

# Defining Diversity and Offering Access to All

**Modupe N. Akinola**  
**Columbia Business School**

**NDEW 2017– Focus Session: Organization and Management of Diversity**

# Gateways vs. Pathways

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- **Entry points** into valued organizations, communities or institutions
  - E.g., admissions, hiring, promotion; decisions requiring a yes/no response



- **Fluid processes** that influence one's ability to access an entry point and succeed after entry
  - E.g., mentorship, sponsorship, feedback, social network processes

(Chugh & Brief, 2008; Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2015)

# Agenda and Focus of Talk

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## Inequities in Gateway Processes

### Key Focus

- Organizational-level decisions
- Perceptions
- Racial diversity



**How do definitions of diversity perpetuate social inequity in organizations?**

*(Akinola, Opie, Ho, Castel, Unzueta, & Brief, working paper)*

## Inequities in Pathway Processes

### Key Focus

- Individual-level decisions
- Contextual factors
- Race and gender diversity



**When and where is discrimination most pronounced in academia?**

*(Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2012)*  
*(Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2015)*

*Inequities in Gateway Processes*  
Diversity Isn't What It Used To Be: The  
Consequences of Broad Diversity  
Definitions

# Collaborators

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Tina Opie  
Babson College



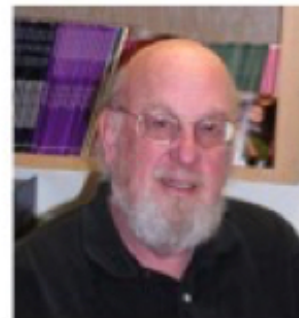
Geoff Ho  
Google, Inc.



Safiya Castel  
UCLA



Miguel Unzueta  
UCLA

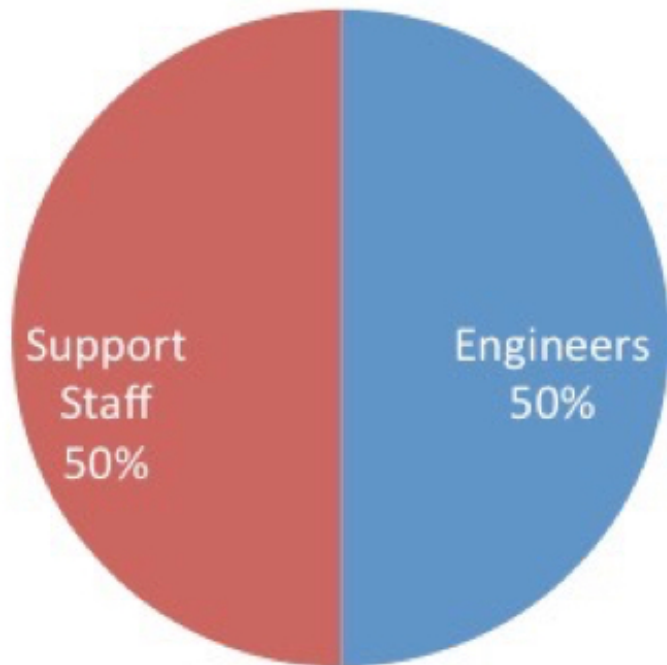


Art Brief  
University of Utah

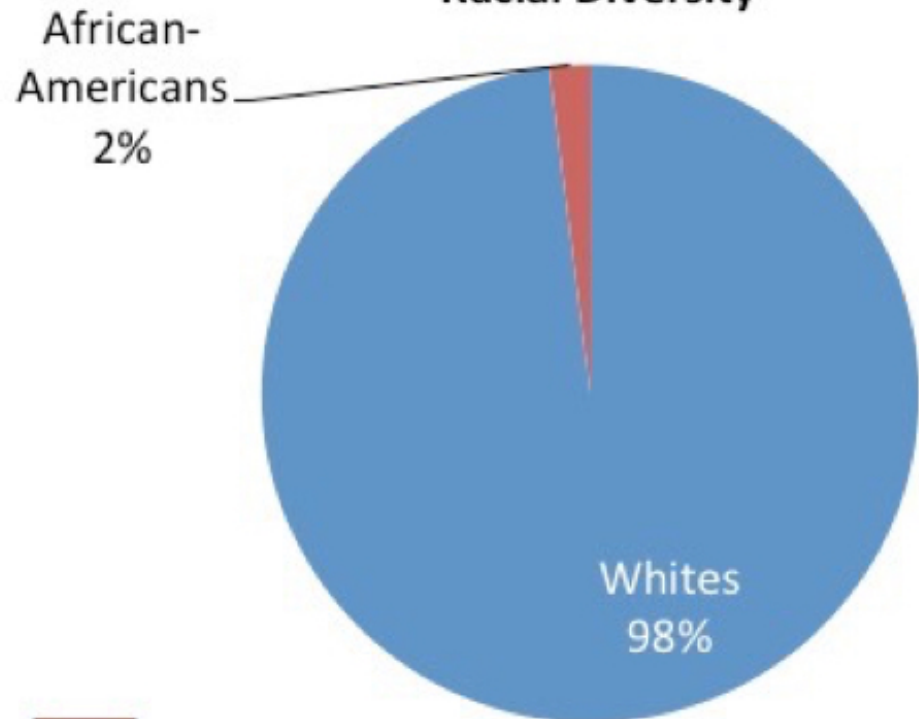
# Strathmore's Diversity Statistics

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Functional Diversity



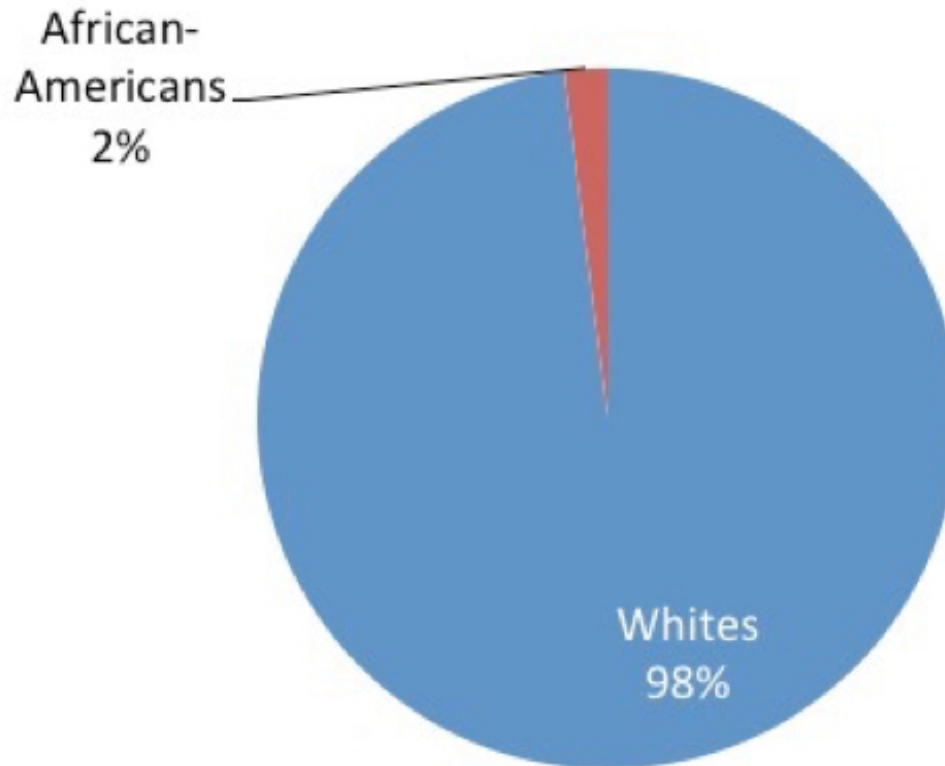
Racial Diversity



**Does Strathmore have a racial diversity problem?**

# Strathmore's Racial Diversity

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**Does Strathmore have a racial diversity problem?...YES**

# Diversity Definitions

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## Narrow

- Focused on *legal (EEOC protected)* categories
  - Sex/Gender
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - LGBT
  - Religion
  - Disability
  - Age/Generational Difference
  - National Origin

## Broad

- Focused on *any category* of difference
  - Legal categories
  - Background/culture
  - Perspectives
  - Skills/abilities/talents
  - Socioeconomic
  - Education
  - Lifestyles/Interests
  - Ideologies
  - Functional knowledge
  - Etc...



# UC Berkeley vs. U.S. Airforce



Berkeley

Narrow

UC Berkeley (2013) defines faculty diversity along the categories of: “members of groups that have been **historically underrepresented** in higher education such as **women, ethnic minorities, religious minorities, differently-abled, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender** and others...”



U.S. AIR FORCE

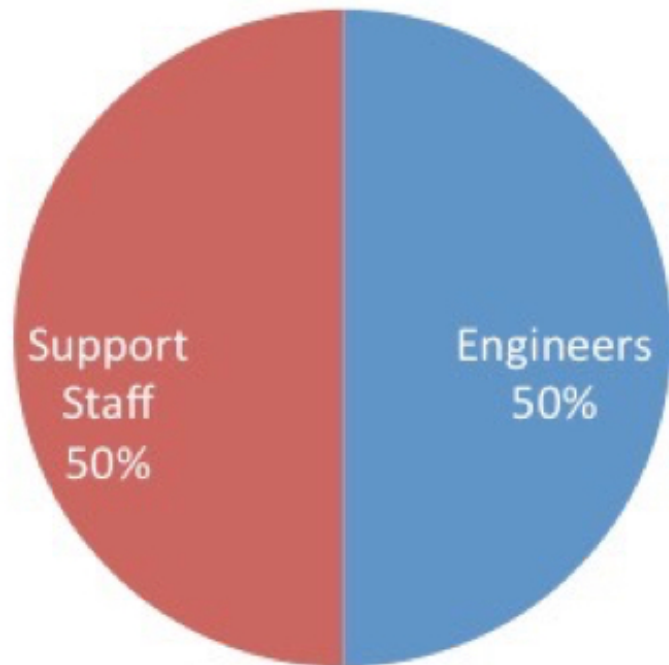
Broad

U.S. Airforce (2013) defines diversity along the categories of: “**personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical/spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity and gender**”

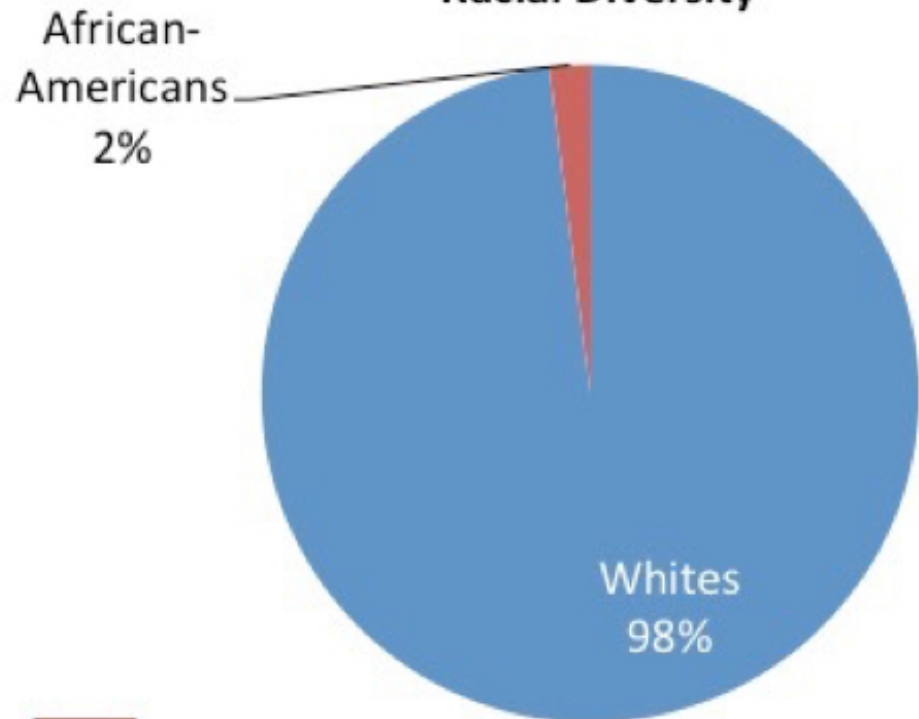
# Strathmore's Diversity Statistics

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Functional Diversity



Racial Diversity



**Does Strathmore have a racial diversity problem?**

# Theory and Hypotheses

Edelman, Riggs Fuller, & Mara-Drita (2001)

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- Broad definitions shift discourse away from legally protected groups
  - Attention focused on other dimensions of diversity
    - E.g., functional diversity vs. racial diversity
  
- May result in...
  - Organizations failing to recognize inequities pertaining to groups protected by law

