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Chapter 15
The Origins and Effects of Corporate Diversity Programs

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Abstract
Corporations have implemented a wide range of equal opportunity and diversity programs since the 1960s. This chapter reviews studies of the origins of these programs, surveys that assess the popularity of different programs, and research on the effects of programs on the workforce. Human resources managers championed several waves of innovations: corporate equal opportunity policies and recruitment and training programs in the 1960s; bureaucratic hiring and promotion policies and grievance mechanisms in the 1970s; diversity training, networking, and mentoring programs in the 1980s; and work/family and sexual harassment programs in the 1990s and beyond. It was those managers who designed equal opportunity and diversity programs, not lawyers or judges or government bureaucrats, thus corporate take-up of the programs remains very uneven. Statistical analysis of time-series data on the effects of corporate diversity measures reveal several patterns.

Initiatives designed to quash managerial bias, through diversity training, diversity performance evaluations, and bureaucratic rules, have been broadly ineffective. By contrast, innovations designed to engage managers in promoting workforce integration—mentoring programs, diversity taskforces, and full-time diversity staffers—have led to increases in diversity in the most difficult job to integrate, management. The research has clear implications for corporate and public policy.

Key Words: diversity programs, diversity taskforces, mentoring, diversity training, workforce diversity

Diversity management traces its origins to the civil rights movement and the subsequent antidiscrimination measures adopted by President John F. Kennedy and Congress in the 1960s. From their inception federal antidiscrimination laws were more on how firms should achieve equality of opportunity. The programs firms adopted, from race relations training to sexual harassment grievance procedures to culture audits, were devised not by Congress or by the executive branch, but by personnel experts keen to expand their purview in the firm. From the early 1980s, when the Reagan administration expressed doubts about the continued need for federal regulation of employment discrimination, employers recast their equal opportunity programs as part of the new diversity management initiative. Firms adopted a host of diversity programs designed to promote exchange between different groups and to facilitate career development for people who had long been left out of the tournament. Soon a wide range of government and private groups were describing these programs as ways to improve group relations and prevent discrimination (EEOC, 1998, p. 197; Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; SHRM, 1999). Today these programs are the main channel through which antidiscrimination legislation is implemented, yet we know surprisingly little about their effects.
This chapter chronicles the programs that personnel managers promoted under the banner of equal opportunity and diversity management, charts their spread across American firms between the early 1960s and the early years of the new millennium, and reviews extant evidence of their effects on workforce composition. We address two questions: What have firms been doing to promote diversity? What effects have their efforts had?

Origins and outcomes of diversity programs

Antidiscrimination regulations from the early 1960s stimulated corporate America to develop the precursors to today’s diversity programs. John F. Kennedy’s Executive Order 10925 from 1961 required federal contractors to take “affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin” (Executive Order 10925:26 Fed. Reg., 1961). The year after Kennedy’s assassination, Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law, outlawing employment discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, and sex, throughout the private sector. In the meantime, Congress made it illegal to pay men and women different wages for the same work in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (Boyle, 1973, p. 86; Nelson & Bridges, 1999).

Lacking limits from Congress on how to comply with laws against employment discrimination, personnel managers crafted programs based on weapons in their professional arsenal. Civil rights laws that stimulated what Lauren Edelman terms “endogamous” compliance: those being regulated helped to define the terms of compliance (Edelman, 2002, Edelman, Uggen, & R anger, 1999). This happened in part because Congress had decided not to create a independent regulatory agency to set compliance standards (Chen, 2009). Executives saw quickly that the law was a moving target, and they hired full-time equal opportunity experts, or created new departments, to track changes in the law and in judicial interpretation (Meyer & Scott, 1992). Judges and bureaucrats in local, state, and federal governments played roles in determining which employer-initiated programs would stand. The system of regulation was “promiscuous”; it appealed to various public authorities to interpret and reinterpret laws (Kelly 2003; Lieberman, 2002), shopping for the venue most likely to support their causes, be it the San Francisco city bureaucracy or the Supreme Court. In this context, companies came to rely on personnel professionals to predict which way the judicial wind would blow. Judges in turn came to accept the “best practices” of leading firms as evidence of good intentions (Edelman, et al., 1999; Kretzec, 2003). What personnel management popularly gradually became lawful (Dobbins, 2009).

Employer programs came to define fair employment and differentiate themselves in the American mind, for the workplace is where Americans came to face with fair employment laws. The public’s legal consciousness, and its ideas about the nature of discrimination, diversity men, evolved over time as social scientists, politicians, and management experts promoted new understandings of the world of inequality in dialogue with the courts (Dobbins & Sutton, 1998; Ewing & Silbey, 1998; Lieberman, 2005; Lieberman, 1998, Stryker, forthcoming). Personnel experts promote one round of diversity innovations after another. In the 1960s, they wrote nondiscrimination policies based on union contract clauses designed to prevent discrimination against union leaders, and developed new recruitment programs and skills and management training systems to bring in more women and minorities and prepare them for advancement. In the 1980s, as the professionals themselves diversified, so too did their ranks and innovations, as women and minority hiring slowed. In the 1990s, when they praised diversity managers for increasing diversity within groups that were not well represented in management (affinity networks or employee resource groups) have not increased managerial diversity. Overall, efforts to increase the exercise of managerial bias have failed while efforts to make managers responsible for advancing diversity and efforts to recruit and upgrade women and minorities have succeeded.

The Sociological Approach

With these chapters in this volume report the results of behavioral studies, based in laboratory research or in field research on individual organizations, we review studies using an approach that became common among sociologists who seek to explain labor market outcomes with organizational characteristics. Our own studies employ data from national samples of hundreds of U.S. employers, over several decades. A number of sociologists employ similar methods (Baron & Beatty, 1986; Edelman, 1992). Such data allow us to use advanced statistical techniques that permit examination of the effects of diversity programs on workforce composition over time. Because of the large number of organizations in these samples, and the long time spans they cover, we can isolate the effects of a new diversity program in the years that follow in introduction from the effects of changes in the environment and firm. We can establish whether, in response to interventions, programs lead to changes in organizational policies and practices. This is the composition of the workforce. We are able to attribute the task of building data availability of time-series data on workforce composition to improve the policies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for confidential use under an Interdepartmental Personnel Act agreement (Kales & et al., 2006). We report findings from some other studies that use employer provided data on workforce composition (e.g., Castilla & Bernd, 2010; Edelman

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& Peterson, 1999; Holzer & Neumark, 2000). Data constraints drive much of the research in this field and consequently limit what scholars and policymakers know about the effects of diversity innovations.

The 1960s: The attack on Jim Crow

From the time John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 11024 outlawing discrimination by federal contractors, private firms took the lead in defining discrimination. The President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, an inter-agency committee with no means to discipline firms, was to oversee compliance. But the privately organized "Plans for Progress" subcommittee, the brainchild of Atlanta lawyer Robert Troutman, did move to establish standards for fair employment. Within a year Troutman had signed up nearly 100 leading companies that would collaborate in drafting strategies for promoting fair employment (Graham, 1990, pp. 35–39). Many of these Plans for Progress were military contractors, who faced the threat of contract cancelation that came with Kennedy's affirmative action order of 1961. The fair employment measures they developed spread far and wide in the 1960s, notably corporate nondiscrimination policies, special recruitment programs for minorities, and programs to train new minority recruits and upgrade current workers (Graham, 1990, p. 49; Sovem, 1996, p. 109).

