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Examining the Diversity of Corporate America and the Federal Government: A Comparison of Selected Sectors

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ABSTRACT

Managing diversity has become a fundamental priority of leading U.S. firms. Management of modern businesses must address the issue of employee diversity. Concomitantly, managing rising diversity demands greater consideration in governmental, corporate, and nonprofit enterprises. The researchers explore the effects of diversity and diversity management on employee views of organizational performance in U.S. federal agencies by establishing measures of three variables: diversity, workplace diversity, and perceived performance of the organization. Despite the fact that the motivations and practices of diverse companies are similar to those described in the best-practices industry, following these guidelines may not guarantee that a company will reach a high degree of diversity. A firm's level of diversity may be influenced as much by contextual factors like its industry affiliation and company size as by strategic factors. However, racial diversity does correlate favorably with organizational performance when tempered by diversity practices and group performance. Diverse perspectives on gender and age and the connections between these factors and other environmental factors lead to inconsistencies.

Keywords: Corporate America, Diversity, Federal Government.

INTRODUCTION

As a result of civil rights laws and affirmative action initiatives changing the demographics of the American workforce, businesses now have a level of variety and heterogeneity that was previously unheard of. Employee effectiveness, job satisfaction, and employee turnover are all affected by the compositional diversity of an organization's workforce, therefore it's critical for managers to know how that diversity influences these outcomes [1]. Modern organizational management is concerned with how to deal with the increasing demographic diversity in the workplace. More varied employee populations are found in the public sector than in the private sector, indicating that public enterprises have made a concerted effort to increase workforce diversity and recruit individuals from a wide range of backgrounds [2]. A number of recent studies have revealed that the average age and racial and gender makeup of US workers is rising, especially in the public sector [3]. To succeed in achieving its goal of improving organizational performance, government agencies must deal with a new challenge: managing an increasingly diverse workforce to ensure that it works well together and achieves its goals.
Corporate boards are under increasing pressure to include more women on their executive committees, and this trend is expected to continue. Women make up around 45 percent of the

workforce and 50 percent of managerial and professional positions in the United States, yet only 15 percent of company board seats are held by women [4]. Many people in the government, academia, and corporations themselves are lobbying for increased gender equality on corporate boards [5], [6]. CEOs in the United States are growing increasingly concerned about the difficulty of building a multicultural, varied firm. It has taken a great deal of time and money for top leaders like IBM's Lou Gerstner and Sam Palmisano to achieve diversity [7]. In an attempt to duplicate what they consider to be best practices in diversity management, several of their rivals have done the same. Many academic and professional publications, as well as a cottage industry of diversity management consulting businesses, have evolved to assist corporate leaders in identifying the keys to diversity and launching diversity initiatives in their organizations today.

Individual variations in gender, racial group, and culture are all included in the broad definition of "diversity," as are those in one's own personality traits. In order to "respect diversity" and "manage diversity," companies must demonstrate their appreciation for these distinctions and implement initiatives to recruit and retain individuals from a variety of backgrounds [8]. The term diversity management encompasses a wide range of organizational initiatives. For example, a special office or committee is dedicated to identifying and removing barriers to diversity, as well as setting numerical goals for increasing marginalized populations in the workforce; these include targeted recruitment, mentorships, organized groups, and diversity apprenticeship programs [9]. Diverse companies are more likely to employ a combination of the aforementioned strategies.

Increasing diversity initiatives and conversation may be traced back to HR experts [10]. HR experts established the so-called economic case for diversity in response to waning public support for government equality programs like Affirmative Action. Individuals from various background might enhance income by increasing market position, lowering attrition, "increasing employee productivity, attractiveness, creativity, inventiveness and problem-solving abilities"; and cutting legal expenses, they said [11]. They were able to keep their employment as well as effectively link diversity management activities to the bottom line of the corporation by making this argument [12].