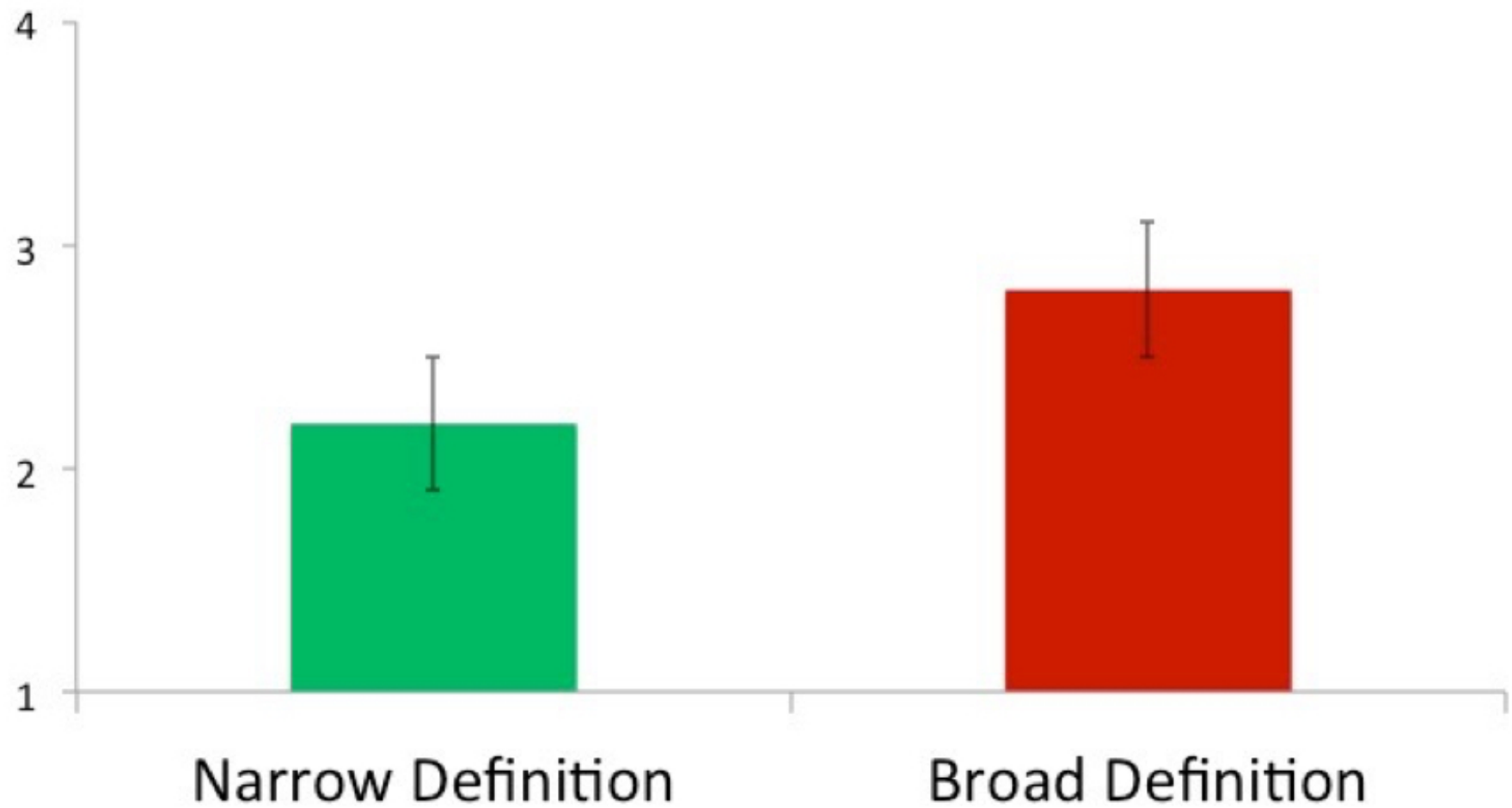
# Study 1

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- 150 participants from an online participant pool
- Manipulated whether participants saw a broad or narrow definition of diversity
- Showed the two pie charts
- Asked them:
  - Do you perceive Strathmore to be diverse? (3 items)
  - Does Strathmore have a racial diversity problem? (2 items)

Study 1

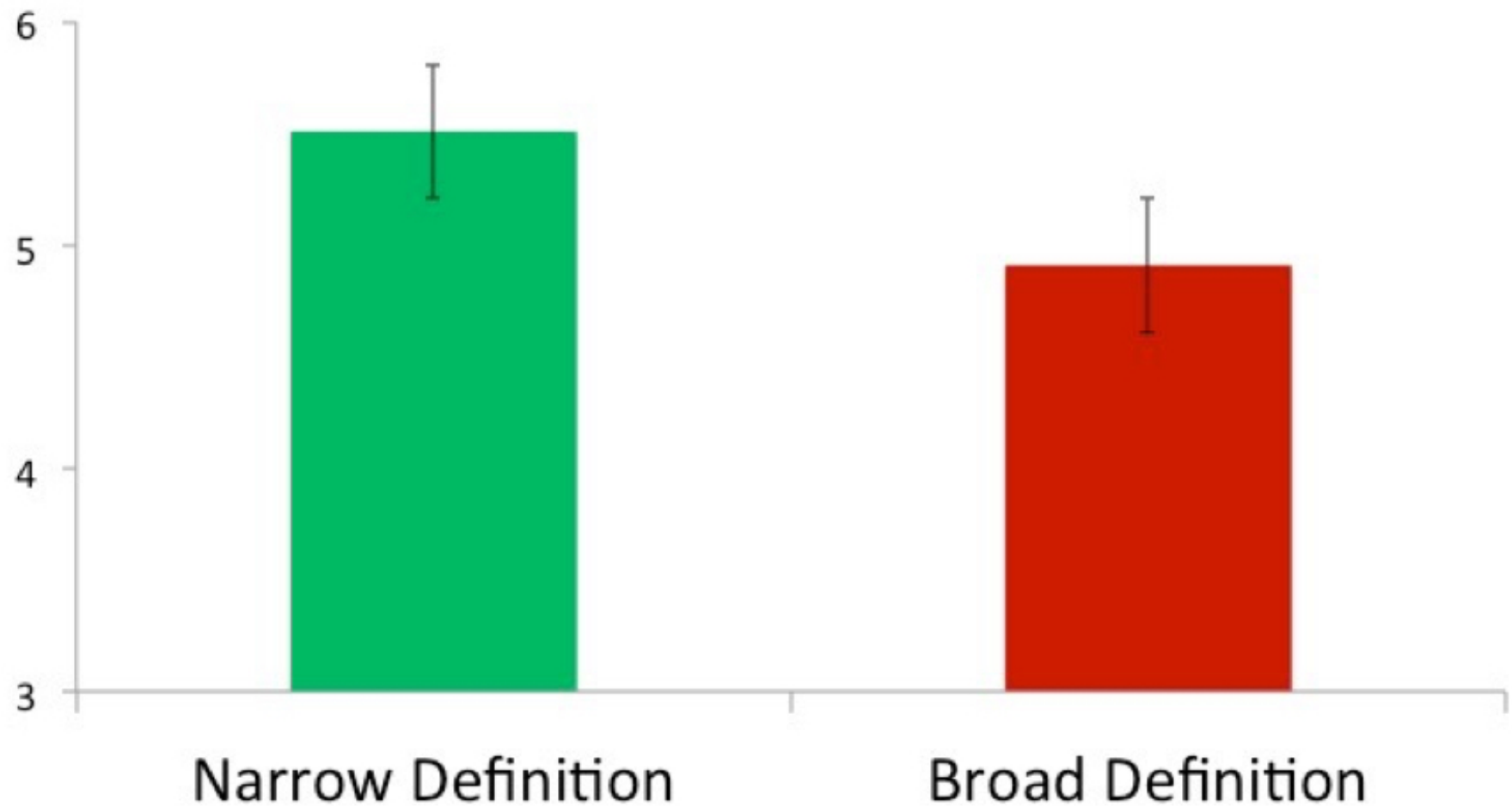
# Perceived Diversity



$t(148) = 2.37, p = .02$

Study 1

# Racial Diversity Problem



$t(147) = 2.31, p = .02$

# Goal of Mediation Analysis

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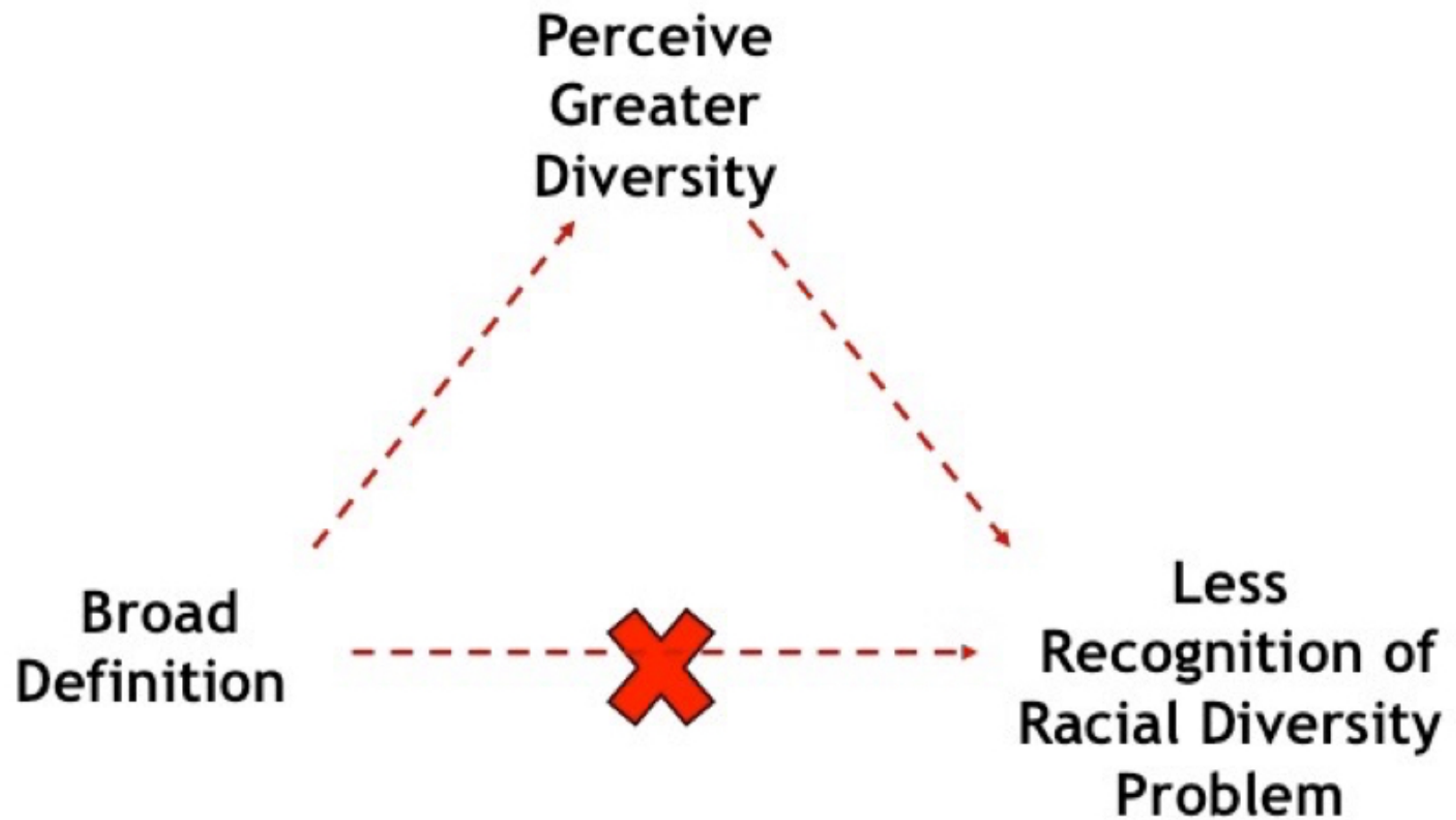
**Broad  
Definition**



