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Perceptions of White Men on Affirmative Action Planning

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COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

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2011

Abstract

Perceptions of White Men of Affirmative Action Planning

by

Linda Lee Hansken

M.B.A., University of Phoenix, 2002

B.S., Widener University, 1990

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Applied Management and Decision Sciences

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Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of White men on whether they should or should not be treated with total equality and be included in affirmative action (AA) planning in the workplace. Previous studies explored the topic of discrimination toward white males and AA. Using Festinger's cognitive-dissonance theory and Adams's theory of equity, this study focused on research questions addressing basic knowledge of AA planning, perceived discrimination, dissonance, and, the perceptions of White men about AA planning. Using phenomenological methodology, data were collected from personal interviews, and analyzed by obtaining a sense of the phenomenon, categorizing the interviews into meaningful and smaller units, transforming the language to emphasize the phenomenon, and synthesizing the meaning into a consistent statement of the phenomenon structure. Results of the study suggested that very few of the White men knew much, if anything, about AA planning in the workplace, and even fewer perceived any type of discrimination associated with it. An overarching theme is that most also believe that AA is still necessary, for protected groups, and sometimes lower income white males, as a check and balance against discrimination that they still see occurring today. The results should assist organizations in understanding the perceptions of why White men do or do not believe they should be accounted for in AA planning, Implications for positive social change include better understanding of the evolving needs as the workforce demographic characteristics undergo changes and this could also potentially help reduce the number of discrimination lawsuits where white males are suing for equal rights in the workplace.

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my mom and dad along with my father-in-law who has always supported me in this effort. Also to my husband, Rick, my soul mate, my first line editor, who has shaped my life in many ways, and has been there for me throughout the entire PhD journey. These few lines are not near enough to show the amplitude of my appreciation.

This dedication also goes out to my daughter Suzanne, my son John, my brother David and my sisters Anita and Rique and a host of nieces and nephews. May you strive to reach your goals in spite of any difficulties you will experience along the way and enjoy the journey in the process.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Since the early 1960s, organizations have had greater regulatory encouragement to promote equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action (AA) (Pedriana and Stryker, 2004). Research in the dynamics and development of various organizational-need theories indicate a changing pattern in improving the well-being and performance for women and minorities, while possibly hindering it for White men (Baker, Wendt, & Slonaker, 2002). However, this change may not be without its internal conflict and potentially harmful ramifications.

The internal conflict revolves around the fairness of AA utilization reporting. AA is a quantitative measurement. It measures how well an organization achieves “equality of opportunity in the work environment by changing the demographics within an organization” (Jones, 2002). In changing the demographics, according to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) clause of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) executive order 11246, all prime or first-tier federal contractors or subcontractors with 50 or more employees, or purchasing orders equal to or greater than \$50,000, must develop a plan to measure, record, and report utilization statistics for the protected groups (U.S. Department of Labor [USDOL], Employment Standards Administration, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, 2004).

To meet the EEO requirements, the utilization report includes each specific job group by organization in a company and specifies the protected groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic individuals, as well as

disabled men and disabled women (USDOL, 1998). It specifically excludes White men. Furthermore, because AA is a legal requirement for all prime or first-tier federal contractors or subcontractors with 50 or more employees, or purchasing orders equal to or greater than \$50,000, management, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC; University of Iowa, 2008) and the OFCCP monitor compliance via the statistical reports and analyses produced by the organization. The failure on a contractor's part to meet this requirement is a federal contract violation subject to fines and penalties (USDOL, 1998).

AA was intended to be a temporary remedy, only to be used when there was been clear and specific discrimination to be redressed, and ending once there was a "level playing field" for all Americans (Brunner, 2007). Due to the absence of tracking for utilization of White men, the number of reverse-discrimination lawsuits, specifically dealing with promotions, is on the rise since the early 2003, indicating an increase in cognitive dissonance, here forward known as dissonance, among White men (Meyer, 2009; D. N. Thompson, 2007).

One example of a reverse discrimination lawsuit is *Western States Paving Co., Inc. v. Washington State Department of Transportation; City of Vancouver, Washington; Clark County, Washington; Douglas MacDonald (2005)*. Western States Paving Co. ("Western States") is an asphalt and paving contractor based in Vancouver, Washington, and is owned by a White male. In 2005, Western States came in with the lowest bid for a state-funded project, which the state rejected in favor of a minority-owned contractor

with a higher bid. Western States sued the state on the basis of reverse discrimination. After losing their case in district court the company appealed to the Appellate Court.

The Appellate Court reversed the decision because Washington State's Department of Transportation failed to prove it had a history of discrimination against non-White contractors. Therefore, according to the United States Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit's opinion, denying the subcontracts to Western States was impermissible and the judge said the case is to be "remanded the case back to the district court with instructions to enter summary judgment in favor of Western States on its as-applied challenge" (U.S. Court of Appeals, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Lynch (1991) and Farron (2005) found that White males perceive reverse discrimination in AA, yet no one has explored the perceptions of White males surrounding the AA planning process. If White males perceive discrimination in AA planning process, their perceptions could penetrate the workplace and create animosities, vacated jobs, and the potential for additional discrimination lawsuits that might otherwise have been averted. A fuller understanding is obtained when all sides of the question are considered.

The research problem this study addresses is that, as the population shows an increase in minorities, the changing demographics may be creating perceptions of inequity and dissonance among White males with respect to their understanding of the current form of AA planning. The study addresses whether White men in the state of Washington, between the ages of 25 and 55, perceive discrimination in the workplace due

to existing AA planning practices, and what courses of action they take if dissonance occurs. This issue could be especially pressing in a time of economic downturn when the OFCCP and the EEOC are reminding organizations to ensure that AA issues play a key role in a reduction-in-force exercise (Norris, 2009).

In the case of *Worth v. Housing and Urban Development* (2002), Housing and Urban Development, the defendants in the case, following the federal government mandate on AA, sought to correct all underrepresentation of women and minorities and ignored the frequent underrepresentation of White men in various job classifications (Casale, Rosman, & Krvaric, 2004). Furthermore, according to Worth's lawyer, White men were substantially underrepresented without any form of remedy (Casale et al., 2004). Because this case is not an isolated instance of excluding White men from employment planning the research questions in this study are an attempt to identify key variables enabling or inhibiting actions taken when White men perceive discrimination and dissonance associated with AA planning.

Background of the Problem

Although AA was intended to be a temporary measure, it has been in effect in some form since 1964. AA was created to overcome the historical effects of discrimination against women and minorities; however, between 1965 and 2000, after the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act in 1965, an estimated 26 million non-Black immigrants were eligible for AA (Farron, 2005, p. 7). These immigrants were mostly Hispanic and Asian, many of whom were "descendants of people who [had] received preferential treatment from the time they or their ancestors entered the United

States” (Farron, 2005, p. 292). According to Bickerstaff, Bernstein, George, and McGon (2006), these immigrants did not experience the “enslavement, rapes, lynching’s, and discrimination” that Black U.S. citizens did. As a result, much of the Black workforce “feels increasingly uneasy” as Hispanic people enter the workforce under the guise of the Black struggle for justice and force Black people to compete with immigrants for entry-level jobs (Bickerstaff et al., 2006).

Changing Demographics

Ethnic and gender demographics in the labor force are changing more quickly than ever before. According to the 2000 Census, there are now more women than men in the workforce (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly (2006, p. 598) conducted a study on AA plans and diversity. They reported that from 1971 to 2002 White male managers decreased from 82% to 61% and that White female managers increased from 15% to 26%. Furthermore, although Whites remain the largest population overall, one of every three (Bernstein, 2005) Americans is nonWhite, a noticeable change from the 1900 census, which showed that it was one of every eight Americans.

This change is particularly visible in California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and West Virginia, because each of these states experienced a decrease in White population (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). Hawaii also saw reductions in reported Black, Native American, and Other people, while experiencing a significant increase in Asian and Pacific Islanders and those of two or more races. For 48 of the 50 states, there was an increase in every non-White ethnicity (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002).

According to Hobbs and Stoops, the minority population grew 11 times as rapidly as the White, non-Hispanic population between 1980 and 2000 (2002, p. 78). In the same time frame black people maintain their largest population in the Northeast, Midwest, and the South. Of all races, the Hispanic population doubled in size, grew by 20.7 million people, and now represents over 12.5% of the U.S. population (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 76). A sizeable portion of the growth rate is attributable to high levels of immigration. Because of these high levels, by the end of the century three states—California, Hawaii, and New Mexico—and the District of Columbia had majority ‘Minority’ populations’ (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 10). In fact, in 2004, Sonoma County in California reported underrepresentation of White men in the professional, protective services (officials and patrol), paraprofessional, office/clerical, and services/maintenance category (County of Sonoma, 2004).

Texas has a 48% minority population (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). In 1960, there was almost an equal percentage of Black and White people (65% and 63% respectively) living in metropolitan areas (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). Of the Black population, 86% live in metropolitan areas in comparison to 78% of the White population (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 98). In September of 2007, Tarrant County reported an underutilization of White men in the professional, technical, protective-services, and administrative-support job groups (Tarrant County, 2007). To date, reporting of underutilization of White men is not required.

Age is another factor in the changing demographics. The 2000 census showed that the White and White non-Hispanic population is the oldest with 15% considered elderly

and 7% 75 years or older, followed by the Black population at 3.5% (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 100). Hispanic people have the lowest population of elderly followed by Asian people, people from the Pacific Islands, and the new “two or more” races category (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 107). The Hispanic population is also the only group in which men outnumber women.

AA, immigration, and the natural-aging process are having an effect on the demographics such that White men, either now or in the near future, may be in need of AA plans themselves. This may even become a greater need as individuals self-identify using the most recent EEO groupings, that is, as more and more individuals declare themselves to be multiracial or unknown (A category defined by Lederman) further reducing the number of White men (Lederman, 2006).

New Census Reporting

The 2000 census allowed individuals to identify themselves as more than one race. This choice can represent any combination of races, including White (Office of Management and Budget, 2000). The areas with the highest reporting of two or more races are in the West, the coastal areas, and along the U.S.–Mexican border. Five states, Alaska, California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and New York reported that over 30% of their races were other than White (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002, p. 88). The notion that an individual can identify her- or himself as being a member of two or more races may add a different dimension to the protected categories, where there is no clear federal guidance (Office of Management and Budget, 2000).

Color Discrimination in Employment

Discrimination in employment is still prevalent (Kravitz, 2008; 2010; Sullivan, 2004), but it differs from the type of discrimination addressed by AA, and cases are on the rise (EEOC, 2008c). According to the EEOC, 374 individuals filed charges alleging color-based discrimination in 1992. By 2006, that number increased to 1,241 (EEOC, 2008c). This is not a case of White against Black: it includes to same-race and –ethnicity. It includes discrimination, of light skinned against dark skinned EEOC (2008d). According to the EEOC (2008d), for example, in March of 2006, the EEOC filed a Title VII suit in Texas alleging discrimination against African Americans in favor of native Africans. In July 2006, another case brought before the EEOC claimed a Dallas-based agency with an African American director discriminated against four Black employees. The plaintiffs won \$200,000. In another instance, in September 2006, the EEOC alleged that a contractor hired Hispanic individuals with less experience over more experienced African American applicants. Finally, in August of 2006, the EEOC claimed that a supermarket chain forced the resignation of Caucasian and African American employees in order to replace them with Hispanic workers. There are many other examples of discrimination that do not involve White men.

Preemployment Filters

AA is a goal-based program designed to provide equal access to jobs, education, and business opportunities for women and minorities. According to Coates (2004), this program can include types of quotas or percentages of what is available. Over the past 30 years, starting in 1980, many colleges and universities used and continue to use race

preference in making admission decisions (Asagba & Kwame, 2004; Holzer & Neumark, 2000). This effort may also work as an additional employment-filtering system, reducing the availability of White male candidates (Flynn, 1999) and possibly making it necessary to track their availability and utilization.

Social Change

As AA becomes more permanent, immigration continues to grow, discrimination continues on many fronts (particularly where there is ethnic and racial unrest), the socioeconomic status of many families has decreased, and the growth rate of the White male population slows, it may be time to include White men in AA planning. A recent memorandum published by the Equal Employment Advisory Council provided statistical proof of the adverse impact on men and nonminorities. However, it is rare when the Council takes action on it. Due to the rapid increase in the Hispanic population, that race is starting to become the standard of comparison rather than the White male. However, the OFCCP is not ready to include White men when it comes to AA planning (Norris, 2008).

If the AA office helps organizations develop recruitment strategies that reflect the availability of women and minorities, and if White men are now at risk of being underrepresented, this study proposes that the AA office also help ensure the equal availability of White men.

Purpose of the Study

This study is important due to the increase in minority populations and a decrease in the White male population which, together, result in a growing number of job groups

that underutilize White men. The OFCCP and the EEOC do not require AA plans for those White men, so the issue remains hidden. Thus, the White-male group may face greater challenges when it comes to finding particular types of jobs. This issue is especially pressing in a time of economic downturn when the OFCCP and the EEOC are reminding organizations to ensure that AA issues play a key role in any reduction-in-force exercise.

This study will assist organizations that conduct business with the government more fully understand the perceptions of White men regarding the effects of AA planning. Additionally, the intent is to expand the knowledge base of AA for individuals studying the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining AA practices. Finally, this study should help White men and organizations determine if there is a need for the same type of social-support structure for White men, such as an affinity group, that currently benefit women and minorities, particularly when White men are the minority.

The process of this qualitative study is to record, by means of personal interviews (see table 2), the perceptions of White men, ages 25–55, in Washington State, on AA planning. If White men do experience discrimination and dissonance, what actions may they take if dissonance occurs?

Theoretical or Conceptual Basis for the Study

This study describes the experience of AA on White men, ages 25—55, using a qualitative research method. An additional goal of the study is to expand on F. R. Lynch's (1991) study of White men and the crisis of AA. The study also incorporates

Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957), Adams's equity (1963), and Pincus's (2003a) exploratory and empirical study on reverse discrimination.

Festingers' Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957) is a seminal work that describes how human minds attempt to deal with contradictory evidence. Festinger's basic hypothesis is that (a) the existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance, and that (b) when dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance (p. 2). As such, cognitive dissonance is the precursor, and a powerful motivator, to reducing dissonance.

Dissonance and consonance describe relations between pairs of elements or cognitions. Cognitions are the things people know about themselves, their behaviors, and surroundings. Festinger (1957) described these elements as *knowledges*. Knowledges are also synonymous with opinions, attitudes, and values. These knowledges are truths/reality to the individuals who hold them.

The reality which impinges on a person will exert pressures in the direction of bringing the appropriate cognitive elements into correspondence with that reality.

This does not mean that the existing cognitive elements will always correspond.

(Festinger, 1957, p. 11)

When they do not correspond due to inconsistencies, cultural or group standards, or contradictions, dissonance develops.

Dissonance occurs on an everyday basis, putting opinions and behaviors in a continuous mode of contradictions, and thus creating an imbalance. Motivations, expectations, and the importance of the elements determine the extent of the dissonance. This imbalance motivates an individual to exhibit certain behaviors that will change either the sentiments or the relationship to them, that create the imbalance (Festinger, 1957; Konow, 2000).

The Effects of Forced Compliance

The federal government mandates that various companies, which meet the specified criteria, have AA plans in place for women and minorities. This is a form of forced compliance. In such circumstances, Festinger (1957, p. 84) suggested that people behave in a manner that is contrary to their convictions, which in turn creates dissonance and the associated activities to reduce that dissonance.

To show public compliance without changing a personal opinion, two conditions need to exist: First, is the threat of noncompliance and second is a reward for compliance (Festinger, 1957). In the case of the AA provisions (E.O. 12246, Section 4212), failure to comply gives the government the right to suspend, cancel, or terminate contracts, debar the contractor from future contracts, and seek resolution via administrative enforcement proceedings (USDOL, 2002). The reward for compliance is that an organization has the right to vie for government contracts. Simply stated, if one wants to continue to work with the government, it must comply with the AA mandate, regardless of its viewpoint. If the view conflicts with its beliefs, dissonance may occur.

To understand the extent of the dissonance, it is important to understand the importance of the cognitive elements (Festinger, 1957). In the case of AA, the reward or punishment in most cases is great enough to produce compliant behavior. However, discontent is growing, as evidenced by greater attempts to abolish AA and legal actions to redress a greater quantity of reverse-discrimination situations. This demonstrates the possibility of a correlation between a strong dissonance and the perception of inequity, as illustrated in chapter 2.

Adams' Equity Theory

Adams's (1963) equity theory revolves around two fundamental questions: What is fair and equitable? What is the appropriate response to a perceived inequity? Adams claimed that concerns over inequities continue to constrain industry, labor, and government, particularly because matters of equity involve perceptions of fairness between the employee and employer. Those perceptions include how an organization considers, among others, "education, intelligence, experience, training, skill, seniority, age, sex, ethnic background, social status, and, very importantly, the effort [expended] on the job" (Adams, 1963, p. 422).

Equity problems can arise if the individual and the organization place different values on hiring, retaining, and promoting attributes (Festinger, 1957). When someone violates expectations, and inputs and outcomes are not in balance, feelings of inequity result (Festinger, 1957). According to Festinger (1957, p. 19), when dissonance exists between two elements, one of those elements must change to bring about a sense of harmony and the important thing is how these changes occur.

Several methods to restoring equity have been suggested. They include altering the person's outcome, altering the person's inputs, altering the comparison of the outcomes or inputs, changing the comparison figure, rationalizing the inequity, and finally leaving the situation. Another possibility is that the individual will change her or his frame or perception (Adams, 1963; Hatfield and Sprecher, 1984). Until recently, most individuals who perceived themselves as having been treated inequitably either rationalized the situation or left the organization (F. R. Lynch, 1991).

Table 1, using effort as the input and satisfaction as the output, summarizes "Whenever the inputs or outcomes, or both, of Person stand in an obverse relation to either the inputs or outcomes, or both, of Other" (Adams, 1963). For the purpose of simplicity, Table 1 uses *high* and *low* as the unit of measure. The numbers are relative measures, where 1 indicates that the individual felt more inequity than 0, and 2 indicates a greater perceived inequity than 1. Table 1 also shows that equity exists when Person's and Other's inputs and outcomes are equivalent, and inequity occurs when the inputs and outcomes are discrepant.

Table 1

Amount of Inequity for Person as a Result of Different Inputs and Outcomes for Person and Other

Person	Inputs–outcomes			
	Other			
	Low–high	High–low	Low–low	High–high
Low–high	0	2	1	1
High–low	2	0	1	1
Low–low	1	1	0	0
High–high	1	1	0	0

Note. The first member of the pair represents inputs and the second member, outcomes.

This is supported by Adams (1963) who had two underlying assumptions: First, “it is not the absolute magnitude of perceived inputs and outcomes that results in inequity, but rather the relative magnitudes pertaining to Person and Other”; and second, if there is an inequity for one, an inequity exists for both Person and Other when their perceptions of inputs and outcomes are the same.

The inputs can take the form of items such as time, effort, loyalty, hard work, commitment, ability, adaptability, flexibility, tolerance, determination, enthusiasm, personal sacrifice, trust, support, and skill. In addition to pay, outputs include job security, self-esteem, benefits, recognition, and responsibility. The theoretical framework section of this study further discusses the resolution of these perceived inequities.

Using the analysis of inequity and the resulting behavior should help in understanding social conflict with AA and point to a measure of control that can be

exercised. AA is a quantitative measurement. As Jones states, It measures how well an organization achieves “equality of opportunity in the work environment by changing the demographics within an organization” (Jones, 2002). Because AA is a legal requirement, management, the EEOC (2008b), and the OFCCP monitor success through statistical reports and analyses produced by the organization.

