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Gone Fishing: I–O Psychologists’ Missed Opportunities to Understand Marginalized Employees’ Experiences With Discrimination

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Abstract

This article focuses attention on research examining workplace discrimination against employees from marginalized groups. We particularly consider the experiences of seven different groups of marginalized individuals, some of which have legal protection and some of which do not but all of whom we feel have been overlooked by the field of industrial–organizational (I–O) psychology. We briefly describe the importance of studying each group and then delineate the brief amount of research that has been conducted. Finally, we make recommendations for I–O psychologists in terms of research and advocacy. Overall, we argue that I–O psychologists are missing an opportunity to be at the forefront of understanding and instigating changes that would result in maximizing the fairness and optimization of these often forgotten employees and their experiences in the workplace.

One of the main goals of industrial–organizational (I–O) psychology is to ensure an equitable and fair workplace for all. Indeed, a large percentage of I–O psychologists devote their research programs and are hired to safeguard for fair selection

systems, reduce adverse impact, increase diversity, and guarantee fair promotion decisions. Although progress has been made, particularly in the areas of understanding fairness of procedures, research examining the specific experiences of some marginalized groups has lagged behind. Moreover, the relatively sparse amount of relevant research from the last couple of decades focusing on understanding the manifestation and consequences of discrimination concentrates almost entirely

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on sex and race (particularly Black/White relations).

Race and sex, along with color, religion, and national origin, are protected characteristics under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and as amended in 1991 (CRA), which bans discrimination at work and in other organizations on the basis of group membership. The CRA protects all cognizable groups formed on the basis of each or some combination of protected factors. Thus, protected groups include those employers covered under the act defined according to one of the factors listed in the CRA (e.g., women, men, Blacks, Whites, Latinos, Chinese, Christians, Muslims). Of course, some protected groups experience more discrimination than others, and the history of discrimination in the United States is likely responsible for producing the emphasis of work done on women and Blacks; indeed, researchers have been interested in exploring the persistence and change in discrimination against these two groups that has resulted because of and in spite of this federal protection. Research focusing on women and Blacks has provided great knowledge about subtle and not so subtle discrimination, and this is a vastly important body of information that I–O psychologists have uncovered. Yet, workplace discrimination extends to many marginalized targets beyond women and Blacks, and we have not accumulated similar bodies of knowledge on their experiences.

Thus, in this article, we argue that I–O psychologists have mostly missed the opportunity to be at the forefront of research examining a broad range of marginalized employees' experiences in the workplace. We specifically identify groups that have been largely overlooked by I–O psychologists and/or whose experiences have been unpublished by I–O psychology journals. In particular, we focus this article on seven groups of marginalized employees: (a) racial minorities in addition to those who are Black, (b) lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) individuals, (c) older workers, (d) individuals with disabilities, (e) those who are heavy, (f) religious

minorities, and (g) those who face marital status discrimination. First, we begin by discussing why each of these groups deserves greater attention from I–O psychologists. Second, we summarize thematic topics that have been unveiled about each group since 1990. To do this, we identified and combed through seven of the top I–O psychology and organizational behavior journals including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Journal of Management*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and *Personnel Psychology*. The selected journals include six journals that have been ranked as prestigious, Tier-1 journals that are well read by I–O psychologists (Zickar & Highhouse, 2001) and one additional journal (*Journal of Business and Psychology*) whose impact factor has risen considerably in recent years. Third and finally, we offer recommendations to researchers, policy makers, and attorneys who benefit from our research to be more inclusive of these and other understudied marginalized groups.

Ethnically/Racially Diverse Employees in Addition to Black Employees

The Importance of the Problem

Race has long been a topic of interest to I–O psychologists as race is a characteristic that has a long history of inciting discrimination (Allport, 1954). Given the strong push to improve equality for U.S. Blacks, much of what we have learned about racial discrimination focuses mainly on the experiences of Blacks. The findings of such research are sometimes generalized across other racial groups to ascertain how minorities, as a whole, might respond; however, the experiences of Black employees differ dramatically from those of other racial minority groups for a number of reasons. Differences in socioeconomic status, family and cultural values, and education all influence the experiences of perceived discrimination from the targets' perspective,

and stereotypes associated with different minority races may influence the extent of discrimination from the actors' perspective. With other ethnic/racial minority groups such as Latinos expanding quickly within the United States and with the increase of globalization, it is vital that I–O psychologists expand the continued research on the experiences of not only Black employees but other racial/ethnicity groups as well.

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

In the past 20 years, 19 articles in the 7 identified I–O journals have focused on racial discrimination and/or diversity for groups other than Black employees (see Table 1). One of the themes that arises out of this research is the important contribution that demographic compositions of the organization and the community make in influencing racially/ethnically diverse employee's workplace attitudes and outcomes (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008; King et al., 2011; Pugh, Dietz, Brief, & Wiley, 2008). For instance, the racial composition of a community where an organization is located helps to shape climate perceptions (Pugh et al., 2008). Other researchers also reinforce that demography of communities matter in terms of the incivility displayed in organizations (King et al., 2011) and the fact that diverse employees who have same-race supervisors report decreases in perceived discrimination (Avery et al., 2008).

A second theme that arises out of the research conducted in this area focuses on how biases toward racially/ethnically diverse employees influence judgments about them made across the employment context. For instance, research shows that implicit biases within the interview context influence judgments and decisions (Purkiss, Perrewé, Gillespie, Mayes, & Ferris, 2006) that Asians are only evaluated positively as leaders when they hold positions that are stereotype congruent (e.g., engineering and technology) and specific factors that influence employee promotions (Sheridan, Slocum, & Buda, 1997).

The great majority of the studies that included other ethnic/racial minorities combined the experiences of multiple minorities and simply examined differences between Whites and non-Whites. This dichotomization attempts to provide more information on the experiences of other racial minorities; however, it fails to take into account differences in discrimination experiences between racial minority groups. Some might argue that when the researchers collapses across "minorities" to make generalized statements about White employees versus everyone else, they are engaged in acts of discrimination in their own work that is designed to expose the effects of just this type of discrimination.