**Less  
Recognition of  
Racial Diversity  
Problem**

# Goal of Mediation Analysis

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Study 1

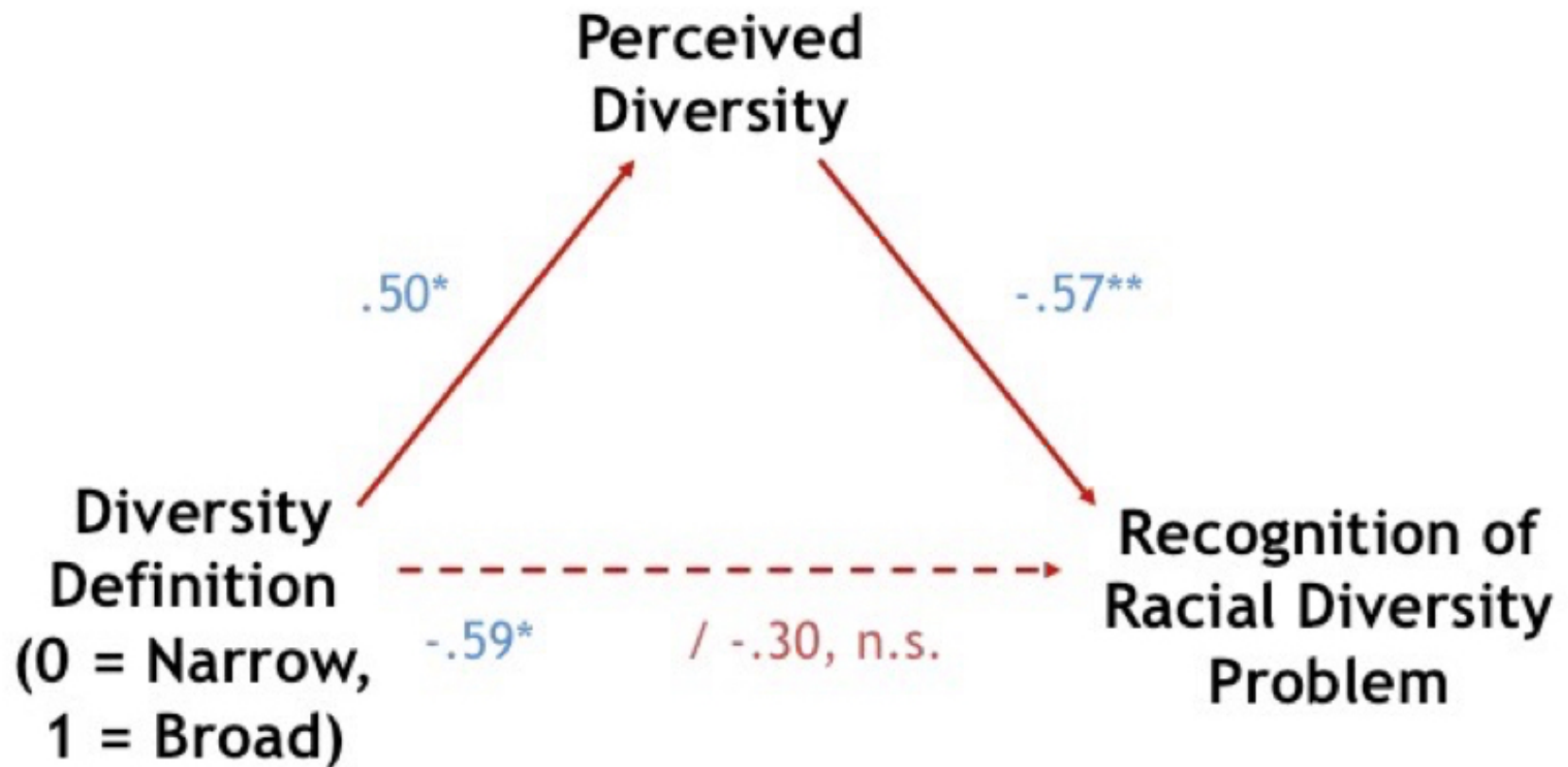
# Mediation Analysis

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# Mediation Analysis

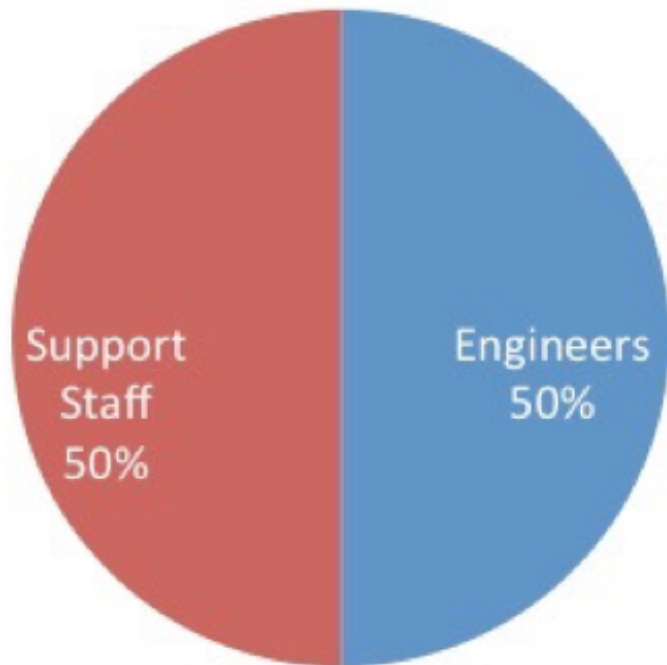
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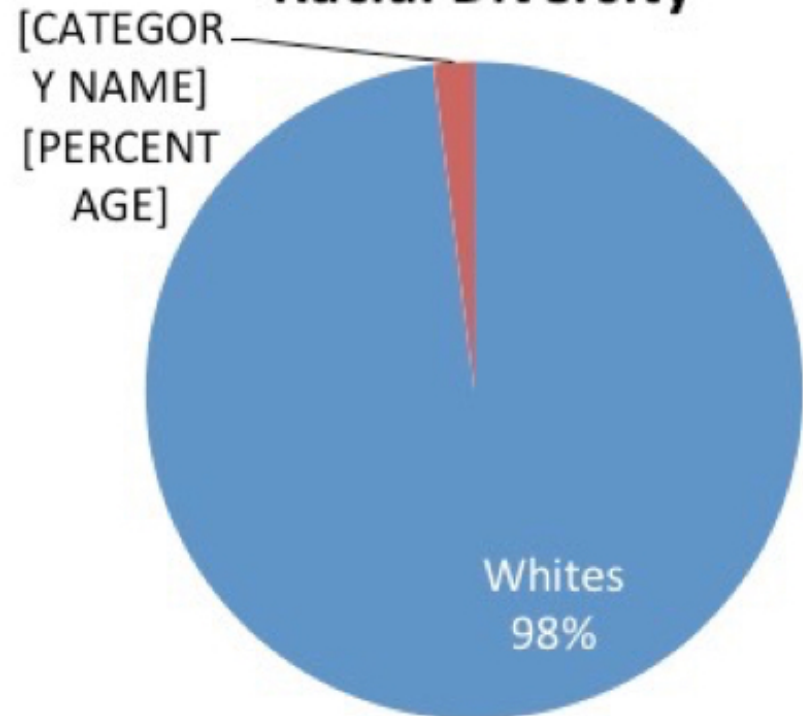
# Study 1

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## Functional Diversity

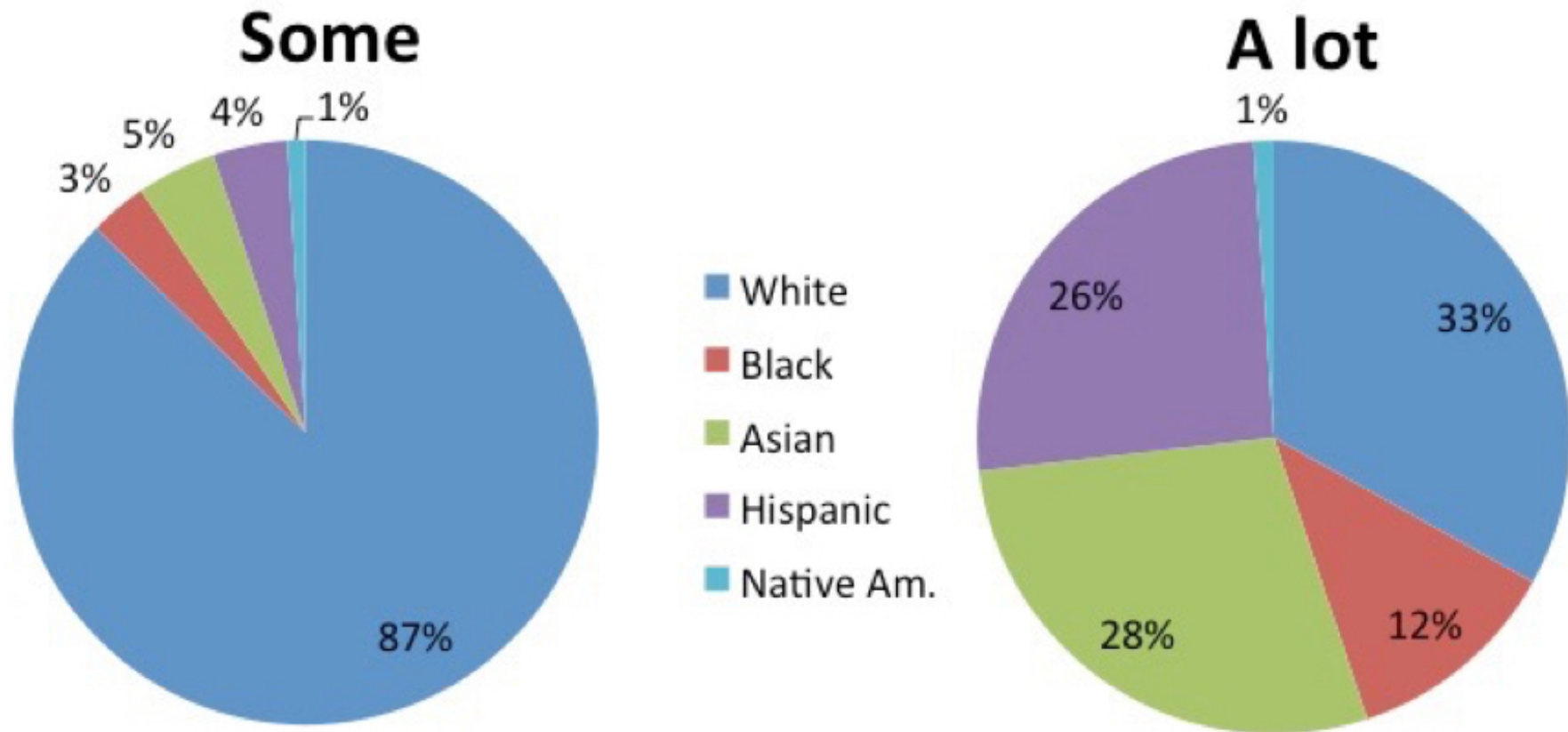


## Racial Diversity



Study 2

# Strathmore's Racial Diversity



Study 2

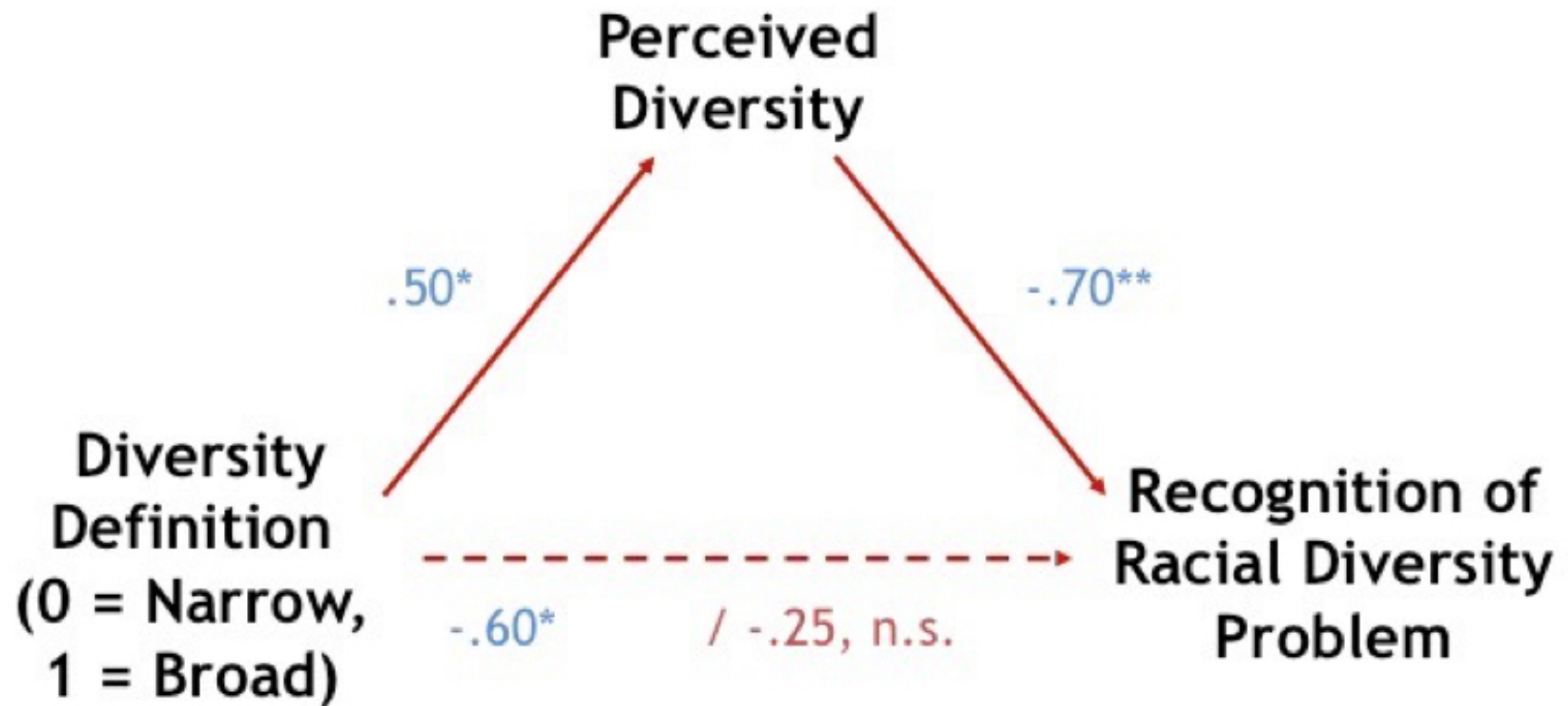
# Mediation Analysis

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# Mediation Analysis

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# Study 3

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- 73 MBA students
- Survey
  - “how was diversity defined at your most recent place of employment?”
    - Rated on a 1-5 scale (broad vs. narrow)
    - Coded statements
- Asked them:
  - Perceived diversity of most recent place of employment? (3 items)
  - Whether the company had a racial diversity problem? (2 items)

# Mediation Analysis

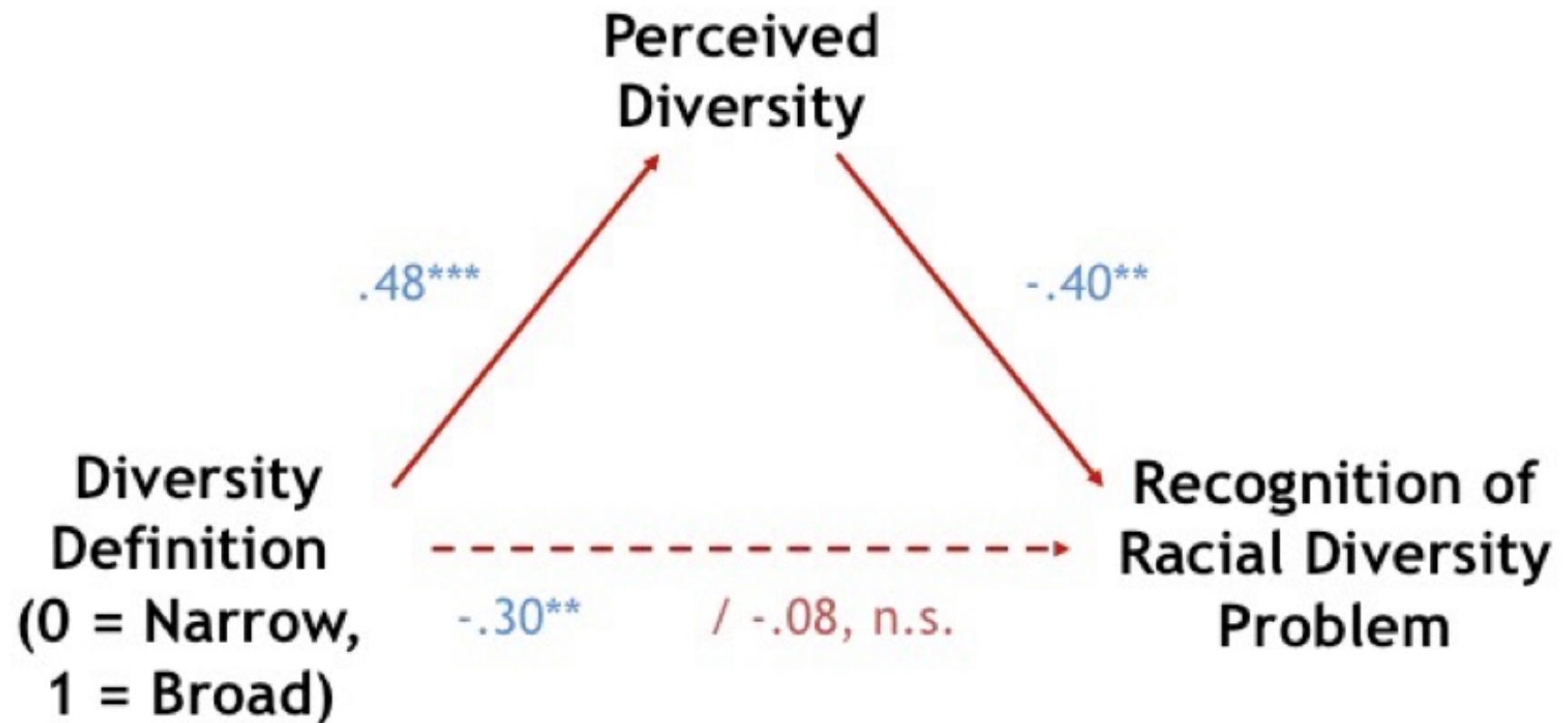
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# Mediation Analysis

