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Affirmative Action in Higher Education: An Analysis of Practices and Policies

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Abstract

This study analyzed the variations of policies and practices of university personnel in their use of affirmative action programs for African American students. In this study, the policy topic is affirmative action and the practices used in admissions, financial aid, and special support services for African-American students. Surveys were mailed to 231 subjects representing thirty-two Missouri colleges and universities. Most of the survey respondents were male, white, and nearly two-thirds were above the age of forty. Ethnic minorities were underrepresented among the professionals. Seventy-two percent of respondents were white, 23% were African American, and 5% were Hispanic. The results of this study suggest a positive picture of student affirmative action practices and policies used by Missouri personnel. Differences among professionals

were at a minimum. The overall mean score for support in diversifying Missouri institutions was fairly high, and this may reflect diversity initiatives taken by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education in the late 1980s, and early 1990s. Data suggested that Missouri personnel are aware of the judicial scrutiny by the courts in administering student affirmative action. Most Missouri institutions use a single process for assessing all applicants for admission, without reliance on a quota system. The recent Hopwood decision showed little impact on the decisions regarding professionals' use of student affirmative action at Missouri institutions. Although public attitudes toward student affirmative action may play a role in establishing policies and practices, Missouri personnel are very similar in their perceptions regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, and institutional office or position.

Introduction

The purpose of analyzing race-based affirmative action practices used by higher education personnel was based on concurrent court rulings and the political climate. California, Washington state, and Florida ceased the use of affirmative action practices in higher education. In the court decision, *Hopwood v. State of Texas*, (1996), the court rendered their decision that ended race-based affirmative action practices historically used by colleges and universities in the Fifth District. Some speculate that these actions precipitated reactions by institutions of higher education in their approach to practices and policies concerning affirmative action.

According to Cross and Slater (1997), analyzing the use of affirmative action practices and policies regarding minority access to higher education is important for the future of our country. Both authors' calculations suggested that if standardized tests become the single norm in admission decisions, African-American enrollment at some institutions will drop by at least one half and in some cases as much as 80 percent.

Former higher education administrators Bok and Bowen (1998), concluded in their longitudinal study that race-neutral standards would produce troubling results in the proportion of African American students in higher education. Statistics at the University of Texas at Austin, School of Law indicated a decrease in the number of applications from African-American students following the Fifth Circuit Court's decision in Hopwood (Henry, 1998, Cross & Slater, 1997, Chenoweth, 1997).

In the University of California System following the passage of Proposition 209 (the California Civil Rights Initiative), African-American applications and admission declined significantly (Jones, 1998). In the spring of 1998, the U. S. House of Representatives voted 249 to 171 to reject an amendment, which if passed could have barred federal support for public colleges and universities that granted preferential treatment in admissions based on an applicant's race, gender and ethnicity (Burd, 1998). Consequently, universities are evaluating their affirmative action policies and practices used in student admission and retention. For these institutions, lawsuits and political ramifications forced some to defend and to abandon the use of race in their policies (Kurlaender & Orfield, 1999). Are colleges and universities altering their practices and policies in using race as a criterion in admissions, financial aid, and special support

services? Could this disparity widen if colleges and universities altered their practices and policies in the use of affirmative action?

Various public opinion surveys consistently found that most Americans valued and embraced diversity whether in the workplace, or university setting. Americans are more inclined to modify than dissolve existing race-based policies (Bolden, Goldberg, & Parker, 1999). Universities inevitably understood that having a diverse student body was essential for student growth. This cultural and ethnic educational environment has naturally effected the outcomes of learners in a university setting. In regards to race conscience efforts, decision makers in higher education are left pondering over decisions on what ways to promote inclusion and diversity.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to analyze the variations of policies and practices of selected Missouri college and university personnel in their use of affirmative action programs for African American students. In this study, the policy topic is affirmative action and the practices used in admission, financial aid, and special support services for African-American students. At the time of this study the courts have not mandated Missouri institutions to alter their admissions and financial aid policies in affirmative action procedures.

This study analyzed the present use of affirmative action policies and practices being administered for student admission, financial aid, and special support services by selected colleges and university personnel in Missouri. Affirmative action policies are currently being challenged at a vast number of colleges and universities across the nation. Institutions of higher education are concerned with the strict scrutiny of the courts in reference to practiced affirmative action policies (Kurlaender & Orfield, 1999).