Indeed, the most consistent theme across the studies we reviewed is that employment discrimination is prevalent for minority groups other than Blacks and that such discrimination and bias is systemic across the employment cycle. Racial minorities (other than just Blacks) report perceiving discrimination, which leads to negative workplace consequences such as lower job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and higher turnover intentions (Foley, Kidder, & Powell, 2002; Raver & Nishii, 2010; Triana, Garcia, & Colella, 2010). Racial minorities (other than just Blacks) also have been perceived more negatively than Whites when occupying leadership positions (Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Sy et al., 2010). Although these particular findings on non-Black employees do match the findings shown in research on Black employees, there is also evidence for divergent experiences between Black and other ethnically/racially diverse individuals in the workplace (Kravitz & Klineberg, 2000; Triana et al., 2010). For instance, Triana et al. (2010) found differences in how discrimination remediation strategies influence different racial groups, such that establishing organizational diversity policies lessened the negative effects of discrimination on commitment for Latinos, but they exacerbated the negative effects of discrimination on commitment for Blacks. Such dramatic differences are not captured

Table 1. Frequency of Articles in Top 1–O Journals Focusing on Discrimination Related Issues for Understudied Targets Since 1990

Keyword Search	Race	Race-not Black	LGBT	Religion	Age	Disability	Weight	Marital status
	discrimination, race bias, race prejudice	Sexual orientation, gay, lesbian, heterosexualism	Religion, religious, Jewish, Judaism, Fundamentalism, Christian, atheism, agnostic, Muslim, Islam, Hindu, hijab, yarmulke	Ageism, age discrimination, age bias, age prejudice, age differences, age stereotypes	Disability, disability discrimination, disability bias, disability prejudice	Weight discrimination, weight bias, weight stigma, obesity discrimination, obesity bias	Marital status discrimination, marital status bias, married and discrimination, married and bias	
Frequency of articles								
JAP	4	6	0	3	1	5	0	
PPsych	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	
AMJ	5	1	0	2	2	0	0	
AMR	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	
OBHDP	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
JOM	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	
JOBU	1	1	0	1	4	2	0	
Total	19	10	1	9	10	8	0	

Note. JAP=Journal of Applied Psychology, PPsych=Personnel Psychology, AMJ=Academy of Management Journal, AMR=Academy of Management Review, OBHDP=Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, JOM=Journal of Management, JOBU=Journal of Business and Psychology.

when research focuses on only one target racial minority group or collapses across minority groups. Similarly, Avery (2003) found differences in the way Whites, Asians, Latinos, and Blacks perceive their starting salaries, such that White, Asian, and Latino participants distinguished between high and low starting salaries, whereas Black participants did not. As Avery (2003) noted, the lower salary expectations that Black (vs. White) employees have coupled with the decreased abilities of Black (vs. non-Black) employees to detect high versus low salaries works to perpetuate salary differences between Black and White employees.

Recommendations

The biggest and already-noted limitation of the research is the simple absence of it, particularly that which goes beyond Black–White comparisons but specifies race/ethnicity. Thus, we highly encourage more research. Although some might argue that discrimination results from stable psychological processes and models that explain it need to treat the cultures and subcultures as fundamental parameters, our review does not support that, and we recommend that future research consider how existing conceptual and empirical efforts might be influenced by the differences among different ethnic and cultural groups. Clearly, there are times when racial minority groups respond in consolidated ways, but there are also dimensions upon which they differ. For instance, the language barriers and accents may be more relevant for Latinos than Blacks (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010) or the variation in skin color of Blacks (vs. Asians) may be more relevant to workplace outcomes (Colarelli, Poole, Unterborn, & D'Souza, 2010) but this sort of research is missing in our I–O journals, and we recommend a greater researcher and practitioner focus on both interracial/interethnic divergence (e.g., how do Asian employees differ from Hispanic employees) as well as intraracial/intraethnic divergence (e.g., what are the different workplace experiences of Latinos from Puerto Rico versus Mexico?)

In addition, very few of the studies that have been conducted focus on the perspective of the racially/ethnically diverse employee. That is, most studies that were conducted focus on others' perceptions of targets or on how organizational variables influence targets' outcomes. We recommend future research that addresses the perspective of actual employees rather than perceptions of them. To do this, though, we might have to engage the practitioner community in also identifying and recognizing the actual experiences that different target groups cite.

Clearly, the research that we reviewed has substantial scientific rigor at least in the internal validity sense, but an additional recommendation that we have is based on the fact that the research literature sometimes fails to address issues pertaining to law and public policy. For instance, although there is a vast literature in I–O psychology addressing disparate impact (i.e., the extent to which selection and promotion procedures neutral on their face disproportionately affect employment outcomes for particular protected groups), there is very little that addresses disparate treatment (i.e., intentional use of prohibited factors to make decisions about employees), hostile environments against individuals based on race or ethnicity (creation of an abusive work environment based upon a protected factor), and retaliation (i.e., punishing an employee for raising a discrimination complaint). Future research might address questions such as: What kinds of ethnic and racial characteristics trigger employer reactions that ultimately lead to adverse treatments? What makes a workplace dehumanizing to the point to which it becomes an abusive and hostile environment in both the legal and extra-legal sense? Are the perceptions of such abusiveness different for observers and experiencers of the actions based on race and ethnicity? Does dehumanization occur differently in different workplace contexts for people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds? How severe and pervasive does retaliatory behavior need to be for workers to complain

to management and ultimately to equal opportunity officers? Rigorous research conducted both in laboratories and ultimately in field settings that rely on theory to answer these questions will speak directly and in a useful way to private and public policy makers, policy enforcers, and lawyers.

LGBT Research

The Importance of the Problem

Understanding the experiences of LGBT workers and the impact of these experiences is important because currently between 4% and 17% of the workplace is comprised of sexual orientation minorities (Gonsorick & Weinrich, 1991; Powers, 1996). Although expressing negative attitudes toward many stigmatized groups is considered societally unacceptable, individuals often feel justified expressing negative attitudes toward LGBT individuals because they feel that, unlike some stigmatizing characteristics (e.g., race, sex), sexual orientation is controllable (Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002). For example, recent nationally representative surveys find that over 30% of American adults do not believe that homosexuality should be accepted by society (Pew Global Attitudes, 2011) and over 40% of American adults do not believe that gay marriage should be legal (Cillizza, 2012). The persistence of negative attitudes toward LGBT individuals is accompanied by perceptions of widespread workplace discrimination against LGBT individuals (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Between 25% and 66% of gay and lesbian employees and 75% of transsexual employees report experiencing some form of discrimination at work (Croteau, 1996; Human Rights Campaign, 2008; Waldo, 1999). Unfortunately, many LGBT individuals facing workplace discrimination have no legal recourse, as there is, currently, no U.S. federal prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in private employment decisions, although legal protections have evolved at the state and local level.