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to make a corporate case for diversity, it can boost work satisfaction, and leadership's influence on diversity. The Hispanic workforce is of particular interest to a limited subset of scholars studying the issue of practice. Politicians and majority groups reacted negatively to Affirmative Action programs because they perceived it as replacing talented majority employees with unqualified minority and women personnel. Diversity Management was born out of this reaction [13]. While equal opportunity legislation and regulations are meant to address the issue of inequity in employment, the goal of diversity initiatives is to influence the culture of a business. Scholars like [14] and others have acknowledged the vast range of studies with regard to diversity in businesses. One researcher [15] discovered diversity as a moderator to enhancing productivity, whereas another [16] found diversity to contribute to low work satisfaction and subsequently high turnover because diversity might lead to decreasing production [13]. A diversified workforce, as mandated by presidential executive orders, remains a governmental priority, notwithstanding data that suggests otherwise.

A vast range of studies and publications have been written in an attempt to provide a business case for diversity. More than three-quarters of all diversity studies were focused on how it affects the ability to make a business case, according to [16] Companies that have a diverse staff are more profitable, according to [13]. When it comes to revenue and customer acquisition, firms with a high degree of diversity outperform those with a low level of diversity. Studies concentrate on group and organizational performance since the federal government does not manufacture a product or service but rather delivers services for the community. Better performance may be achieved by government agencies with strong diversity management strategies [17]. Organizations with a high degree of racial diversity perform better than those with low levels of diversity. High organizational performance communicates to taxpayers that they are receiving their money's value from government personnel, which is the business case in this situation. It is imperative that the federal government successfully manages diversity in order to achieve this level of success.

Job satisfaction is another subject of federal government diversity study. According to [18], having a diverse management team was associated with higher levels of work satisfaction among employees. According to [15], federal agencies that are successful in managing diversity report higher levels of work satisfaction among their employees, whereas those that fail to do so report lower levels of job satisfaction. A greater staff turnover rate was not always a sign of low job satisfaction; rather, turnover was more difficult to assess in light of a diverse workforce. Organizations may profit from diversity if their leaders and managers are on board with it, according to these studies.

Leadership and diversity results are linked, according to researchers. Change in an organization's culture can only occur when the organization's leaders are held accountable, according to researchers [19] and [20]. Research on federal agency diversity by [20] said that attaining diversity-related goals should be used as the basis for performance rating Leaders should have a strong understanding of diversity, according to [19]. According to his findings, effective diversity management has a positive impact on employee well-being, particularly among underrepresented groups. Leaders, rather than Human Resources, should be held responsible for ensuring that their firms are diverse, according to the study. In the federal government, there is a dearth of research on Hispanic diversity, and the subjects covered are wide-ranging. Hispanic Border Patrol officers were interviewed by [21] and [22]. According to [21], Hispanic officers place a higher value on their citizenship than on their ethnicity, and overcoming concerns of cultural identification might be challenging. There is an aggressive diversity recruitment program for Hispanics at the Border Patrol, which is a federal law enforcement organization inside the Department of Homeland Security, to protect the federal government against accusations of racism, rather than to promote diversity in the workplace. Hispanics are underrepresented in the civilian workforce of the Department of Defense, according to a study by [23], which suggests that educational attainment and geographic location may be obstacles to employment. To their surprise, the authors of [24] discovered that factors including English proficiency, educational attainment (including military service), age (including gender), and race (including ethnicity) don't indicate why minorities are underserved in government. Immature professional networks are one possible roadblock for new entrants.

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MERIT IN DIVERSITY

In literature, the term "diversity" is used in a variety of ways, resulting in a wide range of interpretations. The phrase "affirmative action" and "quotas" conjure up images of political correctness for some people. In part, this is due to a restricted concentration on protected groups covered by affirmative action regulations, where distinctions such as sex and ethnicity are the primary topic of affirmative action. A broader definition of diversity could encompass not only color and gender, but also an individual's ethnicity, age and religious affiliation, as well as his or her physical or mental condition and where he or she is located, as well as his or her personality traits and sexual preferences. In this way, the term "diversity" can refer to a wide range of people who belong to various social strata. The term "diversity" often refers to policies and procedures that aim to incorporate persons who are deemed to be different from conventional members in some manner. As a primary goal, diversity is to cultivate a workplace that is welcoming to all potential employees, regardless of their backgrounds or gender identities.