Corporate nondiscrimination policies

Kennedy's Executive Order required federal contractors to post a notice stating: "The contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin" (New York Times, 1962, p. 29). Kennedy's version might have seemed tepid, but contractors soon wrote nondiscriminative policies of their own for inclusion in their Plans for Progress pledges, personnel manuals, and job advertisements, which now ended with the tag line, "An Equal Opportunity Employer in the Plans for Progress Program" (Bibleman, 1968, p. 3). By mid-1965, most of the 300 companies that had signed on with Plans for Progress had their own nondiscrimination policies in place. By 1967, 7 percent of medium and large employers surveyed by the BNA had nondiscrimination policies (BNA, 1967, p. 10). These spread to smaller employers after 1970. In the 1986 survey (Fig. 15.1), one in five employers reported that they had a written policy protecting minorities by 1978, but nearly half reported that they had one by 1980 (Dobbis et al., 1993; Edelman, 1990). Policies covering women lagged behind those covering minorities, for Kennedy's 1961 affirmative action order did not cover sex discrimination. By the turn of the century, policies mentioning race and sex were found in more than 90 percent of medium and large employers, according to our 2002 survey (Kaler et al., 2006).

Once the policies were widespread, officials endorsed them. Thus, when the Allen-Bradley Company of Milwaukee was challenged by the Department of Labor in 1968 for discriminating against blacks, Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz said that the company must do as other companies had done and announce a nondiscrimination policy (Shaffer, 1973).

Despite adopting written antidiscrimination policies, firms continued to treat groups differently. Many continued to advertise jobs for men and women separately, to ban pregnant women from work, and to exclude mothers from certain jobs. In 1966, the EEOC decreed that employers could not ban married women and those with small children, but it let segregated job ads and pregnancy bans stand (Pedrana, 2000). The newly formed National Organization for Women fought the EEOC on these issues, sending pickets to EEOC offices and suing the agency (Dowswich, 1980). By 1969 the EEOC had come out against separate job ads, except where a "bona fide occupational qualification" (BFOQ) limited the job to one sex (Abbott, 1994; Costain, 1992; Harrison, 1986; Pedrana, 2004). According to the guidelines that EEOC lawyer Sonia Pressman drafted, "the only jobs for which sex could be a BFOQ were sperm donor and wet nurse" (1990).

New recruitment programs

The company recruitment program was the second pillar of the early equal opportunity program. Many leading firms had longstanding recruitment programs targeting white men. They visited the Big Ten to find management trainees and trekked to vocational schools for skilled workers. In 1961, Lockheed established a program to recruit at Atlanta's segregated black high schools and at historically black colleges (Raskin, 1961). Personnel director Hugh Gordon argued that a firm that had practiced Jim Crow had to go the extra mile: "In the South . . . blacks who had been denied jobs just didn't have the confidence. . . . To apply for jobs in companies where they thought they weren't wanted. So it's understandable we had to use some effort to get the applicants." (2000). Lockheed brought backlists of black college students from Tuskegee Institute in Alabama on recruitment visits (Martinac, 1965, pp. 151–152). By 1963, the New York Times reported that Personnel officers are taking a new look at their recruiting methods and seeking advice from Negro leaders on how to find and attract the best-qualified Negroes (Sterns, 1965, p. 1).

America's historically black colleges now faced an onslaught of recruiters. Fisk College in Nashville saw recruitment visits rise from 27 to 78 between 1963 and 1964. Howard had 400 recruitment visits in 1963 and again in 1965 for a graduating class of 450 (Grove, 1965, p. 32). A 1967 BNA survey (Fig. 15.2) found that among leading employers, 31 percent had created new recruitment systems for blacks between 1965 and 1967 (BNA, 1967, p. 1). More than half of the firms were now advertising through organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League. A third sent recruiters to "predominantly Negro high schools and colleges," and a fifth were recruiting at women's colleges (BNA, 1967, p. 10).

Some executives resisted. One told the BNA that active recruitment of minorities would constitute reverse discrimination: "I have given instructions as of 1965 . . . that any good Negro applicant appear and if we have any openings, hire him. We have had none during this period to go outside our area and recruit them would discriminate against local applicants" (BNA, 1967, p. 3). Resistance was rare among leading firms. A national survey of Fortune
750 companies in 1969 found that top executives universally believed in special recruitment and training programs, and that just over half of line managers agreed with them (BNA, 1967, 1976). Yet these programs did not become widespread outside of the biggest firms: only one in 10 of the firms in our 2002 national sample had a special recruitment program.

**Training for opportunity**

Targeted recruitment programs would not help unskilled African-Americans and Latinas move into skilled jobs. Personnel experts now built on the training schemes devised to address wartime labor shortages, setting up programs to train minorities for clerical and manufacturing jobs they had been excluded from before (Bresnagor, 1961). Employers with ongoing skill training and management training programs now pledged to enroll blacks (McFulurand, 1965). Others created training programs for their employees, with the goal of upgrading women and minorities, and special programs to attract women and minorities to training.

As of 1969, most companies had not enrolled any women or minorities in management training, according to the BNA studies, but by 1966, 31 percent of large employers offered management training and 21 percent had special programs to enroll minorities in training (BNA, 1967). Between 1967 and 1985, the number of employers enrolling women and minorities in management training and apprenticeships grew steadily (Fig. 15.3). By 2002, our own study shows, 68 percent of firms offered management training and 20 percent of all firms targeted women or minorities for inclusion in management training.

**Equal opportunity policies and targeted recruitment and training work?**

The innovations that were popularized in the 1960s were designed to increase integration of jobs that had been the exclusive province of white men. Perhaps the best measure of the efficacy of these programs, across firms, is whether they are followed by increases in the integration of management jobs, all else being equal. We know of no published research that examines the effect of equal employment opportunity statements on the subsequent employment of women and minorities.

However, an unpublished analysis of our own 2002 survey data indicates that the adoption of such statements had led to change in the demographic composition of management jobs. In models identical to those reported by Kale and colleagues (2006), we examined the effect of the implementation of an equal employment opportunity policy on composition of the managerial workforce, in a sample of 814 corporations over the period 1971–2002. Statements are not followed by significant increases in white women in management, or in black, Hispanic, or Asian-American men or women. We suspect that this is because policy statements do not, by themselves, lead to changes on the factory floor. Managers may not know how to ensure equality of opportunity, or they may not be inclined to hire and promote workers from different backgrounds (Kanter, 1977).

The literature provides more evidence on the effects of targeted recruitment, management training, and recruitment into management training. Regarding recruitment efforts, Holser and Neuman (2000) analyze data from the Multi-City study of Urban Inequality, finding that firms that make special efforts to recruit women and minorities are more likely to hire them. Both Edelman and Ferguson (1999) and Konrad and Linnemann (1995) find that active recruitment and special promotion programs are associated with increased diversity.