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

In the past 20 years, there have been 10 articles in the focal I–O journals that have addressed discrimination toward sexual minorities in the workplace. Although this is a small number, the research that has been done has been fairly thorough in addressing workplace discrimination. Three areas of emphasis in the research on sexual minorities have emerged since the first article (Day & Shoenrade, 1997) appeared: (a) antecedents and consequences of disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace, (b) the effects of discrimination, and (c) strategies for reducing discrimination.

Research on disclosure in the workplace has shown that individuals who have a high self-acceptance of their sexual orientation, have disclosed their sexual orientation to family and friends, and work in an organization with individuals who are gay and lesbian are more likely to disclose their sexual orientation in the workplace, which in turn is important for both individual and organizational well-being (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007). Those who disclose at work (vs. do not) report higher levels of job satisfaction and affective commitment, and lower levels of role ambiguity, work-home conflict, and job anxiety (Day & Shoenrade, 1997; Griffith & Hebl, 2002). Additional research has shown that those who disclose only in some situations (e.g., with friends) but not others (e.g., at work) often experience stress related to these “disclosure disconnects” (Ragins, 2008).

Studies also have investigated the effect of discrimination on workplace outcomes for LGBT employees and found that perceived discrimination is negatively related to job attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career commitment (Button 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Only one study published in the focal I–O journals has focused on strategies for reducing discrimination toward LGBT individuals. Singletary and Hebl (2009) identified three

strategies LGBT individuals can engage in to reduce interpersonal discrimination when applying for jobs. These strategies included “acknowledgement” (i.e., openly addressing their stigma with managers), “individuating information” (i.e., providing additional personal information about themselves that would allow management to see them as an individual), and showing “increased positivity.” Additional research has found that gay and lesbian employees also perceive less workplace discrimination when organizational sexual orientation nondiscrimination policies and gay-friendly benefits are in place relative to when they are not (Button, 2001; Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

Recommendations

Research on the topic of workplace discrimination against LGBT individuals is critical given that federal law prohibiting such discrimination has been stalled for several decades, and we have several particular recommendations for I–O psychologists. First, although there are a number of city ordinances and some state statutes that include groups identified by their sexual orientation as protected classes, I–O psychologists can work to show the importance of extending federal protection for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transsexuals. A combination of field quasi-experiments and lab experiments outside of the I–O literature has shown that state and local employment of antidiscrimination laws effectively promote more positive underlying attitudes toward gay individuals (Barron, 2010) and even reduce subtle interpersonal discrimination toward gay and lesbian individuals in the workplace (Barron & Hebl, in press). However, these are just two articles addressing the potential effectiveness of reducing discrimination by the passage of such laws. We encourage I–O psychologists to conduct further research that similarly informs policy makers and shows how effective laws can be in curtailing negative workplace experiences for LGBT individuals and others who belong to marginalized groups.

Second, companies that wish to improve their organizational climate and the commitment of LGBT workers to their jobs can make good use of the disclosure and discrimination literature to design ways to make LGBT employees more comfortable and more productive at work. One limitation of this research is that it is largely correlational in nature; however, one way to study the causal connections is to manipulate strategies that could reduce straight workers’ inclination to discriminate against LGBT coworkers. One idea is to design a series of vignette studies that manipulate the amount of subtle and not so subtle discrimination that heterosexual workers target at gay and lesbian colleagues. The dependent variables of importance would be ratings of the likelihood to disclose, motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity levels of the gay and lesbian workers that straight and LGBT respondents would supply as they reviewed these vignettes. Extending this approach into organizations with more action-orientated research could involve interventions into workplaces (e.g., training, workshops, contact efforts, and team building) that reduce discrimination against LGBT workers. Measuring levels of disclosure, worker productivity, and job satisfaction after such interventions and modeling the results to test for the indirect effects of disclosure as a mediator between discrimination reducing efforts and outcome factors could offer some important insights about the disclosure-discrimination-work outcome causal linkage. Such findings would certainly be of value to policy makers in the private sector.

Third and finally, very little research has parsed the way that LGBT employees respond and are responded to in the workplace. That is, most researchers lump individuals from all of these categories under a single umbrella. This is understandable, at times, because there are often a very small number of individuals who identify as fitting into any of these four categories, and so power to detect differences can only be achieved when they are collapsed into a single category. However,

it is important for I–O psychologists to study each of the groups in their own right, as their critical workplace issues may be very different from each other's.

Age Discrimination

The Importance of the Problem

Older workers differ from other stigmatized workplace groups in that most individuals will enter this category over their lifetime. Like race and sex, age is a characteristic that is not controllable; however, what is controllable is individuals' willingness to work once they have reached older ages. Older workers comprise an increasingly large segment of the working population, particularly given that the federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967 protects individuals who are aged 40 or older from age discrimination. Although the workforce participation rate is highest among 25- to 54-year-olds, the workforce participation rate of older individuals has risen dramatically over the past 20 years. It is anticipated that the number of older workers seeking employment will increase by over 36% by the next decade (Toossi, 2009), and by 2050, 19% of the labor force will be comprised by the 55-and-older age group (Toossi, 2002).

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

A total of nine studies focusing on age discrimination have been published in the focal journals since 1990. Research has shown evidence that age-related stereotypes in the workplace exist and are particularly likely to be used when individuals have limited information and fewer cognitive resources (Perry, Kulik, & Bourhis, 1996). Posthuma and Campion (2009) describe a wide variety of studies exploring the effects of age stereotypes on the workplace and provide evidence of research disproving many of the age stereotypes. Other meta-analyses have shown a positive relationship between age and job

performance, particularly in complex jobs (Avolio, Waldman, & McDaniel, 1990) and in performance of noncore tasks such as organizational citizenship behaviors and safety-related performance (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Despite the fact that many of the stereotypes are not true (particularly those related to job performance; for a review, see Posthuma & Campion, 2009), these stereotypes may impact older workers' willingness to participate in training by reducing their self-efficacy in this domain (Maurer, 2001).

