysis revealed that reliability of the scale measuring the importance of feedback, items 10) clarification of performance expectations, and 11) providing actionable performance feedback when combined, yielded higher reliability (alpha = 0.91) than the three-item scale. The correlation between items 10 and 11 was higher ($r = 0.84$) than between item 10 and item 12 ($r = 0.28$) or between item 11 and item 12 ($r = 0.35$). Therefore, two additional regression analyses were conducted separating out the third item (item 12) in the scale (“minority faculty need to take increased responsibility for their success”), from the two feedback items.

Results

Means, standard deviations and correlations between the study variables are provided in Table III.

Causes of the Shortage

Descriptive Statistics. A review of the four factor means indicated that a competitive market (mean = 4.25) was seen by business school leaders as the most important cause of the faculty of color shortage, followed by an inhospitable organizational culture (School Culture mean = 1.58) and faculty of color Performance (1.46) with Lack of Acceptance by colleagues and students (1.28) rated as least important.

Regression Results. The regression for the first hypothesis tested whether, after controlling for leader sex, age, race, time in office, school type, and university diversity priority (UPRIOR) in the first block, more racially aware leaders (higher RA)

TABLE III
Means and correlations among the study variables^a

Variables	Mean	S.D.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
(1) Sex	0.27	0.44	-														
(2) Age	54.4	6.54	-0.19	-													
(3) Race	0.16	0.36	0.22	-0.03	-												
(4) Time in position	4.71	5.42	-0.04	0.33	0.06	-											
(5) School type	0.40	0.49	0.09	0.00	0.08	0.26	-										
(6) Univ. Div. priority	7.09	1.89	0.11	0.02	-0.05	0.12	0.24	(0.82)									
(7) Racial awareness	21.89	6.95	0.22	0.01	0.18	-0.11	0.03	0.16	(0.69)								
Causes																	
(8) Performance	1.46	0.71	0.06	-0.13	0.10	0.01	0.02	-0.08	-0.02	(0.79)							
(9) School culture	1.58	0.69	0.04	-0.19	-0.03	-0.27	-0.02	0.00	0.41	0.23	(0.84)						
(10) Lack of Acceptance	1.28	0.63	-0.17	0.00	0.02	-0.14	-0.07	-0.01	0.22	0.20	0.48	(0.71)					
(11) Competition	4.25	0.88	0.15	-0.07	-0.13	-0.03	0.13	0.21	0.09	-0.14	0.01	-0.00	(0.68)				
Solutions																	
(12) Cultural change	2.53	0.90	0.22	-0.00	0.27	-0.00	0.02	0.07	0.35	0.23	0.40	0.22	0.00	(0.85)			
(13) Recruitment	3.71	1.12	0.22	-0.02	0.17	0.09	0.20	0.33	0.28	-0.05	0.23	0.13	0.15	0.47	(0.73)		
(14) Feedback	3.04	1.33	0.07	0.14	0.14	0.03	0.08	0.14	0.16	0.09	0.12	0.20	0.04	0.63	0.45	(0.74)	
(15) Time	3.30	1.23	-0.03	0.12	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.05	-0.01	-0.08	-0.06	-0.04	0.13	0.11	0.07	0.14	-

^aWhere for Sex male = 0 female = 1; for race white = 0 nonwhite = 1; for school type non-doctoral = 0 doctoral = 1.

Reliability estimates (Cronbach alpha) are presented on the diagonal in parentheses.

Significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) are indicated in bold.

would rate Performance issues as a less important contributor to faculty of color under-representation. The first block of control variables and leadership awareness of racial issues were not significant predictors of leader ratings of Performance ($F = .77, p < .61$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported as shown in Figure 1 and Table IV.