Over the past few years, numerous books, articles and scholarly journals addressed the issue of affirmative action, mainly concerning college admissions and financial aid. Nearly all these reports dealt with the legal, ethical, and political issues surrounding affirmative action and preferential admissions for students of color (Bolden, Goldberg, & Parker, 1999). Very few of the studies attempted to forecast how the attacks on affirmative action influenced the policies and practices of those in academia (Bowen & Bok, 1998).

In essence, the present study was significant given the fact that institutions should consider the condition for African Americans students in higher education if we began to eliminate institutional affirmative action policies and procedures. In the late 1980s, the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) developed strategies to increase minority recruitment and retention in Missouri institutions of higher education. Their report entitled "Challenges and Opportunities: Minorities in Higher Education" urged Missouri institutions to develop policies and practices to address the issue of low minority participation (Missouri CBHE Review, 1988). In general, African American students are more likely than white students to come from educational backgrounds that will not adequately prepare them for the challenges of post secondary education (Bowen & Bok, 1998). The objective of the (CBHE) report was to have an impact on the goal of diversifying Missouri society, particularly in the middle and upper reaches of the socioeconomic status system.

The CBHE report, and other prominent educational publications, need to analyze affirmative action policies within institutions of higher education. Have institutions developed policies and practices to address the issue of minority, and in particular, African American student participation? If so, to what degree are personnel using affirmative action practices? Do significant differences exist regarding affirmative action practices used by higher education personnel? These were questions the researcher asked investigated throughout this study.

Hypotheses

In this study, null hypotheses were developed based on the theoretical support that existed in the literature:

- Hypothesis one: There are no significant differences regarding participants perception toward affirmative action practices among Missouri personnel based upon their institutional affiliation (public or private).
- Hypothesis two: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants grouped by ethnicity.
- Hypothesis three: There are no significant differences regarding perceptions toward affirmative action practices between participants grouped by gender.
- Hypothesis four: There are no significant differences regarding participants perceptions toward affirmative action practices between Missouri institutions based on admission classification.
- Hypothesis five: There are no significant differences regarding participants perceptions toward affirmative action practices between Missouri institutions based on size of institution.
- Hypothesis six: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants based on number of years in position at institution.
- Hypothesis seven: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants based upon position within the institution.
- Hypothesis eight: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices currently used by Missouri personnel when institutions are grouped according to the percentage of African-American student enrollment.

Method

This study followed a quantitative descriptive approach to investigate the level of variability in affirmative action practices by Missouri institutions. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), quantitative descriptive studies are conducted to acquire knowledge about preferences, practices, concerns, or interests of a specific group. A quantitative descriptive survey was used to collect data on both practices and policies used by the selected population. Data were coded and analyzed to yield the variance that existed among Missouri college and university personnel in their practices of student affirmative action. Following the collection of data the major statistical analysis used was an analysis of variance. The mean scores for the subjects were analyzed to measure the degree of difference that existed among group characteristics.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Number	%
Sex		
Male	72	65
Female	48	45
Age		
25 - 30	7	5.9
30 - 35	21	17.7
40 - 45	14	11.8
45 - 50	9	7.6
50+	46	38.9
Ethnicity/Race		
Caucasian	85	72.1
African American	27	
Hispanic	6	5.1
Department		
CEO	35	28.9
Student Support	34	28.0
Admissions	29	23.9
Financial Aid	23	19.1
Position		
Director/Assistant Director	78	64.5
President/Chancellor	13	10.7
Vice President/Vice Provost		24.8
Number of Years in Position		
Less than Five	43	35.5
Five to Ten	39	32.2
Ten or more	39	32.2

Demographic information regarding the institutional characteristics are presented in Table 2. Sixty-five, or 54% of respondents listed their institution as public, with 46%

responding as representing private institutions. Over half, 56% responded as being moderately selective institutions, 25% as selective, and 19% as having open admission status. As for the institutional size, 47% responded as having under 5,000 students, 26% represented institutions between 5,000 to 10,000 students, and 25% of respondents represented a student body of over 10,000. Forty-seven percent stated having an African-American student population under 5%, thirty-eight percent responded as having between 5% to 10%, ten percent answered with having between 10% to 15%, and under eight percent responded having an African-American student body above 15%. Specific frequencies for characteristics of the institutions are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Characteristics of the Institutions