Researchers have also examined in-group bias among younger and older raters in employment situations to determine whether or not younger raters have the tendency to evaluate younger individuals more positively and older raters have the tendency to evaluate older raters more positively. There seems to be little evidence of an "in-group bias" among older raters. Lin, Dobbins, and Farh (1992) found evidence of similarity effects for race (i.e., interviewers gave higher ratings to interviewees of the same race) but not for age. Similarly, Finkelstein, Burke, and Raju (1995) did not find evidence of in-group bias among older workers; in their meta-analysis, younger raters gave younger targets higher scores, but older raters did not give older targets higher scores.

Age discrimination has also been explored in some of the focal journals (e.g., see Morgeson, Reider, Campion, & Bull, 2008). One study found that age and race effects interact such that disparities in salaries between Caucasian and minority employees were greater for older than younger employees (controlling for job, organizational tenure, education, and skills; Barnum, Liden, & Ditomaso 1995). Another study illustrated potential disparities in the application of the anti-age discrimination laws whereby older plaintiffs were more successful when bringing age discrimination cases under the ADEA than younger plaintiffs protected under the law (i.e., 40–49-years old; Miller, Kaspin, & Schuster, 1990).

Recommendations

One area that is intriguing and ripe for additional research is the notion of intergenerational ageism or hostile ageism that North and Fiske (2010) have recently put forth in the literature. Specifically, they argue that because of changing demographics and the larger proportion of older Americans, young adults find themselves in competition with older people in three domains. First, with regard to *succession*, the authors argue that older people possess the most influence in society and younger people require older people to step down in order to obtain some of that influence. Second, with regard to *consumption*, older people consume a great deal of the society's shared resources such as health care, public space, and career opportunities, so that younger people are concerned that older people's consumption of these resources prevents younger people from obtaining their fair share. Finally, there are *identity violations*, such that younger people sense that older people are violating the younger people's identity by invading the youth culture, that is, by acting too "cool" and frequenting places that younger people claim as their own. As a result of this competition, which is likely to be evidenced most strongly at work, there is a natural tension between younger workers and older workers that results in ageism and could ultimately result in discrimination against the older workers. Field work on hostile or intergenerational ageism may show larger effects than laboratory studies because the motivations that underlie competition among the young and old are most likely to be felt strongest in the work environment. Research by applied psychologists testing out implications of intergenerational ageism at work could give new insights into the causes and consequences of age discrimination.

Adverse actions against older workers are only prohibited under the ADEA if the worker can show that the actual reason or "but for" cause of the adverse impact was the employee's age. For other protected classes covered under Title VII, employers

are prohibited from using the protected class dimension at all in any decisions that benefit or adversely affect workers. However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Gross v. FBL Financial Services* (2009) that the ADEA is different. Unless age was the "cause in fact" of the adverse impact and not simply a contributing factor, the employer is not liable for its use of age in an employment decision. The absence of this mixed-motive complaint in discrimination law under the ADEA might have important implications for the way in which older employees are treated at work. In fact, in a recent article, Cox and Barron (in press) found that when the new ruling was presented, older employees were rated less capable of change and less suitable for their job than otherwise equivalent younger employees. Rigorous research results that show how intergenerational ageism plays out under the new legal standards for discrimination will be informative to policy makers, rule enforcers, and attorneys as they grapple with the problems of an aging workforce.

Disability Discrimination

The Importance of the Problem

Within the United States, 19% of the civilian population report having a disability (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Although many individuals with disabilities do not participate in the workforce (46% of individuals aged 21–64 with some disability are employed, compared to 84% of individuals aged 21–64 without disabilities; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), research indicates that many individuals with severe disabilities who are not currently employed want to work and can successfully participate in the competitive labor market (Bond et al., 2001). Working is often central to individuals' personal identity, affording many of their social interactions with others and allowing individuals with disabilities to improve their quality of life (Bond et al., 2001). From a broader societal perspective, the integration of individuals with disabilities into the workforce

is important in reducing government spending on disability entitlement programs.

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

A review of the seven focal journals yielded 10 articles that focus on individuals with disabilities in the workforce. Although the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are intended to help individuals with disabilities, they also may negatively impact the way disabled coworkers are perceived. Colella (2001) noted that employees may view special accommodations made for disabled coworkers as unfair, particularly when the accommodation is salient, perceived to be expensive, and disrupts other coworkers. The perceived potential for such requests to burden an organization or coworkers has led some employees with disabilities to resist requesting such accommodations. One study found that for hearing-impaired individuals the relationship between the cost of an accommodation and whether or not they requested the accommodation (which would have improved their performance) was mediated by the perceived social cost of the accommodation (e.g., aggravating one's supervisor; Baldrige & Veige, 2006).

Published research has also examined the attitudes of other employees toward individuals with disabilities and has shown that these attitudes can be dependent on context and the type of disability. For instance, Premeaux (2001) found that interviewers rated job applicants with physical disabilities more positively than individuals with a mental disability and applicants without any disabilities. Another study found that attitudes toward a team partner with disabilities were negative when the participants winning a prize depended on the performance of their partner but not when their likelihood of winning was independent of their partner's performance (Colella, DeNisi, & Varma, 1998).

Finally, research in the focal journals has revealed that individuals with disabilities may need to engage in self-presentation

strategies to reduce the level of discrimination they experience. Specifically, Colella and Varma (2001) found that the quality of the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship between employees with disabilities and their supervisors is lower than the quality of the LMX relationship between employees without disabilities and their supervisors when they do not engage in ingratiating behaviors. Thus, ingratiation may serve as a way for individuals with disabilities to reduce workplace discrimination.

Recommendations

Studies on disabilities tend to focus on different types of disabilities (e.g., physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and disease), measure diverse stigma defining attitude constructs, and offer little in the way of generalized organizational or theoretical structure. As a result, it is difficult to make any general statements about workers' attitudes toward the disabled. Perhaps it is better to treat the concept of disability as a family of issues than as a single concern. That is, researchers might identify the clusters in which disabilities share commonalities in challenges and perceptions (e.g., those with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental illnesses, and physical diseases) to see if issues differentially affect their work life. Of course, what is missing in such research in the workplace is seeing if such categories would even be meaningful and useful in making predictions about workplace discrimination.