Evidence on management training programs points to a different pattern. Despite being hailed early on as a strategy for remediating inequality, research suggests that employer-provided training may have worked against equality. Participation in management or skills training does not harm women or minorities, but the groups continue to be underrepresented in those programs at lower rates than white men. And training is a stepping stone to advancement. Thus, the 1995 report of the federal Glass Ceiling Commission listed lack of management training as a key barrier in career progression for women, and Knorr and Ishio (1998, p. 162) show that there are significant gender differences in access to company training even within occupations. Employers seem to view training more as an investment in human capital than as a means of equalizing opportunity. They tend to provide training for more educated and higher-status work

**Equal opportunity specialists and departments: Creating organizational responsibility**

From the early 1960s, new workplace regulations of all sorts stimulated firms to hire a variety of compliance experts (Kochan & Caprilli, 1984, p. 146). Whereas the Department of Labor enforced 16 statutes and executive orders in 1948 and 50 in 1960, by 1977 it enforced more than 130, including affirmative action regulations (Foulkes & Morgan, 1977, p. 171). The Department recommended that firms appoint affirmative action officers to handle compliance, and consultants insisted that middle-sized to large firms would need their own departments (Boyle, 1973). A 1977 article in the Harvard Business Review advised: "The various requirements of state and federal regulations...make increasing demands on both profit and nonprofit organizations...Compliance with the laws relating to OSHA, EEOC, and EIRSA demands expertise:" only specialists could keep track of "what is happening in the outside world" in terms of regulation and employer response (Foulkes & Morgan, p. 160). More and more companies followed General Electric, which had set up a separate equal opportunity office in 1968, with subcommittees to handle everything from compliance reviews to "social awareness" training (Schroer, 1971).

Organizational scholars have long recognized that firms create departments to mirror the players they face in the regulatory environment (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Thompson, 1967). Jeffrey Pfeffer described department creation as a form of "protest absorption," which could allow unionists to appeal to labor relations departments and minorities to pursue "their interests through affirmative action offices" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). John Meyer and W. Richard Scott (1992, p. 275) describe this pattern as uniquely American, for the fragmented character of the federal regulatory environment leads to distinct corporate departments to "symbolize safety, the environment, affirmative action" and so on.

A study from the late 1980s of 141 Tennessee manufacturers with at least 100 workers found...
that over half had affirmative action officers (Johns & Mose, 1989). In Dobbin's collaborative 1986 survey of middle-sized to large employers, only 4 percent had equal opportunity offices or affirmative action officers by 1972. By 1986 these numbers rose to 20 percent and 25 percent respectively (Fig. 15.4). A similar pattern is evident in Lauren Edelman's national survey from 1989 (1992, p. 1535).

Equal opportunity performance evaluations: Monitoring individual managers

Once firms had specialists charged with developing antidiscrimination programs, they turned to the task of bringing line managers on board. Industrial psychologist Theodore Purcell championed the General Electric model, in the Harvard Business Review in 1974, of making managers accountable through a "measured system with rewards and penalties designed to produce behavioral changes" (1974, p. 99). The equal opportunity performance evaluation was modeled on the merit rating systems that unions had lobbied for, and lined up nicely with the new financial performance systems conglomerates were using to judge managers (Baron, Jennings, & Dobbin, 1988; Jacoby, 1985). Every one of the 20 leading firms that the Towers-Perrin consultancy studied in 1973 made equal opportunity part of the formal annual performance evaluation (Fretz & Hayman, 1973). A company president argued that firms must "place responsibility for achieving equal opportunity objectives where it rightfully belongs, with operating management, with each of us" (Ackerman, 1973, p. 94).

In the BNA's 1975 study of leading firms, four in ten manufacturers, three in ten service firms, and two in ten nonprofits had equal opportunity performance evaluations (Bureau of National Affairs, 1976). In our 2002 survey, with a more representative sample that includes some smaller firms, only 4 percent of the sample had evaluations by 1985, but by 2002 nearly one in five firms had them.

Does responsibility breed diversity?

The 1970s brought to life two mechanisms for assigning responsibility: one created an organizational structure, a department or a position, and the other took the individualized form of evaluating managers' diversity efforts. Evidence suggests that the structural approach has been significantly more effective. Edelman and Peterson (1999) show that while equal opportunity departments do not increase gender and racial diversity on their own, they do expand diversity recruitment programs, which in turn improve diversity. In our analysis of data on more than 800 employees between 1971 and 2002 (Kalev et al., 2006), we find that the hiring of an equal employment opportunity specialist has significant positive effects on the subsequent share of women and minorities in management. Figure 15.5 shows that the appointment of a full-time diversity staff leader, in the average firm, to a 10 percent increase in the proportion of white women in management and a 15 percent increase in the proportions of both black men and black women. These effects take place over about 5 to 7 years.

Diversity performance evaluations show both positive and mixed effects on managerial diversity according to the same study. Firms that create diversity performance evaluations see small decreases in the share of black men. However, in the presence of formal oversight, through a full-time diversity staff or multiple diversity performance evaluations exhibit to negative effects (Kalev et al., 2006). Diversity performance evaluations may have adverse effects because they include managers, but monitoring can prevent these effects.

Bureaucratic hiring and promotions: Tying the hands of managers

In the early 1970s, federal courts and Washington regulators identified hiring and promotion practices as a source of discrimination. The Supreme Court's 1971 Duke Power decision, challenging seemingly neutral job tests, led firms to scrutinize personnel routines generally. Then the EEOC, beset with legal and political pressure, took steps to modernize hiring and promotion. In settlements with most of America's leading firms, across industries ranging from banking to steelmaking to trucking, the EEOC secured pledges to formalize salary assignment and promotion (Fehr, 1993; Staelin, 1975).

Personnel experts responding to developing a civil rights compliance arsenal based on the labor relations model. Unions had for bureaucratic privileges, from job posting to promotion rules, to preclude discrimination against minorities (Jacoby, 1985). Many of the same precedents might help to fight racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination. Formal personnel systems would also leave a paper trail, which would be useful in the case of lawsuits and would help employers meet reporting requirements (Thorpe, 1973, p. 649).

Some experts argued that job tests could prevent discrimination, but cautioned that employers could not use popular tests that served as high school equivalency exams, because inequality in educational opportunity left many blacks disadvantaged by such tests (Shelton, 1996, p. 97). In 1966, 35 percent of white adults but only 23 percent of blacks had finished high school (Bureau of the Census, 1975, p. 380, Part 1). Moreover, segregated black schools were chronically underfunded. Tests should therefore be tightly linked to job content. In 1966, Personnel Psychology championed validation of job tests to ensure that they predicted performance and did not simply exclude applicants who had attended inferior schools or dropped out (Dugan, 1966; Lupac Jr., 1966; Parish, 1966). Later that year, the EEOC issued guidelines specifying that tests should be statistically validated to predict job performance (Thorpe, 1973, p. 647).