Diversity and inclusion have seen a tremendous transformation in political ideology during the past half-century [25]. Employment policies that prejudice against workers on the basis of their race, color, religion, gender, or national origin are outlawed under the 1964 Civil Rights Act's Title VII. Employers are required by this law to give equal employment chances to those with comparable credentials and achievements. Government contractors have been compelled by the Executive Order to use affirmative action to end discriminatory practices dating back to 1965. Discrimination against specific groups of workers was abolished by these rules. They also increased the price for businesses that do not use fair employment standards.

Businesses began to realize in the 1970s and 1980s that while legally mandated, they were inadequate to successfully manage the diversity inside their organizations. Training programs aimed at "diversity initiatives" quickly became popular among businesses and consulting firms. Programs needed to set clear roles and responsibilities for diversity are more successful in raising the share of white women, black women, and black men in leadership than efforts to reduce managerial bias through managing diversity or to reducing stigma through guiding for women and racial / ethnic minorities. Positive action mandated firms are more likely to establish diversity initiatives that have a greater impact, according to the researchers.

The emphasis on the "business case" for worker diversity shifted in the 1990s [26], [25]. This is not just due to a lack of workforce diversity, but also because a more varied workforce was expected to result in better business outcomes. The diversity of the United States was seen as a key to the country's future development. That underutilization of talent pools is caused by prejudice and cannot be ignored was no longer practicable. Increasing access for historically marginalized groups to higher education and the workforce has become an important aspect of the effort to enhance the United States and move past its history of discrimination [27]. People who want to increase the pool of available talent and improve the institutions of the United States of America are being tasked with gathering facts to bolster this business-case reasoning. The radical drive for equality has been "tamed" by the change from racial quotas to diversity [25], yet workforce diversity has become a crucial corporate concern in the twenty-first century, nevertheless.

RESULT

The Diversity of Corporate America

Employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, or religion has been illegal in the United States since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Laws were subsequently enacted to protect workers from discrimination on the basis of age, veteran status, pregnancy, social background, disability, genetic data, and, in some jurisdictions, sexual orientation. By adopting diversity discourse and establishing diversity initiatives, modern businesses show they are in accordance with these rules and safeguard themselves against litigation. Diversity management encompasses a wide variety of initiatives run by businesses. The establishment of numerical goals for boosting the number of minority populations, as well as targeted recruitment, mentorship programs, collectives, and diversity training programs, proper evaluation systems to minimize bias in performance reviews, and a dedicated office or working group to recognize and remove barriers to diversity [28]. Businesses with a strong commitment to diversity will likely use several of these initiatives.

Human resources (HR) experts are widely credited for sparking modern discussions about diversity [29]. Human resources experts came up with the "business case for diversity" as public support for government equality programs like Affirmative Action waned. They said that by hiring people from different walks of life, a company might boost profits by increasing market share, cutting attrition, "raising employee productivity, profitability, creativity, development, and problem-solving abilities," and decreasing legal costs [11]. Human resources experts were able to save their jobs and effectively link diversity management programs to the bottom line by presenting this argument [12].

Unlike HR managers in the business world, many professors have voiced opposition to diversity initiatives. Research by [30] that tracked 700 private companies over time cast doubt on the efficacy of various diversity strategies aimed at elevating more women and members of underrepresented groups to positions of power. Many different kinds of programs were taken into account, each with their own unique aims and systems of responsibility and accountability for accomplishing diverse objectives. Increasing management diversity is best accomplished through the first type of program, which entails assigning responsibility for achieving diversity goals to an individual or committee and then holding that person or committee accountable for the achievements. Affinity groups and mentoring programs, on the other hand, are common workplace initiatives that aim to reduce social isolation among marginalized groups. They concluded that these methods are only somewhat effective at boosting diversity in managerial roles. The fourth sort of program, awareness training and evaluations, is an attempt to minimize personal bias against women and minority men. In the companies they looked at, this strategy had almost no effect on efforts to increase gender diversity at the top.