In addition, as previous research suggests, individuals with disabilities are sometimes unwilling to ask for needed accommodations for fear of social consequences at work. We recommend that researchers and practitioners further examine the implications of requesting and not requesting accommodations. That is, how do these requests and the fulfillment of accommodations impact job outcomes such as performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment? In addition, how can researchers and practitioners take

steps to measure the social consequences that result from these accommodations? It may be that individuals with disabilities fear social consequences, but the benefits outweigh the consequences. In a similar vein, policy makers should ask for data that speak to the effectiveness of various reasonable and perhaps not-so-reasonable accommodations on job performance. We recommend research that examines what specifically constitutes undue hardship from both the perspective of the employer and the employees.

Finally, future research should examine the coping responses that individuals with disabilities use in the workplace. If they are not able to fully perform some task, how does this affect their workplace outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, perceptions of discrimination) as well as the perceptions and evaluations that their coworkers have of them? In addition, I–O psychologists might consider information that would be most useful to policy makers, rule enforcers, and attorneys as they try to help organizations come to terms with workers with physical and/or mental disabilities. Thus, researchers might use the empirical evidence that is available to document the qualifications for specific jobs and identify the essential functions of specific jobs, as well as the ways in what ways people with disabilities may be prepared or unprepared to take on such essential job functions. Each of these recommendations has relevance both for specific cases and for the ADA in general, so they are ripe for psychologists to consider as topics of applied and indeed, more basic research.

Weight Discrimination

The Importance of the Problem

The issue of weight discrimination is a topic of growing concern among employers (Dobson, 2009; Roehling, Roehling, & Pichler, 2007). Several factors appear to be contributing to this development, including the widely publicized rising incidence of obesity in the United States and many Western countries, increased employer concern about controlling healthcare

costs (Marlo & Stavisky, 2011; Shepherd, 2009), an expanding view of “diversity” in the workplace and the importance of effectively managing it (e.g., Roberson & Park, 2007; Van de Ven, Rogers, Bechara, & Sun, 2009), and evidence that weight discrimination is a relatively prevalent and increasing form of employment discrimination that has implications for organization’s effective use of human resources and their potential legal liability (Andreyeva, Puhl, & Brownell, 2008; Roehling et al., 2007).

Growing concern about the issue of weight discrimination in employment is not limited to employers. Researchers in diverse literatures have been giving increased attention to weight discrimination (e.g., economics, Sabia & Rees, 2012; social psychology, Randle, 2012; health, Hansson, Naslund, & Rasmussen, 2010; medicine, Persky & Eccleston, 2011; sports and recreation, Peters & Jones, 2010), and in the legal literature there has been an increase in calls for new laws providing employees greater legal protection against weight discrimination (e.g., Hale, 2010; Kubilis, 2008; Morris, 2010). In light of these concerns, it may be observed that research contributing to our knowledge of weight discrimination in employment, and how it might be effectively addressed, has potentially important implications for organizations, policy makers considering the need for legislation providing protection against weight discrimination, and, of course, overweight individuals hoping to be judged on job-relevant information and not assumptions about their capabilities.

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

Since 1990 a total of eight studies investigating weight discrimination in employment settings have been published in the seven focal journals. Although the number of studies is not great, they include many significant and “cutting-edge” contributions to the weight discrimination literature. For example, the first comprehensive review of research investigating

weight discrimination in employment settings was published in *Personnel Psychology* (Roehling, 1999), and subsequent studies advanced the understanding of weight discrimination through their unique investigations of the effect of weight bias on employee interactions with customers (King, Shapiro, Hebl, Singletary, & Turner, 2006), the effect of lower expectations for obese trainees on training effectiveness (Shapiro, King, & Quiñones, 2007), and the negative impact of automatic stereotypes on decisions whether to interview obese job applicants in a field setting (Agerström & Rooth, 2011). In addition to their significant substantive contributions, many of the reviewed studies also have set or raised the bar in terms of methodological rigor. Notable examples include Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, and Spring's (1994) manipulation of target weight in an experimental study through the use of professional actors and theatrical prostheses and Judge and Cable's (2011) two longitudinal field studies, one German and one American, investigating gender differences in the relationship between body weight and earnings.

Recommendations

Research on weight discrimination is somewhat similar to research studying discrimination against LGBT populations because people feel more justified discriminating against these groups due to the perceived controllability of both stigmas, and neither weight nor sexual orientations are protected factors under federal law. Nonetheless, academic researchers interested in conversation with other academics can carve out several important areas that will have both theoretical and practical implications for the workplace. First, there is a need for research investigating the potential effectiveness of training in changing negative attitudes and behaviors toward overweight applicants and employees. Research addressing this important issue has generally reported success in changing beliefs about the controllability of weight, some success in changing negative

stereotypes, and very little or no success in changing trainees' attitudes or behaviors (e.g. Bell & Morgan, 2000; Teachman, Gapinski, Brownell, Rawlins, & Jeyaram, 2003). And although recent efforts to change attitudes have shown somewhat greater promise (e.g., Ciao & Latner, 2011), the potential contribution of research in this area is great, and we would suggest that I–O psychologists are capable of helping address that need. We recommend that additional approaches to the problem of training and education take a more theoretical approach and consider the models of attitude change regarding race that endorse the roles of both implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes. Future efforts might do well to study implicit attitudes toward overweight individuals and compare the effects of both implicit and explicit attitudes on outcome measures of discrimination. In addition, attitude-changing strategies that have been successful in the race area have endorsed skills education and the contact hypothesis. That is, teaching workers and managers skills in interacting with overweight people in a way that is comfortable for both the overweight and the nonoverweight participants in the interaction may be particularly successful if the nonoverweight people learn such skills while coming into direct contact with an overweight coworker or trainer. Although such techniques may be difficult to study in the context of weight bias, the literature in attitude change shows that the combination of contact and skill development is the best way to reduce negative bias against stigmatized groups (e.g., see Brown, MacIntyre, & Trujillo, 2003; Corrigan, 2000).