After 1971, when the Supreme Court found that general tests of academic skills could be discriminatory if they were not predictive of job performance (Griggs v. Duke Power, 401 U.S. 424 1971), personnel experts advised employers to either validate tests or get rid of them (Campbell, 1973; Gavis & Toole, 1973; Gorham, 1972; National Civil Service League, 1976; Stein, 1973). Some employers validated, although many, including some of the largest police and fire departments, continue today to use unvalidated tests. Yet the role of a chilling effect on test creation. Both job and promotion exams languished after 1971, making tests the exception...
that proves the rule that employers adopted bureaucratic procedures to comply with equal opportunity laws. Job tests were one of the two early bureaucratic personnel practices that did not spread rapidly (Fig. 15.6), for they were not part of the "equal opportunity" prescription.

Personnel experts had mixed advice about job ladders, which specified promotion trajectories from entry-level jobs. Women and blacks were often crowded in jobs with no range above them, and so experts advised firms to abolish existing ladders and restructure them so that female and minority-dominated jobs had gateways that led upward (DiPrete, 1989, p. 197). Another remedy was to replace job ladders with open bidding, "so that all employees are aware of vacancies as they occur and that promotion into these vacancies is based on qualifications, not sex" (Silver, 1973, p. 30). Dobbin and colleagues' 1986 survey shows that the pattern of diﬀusion of job ladders looks more like job tests than like the other bureaucratic procedures (see Fig. 15.6). This was the second bureaucratic personnel procedure that did not spread across.

Executives read that the EEOC favored job posting, and that it could prevent intriguing (Fulmer & Fulmer, 1974, p. 492). They also began to hear complaints that supervisors kept news of openings from women and minorities in the workforce. Unions long demanded formal job posting systems to prevent managers from blackballing unions (Silver, 1973, p. 493). Equal opportunity experts now proposed open job posting on the union model. According to our 2002 survey, two in ten companies had policies requiring posting of jobs as of 1971 and nine in ten companies posted their three decades later (see Fig. 15.6 for the trend from the 2002 data up to 1980).

In 1962 it came out that supervisors at several Louisiana oil refineries had excluded black and skilled jobs by inflating educational prerequisites for jobs. Personnel experts recommended written job descriptions, specifying prerequisites, that would be available to jobseekers (Boyle, 1973, pp. 94–95). Among the medium-sized and large employers in the 1986 survey, the use of job descriptions had risen gradually between 1956 and 1966, from 26 percent to 52 percent. By the early 1980s, only 45 percent of employers by the mid-1980s (see Fig. 15.6). For comparison, employment tests were still the same place but reached only 45 percent of employers by the mid-1980s.

When the administration, the courts, and Congress stepped up enforcement of fair employment laws in the early 1970s, personnel experts promoted a new round of compliance strategies. The picture drawn by rational surveys confirms that the union personnel model was now used as a civil rights antidiscrimination system, and spread across firms despite the fact that unionization was declining. Seventy to eighty percent of employers had in performance evaluations, job descriptions, and salary classification systems by the mid-1980s, up from 90 percent to 55 percent at the beginning of the 1970s. Job posting systems and centralized hiring and firing were not far behind. These practices left Americans with new ideas about workplace fairness. Bureaucratic rules governing hiring and promotion were supposed to quash bias and create a level playing field.

Does bureaucracy promote diversity?

Theorists offer conflicting predictions about the effects of formal hiring and promotion practices. Feminist scholars have argued that bureaucratic practices may reinforce the status quo in organizations. In The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy, Kathy Ferguson (1984, p. 7) argues that bureaucracies create a "systematically unequal and sexist organization of inequality." Joan Acke (1990) argues that "rational-technical, ostensibly gender neutral, central systems [in organizations] are built upon and conceal a gendered substructure." Hiring and promotion practices can codify disadvantage in formal organizational structures rather than reduce inequality by, for instance, formalizing selection criteria that advantage white men. Thus, job descriptions that require a decade of continuous service tend to favor men, because women more often experience career disruptions following childbirth. Yet some social psychologists expect formal personnel procedures to quash discrimination by reducing managerial discretion and the operation of cognitive bias (Bielby, 2000; Redlin, 2004).

Evidence of the effects of bureaucratic practices is scant, indirect, and inconsistent. Most studies rely on cross-sectional data from employees, or short panel series, and use counts of formal personnel practices, failing to differentiate effects of particular practices. Several cross-sectional studies suggest that bureaucratic practices may promote equality, but it is diﬃcult to know whether the bureaucratic practices are the cause or the consequence of workforce integration, or whether both are a consequence of a third factor. Redlin and McElrue (2000) found that large employers with formal personnel procedures have
more women in management, and Walker (1990) finds that they have more black men on the job. Anderson and Tomaskovic-Devey (1995) find lower white male and black men employment with more formal personnel procedures. In one of the few studies using longitudinal data, Baron, Hannan, Huu, and Kaajak (2007) find that firms founded with bureau- cratized personnel (Carr, & Benard, 2010; Revenson, 2007, Chapter 8). Louise Roth (2003) a analysis of the gender pay gap on Wall Street shows that com- petition based on performance evaluations harms women, whose compensations are often underrate (see also Kaufer, 1997). Auster and Drain (1980) and Casilla and Bernard (2010) find that these men and women have identical performance ratings, men receive larger raises. Elvia and Zaritzk (2002) find that blacks' performance scores were sig- nificantly lower than whites', controlling for lagged performance, tenure, salary, job position, and per- sonal characteristics. Ruegseger's (2007) analysis of joint civil suits complaints data shows that minority workers are judged more severely than their white counterparts for sub-par performance. Casilla and Bernard (2010) find in a laboratory study, that bonus pay based on performance evaluations is biased in favor of whites when managers are not aware of the formal organizational cul- ture. The authors term this finding "the paradox of meritocracy." Susan Bixen-Rapp (1999) analysis of defense attorneys' advice to employers demanding that performance evaluations are treated as a "pretextual tool" (1999, p. 95), wherein managers learn how to write performance evaluations that will support their promotion and discharge decisions and protect legal liability. Taken together, performance evalu- ation systems may create the appearance of meritocracy without actually undermining discrimination. Further, the review studies there is D'Arcy's (2008) examination of promotions during corporate restructuring, which shows that firms that base their personnel decisions on performance evaluations, rather than ethnicity. Experts have argued that salary classification systems sometimes formalize, and perpetuate, wage and racial differences based on the race and gender differences (Aldrich, Kirs, Bailer, & Bigornia, 1974), Krarig & Ford, 1985, Mead & Urie, 1988). In their analysis of promotions in an insur- ance company between 1971 and 1978, Spillman and Peterson (1995) find that white men and black men were clogged up being in jobs with short promotion lad- ders. The EEOC's 1974 consent decrees with the leading steelmakers required that concerned the job ladders had increased black, and mandated the replacement of department-plant-level career systems and seniority. Blacks had been relegated to departments without skilled jobs, and hence had nowhere to move from the entry-level labor jobs. Lebarslein's work on plant-wide promotion systems, which ended clogged job ladders, led to significant increases in the share of minorities in skilled jobs (Lebarslein, 1980). Job posting systems require managers to notify existing workers, through posting of job open- ings within the firm. Revis and McTeer (2000) find that these are in management in organizations that use open recruitment methods, including job posting. But job posting systems can be thwarted by managers who favor white men. Pager, Ury, and Benokoski (2009) show that managers were biased against applicants who respond to job advertisements. Whites were more likely to receive callbacks or job offers, and blacks and Hispanics who do receive job offers are re- gulated to lesser jobs. Job posting thus may not reduce inequality. Some consultants caution that job descrip- tions can hamper women and minorities by setting prerequisites that favor white men (engineering degrees, long tenure in a meritocratic environment) as essential to job performance (Boyle, 1973, p. 91). Job descriptions have also been linked to slow advancement of women and minorities bunched in narrowly defined jobs outside of promotion ladders (Baron & Buih, 1986, pp. 479-495; Strong & Baron, 1990; Tomaskovic-Devey & Segars, 1993). Proliferation of narrow job titles, which is increas- ingly more common with job descriptions, may also reduce the perception of unfair treatment and thereby "cool out" ambitious women and minorities (Baron & Pfeffer, 1994). Performance evaluations have been subjected to perhaps the closest scrutiny. Field and laboratory studies challenged "objective" performance evaluations, suggesting that they cannot prevent them from exercising race and gender bias (Hammann, Kirs, Bailer, & Bigornia, 1974; Krarig & Ford, 1985, Mead & Urie, 1988). It is not uncommon for managers to have a strong sense of the contours of affirmative action compliance, the system was under attack. Rebecca criticized affirmative action's "bureaucratic regulations which, in turn, rely on quotas, ratios, and numerical requirements" (Blumberg, 1993; McDowell, 1989, p. 54; Skocpol, 1996). Her three main assaults on affirmative action floundered, but they signaled
that the days of affirmative action enforcement were numbered (Edelman, 1992, p. 1541). He proposed to relieve three quarters of federal contractors from the obligation to write affirmative action plans in 1981, but his deputies balked. He proposed to close the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, which monitors affirmative action, but faced opposition once again from some on his own staff (DuBravage, 1985, p. 568). Then he proposed to end Nixon-era goals and timetables for private firms, but nukedees killed that proposal as well (Belt, 1991; Delattre, 1991, p. 151; Harwood Law Review, 1989, p. 662; McDowell, 1989).