The emphasis here is remedial. Specific groups benefit as past wrongs are remedied. This model assumes that groups brought into the system will adapt to existing organizational norms. Resistance to AA is based on perceived limits to autonomy in decision making and perceived fears of reverse discrimination.

(Jones, 2002, p. 1)

If AA includes all groups, it is possible to either reduce or eliminate that fear. “As long as racial and gender equality is something we grant to minorities and women, there will be no racial and gender equality” (R. R. Thomas, 1990, p. 109). Thomas (1990) further suggested that there is a vision of compromise. White men acquiesce and recognize non-White men, as equals because of AA, but not without creating a certain amount of tension in the workplace.

As Adams’s (1963) equity theory and Festinger’s (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance suggest, when the situation creates tension, the tension motivates a person to act to resolve the inequity. Furthermore, as the magnitude of the tension increases, so does the importance of the resolution. The inequities of AA are beginning to motivate White men, as is indicated by several recent lawsuits, but the avenues of resolution remain weak (Greenberg, 1990). As the avenues remain small, dysfunctional behavior

may occur. Dysfunctional behavior, including aggressive and violent behavior, can be one of the unintended consequences of inequity and organizational injustice (Greenberg, 1990). Aggressive and violent behavior does harm to both the individual(s) and the organization. Although the population of individuals who engage in this behavior is small, the consequences are devastating (Greenberg, 1990)..

When people do not get the reward they need, they feel dissatisfied but not necessarily angry; though they need more, they may have no reason to expect to get it. But when people do not get what they expect—and what they expect often becomes what they feel they deserve / need—they are apt, by the frustration–aggression proposition, to find that aggressive behavior toward the source of the frustration is rewarding. This frustration brings in a new and highly important value, which may change the terms under which the individual will take part in a social exchange. They may be willing to forego other rewards in order to take revenge on their perceived tormentors (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 153).

According to Aamodt (2004), “Research on equity has recently expanded into what researchers call distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice” (p. 327). These three perceptions of justices revolve around perceptions of fairness regarding the actual decisions, methods used to arrive at the decisions, and the treatment received. There are several factors involved with perceived justice: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, trust, withdrawal, and negative employee reactions. There is a direct link between employees’ attitudes and how they behave, based on their perception of how justly they were treated (Aamodt, 2004, p. 328). To keep the

relationship healthy, employers first must have objective and unbiased procedures; next, they must ensure employees comprehend the decision-making process; and finally, they must provide appropriate feedback regarding decisions that affect employees.

Lynch

F. R. Lynch conducted a mixed-method study in 1991 on White men and the crisis of AA. Lynch (1991) indicated that many of the White men who perceived displacement because of AA rationalized the inequity. Examples include “Even White men who have directly encountered reverse discrimination have experienced doubt and confusion in perceiving themselves as victims of policies of racial preference” (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 180). Some of these men figured “they would get their chance eventually [and that] the goals of affirmative action were worthy and [they] were willing to endure the sacrifice” (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 57).

In many cases of social inequity, the resulting behavior is resignation or rationalization. Departure is another form of resignation. F. R. Lynch administered a survey to 32 White men claiming to be victims’ of reverse discrimination. Of the 32, only 2 stayed with the organization (F. R. Lynch, 1991 p. 61).

Pincus

Pincus stated “To the extent that AA has a negative impact on some whites, I suggest substituting the more neutral term of ‘reduced opportunity’ for the more pejorative concept of reverse discrimination” (Pincus, 2000). However in 2003, Pincus (2003a) conducted a small empirically based exploratory study and an empirical study on what he called “the myth of reverse discrimination.” In his book (2003a) *Reverse*

Discrimination: Dismantling the Myth, Pincus contended that supporters of AA believe that no harm results to White men as a group. Furthermore, if some harm does occur to some White men, it is acceptable because it helps women and minorities and it only causes some White people a minor problem (Pincus, 2003a, p. 63).

Pincus did not define the demographics of AA supporters. However, if a majority of White men believe that no harm occurs, it may not be necessary to include them in AA planning. The proposed study helped to understand the perceived harm, or lack thereof, to White men.

Farron

Farron (2005) focused specifically on AA as a discriminatory practice, mostly in universities where ability and achievement are “clearly defined, measured, and, consequently, compared” (p. xv). Farron attempted to demonstrate that (a) vicious anti-White discrimination has pervaded our society since the 1960s; (b) nonacademic attempts at diversity, “anti-white affirmative action” (Farron, 2005, p. xv), only justify discrimination; (c) if institutions must practice racial discrimination, quotas are the most efficient and fair. Finally, Farron claimed that Whites are the real victims of AA.

Farron (2005), used a multitude of court documents, academic test scores (specifically SAT scores), and other secondary literature, such as news articles, to justify the conclusions. He concluded by suggesting that Asians receive the greatest benefit from government set-aside contracts for minority-owned businesses, the Asian population is growing quickly, and a majority of the Asian population in California voted against the “1996 referendum. This action banned the California government from discriminating on

the basis of race (Farron, 2005). Farron further claimed that opponents of AA avoid recognizing that the real victims are Whites. Farron's work contributed to the belief that AA directly impacted White men.

Assumptions

This study assumed the sample represented the population. Secondly, this study assumed that the survey instrument is valid and measured the desired construct. The researcher was prepared to adjust the questions if they did not work as intended. A third assumption was that the respondents would answer the questions truthfully.

Part of the phenomenological analysis process is to validate the trustworthiness of the core themes. The researcher examined each core theme to ensure it reflected the relevant statements in each of the participant's original transcripts and that it did not propose something outside of the original transcripts (Moustakas, 1994).

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to White males in King and Snohomish counties in the state of Washington. This may affect the ability to generalize to White men outside of Washington State, as political views and job availability may vary in other parts of the nation.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), Washington State has a total population of 5,894,121. Of that, 4,821,823 declared themselves White. King and Snohomish Counties reported their White population to be 1,315,507 and 518,948 respectively. The White male population in King and Snohomish Counties between the ages of 25 and 55 are 323,511 and 127,710 respectively, totaling 451,221.

Following F. R. Lynch's study (1991), and to keep the scope manageable, the age range of interest for this study was from 25 to 55. This range encompasses the largest percentage of working males with the most exposure to AA programs.

Additionally, in an attempt to determine if in fact the White male is becoming a minority, the study included secondary data from the 2000 census, published AA plans, reverse-discrimination court cases, journal articles, EEOC and OFCCP publications, recent court cases that involve discrimination filed by White men, examples of various AA policies, and public-opinion polls regarding AA associated with White men. The study did not include perceptions of current protected groups, friends, or family members of the interviewed population.

Nature of the Study

To conduct the interviews, using a phenomenological approach, the sample size was 30 (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, P. 144). Each interview took approximately 45 minutes. Follow-up on questions occurred only when required for further clarification. The overall process to collect and collate the data took approximately 4 months. The researcher used the snowball technique to find the necessary number of participants.

Limitations

Limitations identify potential weaknesses of the study (Creswell, 1994). This was a qualitative study about understanding how White men perceive the affects of AA planning on their workplace opportunities. First, subjects may have experienced discomfort answering all the questions. Second, when it became necessary to conduct an interview via the phone or the Internet, the difficulty in verifying that people are who

they say they are existed. Third, while the questions were open-ended questions those questions may have limited the data collected from the participants.

Phenomenology does present some possible challenges. The researcher needs to ensure a common theme flows between the statements, meanings, and essence of the descriptions in order to build the composite of the descriptions. This is a challenge because the eventual analysis process is not naturally comprised of checks to ensure this flow occurs. Additionally the experience of the participant is static. The information gathered at the interview represents a moment in time and a particular place.

Static information may pose a problem when developing the essence of the research if the group is heterogeneous, having vastly different experiences. It becomes harder for the researcher to achieve the process of epoche, setting aside all biases and assumptions (Moustakas, 1994). These challenges were addressed by adhering to a phenomenological, systematic approach, by identifying significant statements, creating meaning units, clustering themes, advancing structural descriptions, and making a composite description (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Design

This phenomenological research design consisted of qualitative inquiries of a specific racial group via interviews using open-ended questions, dialogue, and observation. The intent was to collect original data on White men in Washington State using a self-designed and -tested survey. The descriptions gained from the interviews provided the basis for the structural analysis which depicted the noesis of the experience, "a vivid account of the underlying dynamics of the experience, the themes and qualities

that account for 'how' feelings and thoughts connected with [the phenomenon] are aroused" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 135).

To analyze phenomenological data, according to Moustakas, the researcher employs a systematic and thorough procedure. Next the inquirer identifies significant statements in the database from the participants, clusters these statements into meaningful units and themes, synthesizes the themes into a description of the experiences of the individuals (textual and structural descriptions), and then constructs a composite description of the meanings and the essences of the experience.

This allowed the researcher to determine what the experience meant to the individuals who participated in the project, and draw conclusions regarding those perspectives and views of their specific social realities.

Definitions of Terms

This section provides definitions for terms used throughout this study.

Adverse impact/disparate impact. "The effect of disproportionately excluding persons based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, where the tests or selection procedures are not 'job-related and consistent with business necessity'" (EEOC, 1964).

Availability. The availability of minorities or women for a job group means the percentage of minorities or women among persons in the relevant labor area and/or internal feeder pools having the requisite qualifications to perform the positions included in the job group. Availability figures are used in determining whether underutilization exists and determining the level of the goal. (Brown, 2008)

Reverse discrimination. “A term that is used to describe policies or acts that are seen to benefit a historically socio-politically non-dominant group (typically minorities or women), at the expense of a historically socio-politically dominant group (typically men and majority races)” (Nationmaster.com, 2007).

Utilization: Utilization studies compare the data for women and minorities against patterns in the broader region or the nation as a whole, as appropriate for each category of work. The analysis uses the “80% rule”, whereby underutilization exists if the unit figure for either Women or Persons of Color is less than 80% of that for the appropriate comparison group (USDOL, 2008).

The conceptual framework is Festinger’s (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance and Adams’s (1963) model for analyzing actions based on perceived inequities. The participants for the study, a modified version of the one conducted by F. R. Lynch, are employable White men in Washington State.

Significance of the Study

Equity in the workplace is significant enough to have theories, laws, doctrines, policies, and procedures in place to enforce it. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, attempted to ensure that no one discriminated against anyone based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. However, Title VII also created the EEOC (1964) to implement the law.

AA, first used by President Lyndon B. Johnson, was to ensure that women had equal opportunities in federal-service employment (National Archives, n.d.). President Nixon expanded the plan to ensure contractors assessed their employees to “identify

gender and race and to set goals to end any under-representation of women and minorities” (National Archives, n.d., p. 7). Today there are over 160 federal AA programs and numerous state and local programs, all of which exclude White men. With the rapid change in demographics, the wider disbursement of interracial discrimination, educational preemployment filters, and the rise in reverse-discrimination litigation, it would appear that organizations and society as a whole will benefit from AA.

The results of this study will be shared with the EEOC and OFCCP to assist them as they determine the future direction of AA planning requirements, in particular the tracking and reporting of utilization statistics on White men. This research may help abate the controversy over the legality of AA by striving to ensure equality by appropriate representation of all groups.

Festinger (1957), Adams (1963), and F. R. Lynch (1991) devoted much attention to the importance of resolving dissonance and equity in the work place. By incorporating the framework of cognitive-dissonance and equity theories into this study of the effects of AA on the White male, this study updates both theory and practice. F. R. Lynch’s (1991) study of White men who were affected by AA is more than 20 years old.

There is a general lack of recent empirical research on changing demographics and associated impacts on White men. This study provides empirical research on the affects of the exclusion of White men in AA planning, and in particular, it describes how they perceive the impacts of this exclusion in the context of the present-day work environment. Second, this study provides empirical research on Adams’s (1963) equity

theory in the context of the contemporary workplace as it relates to something other than financial equity.

Summary

Current day use of AA as a planning tool to hire, train, and retain employees ignores present-day societal and demographic changes in the United States and may adversely impact some White men's attempts to gain and advance through various aspects of employment. There also appears to be a lack of appropriate attention and understanding paid to these changes and their associated impacts.

The relevant literature review in the following chapter helps to explore these assertions in greater detail.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

The goal of this literature review was to explore, analyze, and summarize the literature regarding the way the members of the White male culture perceive their work life based on the prospect of employment discrimination (Garson, 2008). The comprehensive literature review offered in this chapter addresses

- The theory and concepts of the impacts of AA.
- Associated political and socioeconomic drivers, on the population of White men in hiring, training, and promotions.
- Underlying assumptions regarding AA and the associated current issues facing organizations, minorities, and White men.
- AA chronologically, opening with the first constitutional amendments, Civil Rights acts, Presidential executive orders, EEOC charters, and various Supreme Court rulings.
- Advantages and disadvantages of AA policies.
- Critiques of AA.
- Concepts, frameworks, and conclusions of previous studies.
- Reverse discrimination.

Several government websites were used: Equal Employment Advisory Council, EEOC, OFCCP, and Department of Labor. The following databases were used: Academic Search Premier, Business Search Premier, and ProQuest Dissertations. The following keywords were used to search the databases: *affirmative action*,

underutilization, reverse discrimination, affirmative action planning, White, males, perceptions, civil rights, equal employment opportunity, race, equity theory, and diversity.

The Foundation of Preferential Treatment

The Constitution plays a significant role as a reference when individuals or groups are attempting to monitor the needs of society and promoting specific behaviors (Thompson, 2007). Originally written by White men, it guaranteed rights and freedoms for all men (Thompson, 2007). However, society did not equate that to anyone but White men (Thompson, 2007). As society changed, so did the wording of the constitution via amendments. The question today is, has the change in the constitution gone so far that now that White men perceive discrimination via intentional exclusion from certain rights when it comes to employment, retention, training, and promotion opportunities?

In 1865, the 13th amendment abolished slavery (National Archives a, n.d.). The intent was to provide freedom to Blacks. Freedom, however, did not equate to equal rights. As such, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which granted citizenship and equal rights to all Black people in an attempt to end racial discrimination (TeachingAmericanHistory, 2006). Two years later, in 1868, the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution provided equal protection, privileges, and rights to all Black people, again, to eliminate racial discrimination (National Archives b, n.d.).

Equal protection did not address systemic discrimination. Unions maintained the White status quo. This activity gave birth to the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 along with Executive Order 8802, signed in 1941, and introducing the term *affirmative action*: firms that discriminated were require to take affirmative action to place the

victims of discrimination in the job they would have held had they not been the target of discrimination (National Labor Relations Board, n.d.).

The term “affirmative action” appeared again in 1961 in Executive Order 10952, in which President Kennedy established the EEOC. The president directed federally funded programs to “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and employees are treated during their employment, without regard to the race, creed, color, or national origin” (Executive Order 10952, 1961). As greater effort was still necessary to provide minorities status equal to White citizens, the government drafted the Civil Rights Act of 1964, again to remove racial discrimination against not only Black people but also other “subjugated minorities” (National Archives, n.d.). This provision attempted to eradicate economic and social discrimination by mandating equal opportunities in employment, education, housing, and other areas for all U.S. citizens, and provided legal remedies to those discriminated against (National Archive, n.d.). In an attempt to set an example, in 1965 the government issued Executive Order 11246. This policy was intended to provide equal opportunity in the federal government by prohibiting employment discrimination based on race, creed, color, or national origin in each executive organization (EEOC, 1997, p. 101).

Seven years later, in 1971, President Nixon developed the Philadelphia plan, requiring contractors to establish “goals and timetables” (Woolley & Peters, 1999) to track the status of those AA steps, and increase the number of minorities in the ranks of skilled labor. The Philadelphia Plan was the first plan to introduce quotas (Yates, 1997a). According to Yates, this was the first time White men experienced and voiced concern

about reverse discrimination. With that, the U.S. Comptroller declared the Philadelphia plan illegal in 1968, only to have it rise again with the election of President Nixon.

On the heels of the Philadelphia plan was an amendment to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEOA) in 1972, which used the *Griggs v. Duke Power* case to strengthen the battle regarding discrimination against women and minorities. The plaintiffs challenged two stated conditions of employment: possession of a high school diploma, and a passing grade on an intelligence test (U.S. Supreme Court, 1971). This provided the EEOA with the opportunity to focus on the “consequences of employment practices, not simply the motivation [and]... placed on the employer the burden of showing that any given requirement must have a manifest relationship to the employment in question” (U.S. Supreme Court, 1971).

As a direct result of this case, the EEOA’s goal changed to ensure that Title VII “expressly protects the employer’s right to insist that any prospective applicant, Negro or white, must meet the applicable job qualifications” (U.S. Supreme Court, 1971). Chay (1998) provided a more comprehensive look into the affects of the EEOC because of the EEOA. Chay indicated that the EEOA also allowed the EEOC to initiate civil suits on behalf of employees.

EEOA continued to grow through Title VII statutes. The Civil Rights Act now applies to employers with more than 15 employees, rather than the previous 25, and now governs previously ungoverned state and local governments. Additionally, stronger verbiage and Civil Service Commission enforcement ensured federal-government compliance with nondiscrimination.

As the EEOA grew, so did AA. In 1977 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, claiming that the federal government ignored employment discrimination, defined AA as “any measure, beyond simple termination of a discriminatory practice, adopted to correct or compensate for past or present discrimination or to prevent discrimination from recurring in the future.” This document further admits that when reparation occurs, White people who have done no wrong will experience adverse impacts in the form of lost opportunities (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977, p. 4), whereas individuals who have never experienced discrimination will gain an advantage over those White people (Farron, 2005; F. R. Lynch, 1991; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977, p. 9).

The Public Works Employment Act followed in 1977. This act provided a “set aside” of \$4 billion for minority businesses (D. N. Thompson, 2007). Oftentimes, even though White contractors presented the lowest bid, they were not entitled to jobs associated with these set-aside funds. Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act became key in implementing and sustaining AA programs for protected minorities and women.

The Solidification of Preferential Treatment for Women and Minorities

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Both Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibit employers who receive federal funding from discriminating based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 601 of Title VI; Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 703 of Title VII). Title VII specifically extends power to the Commission on Civil Rights to prevent discrimination and establish the EEOC.

Title VII states that it is unlawful for employers and labor organizations to discriminate against any individual because of their race, color, religion, sex, or national

origin in hiring, training, compensating, terms of employment, and other employment opportunities (National Archives, n.d.). Furthermore, according to the National Archives, Title VII is important because it indicates that

Nothing contained in this subchapter shall be interpreted to require any employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor management committee subject to this subchapter to grant preferential treatment to any individual or to any group because of the race, color, religion, sex, or national origin of such individual or group on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons of any race, color, religion, sex, or national origin employed by any employer, referred or classified for employment by any employment agency or labor organization, admitted to membership or classified by any labor organization, or admitted to, or employed in, any apprenticeship or other training program, in comparison with the total number or percentage of persons of such race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in any community, State, section, or other area, or in the available work force in any community, State, section, or other area (p. 1).

Section 703 makes a point of ensuring the message is not about providing preferential treatment. The following section, 705, establishes the EEO, requires reports of how employers eliminate discrimination, and formulates outreach programs targeting historical victims of discrimination, and anyone else the Commission wants to protect (National Archives, SEC. 2000e-4. [Section 705]). The birth of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 brought about the need for compliance administration, thus, the EEOC was created to implement the law. Again, however, in a fourth attempt to strengthen Title VII and

expand the jurisdiction of the EEOC to private employers as well as the public, Congress enacted the EEOA.