Variable	Number	Percentage
<i>Institution</i>		
Public	65	53.7
Private	56	46.3
<i>Admission Status</i>		
Open	23	19.5
Moderate Selective	66	55.9
Selective	29	24.5
<i>Size of Institution</i>		
< 5,000	56	48.3
5,000 to 10,000	29	25.0
> 10,000	31	26.7
<i>Percent of African American Students</i>		
< 5	53	44.5
5 - 10	45	37.8
10 - 15	12	10.1
> 15	9	7.6

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The percentages are based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

The dependent variables in this study were the perceived levels of affirmative action policies and practices used by the subjects in six areas of practices and policies. This was obtained from subject's responses to the survey questions. Based on the construction

of the survey instruments scale, a high mean ($3.0 >$) indicated a greater perceived level of use in applying student affirmative action practices and policies. A low mean (< 3.0) represents a perceived lower level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies. The mean for all questions combined, total $M = 3.21$. The sample's responses based on individual questions are represented in Table 3.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Individual Questions

Variable	Mean	SD	Var.
Q1	4.39	.93	.868
Q2	3.47	1.43	2.058
Q3	3.68	1.28	1.628
Q4	2.69	1.41	1.978
Q5	2.94	1.38	1.917
Q6	2.52	1.56	2.437
Q7	2.87	1.52	2.322
Q8	3.15	1.43	2.056
Q9	3.68	1.34	1.804
Q10	2.94	1.85	3.412
Q11	3.37	1.33	1.764
Q12	3.60	1.17	1.378
Q13	3.68	1.40	1.969
Q14	2.64	1.57	2.471
Q15	2.13	1.31	1.714
Q16	2.70	1.44	2.069
Q17	3.03	1.42	2.008
Q18	3.16	1.32	1.755
Q19	3.77	1.42	2.006
Q20	3.89	1.36	1.841
Q21	4.47	1.02	1.038
Q22	2.26	1.22	1.488

The survey questions were grouped into six areas of student affirmative action practices and policies. The six areas included a strict scrutiny analysis, race-targeted financial aid analysis, race-neutral alternatives, special support services, admission program analysis, and affirmative action program tailoring. This information was obtained from subject's

responses to survey questions listed in Table 3. The groupings according to question number are as follows: strict scrutiny analysis - Q1, Q2, and Q3; race-targeted financial aid - Q4, Q5, Q6; race-neutral alternatives - Q7, Q8, Q9; special support services - Q10, Q11, Q12; admission program analysis - Q13, Q14, Q15; and affirmative action program tailoring - Q16 thru Q22. The perceived levels of student affirmative action practices and policies are listed respectively in Table 4.

Table 4
Descriptives from the Six Survey Areas

Variable Grouping	Mean	SD	N
<i>Strict Scrutiny Analysis</i>			
Q1	4.39	.93	119
Q2	3.47	1.43	115
Q3	3.68	1.28	116
Total	3.21	.7266	120
<i>Race Targeted Financial Aid Analysis</i>			
Q4	2.69	1.41	111
Q5	2.94	1.38	114
Q6	2.52	1.56	120
Total	2.68	1.174	120
<i>Race Neutral Alternatives Analysis</i>			
Q7	2.87	1.52	116
Q8	3.15	1.43	117
Q9	3.68	1.34	117
Total	3.26	.9904	11
<i>Special Support Services Analysis</i>			
Q10	2.94	1.85	119
Q11	3.37	1.33	120
Q12	3.60	1.17	119
Total	3.31	1.18	120
<i>Admissions Program Tailoring Analysis</i>			

Q13	3.68	1.40	120
Q14	2.64	1.57	118
Q15	2.13	1.31	116
Total	2.86	1.17	120
<i>Affirmative Action Program</i>			
<i>Tailoring Analysis</i>			
Q16	2.70	1.44	113
Q17	3.03	1.42	116
Q18	3.16	1.32	111
Q19	3.77	1.42	115
Q20	3.89	1.36	117
Q21	4.47	1.02	118
Q22	2.26	1.22	114
Total	3.36	.8240	120
Statistics for Scale			
	N	Mean	SD
	121	3.21	.528
			Var.
			.7266

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The percentages are based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Responses to Survey as Related to Subject Groupings

Table 5 presents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses and grouped according to gender. The mean difference between the two groups is minimal.

