Which Diversity Interventions Work?: Lessons from Corporations

Frank Dobbin
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Alexandra Kalev
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The Problem with Management Science

- Too Many Theories (of Inequality & its Remedies)
  - Cognitive Psychology: Train Away Bias
  - Economics: Incentives
  - Network Theory: Affinity Groups and Mentoring
  - Bureaucratic Theory: Rules Constraining Bias
  - Human Capital Theory: Internal Management Training

- Not Enough Evidence

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Our Evidence Based Approach

- EEO-1 Workforce Reports 1971-2002
  - All Employers with 100+ Workers
  - Race, Gender, Ethnicity by 9 Occupations

- Retrospective Survey of 829 Workplaces
  - Life Histories of Employment Practices
  - Employer and Industry Characteristics

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Statistical Analysis

- Pooled Cross-sectional Time-Series Models
- Fixed Effects for Workplace and Year
- Modeling log odds of Proportion in Mgt.
- Controls for Everything
- Robustness Checks

- Modeling: Effects of Diversity Interventions
White Men and Women in Management

National Sample of 829 Firms

Year

Percent of Managers

White Men

White Women


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Minority Men and Women in Management

Percent of Managers

Year

Black Men
Hispanic Men
Black Women
Asian Men
Hispanic Women
Asian Women

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Changing Managers to Quash Bias

Theory of Bureaucracy: Rule Out Bias
   Hiring, Promotion, Firing Guidelines

Psychology: Train Away Bias
   Diversity Training

Economics: Performance Incentives
   Diversity Performance Evaluations

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Hiring & Promotion Rules

Percent Change

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Diversity Training & Evaluations

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What’s Wrong with Conventional Wisdom?

Defines Managers as the Problem

Accusatory, Stigmatizing, Alienating

Hiring & Promotion Rules to Stop Discrimination
Training to Unearth Managerial Bias
Performance Evaluations to Punish Bias

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Making Managers Responsible

Network Theory
  Give Managers Proteges

Social Psychology
  A Taskforce with Skill and Authority

Managerial Theory
  Put Someone in Charge (Archie Ervin, CDO)

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Putting Managers in Charge

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Ask Managers to Recruit Women, Minorities

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Ask Mgrs. To Work With Women & Minorities

- Self-directed work teams
- Problem solving Teams
- Cross training
- Job training

Percent change due to the program

- White Men
- White women
- Black women
- Black men

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Do Firms Get it Right?

National Sample of 829 Firms in 2002

Percent of Firms

Diversity Taskforce  Diversity Manager  Diversity Training  Diversity Evaluations  Network Program  Mentor Program

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Lessons for Academia

Don’t Try to Eradicate Bias
  Training
  Department Evaluations, Scorecards
  Hiring Rules and Regulations

Get the Faculty and Administration to Lead
  Taskforces Within or Across Departments
  Mentoring Programs
  Chief Diversity Officers
  Deliberate Recruitment Efforts
  Junior-Senior Collaboration and Committee Work?

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