The EEOC. In several of the EEOC's formative years, Blumrosen (1971), Graham (1990), and Skrentny (1996) claimed that the EEOC's administration struggled with state capacity to implement both policy and programs. Pedriana and Stryker (2004) refuted that claim and questioned the conditions required for state enforcement officials to choose a broad rather than a narrow interpretation in courts. When does state capacity expand, when does it narrow, and how does society influence legislation, especially toward disadvantaged groups? The authors posited that disadvantaged groups created sufficient social pressure to assist the EEOC in broadly interpreting the law's procedural and substantive rules in order to enforce Title VII (Farron, 2005; Pedriana & Stryker, 2004, p. 41).

Pedriana and Stryker (2004) conducted a case study using what they called a strategic narrative, which consisted of theoretically framed questions, concepts, and mechanisms, and a system to improve their process as they proceeded. They also incorporated an EEOC case to obtain an empirically grounded explanation of the conditions that existed to benefit the disadvantaged.

Starting with *Griggs*, Pedriana and Stryker (2004) suggested that rulings on Title VII and disparate impact were restrictive. The *Griggs* case had a major impact on the development of Title VII and subsequent law enforcement, and throughout the period from 1971 to 1977, the court expanded and consolidated the guidelines. By 1976, the court had less respect for the EEOC guidelines. In the 1980s, litigants were fighting for a broader understanding of equal opportunity and reduced EEOC interpretive authority.

These actions suggest that society, the law, and its enforcement experience periods, cycles, and historical turning points such that any legal interpretation is rarely permanent (Pedriana & Stryker, 2004, p. 34). It is the same with legal turning points in equal-employment enforcement.

This synopsis of Pedriana and Stryker (2004) validated the back-and-forth rulings provided by the various courts. The key question is, As the legal definition of employment discrimination expands, how will the courts respond? This question is also significant in terms of the impacts of employment discrimination on White men. If White men remain silent, as F. R. Lynch (1991) and Pincus (2003a) indicated, what will that do to move the courts? If, on the other hand, White men become more vocal, will the EEOC lose more ground, or will it change how it defines protection?

The term protection, in AA parlance, currently belongs to women and minorities. However, the EEOA was formulated to help ensure the same rules apply to all job applicants and employees. The amendment in 1972 also provided the EEOC with the means to enforce compliance through the courts and other agencies. With this enactment, the EEOC determined that rules of engagement require constant communication. As such, it publishes a multitude of critical information to both the workplace and educational institutions.

Some of those publications are disseminated weekly in the form of memoranda to inform members of the human resource community. They provide announcements regarding structural changes in the Equal Employment Advisory Council. Additionally, articles relevant to this study include information on Title VII, Executive order 11246,

discrimination, and AA issues, commentaries on relevant cases in the courts and the associated outcomes, as well as legislation under consideration.

Because the EEOC's primary role is to enforce the federal civil-rights laws, it filters all discrimination complaints prior to the filing of a lawsuit. In order to assist organizations through the process, the EEOC developed and provides guidance and views on federal nondiscrimination laws in its *Compliance Manual*. Section 15 of the new *Compliance Manual*, focuses on "Race and Color Discrimination," and provides specific guidance regarding race and color discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In Section 5 B titled "Racial Disparate Impact" the document states that Congress objects to race or color discrimination against anyone, "whites, blacks, Asians, Latinos, Arabs, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, persons of more than one race, and all other persons" (EEOC, 2002). However, the document becomes more specific when it discusses the need to eliminate disparate impact. In this instance, the focus is on protected groups (EEOC, 2002).

In section 15II, the document poses the question "What is race discrimination" (EEOC, 2002, pp. 15–23)? In a subset of that question is an answer regarding "Reverse Race Discrimination." While it starts out suggesting that all race discrimination is illegal, it goes on to suggest, "some courts, however, take the position that if a white person relies on circumstantial evidence to establish a reverse discrimination claim, he or she must meet a heightened standard of proof" (EEOC, 2002, pp. 15–25). Because women are a protected class, White men face an even greater burden of proof.

In addition to the *Compliance Manual*, the EEOC provides a Question and Answer document entitled *Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action FAQs*. One question in particular that relates specifically to White men is “Does affirmative action mean that we are applying different standards for White men than for women and minorities” (University of Iowa, 2008)? The answer does not provide a definite *yes* or *no*, and suggests that the original intent does not represent current-day utilization. It states, affirmative action was never meant to encourage the hiring of any candidate who is less than qualified. One standard should be applied to all candidates. Assuming that there is a double standard implies that minorities and women are less qualified, generally, than White men (University of Iowa, 2008).

The answer goes on to qualify how almost any employment criteria are subjective, often invalid, and require a thorough examination when it works to impact women and minorities. If then AA does encourage the hiring of a less qualified candidate, and the same standard is not applied to every candidate as employment criteria remains subjective, how then does the White male effectively compete in the new environment?

The new environment, the changing demographics, resides in the EEO-1 report. This document combines the information required from relevant employers that describes all employees by racial/ethnic group, sex, employment officials, managers, professionals, technicians, sales workers, office and clerical, craft workers, operatives, laborers, and service workers. The report is further divided into percentages of participation. This report is significant when looking at availability of minorities and comparing that to current employee status.

The EEOC reported that a large percentage of claims brought to their attention relate to Title VII (EEOC, 2008b). The EEOC suggested that they promote equal opportunity for everyone, however on their web page entitled “Strategic Objective 2: Inclusive Workplace” (EEOC, 2008c), nowhere does it mention White men. It does however, specifically mention Hispanic, Asian, and African American people, and female employees.

The changing demographics also bring new forms of discrimination: interracial marriages and families, an increase in immigration, and changes in the racial demographics of the workforce. However, the EEOC continues to use the White male in their examples of race discrimination, and many of the statistics they report approach 6 years old (EEOC, 2008c). They do, however, touch on the term reverse discrimination.

Reverse Discrimination

Prior research on reverse discrimination attempted to enlighten readers that there is no such thing, it is just plain discrimination no matter how you look at it (Pincus, 2002). However, when researching the term, the dictionary defines reverse discrimination in both general and legal terms. Generally, reverse discrimination is defined as discrimination in hiring, college admissions, etc., that is directed against members of certain social or racial groups, as White men, thought of as being dominant or having benefited from past discrimination against minority groups who are now favored, often as a result of affirmative action. (Your Dictionary.com, n.d.; Pincus, 2003a)

The legal definition is similar:

A term used to refer to the exclusion of a member of a majority class not commonly discriminated against, to compensate for the traditional discrimination

against a minority member. For example, management positions traditionally filled by members of the white race would be filled by African Americans, Asians, or Hispanics to the exclusion of any white candidates, even if the latter had seniority or were better qualified by reason of education, expertise, or temperament. It has been contended that such treatment, broadly known as affirmative action, is in violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, as well as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. (Your Dictionary.com, n.d.)

Whether intentional or not, the term reverse discrimination continues to incite and exaggerate the negative impact on White men (Pincus, 2002). A study conducted by Fenelon and Brod (2000) concluded that AA and reverse discrimination remain a powerful social problem facing Americans in “ethnic and racial conflict, and cohesion between racial, gender, class, and age divisions in our society” (Fenelon & Brod, 2000). Furthermore, any misrepresentation of the issues fuels tensions among various groups (Fenelon & Brod, 2000).

The term, coined in the 1960 when hiring quotas for minorities were invoked, is still used today. However, while legally mandated quotas are gone, AA policies now appear to be the basis for most of the reverse discrimination law suits (Flynn, 1999; EEOC, 2007). Sullivan contended that the core of reverse discrimination revolves around the reluctance of courts to infer racial discrimination against White men in circumstances in which they already infer racial discrimination against other racial minorities (2004).

As mentioned in chapter 1, prior research conducted by F. R. Lynch (1991) revealed that 32 White men encountered some type of crisis involved with AA, claiming

to be victims of reverse discrimination. F. R. Lynch's (1991) study revealed that many White men perceived displacement because of AA. Yates (1997a) theorized that AA is the same as reverse discrimination and argued that although such equal-employment opportunities sound good, "they have come to conceal equally unjust, equally harmful, and probably unconstitutional practices that give preference to some at the expense of others."

Additional work by Connerly (2008), Derous, Witte, and De- Stroobants (2003), and Flynn (1999), revealed agreement with Yates (1997b), purporting that AA programs are discriminatory and unnecessary. Connerly posited that Americans expect our own government to treat everyone impartially and equally and that AA is a form of favoritism, especially toward "people of color." Connerly further theorized that when this type of favoritism for minorities and women exists, it is called AA and not discrimination, because it promotes diversity. Promoting diversity is also described as working to "perpetuate stereotypes" and middle-aged White men are tired of apologizing for being White (Flynn, 1999). Flynn further hypothesized that diversity programs hurt society and business and make White men feel as though they are under constant attack (1999). Summarily, Connerly believed that the government should uphold the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which commands that Americans be treated as equals regardless of race, color, gender, or ethnic background.

Stein (1995) presented arguments positing that AA is not reverse discrimination. Stein contended that AA fixes systemic discrimination and is not the source of discrimination. Other research that supports Stein's hypothesis, conducted by O'Connor, Tilly, and Bobo (2001), queried university students in four cities and concluded that all

minority groups are united in the perception that White men are not the victims of “reverse discrimination” (2001, p. 171).

Not only are White men not seen as victims, but they are often called whiners when they mention reverse discrimination (Neumayer, 2008). When Ferraro (2008) spoke about the election of Barack Obama, Neumayer translated her message, as well as those of others who followed her, as condescending, paternalistic, and hosting several nuances of racism.

Research conducted by M. J. Lynch, Patterson, and Childs (2008) theorized that reverse discrimination became synonymous with racial profiling. In the book, *Racial Divide: Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Criminal Justice System*, the authors claimed that “whites have not been the subject of racial profiling because many scholars may take the position that profiling is something that can only be perpetrated against racial and ethnic minorities” (M. J. Lynch et al., 2008, p. 198). This is based on the belief that minorities cannot be racists because they lack the power to enforce anti-White forms of discrimination.

Additional research conducted by M. J. Lynch et al. (2008) indicated that this belief is challenged by some scholars, noting that White men can be victimized by profiling and that Black people engage in racial profiling. The study, however, did not go as far as to determine if White people actually perceived themselves to be victims of racial profiling. On the contrary, Lesage, Ferber, Storrs, and Wong (2002) believed that White men only perceive themselves as victims, claiming reverse discrimination any time an attempt is made to aid women or minorities and/or attempt to remedy an inequality

(p. 162). This becomes more obvious when aggressive recruiting efforts are underway for “scholars of color” (Lesage et al., 2002, p. 125).

The authors further theorized that this perception from White people comes more from “social ideology, perceived group interest, and social ignorance” (O’Connor et al., 2001, p. 201) rather than actual risk of job loss, and/or personal experience with job discrimination. O’Connor et al. deemed that fellow White people, as a group, believe that a very small percent of White people experience little to no reverse discrimination (2001, p. 201). To further this point, Aronson (2008) conducted a study focused on deindividuation, whereby certain social conditions are supposed to “lessen self-awareness and reduce concern with evaluation by others.” Aronson’s study found, however, that White subjects were less aggressive in reverse discrimination toward Black victims than to White victims, to avoid appearing prejudiced (Aronson, 2008, p. 348).

Research was conducted by Sullivan (2004) and Holder (2004), on a phenomenon known as the McDonnell Douglas approach, which in practice for over 30 years showed that the courts now require a plaintiff to meet four specific criteria to win a discrimination suit. According to Muir (2003), after proving that the case, at least on the surface, has merit, the plaintiff must (a) belong to a member of a protected class, (b) prove their job performance was acceptable, (c) prove that other employees in a similar situation, but in a different class, received better treatment than the plaintiff, and (d) show that the plaintiff was harmed (p. 98); thus making it more difficult to prove reverse discrimination.

Sullivan (2004) theorized that the 2003 case of *Desert Palace, Inc v. Costa* revealed that the lower courts are becoming more dissatisfied with the “application of formalized proof structures to reverse discrimination claims” (p. 2). Sullivan suggested

that the courts are more concerned with the constitutionality of race-based structures and how that associates with the McDonnell Douglas framework. If eliminated, then any individual, regardless of race, would present their evidence to a jury, using new methods of proof, which would simply find for or against race discrimination.

Additional research by Sullivan (2004) indicated that even though Title VII, in theory, bars race discrimination against any race; it is allowably superseded by AA requirements. Furthermore, any plaintiff claiming reverse discrimination must prove, above and beyond that required in a case for minorities, that the company traditionally discriminates against White people. Sullivan suggested that both of these requirements constitute reverse discrimination.

A key problem that Sullivan saw is that most claims of reverse discrimination do not address the validity of AA planning. Defendants are not required to justify themselves based on any AA plan and the White plaintiff does not always use AA as the primary cause of discrimination. Regardless of the cause, as more and more cases are brought before a judge, and the courts determine that reverse discrimination is a common phenomenon, more cases will go before a jury (Sullivan, 2004).

More recent literature posits that there may be a direct correlation between the growing number of reverse discrimination cases and the success for White and male plaintiffs, especially as White men decrease in number in comparison to the rise in the minority population (Beckman, 2006; Lederman, 2006; Norris, 2010). This trend warrants watching, especially when the EEOC (2008a) acknowledged underutilization of White men in certain job groups in the latest census report.

2000 Census

The U.S. Census Bureau, in conjunction with the EEOC, the Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Office of Personnel Management, developed and published the Census 2000 Special Equal Employment Opportunity Tabulation. The 2000 Census contained a special EEO tabulation that is a primary external benchmark used to compare race, ethnicity, and sex composition of the internal workforce and external labor market by geographic area and job category. The intent of collecting census data and using the EEO tabulation is to measure the effectiveness of antidiscrimination laws in the workplace. Effectivity depends on having AA programs in place for everyone, even White men, as well as a requirement to report underutilization of White men. Without the specific legal requirement, there is no enforcement. Thus, the OFCCP does not require AA plans for White men.

The OFCCP

The OFCCP ensures that employers doing business with the federal government comply with Executive Order 11246, known as EEO. Each contractor is required to provide information about the gender, race, and ethnicity of their employees in the five racial and ethnic categories: Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and White people (USDOL, 2004). This is helpful in determining a company's diversity demographics.

The OFCCP also publishes the Functional Affirmative Action Programs requirement (USDOL, 2004a). These documents show the establishment of placement goals. Currently the requirement is to establish a single goal for all minorities and "where a substantial disparity exists in the utilization of a particular minority group or in the

utilization of men or women of a particular minority group, the contractor may be required to establish separate goals for those groups” (USDOL, 2004a).

Contractors and the OFCCP rely on U.S. Census Bureau data when making comparisons and establishing employment goals. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau develops a special EEO file for the OFCCP for the sole purpose of AA planning (USDOL, 2004b). These data also demonstrate the change in demographics from the 1990 census to the 2000 census as well as employment availability in King and Snohomish Counties in Washington State. Currently, no Federal requirement exists to develop AA programs for disparities in unprotected groups in any job category. This present-day lack of attention to unprotected groups has given rise to heated debates about the relevance and legality of AA and in some cases, attempts to eliminate AA altogether.

The Evolution of Affirmative Action

There are literally thousands of articles on AA. However, there is little research documented on AA planning as it relates to White men. That may explain why increasing numbers of White men feel the need to speak out about it. Court rulings vary depending on which justices reside on the case, how they decide the case, and what society advocates at the time. The literature describing the evolution of AA defines the series of judicial processes by which AA has evolved.

In Support of Affirmative Action. As mentioned above, there is a great deal of literature supporting AA, much of which is in the form of court documents. Court documents are important because the cases establish law and set the social precedence for AA. In 1978, Bakke filed a reverse discrimination lawsuit after two consecutive rejections by a medical school. In the same period, the school admitted less qualified

minority applicants via a separate policy. In this case, considered a landmark case, the Court held that the use of quotas in AA programs is not permissible; however, it ruled in favor of employing aspects of AA and the use of race as a factor in admission (U.S. Supreme Court, 1978).

Just a year later, the case of the *United Steelworkers v. Weber*, 1979, provided a large endorsement for voluntary AA. The ruling opened the door for providing preference to African Americans requesting admission to training programs. The Supreme Court indicated this did not violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it attempted to advance minorities and it did not prevent other employees from advancing (U.S. Supreme Court, 1979).

Following the Weber case was *Fullilove v. Klutznick*, 1980. This case took a different approach, focusing on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Under the “minority business enterprise” provision of the Public Works Employment Act of 1977, a minimum of 10% of federal funds granted for local public-works projects must be used by the state or local grantee to procure services or supplies from businesses owned by minority group members, defined as United States citizens “who are Negroes, Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts” (U.S. Supreme Court, 1980, p. 1).

Because of this mandate, the court upheld the AA effort as it furthered the government’s goal to remedy past discrimination. Thus, private contractors are required, as much as possible, to fulfill the 10% minority-business-enterprise requirement even if a nonminority business submits a lower bid. The court also declared that several contractors and subcontractors that engaged in heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning

work did not sustain economic injury due to enforcement of the minority-business-enterprise requirement (U.S. Supreme Court, 1980).

Six years later, the case, *Sheet Metal Workers v. EEOC*, 1986 came before the Supreme Court. The court upheld a previous court-imposed hiring plan to eliminate systemic racial discrimination. The District Court-appointed membership goal allowed the Court to measure compliance. This measurement was not to be confused with requiring a strict racial quota. The significance here is that the Court stated that the

membership goal and the Fund order are temporary measures, and do not unnecessarily trammel the interests of white employees. ... [And] The District Court's orders do not violate the equal protection component of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. They were properly and narrowly tailored to further the Government's compelling interest in remedying past discrimination. (U.S. Supreme Court, 1986, p. 2)

In 1987, the court found that the Alabama Department of Public Safety ignored previous court rulings and systematically excluded Black people from employment. Hence, in *U.S. v. Paradise*, 1987, the Supreme Court ruled that a Court-imposed hiring and promoting ratio of one Black person for one White person was not only legal but also necessary to eliminate "egregious" discrimination.

This case highlights approval of racial quotas and illustrates the continuous differing of opinions regarding AA (U.S. Supreme Court, 1987). Again, Justices Brennan, Marshall, Blackmun, and Powell concluded,

The one-for-one requirement does not impose an unacceptable burden on innocent white promotion applicants. The requirement is temporary and limited in nature,

has only been used once, and may never be used again. It does not bar, but simply postpones, advancement by some whites, and does not require the layoff or discharge of whites or the promotion of unqualified blacks over qualified whites. (U.S. Supreme Court, 1987, p. 3)

Once again in 1987, AA gained ground. In *Johnson v. Santa Clara County*, in a race for a dispatcher position, the Court upheld that considering gender as part of a voluntary AA plan, and thus a factor of employment, superseded experience and test scores. As in previous decisions, the Court stated that the plan “did not unnecessarily trammel male employees’ rights or create an absolute bar to their advancement” (findlaw.com, 1987, p. 2). There were no specific set asides, no quotas, and an express assurance that the AA program was temporary (U.S. Supreme Court, 1987).

In 1990 The U.S. Supreme Court held that awarding a contract to an entity that guaranteed minority preference in public contracting is legal. Such was the ruling in *Metro Broadcasting v. Federal Communications Commission*, 1990. The Federal Communications Commission said they attempted to comply with the Communications Act of 1934 by diversifying programming and encouraging minority participation in the broadcast industry. Furthermore, the Federal Communications Commission held that Metro’s policies did not violate equal protection, as they have support and direction from Congress and worked to achieve broadcast diversity (U.S. Supreme Court, 1990). This case is significant because Congress now ruled that showing preference does not have to be remedial because it serves a broader governmental objective of furthering diversity (U.S. Supreme Court, 1990).