Table 5
Descriptives based on Gender

Gender	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cases
Male	3.21	.7115	72
Female	3.23	.7372	48

Table 6 presents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses and grouped according to age.

Table 6

Descriptives based on Age

Age	Mean	Std. Dev	Cases
25 - 30	3.51	.9292	7
30 - 35	3.19	.6845	21
35 - 40	3.19	.5439	14
40 - 45	3.37	.5074	21
45 - 50	3.30	.3884	9
> 50	3.02	.8541	46

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The percentages are based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

The largest difference of means between groups based on age were between the youngest professional age group (25 - 30), and the above 50 age grouping for professionals. Table 7 represents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses, and subsequently grouped according to ethnicity/race.

Table 7
Descriptives based on Ethnicity/Race

Ethnicity/Race	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
Caucasian	85	3.14	.6942
African American	27	3.28	.7660
Hispanic	6	3.28	.7019

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The percentages are based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Professionals grouped according to their ethnicity showed only a minimal mean variance. The mean average between African American and Hispanic professionals were identical. Furthermore, the mean average between the previously observed groups when compared to white professionals was minimal. Table 8 presents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses grouped based on their respective department within the institution.

Table 8
Descriptives based on Department

Department	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
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CEO	35	3.17	.7550
Student Support	34	3.08	.8230
Admissions	29	3.21	.5885
Financial Aid	23	3.46	.6703

Note: CEO represents those professionals working in central administration.

Institutional Financial Aid Professionals scored the highest mean of the four group represented. Overall there was only a modest variance between group mean scores based on the professionals institutional department. Table 9 presents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses and grouped according to their respective position within the institution.

Table 9
Descriptives based on Position

Position	N	Mean	SD
President/Provost	13	2.93	.7888
Vice President/Vice Provost	30	3.20	.8138
Director/Assistant Director	78	3.21	.6788

The difference in mean scores of the three groups was relatively small. Two of the groups represented were separated by a score of .01. Presidents and Provost had the lowest group mean ($M = 2.93$). Overall there was only a small variance between the three groups.

Table 10 presents the mean and standard deviation of individual's responses and grouped based on the number of years in current position.

Table 10
Descriptives based on Number of Years in Current Position

No. of Years	N	Mean	SD
< than 5	43	3.39	.6429
Five to Ten	39	3.28	.6152
Ten >	39	2.94	.8460

The professionals were closely distributed when grouped according to their number of years at current position. Professionals with more than ten years in current position recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 2.94$). Consequently, professionals with the least number of years in current position recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.39$).

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the analysis. Following the collection of data the major statistical analysis used was an analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA). Additionally, the researcher in this study analyzed selected hypothesis using a t-test. Hypothesis 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 were tested using the One-Way ANOVA. The reason for this was to test multiple groups (variables) for comparison. Hypothesis 1 and 3 were tested using the t-test. Hypothesis 1 and 3 compared two distinct groups. The mean scores for the selected samples were compared to measure the degree of variance between groups. The .05 level of significance was used for all statistical analysis. This section is organized into eight categories based on the hypotheses tested in this study.

Analysis Between Professionals within Public and Private Missouri Institutions

There was a significant difference between the type of institution, public or private at the .05 level, $t(119) = 4.26, p < .001$. Based on the respondents perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies respondents representing private institutions perceived level of student affirmative action was less ($M = 2.92, SD = .678$) than respondents representing public institutions ($M = 3.45, SD = .681$). (See Table 11)

Applying the t-test for independent samples resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis for professionals grouped according to institution (public or private). This finding suggested that the independent variable had an effect on the dependent variable. Institutional personnel do differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institution being public or private.

Table 11
t-test for Independent Samples

Equal variances assumed	df	t	p
	119	4.262	< .001

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

To follow up on the differences between the groups, an analysis of variance between the six areas of student affirmative action practices and type of institution was performed. The significant differences between groups fell into three categories, special support services, admission program analysis, and affirmative action program tailoring. (See Table 12).

