Executive Summary
BIASES IN RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT.

By Roberta Maldonado Franzen

All companies want to recruit the best talent in the industry to join their organization. Many companies invest quite a bit of time and energy in ensuring they hire the most qualified person. In order to hire the best, the best must be a representation of diverse candidates. In today’s society, change and diversity are the hallmark of success.

The purpose of this proposal was to evaluate whether or not human resources professionals would recruit individuals similar to them. For instance, will a Hispanic recruiter recruit a Hispanic applicant over a Caucasian applicant? If this is the case, it may be in companies’ best interest to ensure diversity in their recruiters in order to best represent the company at job fairs and to increase diversity in their workforce.

The researcher partnered with three local chapters of the Society of Human Resources Management in Kansas and requested their participation in a survey. The first part of the survey consisted of demographics and the second part of the survey consisted of photos of individuals. The participants were asked to recruit one of two individuals at a job fair to join a specific organization, such as education, retail, or engineering firm.

The female and male respondents in the survey were more likely to recruit a female applicant at a job fair. The sample for African American and Hispanics was low. Therefore the assumptions may not represent the population. Given that information,
African American and Hispanic respondents were more likely to recruit diverse applicants at a job fair.

As a result of the findings, the following recommendations are suggested to companies and educational institutes. Human resource organizations should consider implementing a training program to recruiters. The training should engage participants and challenge them to be honest about their own personal biases. Participants can complete the attached survey prior to completing the training and afterwards. The trainer can complete an assessment and compare the results for participants. The results should be confidential and delivered to the participants at a later date. In addition, companies can create strategic hiring plans and identify who should recruit new employees. Finally, employers can identify top performing employees and ask them to represent the company, with a HR professional, at job fairs.

Further research can expand the selections participants were given to select. For example, to elaborate further on race/ethnicity, participants can be given the choice to select between an Asian individual and an Arab individual. Companies would then be able to further evaluate who they should send to represent their company at job fairs.

Companies and educators should partner with recruiters and develop strategic action plans that allow companies to leverage this information. For instance, if the company has a top performing Hispanic female employee, and the company is actively seeking diverse talent to join the company, then the employer should consider sending a Hispanic female employee to job fairs to recruit prospective applicants.
BIASES IN RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT

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Roberta Maldonado Franzen, PHR

Student # XXXXX

A Plan B Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Administration

Concentration: Human Resources Administration

Monitor: Ronnie Wilson, J.D., MSA

Central Michigan University
April, 2011
BIASES IN RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT
“Diversity is not about how we differ.
Diversity is about embracing one another's uniqueness.”
Olayinka Joseph
BIASES IN RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT

This study is dedicated to my children because it does not matter what stage you are in life, there is always an opportunity to go back to school and learn something. In addition, to my loving spouse who cooked gourmet dinners while I read books and articles.

Thank you for your patience and support.
Acknowledgements

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Society of Human Resources Management chapters in Manhattan, Salina, and Topeka, Kansas. I was lucky to have great contacts with Jan Carlson, Marc Ziegler, and Alisa Crawford and appreciate them taking the time to visit with me and present my survey to their peers. Without their partnership, I would not have had data to analyze. I am extremely grateful.

I also want to thank Yvonne Amanor-Boadu, PhD, for her assistance in my understanding of the importance of research. Yvonne was kind enough to review my rough draft and provide me valuable tips from a researcher prospective. I am grateful that she devoted her time to provide me with suggestions to improve my project.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Wilson for his candidness, patience, and guidance through the last several months. I appreciated the feedback from beginning of the project to the end. Thank you!
February 23, 2011

Dear Roberta,

Your Research Review Application has been reviewed and approved. You may start your data collection. This approval will not expire as long as your topic and methodology remain unchanged. If your topic or methodology changes, please submit a new Research Review Application and supporting documents to your instructor by e-mail.

Please contact your instructor if you have any questions. Also, be sure to check with your instructor concerning the due dates for your project.

Good luck with your project.

Kim Gribben
Assistant Director, MSA Program
January 6, 2011

Ms. Roberta Maldonado Franzen
Central Michigan University
Master of Science in Human Resources Candidate
715 DeHoff Drive
Manhattan, KS 66502

Dear Roberta:

Thank you for providing documents and information about your final project research proposal and associated survey plans. I provided the information to the Human Resource Management Network (SHRM Chapter 0662) at the January board meeting.

As a SHRM affiliated chapter, our local chapter is interested in activities that strengthen the academic endeavors and professional development of HR professionals. I am pleased to inform you that the board approved your request to conduct your research project survey with members of the organization.

As you pointed out, the results of your survey should provide valuable information to the participants. At the conclusion of your study, if you are interested, we could also provide you with the opportunity to present your findings to the membership or the board at a regular meeting.

As the College Relations Liaison for the group, I will be your primary contact as you require assistance and proceed with your project plans.

Sincerely,

Jan S. Carlson, PHR
College Relations Liaison
Human Resource Management Network
785-565-2377
February 18, 2011

Roberta Maldonado Franzen, B.S., PHR
Central Michigan University
Master of Science in Human Resources Candidate
715 DeHoff Drive
Manhattan, KS 66502

Dear Ms. Maldonado Franzen:

I have reviewed your request to conduct a research project involving the Salina Chapter of Society for Human Resources Management Network. I have sent your requests to our chapter members for consideration to complete your survey. You do have my permission to use the Salina Human Resources Management Association as the subject pool for this project, providing all information gleaned with this project is confidential and no names of our chapter members will be used in any way.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of approval, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Marc Ziegler PHR
785-825-2221
Blue Beacon International, Inc.
500 Graves Blvd.
PO Box 856
Salina, KS 67402
February 23, 2011

Roberta Maldonado Franzen, B.S., PHR
Central Michigan University
Master of Science in Human Resources Candidate
715 DeHoff Drive
Manhattan, KS 66502

Dear Ms. Maldonado Franzen:

I have reviewed your request to conduct a research project involving the Topeka Chapter (SHRM-Topeka) of Society for Human Resources Management. I feel that this project will be beneficial to the organization as well as the project’s participants. You have my permission to use the SHRM-Topeka members as the subject pool for this project. You will send me the e-mail and link to the survey so I can forward it to our members. In addition, upon completion of your project, you will send me a copy of the survey results and findings so I can share it with our members.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of approval, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Alisa Mezger-Crawford, PHR
Vice President, Communications
SHRM-Topeka
BIASES IN RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT

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Chapter I
Definition of the Problem

Introduction

The question of what influences interviewers’ hiring decisions has been monitored by researchers and administrators for quite some time (Garcia, Posthuma, & Colella, 2008). Human resource professionals are trained on how to avoid biases in the hiring process, while students participate in courses and are taught about theories of what influences hiring decisions. Employers spend a great deal of resources creating training to teach employees how to identify personal biases during the recruitment process. Furthermore, the employer trains employees on how not to allow biases to impact hiring decisions. To date, limited research has evaluated the bias of adults who are recruiting applicants to join their organizations and subsequently asked them why they made the decision to recruit the applicants they selected.

Given that this information and research has been limited, an organization should evaluate the bias of their recruiters in order to remain competitive in seeking talented individuals. After all, organizations that want the opportunity to select and compete for the best talent must seek to attract and hire highly trained and educated workers who are increasingly diverse in terms of gender, race, and nationality (Burleton, 2001; Ng & Burke, 2005). This is especially true, if the company wants to remain competitive in the industry.

Prospective employees are evaluating the company with which they seek employment as much as employers are evaluating prospective employees. It is in the
company’s best interest to develop plans to attract diverse talent and create an organization of diverse ideas with diverse talent. The more important question is how do companies reach that goal? Some companies hire managers upon completion of a bachelor degree and then provide training on effective recruitment practices. Then, the new managers begin recruiting for the company at job fairs across the country. However, are companies sending the right people to represent their companies when they are looking to increase diversity amongst its workforce? Companies should be strategic about whom they send to represent their company.

