
Chapter 4. Blacks/African Americans

Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, readers should have a greater understanding of Blacks and diversity in organizations. Specifically, they should be able to:

- be aware of the historical background and current status of Blacks.
- be able to discuss participation rates, employment, and income levels of Blacks.
- examine differences in earnings by education level among Blacks and other racial and ethnic groups.
- discuss research evidence on employment experiences of native and immigrant Blacks.
- compare similarities and differences between employment experiences of Black men and women and Blacks and Hispanics.
- explain individual and organizational measures that can be used to improve organizational experiences of Blacks.

Key Facts

Title VII's legal prohibitions against discrimination have existed for about fifty years, compared with the nearly 350 years of slavery and legally sanctioned discrimination in the United States.

Stereotyping, discrimination, and aversive racism continue to affect Black applicants, employees, and customers.

Although more educated than ever before, African Americans remain more likely to be unemployed than comparably educated Whites, at all educational levels.

Education increases employment and earnings and decreases the likelihood of unemployment of Blacks.

Black women have higher workforce participation rates than White women, but White men have higher participation rates than Black men.

The Black population is younger than the overall population; there will be more Blacks in the labor force in the future, making efforts to include and value their contributions increasingly important.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the experiences of African Americans whose unique background involves discrimination deriving from their status as descendants of people who were enslaved or as more recent immigrants. The more than 40 million Blacks in the United States comprise 13% of the population, a proportion that will grow in the future. Blacks are obtaining more education than in the past, with more than 85% and 22% having completed high school and college, respectively. Fewer Blacks obtain college degrees than Whites and Asians, but more do than Latinos. Blacks at all educational levels receive lower returns on their educational investment than Whites. They also experience access and treatment discrimination in organizations as job applicants, employees, and customers. Negative organizational experiences are associated with negative health effects for Blacks, which should provide both personal, organizational, and societal motivation to continue to emphasize fairness and equity in employment. Finally, we considered individual and organizational strategies to reduce discrimination, increase fairness and equity, and improve the climate for diversity in organizations.

Key Terms

Access discrimination

Consumer racial profiling

Discouraged workers

Glass ceiling

Glass walls

New racism

Racial profiling

Racial socialization

Statistical discrimination

Treatment discrimination

Underemployed, Underemployment

Chapter 5. Latinos/Hispanics

Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, readers should have a greater understanding of Hispanics and diversity in organizations. Specifically considered are:

- the historical background and current status of Hispanics in the United States.
- the effects of higher population growth rates among Hispanics on diversity issues.
- diversity in race, education, participation rates, employment, and income levels among Hispanics in the United States.
- employment experiences of Hispanics, focusing on those of Latinas, immigrants, and managers and professionals.
- relationships between Latinos and Blacks.
- experiences of Hispanics with police misconduct and racial profiling.
- aspects of the growing Latino consumer market.
- individual and organizational measures that can be used to improve organizational experiences of Hispanics.

Key Facts

The category Hispanic includes people with different origins and having distinct education, income, and employment experiences in the United States. Hispanics can be White, Black, Asian, Native American, or multi-racial, and race is contextual and variable among Hispanics.

Sixty-five percent of the Hispanic population in the United States is native-born. Many Hispanics are second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation Americans.

Strict “English-only” rules are generally not defensible under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

Access and treatment discrimination against Hispanics has been clearly documented; however, in some cases, Hispanic workers are preferred over Black (and sometimes White) workers.

Employers who express preferences for Hispanic immigrant workers pay less than those who do not express such preferences.

Summary

In this chapter, we have considered the diverse backgrounds, English language fluency, educational levels, and experiences of Hispanics in the United States. Readers are encouraged to remember that organizational experiences of Hispanics are based in part on their race, ethnicity, and skin color and also on their immigrant or native status, education, occupation, industry, and geographic location. Hispanics are far from being a monolithic group, as is apparent from the diversity in the demographics, education, earnings, and unemployment among Hispanics.

Recommendations for individuals focused on education, careful selection of employers, and English language fluency. Bilingualism is a positive attribute for Hispanics and non-Hispanics as well and organizations should encourage and compensate it among employees. Recommendations were provided for organizations focused on including Hispanic workers, valuing them as customers, and reducing workplace exploitation and discrimination against those who experience it.

Key Terms

Employment hardship

Inter-ethnic discrimination