Analysis revealed that the significant differences occurred between groups in the following areas; special support services, admission program analysis, and affirmative action program tailoring. This difference was significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 12
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
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Strict Scrutiny	1	118	3.32	.071
Race Targeted Financial Aid	1	118	2.81	.096
Race Neutral	1	117	.690	.408
Special Support Services	1	118	8.63	.004
Admissions Program	1	118	9.19	.003
Narrow Tailoring	1	118	20.29	<.001

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by Ethnicity

The three groups analyzed consisted of Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on ethnicity. There was no significant difference between the subjects grouped according to ethnicity at the .05 level, $F(2, 115) = .455, p = .05$. (See Table 13)

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in accepting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to ethnicity. This finding suggested that institutional personnel grouped according to ethnicity do not differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies.

Table 13
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
Ethnicity	2	115	.455	.636

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Analysis Between Participants Based on Gender

To determine if a significant difference existed between professionals grouped according to gender, a t-test was conducted. As illustrated in Table 14, there was no significant difference between the groups based on gender at the .05 level, $t(116) = -.054, p = .957$. Based on the respondents perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies, professionals grouped according to gender perceived level of student affirmative action was not significant. For male professionals ($M = 3.2319, SD = .7272$), and for female professionals ($M = 3.239, SD = .7372$).

Applying the t-test for independent samples resulted in accepting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to gender. This finding suggested that institutional personnel grouped according to gender do not differ significantly in their perceived level in the use of student affirmative action practices and policies.

Table 14

t-test for Independent Samples

Variable	t	df	p
Gender	-.054	116	.957

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by Institutional Admission Criteria

The three groups analyzed represented institutions having open admission status, being moderately selective, and selective in criteria for admission. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on admission status. There was no significant difference between the subjects grouped according to institutional admissions requirements at the .05 level, $F(2, 115) = 2.42, p = .093$. (See Table 15)

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in accepting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to the admission status of their institution. This finding suggested that institutional personnel do not differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institutional admission status.

Table 15
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
Admission Status	2	115	2.42	.093

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by Size of Institution

The three groups analyzed represented institutions having a student body enrollment of under 5,000, between 5,000 to 10,000, and above 10,000. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the perceived level of use of student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institutional student body enrollment. There was a significant difference between the professionals grouped according to institutional size at the .05 level, $F(2, 113) = 13.46, p < .001$. (See Table 16)

Table 16
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable		SS	df	MS	<i>p</i>
Institutional Size	Between Groups	11.86	2	5.933	<.001
	Within Groups	49.81	113	.441	
	Total	61.68	115		

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to the size of their respective institution. This finding suggest that institutional personnel do differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institutional size.

Since the computed F value was significant, Tukey's HSD post hoc test was conducted to determine which groups significantly differed in their perceptions toward the use of student affirmative action policies and practices. Results are listed in Table 17.

Table 17
Dependent Variable: Total; Tukey HSD

Variable (I) Size	Variable (J) Size	Mean Diff. (I) - (J)	Std Error	<i>p</i>
< 5,000	5,000 - 10,000	.4081	.1519	<.022
	10,000+	.7575	.1486	<.001
5,000 to 10,000	< 5,000	.4081	.1519	<.022
	10,000+	.3494	.1715	.108
10,000+	< 5,000	.7575	.1486	.001
	5,000 to 10,000	.3494	.1715	<.108

The mean difference is significant $p < .05$ level.

Post hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test was computed at the .05 level. Analysis revealed that the less than 5,000 institutional group differed significantly ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .6377$) from the other two groups. The 5,000 to 10,000 group ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .7986$), and the 10,000+ group ($M = 3.64$, $SD = .5653$), revealed no significant difference at the .05 level. Institutional size does have an effect on personnel's perception of levels in the use of student affirmative action practices and policies.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by the Number of Years in Position

The three groups analyzed represented professionals years of service in current position at their respective institutions. The professionals were grouped accordingly; less than five years of service, five to ten years of service, and, above ten years of service. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on

professional years in position. There was a significant difference between the professionals grouped according to years in position at the .05 level, $F(2, 118) = 4.42$, $p = .014$. (See Table 18)

Table 18
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable		SS	df	MS	F
Years in Position	Between Groups	4.417	2	2.209	.014
	Within Groups	58.939	118	.499	
	Total	61.68	120	120	

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to the number of years in position. This finding suggested that institutional personnel do differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institutional size.