Finally, in 2003 the case of *Grutter v. Bollinger* appeared before the Supreme Court. In light of a reverse of judgment on *Gratz v. Bollinger* (U.S. Supreme Court 2003), the Court found against Grutter, a White female, in favor of Bollinger's admission policy when it used race as only one of many factors and reaffirmed its commitment to diversity. For the first time, the court determined that diversity is a compelling interest and as such, using racial classifications is permissible.

Furthering the need and affinity for AA is the Center for Individual Rights. According to the Center for Individual Rights (2008), the Court did not establish clear legal standards. Additionally, the Center for Individual Rights suggested that this lack of direction will create confusion among individuals and organizations for many years, allowing educational institutions to relax the requirement to treat applicants as individuals, and promoting the treatment of racial groups as a commodity.

In 2002, Pincus claimed that AA still remains one of the most controversial issues in its perceived negative impact on White men, even in light of the fact that only 2–5% of racial discrimination cases are filed by White men (Pincus, 2002). Additionally, in 2008, Kravitz made a similar claim regarding the controversy that AA continues to incite. Pincus (2002) concluded that AA does not reduce opportunities for a majority of White men and that White men just need to understand the realities of race and gender relations in this Century.

Race and gender are the backbone of AA planning. A study conducted in 2006 found that Black people prefer more AA than White people (Smith, 2006). In fact, White people prefer little or no AA planning because only a few benefit, due to the efficiencies

of AA, and the rest of White men, as a group, are harmed by the distributional losses (Smith, 2006).

Kravitz (2008) conducted a study on whether AA caused an economic impact on the targeted groups or their organizations, and whether it stigmatized the targeted groups. Kravitz found that opinions varied based on political-alliance, demographic, race, and sexual-orientation differences. Additionally Kravitz reported diminished support for AA among individuals wanting to maintain a hierarchy among groups. However there was strong support for AA when it was believed that workplace discrimination still existed and that AA was a fair means of addressing it (Curry, 2002; Kravitz, 2008; Leonhardt, 2007). Kravitz concluded that AA is still a viable method for organizations to eliminate the effects of past demographic-based discrimination and is likely to be around for a long time. Curry (2002) also believed that it is not just past but current racism, especially among the Asian American community, that AA still needs to address.

Organizations that echo Kravitz's (2008) findings and fight to keep anti-AA initiatives off state ballots are organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women. According to the National Organization for Women (2008), AA is still essential to ending gender and race discrimination except for White men. In fact, their website says, "Until we have fully eradicated the dual and vicious costs of racism and sexism in our society, we must press for programs that affirmatively address the disparities that result from centuries of white male privilege." Furthermore, according to Cote (2007), AA is still necessary because "we haven't bothered to do much of anything else. Hurricane Katrina made that abundantly clear." Additionally, Selden's (2006) study concluded that promoting AA not only provides

greater equal opportunities but also better policies. The real issue is not whether AA wins or loses; it is what it ultimately represents, which is equality for all (Philosophy and Public Policy, 2008).

The greatest collection of literature showing favoritism for AA revolves around universities and their admission policies. Laird (2005), in a documentary, described years of changes in AA policies as it related to Berkeley University. Laird described the impact that the judicial system had on the admissions policies in American colleges and universities, how important a role AA played in maintaining equal educational opportunities, how critical it was to maintain a diverse student body, and how AA would move universities toward a “color blind society” (2005, p, 23).

Stohr (2004) published an in-depth study about the Gratz case, considered a landmark case in AA. Stohr, through a series of interviews, published literature, and court documents noted how support for and against AA was very strong. To some, AA was espoused as not only morally right, but “make[ing] good business sense” (p. 138), creating a diverse pool of potential applicants from which to draw. Individuals also testified that AA was “legalized discrimination in educational institutions” (p. 45). Regardless of the benefits and detriments, the result of the case changed how universities incorporate AA in their future admission policies. This is important because universities are feeder pools to the workplace.

Other literature diverted from admission policies and focused on university-student attitudes about AA. Sax and Arredondo (1999) interviewed 277,850 freshmen students from 709 colleges (p. 440) on how self-interest shapes student attitudes when it comes to AA. Killenbeck (2000) interviewed all first-year law students at six law schools

about their attitudes on AA and diversity. Zamani (2000) also surveyed 20,339 freshmen students from 73 two-year institutions regarding attitudes on AA relative to their academic experience.

Sax and Arredondo (1999) used contemporary court cases cited Kinder and Sears' premise of self-interest. Their research is similar, in that self-interest can equate to dissonance. It differs in that Sax and Arredondo as well as Zamani (2000) and Killenbeck (2000) focused on all races; and Knight (2002), while focusing on the White race, included women. Additionally, they all research the likes and dislikes of the standard method of AA, in contrast to adding another group to the required AA reporting, and their participants were university students rather than full-time employees.

Less in Favor of Affirmative Action. I use the term *Less in Favor of Affirmative Action* because although AA lost some ground, it held its ground in other areas. Referring once again to the outcome of court cases, one of the first landmark cases contributing to the reevaluation of AA is *Firefighters v. Stotts*, 1984. This case attacked the City of Memphis' seniority system. The Supreme Court ruled that the existing seniority system, mandated by a court of law in 1964 to protect African Americans, now violated Title VII.

This ruling meant that it was unlawful to provide a remedy in a pattern or practice by increasing the number of minority workers at the expense of some innocent White people, being those who never engaged in the practice of discrimination (U.S. Supreme Court, 1984). However, the decision did not negate the use of AA when hiring and promoting women and minorities. Again, the Court ruled that displacing White workers from their jobs was a greater offense than disappointing their hopes for new opportunities (civilrights.org, 2008).

Five years after *Firefighters v. Stotts* (U.S. Supreme Court, 1984), the Supreme Court dynamics changed and now a majority of the justices opposed AA (civilrights.org, 2008). This became evident in the case of *Richmond v. Croson*, 1989a in which the city attempted to leverage the Public Works Employment Act 1977 to set aside funds for minority businesses. The Supreme Court ruled that Richmond violated the 14th amendment when it instituted a 30% minority set-aside provision in the City's contracting process.

Here, Richmond did not identify the need for this type of remedial action because there is no history of discrimination toward Spanish-speaking, Asian, Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut individuals in that city's construction industry. Furthermore, Richmond did not sufficiently tailor the program, did not pass the test of strict scrutiny, did not demonstrate a justifiable government interest, and should consider other nondiscriminatory means to reach its goal (U.S. Supreme Court, 1989a).

In the same year, with the same set of justices, another case, *Wards Cove v. Antonio*, 1989b, saw the temporary overturn of *Griggs v. Duke Power*. The Court required the plaintiffs to show intentional discrimination using statistical analysis. A tougher standard was now required to prove discrimination. The Court noted that racial comparisons must remain with the at-issue jobs and the availability of qualified population in the appropriate labor market (U.S. Supreme Court, 1989b). The justices however, remanded the case back to the Court of Appeals. Then Congress amended Title VII by adding the Civil Rights Act of 1991 to oppose the Supreme Court's verdict in *Wards Cove*. This action made it easier for plaintiffs to win employment discrimination

suits and gave credence back to the *Griggs v. Duke Power* verdict by shifting the burden of proof back to employers (U.S. Supreme Court, 1971).

In 1995, *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña* successfully overturned the verdict of *Metro Broadcasting v. Federal Communications Commission*, ruling that racial preference in public contracting is illegal. According to Truesdell (2008), this decision questioned the legality of the Minority Business Enterprise Programs, Women Business Enterprise Programs, and federal contract incentives for hiring the “disadvantaged.”

The Court ruled that strict scrutiny also applies to federal AA programs (U.S. Supreme Court, 1995). Again, however, the Court refused to reject properly designed AA. The court also validated the definition of suitable preferential treatment. First, it is a remedy to past discrimination. Second, it is temporary in nature. Third, they must not use a quota system (U.S. Supreme Court, 1995). Furthermore, according to Civilrights.org (2008), the Court’s decision in *Adarand* was the catalyst for California’s Proposition 209 in 1996.

Finally, in 2009, 20 mostly White firefighters won a reverse-discrimination decision from the U.S. Supreme Court regarding the role race played in job advancement (Mears, 2009). The ruling, against the city of New Haven Connecticut indicated that the City acted improperly by dismissing the results of an examination when almost no minorities passed the test. This case raised at least three questions. First, does the need for special treatment for minorities still exist? Second, did the city intentionally discriminate and violate the Equal Protection Clause? Third, was the test fair?

During the trial, the city contended that Title VII dictates that any actions creating a “disparate impact” on a protected class must cease, and had they kept the test, they

would have been liable under the law designed to remove disparate impact. In contrast, the Court claimed that “The city rejected the test results solely because the higher scoring candidates were white. ... Fear of litigation alone cannot justify an employer’s reliance on race to the detriment of individuals who passed the examinations and qualified for promotions” (as cited in Mears, 2009, para 9).

This case did not eliminate the use of AA, but restricted how far employers can go when considering race in hiring and promotion decisions. The essence is that workplaces need to be cautious, when mitigating discrimination against certain groups, to not discriminate against others.

Against Affirmative Action. Called *the zero-sum game* for conservatives and considered highly supported by “angry White men” (Brunner, 2007; Pincus, 2003a), the face of anti-AA started to take shape. The zero-sum philosophy describes how one group receives benefits at the expense of another. In this case, unqualified minorities, through preferential treatment rather than hard work, receive work life benefits at the expense of White people (Brunner, 2007). However, it was not even so much that preferential treatment existed but that it appeared as though some minorities “enjoyed playing the role of the professional victim” (Brunner, 2007).

A lot of this became relevant in the Michigan cases, where the Supreme Court ruled that AA was no longer the justified means of redressing past injustices (Brunner, 2007). Even though there were a number of AA supporters who filed a record number of “friend-of-court” briefs, the Supreme Court Justice, Sandra Day O’Connor wrote, “In order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is

necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity” (as cited in Brunner, 2007, para 11).

It appears that the “spiral of silence” (F. R. Lynch, 1991) is no longer as silent. After several years in court, with an increasing number of reverse-discrimination lawsuits in the judicial queue, various states decided to combat AA even further. In 1996, California was the first state to do so with Proposition 209. Proposition 209 prohibits all AA programs in employment, education, and contracting in the public-employment arena in California.

The argument for the proposition is “Reverse discrimination based on race or gender is plain wrong. ... Government should not discriminate” (Spann, 1996, p. 204). “[Government] must not give a job, a university admission, or a contract based on race or sex [and] must judge all people equally, without discrimination” (California Secretary of State, 1996, para. 4). Conversely, even with Proposition 209, the state must remain in compliance with court rulings regarding “preferential treatment” and any federal laws that require businesses to meet federal-funding eligibility, Court orders, and federal laws (see Analysis of Proposition 209, California Secretary of State). However, the passage of Proposition 209 did open the door for other states to follow suit.

Washington followed California in 7 years with Initiative 200 (I200), which voters passed in 1998. This is yet another testament to breaking through F. R. Lynch’s “cone of silence” (1991). This initiative asked the voters to prohibit government from discriminating based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, education, and contracting. Similar to California’s Proposition 209,

however, companies must still follow federal laws and government actions that prevent discrimination but also grant preferential treatment.

Several years after Washington's I200, Michigan followed suit with its own Civil Rights Initiative, Proposal 2, which became law on December 22, 2006. The initiative changed Michigan's constitution by adding a new civil-rights section for any public-education body or any other state-run entity of Michigan. It is illegal for these institutions to discriminate in any form in race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin. Individuals opposed to Proposal 2 believed it would put an end to AA. Proponents of Proposal 2 declared it would end preferential treatment and protect equal rights. A large contingency of Black people opposed the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative and many organizations threatened to continue AA measures. Ultimately, drafters of Proposal 2 assured the voters that AA would not suffer; only preferential treatment (Zarko, 2005). Individuals and groups continue to challenge this proposition in the courts, illustrating the difficulty of eliminating AA.

Finally, five other states worked to have initiatives on the ballot for 2008 to eliminate AA. Arizona's Proposition 104, Missouri's Measure 009, and Oklahoma's Initiative 737 did not collect enough signatures for the November ballot, but proponents have not given up (Ballotpedia.com, 2008). However, on March 24, 2008, Colorado announced a new amendment was ready for debate prior to the public vote (Colorado Secretary of State, 2008). A-46, also known as the Colorado Civil Rights Initiative, is intended to eliminate AA (Thi, 2008). It targets the same areas as Proposition 209, I200, and MI206. Individuals against A-46 claim that equality still does not exist between women and minorities, and nonminority or male groups (Thi, 2008). Those who support

A-46 believe that preference based on race rather than qualification is discrimination, and as more people identify themselves as multiracial, it is more difficult to define who should receive preference (Thi, 2008). In addition to Colorado, Nebraska's Civil Rights Initiative also collected "136,589 valid signatures, well over the 112,000 needed to be placed on the ballot this November" (Nebraska Civil Rights Initiative, 2008, para 1).

Another outcry against AA based on race is from a community of Asian university students. Tsang initiated a nationwide group, through Facebook, of more than 950 members of Asians Against Affirmative Action (Lin, 2008). The main reason for their concern is that Asians were overrepresented in universities, which disqualifies them from any AA programs or policies. Additionally, advisors suggested that Asian students not check the box marked *Asian* as it would impede their chances of admittance. Thus, a program that provides benefits to one group at the expense of others is discrimination (Lin, 2008). According to Lin (2008), "Our nation cannot move forward if every race and ethnicity fights each other for shrinking crumbs of opportunity, rather than uniting to expand opportunity for all" (p. 4).

There is a website dedicated to individuals and groups with a specific focus "to promote fair and equal treatment under the law without regard to race, gender or ethnicity" (Adversity.net, 2002, p. 1). AA initiatives, especially those that create the perception of reverse discrimination, are often the target. Although they refer to AA, the site more importantly focuses on the term *affirmative discrimination*, which it defines as a government-mandated AA policy that precludes color-blind treatment in addition to preventing employers for hiring solely on the basis of qualifications (Adversity.net, 2002).

Adversity.net responds to the anti-AA movement with topics about equity. The 2008 racial-equity campaign and the Maryland Racial Equality Act in Frederick County, although old news, are still boldly displayed on the website. Other individuals and organizations either for or against AA cite inequity based on race as the main concern. Although there are literally thousands of articles that focus on either the history, defense of, or anguish over AA, there are very few studies that explore the impact of AA on the White male. Thus, the next section focuses on cognitive dissonance and the equity theory to explain how individuals, and in particular White men, cope when faced with situations of perceived inequity.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper builds on Festinger's (1957) seminal work on equity theory, cognitive dissonance, and their relationship to AA. Adams's (1963) equity theory connects all aspects of the problem definition, purpose, literature review, methodology, data collection, and analysis to determine if White men perceive they experience employment discrimination, especially as it relates to AA. Additionally, Adams's equity theory is still considered a good indicator of organizational behavior (Telly, French, & Scott, 1971).

Striving for Equity

The literature review revealed that various studies show how social processes and exchanges provide a context for understanding fairness, equity, and inequity in work relationships (Anderson & Patterson, 2008; Blau & Etzioni, 2003; Hamilton, 2006; Heinz Courses, n.d.; Nelson & Quick, 2006). Additionally, Adams's (1963) equity theory and Hamilton's (2006) discussion of distributive justice and procedural justice regarding the

social-exchange process, attempt to explain employees' cognitive and behavioral response to perceived unfairness in the workplace, which, according to Steers, Mowday, and Shapiro (2004), can be an extremely important motivating factor. Finally, Festinger (1957) developed the theory of cognitive dissonance, which also explains how individuals attempt to rationalize inequities.

Adams's (1963) equity theory and Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance suggested that people are intrinsically motivated to take action when they find themselves in situations of inequity or unfairness. Inequity occurs when a person receives more or less than the person believes is deserved based on effort and/or contribution. Inequity creates tension, and tension motivates a person to act in a manner that works to resolve the inequity (Ojedokun, 2010). These actions resemble distributive justice whereby individuals expect to be proportionally rewarded for their time and energy (Anderson & Patterson, 2008; F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 152; Van den Bos, Lind, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997).

To determine whether there is inequity, people typically examine the contribution portion of the exchange relationship. Employees weigh their own inputs with outputs of the organization. Individual input to organizational output is the ratio that people calculate and use to make comparisons, as shown in Table 1. Inputs and outputs that are difficult to measure, but are nonetheless important, enter into the person's equity equation (Morley 2004; Bolino & Turnley, 2008).

By itself, this ratio is not especially useful. However, employees then compute the input/output ratios for other employees and for previous work experiences and compare them to their own. If their ratios are lower than those of others, they

become dissatisfied and are motivated to make the ratios equal in one or more ways. (Aamodt, 2004, p. 308)

Adams (1963) also identified two levels of inequity: negative and positive.

Underpayment, the negative perception, occurs when an individual feels slighted by the reward or payment received when compared with the effort exerted. Overpayment, the positive perception, occurs when the individual received more than expected. In this case, a feeling of guilt might exist. Regardless of the perception, however, there is no method of measuring the importance of one over another.

Resolving Inequities

Knowing that an inequity exists, the individual has several options to restore equity. Nelson and Quick (2006) directed the reader to Adams's (1963) seven basic strategies:

1. alter the person's outcomes,
2. alter the person's inputs,
3. alter the comparison other's outcomes,
4. alter the comparison other's inputs,
5. change who is used as a comparison other,
6. rationalize the inequity, and
7. leave the organizational situation (p. 428).

Allen and White (2002) conducted a similar study and formulated the equity sensitivity theory. It complemented Adams's (1963) equity theory and Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance and focused on discerning among participants' responses to perceived inequity. Using a survey instrument to measure equity sensitivity, Allen and

White conducted a study of 240 business students to determine how they responded to a situation of inequity. They tested five different hypotheses and determined that different types of employees will behave differently when confronted with a situation of perceived inequity, thus justifying Adams's seven options. Allen and White (2002) further contended that not all employees will "suffer in silence" when faced with an inequitable situation. It also appears that White men are much more vocal about inequities since F. R. Lynch's (1991) study; however the vocal individuals experiencing reverse discrimination continue to remain in the minority.

To rectify any of the first four options, the individual needs to work with their manager, the company's compensation department, an equity committee, or the legal department. Option 5, changing who represents a comparison other, is more difficult. Nelson and Quick (2006) proposed that in the short term, this may resolve the inequity; however, in the long-term there are adverse consequences to morale and productivity. The same argument addresses seeking legal advice. Nelson and Quick put forward, "The choice of legal tactics may result in equity but have the long-term consequence of damaged relationships in the workplace" (2006, p. 166).

Perceptions of inequity and choices to rectify them have a direct impact on organizational behaviors such as job satisfaction, labor-management relations, and organizational commitment. Each person has to weigh the short- and long-term personal consequences prior to taking action. Additionally, individuals need to feel as though they have the ability to change the situation (Bolino & Turnley, 2008). Although the equity theory may work to solve inequities such as pay, it does not work as well in resolving perceived inequities created by AA (Coates, 2004).

Dissonance, Equity Theory, and Affirmative Action

AA creates a quantitative measurement. It measures how well an organization achieves “equality of opportunity in the work environment by changing the demographics within an organization” (Jones, 2002). Because AA is a legal requirement, management, the EEOC, and the OFCCP monitor success through statistical reports and analyses produced by the organization.