There are several methods companies use to select company representatives. Companies should evaluate the background of individuals and seek for understanding of differences amongst applicants. Once established, researchers suggest racial prejudice is often resistant to change amongst European-American children (Bigler, & Liben, 1993; Aboud, 1988; Williams, & Morland, 1976). Do these learned biases from childhood continue as adults? Do individuals select applicants similar to them based on gender, race, and/or based on their stereotypes of what type of person traditionally works in the specified field regardless of qualifications?

In an effort to drive the process of recruiting techniques, companies should create and execute a strategic plan (Knouse, 2009). Therefore organizations should further explore if the recruiter is recruiting utilizing preconceived stereotypes. Furthermore, companies should operate under the assumption that prospective employees are doing the same thing. Hence, the biases could work to an organization’s advantage. If the organization is particularity interested in increasing diversity amongst its workforce, then
it may want to send a diverse candidate to recruit on its behalf. For instance, if a Hispanic woman is attending a career fair and she looks around the crowd, she may be more likely to approach the engineering firm who has a Hispanic woman recruiter representing the firm. The rate of pay and career development in the fields of engineering, construction, plumbing, and information technology are traditionally identified as male dominated fields (Pullin, 2005). A Hispanic representative may provide the Hispanic woman a sense of comfort because stereotypes indicate the engineer firm is a male dominated field. Therefore, the engineer firm would benefit from sending a diverse recruiter to seek diverse talent, if it is the firm’s mission to increase diversity in the workplace.

**Statement of the Problem**

Individuals tend to gravitate towards individuals that have similar characteristics to themselves. Therefore, applicants tend to approach recruiters who are similar to them. If this is the case, businesses would benefit from having diverse recruiters attend job fairs to recruit for the company.

According to Snell and Bohlander, (2010) “Equal employment opportunity or the employment of individuals in a fair and nonbiased manner, has consumed the attention of the media, courts, practitioners, and legislators” (p. 100). In hopes of increasing the applicant flow, managers, supervisors, advisors, and the like, become recruiters in the workplace. It is not uncommon to learn many Fortune 500 companies and schools are highlighted in magazines as valuing diversity. Therefore it is safe to assume diversity is important in the workforce and is valued. Companies and schools can place a strong emphasis on diversity management because it can help organizations capitalize on the
benefits of a diverse workforce (Ng & Burke, 2005) through retention, for instance. This is established through an effective recruitment plan developed in partnership with human resources (HR) and management.

HR would be given the opportunity to evaluate the current plan and provide a strategic plan to evaluate the recruiter’s effectiveness to recruit diverse talent. In order to increase diversity within an organization or company, the recruiter ought to understand the mission statement or the reason for the emphasis on workplace diversity. Companies should actively recruit diverse talent, in order to diversify the workplace and increase employee satisfaction. Organizations have different ideas and backgrounds with the diversity of its leadership team. This also inspires other diverse employees towards a goal of reaching the top because the goal is attainable.

The research examined if individuals recruit diverse talent with typical stereotypes. The research attempted to provide insight into the following questions posed: do first impressions impact decisions to recruit diverse applicants to an organization? Will individuals select applicants, based solely on photos, for positions based on their own preconceived stereotypes? Do company training programs or college education impact an individual’s stereotypes when recruiting? Will individuals recruit talent based on typical stereotypes for specific roles? For instance, will individuals recruit women for nursing positions and childcare positions over men? Also will individuals recruit men for engineering firms and sales positions over women?
Given that, the intent of the research is to confirm the following statements:

S1: Female participants recruit female applicants, based on first impressions in photos.

S2: Male participants recruit male applicants, based on first impressions in photos.

S3: African American participants recruit African American applicants, based on first impressions in photos.

S4: Hispanic participants recruit Hispanic applicants, based on first impressions in photos.

**Purpose of the Research**

The objective of the study was to ascertain the impact of stereotypes on individuals’ ability to recruit diverse talent into an organization. Is it possible to effectively recruit applicants based solely on his/her merits or do pre-existing biases come to bear? This topic impacts all organizations that provide training to staff members and educational institutions teaching the incoming workforce recruiting techniques. In addition, it impacts organizations’ recruiting strategy especially if women are more likely to approach a female recruiter over a male recruiter or if a Hispanic applicant is likely to approach a Hispanic recruiter.

The research can be applied to any organization or school in an effort to evaluate if the training programs taught to staff are effective or if the courses taught are effective at teaching students to identify personal bias. In addition, to provide insight to an organization as to whom they should send to recruiting events to recruit on the
organizations’ behalf, being able to identify individual stereotypes may actually help an organization when developing effective recruiting strategies to increase diversity amongst staff. If employees are self-aware of their biases, they can approach recruiting events differently and apply their personal biases as necessary. However, recruiters may proceed with caution so as to avoid unfair hiring practices.

The results further evaluate individuals’ personal stereotypes and the impact on recruiting diverse talent. If organizations do not re-evaluate the recruitment training, it could potentially come across to prospective diverse applicants as not valuing diversity, which may create a missed opportunity for qualified talent. If an educational institution fails to educate the incoming workforce on the importance of acknowledging personal bias or, at the very least, becoming aware of personal stereotypes, then the educational institution is failing the students by not educating them accordingly. In a study completed by Avery, Hernandez, and Hebl (2004), Black/African American and Hispanics applicants preferred organizations with minority recruiters because they perceived a greater degree of similarity with the representatives. If this is the case, do the roles reverse with similar results, hence indicating recruiters prefer applicants with greater degrees of similarities to themselves? Companies, however, should proceed with care so as to not misrepresent its work environment, by over-utilizing its current diverse employees as recruiters.

By evaluating training and education taught to employees/students, an organization or educational institution has the opportunity to discuss the topic at hand and alert the audience that ingrained stereotypes exist, and it is the individuals’ responsibility
to resist them from impacting decisions when recruiting. Otherwise, society is neglecting to acknowledge the mere existence of stereotypes and the impact. It is important to discuss biases and educate recruiters on how to work with it.

Scope

The data are limited to human resource professionals whom are Kansas residents. Participants were selected since they were human resources professionals who recruit on the behalf of the company they work for. The participants are members of a local chapter of Society for Human Resource Management and represent companies in the field of human resources. The study was designed to gauge first impressions and the impact of stereotypes in the workforce and education.

Terminology and Definitions

Locus of control is an individuals’ perception of what causes events in his/her life (Silvester, Anderson-Gough, Anderson, & Mohamed, 2002). They typically represent internal or external factors that contribute to the outcome.

Nonverbal cue is a method of communicating with one another without using words (DeGroot & Gooty, 2009). Individuals are able to communicate to a stranger walking in the park by smiling or shaking the hand of an applicant.

Realistic expectation is also known as realistic job preview. It is when the employer provides an applicant with information about the job (Snell & Bohandler, 2010), such as vacation leave benefits and the employee expects to earn vacation leave.

Perception is the process of becoming aware of something (Malpass & Kravitz, 1969). For example, a recruiter may perceive that an applicant is punctual and reliable because the applicant arrived to the interview fifteen minutes early.
Salience is the process of standing out to other things (Avery et al., 2004). For instance, an applicant may show up to an interview dressed in a suit with a red tie to stand out from other applicants.

Stereotypes are opinions of another gender or race (Snell & Bohlander, 2010), such as Asian people are better in math than Hispanics.
Chapter II

Review of the Related Literature

Introduction to the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief analysis of available references from topics ranging from children’s ethnic attitudes, non-verbal cues, diversity in the workplace, and typical stereotypes within pre-identified fields, from research studies, journals, and articles. The research begins as early as 1950’s in regards to biases of children identified at an early age and proceeds well into 2010 with regards to diversity in the workplace, hence providing the opportunity to explore over fifty years of autonomous studies. Independently, the topics speak for themselves from well-known researchers. However once the topics are combined, the opportunity to explore in further research if stereotypes impact decisions to recruit diverse talent for an organization exist.