Since the computed F value was significant, Tukey's HSD post hoc test was conducted to determine which groups significantly differed in their perceptions toward the use of student affirmative action policies and practices. Results are listed in Table 19.

Table 19
Dependent Variable: Total; Tukey HSD

Variable (I) Size	Variable (J) Size	Mean Diff. (I) - (J)	Std Error	<i>p</i>
< five	five to ten	.114	.1563	.756
	> ten	.4499	.1563	<.013
five to ten	< five	-.1114	.1563	.756
	ten>	.3385	.1600	.091

The mean difference is significant $p < .05$ level.

Post hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test was computed at the .05 level. Analysis revealed that professional with less than five years differed significantly ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .6429$) from the professionals with more than ten years in their current position ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .8460$). The professionals with five to ten years ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .2.94$), and the professionals with more than ten years in their current position ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .8460$), revealed no significant difference at the .05 level. Furthermore, the professionals with less than five years revealed no significant difference when compared to the professionals with five to ten years of experience in their respective positions. The number of years in position does have an effect on personnel's perception of levels in the use of student affirmative action practices and policies.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by Institutional Position

The three groups analyzed represented institutional presidents/chancellors, vice presidents/associate chancellors, and departmental directors. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on institutional position. There was no significant difference between the subjects grouped according to institutional position at the .05 level, $F(2, 118) = 1.14, p = .323$. (See Table 20)

Table 20
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
Position	2	118	1.141	.323

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in accepting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to their position within the institution. This finding suggested that institutional personnel do not differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the institutional admission status.

The researcher for this study also analyzed professionals perceived levels of the use in student affirmative action based on their respective departments. The four groups analyzed represented the department of admissions, financial aid, student support services, and central administration. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on professionals grouped by department. There was no significant difference between the subjects grouped according to institutional position at the .05 level, $F(3, 117) = 1.29, p = .278$. (See Table 21)

Table 21
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
Department	3	117	1.298	.278

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in accepting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to their position within the institution. This finding suggested that institutional personnel do not differ significantly in their perceived level

of use in student affirmative action practices and policies grouped according to institutional department.

Analysis Between Professionals Grouped by Institutional Percent of African American Students

The four groups analyzed represented institutions having an African American student body enrollment of less than 5 percent, within 5 percent to 10 percent, between 10 percent and 15 percent, and above 15 percent. After determining that the data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, a One-way ANOVA was calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the perceived level of use of student affirmative action practices and policies based on the percent of African American students within the institution.

There was a significant difference between the professionals grouped according to institutional percent of African American students at the .05 level, $F(3, 115) = 13.103, p < .001$. (See Table 22)

Table 22
ANOVA Summary Table

Variable	df _{bg}	df _{wg}	F	p
% of African American Students	13.103	118	10.02	.001

Note: Due to missing data the Ns for some responses do not sum to 121. The df is based on the

number of responses provided; in some cases this was less than 121.

Applying the analysis of variance resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis for participants grouped according to the percent of African American students within the institution. This finding suggested that institutional personnel do differ significantly in their perceived level of use in student affirmative action practices and policies based on the percent of African American students.

Since the computed F value was significant, Tukey's HSD post hoc test was conducted to determine which groups significantly differed in their perceptions toward the use of student affirmative action policies and practices. Results are listed in Table 23.

Table 23
Dependent Variable: Total; Tukey HSD

Variable I % of African American Students	Variable J % of African American Students	Mean Diff. (I) - (J)	Std Error	p
below 5 %	5 - 10 %	-.4341	.1338	<.008
	10 - 15 %	-.5432	.2110	.054

	15 % above	.6968	.2379	<.021
5 - 10 %	below 5 %	.4341	.1338	<.008
	10 - 15 %	-.1090	.2144	.957
	15 % above	1.130	.2410	<.001
10 - 15 %	below 5 %	.5432	.2110	.054
	5 - 10 %	.1090	.2144	.957
	15 % above	1.240	.2910	<.001
15 % above	below 5 %	-.6968	.2379	<.021
	5 - 10 %	-1.130	.2410	<.001
	10 - 15 %	-1.240	.2910	<.001

Post hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test was computed at the .05 level. Analysis revealed that professional with an African American student population of above 15 percent differed significantly ($M = 2.35$, $SD = .5778$) from the professionals representing the additional three groups. Furthermore, the professionals with an African American student population less than 5 percent ($M = 3.04$, $SD = .6876$) showed a significant difference when compared to the professionals with a 5 to 10 percent ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .6870$) African American student population in their respective institutions.