The emphasis here is remedial. Specific groups benefit as past wrongs are remedied. This model assumes that groups brought into the system will adapt to existing organizational norms. Resistance to AA is based on perceived limits to autonomy in decision making and perceived fears of reverse discrimination. (Jones, 2002, para 4)

In 2005, Kormanik conducted phenomenological research using Schlossberg’s model for analyzing adults in transition. Kormanik studied middle-aged White men experiencing what Kormanik termed “stalled careers.” The researcher found that White men experiencing a stalled career also found no organizational support in achieving social equality. Festinger (1957) pointed out that the needed social support may be difficult to find when looking to reduce dissonance, and that dissonance might even increase depending on what a person encounters.

The absence of organizational support and common rules perpetuated the anger many White men held toward women and minorities. “Sociologists have long argued that for a bureaucracy to function effectively, those who manage it must apply rules universally: that is, if they make exceptions for the particular needs of individuals, the whole system will break down” (McClelland & Burnham, 2003).

If attempts to reduce dissonance fail, the psychological symptoms of discomfort become evident (Festinger, 1957; Konow, 2000). Reducing or eliminating dissonance results when one or more of the cognitive elements change. Some of the elements resist or defy change. This makes it important to know which elements can change and it is the magnitude of the resistance to change that helps make that determination (Festinger, 1957). Since its inception, AA has changed but not in the direction of including requirements to develop plans for White men.

Using Adams's (1963) theory of inequities, there are seven methods to restore equity to individuals who perceive inequitable treatment as a result of AA. This may mean altering the existing form of AA. Step 1 is to alter the individual's outcome. For these individuals, it would mean that the organization hired or promoted the most qualified individual without having to justify the choice, if the most qualified candidate is a White male. However, equity is difficult to achieve here because, as shown "In *Higgins v. City of Vallejo* (1987), the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that promotion of a minority applicant with the third highest score over a non-minority applicant with the highest score was legal" (Aamodt, 2004). In this case, close enough, instead of the most qualified, in the courts opinion, is good enough.

What can happen here is that neither the individual hired nor the individual not hired should see this as an equitable situation. In fact, according to R. R. Thomas (1990), "So long as racial and gender equality is something we grant to minorities and women, there will be no racial and gender equality." R. R. Thomas further suggested that there is a vision of compromise. White men acquiesce and recognize non-White men, who thrive because of AA, as equals but not without creating a certain amount of tension in the

workplace (R. R. Thomas, 1990). Although several groups tout that diversity adds to the companies' competitive advantage, this situation compromises it (Flynn, 1999; R. R. Thomas, 1990). In fact, without disputing the social benefits of diversity, F. R. Lynch (2005, p. 183) suggested that no empirical data exists to support the claim that diversity alone is a factor in the profitability of a company.

The second strategy is to alter a person's inputs. This might suggest that individuals only work as hard as they perceive the individual brought in by the AA program does. Another remedy, tried by several individuals, is to change one's input by suggesting they are what they perceive it takes to get hired. In 1975 when two White men, the Malone brothers, failed to pass an examination for entry into the Boston firefighters, they changed their race on the application, retook the examination, and received the job, with a lower score, as a minority. "They claimed they learned they were black after they took the 1975 examination" (Farron, 2005). An investigation followed where several other fraudulent claims surfaced. In each case, it was incumbent on the individuals to prove they were not white. "According to David Haley, the head of the [Department of Personnel Administration], the Malone's worst crime was against the two minorities who would have been selected to serve as Boston firefighters" (Farron, p. 70).

Strategies three and four suggest the individuals alter the comparison with other's outcomes and inputs. When an organization hires or promotes someone using an AA program, with whom else would an individual compare their efforts? Individuals perform the gap analysis on where they are, where they want to be, and what is required to get to where they want to be. If another individual gets that position, that is the natural

comparison other. If that person gets the position through inputs or outputs other than objective qualifications for the job, a social inequity exists.

Changing the comparison other is Option 5. When the issue is AA, if one does not compare themselves to the individual promoted or hired, then the comparison may be with other like individuals perceiving discrimination.

Option 6: Rationalize the Inequity.

One of the most effective ways of eliminating dissonance is to discard one set of cognitive elements in favor of another, something that can sometimes be accomplished if one can find others who agree with the cognitions one wishes to retain and maintain. Processes of social communication and social influence are, hence, inextricably interwoven with processes of creation and reduction of dissonance (Festinger, 1957, p. 177).

This is a more common approach: “Even white males who have directly encountered reverse discrimination have experienced doubt and confusion in perceiving themselves as victims of policies of racial preference” (F. R. Lynch, 1991). Some of these men figured “they would get their chance eventually [and that] the goals of AA were worthy and [they] were willing to endure the sacrifice” (F. R. Lynch, 1991). Because of the tremendous force behind this particular social inequity, the resulting behavior is resignation. Furthermore, according to Allen and Montgomery (2001), depending on where an individual is in their career, it might be easier to accept that someone else, less qualified, gets a job or a promotion over more qualified individuals. These authors brought up the issue of the disparity gap between White and Black people’s beliefs about how much Black people remain disadvantaged (Allen & Montgomery, 2001).

The issue however, goes beyond just Black and White. Black people, after 40 years of AA programs, do not see the same advantage as recent immigrants (Farron, 2005). Part of the reason Black people remain disadvantaged is because Asian people are also a protected group; however, as a group, they have a higher average intelligence and income than White people (Farron, 2005, p. 275). Farron suggested that, in the current form of AA, it makes no sense that Asian people are included in AA programs as a protected minority.

Allen and Montgomery (2001) also corroborated F. R. Lynch's (1991) belief that reverse discrimination receives the silent treatment, indicating that if no one complains, the problem must be personal. Pincus (2003a) and Truesdell (2008) attempted to rationalize or even dispute the fact that reverse discrimination exists (as cited in Pincus, 2003a). Pincus (2003a) conducted a study of White men. Pincus asked participants if they really are victims of race and sex discrimination, whether AA hurt them, and if so, how and to what extent. Pincus (2003a) hypothesized that White men alleged discrimination when a promotion or the loss of a job were involved rather than hiring situations or those that involved AA goals. Pincus (2003a) also hypothesized that allegations of discrimination by White men were less credible.

Pincus (2003a) indicated that the findings did not provide sufficient data to substantiate the hypothesis, however Pincus still claimed that the findings should "take some wind out of the sails of the conservative, anti-affirmative action movements" (p. 120). The researcher indicated that the data did not show a "large" negative impact on White men. One plausible explanation is that individuals experiencing reverse

discrimination remained silent, which supported F. R. Lynch's (1991) claim. A second plausible explanation is that there was little to no negative impact on White men.

Finally, in Pincus's (2003a) summary, the author suggested that antidiscrimination and AA policies need strengthening, and there should be less focus on any "negative impacts to White men as a result of AA" (p. 146). Removing the focus from impacts to White men is what F. R. Lynch termed the *cone of silence* (1991, p. 8).

The last option discussed is to leave the organizational situation. Festinger (1957, p. 24) suggested that when the change is painful or involves a loss, there is a definite resistance to change, the magnitude of which is determined by the extent of the pain. F. R. Lynch (1991) conducted a survey of 32 White men claiming to be victims' of reverse discrimination. Of the 32, only 2 stayed with the organization. A study conducted by Telly et al. (1971) also found that perceptions of inequity directly correlate with employee turnover. Furthermore, those who do not leave adversely affect interpersonal relationships and job productivity. As Adams's (1963) equity theory suggested, when the situation creates tension, then the tension motivates a person to act in a manner to resolve the inequity. In this instance, the action is to refuse to change one's behavior to adapt to the situation.

Festinger (1957) pointed out that adapting to all change may not be possible for a variety of reasons: first, the individual cannot control their emotional reaction to the situation; second, the new behavior may be unknown to the individual; and third, some actions or reactions are irrevocable (p. 24). The perceived inequities of AA may be beginning to motivate White men, but the avenues of resolution remain weak.

Stodolska (2005) conducted a study specifically looking for behaviors that predicted if someone would discriminate. This author defined three stages of behavior that appear to be consistent with discriminatory actions. These stages consist of first, relying on existing information to develop beliefs about groups; second, combining new information with preexisting beliefs and developing either a good or a bad attitude; and finally, weighing the benefits versus the consequences of possible actions, and then developing specific behaviors. Knowing this pattern can assist companies in developing methods to intercede and reduce discriminatory practices.

One behavior that Stodolska (2005) said appears to predict discriminatory actions is the incompatibility of value systems, such as AA, with certain minorities, that results in someone feeling threatened about losing an expected job, training, or promotion, and having no control over the situation. Deslippe (2004) conducted a case study involving the Detroit Police Department. In anger, several White male police officers, in the face of AA, defended their seniority system by participating in several reverse-discrimination protests. They demanded an emphasis on individual rights, merit, and other specific qualifications.

In March 1993, after 20 years of opposition, even though the court ruled the AA program violated the 14th Amendment, it reiterated that the AA program created “real and unfortunate injuries,” however, the burden on the innocent was necessary. As a direct result of the anger and the Court’s opinion, the workplace and the town remained divided for more than 2 decades, and the White men affected continued to feel angry and demoralized over losing the “deserved” career opportunities that went to others (Deslippe, 2004; Thompson, 2007).

Finally, according to Stodolska (2005), although this model is not yet scalable to groups, it does predict individual behaviors. Because most human behavior is adaptable to change, people can work to modify actions and feelings as situations change (Festinger, 1957). Knowing which change is possible will help formulate policies to reduce discriminatory behaviors (Stodolska, 2005).

New Perspectives on Equity Theory

New research has provided new theories. Allen and White (2002) and Nelson and Quick (2006) studied three types of behaviors based on preferences for equity: equity sensitives, benevolents, and entitleds. The equity sensitives use the original formula for their comparisons. Benevolents, known as givers, are content with a slightly lower ranking than their comparison others. Benevolents also tolerate being underrewarded more than the other types (Bolino & Turnley, 2008). Entitleds, known as takers, prefer a higher equity ratio than their comparison others. Additionally, they are less tolerant of being underrewarded (Bolino & Turnley, 2008).

Dysfunctional behavior can be one of the unintended consequences of inequity and organizational injustice. Aggressive and violent behavior does harm to both the individual and the organization (Sommers, Schell, & Vodanovich, 2002). Although the population of individuals who engage in this behavior is small, the consequences are devastating.

According to the literature review, there are several factors involved with perceived justice. They include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, trust, withdrawal, and negative employee reactions. There is a direct link between an employee's attitudes and how they behave, based on their perception of how

justly they were treated. When anyone, and for this study, White men, believe they receive unfair treatment, whether it is under the premise of AA or diversity, according to Adams's (1963) equity theory and research conducted by Sommers et al. (2002), they engage in some form of activity to restore equity.

This theory correlates to the increase in the rate of reverse-discrimination lawsuits (Small Business Encyclopedia, 2008). To keep the relationship healthy, employers first must have fair procedures (Sommers et al., 2002); next, ensure that employees comprehend the decision-making process; and finally, provide appropriate feedback regarding decisions that affect the employee.

Method of Study

This study is strictly qualitative, using phenomenology to obtain an understanding of the White male culture as it applies to workplace practices surrounding AA planning. It is limited to one group, often with a similar characteristic, based in the qualitative tradition, in order to develop a comprehensive analysis (Creswell, 1998; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Moustakas, 1994).

In this study, the group is White men in the state of Washington. Several theoretical and philosophical frameworks, procedures, and processes exist, that ground a given study (Creswell, 1998). It is the assumptions, whether they are ontological, epistemological, or axiological, that distinguishes the qualitative from the quantitative approach. This study used the ontological assumption in that it reports participants' views and diversity of opinion, then using the inductive approach, generalizes the details gathered.

The other two—the epistemological and axiological methods—necessitate close proximity between the data studied and the researcher, or the researcher interjects personal values on the participants' personal account, which is not the intent of this study. The fact that White men may need employment protection as minorities was at one time unthinkable. Thus, although the process exists to accommodate them, the federal requirements do not, nor are the courts vigilant in its support (EEOC, 2008c).

There is a need to determine if White men feel the need for protection, and if so, what should that form of protection be. This study contributes to the understanding of this phenomenon by using some of the six major sources of data: “documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts” (Creswell, 1998, p. 123).

Additional data analysis will describe the distribution of the population, various characteristics, and attitudes (Singleton & Straits, 2005). Using data from the 2000 census and more recent numbers published by the EEOC, it will show the trend of White men compared to other minorities in the workplace. The purpose of this type of data collection is to remain objective, and perform deductive reasoning in analyzing the future trend of the workforce.

The methodology for this study somewhat mimics that of F. R. Lynch's (1991) study to determine how White men, their coworkers, and their families reacted to what were perceived as reverse-discrimination situations. F. R. Lynch's (1991) study, both investigatory and qualitative, using case studies and interviews, still speaks to the heart of the issue today. F. R. Lynch (1991) interviewed 32 White men and their associated

networks and described the White men as experiencing behaviors such as those portrayed by Adams (1963).

The biggest blockade to justice was what Lynch referred to as the “spiral of silence” (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 112). In talking about reverse discrimination, a majority of individuals, such as victims, the media, and corporations would prefer to remain quiet about it (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 112). F. R. Lynch (1991) also discovered that White men, considering themselves as having experienced discrimination, experience doubt and confusion, particularly because it was taboo to see White people, and in particular White men, in this role (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 180). To determine how White men perceive their situation today, participants in this study received a modified version of F. R. Lynch’s (1991, p. 202) interview questions. F. R. Lynch (1991) developed interview questions that this study replicated, with some changes to address today’s situation. Additionally, the results of F. R. Lynch’s (1991), Farron’s (2005), and Pincus’s (2003a) studies will provide an appropriate basis for comparison.

Summary

The literature reviewed for this paper holds many themes. The first is that discrimination, in many forms, thrives, and eradicating it is highly unlikely (Selden, 2006). As such, antidiscrimination laws are necessary and need to address social problems (Primus, 2003; Selden, 2006). Secondly, U.S. demographics are changing, making, in some cases, the White male the minority, and many other minorities eligible for protected status (Farron, 2005). Thirdly, there are many opinions about AA. Is it right? is it wrong? and is there still a need for it? (Selden, 2006).

Advocates and opponents still hotly debate those questions; however as long as discrimination exists, there needs to be some type of remedy, and that remedy needs to be fair to everyone. Additionally, Primus (2003), and Farron (2005) suggested that unless Congress promotes equal-employment allocation to people proportionally by race, they promote an unintended social harm, namely that of reverse discrimination, which has a statistically disparate impact on White people. Finally, the courts continue to view discrimination toward White men, in many instances, as a small inconvenience to the group of White men. This view does not help individual White men who never engaged in the practice of discrimination (U.S. Supreme Court, 1984).

F. R. Lynch (1991), Pincus (2003a), Kormanik (2005), and Farron (2005) interviewed various groups of White men about reverse discrimination; however, they did not focus on them as a group, in AA plans. Using the literature listed here, and the appropriate research method, I built on their research to further the body of knowledge surrounding the effects of White men' perceptions of employment discrimination, as it relates to AA planning. In chapter 3 I present the method of research, the design of the study, and the data collection process.

Chapter 3: Method of Research

Introduction

Chapter 3 covers, first, the overall research design, methodology, sample and target population, sampling procedure, and instrumentation. Next, it explains how the data will be presented and analyzed. The chapter closes with the role of the researcher, addressing researcher bias, ethical considerations, and participant confidentiality

. Included in Chapter 3 are three main research issues.

1. What levels, if any, do White men in Washington experience discrimination associated with the current form of AA planning?
2. What levels of dissonance, if any, do White men in Washington experience if discrimination is perceived?
3. If White men perceive discrimination and associated dissonance, what actions do they take to resolve the situation?

Design of the Study

Method of Inquiry

The researcher used a qualitative methodology to determine the perceptions of Washington State's White men on employment discrimination. According to Creswell, qualitative research,

is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (1998, p. 15)

Qualitative methodology is employed in this study because the United States' White men, becoming a minority, are unsupported, with no available theories and variables to explain their reactions to the impact of trends on their recruitment, employment, training, and mentoring opportunities. More importantly, this study, using the survey questions, explores if and how AA plays a role.

Creswell (1998, p. 86) described five traditions to consider when conducting a study: ethnography, biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and case. Each of these approaches have two things in common: “They focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings—that is, in the real world. And second, they involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 133). However, they differ based on various assumptions, the nature of reality, the purpose of the study, and the type of data to be collected.

Creswell (1998) also defined five philosophical assumptions and associated implications: ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, and methodological. Ontological assumptions question the nature of reality, are subjective, and employ quotations and themes from participants, providing different perspectives. The epistemological assumption questions the relationship between the researcher and the research, with the researcher being in close proximity to the research, possibly as an insider, and includes field time with participants. Third, axiological assumptions question the role of values, such that the researcher interprets the values and biases as a part of the narrative from the perspective of the researcher and the participants.

The fourth assumption is rhetorical whereby a narrative and possible first-person style engages the reader. Finally, when using the methodological philosophical

assumption, the researcher employs inductive logic, starting with details and moving toward generalizations, making multiple revisions to the questions along the way (Creswell, 1998, p. 75). The philosophical assumptions for this study are ontological in that they question the nature of the reality and describe meaning. This reality of White men should prove to be subjective and different among all the participants (Creswell, 1998, p. 75).

Justification of Phenomenology

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), and Moustakas (1994), there is no cookbook for determining the proper research design. There are five basic types to choose from, each one specifying its own focus and method. This study chose the phenomenological method over biography, ethnography, case study, and grounded theory.

A biography requires a researcher to tell the life story of a single individual (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This did not fit with this study, because it required the perceptions of several White men on a single topic. Conducting a study of one White male would not provide a theory that can be generalized to other White men and severely limits the applicability of the study.

Grounded theory is similar to a case study in that one method of collecting information is through personal interviews. However, it differs in that a grounded theory has, at its focus, a central phenomenon to construct a theory. The intent of this study was not to develop a central theory; rather it was to ascertain whether White men perceive they experience employment discrimination and whether it related to AA or not.

Case studies work best when the focus is on a particular individual, program, or event in a defined period of time (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). It requires detailed data collection using multiple sources of information (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). Because AA does not affect just one individual, program, or event it was not a good choice for this study.

Ethnography deals with the scientific description of individual cultures, their behaviors, customs, and ways of life (Moustakas, 1994). The ethnographic design focuses on smaller cultures such as that of White men affected by AA laws. It is the best choice when the researcher wants to gain an understanding of the complexities of a specific culture and remain flexible in the choice of methods to obtain the information. It was not used in this research because the researcher must spend time with groups to understand the culture and this study did not include obtaining access and acceptance by specific cultural groups.

Finally, this study incorporated the phenomenology method because it requires identifying specific individuals having the same or similar experience. It suggests that a caring interaction exists between the researcher and the participant over a specific event. In order to capture a comprehensive account of the individual's experience (Moustakas, 1994) and gain an understanding of how any White male perceives employment discrimination and its association to AA, the researcher employed lengthy interviews with thirty individuals regarding their experience with the phenomenon under study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Additionally, when using the phenomenological approach it was necessary that I identify all biases, preconceived ideas, and judgments about what I believed to be real,

and then suspended them until those beliefs were founded on a more certain basis (Moustakas, 1994).