Second, there is also a need for I–O psychologists, both practitioners and academic researchers, to pay greater and more explicit attention to the issue of when (under what circumstances) employee body weight is job related. The widely recognized benefits of structuring employment decision-making processes suggest that providing employers clear guidance regarding when weight is demonstrably job related, and when it is not, should reduce the use of applicant

or employee in more subjective and discriminatory ways. Research in this regard will consist mostly of studies that expose the similarity between overweight and nonoverweight people in performing most jobs. Although there might be a few positions (e.g., firefighter or police officer) in which weight becomes a legitimate factor for managers and employers to consider in decisions about employee performance, it is likely that in most jobs weight is an irrelevant concern that only leads to discrimination without functional purpose. Although there are few laws in the United States that prohibit discrimination against people who are overweight, the enactment of any new legislation would more than likely allow for an affirmative defense of job relatedness. Research that shows the low relevance of job relatedness for being overweight might even encourage new laws to outlaw discrimination based upon weight.

Third, there is a need for research investigating the effectiveness of employer-sponsored weight loss programs to include an assessment of the extent to which such programs may be impacting the experience of weight discrimination in the workplace. It would seem possible that depending on how such programs are structured (e.g., the use of group vs. individual incentives), communicated to employees, and supported by management, the incidence of weight discrimination in the sponsoring organization might be increased, or it might be decreased. Research that shows how weight loss programs can successfully transform worker's productivity could influence policy makers in the private and public sectors to enact rules in the organization and in the public arena that encourage overweight individuals to gain control of their own bodies and improve their life satisfaction both on and off the job.

Religious Discrimination

The Importance of the Problem

In the last couple of decades, the landscape of religion in the U.S. has changed dramatically. First, although the vast majority

of United States adults are identified as Christians (78.4%; Pew Research Center, 2007), the once very dominant Protestant country has now become more diverse within Christianity (51% identify as Protestant, 24% identify as Catholic, 1.7% identify as Mormon, and less than 1% each identify as Jehovah's Witness, Orthodox, or other Christian religions). Second, the number of individuals who don't affiliate with any faith has more than doubled over the last several decades. Specifically, 16% say they are unaffiliated with any faith, and of these, 2% describing themselves as agnostic, 1.6% describing themselves as atheist, and 12.1% describing themselves as nothing in particular. Third, immigration is also increasing the number of Muslims and Hindus. Fourth and finally, across a 10-year span from 2001 to 2011, the number of such religious discrimination claims in the workplace reported to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) doubled, and according to a report published by the American Bar Association, religious-based complaints were increasing at a faster rate than either race or gender claims (Weiss, 2008).

These changes in the U.S. religious landscape; the acute prejudice, discrimination, and even wars that are often waged in the name of religion; and the fact that religion is a protected characteristic according to the CRA of 1964 all serve to make studying workplace discrimination on the basis of religion critically important. And yet, almost no research addresses religion in the workplace.

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

Research on the workplace experiences of religion is simply not present in the top I-O journals. We found, in our search of the seven journals, only a single article that addressed religious discrimination in the workplace. This dearth of research is particularly striking given research (published in nonworkplace journals) that shows people perceive, anticipate, and actually receive all sorts of discrimination based upon their

religious affiliation (e.g., hijabis; Ghumman & Jackson, 2010; Park, Malachi, Sternin, & Tevet, 2009; Unkelbach, Schneider, Gode, & Senft, 2010). Surely, such findings are likely to be relevant to organizational settings and the hiring cycle as well.

The single exception to no studies existing within the seven journals is a study investigating discrimination toward Muslim individuals. King and Ahmad (2010) found that female applicants who wore a hijab (vs. did not) were more likely to face interpersonal discrimination from store managers. Specifically, the authors found that applicants wearing the Muslim attire were not formally discriminated against (e.g., they were called back for interviews and allowed to complete applications at the same rates), but they were more likely to be the recipients of interpersonal discrimination (e.g., interactions lasting a shorter duration and involving more negativity and hostility) than were those not wearing the hijab. The negativity that the applicants received may not be surprising given recent reports of poll research showing that Muslim individuals are often viewed as “cruel, deceitful, hot-tempered, and irrational” (American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 2008).

Outside the workplace literature, a sizable amount of research has also shown negativity toward atheists. Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann (2006) found that participants who believed atheists were unlikely to share their vision of America and would disapprove their own children marrying an atheist. Gervais (2011) suggests that the reason people may dislike atheist individuals is because they don't trust them. In fact, research seems to support that proposition. A Pew Research Center poll (2007) found that almost half of Americans believe that it is impossible to live a moral life without a belief in God. Furthermore, Gervais, Shariff, and Norenzayan (2011) found that a description of a criminally untrustworthy individual was more likely to be seen as representative of atheists than they were of Christians, Muslims, or feminists. In fact,

only rapists earned the same level of distrust as did atheists.

Recommendations

Given that the religious landscape is changing and that religious-based workplace complaints are increasing, policy makers and rule enforcers, especially in the public sector, and attorneys are in need of additional reliable information about this type of discrimination. Thus, we make several recommendations. First, we recommend that I–O psychologists simply document the ways in which employee's varying religions influence workplace outcomes. We do not know the extent, severity, and content of such discrimination and how it plays out in the workplace. Most religions are represented by visual cues and research might address whether such items (e.g., a cross, the Star of David, the wearing of a hijab, the wearing of a yarmulke) alone might trigger discrimination and the extent to which conversations about divergent belief systems and variations in religious fervor further bias.

Second, I–O psychologists should consider the accommodations that are requested by employees because of their different religions. Organizations often publicly endorse some religions (by organizational sponsored events, such as Christmas parties or visibly decorating office space such as putting up Christmas trees and wreaths) while ignoring others (e.g., not placing a visible menorah). Alternatively, some organizations endorse all religions that their employees request and still other organizations opt for celebrating none so as to be fair. How organizations make such decisions, how they are interpreted by employees, and the workplace implications that they have for employees, as a whole have not yet been empirically examined. Organizations may differ in their willingness to make additional religious-related accommodations (e.g., breaking from work to pray throughout the day), and this variability in responding to requested accommodations may differ on the basis

top managements' perceptions of their beliefs about the legitimacy and likability.