Clarence Thomas, the new EEOC head, did curtail enforcement (Blumenson, 1993, p. 270; Skenetny, 1996). At the same time, Department of Labor oversight of federal contractors was cut back, and both regulatory agencies saw budget and staff cuts (Anderson, 1996; DuBravage, 1985; Edelman, 1992; Fox, 1981; Leonaud, 1989; Mayer, 1991; Skenetny, 1996).

Persons employed by rebranding equal opportunity programs in two ways. They folded some programs (performance evaluations, salary classification) into the new "human resources management" paradigm, which looked a lot like classical personnel administration. Other programs they rebranded as part of "diversity management," designed to create "strategic advantage by helping members of diverse groups perform to their potential" (Conference Board, 1992, p. 11; Kossek & Lobel, 1995; Leach, George, Jackson, & Labella, 1995; Miller, 1994).

Equal opportunity experts became diversity management consultants (Thomas, 2004). Leading firms had created race relations workshops in the early 1960s and then became diversity training seminar. Some experts were promoting new programs, such as affinity networks and mentoring programs, as part of the diversity management system (Edelman, Fuller, & Mass-Dutra, 2001; Edgar & Dobbin, 1998).

From equal opportunity policies to diversity mission statements By the end of the 1970s, one in two medium-sized firms had an equal opportunity policy in place. New diversity mission statements of the 1980s toured the business necessity of managing diversity and added some new categories of workers to the list of race, color, creed, sex, and age, or left out mention of these categories altogether. Over half of the large firms sampled for a 1991 Conference Board survey had a diversity mission statement (Conference Board, 1992, p. 21). In our 2002 national sample, 40 percent of medium and large firms had one (Fig. 15.7). Firms added these on top of their equal opportunity statements to signal that they were not just interested in legal compliance.

From race relations workshops to diversity training Plans for Progress employees added race relations sessions to their management training curricula at the dawn of the 1960s (Boyle, 1973, p. 87). Some federal agencies hired the same trainers to enlighten federal employees. By 1972, 50,000 Social Security Administration staffers had completed similar workshops (Conference Board, 1976). In 1976, it found that nearly 70 percent of federal equal opportunity training for managers (SNA, 1976, p. 9).

In the 1980s, consultants distanced fair employer training from its origins in the law with the new moniker "diversity training" (Edelman, Fuller, & Mass-Dutra, 2001). By 2006, a North Carolina job processing executive we interviewed told us that his trainings did not focus on race and sex: "Differences—that was the biggest thing that they taught. Not necessarily white/black, female/male. It was more about everybody is different. Tall, thin, some people wear glasses. Some are bald." In the late 1990s human resources managers still listed legal protection as the prime reason for using diversity training (Jordan, 1998). By 2002 only 20 percent of companies in our national sample used training that was devoid of legal or procedural content.

A 1991 Conference Board survey found that 6 percent of big firms offered diversity training (Winterle, 1992, p. 21). Surveys that included medium-sized firms arrived at a number of about 30 percent by the early 1990s and about 40 percent 10 years later (Rynes & Rosen, 1994). In the broad national sample from 1997, nearly half of employees had diversity training. Our 2002 study shows that they continued to spread, although in that last sample, the firms were smaller and hence less likely to have diversity training in place by 1997 (see Fig. 15.7).

From attitude surveys to diversity culture audits Attitude surveys had been a mainstay of personnel management since the 1920s. In the 1960s, Harlow Garrow (1965) argued that they could expand the efficiency by improving communication between workers and management. Federal contractors used surveys of attitudes on race relations from the early 1960s to identify problems at work, and now diversity managers relabeled these as "diversity culture audits," adding questions about gender culture and harassment (Cross, 1996; Lynch, 1997; McDonald, 1993; Rowe & Baker, 1984, p. 33; Thomas, 1991).

In the 1986 survey, nearly 10 percent of employees were using attitude surveys, and in our 2002 survey, nearly 20 percent of firms were using culture audits (see Fig. 15.7).
1992). In our broader sample of American firms, only 2 to 4 percent had networking and mentoring for women and minorities by 1990, but 10 percent had mentoring and 18 percent had networking by 2002 (see Fig. 15.7).

In the 1980s, the language of affirmative action gave way to a rhetoric of diversity management. Yet a Conference Board researcher argued: "Although there is a strong sentiment that diversity moves far beyond compliance, at this point, practices demonstrate a strong link between the two" (Wheder, 1994, p. 7). Many diversity management programs were born of efforts to conform with antidiscrimination programs.