This qualitative approach allowed the researcher to search for meanings and the fundamental nature of the participant's experiences versus providing measurements and explanations. Phenomenology provided the frame within the questions that gave direction and clarity to the meaning, allowing the researcher to process, see, reflect, and know (Moustakas, 1994).

Exploratory verses. Descriptive vs. Explanatory

Choosing, knowing, and understanding the purpose is important, as each of the three functions have different implications for research design. According to Singleton and Straits (2005),

Research is undertaken for three broad purposes: The first is to explore a phenomenon, become familiar with it, gain insight, and understand it, in order to formulate a more precise research problem for further study. Secondly, the research should describe the object of the research as completely, precisely, and accurately as possible. Finally, the researcher conducts research to examine, and formally to test, relationships among variables. (p. 68)

Exploratory studies address a relatively unknown or unexplained phenomenon. No clear boundaries exist for the independent and dependent variables or categories of observation. Explanatory studies test relationships and formally seek answers to a problem or a hypothesis. This differs from descriptive studies in that "purely descriptive research operates at a lower level of description by merely seeking information about

isolated variables, whereas explanatory research goes beyond this step to a description of relationships among variables” (Singleton & Straits, 2005, p. 69).

Finally, a descriptive study describes a phenomenon in a more structured fashion than exploratory research. The primary goal revolves around fact finding with a focus on a few dimensions, incorporating numerical descriptions. The researcher uses a set of cases to gather the information and generalize the findings. A key attribute of a descriptive study is to understand a portion of a specified population who hold certain opinions or views.

This study was a descriptive study and confined itself to understanding how employable White men perceive AA issues related to the current form of AA planning in the State of Washington. The focus was on the group, White men, with an attempt to aggregate the data to other levels of analysis, such as an analysis of the responsibility of the EEOC and the OFCCP in ensuring equal employment opportunities for everyone.

Sample and Population

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), conducting a descriptive study determines the nature of how things are, particularly when surveying a large population to describe one or more characteristics. As stated in chapter 1 the intended population is White men between the ages of 25 and 55 living in Washington State in either King or Snohomish counties. The ability to impart transferability of this data provides the external validity of a research study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 198).

Sampling Procedure

The rationale for conducting a descriptive study was to determine how things are. The purpose for sampling and the parameters of the population drove the sampling

procedure. It was important to give the process careful consideration, because the sampling procedure guides the researcher toward reaching conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 199). This research requires sampling of individuals for a specific purpose and requires that those individuals typify a population. To determine how things are with respect to employment discrimination among White men in the State of Washington, the researcher used selected representatives who typify that population. As such, this research used nonprobability purposive sampling as well as incorporating the snowball technique, requesting referrals to other individuals to participate in the study.

Sample Population

It is important to understand the sample size necessary to represent the population. According to Aczel and Sounderpandian, “Get as large a sample as you can afford. If possible, sample the entire population” (2006, p. 266). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), the State of Washington has a total population of 5,894,121 individuals. Of that number, 4,821,823 declared themselves White. King and Snohomish Counties reported their White population to be at 1,315,507 and 518,948 respectively. The White male population in King and Snohomish Counties between the ages of 25 and 55 is 323,511 and 127,710 respectively, approximately totaling 451,000. This age range encompasses the largest percentage of working males who possibly having some experience with or knowledge of AA.

Various constraints of this study prohibited interviewing all 451,000 White men. To determine the appropriate sample size for a phenomenological study, Leedy and Ormrod recommended interviewing between “5 and 25 individuals” (2005, p.144).

To satisfy the qualitative aspect of the study, a sample size of 30 is more than sufficient, based on previous studies whereby F. R. Lynch (1991) and Pincus (2003a) interviewed only 32 and 6 White men respectively.

Each interview took an average of 45 minutes. Follow-up to clarify any misunderstanding of the answers occurred only if the researcher required further clarification. The overall process to collect and collate the data took approximately 6 months. The researcher generalized the results as the sampling frame is a fair representation of the population (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2006).

Gaining access to participants involved determining where and how to find volunteers, obtaining their permission, providing a letter of introduction, and securing cooperation (Singleton & Straits, 2005, p. 248). Once the researcher had individuals to interview, it was important to get them to speak openly and provide pertinent information. This involved developing a sense of trust. Once trust was established, the researcher built a rapport with a participant and commenced with the interview. Information provided to participants included their right to withdraw, the central purpose of the study, any known risks and benefits, and a form for their signature (Singleton & Straits, 2005, p. 116).

Data Collection

When planning for data collection, the researcher considered issues related to validity, reliability, ethics, data acquisition, and data interpretation to resolve the overall research problem (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 104). Leedy and Ormrod suggested the researcher consider four fundamental questions regarding the data: (a) What data are necessary? (b) Where are the data located? (c) How will the researcher secure the data?

and (d) How will the researcher interpret the data? To answer these questions, this research used multiple sources of data. The main source of data was the interviews. They were supplemented with documents such as relevant laws, EEOC and OFCCP regulations, enforcements, and other archival sources of data such as the Census 2000, that provided evidence of demographic changes. Finally, the researcher added any observational notes taken during the interview.

Interviews. The interview is the oldest and most highly regarded method of survey research (Singleton & Straits, 2005, p. 238). Interviews allow for a rapid response rate, more responses obtained, and reduced nonresponsive error or bias. Additionally, they facilitate better discussion sessions. For this research, each respondent experienced one interview, either in person or by telephone. The participant was only contacted a second time if clarification was required. Taping and transcribing the interviews ensured accurate data collection.

F. R. Lynch (1991) developed a survey to determine “the reactions of white males to affirmative action barriers” (p. xvi). F. R. Lynch (1991) referenced other studies that tested White males’ attitudes toward AA. F. R. Lynch posited that

though attitude surveys are amenable to quantitative techniques championed by many leading sociologists, affirmative action realities are resistant to count-and-prove approaches...When studying White men’ reactions to reverse discrimination, the researcher must deal with the subjects’ strong feelings of self-censorship, pride, shame, pain, and blame. (1991, p. 52)

F. R. Lynch (1991) and two other interviewers employed a flexible open-ended interviewing format, ensuring they captured the respondent's own words. F. R. Lynch engaged in an investigatory qualitative study, using a case-study approach (1991, p. xvi).

This research started with an adaptation of F. R. Lynch's (1991) survey questions. F. R. Lynch (1991) provided the researcher with approval to start with that survey (see Appendix A) and enhance the questions to address the needs of this study. F. R. Lynch (1991) also used networking, and referral chains, which focus on hidden or rare populations, to obtain the 32 participants for the study, which this study also employed. In chain sampling, "investigators use links between people to find other people to include in the sample" (S. K. Thompson, 2003, p. 305). Additionally, to help ensure that facts are not distorted, F. R. Lynch (1991) used many direct, detailed quotations, which is another aspect used in the present study. The survey instrument, shown in Table 2, is how this research captured the basic information about respondents, as well as their individual views on the subject of AA and discrimination against White men.

Each participant signed a consent form (see Appendix B) that provided a statement describing the study, the selection criteria, disclosure of the role of the researcher, description of the procedures, the expected duration of the subject's participation, and a description of any risks or anticipated benefits. The consent form also stressed that participation was voluntary, that anyone could withdraw at anytime with no penalty, and that their information would remain confidential. Additionally, participants received a copy of the form for their files.

Table 2

Interview Instrument

Ref	Question
D1	Participant
D2	Age
D3	Washington County
D4	Place of Birth
D5	Marital status
D6	How long in Washington
D7	Education
D8	Current Occupation
D9	Previous Occupation
D10	Estimated Annual Income
1	What do you know about affirmative action
2	Describe what you know about an affirmative action plan
3	Who does affirmative action planning and why
4	Define any benefits from affirmative action that you might be aware of
5	Describe your overall perception of affirmative action.
6	How long have you known about the EEOC's requirement for affirmative-action planning?
7	Have you ever felt discriminated against as a white male?
8	What job were you in when you first detected discrimination against you because of your race or sex?
9	If it was your race or your sex that were held against you, or both, can you explain how?
10	How was your awareness sharpened by a specific event or was it more of a cumulative pattern of occurrences?
11	What were the circumstances involved?
12	How did you respond to this situation?
13	How did you speak out and to whom?
14	If you did not speak out, why not?
15	If you did speak out, what were the results?
16	What were the perceptions of others at your work setting?
17	Describe who else was being hired or promoted at the time.
18	How did you account for the white males being promoted at the time?
19	How did they account for their promotion?

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- 20 One thing that is sometimes mentioned in these situations is that “other factors” were involved, such as the employee’s personality, his real or suspected sexual or drinking habits, his politics, etc. Did any of these “other factors” have had a bearing on your situation?
- 21 What did you mention to friends and how did they respond?
- 22 How do you feel about immigration as it relates to affirmative action?
- 23 How do you believe your view regarding preferential treatment for women and minorities relates to the company you work for?
- 24 Tell me about diversity programs and how they are different or like affirmative-action programs?
- 25 How would you classify yourself politically and philosophically: conservative, liberal, moderate, or something else?
- 26 How do you feel about gay rights and women’s liberation?
- 27 How much influence do you think the newly elected president and administration will have on keeping, changing, or removing affirmative action? Why, and what does that mean to you?
- 28 How has your work experience, in regards to diversity or affirmative action, meshed with your political and philosophical views? Explain if you had any change of mind or heart because of this.
- 29 It has generally been assumed in this country that each individual is responsible for his or her own success or failure. How would you agree or disagree with this statement?
- 30 Based on item 29, how does AA contribute or distract from that?
- 31 How would you say that affirmative action, as we know it today, has affected the confidence and self-esteem of the white male?
- 32 Based on your views on society? Has your experience with affirmative action made you “lose faith” in society overall or in any of its key institutions (such as business, Congress, the courts, government bureaucracies, the military, the police, etc.)? And why or why not
- 33 What do you think would happen without affirmative action planning
- 34 Do you believe that race and sex affirmative-action goals or any other types of affirmative-action programs remain necessary in some form in various areas of our society? And if so, what would that look like?
- 35 Do you believe white males should be added to affirmative action plans, why or why not.
- 36 Any additional comments in relation to White males and AA
-

Confidentiality is important. According to MRS (2006),

Research is founded upon the willing co-operation of the public and of business organizations. It relies on the confidence of those involved that it is conducted honestly, objectively, without unwelcome intrusion and without harm to

respondents. Its purpose is to collect and analyze information and not to create sales or to influence the opinions of anyone participating.

The researcher coded the information and detached it from the identity of participants, then stored the information in a safe place. Using an Excel spreadsheet the researcher populated the names in one column, using no specific order, then applied a = RANDBETWEEN (1,100) function to assign a generated random code to the name. With the code generated, the researcher detached the print-out sheet with the names, deleted that specific file, and locked the names in a file cabinet for privacy and information protection. When planning the interview sessions, the participants designated a time and location that was safe and convenient for both of us (Creswell, 1998; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Documents. In addition to primary data such as interviews, this research used official records such as court records, state laws, U.S. Census Bureau vital statistics, and other information produced as important indicators or measures of the available population of employable White men in the State of Washington as it compared to the availability of the protected groups.

Observational field notes. During the interview, the researcher took notes on a laptop computer, and used a tape recorder, including backup batteries, maintaining a journal, and recording summaries to determine how the respondents use feelings and attitudes to express their experiences (Singleton & Straits, 2005). Capturing the intonations, hesitations, and other characteristics in the voice as part of the conversation helped to determine the comfort or unease of the respondent regarding various questions.

Field notes captured either implicit or explicit answers to the questions such as why, when, and where (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 127) and involved detailed, nonjudgmental, concrete descriptions of what was observed (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). They allowed the researcher to identify the big picture and provided important questions for subsequent interviews. These notes assisted with the analysis and findings of the research. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) cautioned the researcher, however, that it is critical to record actual manifestations of emotions, not the researcher's interpretation of the emotion.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in this qualitative investigation was to be the primary data-collection instrument, gathering facts in person. The researcher administered the survey and collected the data using standardized procedures. Once the researcher gathered the facts, the researcher transformed the findings. The researcher also recognized the possibility of impacting data collection by being both an active agent and a hindrance to the process. To ensure reduced bias, the researcher's academic advisor and dissertation supervisory committee conducted an audit.

Method of Data Analysis

This section describes how the researcher organized, analyzed, and interpreted the data to address the research. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), this is a key step in providing the meaning of the entire research project (p. 122). The analysis of the data is "custom-built, revised, and choreographed," evolving as the researcher moves through the process (Creswell, 1998). This project used strictly a qualitative method to conduct data analysis.

In order to analyze the data, the researcher parceled the material into manageable pieces, coded the information, a very critical step, which assisted in developing a descriptive naming scheme. This scheme assisted in sorting and sifting through the data. While sifting through the data, patterns, relationships, sequences, and classes became obvious. Through this process the researcher was able to make discoveries about the phenomena being researched.

Supplemental Analysis

To supplement the interviews, the study sought to portray the distribution of attitudes and/or experiences of the population of White men in Washington State's King and Snohomish counties. As stated in the section on sample population, the researcher interviewed 30 White men in the State of Washington, ages 25 and older, either in person or by telephone regarding their views on employment discrimination and AA.

The choice between probability and nonprobability sampling affects the quality of the design (Singleton & Straits, 2005). Probability sampling, although more acceptable, assumes that a random selection and a known probability of inclusion in the sample. (Singleton & Straits, 2005). With nonprobability sampling, nonrandom selection occurs. In researching prior studies, researchers have struggled to obtain enough respondents for their survey. Realizing that there is a large population to reach, the researcher took the first 30 respondents who met the criteria. Thus, this research used nonprobability purposive sampling as well as incorporating the snowball technique, requesting referrals to other individuals who then participated in the study.

Qualitative Data Management, Analysis, and Representation

“Qualitative inquiry is fundamentally interpretive, experiences do not speak for themselves nor do features within a research setting directly or spontaneously announce themselves as worthy of your attention” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 111). Every form of data collected requires ongoing interpretation and decisions regarding the significance of those data to the research. All these decisions play into the method of analysis.

The qualitative data analysis resembles what Creswell termed “The data analysis spiral” (1998, p. 142; see Figure 1).

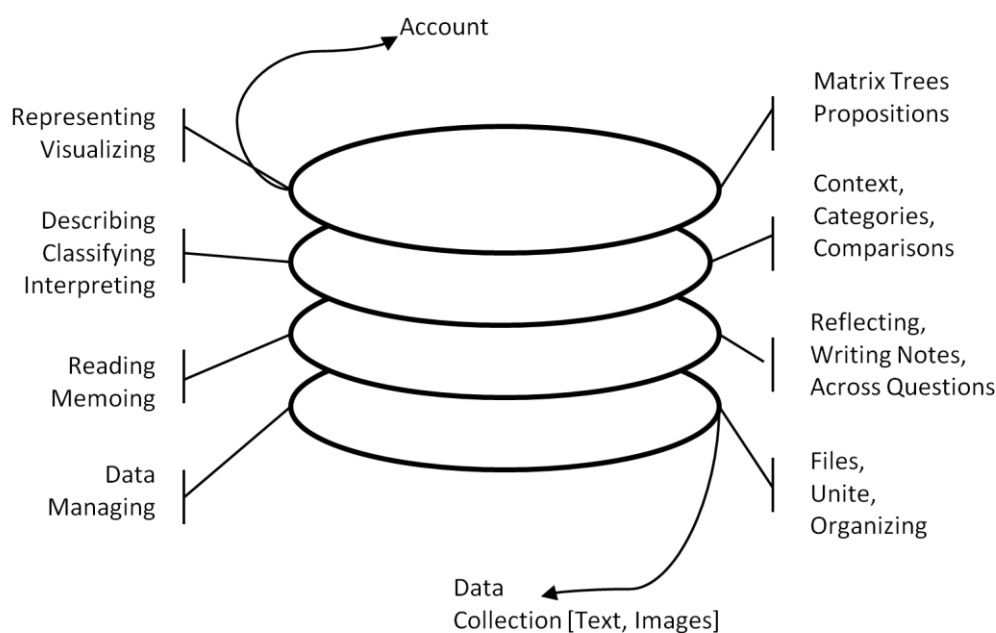


Figure 1. The data analysis spiral.

Adapted from *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, by J. W. Creswell, 1998, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p. 143.

The first loop, data management, is where the researcher organizes the data.

Using inductive reasoning, the researcher takes the collected data, sorts it, categorizes it, and develops themes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 150). The current method consisted of

computer files with a systematic means of identifying numeric as well as textual data.

Interviews, once converted, used the same organizational format.

From the segments, the researcher developed the whole picture in order to break it into its relevant parts, “writing memos in the margins” (Creswell, 1998, p. 144), as the important ideas revealed themselves to the researcher. As these parts became categories, the researcher moved from the memorandum loop to describing, classifying, and interpreting. Creswell described this phase as the heart of qualitative data analysis. This is where classifications and themes develop.

Because the researcher typically collects a large amount of data, it is important to “winnow” the data into small manageable sets of themes (Creswell, 1998). F. R. Lynch (1991) developed themes based on interviews. Because the men interviewed all claimed to encounter discrimination, the categories focused on the respondents’ initial response to the event, whether they protested or not, and the action they took.

Once the data resided in manageable sets, it was easier to interpret. This interpretation, described by Creswell (1998), comes from the researchers’ hunches, insights, and intuition as well as personal views and social constructs. Once this step is complete, the researcher can reflect on the whole picture and provide greater significance to the data collected.

The final step in the data analysis is to present the data. Researchers accomplish this by constructing tables, charts, matrices, and other forms of diagrams, most of which this research used as well. Table 2 shows the type of data collected.

Structure of the Narrative Report

A key source of primary data for recent events is the interview: obtaining information directly from the people involved in a particular event (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Reporting events is what connects the reader with the results. Creswell (1998) posited that no single standard applies when reporting the results of the research although the intent of the study does help in providing the structure. Creswell suggested two structure types: overall rhetorical and embedded rhetorical.

The overall rhetorical structure consists of seven processes. The first is to use vignettes to open and close the study. The researcher follows up by interjecting issues, purpose, and the method of study. Third, the researcher follows with an extension of the description and content of the case(s). Next, the researcher presents the issues in a manner such that the reader understands the complexity of the case(s). Following this is a microlevel view of several of the issues. The sixth step is to present assertions, generalizations, summaries, and conclusions. Finally, a closing vignette reminds the reader “that this report is one person’s encounter with a complex case” (Creswell, 1998, p. 187). Creswell recommended this approach because the information is in a format that is easy for the reader to follow and captures the entire case or cases better than the embedded design.

The embedded rhetorical structure however, uses a narrowing approach, to bring the reader from the general to the specific. Creswell (1998, p. 188) suggested that one approach is to present the information in chronological form and show how the events of one case affected the events of the next. This helps to build a theory or themes that interrelate.

The structure of this report was a combination of the two. The sequence of events in regard to laws and subsequent court cases provided the chronology. Each legal ruling generated a sequence of events. The respondents that I interviewed defined if and how any of those events affected them and provided their perception of how to move forward. The researcher included detailed descriptions and direct quotations from those interviews as part of the narrative, in a manner that clearly defines the sequence of events and makes sense to the reader.

Issues of Quality and Ethics

There are specific concerns with each of the basic four categories of ethical issues: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty. It is the responsibility of the researcher to see that no harm comes to any of the participants “Whenever human beings are the focus of investigation, we must look closely at the ethical implications of what we are proposing to do” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 101). If the possibility exists that any physical or mental discomfort is imminent, all participants know in advance of their participation. Informed consent ensured the participants that their participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants have the right to privacy, which means that their identity remains anonymous.