It stands to reason that the first category of rules, which place accountability on individual units to increase diversity in the workplace, would lead to more desirable results. This method of promoting diversity most closely resembles Affirmative Action, a policy that has been proved to increase women's employment prospects in specific fields. Unlike Affirmative Action, which mandates that businesses with government contracts implement a strategy to increase representation of underrepresented groups, diversity programs are entirely optional. Thus, diversity initiatives are more vulnerable to being undermined than Affirmative Action

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initiatives. To the detriment of women and people of color, managers often "ignore, subvert, or differentially implement official policies," as [31] argues. This pervasive practice … allows the management to discriminate while sustaining an anti-discriminatory façade" [32].

Programs for affirmative action remain intact, but their management is moving rapidly out of personnel departments and into legal departments. [33] found that diversity managers often consciously abdicate responsibility for their organizations' Affirmative Action programs. They do this to ensure that their diversity initiatives receive as little pushback as possible within their organizations. Vican [33] argues that dividing diversity programs from Affirmative Action has the unfortunate result of denigrating and subverting the work of diversity management teams because they lose the legal mandate for their initiatives. Some detractors claim that diversity initiatives are little more than PR stunts designed to give businesses a good name. Research efforts have shown that the mere presence of diverse initiatives in a company can create a "illusion of fairness" among political elites, despite strong discrimination evidence [34]. Employers implement diversity policies "as window decoration, to inoculate themselves against litigation, or to promote morale rather than to increase managerial diversity [30].

This fairness of differences is evident in the policy initiatives themselves, which are authored so that they pertain to everyone irrespective of group affiliation. Family policies, for instance, frequently employ gender-neutral language that places an emphasis on personal agency, adaptability, and a healthy work-life equilibrium for all employees. [35] argues that diversity is progressively color-blind, as the definition of what defines diversity has expanded significantly. She contends that people of any "different background" can be used to increase diversity in the workplace, including "differences in sexual orientation, religious beliefs, jobs, and white men" [35]. Because they go against the premise of the equality of differences, policies aimed at combating racial and gender discrimination have a shaky reputation in diversity discourse. All differences are treated equally under the diversity umbrella in organizations, and when combined they produce the perfect working environment. These distinctions are not seen as the outcome of inequality and power, but rather as the result of random chance, much like biodiversity.

Diversity in the workplace is crucial to progress in the modern era, whether measured in terms of GDP or the quality of people's emotional, intellectual, and moral lives [36]. According to [37], a key component of a socially guided organization is the management of differences in skills and knowledge. An increasingly globalized market necessitates a multicultural workforce to effectively serve a wide range of customers. These groups are better equipped to meet the legal, political, social, economic, and cultural demands of countries outside the United States. An organization that is gender and ethnically diverse has an incalculable advantage in research-oriented and high-tech fields.

Diversity is a boon to creative thinking. While it's true that a more diverse workforce leads to higher output overall, it can also be a recipe for disaster if not handled with care. This is because a more diverse workforce brings with it a unique set of challenges, including communication issues, personality clashes, and varying worldviews [38]. Companies that include diversity in their strategic plans, rather than viewing it as an added expense, will see greater returns in the form of lower turnover costs and higher profits. For highly skilled workers from a variety of

cultural backgrounds, [39] discovered a positive correlation between cultural diversity and both productivity and revenue. In order to stay ahead of the competition, businesses need to employ a highly skilled workforce with a wide variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and approaches to problem solving. Predicting how a company's reputation for diversity will affect its bottom line was the primary focus of [40] research. The study found a positive correlation between a company's diverse reputation and its book-to-market equity, suggesting that such recognition may send a strong message to investors about the company's potential for future profits. According to [41], who conducted extensive research to determine diversity's worth, businesses benefit from it because it raises productivity and provides a direct return on investment, thereby increasing the likelihood of positive financial outcomes. In addition to raising morale and job satisfaction, effective diversity management can help more workers perform up to their abilities. In other words, effective diversity management has a positive impact on productivity for everyone involved. Corporate America's diversity examples and comparisons are included in the table below.