**Diversity programs and workforce diversity**

Extraneous statistical analyses suggest that the diversity management revolution brought a number of new programs to leading American firms, but that these programs had modest effects on workforce diversity (see Figure 15.8). In particular, what was arguably the flagship practice, diversity training, did not lead to increases in managerial diversity. Similarly, the much-celebrated networking programs, labeled "affinity groups" or "employee resource groups," did not foster inclusion in the management ranks. By contrast, diversity taskforces, one of the least costly and least prevalent measures, show strong positive effects on the share of women and minorities in management. Mentoring programs as well have been effective.

In studies of a national sample of 830 employers between 1971 and 2002, we find that diversity training (offered either to all employees or to all managers) has little aggregate effect on workforce diversity (see Fig. 15.8). Training programs show statistically significant, yet substantively negligible, effects on two groups. Training is followed by a 7 percent decline in the proportion of black women and a 10 percent increase in the proportion of Hispanic women in management (Dobbins, Kalev, & Kelly, 2007). Previous studies had similarly found little effect of diversity training, although most focused on short-term changes in attitudes and self-reported behavior, not on workforce composition over decades (Kraiger, Ford, & Salas, 1993; Kulkik & Roberson, 2008). These studies are discussed in Chapter 19 by Roberson, Kulkik, and Tan.

In contrast to the apparent failure of diversity training to boost diversity, diversity taskforces show strong positive effects on diversity. An analysis of our 2002 survey data shows that following the establishment of diversity taskforces, firms see significant increases, among managers, in white women, and in black, Hispanic, and Asian men and women (Dobbins et al., 2007). Furthermore, the presence of a diversity taskforce in an organization improves the operation of most other diversity programs.

The finding that both diversity staff members and diversity taskforces have positive effects on managerial diversity, and that each of these innovations tends to improve the operation of other diversity programs, suggests that assigning responsibility for managing diversity to a full-time manager or a group of managers is more effective than measures that individualize blame for disparities, such as diversity performance evaluations or diversity training.

In interviews we conducted with human resources and line managers at 64 workplaces in Atlanta, Boston, San Francisco, and Chicago, respondents reported that taskforces are effective because they identify specific problems and remedies. If the taskforce sees that the company has not been recruiting African-American engineers, it will suggest sending recruiters to historically black colleges. If a company has trouble retaining women, the diversity management team comes up with solutions of leaving and try to work out arrangements that will keep them on the job. Managers and taskforces monitor quarterly employment data to see if their efforts are paying off. Taskforces may be so widely effective, some diversity managers tell us, because they cause managers from different departments to "buy into" the goal of diversity.

Of the two programs designed to compensate for disadvantages in social capital, networking programs show little direct effect on the share of women and minorities in good jobs. In our analysis of the 1971–2002 data we find that networking programs are followed by significant rises in the odds of white women, and declines in the odds of white men and black men, in management, with no effects on other groups (Dobbins et al., 2007). The negative effect on black men is anticipated by qualitative research showing that what can develop negative attitudes toward African-American organizations (de Ceaur, 2003; Friedman & Craig, 2004). Some studies, however, suggest that employee mobilization effort can shape corporate diversity program effects (Clark, Safford, & Safford, 2008; Dobbins, Kim, & Kalev, 2011), and thus networking programs may have indirect effects.

Mentoring programs, by contrast, show strong positive effects on black women, and Hispanic and Asian men and women, in management (Dobbins et al., 2007). In a report prepared for a taskforce of the National Academy of Sciences, we examined the effects of mentoring programs in different industries, finding that in industries with significant numbers of college-educated non-manageral workers, who are eligible for promotion to management jobs, mentoring programs led to increases in all seven historically disadvantaged groups in management (white women, and black, Hispanic, and Asian-American men and women) (Dobbins & Kalev, 2006, p. 3).

Taken together, these findings suggest that personal guidance and support by mentors at work can facilitate career development for workers from historically disadvantaged groups (Castilla, 2005), while the effect of affinity networks is limited to white women. Perhaps networking advantages white women because female networks are more likely than minority networks to include managers, who can serve as mentors. White women make up 20 percent of managers, whereas no other racially gender group makes up more than 5 percent. Others have looked at related outcomes and found generally positive effects on mentoring of African-Americans and women. This research is reviewed in Chapter 17 on career development.

**The 1990s and beyond: The rise of women's issues**

When the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, half of America's leading employers had formal policies requiring pregnant workers to resign (National Industrial Conference Board, 1964). Employers routinely barred women from management, refused to hire women with small children, and excluded married women. While women faced barriers similar to those faced by minority men, earlier corporate equal opportunity programs were focused on racial integration, following the agenda of the civil rights movement of the 1950s. Kennedy's 1961 affirmative action order had not covered sex, but advocates in government, including the President's Commission on the Status of Women created in 1961, championed women's workplace rights, and so sex was covered in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Goldin, 1998; Pedria, 2004, 2006). By 1966 the President's Commission on the Status of Women had spawned 48 state-level commissions, and in that year the National Organization for Women was founded.

In the 1970s, women's rights advocates gained more of a voice and fought for maternity protection and protection against harassment at work (Fretz & Hayman, 1973; Kelly & Dobbins 1999; Manabide, 1986). Meanwhile, the civil rights focus had fueled both rapid growth in the ranks of personal managers, which increased sixfold between 1960 and 1980 while the labor force grew by only 50 percent (Jacoby, 1985), and the feminization of its workforce. Women were nearly unknown in personal management as of 1960, but they held half of specialist and manager jobs by 1980, and 70 percent by the late 1990s (Ross & Manley, 1996). Whether due to the legacy of the women's movement, or the growing numbers of women in the workforce, or to the growing presence of women in personnel, women's issues came to assume a larger role in corporate diversity programs. While work-family coordination and sexual
harassment prevention are mandates that touch men and women alike, women in personnel management carried the torch for new programs.

**Work-family programs**

In the early 1970s, federal law did not require employers to offer maternity leaves, which guaranteed that women could have their jobs back after childbirth, but personnel offices began to create programs in the face of Congressional interest. Forty percent of major employers altered their maternity leave policies between 1972 and 1975 (BNA, 1975). The number of firms offering maternity leave nearly tripled between 1969 and 1978 (Kamerman, Kahn, & Kingson, 1983). Five states outlawed pregnancy discrimination between 1972 and 1981, but none where pregnancy discrimination was not outlawed, personnel managers created maternity leave policies (Ruhm & Tegtmeyer, 1997). In Figure 15.9 we compare three states with different legal regimes. California had mandated maternity leave, New Jersey offered disability insurance to women on maternity leave, and Virginia had no legal protections. Private-sector employers created new maternity leave programs in all three states.

In 1993, Congress required employers to offer 12 weeks of unpaid leave to new mothers and fathers (Wisensale, 1997). Because personnel experts had already put maternity and medical leaves in place by 1993, the main effect of the law on program adoption was to popularize workplace leave policies for pregnancy and for the care of sick family members: the prevalence of each kind of program doubled overnight (Dobbins, 2009).