Third, it is important to note that religious bias does not just target people of faith. It also targets people who have no faith or who are unsure of theirs. For instance, research reveals the stark distrust that Americans have of atheists (Edgell et al., 2006), and it is unclear how this plays out in workplace settings. We encourage I–O psychologists to consider religious beliefs (and lack thereof) across the spectrum. Fourth and finally, we encourage research that examines how religious tolerance in the workplace might be fostered. Given that employees have different sets of beliefs and are encouraged by their faith to steadfastly avow them, researchers might assess whether there is a need for religious diversity training workshops and if so what types of training are likely to be successful. Such research might consider whether such training should include tolerance for those who deny the existence of a deity. In summary, rigorous workplace research conducted on the impact of religiosity conducted both in laboratories and field settings will speak directly to I–O psychologists and in a useful way to private and public policy makers, policy enforcers, and lawyers who may have no choice but to confront occurrences of religious discrimination in the future.

Marital Status Discrimination

The Importance of the Problem

Discrimination in employment based on marital status was once a widely tolerated, if not encouraged, practice. Women were required to resign upon their marriage in some occupations (e.g., flight attendants, *Sprogis v. United Air Lines, Inc.*, 1971), and employers spoke openly of their assessment that single men were less trustworthy than married men, and therefore less desirable for certain positions (Burbanks, 1908). In recent decades, legislators in industrialized countries around the world have recognized that discrimination in employment based on an applicant's or employee's marital status

is a “real world” problem with important consequences for individuals and society, and they have enacted laws making marital status discrimination illegal (e.g., Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, and New Zealand). Although such a law does not exist at the federal level in the United States, 21 states have passed laws making it illegal to discriminate in employment based on marital status (Unmarried America, 2012).

From a behavioral science perspective, the marital status discrimination construct has not been formally explicated. The significance of this omission is highlighted by the fact that, from a legal perspective, what constitutes marital status discrimination varies greatly across jurisdictions. For example, within the United States, some states (e.g., Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Wisconsin), have adopted a narrow definition that only recognizes illegal marital status discrimination if an individual is treated differently solely because of his/her individual status as single, married, divorced, separated, or widowed (Beattie, 1991; Porter, 2001). This is akin to a “but for causality” standard that currently exists under the ADEA in age discrimination law. Other states (e.g., Alaska, Hawaii, Minnesota, and Washington) have adopted a much broader definition that merely requires that an individual's marital status is among the factors determining the employer's challenged decision. Laws in these states adopt a standard similar to the mixed-motive theory that is currently available for individuals making claims based upon Title VII of the CRA but not available to those bringing federal age discrimination complaints. Applying the broad definition, an adverse employment decision that is based in part on the identity or position of an individual's spouse or partner may also constitute illegal marital status discrimination (Beattie, 1991; Porter, 2001).

As a result of the significantly different approaches to defining marital status discrimination, from a legal perspective, whether an employer's action involves marital status discrimination often depends on

what jurisdiction's law is controlling. For example, the following employer actions that have been found to involve marital status discrimination in states that have adopted the broader definition would *not* be considered marital status discrimination in states that adopt the narrow definition: (a) the termination of a male employee because he lives with his girlfriend with whom he has a child (*Johnson v. Porter Farms, Inc.*, 1986); (b) the refusal to hire a woman who is qualified for a job because she had a child out of wedlock (*Cooper v. Mower County Social Services*, 1989); (c) the firing of a receptionist because her husband, a former executive with the same company, had been forced to resign (*Taylor v. LSI Corporation of America*, 2010); and (d) an employer's denial of domestic partner benefits to same-sex couples (*Alaska v. Tumeo*, 1997).

Review of Relevant Research in Focal Journals

Arguably, no other category of employment discrimination that is as widely prohibited by law has received less attention from I–O psychologists than marital status discrimination. Our review of research published since 1990 in the seven focal journals was unable to identify even one reported study focusing on marital status discrimination in an employment setting. Several studies provide evidence indicating that marital status influences employment decisions or outcomes in some circumstances. For example, 36% of the managers participating in Brown and Allgeier's (1995) study of workplace romances indicated they would react more negatively to such relationships if one or both parties were married to others. However, for the journals and time period in question, no study investigates marital status discrimination in the workplace.

Recommendations

Our recommendation is that academic researchers examine the issue of marital status discrimination from the broadest perspective possible and conduct a

comprehensive, interdisciplinary review of what is currently known about the nature, extent, causes, and consequences of marital status discrimination that includes not only employment but also other social arenas including health, education, and government. Our investigation of diverse literatures failed to find any attempt at such a review. To the extent there is relevant empirical research, it appears to be more prevalent in past decades. For example, in an experimental study published in the *Academy of Management Journal* over 35 years ago, Renwick and Tosi (1978) failed to find main effects for target sex or target marital status on participants' ratings of the suitability of hypothetical applicants for two managerial positions. However, they found interactions, such that among women applicants the most desirable applicants were single, and overall (men and women), the most desirable applicant was a married male with two children. Would these findings be replicated today? Does the answer to that question depend on whether participants are in a jurisdiction with a law that makes marital status discrimination illegal? The results of this type of research should be influential to policy makers in organizations and ultimately to those in the public sector who have the authority to legislate and administer existing laws that might be useful for preventing and controlling marital status discrimination.

As the latter question suggests, the effectiveness of laws prohibiting marital status discrimination in employment remains an open question. Anecdotally, it appears that such laws may have curtailed the most blatant forms of marital status discrimination. However, there is also evidence that marital-status based stereotypes have persisted beyond legislative efforts to address marital status discrimination (e.g., Etaugh & Birdoes, 1991; Morris, Sinclair, & DePaulo, 2007) and that a significant number of employers continue to inquire about marital status on application blanks and in job interviews—even in jurisdictions where marital status discrimination is prohibited by law (e.g., Harcourt & Harcourt, 2002;

Mullen, Thakur, & Hensel, 2007). It is unclear whether employers who continue to inquire about marital status are unaware of relevant legal constraints or if they choose to disregard the law. Also unclear and in need of investigation is the extent to which there is normative pressure on employers to avoid—or engage in—discrimination based on marital status. Are laws prohibiting marital status discrimination in employment more accurately described as leading and influencing societal norms, versus merely reflecting societal norms? The answer to these questions will be informative to policy makers, policy enforcers, and lawyers as they try to direct organizations and government to regulate employment decisions in a way that does not allow stigma against the married or unmarried to color workplace decisions.