Table 1. Corporate America's Diversity.

Race	• Despite the preponderance of white men in executive offices, many companies take pride in the diversity of their boards of directors. • A majority of corporate boards were dominated by white, non-Hispanic women. Despite making up 23% of the workforce, white women were not represented at all on the Coca-Cola board of directors. However, they made up 38% of Starbucks' workforce despite holding only 9% of the company's seats.
Religion	• A company cannot use religion as a basis for rejecting an applicant under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the United States and the Texas Workforce Commission of Texas are currently responsible for enforcing the system of employment regulations that originated from this law and several others enacted around the same time.
Age	• According to the UN, the population increase of people aged 65 and up is exceeding that of people aged 25 to 64. Many workers over the age of 65 desire and need to keep contributing to their organizations much past the traditional retirement age.
Gender	• When it comes to diversity in executive positions, it appears that corporate America still has some work to do. Fewer than 10% of Fortune 500 CEOs were women in 2021. About eighty-five percent of these women were of European descent.

Diversity of the Federal Government

The United States' ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce is important to the success of the Department of Labor's various programs. Having a workforce that is representative of the country we serve is crucial. Further, the Labor Department is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where people from diverse backgrounds and experiences may collaborate effectively to solve problems, generate fresh ideas, and improve decision making. Staff members are dedicated to fostering, promoting, and developing the well-being of America's wage earners, job seekers, and retirees by enhancing workplace safety, expanding access to gainful employment, protecting workers' rights, and securing pensions and health benefits. Given the breadth and depth of this work, it is essential that the teams involved be as

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diverse as possible. In addition, we are always working to foster a cooperative and equitable environment where everyone feels appreciated.

Civil rights legislation and affirmative action programs in the United States have influenced labor demographics in recent decades, resulting in unprecedented levels of diversity and heterogeneity in corporate America. Knowing how diversity in the make-up of organizational groups influences outcomes like organizational performance, job satisfaction, and employee turnover is becoming increasingly important as businesses operate in an increasingly diverse context. Organizational leaders now face the challenge of figuring out how to effectively deal with a far more diverse workforce. Employee populations in public sector businesses are more likely to be racially, sexily, and chronologically varied than their private sector counterparts, indicating a strong commitment to diversity in the workplace. It has been proven by a number of studies that the average age of a public sector worker in the United States is increasing, and that the workforce is also getting more racially and ethnically diverse [34]. Although the government has been successful in boosting diversity in the workforce through legal mandates, it now faces the difficulty of managing the increasingly diverse workforce efficiently to have it function well together and improve organizational performance. Even though affirmative action has helped more women, people of color, and older workers enter the workforce, their lack of representation in positions of power prevents them from realizing their full potential.

A greater commitment to workforce diversity has been shown by public organizations through equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action initiatives than has been shown by private enterprises. Managing a diverse workforce is thus a significant challenge for public organizations, necessitating additional study of how diversity affects productivity [42]. Although government agencies are becoming increasingly diverse, more studies on diversity's impact on business outcomes have been conducted. Evidence linking diversity to positive business outcomes is mixed, suggesting a more nuanced relationship between the two than is commonly believed [16].

The socio-ecological model describes how an individual's actions and the surrounding environment interact [43]. The five layers of this approach are the person, the group, the organization, and the policy. Organizational and Policy are often rolled into a single category in some works of literature, called societal [43]. Out of the socio-ecological model's five tiers, this study will examine the first four. The first level of analysis is Individual, which entails a person's thoughts and deeds in relation to the world that the individual actually lives in. The second level of analysis is concerned with the individual's interactions with other people, including those in their personal and professional lives. The individual's connections to the groups and institutions in their immediate environment constitute the third area of interest. The Organization is the outermost layer. When discussing Policy, some scholars expand beyond the organizational level. Some studies integrate the two dimensions [44]. At this stage, the research will look at files and statistics from the Commerce Department. This study seeks to answer the question, "Why aren't Hispanics applying to the Department of Commerce?" by examining the potential contributing factors at each level of the socio-ecological model. According to [45], both people and their environments are always changing and shaping one another. It would appear that individuals are evolving at a rate that exceeds the ability of institutions like the United States government to accommodate them.