Professionals with an African American student population between 10 - 15 percent ($M = 3.58$, $SD = .4334$), and professionals representing groups with less than 5 percent ($M = 3.04$, $SD = .6876$), and between 5 - 10 percent ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .6870$) indicated no significant difference at the .05 level. In some cases the percent of African American enrollment at an institution does have an effect on personnel's perception of levels in the use of student affirmative action practices and policies.

Of the eight null hypotheses analyzed in this study, the researcher accepted the null for hypotheses two, three, four, and seven. These hypotheses accepted are as follows:

- Hypothesis two: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants grouped by ethnicity. The analysis of the data revealed no significant differences existed between participants based on their ethnicity.
- Hypothesis three: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants grouped by gender. The analysis of the data revealed no significant differences existed between participants based on their gender.
- Hypothesis four: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between Missouri institutions based on admission classification. The analysis of the data revealed no significant differences existed between Missouri institutions based on admission classification.

The four hypotheses rejected by the researcher included hypothesis one, five, six, and eight. These hypotheses rejected by the researcher are as follows:

- Hypothesis one: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward

affirmative action practices among Missouri personnel based upon the institution being public or private. The analysis of the data revealed that a significant difference existed among Missouri personnel based on their institution being public or private.

- Hypothesis five: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between Missouri institutions based on size of institution. The analysis of the data revealed that a significant difference existed among Missouri institutions based on their student population (i.e., size of institution).
- Hypothesis six: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices between participants based on number of years in position at institution. The analysis of the data revealed that a significant difference existed among Missouri personnel based on their number of years in current position within their respective institution.
- Hypothesis eight: There are no significant differences regarding perception toward affirmative action practices currently used by Missouri personnel when institutions are grouped according to the percentage of African American student enrollment. The analysis of the data revealed that a significant difference existed among Missouri personnel based on their percentage of African American students.

Conclusions

Analysis of the data suggested that Missouri personnel are aware of the judicial scrutiny by the courts in the administering of student affirmative action. However, according to responses personnel in Missouri institutions are not consistent in critiquing their student affirmative action practices and policies. Overall, student affirmative action program objectives serve two purposes: (a) remedy the present effects of past discrimination, and (b) to advance campus diversity.

Concerning financial aid, Missouri institutions occasionally used race/ethnicity awards to attract students of color to their respective institutions. Provided race/ethnicity awards are used, the application of statistical data to support race/ethnicity awards are used occasionally by Missouri institutions. This finding contradicts with the fact that Missouri personnel are mindful of the judicial scrutiny by the courts in the administering of student affirmative action. Race neutral alternatives, such as socioeconomic statuses are currently being administered in place of race/ethnicity financial awards at Missouri institutions.

The issue of student diversity currently is a concern for Missouri institutions. Designed programs for retention, separate departments such as Minority Affairs Offices, and the identification of faculty mentors for African American students are supported by Missouri institutions. Overall, Missouri institutions actively target and recruit prospective African American students for the specific purpose of campus diversity. The data revealed little indication that Missouri institutions are currently administering special allotments for admission. Missouri institutions did not suggest that separate pools, subcommittees, and separate cutoff scores were a part of current practice and policy.

Overall, Missouri institutions have taken steps to reduce the impact of currently used affirmative action practices on students not eligible for participation. An overwhelming majority of Missouri institutions use a single process for assessing all applicants for admission, without the reliance of a quota system. The recent Hopwood decision revealed limited impact on the decisions regarding professionals use of student affirmative action at Missouri institutions.

There are several authors and researchers within the context of higher education addressing questions regarding perceptions toward student affirmative action (Bowen & Bok, 1998). The United States Department of Education has provided guidelines for those in higher education to assist in developing permissible student affirmative action policies. However, it appears that most, if not all, of these policies are not from the perspective of professionals in the field.