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# Study 4

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**Do **companies** with more  
broad diversity definitions  
have a **lower representation**  
of minorities and women?**

# Study 4

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- Diversity Statements
  - Taken from company websites
  - Broad vs. Narrow coded subjectively and objectively
- Diversity Statistics
  - Source: Building a Better Legal Profession (BBLP)/ the National Association for Legal Career Professionals (NALP)
  - % Women and % Minorities (Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians)



**Do companies with more broad definitions have a lower representation of women and minorities?**

# Study 4

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- Diversity Statements
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**Do companies with more broad definitions have a lower representation of women and minorities?**

# Regression Model Predicting % Minorities and Women

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Variables	Model 1	
	B	s.e.
<i>Independent Variables</i>		
Broad Diversity Definition (rated)	-.37*	.17
<i>Control Variables</i>		
Number of Words	-.002	.003
Number of Offices	.19†	.11
Northeast	-1.51***	.36
South	-1.24**	.38
Midwest	-1.83***	.50

NOTE: n= 253, level 1; n=135, level 2. Regions were dummy coded

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01; \*\*\*p<.001

# Summary

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- Broadening the definition of diversity is beneficial
  - Brought attention to people that have been overlooked in organizations
- Broadening the definition of diversity has ironic consequences
  - Shifts discourse away from legally protected groups (e.g., women and minorities)
  - Attention focused on other dimensions of diversity (e.g., functional, personality)
- Organizations may be less likely to recognize inequities pertaining to groups protected by law, perpetuating inequitable social hierarches

*Inequities in Pathway Processes*  
The When and Where of Discrimination:  
An Audit Study in Academia

# Collaborators

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Katherine Milkman  
**The Wharton School,  
University of Pennsylvania**



Dolly Chugh  
**NYU Stern School of  
Business**



# We all get these emails...

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- I got your name from ...
- I read your paper on....
- I saw you on XYZ website...
- *...and I am interested in applying to PhD programs*



***Are you available to meet?***

RE: Hello again! | CBS - Message (HTML)

Message Insert Options Format Text Adobe PDF

Paste Times New 12 A A Bold Italic Underline Basic Text Address Book Check Names Attach File Attach Item Business Card Calendar Signature Follow Up Spelling Proofing

To... Akinola, Modupe  
Cc...  
Subject: RE: Hello again! | CBS

**From:** Michelle Wonsley [mailto:mwonsley@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 05, 2012 7:00 PM  
**To:** Akinola, Modupe; Akinola, Modupe  
**Subject:** Hello again! | CBS

Hello Modupe,

I hope this finds you well. I am writing to see if you'd have time to connect in coming weeks as I am considering applying to doctoral programs.

I am specifically interested in Columbia. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you, perhaps meet for coffee, at your convenience. I also see that Kathy and Damon Phillips are on faculty now. They are good friends with a great professor/mentor of mine from when I was a student at Johnson, Melissa Thomas-Hunt. In any event, I look forward to hearing from you.

Warmly,  
Michelle  
347.853.4906

Michelle Wonsley

What if this had been from **Brad**? What if it had been from **Jamaal**?

- Do academics discriminate on the basis of race and gender?

# Evidence of Discrimination

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- Recent evidence of discrimination against women and minorities exists in many settings:
  - Employment
    - Blind orchestra auditions help women (*Goldin and Rouse, 2000*)
    - Identical black candidates 50% less likely to receive an interview in Boston, Chicago (*Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004*)
    - Caucasians just released from prison equivalent to Black/Latino with no such record (*Pager, Western, and Bonikowski, 2009*)
  - Housing (*Massey and Lundy, 2001*)
  - Credit (*Ross and Yinger, 2002*)
  - K-12 Education (*Farkas, 2003*)

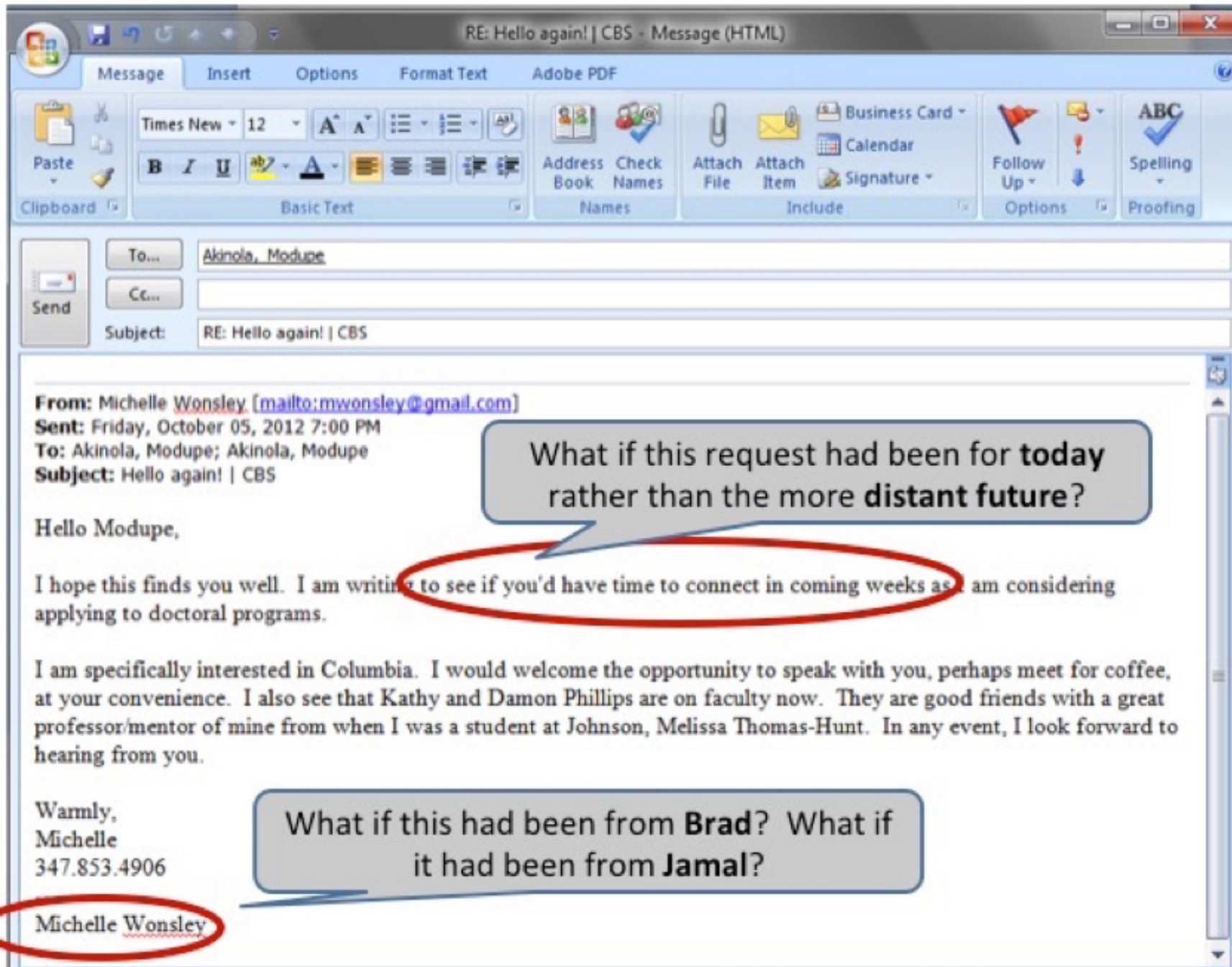
# What about Academia?

- If you would expect to see a post-racial and post-gender world anywhere, it might be in academia
  - Egalitarianism is prized
  - Affirmative action is widespread
  - A setting where some believe **reverse-**discrimination may exist



*Daddy works in a magical, faraway land called Academia.*

- Do academics discriminate on the basis of race and gender?
  - If so, how much?
  - In what context is discrimination most pronounced?

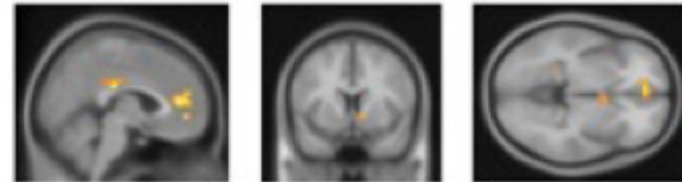


# Choices about the future are shaped by “temporal distance” Trope & Liberman, 2003

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- Choices for now vs. later rely on different processes and mental representations

*McClure et al. (2004)*



- Temporal distance heightens construal level

*Trope and Liberman (2003)*



# Construal Level Theory

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- *Immediate* Events Trigger **Low Level Construal**:
    - Concrete reasoning
    - Focus on **how** the event will occur
    - Focus on **feasibility** of the event
  - *Distant* Events Trigger **High Level Construal**:
    - Abstract generalizations
    - Focus on **why** the event should occur
    - Focus on **desirability** of the event
- 

***Near-future*** events lead one to consider “**can I do it?**” whereas ***distant future*** events lead one to consider “**is doing it worthwhile?**”

# Construal Level and Stereotyping

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- **Theory:** Abstract construals' *desirability/why* focus heightens reliance on perceived **average group characteristics, stereotypes** in judgment
- **Evidence:** High level construal mindsets increase reliance on stereotypes in lab studies *McCrea, Wieber, and Myers (2011)*
- **Implications:** Let's look at "Brad" and "Jamaal" ...

Methods

# **EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

# Field Experiment Set in Academia

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- **Procedure:** Subjects (faculty at U.S. universities) received an email from a prospective doctoral student *requesting a 10 minute meeting*
- **Randomization:**
  1. Student's name (designed to signal identity)
    - Gender (male or female)
    - Race (Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, Chinese or Indian)
  2. Timing of meeting request: "now" vs. "later"

# Faculty Subjects

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- 6,548 faculty at top 260 Universities
  - 1 or 2 from each of 6,300 Ph.D.-granting departments
- Characteristics pulled from homepages:
  - Race, gender, rank, university affiliation

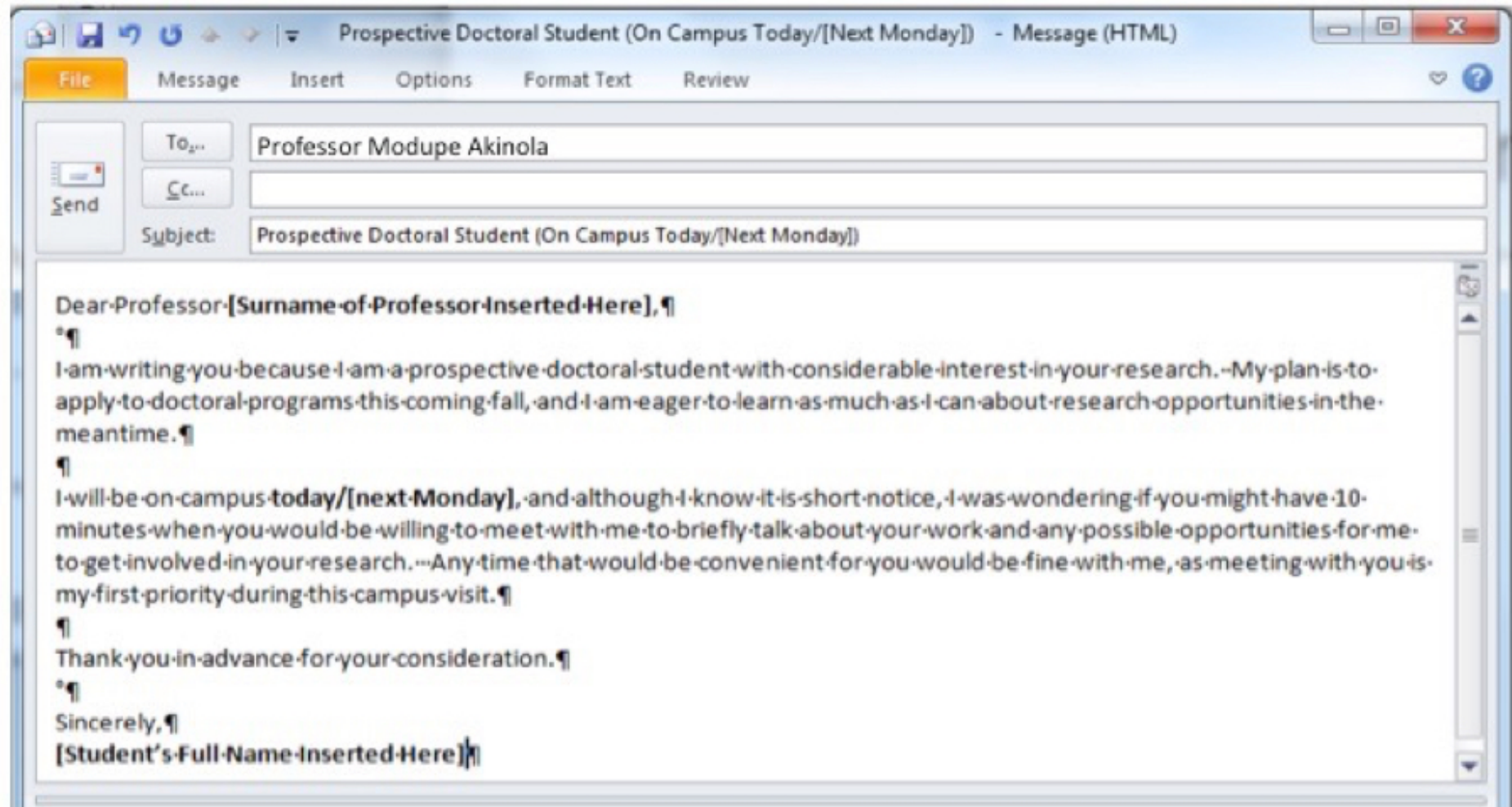
	<b>Representative Sample</b>
<b>Caucasian</b>	87.5%
<b>Black</b>	1.2%
<b>Hispanic</b>	1.5%
<b>Indian</b>	3.0%
<b>Chinese</b>	4.1%
<b>Other Race</b>	2.6%
<b>Male</b>	68.8%
<b>Full Professor</b>	48.0%
<b>Assistant Professor</b>	25.9%
<b>Associate Professor</b>	21.3%
<b>Other Professor</b>	4.8%
<b>Eastern (EST)</b>	54.9%
<b>Central (CST)</b>	26.4%
<b>Mountain (MST)</b>	5.4%
<b>Pacific (PST)</b>	13.3%
	N = 4,375