There is extensive literature regarding all sub-topics individually. Therefore in this chapter, the literature has been organized to address the sub-topics mentioned earlier. It is important to understand the impact of non-verbal cues when recruiting diverse candidates, and its influence on engaging diversity at the workplace. In addition, the relevance to stereotypes when recruiting for specific fields and whether perceptions guide decisions when recruiting is covered by the collected works. Finally, the literature explored stereotypes from childhood and provided insight to when biases begins.
Presentation of the Literature

Children’s ethnic attitude.

Past research suggest the majority of Euro-American children display negative characteristics to African Americans by the age five (Bigler & Liben, 1993). Other groups of researchers looked into children’s ethnic attitudes and the relationship to certain personality factors and concluded there is a relationship between children’s attitudes towards specific groups, such as African Americans and Jewish people (Gough, Harris, Martin, & Edwards, 1950). In addition Gough, et al. (1950) studied the attitudes and scales assessing more generalized reactions of tolerance and intolerance with African Americans and Jewish people. The concern with the later study is the cultural environment in the mid-1900’s and inequalities amongst races. America was a growing country at the time and faced the challenges of racism and prejudices against one another, therefore results may have been impacted by the environment initially. However later research continued to show a bias in children’s preference of one race over another race.

Some theorists, such as Hirschfeld (1993), argued that racial information is perceptual and verbal amongst children. While others theorists, such as Katz & Seavey (1973) suggested the type of label associated with faces influences the way in which they are perceived. Granted, these researchers were discussing the effects with children, but it presents an open door for adults and the next question to ask is if the bias continues as adults.
Nonverbal cues.

There is quite a bit of research (Rasmussen, 1984; Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Silvester et al., 2002; DeGroot & Gooty, 2009) that has explored if nonverbal cues impact decisions made during the interview process. In fact, early research by Ekman (1973) and Ekman and Friesen (1975) indicated, non-verbal behaviors impact the emotional cues of others (as cited in DeGroot & Gooty, 2009). Given that organizations could enhance the predictive validity of their interview techniques by training interviewers to “correctly” process the cues exhibited by the interviewee and educate recruiters of the halo effect, whereby recruiters allow one characteristic to influence another (DeGrott & Gooty, 2009). Therefore, educators and trainers should teach interviewers the impact of facial expressions, such as smiling or frowning, or head gestures, such as nodding the head up and down in agreement, and the ability of nonverbal cues to influence hiring decision.

Another study provided support for relationships between how candidates’ physical attributes influence employers. For instance, according to a survey conducted by the National Association of College Employers, 78% of employers are slightly/strongly influenced by a handshake (Snell & Bohlander, 2010). The same study also noted 87% of employers are slightly/strongly influenced by applicants wearing nontraditional interview attire (Snell & Bohlander, 2010). While employers are aware these factors should not solely influence their hiring decision, it is difficult, at times, to adjust your thought process and offer an applicant a position although they did not dress for the role. Biases simply impact decisions, regardless of what individuals know to be
right and wrong. There is a consensus that nonverbal cues play a role in the decisions hiring managers make on candidate selection.

Rasmussen (1984) noted, “Previous research has shown that when job interviewees display higher levels of nonverbal behaviors, such as eye contact, smiling, hand-gesturing, and head nodding, their chances of acceptance are increased” (p. 551). Given this information, participants in the present research project were shown photos of prospective applicants all smiling and looking straight ahead in order to engage in eye contact with participants. This ensured all participants viewed similar expressions to ensure consistency amongst their responses. In addition, Rasmussen’s (1984) study “…indicated that when resume and verbal information are entered into the decision making process, the effects of nonverbal behavior alone are relatively small” (p. 554). The researcher presented pre-recorded interviews for students to view and rate which applicant they would select based on the interview. Results showed that students preferred to hire the candidates with the better credentials on paper but when verbal cues were positive, the students also preferred candidates with positive non-verbal cues (Rasmussen, 1984). The researcher also pointed out, resumes account for the greatest proportion of variance in the subject’s ratings, when there is large verbal content (Rasmussen, 1984). Although, resumes impacted participants’ selection at the end, initially, first impressions were more impactful in the selection of whom to hire.

Other researchers have presented their work on the importance of making the right impression. The purpose of the study performed by Stevens & Kristof (1995), “Was to provide data on the use and the effects of applicant influence tactics during
actual job interviews” (p. 587). Specifically, they studied applicants’ use of impression management strategies to prompt positive interviewer outcomes and evaluations.

According to Goffman (1956), impression management is the effort made by individuals to shape the “Impression one makes on others in the present- whatever the long-range or unconscious basis of this concern may be” (p. 265). Stevens & Kristof’s (1995) method included audiotaping interviews and having one group of trained research assistants listen to the tapes and rate applicants’ verbal behaviors and the second group of research assistants categorize applicants’ impression management behaviors using the interview transcripts. The data from multiple methods and raters were consistent in depicting applicants as using assertive, self-promoting impression management tactics during actual job interviews (Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Stevens & Kristof (1995) found that verbal behaviors had a positive impact on interviewers’ selection process over reading transcripts. The authors suggested verbal cues are important during an interview process.

Eight years later, Silvester et al. (2002), conducted three studies, which investigated how the candidate and interviewer’s locus of control influenced preferences for three categories of explanations proffered by candidates during graduate recruitment interviews. The locus of control is individuals’ perception of what causes events in his/her life (Silvester et al., 2002). For instance, do external factors impact outcomes, such as leaving it to fate? Or do internal factors impact individual outcomes, such as individual efforts? Silvester et al. (2002), when studying locus of control in the first study, found that 139 student and 37 personnel managers stated internal factors had a
positive influence after completing Rotter’s Locus of Control questionnaire and Interview Behavior Scales.

The hypothesis continued to be supported in study two when a group of 62 candidates applied for positions at actual firms and the interviewers also stated internal factors had a positive influence after completing the same questionnaire (Silvester et al., 2002). Finally, during the third study in the research, 103 experienced interviewers completed the same locus of control questionnaire and stated internal factors or an individuals’ effort most likely convey a positive impression of the candidate (Silvester et al., 2002). In general, candidates and interviewers rate internal-controllable candidate attributions as being more likely to convey a positive impression of a candidate rather than external factors (Silvester et al., 2002).

It is crucial to understand the impact of nonverbal cues, especially when evaluating first impressions. It is important to identify what is significant to recruiters when seeking individuals to join the organization. Research suggests the interview performance is strongly impacted by visual cues (DeGroot & Gooty, 2009). The study by DeGroot and Gooty (2009) acknowledged nonverbal cues impact on decisions, however takes it a step further by asking “how does it happen?” They suggested personal attributions mediate the nonverbal cues. Theories about personal attribution suggest that individuals make inferences about their situation in ways that cast themselves in the most positive light. Specifically, people will attribute their accomplishments or disappointments to influences that increase a positive feeling. Therefore, if an applicant is offered a position with a company, he/she will attribute this success due to his/her
talent. However, if the same applicant is not offered the position with the company, he/she will attribute this failure job to an unfortunate event he/she did not have control over.

DeGroot and Gooty (2009) also discussed the three types of nonverbal cues, such as dynamic or eye contact and smiling; static or physical attraction; and paralinguistic or speech rate and tone and its impact on the five personality traits (conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness and extroversion). For instance, an individual who maintains good eye contact during an interview may rate high in conscientious. Or, an individual who nods his/her head will be seen as agreeable or an individual who smiles may be seen as being an extrovert. The results of the study showed a significant correlation among both interview ratings and personality traits (Degroot & Gooty, 2009). These are all examples of nonverbal cues impacting the decision making process although it is not an acceptable practice to select an applicant based on a perception of being an extrovert or friendly. Hiring Managers are likely to do it anyway.