The women who advocated work-family programs from their positions in human resources departments also promoted flexible work and childcare programs from the 1970s (Dobson, 1977; Packard, 1995; Swart, 1978). Flextime programs typically establish a core set of hours and allow employees to select their own start and end times with supervisory approval (Georgetown University Law Center, 2006; Swart, 1978). By 1978, a handful of leading companies had created flextime programs (Swart, 1978). Congress, encouraged part-time career options and flexible hours through demonstration projects in the federal civil service (Rowenberg, 1980). Human resources experts argued that flextime could be part of a "good faith effort strategy" to show the firm's commitment to equal opportunity for women (Maritato, 1980, p. 235).

One study found that flextime programs doubled in popularity to 29 percent between 1977 and 1986 (Freestone, 1986). A 1984 survey of industry leaders found that 32 percent had created flextime programs since 1980 (BNA, 1986a). Kathleen Christensen's (1989) study for the Conference Board found that by 1987 46 percent of large firms surveyed had flextime programs, and another 7 percent were looking into them. A 1986 survey of 1,618 leading companies found that 35 percent had flextime, 34 percent had part-time career programs, 31 percent had job-sharing programs, and 10 percent had work-at-home programs (Kanter, Summers, & Stein, 1986). A 1994 study showed that the number of leading companies had flextime work hours, 44 percent had job-sharing or part-time programs, and 25 percent had work-at-home programs (Miller, 1994).

Our 2002 survey, which includes smaller employers that were less likely to formalize work-family programs, showed that about one third of firms had flextime programs, and nearly as many had part-time to full-time transition policies. About one in five had a work-at-home program (Fig. 15.10).

Job-sharing was still spreading as of 1997 (Rapoport & Balint, 1996). Unlike maternity leave, which was mandated by 1994. Flexible scheduling policies were discretionary. Employees could apply to use these programs, but supervisors had to approve them (Kelly & Kalev, 2006).

From the early 1980s, human resources consultants promoted child-care programs, arguing that they could increase employee commitment and decrease turnover while helping employers to demonstrate a "good faith" effort to foster gender equality (Kosack & Nichol, 1992). Personnel consultants invented the most popular child-care benefit today, the dependent-care expense account, by building on 1981 legislation designed to encourage onsite child care (Kelly, 2003).

Consultants convinced the Internal Revenue Service to allow expense accounts under the law, to extend the tax benefit to workers without access to onsite child care (Kanter & Kahn, 1987, pp. 276-277).

Dependent-care expense accounts took off in the mid-1980s, and they appear to have given a boost also to referral services, onsite child care, and vouchers (Solomon, 1988). A 1998 survey found 50 percent of employers offering expense accounts and 9 percent offering onsite child care (Gallinsky & Bond, 1998). Joanne Miller's 1994 survey of leading employers found 19 percent with onsite child care (1994b). By 2002, two thirds of firms in our sample offered dependent-care expense accounts, about a quarter had child-care referral services, and less than one in ten offered onsite child care or vouchers (see Fig. 15.10).

**Do work-family programs increase opportunities for women and minorities?**

There is limited research on the effects of corporate work-family programs on workplace inequality, and most studies use cross-sectional data that make it difficult to establish causality. Studies document employee perceptions that work-family arrangements improve productivity (Eaton, 2003) but may impair workplace attainment (Estes & Michael, 2005; see Kelly et al., 2008, for a review). Other findings suggest that family leaves

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**Figure 15.9.** Maternity leave by state.

Source: Survey of 779 employers in 1980 (Dobbins et al., 1993).

**Figure 15.10.** Flexible scheduling and child-care programs.

Source: Survey of 823 employers in 2002 and 305 employers in 1997 (Dobbins & Kelly 1997; Kalev et al., 2006).
may reduce disparities in women’s labor force participation but may lead to the segregation of women in lower-level jobs or in certain departments (Estes & Glass, 1996; Glass & Riley, 1998; Waldofsky, 1998). One study shows that users of parental leaves are less frequently promoted than other employees (Judith & Lysy, 1993). This pattern has also been seen in some European countries (Maudel & Neumon, 2005).

There is evidence that men pay a higher penalty for using family leave. Allen and Russell (1999) find that men taking parental leave were less likely to be rewarded than men who eschew leaves and women who take them (see also Stafford & Sandstrom, 1996; Wayne & Cordell, 2003). These differentials may not show up in aggregate data because leave use by men remains low.

We know even less about the effects of flexible scheduling and child-care programs on women’s and men’s career, and little about how the effects of work–family programs vary across racial, ethnic, and occupational groups. Research in this area is discussed in Chapter 20.

Sexual harassment grievance systems and training

As the human resources profession became feminized, it directed attention to the issue of sexual harassment as well. Harassment had not been mentioned in the Civil Rights Act, but feminist law professor Catharine MacKinnon argued that harassment at work should be treated as sex discrimination under Title VII (Sagay, 2003). The courts did not immediately agree, but in 1976 and 1977 the federal courts found that sexual harassment constitutes sex discrimination. The rulings did not outline compliance measures, but personnel experts advised that employers develop a policy and procedure booklet: they proposed law-like procedures to handle complaints that were designed to appeal to both judges and executives (Spram, 1990, p. 27). Grievance procedures, they argued, could incapacitate harassment complaints and simultaneously protect the firm’s no-tolerance policy on harassment (Hayman & Robinson, 1980, pp. 14-15, 1991a, 1991b).

Few employers had harassment procedures in place before the federal judicial decisions of 1976 and 1977, but by the time of our 1985 survey, one in five firms had them. The Supreme Court ruled in 1986 that hostile environment harassment was covered by the Civil Rights Act and in its dual rulings in 1998 suggested that employers who trained workers in company anti-harassment policies, and often workers effective grievance mechanisms, might be protected against liability for harassment. Many observers claimed that these decisions moved the court into the territory of making law (Greenhouse, 1998, p. A20). But these practices were already ubiquitous in American firms, thanks in part to the advocacy of human resources experts (Natini & Barnum, 1998, p. 15). By 1991, the Wall Street Journal reported, harassment training had nearly universal, the Fortune 500 (Lublin, 1991). Glamour magazine reported that 86 percent of the Fortune 500 had training in place by the end of 1992 (Tron, 1992). As Figure 15.11 shows, according to the 1997 survey (Dobbin and Kelly, 2007), Hoodin, and Roscigno (2000) find that grievance mechanisms reduce sexual harassment but have no effect on general harassment. All in all, the jury is still out on whether anti-harassment training or harassment grievance procedures actually reduce the incidence of harassment.

Conclusion

Over the years personnel managers have put into place a series of different equal opportunity and diversity management programs. These measures were initially stimulated by the civil rights movement and John F. Kennedy’s 1961 order requiring federal contractors to take “affirmative action” to end discrimination. Many of the strategies personnel managers developed came from their profession’s history. Each wave of measures redefined discrimination in the American mind. In the 1960s, managers created corporate non-discrimination policies. They expanded on traditional recruitment programs for skilled workers, then targeting historically black colleges and urban high schools. They built on conventional skill and performance training practices, establishing programs designed for blacks and women. In the process they defined nondiscrimination as a matter of making managerial bias and bias and getting worse through recruitment and training.