For Hypothesis 2, which assessed the effect of awareness of racial issues (RA) on importance ratings for School Culture, the control variables (sex, age, race, time in office, school type and university diversity priority (UPRIOR)) entered in the first block were not significant predictors. RA, entered in the second block was significant ($F = 6.12,$

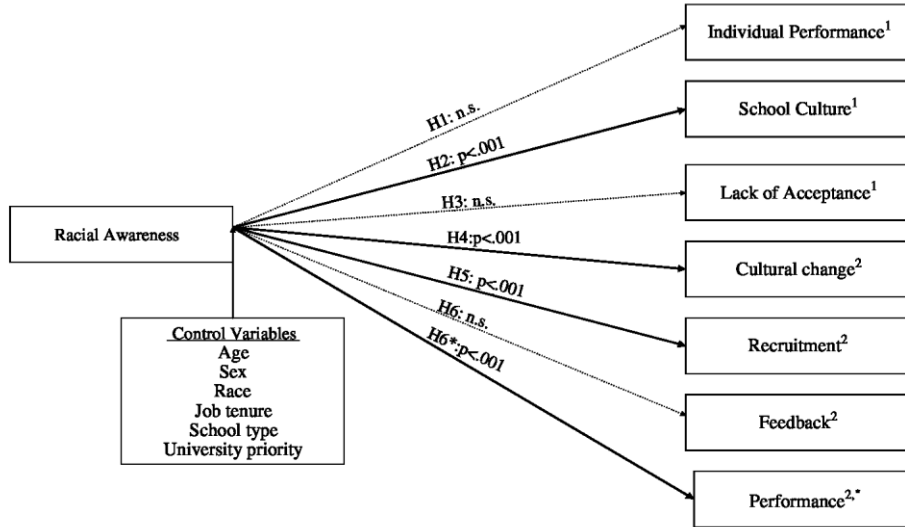


Figure 1. Regression results for the impact of racial awareness on business school leader ratings of causes for and solutions to the minority faculty shortage. ¹Causes of faculty shortage; ²Solutions to faculty shortage; *ad hoc hypothesis.

TABLE IV

Results of regression analysis of leader racial awareness on ratings of individual performance, school culture and lack of acceptance as causes for the minority faculty shortage

	H1 – Individual performance		H2 – School culture		H3 – Lack of acceptance	
	Beta ^a	Std. Error	Beta ^a	Std. Error	Beta ^a	Std. Error
Constant	2.77***	(.74)	2.02**	(0.61)	1.12	(0.68)
<i>Controls</i>						
Sex	0.08	(0.18)	– 0.12	(0.14)	– 0.35*	(0.16)
Age	–0.02	(0.01)	– 0.02*	(0.01)	– 0.00	(0.01)
Race	0.14	(0.21)	– 0.20	(0.17)	0.05	(0.19)
Time in position	0.02	(0.02)	– 0.03*	(0.01)	– 0.02	(0.01)
School type	– 0.16	(0.16)	0.01	(0.14)	– 0.13	(0.15)
University priority	– 0.02	(0.05)	– 0.03	(0.04)	0.01	(0.04)
<i>Predictor</i>						
Racial Awareness	– .00	(.01)	0.05***	(0.01)	0.03*	(0.01)
F	0.77		6.12***		1.82†	
R ²	.05		.31		.12	

^aValues are unstandardized regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses.

† $p < 0.10$ * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$.

$p < .0001$, $R^2 = 0.31$) with a standardized beta of 0.48. Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported as shown in Table IV.

Hypothesis 3 tested whether more racially aware leaders would rate Lack of Acceptance by colleagues and students as a more important contributor to the faculty of color under-representation. Demographic variables, school type and UPRIOR entered in the first block and RA, entered in the second block failed to reach significance ($F = 1.82$, $p < 0.09$). Thus, as Table IV shows, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Solutions to Faculty of Color Under-representation

Descriptive Statistics. Means indicated that active recruitment of faculty of color was rated the most important solution to the faculty of color shortage (Recruitment mean = 3.71), followed by the passage of time (Time mean = 3.30), and enhancing performance feedback for faculty of color (Performance Feedback mean = 3.04). The lowest mean for importance in solving faculty of color under-representation was changing business school organizational culture (Changing Culture mean = 2.53).