Many studies have indicated that when a person deliberately tries to convey an emotion through facial expression, the observer will accurately access which emotion is intended (Ekman & Friesen, 1975). Therefore, Ekman (1973) conducted dozens of research studies aimed at facial expressions of emotions over the last thirty years (as cited in DeGroot & Gooty, 2009). For example, in one particular study, participants were invited to decide which facial expressions of psychiatric trainees completing a stress interview were pleasant and unpleasant facial expressions. The participants were able to accurately decipher which was which. Charles Darwin also wrote, as cited by Ekman,
that facial expressions of emotion are universal, not learned differently in each culture; that they are biologically determined, the product of man’s evolution (as cited in Ekman & Friesen, 1975). Given that information, one can conclude that nonverbal cues make a difference in individuals’ perceptions of others.

**Diversity at the workplace.**

Many studies have been completed relating to perception of recognition of facial expression (Malpass & Kravitz, 1969). In the study conducted by Malpass and Kravitz (1969), 20 Black and 20 White psychology students from the University of Illinois and Howard University were shown 20 photos of individuals with neutral facial expressions. Later the students were shown 80 photos, including the original 20 and 60 they had not seen before, and were to recall which photos they had seen previously. Overall, participants recognized the faces of their own races better than the other race shown in the photos. With the sample of 13 African American and 13 White students from the University of Illinois, facial recognition was significantly correlated with participants’ race, however with the sample of seven African American and seven while students at Howard University, this relationship was only marginally significant. If this is the case, prospective diverse employees may gravitate towards recruiters similar to themselves. This would give the employer an opportunity to increase diversity within the organization.

The importance of diversity in the workplace varies from organization to organization and may also vary among applicants. Ng and Burke (2005) completed a study aimed at finding out what choice women and diverse applicants would make in
deciding which organization to join. Participants consisted of 113 MBA students from Ontario, Canada. Of that, 41% were women, 43% minorities, and 41% immigrants to Canada (Ng & Burke, 2005). The participants were shown two offer letters with company information depicting diverse employees on the brochures and asked to rate their personal attractiveness to each company based on the information provided. The researchers found women and diverse applicants preferred a company that is diverse because it implies the companies’ commitment to diversity. Women and diverse applicants felt valued and believed they had the opportunity for advancement in such companies. Ng and Burke (2005) found “Diversity practices make organizations more attractive to women and minorities, and there is initial evidence to show that they also attract high achievers and new immigrants as potential employees” (p. 1207). This may be a strategic point for companies revising their employment goals for diversifying the workplace.

   Many employers include creating and fostering a diverse workplace as part of the company strategic plans in regards to recruiting. Employers instruct recruiters to find the best candidate to fill the position, while some recruiters do not realize the candidate is also evaluating the company to ensure they are the best company for him/her. According to Dreyfuss (1990) and Avery, Hernandez, and Hebl (2004), “Research on minority recruitment is particularly important because an increasing number of women and minorities are entering the workforce and will fuel labor market growth” (p. 147). Avery et al. (2004) completed a study by utilizing 194 participants, 104 male and 90 female. The research included a mixture of diverse participants too. Of the 194 participants, 30%
were African American, 26% were Hispanic, and 42% were white. Avery et al. (2004) presented participants brochures featuring companies with diverse representatives on them and found Black and Hispanic applicants preferred organizations with minority recruiters because they perceived a greater degree of similarity with these organizations. A pattern seemed to emerge in research studies over the last ten years. These studies illustrated the preferences of diverse applicants for diverse organizations.

Assuming previous research suggestions regarding the importance of recruiting diverse applicants, Knouse (2009) examined the effectiveness of targeted recruiting in relation to strategy, impression management, realistic expectations, and diversity climate. The author begins with the theory of impression management, or the opportunity of a company to present itself in a specific manner to its audience. For instance, a recruiter attending a job fair may present brochures about the company to perspective job applicants featuring all the positive aspects of the company, such as benefits and pay. The recruiter may also be diverse, in order to demonstrate to prospective applicants the company values diversity amongst the workforce. However, Knouse (2009) suggested companies should proceed with caution as to not set unrealistic expectations by giving prospective employees a false sense of the work environment.

The next theory, Knouse (2009) discussed was realistic expectations theory. It is the opportunity for a company to present the expectations of the position. For instance, a recruiter may share with a prospective applicant that the typical assistant manager is promoted to store manager within three to five years, but may fail to share with the applicant that he or she will change positions every twelve to eighteen months and must
be willing to relocate across the country. Once the applicant accepts the position and realizes the additional terms of the agreement, the applicant will feel misled and wonder what else the organization is failing to divulge. It is also important to note that the organization must create an effective strategy to recruiting diverse talent, if it wants to remain competitive for talented individuals.

The final theory discussed by Knouse (2009) is diversity climate. Knouse (2009) stated, “Diversity climate reflects the diversity values of the organization (e.g. fairness, equity, and inclusion) which the individual uses to determine degree of fit with personal values” (p.349). In other words, job applicants will look at the company’s employee appraisal practices, opportunity for advancement, and/or the decisions of top management, in order to obtain a better understanding of the companies’ values. Prospective employees want to know the company is honest. According to Knouse (2009) “Diversity climate then may be the basic criterion for reality- the basis for discerning whether employee expectations of fairness and inclusion gained from recruiting are realistic” (p. 350). The author concluded that unrealistically high expectations can occur when companies mislead potential employees, producing low job satisfaction when confronting diversity climate on the job, and ultimately increasing turnover amongst employees (Knouse, 2009). The author also cautioned employers in providing materials that accurately represent its’ workforce to ensure it does not present employees a false sense of the work environment. Otherwise, diverse employees may feel mislead, and it may later result in poor performing behaviors or corrective actions,
BIASES AND RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT

which ultimately increase turnover (Knouse, 2009). Employees, in general, do not want to work for an employer who is dishonest or misled them.

**Typical stereotypes.**

There are many stereotypes regarding which fields each gender typically represents in different jobs. For example, women tend to focus on careers in nursing and childcare. While other stereotypes affirm men tend to focus on careers in sales and engineering. Gender stereotypes may also be combined with racial stereotypes leading to stereotypes that Asian-American men dominate the field of engineering, that White-American women dominate the field of education, that African-American women dominate the field of childcare, White-American men dominate the field of sales. Researchers (Babin, Boles, & Darden, 1995; Cameron, 2001; Stimpson & Martin, 2005; Hean, Clark, Adams, & Humphris, 2006) have concluded stereotypes exist in the work environment in specifics fields. So what should individuals do with the pre-existing stereotypes? Companies should learn from them and adapt their recruiting techniques to fit the needs of the prospective and current employee.

**Summary of the Literature**

Based on the review of the research, stereotypes begin with us at a young age and may continue with us as adults. The need exists to explore further whether those stereotypes impact decisions when recruiting diverse talent. What role, if any, do non-verbal cues play when recruiting talent? Research suggests that individuals gravitate towards individuals with smiles on their faces and nod their heads in concurrence; however do similar cues exist in regards to race? If this is the case, what impact will this
have on diversity at the workplace? Will individuals who desire to work in diverse environments, achieve success as research leads us to conclude? Or do stereotypes constrain us from diversifying the workplace?

Organizations owe it to themselves to determine what techniques best suit their needs; therefore, if research shows that diverse applicants gravitate towards individuals similar to them, then companies could consider sending diverse recruiters, because those diverse recruiters may seek out diverse candidates in return. The studies relating to recruiting diverse talent all support the notion that diverse employees increases the likelihood of recruiting diverse individuals. Therefore, employers should consider recruiters’ gender and/or ethnicity prior to sending them to recruit on the company’s behalf.
Chapter III

Methodology Procedures

Research Methodology

The objective of this study was to ascertain the impact biases have on individuals’ ability to recruit diverse talent into an organization. Is it possible to recruit applicants effectively based solely on his or her merits or do pre-existing stereotypes come to bear? This topic impacts organizations that provide training to staff members and educational institutions teaching the incoming workforce recruiting techniques.

