

Appendix A: Literature Summary and Selected Past Surveys and Studies

Literature Summary

The goal of this research project is to conduct a landscape study of workers' perceptions and opinions of three specific subtopics: (1) the problem of racial and ethnic discrimination in the workplace; (2) the role that diversity, equity, and inclusion play in the workplace; and (3) what solutions workers perceive are impactful/effective to address discrimination, diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve the economic mobility of workers of color, especially women and low-wage workers.

Measuring racial and ethnic discrimination, both inside and outside of the workplace, using survey research is a multi-faceted, prodigious effort that has been studied by scholars for decades.¹ This project's survey asks workers to reflect on their experiences with discrimination relating to unconscious bias or lack of awareness of discriminatory behaviors, frequency of experiencing discrimination, and microaggressions, which are all inter-related.² These facets of racial and ethnic discrimination are important as [Deitch et al. \(2003\)](#) write that "even people who are strongly motivated not to be racist are subject to automatic cognitive activation of stereotypes that can unconsciously influence behavior (e.g., Chen & Bargh, 1997; Devine, 1989; Dovidio et al., 1997)." The authors discuss the role that "everyday discrimination" plays in the workplace, and its relationship to a lack of awareness on the part of the actor (albeit the differences between experiencing discrimination inflicted by a supervisor or by a colleague), especially the implications for [why policies and one-time trainings may do little to help. Microaggressions are](#) "everyday, subtle, intentional – and oftentimes unintentional – interactions or behaviors" that have serious implications for workers' productivity and mobility, inflicting an ["emotional labor"](#) (and for Black workers specifically) that organizations must address. The experience of witnessing, or observing, perceived discrimination, compared to experienced discrimination is an important component of measuring the existence of discrimination – especially at work. [There are distinct and detrimental outcomes associated with witnessed discrimination](#) related to coping behaviors, reporting, and employee outcomes. Whether workers can disentangle the source of discrimination: [formal \(i.e., within the organization\) and informal \(by and between co-workers, perceptions\), intentional or unintentional](#) discrimination, the complexity of measuring inclusion (for example, [personal experience and enterprise perception](#)) has implications for what organizations can do to address these situations.³

There are [clear inputs and associated outputs](#) that distinguish the various terms of [interest](#) related to reducing discrimination and improving economic mobility for workers of color: [diversity, equity, inclusion, discrimination, and belonging](#). By ["focusing explicitly on addressing...discrimination,"](#) diversity, inclusion, and equity, actual progress might be made by employers. Even so, inclusion is a [sweeping term](#) that is difficult for workplaces to measure and address, as is the ["diversity climate"](#) of an organization.

1 See <https://gss.norc.umd.edu/Documents/reports/methodological-reports/MR096.pdf>; National Research Council. (2004). *Measuring racial discrimination*. The National Academies Press; Colella, A. J. & King, E. B. (2015). *The Oxford handbook of workplace discrimination*.

2 The term "microaggression" was not used in the survey.

3 Hughes, D., & Dodge, M. A. (1997). African American women in the workplace: Relationships between job conditions, racial bias at work, and perceived job quality. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 25(5), 581–599. <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1024630816168>

Researchers have considered the key methodological question associated with measuring discrimination experiences: how is discrimination different from unfair treatment or mistreatment? What is mistreatment, though lawful, and what is discrimination, which is always unlawful? When is unfair treatment and unfair judgment different, or identical? For example, some authors have used the terminology, “do you feel in any way discriminated against because of your race or ethnic origin,” taking care in [distinguishing these experiences from mistreatment](#) – threats, bullying, or harassment – while at work. The Urban Institute found that the prevalence of the reporting of unfair treatment and unfair judgment due to race or ethnicity was similar, but these terms may “[capture different types of experiences](#),” especially when comparing actions (unfair treatment) to attitudes (unfair judgment). In that study, researchers did not use the word or prompt “discrimination.” All people will perceive and experience discrimination and inclusion differently, thereby affecting their own personal trajectory of the job opportunities they search for, work in, and progress to. The experiences of [Black](#) workers, [Latino](#) workers, and Asian-American workers – and because of language, colorism, and gender – are unique. Disaggregating data to document these experiences that contribute to positive [impacts on job quality and economic mobility](#), especially for low-wage workers, is needed.

There is [much to be done](#) to improve economic mobility for workers of color and low-wage workers that can arise from the reduction of racial and ethnic discrimination in the workplace. Research on the relationship between diversity, equity, and [inclusion initiatives](#) and their effectiveness in reducing discrimination and/or improving economic mobility is widespread, though empirical evidence is [somewhat limited](#). The [role of government](#), particularly in [unionization](#) and enforcement, is necessary to help workers in organizations that are without the capital, knowledge, or motivation to improve. Scholars seem to agree on the [value of some initiatives on the part of the workplace itself](#), that undoubtedly vary based on the organization’s size, [industry](#), and buy-in, and may be effective in [key, select combinations](#) of policies, practices, and programs:

- [Sponsorship](#) opportunities, superlative to [mentorship](#).
- The [role that leaders play](#) in reducing/eliminating bias in the organization.
- The organization’s sociodemographic makeup [reflecting the sociodemographic composition of the organization’s location](#).
- A company or organization [actively speaking out against racial and ethnic discrimination](#).
- Clear policies that address [specific incidents of discrimination](#).