The results of this study suggest a positive picture of student affirmative action practices and policies used by Missouri personnel. The overall mean score for support in diversifying Missouri institutions was relatively high. Perceived differences among groups were at a minimum. In analyzing the perceived difference between public and private Missouri institutions revealed a higher overall mean score for public institutions. This was expected due to the fact public institutions must comply with federal guidelines for affirmative action as set by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), and the statement released by U. S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley in response to the passage of Proposition 209 (United States Department of Education press release, March 1997). Furthermore, a higher mean level for public institutions may reflect diversity initiatives taken by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education in the late 1980s, and early 1990s.

Although the majority of all survey respondents were male (65%), and Caucasian (72%), this group appeared to have no perceived difference in their level of use in student affirmative action. Overall, their responses were similar to those perceived levels by African American and Hispanic professionals. Clearly, their perceptions of student affirmative practices and policies were positive. Similarly the groups compared closely with gender used as a variable in this study. Women (35%) respondents displayed no difference in their analyzed perceived levels of student affirmative action when compared with male professionals.

There are three levels of criteria for universities in selecting their student body based on admission requirements. According to Cross and Slater (1997) the authors' assessments suggested that if standardized tests become the single norm in admission decisions, African-American enrollment at some institutions will drop dramatically. Most of the respondents represented moderately selective institutions (56%), with professionals representing open admission 20 percent, and selective as 24 percent. Overall, their responses were similar toward perceived levels of student affirmative action. Interesting the data revealed selective institutions as having a slightly higher level in the use of student affirmative action. Although the researcher did not acquire individual institutional admission requirements, this finding suggested that admission criterion does not affect professionals perceptions toward policies and practices in student affirmative action.

Levels of perceptions in student affirmative action practices and policies were higher in

institutions with an enrollment of more than 10,000 students. Concerning student support services, and strict scrutiny analysis, institutions with more than 10,000 students had noticeable higher levels of perceived use in student affirmative action. The researcher can only offer two assumptions for this attained higher level. In the area of strict scrutiny, the majority of lawsuits against student affirmative action practices have been directed toward large state institutions (*Regents of Univ. of Cal. V. Bakke*, 1978; *Podberesky v. Kirwan*, 1994; *Texas v. Hopwood*, 1996). Secondly, there may be greater state allocations (i.e., funding) available for these institutions toward recruitment, and retention of African American and other minority groups.

Although most of the respondents had less than five years of experience in their current position (35%), the groups were closely distributed. This group also displayed a higher level of perceived use in student affirmative action practices and policies. Clearly, the less number of years in position appeared to have an impact on the perceptions of this group. This was an interesting and puzzling finding since the two areas of significant difference represented the financial aid analysis, and race neutral alternatives. The researcher expected this variable to have little difference between the groups. This relationship may have been attributed more toward a greater responsibility of professionals following their institutional practices based on position assurance. Professionals with more seniority may feel a greater sense of security within the institution due to longevity or tenure. This was one variable the researcher did not account for in this study. However, seniority and tenure could have an impact on perceptions toward institutional practices and policies. This statement would account for the differences in these two areas of practices and policies for professionals with less than five years in their current position.

For professionals position within their institution, the data revealed no significant difference between groups. Directors and Assistant Directors displayed a slightly higher group level of perceptions toward student affirmative action practices and policies. This higher level corresponds with this group of professionals since they are more actively involved in the conduction of student affirmative action policies and practices.

Accordingly, when professionals were analyzed based on their department within the institution, the data revealed no difference between groups. Understandably, since other variables analyzed were similar for perceived levels, analysis presented great consistency among the four departments represented by Central Administration, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Support Services. Overall, the groups exhibited a perceived level favorable toward student affirmative action.

The final variable analyzed in this study investigated perceived levels toward student affirmative action based on the percentage of African American students. Post hoc analysis revealed that professionals with an African American student population of above 15 percent differed significantly from the professionals in the other three groups. This difference may be attributed to the fact that institutional personnel with less than 15 percent are more aware of their need to increase campus diversity. Therefore, these groups' levels of perceptions were greater than those exhibiting a higher percentage of African American students on campus. This would explain the higher mean level for groups with less than 15 percent African American student representation. The second explanation is that those institutions with less than 15 percent represent areas with minimal community diversity. Therefore, the need for student affirmative action policies and practices becomes more urgent. In some cases, the percent of African American

enrollment at an institution does have an effect on personnel's perception of levels of use of student affirmative action practices and policies.

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