The procedures entailed providing the link to the survey to willing participants of members of local chapters of Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM). Participants were given the web address and invited to participate in the survey in the privacy of their home. They were encouraged to select the applicant who comes to mind first and asked not to discuss the survey with their peers in the chapter until the results are presented at a later date. Participants completed a two part survey after request for participation. The initial survey asked participants’ demographics and background information. The second part of the survey provided participants the opportunity to select one of two applicants they would recruit for a specified company or organization, such as education, retail, or engineering firm. Participants were shown photos of the following races/ethnicity: White/Caucasian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latin, and Asian, and the following genders, male or female. The participants were given the opportunity to select from one of two applicants at a time. Participants could not proceed without selecting one of two options.
The photographs were purchased through istockphotos.com, along with standard license rights that permit usage of photos up to 500,000 reproductions. Permission was also granted from istockphotos.com and attached to the proposal. The photographed participants are similar in age and demeanors, such as holding the same color portfolio in the photo. The pictures have the same white background in all photos to ensure consistency. In addition, all individuals in the photo appear to be friendly and display smiles. Finally, individuals in the photo are wearing the same colored black suit.

The sample included members of SHRM who are residents in Kansas. Members of SHRM are diverse in regards to age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Each participant reviewed and acknowledged receipt of a consent form prior to participating in the survey. There was no risk for participating. The research does not involve past, present, or future physical or mental health conditions of subjects. The researcher provided a brief presentation requesting participation prior to the local SHRM meetings.

The participants were asked to complete an online survey after the presentation. The researcher provided a follow up request to participants via electronic mail (email). The survey was a multiple-choice, single-response scale, and data nominal with classification questions/target questions. The participants’ participation is confidential, and participants were not asked their names at any point on the survey. In addition, participant involvement was strictly voluntary.

The survey was developed using lime survey software. Participants were asked to visit www.hrsurvey.info website to complete the survey. The participants were asked to respond with honest answers and to practice confidentiality in regards to the survey.
Data Collection Approach and Procedures

Data to be collected.

The data was analyzed by reviewing the responses of participants based on their gender and race. The average participant could be more than or less than, the anticipated average of participant’s, selecting applicants similar to them, regarding race/ethnicity, gender, and education or company training. The scope and limitations are the sample bias due to the majority of participants being white/Caucasian women. The survey is objective, and the data was collected for a one month timeframe, beginning at the end of February and ending in the middle of March.

The data was collected by participant gender, race/ethnicity, and whether the participant received education or work training about recruiting prior to completing this survey. Each variable is measured against the participants reply to those previous statements and whether they selected applicants similar to themselves’ in terms of gender or race or ethnicity when reviewing the photos. Next, each variable is be measured against the participants reply to those previous statements above and whether they selected applicants based on typical stereotypes, such as White/Caucasian women dominating the workforce of education.

Participants were asked their gender, race/ethnicity, and training experience in college and at work and evaluated which diverse applicants they select to recruit for their individual company by only viewing photos. Another approach to gathering the data would be to allow participants to view actual interviews instead of photos; however, this does not seek to understand whether first impression plays a role in the selection process.
Applicants could be given the opportunity to evaluate video recordings of such meetings; however, audio cues may impact the selection process.

**Data collection procedures.**

The survey was administered through hrsurvey.info. Participants were recruited from members of SHRM local chapter in Kansas. The researcher reviewed the survey instruction sheet to students and SRHM members. The researcher asked participants to visit hrsurvey.info and complete the survey within one week of being invited. The researcher also provided a friendly reminder to the participants after one week lapsed.

The researcher invited 301 participants to complete the survey and 70 participants responded. The survey was administered via a hrsurvey.info, and the data was analyzed. The researcher knew some of the participants due to working in the human resource profession in the area. The survey was anonymous, and participants are at least 18 years of age in order to participate.

After completion of the project, the results were submitted to Central Michigan University and to be converted to microfiche for future access. In order for anyone to view the paper, written permission must be obtained from the author of the paper in advance. The results are also saved on a compact disc at the authors’ residence for future reference for twelve months after completion of the course.

**Proposed Approach for Data Analysis and Synthesis**

The data was organized by coding each part of the survey. Part one of the survey is demographics and it was used when analyzing part two of participants’ responses. The data displayed a relationship between applicants’ gender and whether participants
selected applicants visibly similar to their own gender in photos versus selecting the opposite gender. The average responses are shown for each response for each group.

**Methodological assumptions.**

The researcher assumes the participants know how to read and completed the survey at the privacy of their residence. It is also assumed the participants completed the survey with honesty within two weeks of being invited to participate in the survey. The participants were asked to not discuss the survey with their peers until the results are presented to the group at a future meeting. This is also one reason the applicants had access to the survey for only two weeks.

**Methodological limitations.**

There are several limitations to the present study. First, the sample consisted of Kansas residents. Therefore, the results may not be applicable to all states. Second, the participants were specifically selected based on their education background and previous work experience. The research targeted individuals with college education in the field of human resources. Third, the results do not apply to a specific company or organization in a particular field. Another limitation is that the researcher does not test attractiveness to the candidates provided in the photo.

The survey was tested for validity by partnering with three human resources professionals to complete the survey prior to distribution. All three professionals had over five years of experience in management and human resources. In addition, the participants were diverse and represented both genders and Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic individuals. Their feedback was used to make minor changes, such as not
using the medical profession as a vacant job due to the medical professions arriving at
interviews in scrubs and not suits. Finally, the data was tested for reliability, by inviting
five human resources professionals of diverse backgrounds to complete the survey online.
Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Introduction

In an effort to determine if recruiters will select individuals similar to themselves or not, the researcher completed an analysis and tested four statements in the present study. The data was collected by participant gender, race/ethnicity, and whether the participant received education or work training about recruiting prior to completing this survey (Table 1). In an attempt to increase diversity in a workplace, employers must know who their recruiters are more likely to approach at job fairs, when recruitment is crucial. The research will provide an opportunity for employers to select the most likely recruiter to increase diverse applicants at recruitment events by means of approaching the individual the company specifically seeks. Alternative options and future suggestions are later discussed for additional research in the next chapter.

Table 1. Part One: Demographics for all respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One: Demographics</th>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data Presentation and Analysis

**Statement I: Female participants recruit female applicants, based on first impressions in photos.**

As indicated in Table 2, there were a total of 56 female participants including; 49 Caucasians, three African Americans, three Hispanics, and one self-identified as other to test the statement that female participants select female participants based on first impressions in photos. Figure 1 displays a diagram of female respondents’ gender preference. The average age of respondents was 42 years, and 96% are currently employed. The education background of the participants was 11% high school diploma, five percent associate degree, 63% undergraduate degree, and 21% graduate degree, and they have over 21 years of work experience. The participants were also asked if they...
recruited or encouraged people to apply for a job within their current workplace and eight percent responded yes. Lastly, when asked if completed training on recruitment at work, 73% of participants agreed to completion of recruitment training at work.

Table 2: Female respondents based on gender choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N= Sample</th>
<th>Female Selection</th>
<th>Male Selection</th>
<th>Ethnicity: Caucasian</th>
<th>Ethnicity: African American</th>
<th>Ethnicity: Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Respondents (N= 56)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: Caucasian (N=49)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: African American (N=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: Hispanic (N=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Female respondents gender selection.

The female participants were given the opportunity to select photos of the male and female genders of four ethnic groups, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, and Asian. The participants were asked to make a selection of whom they would likely approach at a job fair to recruit for a management position at a retailer. When given the choice between approaching a female applicant or a male applicant at a job fair, the
participants selected the female applicant 2.73 out of 4 or 68%. The female participants’ tendency of selecting female applicants the majority of the time are important in the aspect that if a company wants to increase the diversity within the workplace in terms of gender, the company should consider sending a female recruiter to job fairs to recruit. Since three out of four female participants completed recruitment training at work, it is likely to have little or no impact on the participants’ choice of whom to approach at a recruitment event.