There are examples of organizational planning, commitments, and efforts that describe the goals, processes, and ideal outcomes associated with increasing racial equity and reducing discrimination in the workplace. The [2021 CEO Blueprint](#) is one such “roadmap.” [Demos](#) outlines its internal racial equity organizational “transformation.” Other “how-to’s” are published by [SHRM](#), [LinkedIn](#), and other organizations.

Selected Past Surveys and Studies

Past surveys conducted by the following organizations were reviewed for this project, accessed online/via the [Roper Center](#) at Cornell University, among others:⁴

- American Psychological Association/Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (2006)
- Associated Press/NORC (2019)
- CBS/New York Times (1997)
- Gallup/AARP (2003)
- Hart/CNBC (2020)
- Harvard Business School (2021)
- Just Capital (2021, 2022)
- Kaiser Family Foundation/CNN/SSRS (2020)
- Kaiser Family Foundation/SSRS (2020)
- Pew Hispanic Center (2007)
- Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation (2002)
- Pew Research Center (2017)
- Pew Research Center/Princeton Survey Research Associates (2007)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard University (2013)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard Chan School of Public Health (2017)
- Wisconsin Public Television/Princeton Survey Research Associates (1997)

In addition, other surveys, studies, and projects were reviewed (and are recommended for further reading):

- [America's Workplace Diversity Crisis: Measuring Gaps in Diversity & Inclusion Satisfaction by Employee Race and Ethnicity](#)
- [The Journey to Equity and Inclusion](#)
- [Absenteeism, Productivity Loss, and Turnover: The Cost of Racial Injustice](#)

⁴ These may be in addition to, or duplicative of, the organizations listed in the Executive Summary.

- [SHRM: Workplace Racial Inequity Cost Employers \\$172B Over Past 5 Years](#)
- [Empathy: DE&I's Missing Piece](#)
- [Building from the Bottom Up: Worker Perspectives on Upward Mobility](#)
- [Blacks in STEM Jobs are Especially Concerned About Diversity and Discrimination in the Workplace](#)
- [A Workplace Divided: How Americans View Discrimination and Race on the Job](#)
- [New Survey Reveals that Nearly Half of American Workers are Considering Leaving their Current Place of Employment](#)
- [Work is Satisfying for Many but Views on Discrimination Persist](#)
- [The State of Workplace Discrimination, 2021](#)
- [In Poll, Americans Reject Means but Not Ends of Racial Diversity](#)
- [Mirror/Mirror: AARP Survey of Women's Reflections on Beauty, Age, and Media](#)
- [Survey for Assessing Racial/Ethnic Harassment and Discrimination in the U.S. Military](#)
- [Discrimination and Career Satisfaction: Perceptions from US Forest Service Scientists](#)
- [Understanding the Effects of Discrimination in the Workplace](#)
- [iCIMS Research Finds Mixed Bag when it Comes to Diversity Recruiting Measures](#)
- [Before COVID-19, Many Latinos Worried About their Place in America and had Experienced Discrimination](#)
- [Closing Latino Labor Market Gap Requires Targeted Policies to End Discrimination](#)
- [Discrimination in the United States: Experiences of Latinos](#)
- [Poll: 1 In 3 Latinos Report Discrimination Based on Ethnicity](#)
- [Latinx Workers – Particularly Women – Face Devastating Job Losses in the COVID-19 Recession](#)
- [Latinos and Discrimination](#)
- [One in Four Black Workers Report Discrimination at Work](#)
- [American Attitudes and Race](#)
- [Let's Talk About it: CHROs Take on Race in the Workplace](#)

- [Reparations and Black Americans' Attitudes About Race](#)
- [Most U.S. Managers Not Fully Prepared to Talk About Race](#)
- [The General Social Survey](#)
- [NIOSH Worker Well-being Questionnaire](#)
- [Gallup Center on Black Voices: Jobs and Work Series](#)
- [On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and Whites are Worlds Apart](#)
- [One in Four Black Workers Report Discrimination at Work](#)
- [Representation Shapes Black Employees' Work Experience](#)
- [Edelman Trust Barometer 2021](#)
- [Discrimination in America: Final Summary](#)
- [Discrimination in America](#)
- [ASA Workforce Monitor](#)
- [For Black Americans, Experiences of Racial Discrimination Vary by Education Level, Gender](#)
- [Women and Men in STEM Often at Odds Over Workplace Equity](#)
- [Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health/National Public Radio/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Discrimination in the United States Survey](#)
- [Pew Research Center: 2016 Racial Attitudes in America III](#)
- [Perceptions of Discrimination](#)
- [Perceived Discrimination Scale](#)
- [The Journey to Equity and Inclusion](#)