Ethics goes beyond how a researcher deals with participants. It also takes into account the possibility of data manipulation. Data manipulation occurs when a researcher excludes cases from the analysis to achieve a desired result, fails to report accurate results, and more grievous, fabricates results (Creswell, 1998; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005;

Singleton & Straits, 2005). It is the intent of this researcher to set biases aside and report the facts as accurately as possible.

Researcher's Role

Dealing with researcher bias. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), no matter how one structures the data, researchers' bias and values will influence the interpretation to some extent. Recommendations for reducing the interjection of personal bias include collecting different kinds of data, obtaining more than one perspective on a single event, looking for information that contradicts the hypothesis, and acknowledging any bias so readers can account for it when reviewing the information (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 151). This research employs those recommendations in the following ways. Data were collected from multiple sources and consisted of laws, court cases, journal articles, and books containing opposing views, and the researcher interviewed individuals with varying perspectives.

In bringing personal bias to the forefront, this researcher is the mother of a young White male and wants to ensure he has equal opportunity and equal access to any job for which he is qualified. As bias is "any influence, condition, or set of conditions that singly or together distort the data" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 208), it was important for the researcher not to encourage respondents to answer in a way that reflected the beliefs of the researcher or for the researcher to interpret data to get the desired results.

Participants' protection. Providing protection and privacy to the participants was paramount to the success of this study. The participation of each respondent was voluntary. Participants could withdraw from the research at any time in the process. Participants understood the purpose and the process of the study. Because of the sensitive

nature of the interview questions, the researcher remained emotionally neutral to avoid soliciting any specific emotional response from the participant. The researcher guaranteed each participant anonymity and confidentiality during and beyond the timeframe of the study by using pseudonyms and information coding. Additionally, participants were free to suggest the location of the interview, accounting for the safety of both parties (Creswell, 1998; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Summary

Chapter 3 examined the research-design methodology to determine the perceptions of White men about employment discrimination and any associated dissonance. The phenomenology, using a modified version of F. R. Lynch's (1991) interview questions, sought to examine the assumptions White men described if they perceived themselves to be affected by AA, whether it was appropriate to include White men in AA planning, and why. The study also sought to understand the changing demographics in the United States, as well as Washington State, and the impact that may have to employment opportunities for White men.

With the appropriate participant protection, authorization, work ethics, and confidentiality in place, this research met the potential to offer additional insight into the White-male perspective.

This perspective, garnered from the participants of the study, appears in chapter 4, which also includes demographic data, and an overall summary.

Chapter 4: Results

Data-Gathering Process

This empirical study was conducted to determine if White men in Washington State, between the ages of 25 and 55, perceive discrimination in the workplace due to existing AA planning practices, and what courses of action they would take if dissonance occurred. The interview, which consisted of 36 questions, measured participants' perceptions of AA planning, personal experience with discrimination, and actions to resolve any associated dissonance. In this chapter, the process I used to gather the data is covered, along with the associated results. Microsoft Excel was the tool used to conduct all analyses.

Six respondents provided multiple referrals and the remaining participants, even though they said they had someone in mind as a referral, failed to provide any referrals. Three additional individuals, who fell outside of the age demographics for the study, provided additional referrals. Thirty surveys were conducted over a 4-month period. Thirteen interviews were conducted face to face while the remaining 17 were conducted by telephone.

Potential participants were sent an invitation to participate in the interview, followed by an informed-consent form. Once participants agreed to an interview, a time was chosen and, for face-to-face interviews, a location was chosen that provided privacy and was convenient for both participant and researcher. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the participant, using a digital recorder for future transcription. A journal, using a standard notebook, was kept to notate reactions to the questions and process during the interview.

Demographics

The demographic data collected during the survey provides a profile of the 30 participants, displayed in several tables below. Participants' identity shows only as a number obtained using the RANDOM feature in Microsoft Excel and the letters WM (White male) placed in front of the number (e.g., WM100), so that the number is not confused with any statistic. For age distributions see Table 3. Most ages between 25 and 55 were represented at least once. Ages 45 and 51 had the highest representation.

Table 3

Age Distribution of Participants

Age	25	26	27	33	35	37	38	39	40	41
Quantity	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
Age	42	43	44	45	47	48	50	51	54	55
Quantity	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	4	2	1

The split between individuals living in either King or Snohomish County was even. Given the fact that this study may be generalizable to other White men in the United States, it was important to know where the participants were born and how long they lived in Washington State.

The participants were born in 17 different states in the United States, with the highest concentration of 11 in Washington State itself, and 1 individual was born in Germany (see Table 4). The number of years a participant lived in Washington State varied greatly, from 5 to 51, with the median being between 19 and 29 years (see Table 5).

The survey also asked the participants their level of education. Sixty-seven percent of the participants had their bachelor's degree. A small percent had a master's or doctorate. The remainder had some level of college. All participants graduated high school. Table 6 shows the distribution of the participant's education background.

Table 6

Participants Educational Background

Education	13.5	14	AA	BA	BS	HS	MBA	PhD
Count	2	1	1	12	8	2	2	2

Other demographic information includes the annual income of the participants, which varied greatly from \$40,000 a year to \$410,000, with the average income equaling \$129,400. Additionally, the combined occupations, both previous and current, were as numerous as the participants. From the 30 participants came a total of 49 different occupations of which only 8 were duplicated; of those 8, 5 individuals reported having the same current and previous occupation. Table 7 and 8 show the overall demographics and the variety of occupations held by the study's participants.

Table 7

Composition of the Participants

Age	Washington County	Marital status	Years in Washington
25	SC	M	25
26	SC	M	51
27	KC	M	15
33	SC	S	29
33	SC	M	14
35	SC	M	29
37	KC	M	20
38	KC	M	32
39	SC	M	30
39	SC	M	39
40	SC	M	13
41	SC	M	19
42	SC	M	7
43	SC	DP	17
44	SC	M	44
44	KC	M	38
45	SC	M	16
45	SC	M	5
45	KC	M	19
47	SC	M	5
48	KC	S	48
48	KC	M	40
50	KC	M	21
51	KC	D	21
51	KC	M	51

Age	Washington County	Marital status	Years in Washington
51	KC	M	35
51	KC	M	6
54	KC	M	20
54	KC	M	32
55	KC	M	47

Table 8

Composition of the Participants

Estimated annual income (NA = Information not provided)	Current occupation	Previous occupation
NA	Federal Police Officer	Military
NA	Privacy & Security Specialist	Programmer
NA	Senior District Sales Manager	Sales Manager
NA	Sales Manager	Sales Manager
NA	Marketing Consultant	Advertising
40	Mechanic	National Guard
41	Machinist	Casino Card Dealer
42	Maitre d'	Cook
60	Mechanic	Mechanic
60	Account Management	Restaurant Management
65	Project Manager - Construction	Project Manager - Architecture
90	Project Manager	Industrial Engineer
95	Fire Fighter Captain	Military
100	Engineer	Sheet Metal Mechanic
100	Industrial Hygienist	Retail
100	Commercial real estate broker	Title Insurance
102	Managing Hotel Director	Hotel Manager
110	Service Manager	System Administrator
110	Business Account Executive	Sales Manager
120	Engineer	Manager
120	Design Engineer	Sales Engineer
120	Director of operations warehouse logistics	Warehousing
120	Chief Strategy Officer	Resort Executive Vice President

Estimated annual income (NA = Information not provided)	Current occupation	Previous occupation
150	Program Manager	Senior Program Manager
175	Advertising	Hotel Manager
200	HR Director	Information Technology
200	Public Relations	Public Relations
250	Director of support services for mobile technology	Manager of IT & Software development in marketing
250	Founder of Technology Company	Founder of Technology Company
415	Portfolio specialist for a global asset management company	Wine Distributor

Finally, participants were asked to describe their political affiliation and philosophy, to ascertain if a certain political affiliation correlated to how much a participant knew about AA, and how they felt about AA. Thirty percent of the respondents considered themselves conservative, followed by 27% moderates. Twenty percent called themselves liberal and another 13% said they were not affiliated with anything except who or what represented their views at the time. Only 10% said they were associated with Democratic or Republican parties. Participants who aligned themselves with Republicans said that they were not dogmatic Republicans. The political affiliation and participants' age can be found in Table 8.

Table 8

Participants' Political Affiliation and Age

Affiliation/age	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Democrat	Republican	Whoever I agree with
Percent	30%	20%	27%	7%	3%	13%
Age 25–30	1	1	1	0	0	0
Age 31–35	1	1	1	0	0	0
Age 36–40	2	1	2	0	0	1
Age 41–45	2	1	1	0	1	3
Age 46–50	0	1	1	2	0	0
Age 51–55	3	1	2	0	0	0

Many of the participants also described themselves as middle of the road, or left or right of center.

The Findings

The questions, some of which are based on Lynch's original survey, were developed to address three basic questions, as listed in Chapter 1, the first being What levels, if any, do White men in Washington experience discrimination associated with the current form of AA planning. The second question was, What levels of dissonance, if any, do White men in Washington experience if discrimination is perceived? The third question was, If White men perceive discrimination and associated dissonance, what actions do they take to resolve the situation? Two additional research questions developed. The first was, What do White males know about AA? The second was, How do they feel about it as it relates to their political and philosophical beliefs?

Table 9 shows the 36 questions and how they relate to the intent of this study: 21 the questions focused on the participants' knowledge and opinions regarding AA; 20 revolved around equity; 18 addressed the possibility of discrimination and the associated circumstances; and 16 of the questions focused on dissonance.

F. R. Lynch (1991) conducted the original study in 1984–1985. In using that study as the precedent to this study, 18 of the questions are in the form F. R. Lynch (1991) originally asked. They differ in that F. R. Lynch focused strictly on reverse discrimination, whereas the focus of this study was more closely related to AA and possible discrimination.

Table 9

Survey Questions Relationship to Study

Ref	Question	Research question	Discrimination	Dissonance	AA	Equity	Asked by Lynch
1	What do you know about affirmative action?	1			X		
2	Describe what you know about an affirmative action plan.	1			X		
3	Who does affirmative action planning and why?	1			X		
4	Define any benefits from affirmative action that you might be aware of?	1			X		
5	Describe your overall perception of affirmative action.	1			X		
6	How long have you known about the EEOC's requirement for affirmative-action planning?	1			X		
7	Have you ever felt discriminated against as a white male?	2	X				
8	What job were you in when you first detected discrimination against you because of your race or sex?	2	X				X
9	If it was your race or your sex that were held against you, or both, can you explain how?	2	X				X
10	How was your awareness sharpened by a specific event or was it more of a cumulative pattern of occurrences?	2	X				X

Ref	Question	Research question	Discrimination	Dissonance	AA	Equity	Asked by Lynch
11	What were the circumstances involved?	2	X				X
12	How did you respond to this situation?	3	X	X		X	X
13	How did you speak out and to whom?	3	X	X			X
14	If you did not speak out, why not?	3	X	X			X
15	If you did speak out, what were the results?	3	X	X		X	X
16	What were the perceptions of others at your work setting?	4		X		X	X
17	Describe who else was being hired or promoted at the time.	4		X		X	X
18	How did you account for the white males being promoted at the time?	4		X		X	X
19	How did they account for their promotion?	4		X		X	
20	One thing that is sometimes mentioned in these situations is that "other factors" were involved, such as the employee's personality, his real or suspected sexual or drinking habits, his politics, etc. Did any of these "other factors" have had a bearing on your situation?	0		X	X	X	
21	What did you mention to friends and how did they respond?	4		X		X	X
22	How do you feel about immigration as it relates to affirmative action?	5			X	X	
23	How do you believe	5	X	X	X	X	

Ref	Question	Research question	Discrimination	Dissonance	AA	Equity	Asked by Lynch
24	your view regarding preferential treatment for women and minorities relates to the company you work for? Tell me about diversity programs and how they are different or like affirmative-action programs?	5			X		
25	How would you classify yourself politically and philosophically: conservative, liberal, moderate, or something else?	1		X			X
26	How do you feel about gay rights and women's liberation?	5	X		X	X	
27	How much influence do you think the newly elected president and administration will have on keeping, changing, or removing affirmative action? Why, and what does that mean to you?	5	X		X	X	X

Ref	Question	Research question	Discrimination	Dissonance	AA	Equity	Asked by Lynch
28	How has your work experience, in regards to diversity or affirmative action, meshed with your political and philosophical views? Explain if you had any change of mind or heart because of this.	5	X	X	X	X	X
29	It has generally been assumed in this country that each individual is responsible for his or her own success or failure. How would you agree or disagree with this statement?	5			X	X	X
30	Based on item 29, how does AA contribute or distract from that?	5			X	X	
31	How would you say that affirmative action, as we know it today, has affected the confidence and self-esteem of the white male?	5	X	X	X	X	X
32	Based on your views on society? Has your experience with affirmative action made you "lose faith" in society overall or in any of its key institutions (such as business, Congress, the courts, government bureaucracies, the military, the police, etc.)? And why or why not	5	X	X	X	X	X
33	What do you think	5			X		

Ref	Question	Research question	Discrimination	Dissonance	AA	Equity	Asked by Lynch
34	would happen without affirmative action planning Do you believe that race and sex affirmative-action goals or any other types of affirmative-action programs remain necessary in some form in various areas of our society? And if so, what would that look like?	5	X		X	X	
35	Do you believe white males should be added to affirmative action plans, why or why not.	5	X		X	X	
36	Any additional comments in relation to White males and AA?	ALL	X	X	X	X	

Research Question 1

Research Questions 1 through 6 were devoted to gaining insight into what the participants knew about AA by asking What do White men know about AA.

Survey Question 1

When asked what the participants know twenty three respondents provided a relatively accurate definition, even though 11 of those were admitted guesses. Four thought it was the same as diversity, another 4 thought it included religion and creed, 3 still thought it was a quota system, 1 said it was a means of leveling the playing field, and 1 knew close to nothing. Several of the participants admitted they should know more.

Survey Question 2

This question asks participants to describe what they know about AA plans. Twenty-two responders said they didn't know much at all, however some of them sensed that it was to resolve differences for minorities. Fourteen indicated that AA plans are hiring goals for minorities and 1 said it was to address wage issues. 2 of the respondents thought that it was associated with Title IX for sports programs, as it had impacted them at some point in their own lives.

Survey Question 3

Question 3 was generated to learn if the participants know who does AA planning and why. Eighteen respondents could only guess, whereas 6 admitted to not knowing how to answer the question. Twelve and 16 respectively suggested that the human-resource department and government conducted AA planning. As for the why it's done, 4 said it was done to comply with legal requirements, and 4 said it was the only way to get

government contracts, whereas another 4 said it was to ensure equal opportunity. Finally 2 indicated it was good for business.

Survey Question 4

Survey question 4 is used to determine if the participants can define any benefits from AA that they might be aware of. Eleven participants admitted to guessing on this one. Individuals provided multiple answers. Of the answers provided, 12 answers indicated that there were few or no benefits provided by AA, whereas 6 felt that there were some benefits. Another 12 felt that it provided for more diversity in the company. Nine indicated that equal opportunity was the main benefit, whereas 4 said it created unequal opportunities. Two participants said it was necessary to get government contracts and 1 respondent said it made the employer more attractive to the workforce.

Survey Question 5

With this question I am asking participants to describe their overall perception of AA. The responses fell into 12 distinct categories. Because this was an open-ended question, participants provided multiple descriptions. Four defined AA as unequal, whereas 9 said it provided for equal opportunities. Six participants felt it was beneficial overall, whereas 5 said it was forced on companies. Another 5 participants felt that AA was no longer necessary in today's environment. Four and 3 respectively said that AA provided more diversity and was very supportive. Three participants indicated that it could create reverse discrimination; 3 felt that it was still just used to meet quotas. Two of the respondents indicated that it was unfortunate that AA was still used, and 1 individual said that it lowered company standards and was used just to meet a goal.

Survey Question 6

In order to understand the length of time the participants have been aware of the EEOC, I asked them how long have they known about the EEOC's requirement for AA planning. Although most participants knew what the EEOC was, few of them knew it was associated with AA planning. Twelve participants admitted knowing about the requirements for as little as 1 year. Two have known for the past 2 to 4 years. Four respondents have known for the past 5 to 10 years. Three participants have had the knowledge for 11 to 15 years and 3 more have known for 16 to 20 years. Five participants admitted knowing about the requirements for 21 to 30 years and only 1 respondent had any knowledge beyond 31 years.

Survey Question 26

The participants were asked how they feel about gay rights and women's liberation. In regard to AA, this question's purpose was to get a feel for how participants viewed the individual freedoms and differences of groups different from themselves. An overwhelming majority supported gay rights and women's liberation. During the interview, participants went to great lengths to express their support for gay rights and loved talking about the strength of their mothers.

More participants supported gay rights than women's liberation (see Table 10). According to 1 participant,

I think everyone has the right to live however they choose to live. It's of no relevance to me. To me everyone should have the same rights. There is no direct effect on me as to how someone chooses to live their life and that's where I draw the line where it starts affecting something else. (WM3)

Table 10

Percentage of Responses For or Against Gay Rights or Woman's Liberation

How do you feel about gay rights and women's liberation?			
For gay rights	Against gay rights	For women's liberation	Anti women's liberation
28	2	27	3

There were a small minority of participants who did not support gay rights, based strictly on their religious beliefs.

When it came to supporting women's liberation, some participants believed it should never have taken as long as it did for women to get to where they are today. One notable comment was

I think women's lib is fabulous. I thought it was embarrassing as a country that women couldn't vote and couldn't do a lot of things. Women would do a similar job and get paid different rates. I felt it was not an abomination but I felt it was something to be almost shameful about. And my issue has always been if you do the same job and you do it the same way and you get the same results you should get the same pay. There shouldn't be a difference. (WM98)

Some of the participants believed women don't encounter discrimination as much today. "Maybe the data doesn't support that but I can tell from all my co-workers, anybody I work with that no one discriminates against women that I've ever seen" (WM86). Another participant reflected however on a recent court case whereby

women judges make fifteen percent less than male judges at the district court level. That's insane, that's insane, for a government, for the government, I mean

come on, give me a break! So I think, again, we should be advancing the cause of everybody for some sort of equality. (WM97)

The respondents who were not in full support of woman's liberation indicated that the pendulum may have swung too far, with things like Title IX and missing out on the kids at home. One participant reflected on how Title IX impacted him directly because they cut his particular sport to bring in equality. A few others felt that women should not be competing in fields they are not biologically fit to work in as there are natural differences.

Survey Question 24

Tell me about diversity programs and how they are different or like affirmative-action programs. This question was to see if these participants were familiar with that concept or something different, because diversity programs have been touted as a form of AA.

Sixteen respondents didn't know the difference but some rendered a good guess. Twelve participants indicated there was a difference in the two programs and only 2 said they were the same. Of those that didn't know, the main reason they were unaware is because they are unfamiliar with diversity programs. Of those who said they did know, they explained the difference by saying that the government mandates AA programs, they are statistically driven, and the aim of AA was strictly to meet hiring goals and diversity was for getting along.

Most of the respondents knew very little about AA and AA plans. Even though some of the participants experienced discrimination, it was not directly related to organizations that used AA planning.

Research Question 2

What levels, if any, do White men in Washington experience discrimination associated with the current form of AA planning? As mentioned in Chapters 1 through 3, this question focuses on Festingers (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance: (a) the existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance, and (b) when dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information that would likely increase the dissonance (p. 2).