In addition, the results display the following; the Caucasian female participants selected female applicants to approach at the job fair 83% of the time over approaching a male applicant. Whereas African American female participants selected female applicants at a lower rate of 67%, and Hispanics female participants selected female applicants 100% of the time. Based on the results, a company should consider sending a Caucasian and/or a Hispanic female recruiter to recruit on behalf of the company, if the company wants to increase diversity in the workplace. This would be extremely beneficial in the fields of engineering and information technology because female recruiters are more likely to approach female applicants at a higher rate. In this way, the companies will be able to recruit more female applicants, and consequently, it will also increase the number of female applicants. However, the company should be aware that the information presented in the study is based on a small sample of Hispanic participants.

Statement II: Male participants recruit male applicants, based on first impressions in photos.
As shown in Table 3, there were a total of 14 male participants including: 13 Caucasians, and one African American to test the statement that male participants select male participants based on first impressions in photos. Figure 2 presents a graphic illustration of the male respondents’ selection. The average age of respondents was 40 years, and 100% are currently employed. The education background of the participants was seven percent with high school diploma, seven percent associate degree, 36% undergraduate degree, and 50% graduate degree and they have over 19 years of work experience. The participants were also asked if they recruited or encouraged people to apply for a job within their current workplace and 93% responded yes. Lastly, when asked if they completed training on recruitment at work, 71% of participants responded yes.

Table 3. Male respondents based on gender choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N= Sample</th>
<th>Female Selection</th>
<th>Male Selection</th>
<th>Ethnicity: Caucasian</th>
<th>Ethnicity: African American</th>
<th>Ethnicity: Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Respondents (N=14)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity: Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Male respondents gender selection.
The male participants were given the opportunity to select photos of the male and female genders of four ethnic groups: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, and Asian. The participants were asked to make a selection of whom they would like to approach at a job fair to recruit for a management position at a retailer. When given the choice between approaching a male applicant or a female applicant at a job fair, the participants selected the male applicant only 1.43 out of 4 or 36% of the time. The selection of male applicants less than the majority of the time is important in the aspect to explore. If a company wants to increase the diversity within the workplace in terms of gender, the company should consider sending a male recruiter to job fairs to recruit because he is more likely to select the opposite gender. In addition, since almost three out of every four male participants completed recruitment training at work, it is likely to have little to no impact on the participants’ choice of who to approach at a recruitment event.

The results showed the following; the Caucasian male participants selected Caucasian male applicants to approach at the job fair only 21% of the time over approaching a Caucasian female applicant. The findings suggest Caucasian males are likely to recruit female applicants to join the organization. In addition, Caucasian males are inclined to approach an African American male 43% of the time over an African American female. The findings indicate the Caucasian male is likely to approach the African American female more than the male, again indicating the Caucasian male is likely to approach diverse applicants. The Caucasian male is likely to select Hispanic males 36% of the time and select Asian males for a management position 57% of the time. Based on the results, a company should consider sending a Caucasian male
recruiter to recruit on behalf of the company. In this way, the company will be able to increase gender diversity in the workplace. This would be extremely beneficial in the fields of engineering and information technology because male recruiters are more likely to approach female applicants at a higher rate.

**Statement III: African American participants recruit African American applicants, based on first impressions in photos.**

There were a total of four African American participants, one male and three female participants. Therefore, the responding participants were not sufficient in this category to test the statement and do not adequately represent the population. Given that information, the data is presented with understanding that a more diverse participant sample is necessary.

There were a total of four African American participants; three were female and one was male, to test the statement that African American participants select African American participants based on first impressions in photos. The average age of respondents was 38 years, and 100% are currently employed. The education background of the participants was 75% undergraduate degree, and 25% graduate degree and they have over 18 years of work experience. The participants were also asked if they recruited or encouraged people to apply for a job within their current workplace and 75% responded yes. Lastly, 25% of participants confirmed they completed training on recruitment at work.

In the next six questions, participants were asked to recruit for an engineering position at a job fair. They were given the opportunity to select a male applicant who
was either: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, or Asian. The African American respondents selected an African American male applicant 50% of the time in comparison to each of the other ethnic backgrounds. The African American respondents selected a Caucasian male only 25%, a Hispanic male 42%, and an Asian male 58% of the time. The engineering field is typically compromised of males in the field and some educational institutions are working to increase female participation in the field. If this is the case, educational institutions should consider African Americans as recruiters to such programs.

The last six questions asked participants to recruit for a vacant teaching position at a job fair. The respondents were given the opportunity to select a female applicant who was either, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, or Asian. The African American respondents selected an African American female applicant 67%, Caucasian female applicant eight percent, Hispanic female applicant 67%, and Asian female applicant 58% of the time. In regard of the African American participants’ selection in recruiting a female, teacher showed diversity in choice. Again, if an educational institution is considering increasing diversity amongst the district, the Superintendent should consider sending an African American recruiter to seek diverse candidates because the data suggest they will approach diverse applicants more. Figure 3 depicted the responses of African American participants to the last twelve questions in an illustration.
Figure 3. African American respondents on race/ethnicity.

Overall, African American respondents selected African Americans depicted in photos in comparison to other ethnic backgrounds 58% and selected Caucasian photos only 17% of the time. The respondents also selected Hispanics at an increasing rate compared Caucasians at 54%. Next, African Americans selected Asian applicants 71% to approach at a job fair. It is very interesting to note, overall, African American respondents are more likely to approach diverse applicants in a public setting.

Companies should consider sending a diverse recruiter to events in order to attract diverse applicants.

Finally, there is not a strong relationship between respondents’ completion of recruitment training at work and the one at school. The participants’ responses may vary if they are given the opportunity to attend recruitment training and are taught to identify
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self-biases and the impact biases have on individual hiring decisions. However, it is important to note the small sample in this situation.

Statement IV: Hispanic participants recruit Hispanic applicants, based on first impressions in photos.

There were a total of three Hispanic participants, which represented three females. Therefore, the responding participants were not sufficient in this category to analyze the statement and do not adequately represent the population. Given that information, the data is presented with the understanding that an increase of the population sample is necessary.

There were a total of three Hispanic participants; all three were female, to analyze the statement that Hispanic participants select Hispanic participants based on first impressions in photos. The average age of respondents was 35 years and 100% are currently employed. The education background of the participants was 67% undergraduate degree, and 33% graduate degree and they have over 11 years of work experience. The participants were also asked if they recruit or encouraged people to apply for a job within their current workplace and 67% responded yes. Lastly, when asked if completed training on recruitment at work, 33% of participants agreed to completion of recruitment training at work.

In the next six questions, participants were asked to recruit an engineering position at a job fair. They were given the opportunity to select a male applicant who was either, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, or Asian. The Hispanic respondents did not select a Hispanic male applicant at any point during the selection process. The
Hispanic respondents selected a Caucasian male only 78%, an African American male 67%, and an Asian male 56% of the time. The engineering field is typically compromised of males in the field and some educational institutions are working to increase female participation in the field. If this is the case, educational institutions should consider Hispanic as recruiters to increase the applicant pool of African American and Asian people to said programs.

The last six questions asked participants to recruit for a vacant teaching position at a job fair. The respondents were given the opportunity to select a female applicant who was either, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, or Asian. The Hispanic respondents selected a Hispanic photo in comparison to other ethnic backgrounds 78% of the time. In addition, the Hispanic respondents selected Caucasian females 33%, African American females 33%, and Asians 56% of the time. If this is the case in a larger sample, companies should consider sending a Hispanic recruiter to job fairs to increase the applicant flow of Hispanics and Asian applicants. This is particularly interesting in the field of education, where teaching Spanish in schools is increasing. Figure 4 represents the selection of Hispanic participants.