Hypothesis 4 examined whether leaders with more awareness of racial issues rated Cultural Change as a more important solution than did less aware leaders. Demographics, school type and UPRIOR entered in the first block were not significant. RA, entered in the second block was significant ($F = 3.85$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.23$) with a standardized beta of 0.33, as shown in Table V. Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5, that leaders with more awareness of racial issues would rate recruitment of faculty of color as a more important solution than would less aware leaders, was also supported ($F =$

5.12, $p < 0.0001$, $R^2 = 0.28$). Demographic and school type variables entered in the first block were insignificant while university diversity priority (UPRIOR), with a standardized beta of 0.30, was a significant influence on importance ratings of Recruitment ($t = 3.08$, $p < 0.003$). RA, entered into the second block, was significant ($t = 2.39$, $p < .02$) with a standardized beta of .23, as shown in Table V. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

TABLE V
Results of regression analysis of leader racial awareness on ratings of cultural change, recruitment, feedback and performance as solutions for the faculty shortage

	H4 – Cultural Change		H5 – Recruitment		H6 – Feedback		H6 ^b – Performance	
	Beta ^a	Std. Error	Beta ^a	Std. Error	Beta ^a	Std. Error	Beta ^a	Std. Error
Constant	1.59 [†]	(0.86)	2.58**	(0.90)	2.17 [†]	(1.12)	5.38***	(1.39)
<i>Controls</i>								
Sex	0.19	(0.21)	0.39 [†]	(0.22)	0.07	(0.27)	-0.10	(0.34)
Age	-0.01	(0.01)	-0.02	(0.02)	0.01	(0.02)	-0.02	(0.02)
Race	0.44 [†]	(0.25)	0.30	(0.27)	0.57	(0.33)	0.86*	(0.41)
Time in position	0.02	(0.02)	0.02	(0.02)	0.03	(0.02)	0.04	(0.03)
School type	-0.25	(0.20)	0.03	(0.21)	-0.32	(0.25)	-0.40	(0.32)
University priority	0.06	(0.05)	0.17**	(0.06)	0.10	(0.07)	0.04	(0.09)
<i>Predictor</i>								
Racial Awareness	0.05***	(0.01)	0.04*	(0.01)	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.07**	(0.02)
F	3.85***		5.12***		1.15		2.40*	
R ²	.23		.28		.08		.16	

^aValues are unstandardized regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses.

[†] $p < 0.10$ * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < .001$

^bThese results report the post hoc analysis for Hypothesis 6 using the single-item measure, “faculty responsibility”.

Finally Hypothesis 6 examined whether more aware leaders would rate feedback and individual faculty of color’s responsibility for performance as less important was not supported when the three items were analyzed as a scale. Demographic, school type and university priority for diversity (UPRIOR) controls entered in the first block were not significant. RA entered in the second block was not significant ($F = 1.15$, $p < 0.34$). In the post hoc regressions, examining the effect of racial awareness (RA) on separate ratings of feedback and faculty responsibility for performance, demographic, school type and university priority for diversity (UPRIOR) controls entered in the first block were not significant in either equation. For the combined feedback items (items 10 and 11), RA entered in the second block was not significant ($F = 1.20$, $p < 0.31$). When item 12, faculty responsibility, was regressed on the demographic and university controls and racial awareness (RA), only racial awareness was significant ($F = 2.40$, $p < .03$, $R^2 = 0.16$), with a standardized beta = -0.33 . Thus, Hypothesis 6 was partially supported, as shown in Table V.

In summary as shown in Figure 1, results indicated that the leaders with more awareness of racial issues rated School Culture (Hypothesis 2) as a more important cause of faculty of color under-representation. When evaluating the solutions to faculty of color under-representation, those

leaders viewed Cultural Change (Hypothesis 4) and Recruitment (Hypothesis 5) as more important. In contrast, the less aware leaders rated the solution that individual minority members take more responsibility for performance as more important than did more racially aware respondents, as evidenced by the post hoc analysis of Hypothesis 6.

Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine the extent to which leaders' racial awareness influences their perceptions about resolving low minority- group representation in their organizations. We examined the extent to which higher education leaders' awareness of racial issues influences their perceptions about the causes of minority faculty under-representation and potential solutions to these shortages in U.S. business schools.