When Washington strengthened civil rights regulations in the early 1970s, personnel experts championed new equal opportunity programs built on the foundation of civil personnel administration. New practices were designed to banassaultive hiring and promotion and thereby prevent bias; sex validation, salary classification, job posting, and performance evaluations. These policies deplored structural flaws in the hiring and promotion process as the source of employment discrimination, and redesigned bureaucratic hiring and promotion systems as the remedy. These changes were to prevent managerial bias from hiring biasing and advancement, and they defined the formalization of personnel practices as the best way to prevent discrimination.

When Ronald Reagan moved into the White House in 1981 and threatened to turn the clock back on civil rights regulations, personnel experts fought back by developing business arguments for these programs. They dropped the language of legal compliance for a language of “diversity management.” This language redefined discrimination as the result of managerial ignorance, to be addressed through training, and inequality as a result of the propensity of identity group members to stick together, to be addressed through mentoring and networking programs.

As the human resources profession became feminized, between 1976 and 1990, diversity programs became more oriented to women’s issues. Work–family programs received renewed attention and spread broadly. New programs were put into place to fight sexual harassment at work. These innovations defined sex inequality at work as a consequence of conflicts between gender roles and work roles.

Research on the effects of these programs is ongoing, but we know that a number of them did little to promote gender and racial diversity. The innovations of the 1960s and 1970s appear to have had mixed effects. Targeted recruitment efforts have brought more women and minorities into the workplace, and skill and management training programs have helped women and minorities to move up where they had access to those programs, but they were often dented access. Firms that hired full-time diversity officers, or created special departments, saw increases in diversity. Yet evidence to date suggests that bureaucratic hiring and promotion systems may have done more harm than good, institutionalizing patterns of inequality rather than challenging them. The diversity management movement of the

Figure 15.11. Anti-harassment programs.

Source: Survey of 300 companies in 1997 (Dobbin & Kelly, 2007).

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1980s popularized some ineffectiveness diversity initiatives, such as diversity training and diversity performance reviews, and squandered some quite effective initiatives, such as diversity taskforces and mentoring programs. When it comes to work-family programs, existing research suggests that parental leave has increased both participation of women in the workforce and job segregation, but we are still in the dark regarding the effects of flexible work schedules and childcare arrangements.

Our survey of research on the effects of these programs leads us to conclude that there are few concrete results of successful programs. The first is that corporations that put managers in charge of promoting diversity typically see results. Making managers a part of the solution, by appointing a full-time diversity manager, creating an independent taskforce, or assigning managers as mentors, helps to promote diversity. Moreover, diversity programs that otherwise have null or negative effects work better in the context of these practices. Similarly, regulatory oversight has been shown to improve the effects of certain diversity programs (Kalev et al., 2006). The second conclusion is that innovations designed to quash managerial bias have been broadly ineffective. Bureaucratic practices designed to eliminate managerial discretion from the hiring and promotion process have not led to increases in diversity; nor have diversity training programs designed to make managers aware of their own unconscious biases; neither have diversity performance evaluations that give managers feedback and career incentives to improve diversity. All three innovations point to managers as the problem to be solved, rather than as the source of the solution. All three are designed to change individual managers’ behavior. The evidence suggests that this approach can have modest positive effects in the presence of managerial oversight of diversity efforts, but that it typically fails.

Research on diversity management and the remediation of workplace inequality is in its infancy. We still have much to understand about how diversity programs influence workforce composition. Next we suggest several lines of inquiry that may deepen the field’s understanding of corporate diversity efforts.

A better understanding of success
Why do certain classes of innovations consistently succeed in bringing about change? We have noted that managerial and regulatory oversight of diversity efforts fosters success, but we know little about the underlying mechanisms. For example, do managers with hiring and promotion authority invest additional cognitive effort in recruiting when they know they may need to explain their decisions (Lerner & Telkow, 1999)? Does assigning responsibility simply ensure that someone takes charge of the task? Or does cognitive distance necessarily prevent diversity, even when there was an assigned responsibility for diversity? And what are the mechanisms that transform the commitment of diversity managers, and executives, into substantive organizational change? Understanding the mechanisms underlying positive effects promises to help us design better diversity programs, and overcome those already in place.

A broader understanding of diversity
How do diversity efforts affect the age distribution of the workforce, the utilization of disabled workers, and workforce composition by sexual orientation and immigration status? Does the effect of diversity vary by the intersection of social categories? Most research on diversity program effects focuses on gender, race, or ethnicity. We need more research and research on other dimensions of disadvantage, as well as on the interaction of social categories. The findings we have outlined suggest some open questions concerning the intersection of race and gender. Why is it that black men see negative effects from networking programs while white men see positive effects? Why does diversity training appear to help black men but hurt black women? It is possible that differences in relational dynamics and in the content of gender and race stereotypes (Browne & Miasa, 2005; Moss & Tink, 2001; Roscigno, 2007) lead to different program outcomes across the interaction of gender and race. We expect there are unexplored program effects across other intersections as well. Thus, salary classification systems that emphasize skills over tenure, for instance, may advantage women with careers interrupted by maternity, but disadvantage older men with greater seniority. The intersection of race and immigration status is also unexplored. Thus, criminal records checks may expand hiring of blacks by convincing the employer to assume that all black men have criminal records (Hitner, Raphael, & Stall, 2005), but do they also deter undocumented immigrants from applying for jobs?

A better understanding of context
How do organizations moderate wider contextual changes that influence workforce diversity? Many firms have joined the performance-based compensation bandwagon, but we have scant knowledge of whether this trend has affected workforce composition. The literature on tokenism suggests that minorities who reach the top face additional challenges and may experience alienation, anxiety, and stress (Kanter, 1977). But we do not know whether women and minorities on boards of directors experience lower rates of turnover. Are high levels of turnover among board members the “corporate social responsibility” movement affected corporate diversity efforts and workforce composition? A better understanding of the bottom line In the civil rights era, the great promise of equal opportunity programs was that they could increase social justice in America. The great promise of diversity management is that today that is that workforce diversity can also contribute to the corporate bottom line. But as yet, research has not produced clear evidence of the effect of diversity on performance. Cross-sectional studies suggest that diversity is positively correlated with a number of performance measures (Ferriero, 2009). But early studies showing a positive correlation between corporate board diversity and performance (Catalyst, 2007) were thrown into doubt by sophisticated time-series studies (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Together, these studies show that the kind of longitudinal data required for explaining this result is a challenge, but several groups of sociologists are now at work on that.

All of these areas for future research require richer data from a variety of sources. For instance, the challenge of studying the effects of diversity policies and programs on workforce characteristics beyond sex, race, and ethnicity is substantial, for the most revealing studies use federal data (Kalev et al., 2006; Leonard, 1990), and the federal government does not collect systematic data on age, immigration status, disability, or sexual orientation. Perhaps the best hope for obtaining time-series data at the firm level is in career data collected by firms themselves for internal use, such as those used by Fernandez (2001) and Castilla and Benard (2010).

To achieve a fuller understanding of program effects on careers, the ideal dataset would match time-series data from a large number of employers with data on individual employees. A longitudinal version of the National Organizational Survey...