Hispanic respondents largely selected the African American photo in comparison to other ethnic backgrounds 50% and selected Caucasian photos 56% of the time. The respondents also selected Asians at an increasing rate, 56%, compared to Hispanics at 39%. It is very curious to note, overall, Hispanics respondents are more likely to approach diverse applicants in a public setting equally. Companies should consider
BIASES AND RECRUITING DIVERSE TALENT

sending a Hispanic recruiter to events in order to attract diverse applicants from all backgrounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Statement I</th>
<th>Statement II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Teacher: Female photo</td>
<td>Engineer: Male photo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Teacher: Female photo</td>
<td>Engineer: Male photo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Teacher: Female photo</td>
<td>Engineer: Male photo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Teacher: Female photo</td>
<td>Engineer: Male photo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Hispanic respondents on race/ethnicity.

It is unfortunate the sample was not larger in number and representative of both genders. The respondents’ selection is not significant due to low sample. It would be interesting to analyze the results of the Hispanic male population in regards to recruitment selection. It is definitely a topic that requires future study.

**Data Analysis Conclusion**

The responses to statement I, III, and IV, suggested as the research set out to determine, there is a bias when recruiting talent in the workforce and stereotypes impact our decisions in first impression situations. However, the responses to statement II indicated that males are likely to approach the opposite gender at a job fair more often than approaching their same gender. Therefore, if a company is interested in increasing
diversity amongst the work environment, the company must decide which aspect of diversity it is interested in achieving and develop a strategic hiring plan to include diverse recruiters based on the need of increasing diverse applicants.
Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Overview

Summary.

The purpose of this research project was to determine whether the individual’s gender and race/ethnicity indicate the choice of who an individual is likely to recruit at a job fair. The human resources professionals were asked whether they completed training about recruitment at work and/or in college. Although the majority had completed training, many professionals still selected individuals similar to their gender and/or race/ethnicity.

The literature review explained that racial biases exist as a child, and this research challenged whether they are present as adults. In addition, previous research suggested that prospective employees are attracted to organizations that picture employees on recruitment brochures similar to themselves. Therefore, an African American female will be more attracted to a company featuring an African American female on the cover of their great place to work pamphlet. The review also cautioned employers from creating diverse recruitment materials if the company is not representative of what is depicted in the brochures. Hence, do not create a false sense of the environment because those newly hired employees may feel the employer is not trustworthy and question the company’s integrity.

In order to determine whether human resources professional would select individuals similar to themselves, the researcher obtained permission to survey 301
members from three local chapters of the Society of Human Resource Management in Kansas. Members of the organization were human resource professionals in the community and were given an opportunity within two weeks to submit their responses to the online study. The participants were briefed on the instructions prior to completing the questionnaire. There were 70 respondents who participated in the study. The response rate was 23.3%; however, the sample was sufficient to analyze the responses based on gender.

The average age of the human resources professional who participated in the research average age was 42 years and they had over 21 years of working experience. However, some participants may not have worked in the human resources field the entire time; 73% completed training at work on recruitment practices. The demographics of the participants included the following: 20% male and 80% female, 88% Caucasian, six percent African American, five percent Hispanic, and one percent self-identified as other. The majority (50%) of the participants earned a graduate degree; 36% earned an undergraduate degree; seven percent earned their associates degree; and the last seven percent earned a high school diploma. Ninety-seven percent of participants completing the survey are currently employed in Kansas.

Based on the survey results, it exposed that people are likely to recruit individuals similar to them in terms of gender and/or race/ethnicity except for males. The Caucasian males were more likely to select a female or a diverse applicant as opposed to selecting a Caucasian male. The survey also lacked a sufficient sample of African Americans and Hispanics to validate statement III and statement IV.
Conclusions.

The first research question suggested female human resources professionals are more likely to recruit female applicants at a job fair. After a review of 56 female respondents, the statement was deemed accurate. Therefore, if a company is seeking to increase diversity in terms of gender, it should consider sending a female company representative to job fairs. This is extremely beneficial in fields in which women are underrepresented, such as engineering and information technology.

The next research question asked whether male human resources professionals are more likely to recruit male applicants at a job fair. However, after reviewing 14 male respondents, the statement was rejected. The participants were asked to make a selection of which applicant they would recruit for a management position for a local retailer. Male participants were most likely to recruit female applicants based on first impressions at job fairs. This is specifically intriguing given that the male respondents preferred females as managers in a retail environment.

The interaction is shown between female and male respondents in Figure 5. Overall, female respondents were more likely to select female applicants at a job fair. Male respondents, however, were more likely to select female applicants.
The third research question suggested that African Americans were more likely to recruit African Americans for engineer and teaching positions. Unfortunately, there were only four respondents; however, the responses were consistent with the statement. African Americans selected African Americans 50% for engineering positions and 67% for education positions. In general, African Americans displayed a preference to recruit diverse applicants. Therefore, an employer should consider sending an African American recruiter to recruit diverse employees.

The final research asked whether Hispanics would prefer to recruit Hispanics for positions as engineers and teachers. The results were not an accurate representation of the population; however, if the results were similar and the sample increased, the statement would be valid. There were three respondents, and Hispanics did not select Hispanics to recruit as engineers, which this could be due to stereotypes about the type of person who is qualified to work in the field or the respondents simply thought the other male applicants were more approachable. The Hispanic respondents did select the female
applicants to recruit in the education field 78%. Hispanics are more likely to select female Hispanics instead of male Hispanics and employers should take note, because, once again, a diverse recruiter appears more likely to recruit a diverse range of applicants.

As shown in Figure 6, is the interaction between respondents race/ethnicity. Caucasians Hispanics were more likely to select individuals at job fairs on a consistent basis between all race/ethnicities. While African Americans tended to select diverse applicants more often. The choice individuals make are based on stereotypes and past experience. Employers must be made aware of these selections, in order to send an effective recruiter to job fairs.

![Figure 6. The interaction between the selection based on race/ethnicity.](image)

**Recommendations.**

The first recommendation is for the Society of Human Resources Management to consider developing a training program for members. The training should inform participants to step outside their comfort zones and to be honest with themselves. Then,
the participants should complete a pre-test that consists of a similar survey used in this study. The test should consider using photos of children and ask participants to select whom they were more likely to play with at the playground when they were younger. Next, the participants would complete a training based on biases in the recruitment process, federal and state laws and regulations, and diversity awareness. Afterwards, participants should complete a post-test that is similar to the questionnaire used in this study. The trainer can use the information to engage the participants in meaningful conversation about the importance of embracing biases. The key in the training is not to avoid biases but to educate ourselves about their existence and how to leverage the biases to meaningful results in the workplace. The training can be implemented at the workplace, seminars in the community and at colleges and universities. In other words, it is important to share the knowledge and experience with others.

The next recommendation is that employers should evaluate their current workforce and consider creating a strategic recruitment plan to increase diversity in the workplace. Given that, females are more likely to approach females, an engineering firm would benefit from sending a female recruiter to job fairs to recruit. This will show prospective employees that the company values diversity and the contribution of women in the field of engineering. Previous research suggested diverse applicants are more attracted to companies with diverse representatives and at a job fair, this will increase traffic to the employers’ booths and recruiters, which this will provide the prospective employees an opportunity to engage the employer of their choice.
Another recommendation is for employers to utilize their current diverse workforce. If an employer wants to increase diversity among the environment, the employer should consider asking employees to recruit on its behalf. The human resources team does not need to be the only company representative attending job fairs or presentations in the community. The company ought to consider identifying top performers within the organization and ask them to assist in recruitment efforts, which this will increase morale of current employees and make them better recruiters.

Finally, an organization shall consider hiring a consultant firm to develop training on effective recruitment practices specific to each department’s hiring needs. In this aspect, the organization would identify the need to increase diversity by tailoring the training to each department, hence creating an action plan per department need. The consultants shall have experience and also be diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity in order to build rapport with the trainees. After all, the trainers are the subject matter experts and should be able to speak in terms of the importance of increasing diversity in the workplace. The training provided by the consultants can be interactive with online scenarios or live role-playing exercises on effective methods to attract diverse candidates.