# Surveys to Pre-Test Race and Gender Recognition

Race	Gender	Student Name	Race Recognition	Gender Recognition	SES (1 = low, 3 = high)
Caucasian	Male	Brad Anderson	100%***	100%***	2.42
		Steven Smith	100%***	100%***	2.26
	Female	Meredith Roberts	100%***	100%***	2.21
		Claire Smith	100%***	100%***	2.15
Black	Male	Lamar Washington	100%***	100%***	1.79
		Terell Jones	100%***	94%***	1.79
	Female	Keisha Thomas	100%***	100%***	1.73
		Latoya Brown	100%***	100%***	1.64
Hispanic	Male	Carlos Lopez	100%***	100%***	1.68
		Juan Gonzalez	100%***	100%***	1.68
	Female	Gabriella Rodriguez	100%***	100%***	1.68
		Juanita Martinez	100%***	100%***	1.58
Indian	Male	Raj Singh	90%***	100%***	2.32
		Deepak Patel	85%***	100%***	2.47
	Female	Sonali Desai	85%***	100%***	2.26
		Indira Shah	85%***	94%***	2.26
Chinese	Male	Chang Huang	100%***	94%***	2.42
		Dong Lin	100%***	94%***	2.26
	Female	Mei Chen	100%***	94%***	2.47
		Ling Wong	100%***	78%***	2.26

Reported significance levels indicate the results of a two-tailed, one sample test of proportions to test the null hypothesis that the observed recognition rate is equal to that expected by chance (16.7% for race and 50% for gender). \*\*\* 0.1%, \*\* 1%, \* 5%

# Emails All Sent on a Monday at 8 am



*Messages sent from email accounts of the form: `firstname.lastname@domain.com`*



SUBJECT: Prospective Doctoral Student (On Campus **Today/Next Monday**)

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Dear Professor [**Surname of Professor Inserted Here**],

I am writing you because I am a prospective doctoral student with considerable interest in your research. My plan is to apply to doctoral programs this coming fall, and I am eager to learn as much as I can about research opportunities in the meantime.

I will be on campus **today/[next Monday]**, and although I know it is short notice, I was wondering if you might have 10 minutes when you would be willing to meet with me to briefly talk about your work and any possible opportunities for me to get involved in your research. Any time that would be convenient for you would be fine with me, as meeting with you is my first priority during this campus visit.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**[Student's Full Name Inserted Here]**

# Outcomes of Interest

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## 1. Response Received within One Week

- *67% of emails received a response within a week*

## 2. Meeting Request Accepted

- Coded by RA's (97% agreement rate)
- *40% of meeting requests accepted*
  - In other words: 59% of responders said “yes”

## 3. Response Speed

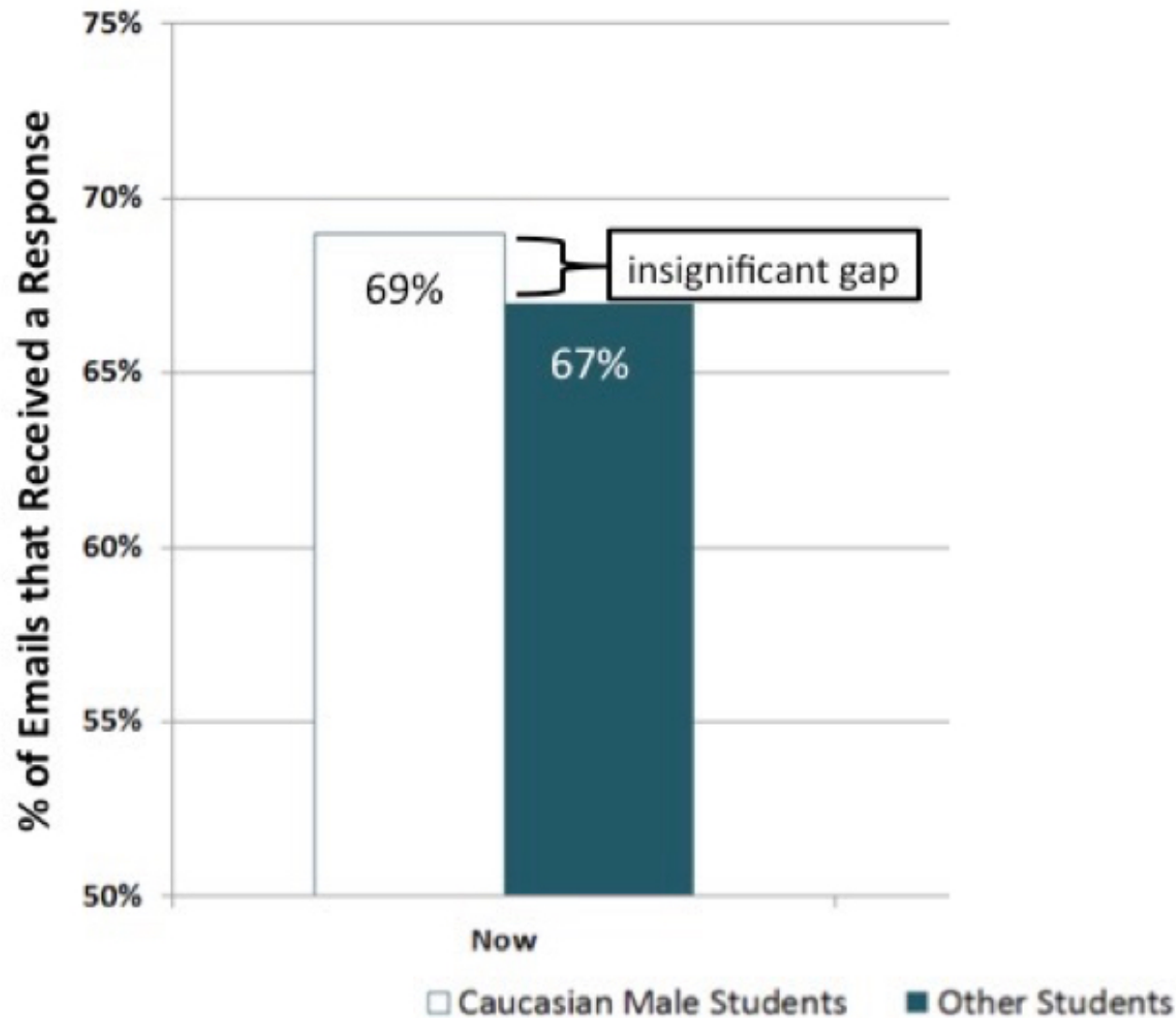
- Hazard models used to address right censoring
- *Median response speed: 5.6 hours*

**Paper #1: Temporal Distance and  
Discrimination: An Audit Study in Academia**  
*Psychological Science (2012)*

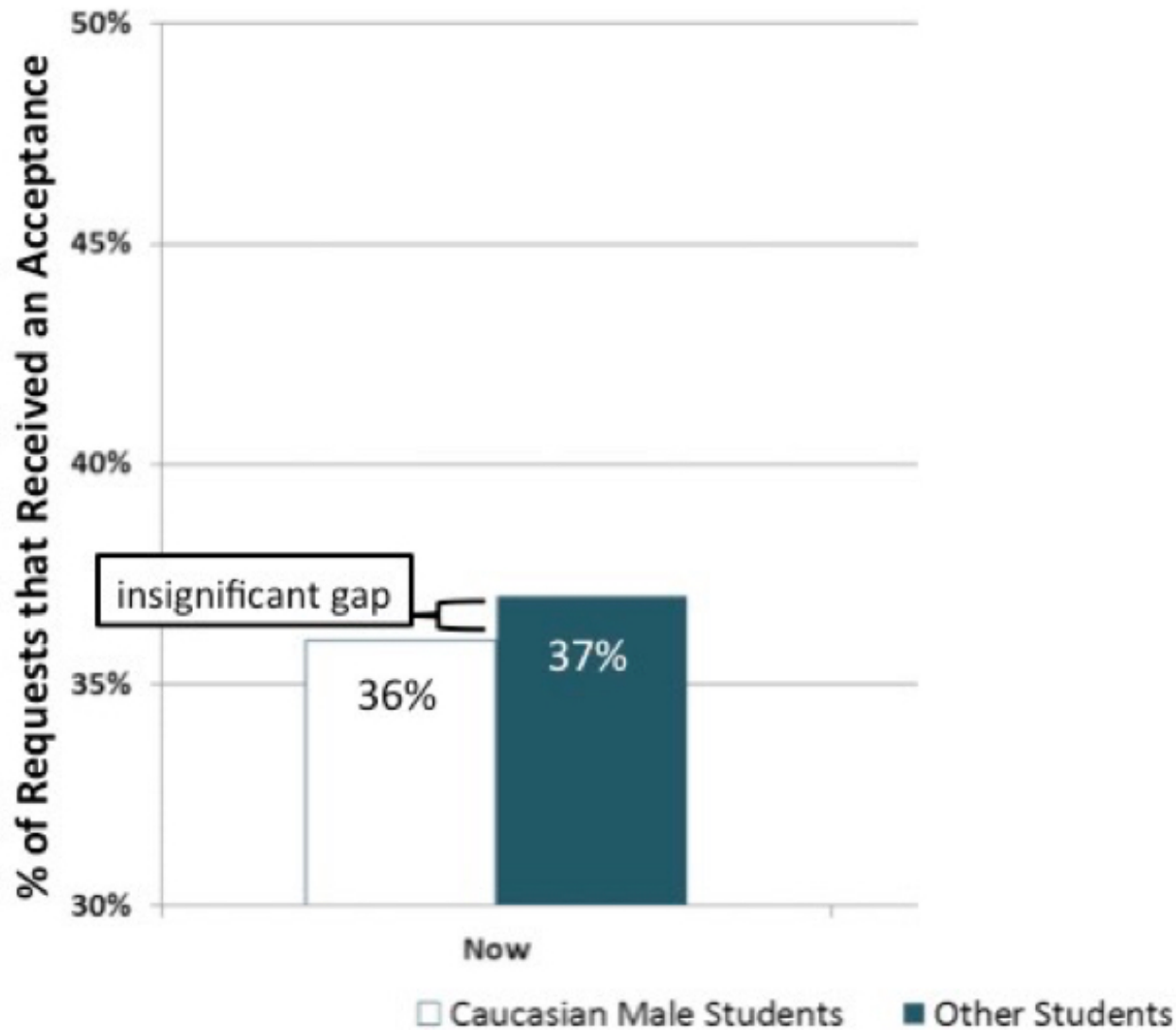
Results - Temporal Distance and Discrimination: Part 1