Overall, the results indicated that the leader participants rated competition as the most important cause of the shortage and recruitment of faculty of color as the most important solution. On average, participants did not report other causes to be particularly important and appear to believe time will alleviate the under-representation of faculty of color in their business schools. Results also suggest that the business school leaders do not view individual performance as an important cause of the shortage but believe feedback may help improve faculty of color representation.

The results of this study indicate that racially aware leaders tend to attribute the causes of and solutions to faculty of color under-representation to more systemic factors. Less racially aware leaders are more likely to place emphasis on non-systemic factors such as individual responsibility for performance. We emphasize the importance of these findings by reminding the reader that these results do not reflect the idiosyncratic views of some skewed subset of the AACSB population. This study surveyed the entire 658 institution population of the AACSB U.S. business schools and achieved generally accepted response rate levels. Additionally, analytic comparison of the sample demographics to the population demographics suggested that the sample effectively represented the population.

Consistent with the findings of Linnehan et al. (2002) and Harrison et al. (1998), business school leader's awareness of racial issues (deep level diversity) had a greater effect on the leader's ratings of various causes of the faculty of color shortage and possible solution strategies than did the surface level characteristics of race or sex. This line of research received strong support in our sample of AACSB leaders with ethnicity and sex insignificant predictors. For those seeking to improve organizations through diversity initiatives, it would appear to be more fruitful to directly assess racial awareness in the selection of business school leaders than it would to pursue a strategy of selecting leaders based on surface level characteristics such as sex or ethnicity. Our findings also suggest that to increase employee recognition of the value of diversity initiatives, systematic programs to shape racial awareness at the organizational level, beginning with the leader may prove fruitful. This finding should be regarded as encouraging since enhancing racial awareness may be more malleable than firing and hiring to reshape leader demographics.

A recent survey by Dalton (2004) of mid and upper level managers, if generalizable to higher education, may shed some insight on the business school leaders' relatively low rating of cultural

change in their organizations. The managers in Dalton's study indicated that in their organizations, difference related to sex, race, culture and other characteristics, were only sometimes or rarely acknowledged. When acknowledgement of difference occurred, the respondents indicated that the discussions were generally guarded. Perhaps the business school leaders in the present study also feel some uncertainty about how to engage discussions of difference or how to undertake cultural change in their organizations. Therefore, they may have accorded this more complex strategy a lower priority than easier to implement strategies such as recruitment, enhanced feedback or simply the passage of time.

Results of the present study suggest that respondents recognize that inhospitable school culture may be a potential cause of minority under-representation. However, cultural change though significantly related to leader racial awareness, was rated as the least important solution (mean = 2.53) to alleviating the shortage. Research has demonstrated the importance of leader commitment to organizational change efforts aimed at increasing diversity in the work force (Cox, 2001; Rynes and Rosen, 1995). If leaders see cultural change as relatively less important in alleviating the faculty of color shortage, then it seems that strategic change, initiated by school managers may be less likely to occur. Indeed, the leaders' rating of the statement that the number of applicants would increase over time was rated higher (mean = 3.30) than cultural change (mean = 2.53). However, time alone likely will not solve the shortage as minority group members represent only a small proportion of business students, lower representation than in other fields of study. According to Census Bureau projections (2004), minority group members will comprise 42.5% of the U.S. population in 2030. Extrapolating from PhD Project statistics (Mangan, 2006), faculty of color could constitute approximately 20% of business school faculty by 2030, still significantly underrepresented relative to their population proportion. Unless minority group members are brought into business undergraduate and graduate programs in greater numbers, proportionate representation may take many years to occur. Some initiatives to recruit students of color have been instituted, including summer business institutes for high school students, minority business professional networks, mentoring with high school and college students, and recruiting receptions (Shinn, 2003).