**Future research suggestions.**

The current study could have expanded the sample the population in more diverse cities in Kansas. A future research study should consider partnering with metro cities for feedback from participants in order to validate the results from African American, Hispanic, and Asian participants. The research can be expanded further to biases about
the Arab community. Given the attacks on September 11, 2001, it would be interesting to
survey the respondents about whether they would select an individual from the Middle
East and whether the burka would impact their decisions.

In addition, research could test the gender to race/ethnicity. For example, measure the choice of a Caucasian male of the following race/ethnicity African American, Hispanic, Asian, or Middle Eastern female. The research would be able to confirm whether Caucasian males are more likely to recruit diverse females to the organization.

Further research should partner with human resources professionals and ask them to complete a pre-test of whom they were most likely to play with at the playground when they were young, and afterwards complete training about diversity awareness. Three months later, ask them to complete a post-survey of whom they would likely recruit to join their organization. A comparison of the results prior to the training and after the training could be used to further study in a qualitative manner and with a follow up method to ask the participants why they made the selections they did.

In conclusion, another method of expanding on the research is to use resumes to distinguish differences among individuals and test if traditional ethnic identifiers make a difference. For instance, a participant may be presented with five resumes and asked to narrow the selection process to two applicants to interview for a position. The resumes may have stereotypical identifiers, such as common African American names, colleges, sororities/fraternities, and residence within the community. The participants’ gender and/or race/ethnicity could then be measured based on their selection.
For a company competing for the honor of employer as choice among diverse employees, it ought to consider an effective method of recruiting diverse talent. The organization should create a strategic plan that evaluates the effectiveness of the recruiters in the field. The plan should consider who is the best person to represent the company at job fairs and will recruit the most qualified and diverse employees. Companies must remain competitive in the industry and be aware of the importance of the recruitment process, especially in regards to diversity.
References


Appendices

Appendix A  Consent Form
Appendix B  Survey Instructions
Appendix C  Survey Questions Part One
Appendix D  Survey Questions Part Two
Appendix A

Study Title: Recruitment Practices in the Workplace
Investigator: Roberta Maldonado Franzen, MSA Program, maldo1rt@cmich.edu
Faculty Monitor: Ronnie Wilson, MSA Program, wilso1rd@cmich.edu

Introductory Statement:
I am Roberta Maldonado Franzen, a graduate student in the Master of Science in Administration degree program, with an emphasis in Human Resources, at Central Michigan University, and I am conducting research to fulfill degree requirements at Central Michigan University. You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this study is to gather data about individual recruiting practices in the workplace so that human resources professionals can better understand how to recruit applicants to their respective organizations.

What will I do in this study?
If you consent to take this study, please click on the link to the online survey. This link is found at the end of the consent form. All answers will be anonymous because no names or employers are asked in the survey. I am looking for your first response and honesty when responding to the survey questions. Surveys will be completed and submitted online though the link at the end of this document. The researcher will compile the data and draw some conclusions which will be available to all participants. Participation is voluntary and the researcher will have no way of knowing who participated and who did not.

How long will it take me to do this?
The survey will likely take you about 7-10 minutes to complete. It can be taken any time until the survey deadline of (insert date) at midnight. There is no advance preparation needed.

Are there any risks of participating in the study?
Although the researcher may work with some of the participants, this survey will in no way impact your position with the university as I will have not have a way of knowing who participated and who did not. Participants are assured that their responses are anonymous. Participation is voluntary and opting to participate or not will have no effect on your job or position. For those who participate, no risk or discomfort is anticipated.

What are the benefits of participating in the study?
The benefits to participating in the study are that the participants will be assisting researchers in learning about recruitment practices in the workplace. This will ultimately help human resources professionals recruit applicants to their respective organizations.

**Will anyone know what I do or say in this study? (Confidentiality)?**
All surveys are anonymous and the web-based survey system will compile the data. The project will be shared with my faculty monitor. Data will be compiled and a copy of this study will be provided to any interested parties.

**Will I receive any compensation for participation?**
There is no compensation or fee to be paid to any participant in this study. Participation is voluntary.

**Is there a different way for me to receive any compensation for or benefits of this study?**
No; there is no compensation for participating.

**Who can I contact for information about this study?**
For more information about the study, you can contact the researcher, Roberta Maldonado Franzen, with the following contact information:

- Roberta Maldonado Franzen, PHR
  - (785) 341-5906
  - maldo1rt@cmich.edu

Or, my faculty advisor, Dr. Ronnie Wilson, at wilso1rd@cmich.edu.

Please note that if you are not satisfied with the manner in which this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MSA Program by calling 989-774-6525 or addressing a letter to the MSA Program, Rowe 222, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

**Additional Information:**
You are free to refuse to participate in this research project or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your participation will not affect your relationship with the institution in this research project.

*Clicking on the survey below implies your consent to participate in this research. This copy of the form is for you to keep for your records.*

**Click this link to begin the survey:**


Thank you for your participation.
Appendix B

Dear Participant:

Thank you for participating in this important survey. Your responses will assist human resources professionals understand individual recruiting practices in the workplace.

The purpose of this survey is to collect information regarding the use of recruiting selection processes of prospective applicants. This information will be a key component in assessing the effectiveness of company and educational training.

The individual data collected from these surveys will remain strictly confidential. No one from your organization will see any answers associated with your personal demographic or personal data. Once all of the surveys are collected, the researcher will compile the results, ensure there is no identifying data and make them available to all participants.

The survey consists of two parts. Part One will ask for demographics, such as gender, education, etc. and should not take more than one-two minutes. Part Two will have sixteen questions that focus around key recruitment techniques in the workplace and should not take more than five to eight minutes. The test will ask you to select the prospective applicant you would recruit for a specified employer. Please provide honest feedback.

Thank you in advance for your participation and if you have any questions, please contact me at the email address given below.

Roberta Maldonado Franzen, PHR
Central Michigan University
Masters of Science in Administration Candidate
maldo1rt@cmich.edu
Appendix C
Survey
Please select the response that best suits you.

Part I: Demographics
Are old are you?: _____
Gender:
  ○ Male
  ○ Female
Race/Ethnicity:
  ○ White or Caucasian
  ○ Black or African American
  ○ Hispanic or Latin
  ○ Asian
  ○ Pacific Islander
  ○ Other
Education level:
  ○ High School
  ○ Associates degree
  ○ Undergraduate degree
  ○ Graduate degree
Currently enrolled in school:
  ○ Yes
  ○ No
Employed:
  ○ Yes
  ○ No
How many years of work experience do you have?: _____
Do you recruit or encourage people to apply for a job with your current employer?
  ○ Yes
  ○ No
Have you completed, at work, training on recruitment practices?
  ○ Yes
  ○ No
Have you completed, in college, classes on recruitment practices?
  ○ Yes
  ○ No
End of Part One
Appendix D

Part Two: Recruitment Selection

Instructions: Please read the scenarios and follow the directions provided in each scenario.

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a retailer. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a management position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

- [ ] Applicant A
- [ ] Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a retailer. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a management position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a retailer. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a management position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a retailer. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a management position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

- Applicant A
- Applicant B
Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

☐ Applicant A

☐ Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

〇 Applicant A 〇 Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for an engineer firm. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill an engineering position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

- Applicant A
- Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

- Applicant A
- Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

☐ Applicant A  ☐ Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

☐ Applicant A  ☐ Applicant B
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?
Appendix D

Scenario: You are at a career fair looking for potential applicants. You are a hiring manager for a school district. Your objective is to recruit applicants to fill a teaching position. You glance across the room and see “Applicant A” and “Applicant B”.

Who are you most likely to recruit to join the organization?

☐ Applicant A  ☐ Applicant B

End of Part Two
Thank you for your participation.