**COMPARING CAUCASIAN MALES  
TO OTHER STUDENTS (GROUPED)**

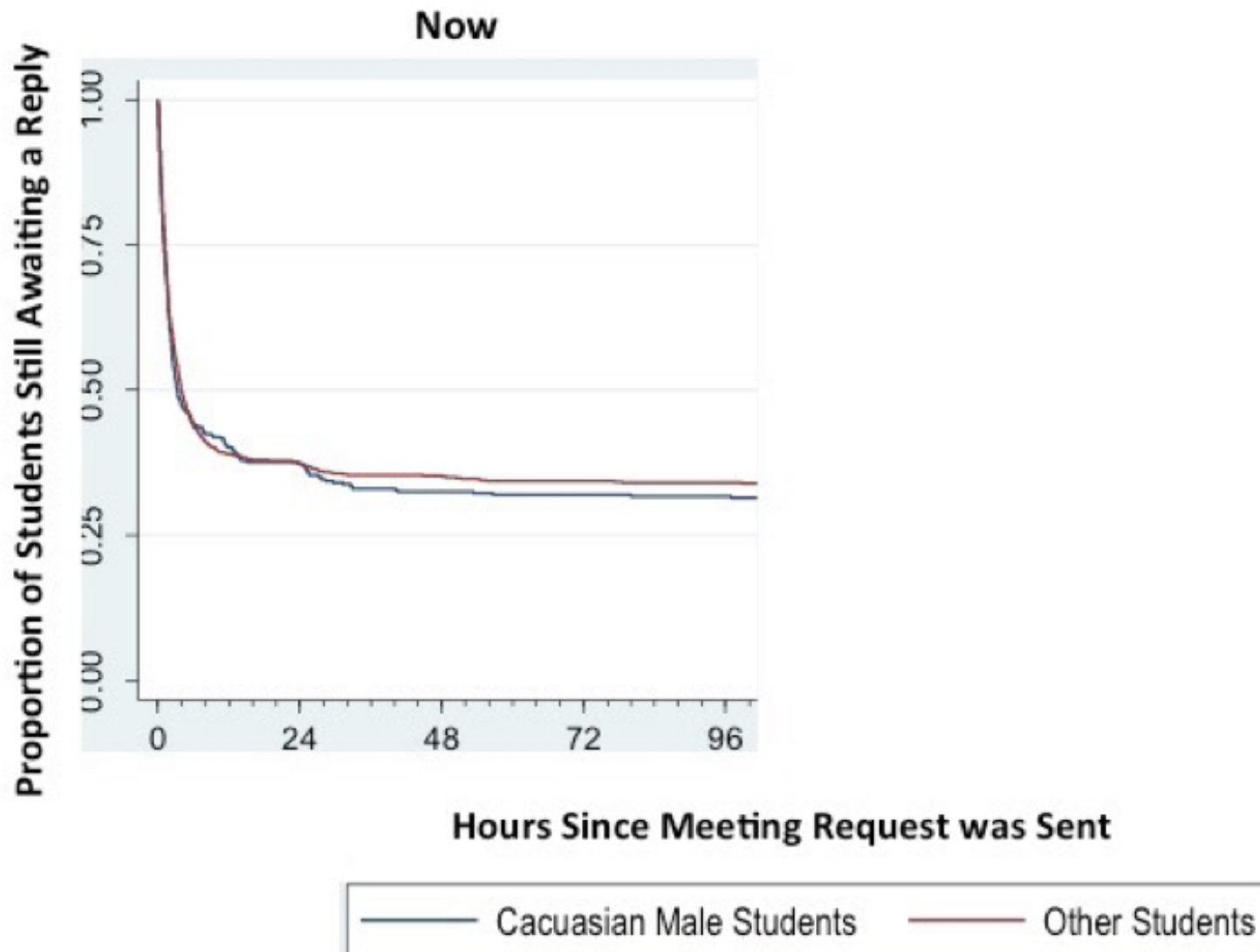
# Response Received



# Request Accepted



# Survivorship Function: Awaiting a Reply



Results: Part 2

# **COMPARING CAUCASIAN MALES TO OTHER STUDENTS (SEPARATELY)**

# Response Rates (Relative to White Males)





# Contact

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Lorenzo D. Baber

Associate Professor and Division Head, Higher  
Education

School of Education

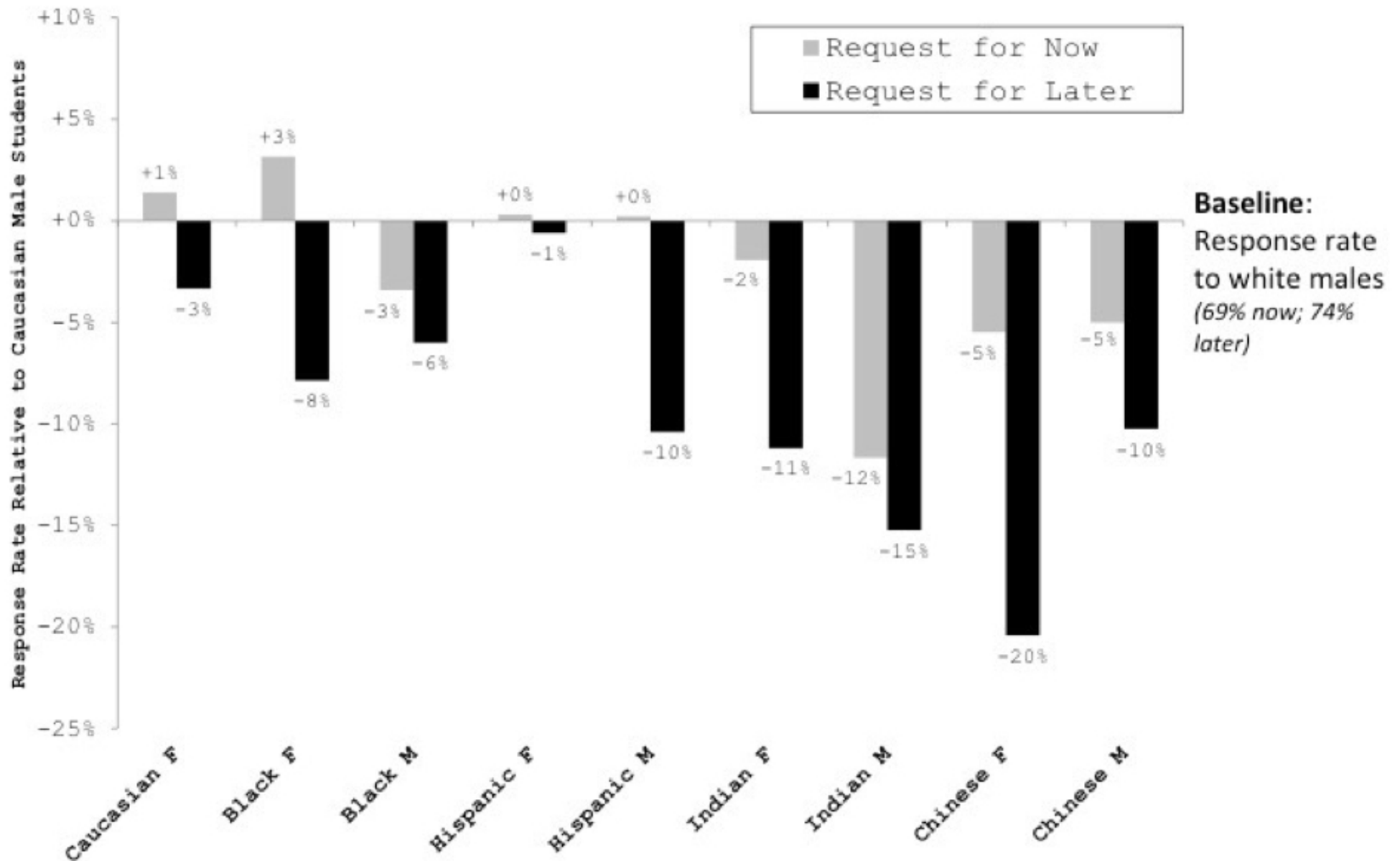
Iowa State University

Email: [ldbaber@iastate.edu](mailto:ldbaber@iastate.edu)

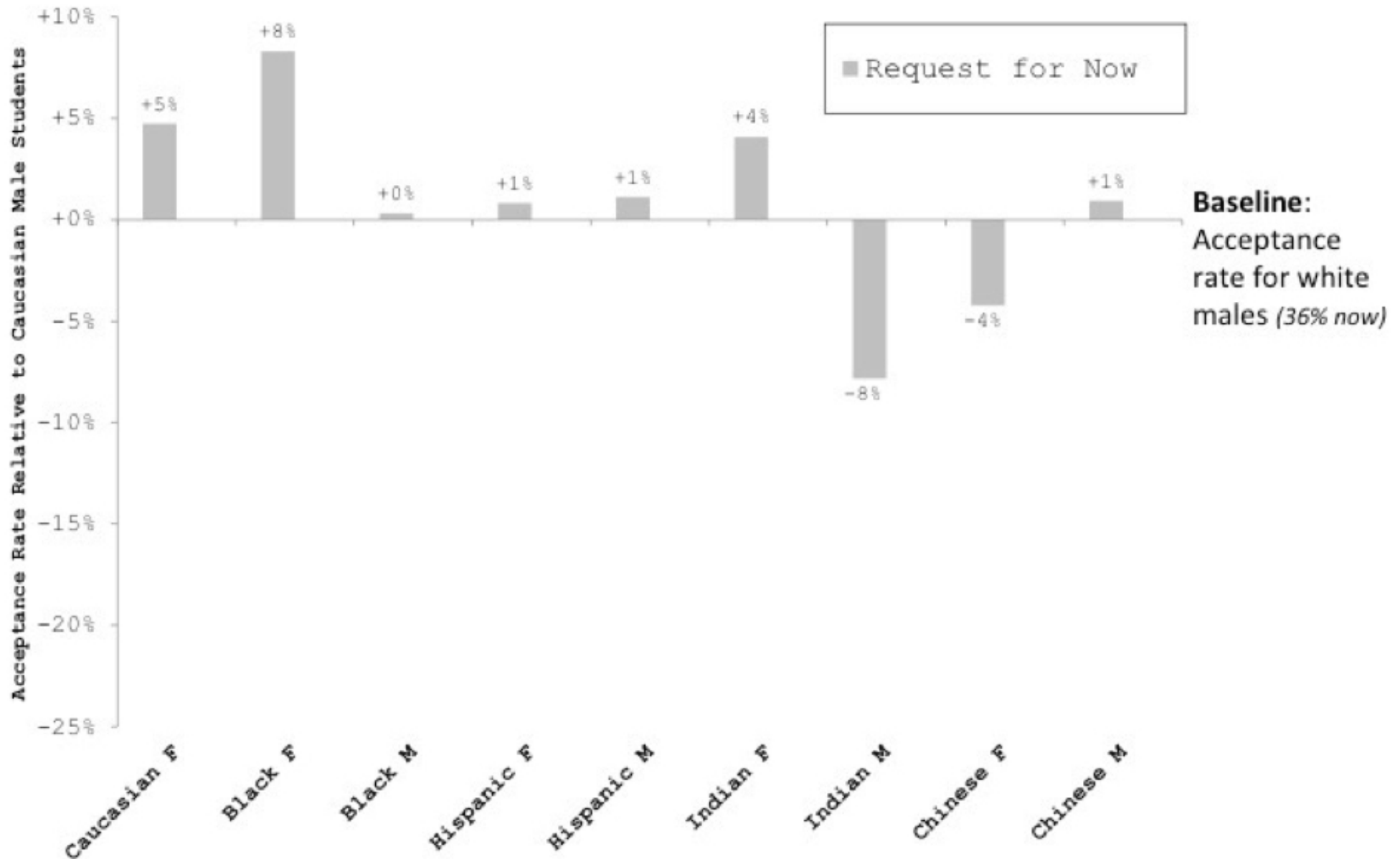
Twitter: [@doczo](https://twitter.com/doczo)

Phone: 515-294-8374

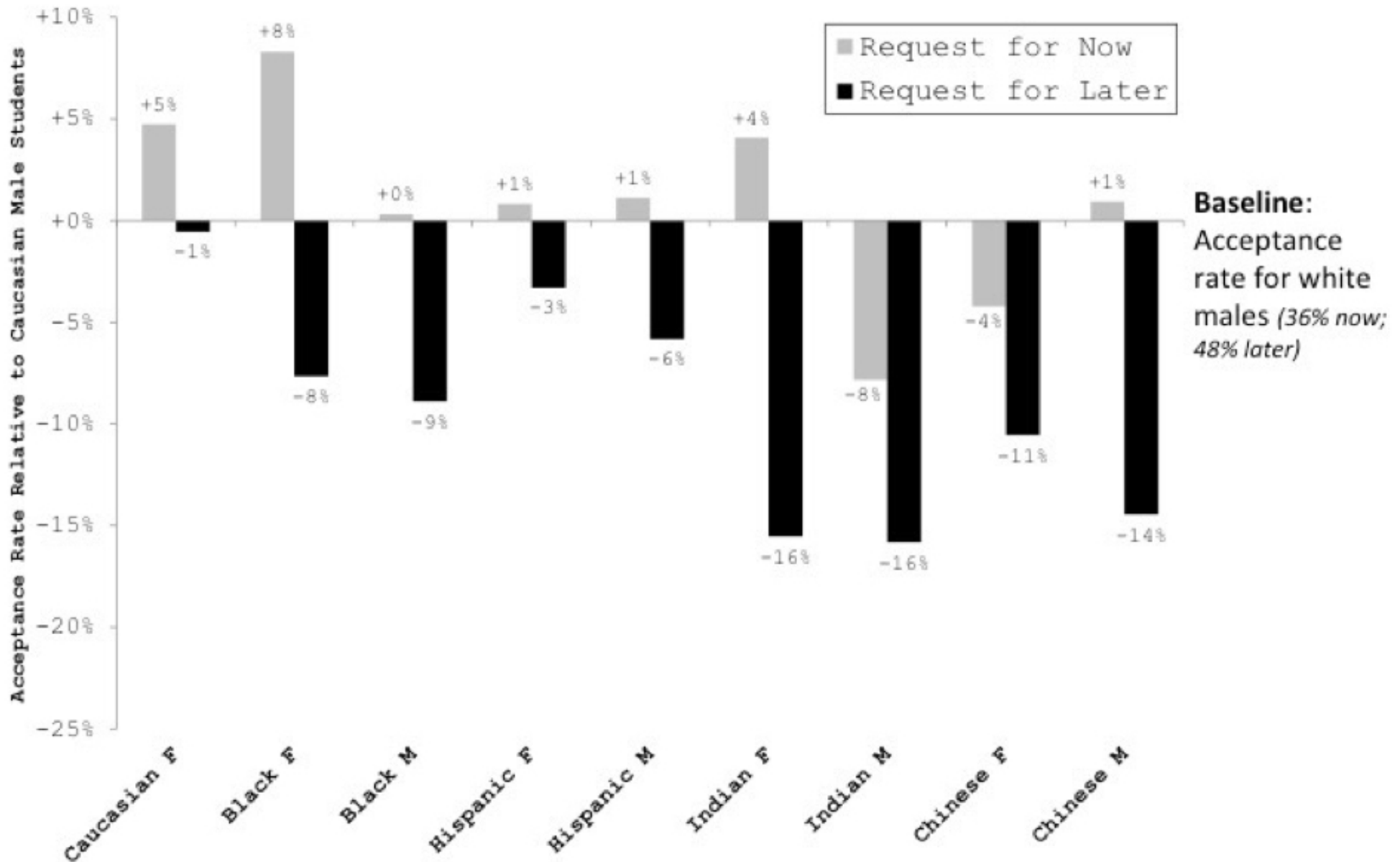
# Response Rates (Relative to White Males)



# Acceptance Rates (Relative to White Males)



# Acceptance Rates (Relative to White Males)



Results - Temporal Distance and Discrimination: Part 3

# **EXAMINING MATCHED-RACE & GENDER FACULTY-STUDENT PAIRS**

# Faculty Responses to Students of Their Race or Gender

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- Racial match increases reply rate by a factor of **1.28**
- No effect of gender match on reply rate
- *“Temporal discrimination effect”* still present even for matched race and gender faculty-student pairs
  - Effect size is not diminished



**Paper #2: What Happens Before? Exploring How  
Pay and Representation Differentially Shape Bias on the  
Pathway Into Organizations**  
*Journal of Applied Psychology (2015)*