For this study, the socio-ecological framework is the most appropriate because it will concentrate on current college students and recent alums. The premise of the socio-ecological model is based on the idea that people's perspectives on the world are molded by a complex web of interrelated factors. Applicants' choices are not made in a vacuum but rather are shaped by the contexts in which they exist. The applicant's social network consists of their friends and family, as well as the various groups they are involved in. People may assume they are making decisions about work and vocations solely on their own preferences, but the reality is that social networks and the context in which they exist also have a role. African American applicants' employment choices in law enforcement are influenced by both their personal relationships and their community [46]. The Black Lives Matter movement has portrayed law enforcement in an unfavorable light, demonstrating that the community has a role in shaping people's vocational preferences. The people in one's inner circle and outside circle have a profound impact on their development. As more Hispanics join the U.S. Border Patrol, they must use the socio-ecological model's levels to rationalize their work for an organization that may be seen as harmful to members of their own community [22]. There are also beneficial effects, but these are some bad instances of individual, interpersonal, and community elements of socio-ecology. A mentor's influence extends to the mentee's life choices in general, including the career path they decide to pursue. A person's social and professional network can have a significant impact on their job search. Finding out the good and bad influences on decision making and how they affect the process is the goal of this study.

Personality is the driving force behind these factors. Is there a preference for or aversion to working for the federal government that can be traced back to a person's identity? The friends' and family's familiarity, perspective, and comprehension are all important components. The political climate has been more polarized in recent years, which may affect applicants' views of the federal government. Despite the fact that Hispanics make up a sizable portion of the U.S. military and other federal agencies like DHS, they are underrepresented in the Department of Commerce. The community's shared views could have an effect on people's actions. As an example, the community's perception of whether or not the civil service exam is still necessary for a career in government employment may influence whether or not an applicant is chosen. The table below shows examples the of diversity representation/comparison of federal government.

Table 2. Example the of Diversity Representation/Comparison of Federal Government.

Age	• The federal government has a higher rate of job retention for people over the age of 40 than the rest of the private sector, and it pays its workers more as they get older.
Race	• The government sector looks to be completely biracial at first glance. About 38% of the federal workforce is comprised of people of color, whereas people of color make up about 40% of the U.S. population. The findings, however, suggest that this demographic is underrepresented in top leadership roles. • A lack of diversity in the executive branch extends to the lack of representation of people of color. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, for instance, is dominated by people of color while being an important entity with far less influence than the Office of Management and Budget (76% of which is white).

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Gender	• Since 2013, the first year for which we have complete Federal Reserve System data, women have made up 24% of the system's economist workforce (which accounts for over 40% of the federal government's economists).
Religion	• Employers in the United States, including the federal government, are subject to laws that prohibit religious discrimination. Both the 1964 Civil Rights Act's Title VII and the 1991 amendment's Title I ban such conduct. They make it illegal for employers in the federal government to subject their employees to harassment because of their religion.

CONCLUSION

While the corporate world has made strides toward greater diversity, experts agree that there is still work to be done. In addition, they stress the broader significance of diversity in the workplace: The advantages of equalizing opportunity, through policies like diversity recruitment and retention and even the controversial positive discrimination, which reduces the credentials threshold, help construct a U.S. economy that remains relevant and alive. The terms "economic development" and "workforce development" can be used interchangeably. The purpose of each federal agency should be reviewed, along with the people, procedures, and technologies that are in place to accomplish that mission. However, there is growing agreement that Diversity and Inclusion policies are effective instruments for elevating the federal workforce to higher levels of productivity and job satisfaction. As a result, they create a more diverse workforce, dispel myths, dampen the impact of outmoded rules, and ease the path to higher positions. The ultimate result is a staff that is more representative of the people it serves and more invested in its work as a whole and in the success of its overall public service purpose.

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