The fact that there are some jurisdictions in the United States with broad laws banning marital discrimination, some with narrow laws, and some without laws creates a natural laboratory that researchers should use to help us learn about the effects of these laws. At the macro level, investigations of differences in documented organizational discrimination, moral beliefs about marital discrimination, and the effects of discrimination on work outcomes could be instructive to policy makers and policy enforcers at the state and local level. Do marital discrimination laws have beneficial outcomes? Does it matter whether the standard is “but for causality” or “a contributory factor model?” Research at the macro level can give us descriptive answers to these important questions. Furthermore, experimental research at the micro level in the form of jury decision-making studies and vignette studies that purposefully vary the type of standard could be informative to attorneys and policy makers with the interest of eliminating marital discrimination.

Finally, I–O psychologists should help ensure that they, and the employers they serve, are aware of existing legal constraints on the consideration of marital status in employment decisions and take appropriate

steps to address it. This will be a challenge given that the meaning of “marital status employment discrimination” varies significantly across jurisdictions.

Conclusion

There are challenges to conducting research on marginalized groups, and these reasons may help account for the fact that I–O psychologists have been slow to conduct such research. First, for a number of reasons, discrimination-related research is hard to conduct. Top management is understandably cautious about approving and giving access to the investigation of discrimination-related issues within their organizations. That is, if discrimination is found within organizations, particularly against members of protected groups, they become vulnerable to lawsuits and irreparable damages to their reputation. In addition, it is difficult to collect the data, divorce perceptions from objectivity, find second source data, and gather behavioral measures. Second, some of the groups that we have discussed have concealable stigmas or stigmas that are not readily apparent. For instance, unlike race or sex, sexual orientation is harder to detect by simply visually looking at an individual; thus, it is harder to identify this population.

Third, some of these groups have stigmas that are considered controllable. For instance, many individuals view obesity as a characteristic that one has a great deal of control over based on diet, exercise, and lifestyle, and therefore they feel more justified in discriminating against these individuals (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). As researchers and practitioners we must ensure that individuals are protected and treated with equality regardless of the nature and controllability of their stigmatizing characteristics. This duty is clearly laid out in the American Psychological Association’s Ethics Code and should be enforced by all I–O psychologists. Fourth, as evident by the unequal proportion of published research on understudied populations in other journals compared

to top I–O journals, it is possible that reviewers and editors have been reluctant to publish articles focusing on marginalized targets or that researchers simply are not doing this work. Reviewers' and editors' reluctance coupled with academic researchers' practical need to publish may be stifling quality research on this important area. Fifth and finally, workplace discrimination is sometimes governed by law and sometimes not depending upon the target of discrimination and the context of the discrimination. Studying some of the sources and consequences of discrimination in a way that is relevant to policy makers, rule enforcers, and attorneys might require researchers to walk on unsteady ground. They may need to learn more about the law or corroborate with others who do.

In this article, we have highlighted several key marginalized groups that are understudied and hope that researchers will devote more attention to these and other marginalized groups. We propose that broadening the tent of discrimination research is simply good for all stigmatized groups. Conducting broad research will increase the knowledge basis and identify the plights that individuals and groups face, it will allow for empirical comparisons between different marginalized groups, and it will lead to research examining successful coping and amelioration strategies. In addition, casting a wider net in the examination of discrimination targets also will allow researchers to examine the influence of multiple stigmatized characteristics (e.g., the impact of weight discrimination on older Hispanic workers).

Although we promote researchers to cast a wide net in the study of marginalized targets, we also believe that some resistance will propose that focusing efforts on so many characteristics is fruitless because it diminishes the impact of protecting marginalized groups by making it easier to classify almost everyone into some type of marginalized group. For instance, being more inclusive in the study of marginalized groups may undermine individuals who have some characteristics that are

marginalized and other characteristics that are not (e.g., Black, nondisabled heterosexual male). Furthermore, casting an overly wide net in the study of discrimination may potentially make it easier for individuals to make discrimination claims based on any number of characteristics and as a result harm social interactions in the workplaces by creating fear among employees. We believe that, taken out of proportion, the study of discrimination can become muddled; however, such rationale also may serve as unfounded justification for the I–O psychology community's lack of responsiveness in conducting and publishing quality research that informs and benefits understudied marginalized groups. Despite the potential barriers to focusing on understudied marginalized groups, we urge researchers, practitioners, attorneys, and policy makers to swing for the fence and study many of these groups.

The research literature in applied psychology that focuses on discrimination, bias, and prejudice can have a significant practical impact on the world of work. Consumers of the results of these studies can use the findings to alter the work environment and assist the EEOC to meet its mandate of removing discrimination from the workplace. Each in their own way, academics, policy makers, policy enforcers, and attorneys are in a position to use the findings from this literature to modify the work environment either directly through action in the workplace or indirectly through action that regulates and controls the context of work. Academics rely on existing studies and plan new studies to gain understanding about the underlying causes and consequences of discrimination so that they can translate the results of their science in a way that allows front-line professionals to make use of the findings. Although this research may be provocative, journal editors should not shy away from daring to publish it if the research is of sound quality. Policy makers and enforcers in the public sector (e.g., state legislators, judges, and administrators in EEOCs) and in the private sector (e.g., CEOs, managers, and human resource workers)

can and should rely on the results in the scientific literature to make rules that prevent discrimination, deter it, and proclaim a moral code that emphasizes the community's lack of tolerance for unfair treatment of individuals based upon race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or any characteristic. Finally, attorneys for both the plaintiff and the defense can use the results of social science research to educate their clients about discrimination and protect them against the costly outcomes of discrimination in terms of both psychological harms and financial damages.

It has been almost 50 years since the CRA passed, and we firmly believe that I–O psychologists have missed a great opportunity. Instead of being on the front line serving as scientists and allies for those who are marginalized and treated poorly, we have let these individuals take a backseat while we have gone fishing. Where have SIOP members been in studying protected groups and groups that need protection? It is really time to act. We must start looking at underresearched protected groups, but we must also look at groups that do not have legal protection to understand limitations they have in accessing the workplace and optimally thriving in it. We urge the I–O psychology community, editors included, and those who benefit from our research, to get on board, take action, and attend to these marginalized groups so that we can lead and not follow in the pursuit of guaranteeing workplace rights for all.

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