Results – What Happens Before

**HOW BIG IS THE BIAS IN DIFFERENT  
PARTS OF ACADEMIA?**

# Faculty Subjects by Academic Discipline

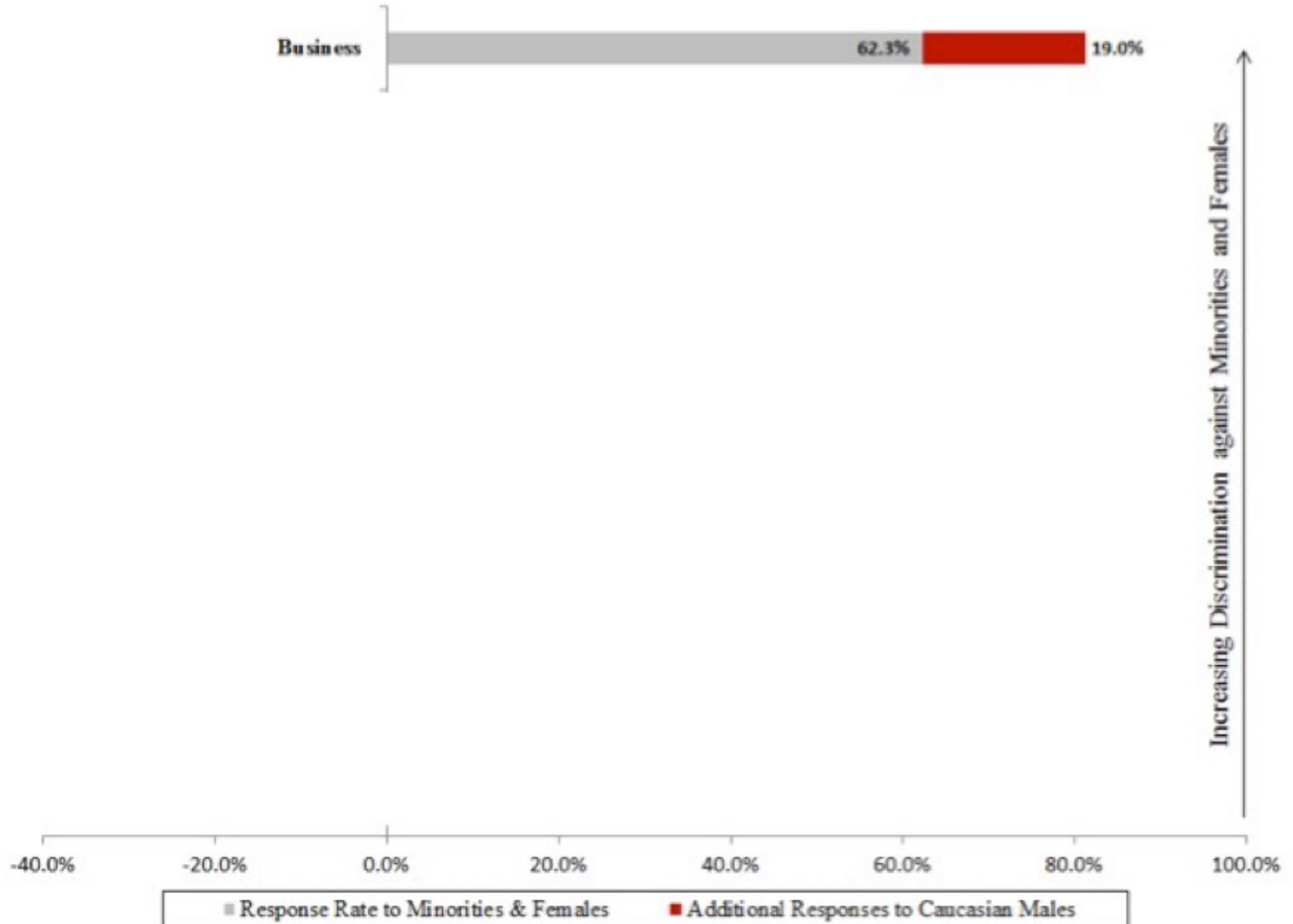
Broad Discipline	N	# of Narrow Sub-Disciplines*	Avg. Base Salary (9 Month)	Sample-Weighted Representation						
				Female	Caucasian	Black	Hispanic	Chinese	Indian	Other Race
Business	265	6	\$ 63,651	26%	85%	2%	1%	4%	5%	4%
Education	441	16	\$ 45,897	55%	91%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Engineering and Computer Science	1,125	14	\$ 71,107	15%	78%	1%	1%	8%	8%	4%
Fine Arts	209	8	\$ 38,023	38%	92%	1%	1%	4%	1%	2%
Health Sciences	343	13	\$ 69,222	46%	91%	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Human Services	188	11	\$ 49,257	43%	87%	4%	2%	1%	1%	5%
Humanities	668	7	\$ 46,375	38%	90%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Life Sciences	1,051	9	\$ 70,123	24%	90%	0%	1%	4%	3%	2%
Natural, Physical Sciences and Math	850	9	\$ 60,245	18%	85%	1%	1%	7%	4%	3%
Social Sciences	1,379	19	\$ 52,889	38%	90%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
<b>University Type</b>										
Public	4,450	105	\$X	30%	87%	1%	2%	5%	4%	2%
Private	2,098	100	\$X+\$34,687	32%	88%	1%	1%	4%	2%	3%

\*Note that some sub-disciplines fit into more than one broad disciplinary category, which is why the total number of narrow sub-disciplines listed here does not sum to the total number in our sample.

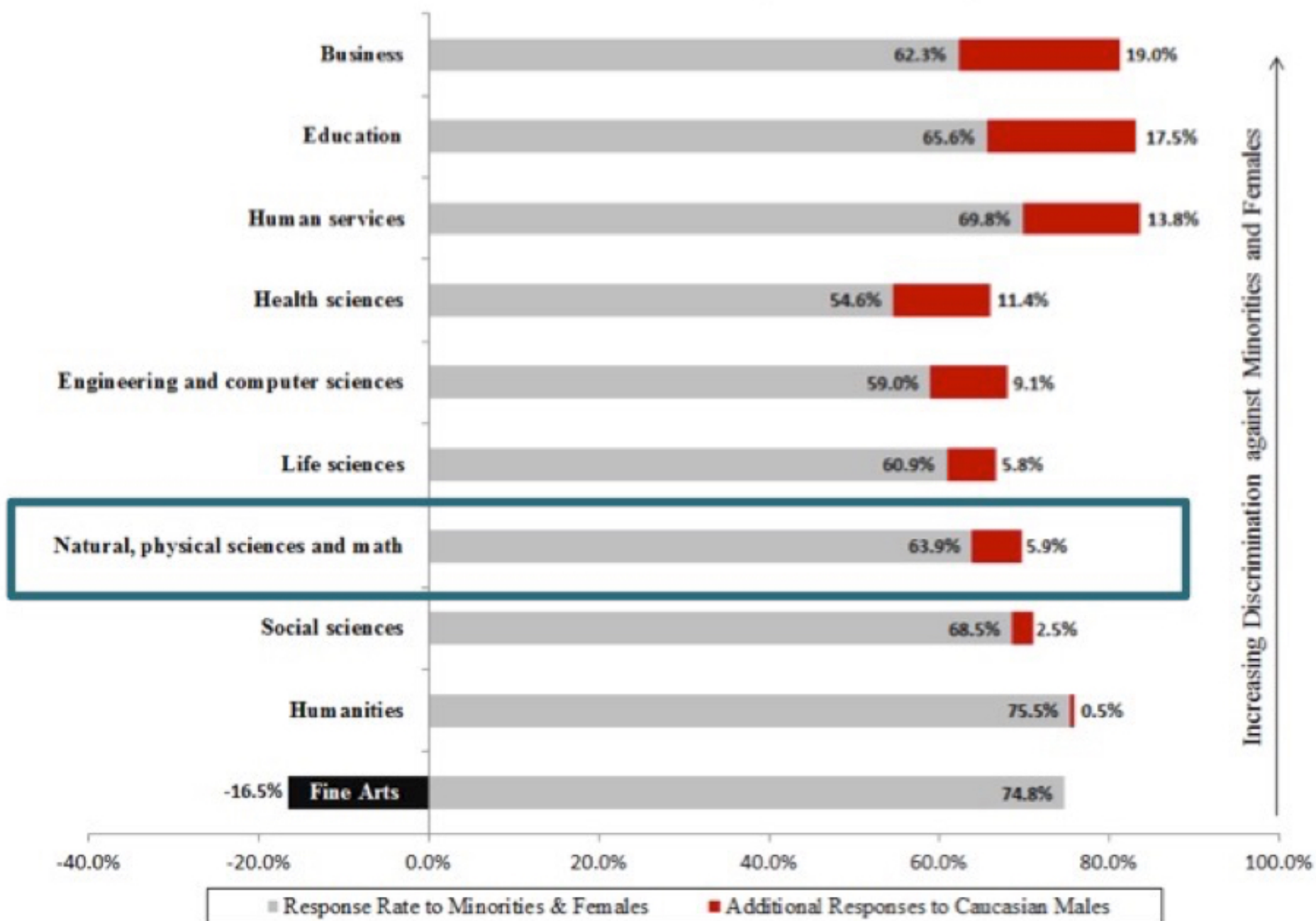
**National Study of Post-Secondary Faculty (NSOFP) 2009 Data**  
*National Center for Education Statistics*



# Discrimination by Discipline



# Discrimination by Discipline



Business



Caucasian F

Black F

Black M

Hispanic F

Hispanic M

Chinese F

Chinese M

Indian F

Indian M

Size of Discriminatory Gap:



-75

-32

-1

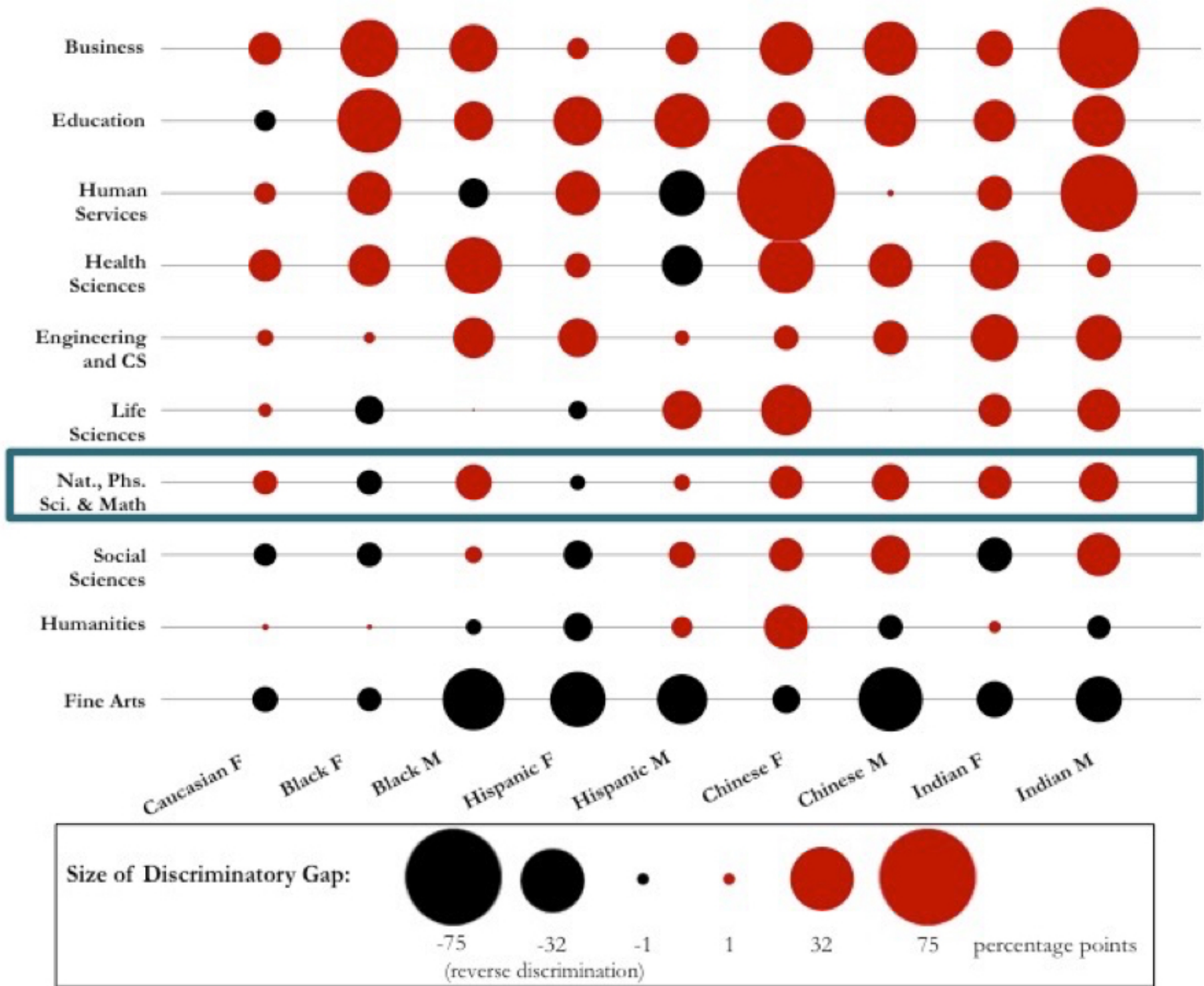
1

32

75

percentage points

(reverse discrimination)