Recruitment (mean = 3.71) was the most highly rated strategy for resolving the shortage of faculty of color. However, unless the faculty of color pipeline is increased, enhanced recruitment strategies may simply lead to escalation of salaries and benefits for faculty of color currently in the business school job market, as racially aware leaders intensify the competition for an already scarce pool of minority-group faculty. Indeed, business school leaders in our sample indicated their institutions were currently paying a 13% premium for faculty of color new hires. Thus, one key would seem to be to increase the pipeline of doctorally qualified faculty of color. A proactive initiative to improve this pipeline is the PhD Project, a mentoring network that provides information and support to aspiring and actual doctoral business students of color in the U.S. (note 1).

In the study, we found that leaders' importance ratings of various causes of faculty of color underrepresentation and potential solutions varied systematically as a function of respondent racial awareness. One issue with the methods implemented in this study is the traditional concern regarding the potential for bias when the measurement of the independent and dependent variables are obtained from the same source. The concern is that raters, in striving for cognitive

consistency, align their responses in a socially desirable manner. However, in this study, the range of scores on the Racial Awareness scale (predictor) was large, encompassing almost the full scale range. Similarly, the responses to questions about causes and solutions to minority-group member under-representation (dependent variables) covered the full scale of potential responses. If taking a socially desirable posture were the goal, one would expect that the participants would report uniformly high levels of awareness of racial awareness and would rate all solutions as important. Yet these were not the results of this study. Collectively, these two observations suggest the respondents were more focused on answering the questions asked of them than in striving for cognitive consistency or political correctness in their responses. On the other hand, the reliability of the racial awareness scale was lower than we would have liked. Future research might assess business school leaders' diversity awareness using a different measure to corroborate the present findings.

One solution for racially aware leaders with doctoral programs might be to recruit minority group members into their program and then retain these individuals as faculty members upon graduation. While such an approach would be counter to the "don't hire your own" organizational culture prevalent in doctoral granting business institutions, it would be a pragmatic approach to an acute problem. For racially aware leaders without a PhD program, the process of building relationships with doctoral granting programs might be an appropriate strategy. To the extent a school undertakes the steps suggested by the findings in this paper (e.g. developing a more hospitable organizational culture) and makes the doctoral granting institutions aware of their efforts, that institution may be more likely to guide the doctoral student of color toward the minority friendly institution. A key issue here would be whether the doctoral granting institutions, who typically like to see their students placed at other doctoral granting institutions, would place faculty of color fit ahead of reflective academic prestige in the mentoring of their graduates.

One limitation of the present research is that the study measured leaders' perceptions rather than actual strategies and policies of business schools. Future projects could extend the current research by assessing the impact of recruitment, cultural change through, for example diversity training or review of current policy for adverse impact, and implementing additional strategies for performance-related feedback for faculty. Business school leaders may find it helpful to know which strategies are relatively more effective at recruitment and retention of faculty of color.

Future research could also examine the perceptions and decisions of faculty of color to determine, from the faculty members' perspective, which strategies are differentially important in their initial employment decisions and subsequent decisions to stay or leave their current school of employment.

In summary, this study makes several important contributions to the diversity literature. First, scales for measuring the possible causes of faculty of color under-representation and potential solutions to improving under-representation were developed that will be useful in future research. These scales would clearly be applicable to non-business school units in higher education (i.e. education, nursing, liberal arts) and likely have application, with some modification, to private sector settings. Second, this study found that business school leader sex

and race are not significant predictors of attributed causes and proposed solutions to faculty of color under-representation. Third, this study has shown racial awareness to be an important variable in differentiating business school leaders' attributions for faculty of color under-representation and schemas for solving the shortage. More racially aware leaders are more likely to view systemic factors as causes of underrepresentation and cultural change and recruitment as potential solutions to under-representation. Collectively, these findings have important implications for selecting future business school leaders. Importantly, these findings suggest that simply increasing minority-group representation in business school leadership positions should not be expected to solve under-representation issues. While appointments based on demographics may have important symbolic value, our results suggest that the selection and development of racially aware leaders will be more important strategies toward achieving a long term solution. Racially aware leaders, independent of group membership, who are willing to implement cultural change appear to be one stepping stone on the route to a more affirming environment for faculty of color. We encourage future researchers to expand and refine the implications of this research.

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Note

1 For more information about the PhD Project, go to the following web site:

<http://www.phdproject.com/index.html>

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