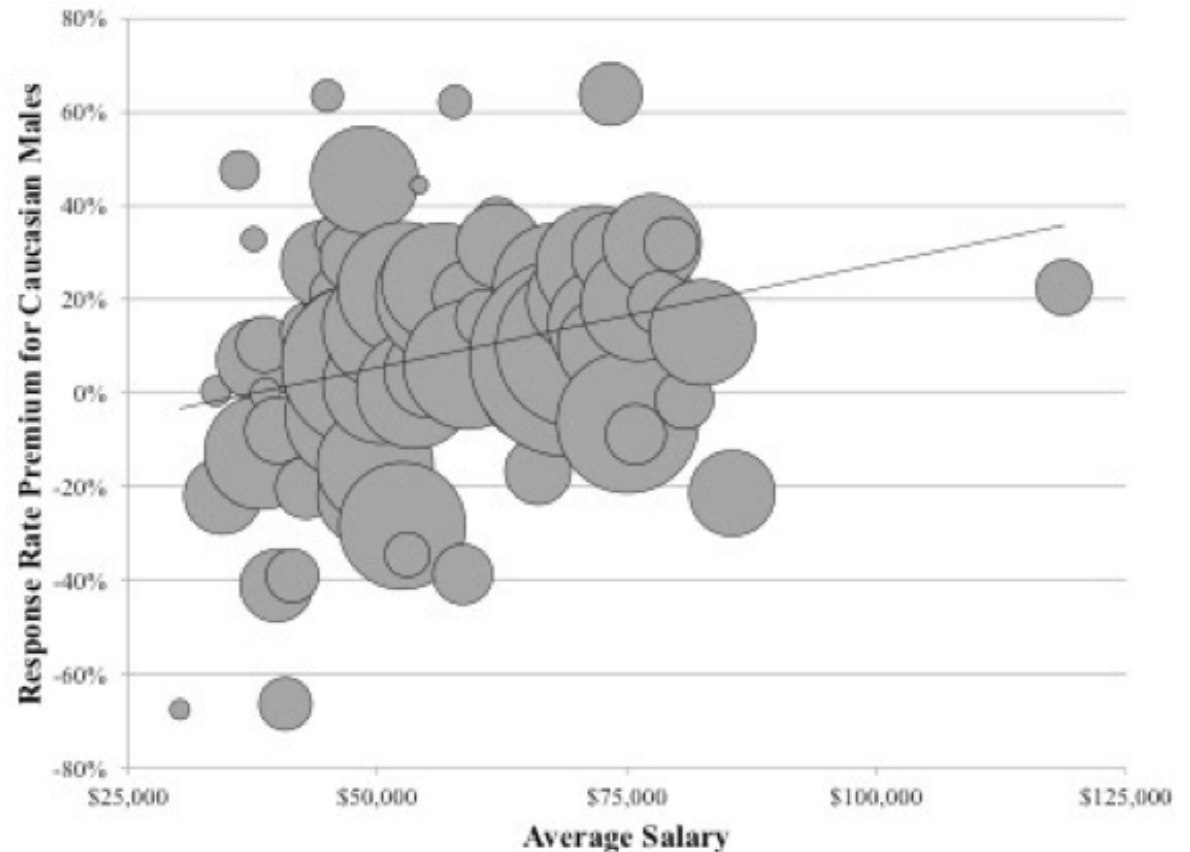


# What Drives the Disciplinary Gaps?

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- **Across 10 Broad NSOFP Fields:**  
Correlation of **0.47** between yearly pay and gap size

- **Across 89 Narrow NSOFP Fields:**  
**\$13k increase in pay** associated with a **4 pct. pt. increase** in gap



Academic Discipline Characteristics	Z-Avg. Faculty Pay	0.000	0.009	0.014	0.014	0.014
		(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
	Z-Pay x Minority or Female Student	-0.043*	-0.048**	-0.053**	-0.053**	-0.053**
		(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
	Z-Faculty% Minority	-	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000
		-	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
	Z-Fac%Minority x Minority Student	-	0.002	0.003	0.005	0.005
		-	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)
	Z-Faculty % Female	-	0.018^	0.018^	0.019^	0.019^
		-	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Z-Fac%Female x Female Student	-	-0.014	-0.014	-0.014	-0.014	
	-	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.014)	
Z-PhD Students % Minority	-	0.002	0.002	-0.004	-0.004	
	-	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	
Z-PhD%Minority x Minority Student	-	-0.004	-0.003	0.001	0.001	
	-	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	
University Characteristics	Public School	-	-	-0.100***	-0.110***	-0.113***
		-	-	(0.025)	(0.029)	(0.035)
	Public School x Minority or Female Student	-	-	0.140***	0.141***	0.145***
		-	-	(0.029)	(0.034)	(0.039)
	Z-Undergraduate % Minority	-	-	-	-0.024*	-0.024*
		-	-	-	(0.012)	(0.012)
	Z-Und%Minority x Minority Student	-	-	-	0.011	0.011
		-	-	-	(0.013)	(0.013)
Z-Undergraduate % Female	-	-	-	-0.009	-0.009	
	-	-	-	(0.008)	(0.007)	
Z-Und%Female x Female Student	-	-	-	0.005	0.005	
	-	-	-	(0.013)	(0.012)	
Z-School Rank (US News)	-0.006	-0.006	-0.010^	-0.006	-0.003	
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.019)	
Z-School Rank x Minority or Female Student	-	-	-	-	-0.004	
	-	-	-	-	(0.021)	
Minority Student Characteristics	Black	-0.088**	-0.091**	-0.180***	-0.176***	-0.178***
	Hispanic	-0.078*	-0.080*	-0.172***	-0.159***	-0.161***
	Indian	-0.177***	-0.178***	-0.268***	-0.253***	-0.255***
	Chinese	-0.123***	-0.124***	-0.215***	-0.204***	-0.206***
	Female	-0.042	-0.044	-0.134***	-0.128**	-0.130**
	Black x Female	0.059^	0.063*	0.153***	0.146***	0.148***
	Hispanic x Female	0.078*	0.081*	0.172***	0.170***	0.172***
	Indian x Female	0.105*	0.105*	0.194***	0.172***	0.174***
Chinese x Female	0.015	0.015	0.101*	0.093^	0.095^	
<b>Additional Controls:</b> Recipient: Race, Gender, Position (Full, Associate, Assistant); Request for Now; Request for Now x Minority/Female Student, Faculty-Student Racial Match						
Observations	6,206	6,206	6,206	6,206	5,852	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	

higher pay predicts bias

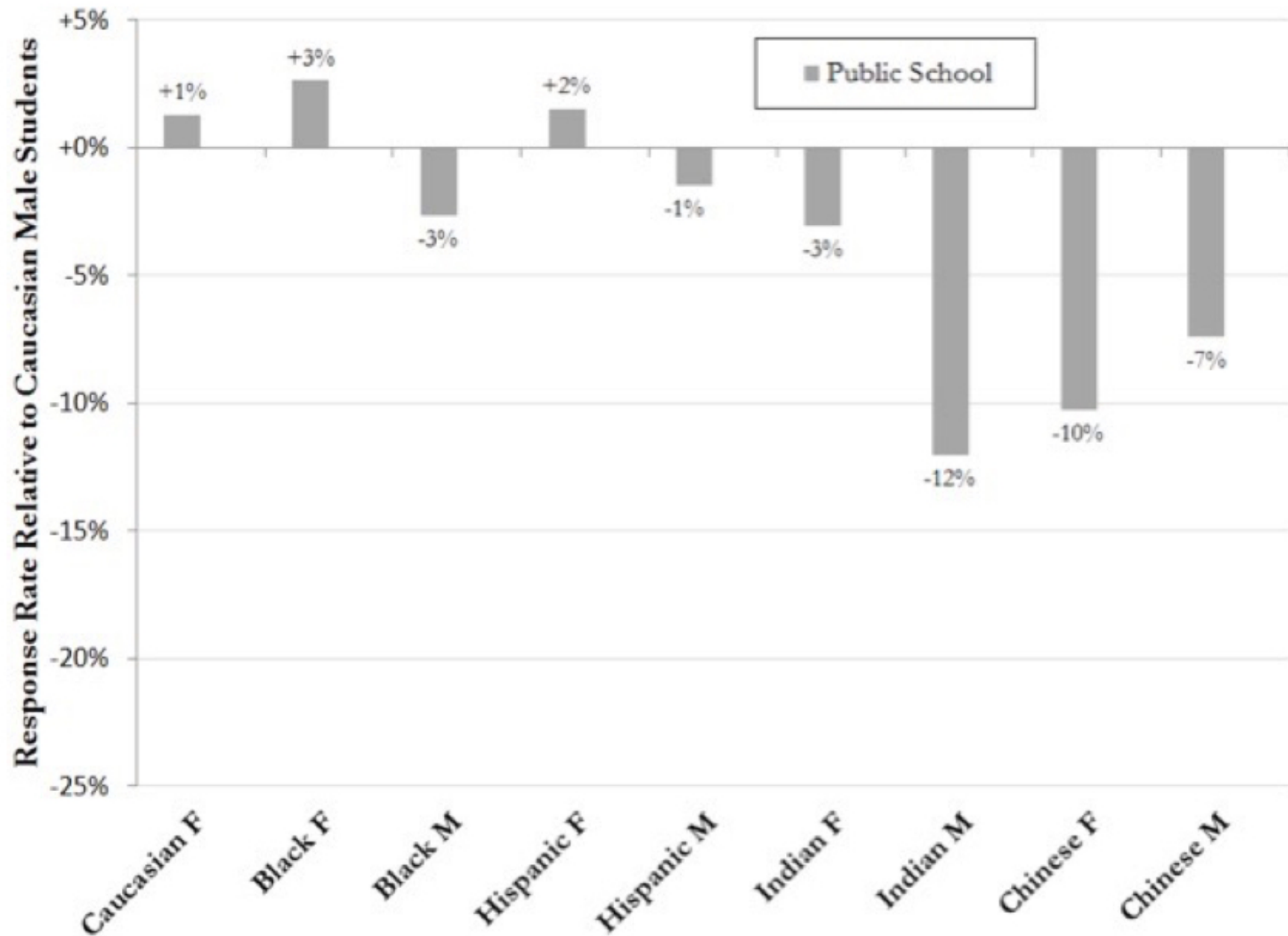
representation in the discipline and university does not predict bias

private u. predicts bias

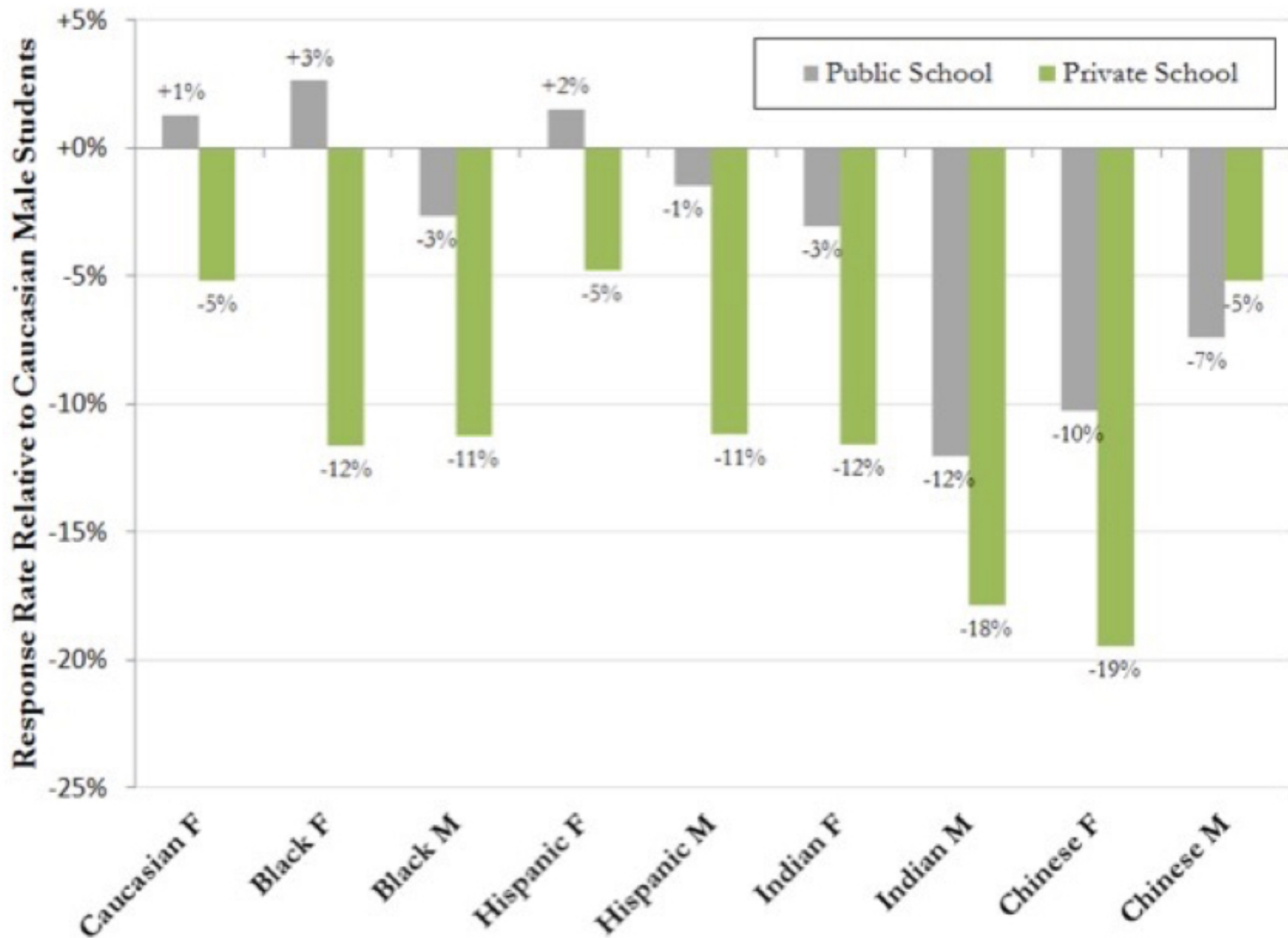
US News rank does not predicts bias

^Significant at the 10% level. \*Significant at 5% level. \*\*Significant at 1% level. \*\*\*Significant at the 0.1% level.

# Discrimination by University Type



# Discrimination by University Type





# Summary

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- **Temporal distance heightens discrimination**
  - Decisions about *distant future* events generate more discrimination than decisions about *near future* events
- **Discrimination varies by discipline**
  - *Most discriminatory disciplines:* business, education, human services, health sciences, engineering
  - *Faculty in higher paying* disciplines are more discriminatory
  - *Faculty in private vs. public institutions* are more discriminatory

# Implications

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- Systems to prevent discrimination are needed in pathway processes
  - E.g., All emails from students get forwarded to a central administrator
  - Systems need not focus solely on gateway processes
- How can women and minorities ensure they do receive a response?
  - Ambiguity is a breeding ground for bias
  - Encourage applicants to make their qualifications clear
- An impressive representation of minorities and women in faculty ranks cannot be assumed to eliminate or reduce discrimination
- Academic programs designed to combat discrimination are needed, particularly in high-paying disciplines and at private universities

# The Importance of Word Choice

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- Which categories to include in diversity definitions?
  - Which groups end up feeling excluded?
  - What attracts vs. deters applicants?
- Which terms to use to describe women?
  - Female vs. Woman?
  - Woman!!
    - Refers specifically to human beings; female connotes biological sex and refers to mammals not humans
    - Not all women are biologically female; calling women females excludes gender non-conforming people and members of the trans community
    - Female is an adjective; No one refers to men as “males” (e.g., how often do you hear the term “male doctor”?)

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