Survey Questions 7 and 8

These questions focused on the participants' perceived experience with discrimination and its associated dissonance. Survey Question 7 asked, Have you ever felt discriminated against as a White male? Nineteen participants said no, 10 participants said yes, and 1 respondent indicated that he was not sure. This differs from the study that F. R. Lynch (1991) conducted, in that all his participants were predetermined victims of reverse discrimination.

Of the 19 who said no, they were adamant that they have either never been in that position or were never aware of being discriminated against. They have gotten every job they applied for, and believe that if they did not get the job they wanted, it was just because they weren't qualified. Several respondents indicated that current hiring methods are and have been fair, and that Washington State was not the type of place where a lot of discrimination occurred.

For the 10 participants who indicated they have experienced discrimination, Survey Questions 8 through 21 asked them to define the experience. These questions are very similar to the ones that F. R. Lynch (1991) used in the original study.

Survey Questions 8, 9, 10, and 11 asked the participants to describe the circumstances of being the target of discrimination. The companies that were identified to have discriminated against these participants the most were those owned and operated by Native Americans, African Americans, and women, where the White male was the minority. Another source of described discrimination against White men were companies they identified that contracted with the government. Additionally, at least one fire department was identified by a respondent to have appeared to discriminate against White men during the examinations for promotions.

Six of the participants who felt discriminated against said it was because of their race and gender. Only 2 respondents said it was because of their race, and another 2 indicated it was only their gender. One participant was not sure if it was their gender or race. Respondent WM98 indicated

What became painfully obvious when we got out into our jobs and positions, the males would get fired for achieving low productivity much sooner. But if you were a female or a minority you were allowed to continue to work at the company at a much slower pace.

Respondent WM69 was employed in a management position when the company had to increase pay scales for women.

They started to redress pay inequities in the company and give direct money towards groups and they took away from one group and gave it to the other group

in the salary planning. ... [Additionally, after getting into a management position] the group I joined said, well this is great except they said we should have more women. Basically that's what the comment was. It was a little more crude than that. It was more like, well, which one of you should be changed (laugh). (WM69)

Participants working for tribal businesses also experienced discrimination because the tribes rarely hire outside the tribe. Tribal nations are also not governed by the EEOC. Other participants could not conclusively prove discrimination; it was just a perception in retrospect. Participant WM75 responded "Well, I would not know if I was discriminated against while I was trying to get a job because that would open the company up to legal action." Respondent WM46 said:

It was interesting that I chose the university that I did because I went to Kentucky State University which is predominately an African American college. There were many scholarships that were offered to many students and I just felt at one point I got the short end of the stick because there was someone who was African American in front of me who got a better work study program than I did. It really didn't affect me that much but now that I'm a little bit older I see into it. When I was much younger I don't think I really realized what happened until way after the fact. And then I felt like "ok, that wasn't right." It wasn't instantaneous. I don't really know that it was but it was the sense of, you know, this person gets a job in this area and you get a job here and it was just kinda like I don't understand. It seemed like the person who had more credentials to do the work study would have been placed in that position rather than somebody who had no idea what they were doing. It was actually a music library and I'm thinking "Oh

my god, why was I not put in the music library, I'm a music major it makes sense." But instead they put someone else there. I thought that was kind of odd.

Finally, when asked if it was your race or your sex that were held against you, or both, participants indicated the forms they fill out to bid on government contracts are discriminatory. WM49 said "When you get questions like that you basically feel like, ok I'm a White male and I've just been discriminated against before I even start filling out this contract. Before I even start filling out this proposal."

Survey Question 10

The participants were asked if their experience was a single occurrence or a cumulative pattern of occurrences. Three participants indicated it was a one-time occurrence, whereas 7 respondents indicated it was a cumulative pattern of occurrences. For those who indicated it was a pattern, it was believed that

both from a standpoint of again whether you're a minority, whether you're a female the opportunities for advancement or upward mobility or just to maintain your position was much much stronger than if you were just an average White male. (WM98)

For individuals for whom a civil service test was required, the belief was that "They were based on your race. You can have people coach you on how to take the test. I was never offered it. Certain organizations within the bigger organizations tend to coach and help the people of the minorities" (WM75).

Survey Question 11

Individuals were asked to describe the specific circumstances. Four participants said they were victims of preferential hiring and 3 respondents indicated there were

different job expectations between women and minorities and White men. Comments provided such as “But if you were a female or a minority you were allowed to continue to work at the company at a much slower pace” (WM98), or “yes, there is prejudice, there’s hatred, there’s anger, there are time when I absolutely was mistreated as a White Anglo-Saxon American” (WM56). Respondent WM52 indicated that

He applied for a couple of high-level roles. I think the final draw was when somebody came in and they had only been there a year and were given a director-level role, and this was in my 3rd year, and the person was actually reporting to me during that time. So just basically that was the counting point of, you know what, you’re not valued here. And it was a fact; I strongly believe it was because she was a female.

Working as a White man in a tribal-owned business created a different set of circumstances.

When it came time to re-up the contracts that were established for the select executives of the company who happened to be White males, that never came to be and we were, in great number, told that our contracts were no longer valid and that we were to leave our position. (WM27)

And according to another respondent

it’s kind of just understood that there is a tribal preference and that people of the tribe get a job in front of per se myself because I’m not tribal. They get interviewed first and they get a chance before I do which is interesting and kind of makes me feel, not discriminated against because I understand the whole issue with it. At the same time I’m kinda like “it doesn’t seem all that right.” (WM46)

Another predominate theme was vying for government contracts. All of the respondents who attempted to attain government contracts have partnered with a woman or a minority in order to qualify for the contract. When the companies' partner and they are filling out the application, the name they register under is that of the woman or minority-owned business (WM49).

As mentioned at the beginning, most participants did not feel as though they had ever been discriminated against. For those who did experience discrimination, not all of it was associated with AA. Where the majority of discrimination toward White men was experienced was in businesses owned by minorities and women, and by the government wanting to contract with what appears to be mostly minority- or women-owned businesses. For those individual who reported discrimination, they did experience dissonance. Research Question 3 addresses that dissonance and associated actions.

Research Question 3

What levels of dissonance, if any, do White men in Washington experience if discrimination is perceived? Based on Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance and Adams's (1963) equity theory, it was important to understand how the participants who experienced discrimination attempted to address the situation. The assumption is that the participants were psychologically uncomfortable with the situation and were motivated to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve harmony, and actively avoid situations and information that would most likely increase the dissonance. As mentioned earlier, there are several suggested methods to restore equity (Adams, 1963; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1984). They include altering the person's outcome, altering the person's inputs,

altering the comparison of the outcomes or inputs, changing the comparison figure, rationalizing the inequity, and finally, leaving the situation (F. R. Lynch, 1991).

Acquiescence, Altering the Expected Outcomes

“The men who acquiesced usually did so with a measure of quiet resignation: There was nothing I could do” (F. R. Lynch, 1991, p. 57). This study validated F. R. Lynch’s (1991) finding. Participant WM98 said

I don’t think I responded in any particular way. I mean I have always focused on what I do and how I work. I think it was just one of those situations that you would have a clear understanding that when I would have a cohort, and I’m certainly not trying to pound on women here but it’s kind of amazing how I’ve worked with some with some people in my industry, and whether it was a similar specific position, where you know the bar was set at very different levels. I didn’t have any particular response. It’s nothing I can control. I could only control myself and my actions.

Accordingly WM42 “did not speak out to anybody because it wouldn’t have done any good anyway.”

The participants in this study who worked for tribal-owned businesses found they too had to alter their behavior or the expected outcome of a situation. One participant in particular indicated that ramifications for individuals differed between tribal and nontribal members. Nontribal members received the prescribed discipline for a given infraction. However, when a tribal member broke the rules,

Sometimes we would go to the board with a very, very clear defined standard operating procedures breaking of the rules and the board would say, well did you

think of this and again it was swinging the cultural aspect back into it. A lot of times, whether we agreed or not it was okay and we modified our behavior.

(WM56)

Acquiescence and Anger

F. R. Lynch (1991) discovered the largest group of respondents experienced acquiescence and anger. This study had that as the lowest number. However, F. R. Lynch (1991) also noted that very angry persons complained to coworkers or friends. This study uncovered 2 participants who expressed anger. The first responder expressed anger over the situation saying

I ranted and raved to friends but I didn't do anything about it. I didn't care. It was a job and if that's the way the dude wanted to run his business ... you can't run a real successful business, you cannot really become an empire without embracing the whim of the people. It's the people that run anything. And if that's the way he's going to run it, he'll be a small-time business the rest of his life. (WM70)

A second example comes from participant WM90. This individual described a factory environment where the crews were divided by gender. Thus, every day the supervisor told the male crew that they needed to help the female crew.

We say [anguishing] Again? We always do their work for them. He says "whatever, it's gotta be done." So people on my crew often just shrug it off because it's fairly easy work and it's something to do, especially when we worked our tails off getting ahead and getting everything done. But then a lot of people get really annoyed because we worked our tails off to have some days off to get our boxes ready and now we have to do their work too. (WM90)

Acquiescence and Leaving the Situation

Leaving the situation as quickly as possible was described by F. R. Lynch as “a natural response” (1991, p. 61). That is exactly what at least 3 of this study’s participants did. The first indicated “I left quietly. I literally had no recourse. I had no recourse being on tribal sovereign land. I had really nothing but compliance” (WM27). Another respondent reported

I just felt like if I went to someone who was African American and said “hey, this is how I’m feeling,” they may not understand that and take it the wrong way so I just kinda zipped my mouth. I took another job. (WM46)

In another example a participant indicated,

I worked in a company that was primarily female and I ended up parting that company because of that. I think it can work in both directions where there can be sexual harassment on both sides of the house. I think as a male it was difficult to work in a purely owned and managed female company where you knew that the only way you were going to work up the ladder is if you were female. Mainly because it was owned by a female and the board of directors were the female’s sisters and the directors of the company were also female. I felt like my hands were tied. (WM52)

Defiance and Protest

While F. R. Lynch (1991) encountered 3 individuals who filed lawsuits against their perspective employers; none of the participants in this study reported doing so. There were no protests, no lawsuits, and no legal claims of discrimination.

Circumvention

The option to circumvent the system was predominant when it came to applying for government contracts. F. R. Lynch indicated that this option is used rather than “challenge and open confrontation” (1991, p. 68). All of the individuals interviewed suggested that most of the other businesses they know do the same thing. One participant explained,

In our industry it’s almost a given that if you want to play in the arena you have to play by their rules. And White males aren’t happy about it. It makes it really really hard to go after government projects. I think the government is losing opportunity by adding those extra points for the minorities. I just find it unfair as a White male. (WM49)

Another example of this comes from a second participant. He indicated that, I think that 10 years ago or so when I was still fairly new to management roles and such, AA, I didn’t really have an opinion on it. It’s kinda that’s nice or whatever. Given the fact that our owner is actually ... from India. And his, what really got me is that he went out and became an American citizen solely for the fact that an American Citizen and a minority he could now get humungous government contracts, and the unfortunate thing is that there were other companies that were just as good as we were, maybe even better, that were not minority owned, and did not get those contracts simply because of this one factor. (WM84)

Research Question 4

If White men perceive discrimination and associated dissonance, what actions do they take to resolve the situation? Survey Questions 12 through 21 addressed the actions associated with the dissonance the participants experienced. The initial response to discrimination can be broken out into 2 different categories. The respondents either did or did not respond. In this study 5 participants did not respond and 5 responded by taking another job.

The participants who chose not to respond to the situation said they just focused on their own work, because what was happening was beyond their control (WM98; WM27; WM46). Other respondents just had to manage the situation (WM56). Others, like WM69 just ignored the situation. Of the respondents who took another job, they all did so quietly. No one threatened to quit, no one sued, and they opted to leave the company. None of the respondents filed an EEO complaint.

Survey Questions 14 and 15

These questions addressed whether the respondents spoke about their experience and to whom if they did. Thirty percent did not express their frustration. Another 30% shared with friends. The rest evinced their feeling to a coworker, a family member, or someone in human resources.

Participants who spoke to friends indicated that 30% were not surprised at the situation, commenting that

Yea, that's kind of an on-going joke that if you get hired or get high enough on Seattle's list, you are on the White guy list and chances are you probably

wouldn't get the job, and you may or may not get offered the position depending on how many they are going to hire. (WM42)

Twenty percent were shocked, 20% felt the situation was very inappropriate, another 20% were very angry. Finally it was reported that 10% of friends were uncomfortable with the conversation.

The participants who spoke to no one listed approximately six key reasons. Three individuals said it wouldn't do any good, nothing would change (WM42). One participant specifically said, when they were the minority, "Who do you talk to?" (WM46). The rest of the reasons, which were evenly distributed at 14% each, were (a) they were afraid of a backlash, (b) they didn't know their rights, (c) they felt guilty, (d) there was no one to understand, and (e) they would probably appear as a racist.

When the participants indicated there was no one available to understand, it was predominately in women-owned businesses, tribal businesses, or a predominately African American learning institution. When those ethnicities or genders were the perpetrators of discrimination and in charge of the institution, White men felt they had no place to go (WM90; WM46; WM49).

For participants who did speak out about their situation, only 1 said he gained a new cultural understanding and learned from the situation. However, 5 participants indicated nothing happened to correct the situation. The 1 participant who claimed he gained a good cultural understanding was working with the tribes. They had very good operating procedures and when someone came into the organization they already knew where they stood. For participants working in other environments they never really expected their vocalization to change anything (WM98; WM52; WM70; WM90).

Survey Questions 16, 17, 18, and 21

Survey Questions 16, 17, 18, and 21 asked respondents to discuss the perceptions of others, either in their work settings, or their friends and family. Three participants said it didn't matter what others thought because they were well liked (WM52), understood the work conditions (WM27), or it just plain didn't matter (WM90). Another two respondents perceived that minorities had the advantage.

I don't think there's any secret out there that if someone is trying to get into dental school, medical school, something where you have a limited amount of positions, I think it's a standard view that again, if you are of a minority status, again whether it's a gender or a race that certainly you had a significant advantage. (WM98)

"It was pretty obvious when they interviewed people. It's just the perception that you got. Then you looked at the class makeup and you could tell. They had to have so many of each in there" (WM42).

For 1 it became an uncomfortable situation for others as the participant expressed comments were made such as "Ha ha ha, see White boy, you're gonna learn. Nonnative it was and if it's happening to you it's certainly going to happen to us. I better watch my back" (WM56). Some family or friends could not believe what just occurred; they felt the situation was questionable at best (WM69). And as mentioned before, the same perception resounded with everyone who knew anything about applying for government contracts. When the participant spoke to others the feedback was "it's the same perception that if you want to go for government contracts you better team up with a woman or a minority but your best bet is a women minority" (WM49).

When asked to define who else was being hired or promoted at the same time these individuals experienced discrimination and why, 3 respondents said they were not sure, and 5 participants indicated mostly women and minorities, however more women than minorities. One participant reflected on why other White men were not getting promoted in the company he worked for, and that was because the men knew their position in the company and “they were not in promotable positions really” (WM52)

Three participants indicated that the reason any White males were being hired or promoted was because (a) related to the tribal-owned businesses it was because the White men must have been related to tribal members, (b) for government contracts it was because they must have paired up with minorities, and (c) it was suggested that it was to avoid a reverse-discrimination suit. As 1 participant recalled

There was a couple of time that we actually had to go to the board and bring the attorney’s in and say you’re now creating reverse discrimination with regards to swinging the pendulum the other way and having issues that could jeopardize their tribal preference out in the world, their benefits out in the world. All their government incentives can go away if they are not following a plan that is not just one sided. (WM56)

However 71% admitted not knowing if White males were being promoted at that time.

Although only 10 participants experienced discrimination, and they did fall into most of the same categories that F. R. Lynch (1991) described, it became obvious that there was still a need to understand how all the participants actually felt about AA. Thus, Research Question 5 was developed.

Research Question 5

What do White men feel about AA? Research Questions 22 through 35 were devoted to gaining insight into how the participants felt about AA.

Survey Question 22

How do you feel about immigration as it relates to AA? Table 11 provides the breakout of the responses.

Table 11

Relationships of Immigration to Affirmative Action

How do you feel about immigration as it relates to affirmative action?				
It's a good thing	Only legal ones are ok	Should not be included in AA	Not ok if I'm disadvantaged	Don't know
3	12	11	1	3

Three respondents believed that AA was ok for all immigrants. Twelve participants said it was acceptable if legal immigrants were included in AA. Eleven respondents discerned that it was not acceptable, and an additional respondent said it was not acceptable if it put him at a disadvantage; 3 participants didn't know (see Table 11).

The Positive Perspective of Immigration and AA

Several phrases used to describe immigration as it relates to AA are: its fine, it provides equal footing, the more the better, it's healthy for competition, we were all immigrants at one time, the immigration process takes too long, and without it we would be lacking in the necessary skills either in the fields or the workplace. Immigration is also necessary to sustain the economy. Essentially the feeling was, "as far as it relates to AA,

if they are legal, AA is great. If they are non-legal it's up to the employer or immigration to take care of it" (WM79).

If you are afraid somebody's going to take your job and do it for less, you better be willing to do it for less yourself. If somebody said to me today that we have this guy from Mexico is going to do your job for \$10.00, so fine; I'll do it for \$9. But there's no right or wrong answer to this question cause on one hand I believe you shouldn't give somebody somebody else's job just because they're from another country or the color of their skin or gender, or the color of their eyes. I mean physical appearance should be based on work. Dude this immigrant is going to come in and he's going to work harder for less he, or she-sorry, deserves my job. I'm not going to argue with that. (WM70)

The Negative Impacts of Immigration and AA

Eleven of the participants did not support AA being applied to new immigrants. Sixteen of the participants disapproved of AA for individuals who were not legal citizens. One participant indicated that because of the current unemployment rates, he would rather we fill current job openings using existing citizens. Another stressed that it's unfortunate that immigrants are included in AA because it causes fiscal stress (WM98). Another participant added "We're going to give [immigrants] all the benefits of what the United States is offering without being citizens, without paying taxes, without laws, and I'm against that. I don't know how to fix that" (WM56).

Another participant did not really focus on the legality of immigration status per se but said "I guess there is an inequity in immigration in the sense that a lot of them have not had, at least the legal ones, haven't had the socio-economic discrimination" (WM69).

Other participants felt that because most of the immigrants come into this country willing to work hard, if the skill set is equal, they see no need for them to use AA. Additionally, an immigrant, himself from Germany, but a current U.S. citizen said,

Well, being that I am an immigrant from Germany, I feel good about it; however I don't believe there should be summary judgments made just because someone is an immigrant. Either way, I don't think there should be a global handing out of jobs or social security jobs based on the fact that you are an immigrant from a certain country. I think that it should be merited on each individual's situation, education, legal status in their own country etcetera. (WM27)

Another participant traveled to a country where individuals were very poor.

Reflecting on this experience he shared,

I can imagine why they would migrate to America where they can actually get a job where they can make some type of money, which is very hard to do there. But at the same time I don't think I would want AA letting all these immigrants into the country and taking all the American people's jobs. Because it is our country and I feel like if we allow all the immigrants in and give them all work through AA then what's left for all of us and are we in the same boat. (WM46)

And in a similar tone

What I think the right thing is that immigrants should not have preference. They come into America for opportunity and it's our responsibility as citizens to be sensitive to their new home here in America and befriend them and things of that nature, but they shouldn't necessarily have more opportunities than people whose families have been here for centuries. (WM90)

The other part of this question asked participants how immigration related to AA would impact them personally. Three participants stated that immigration and AA will not impact any of them. WM23 doesn't believe it would displace him from any job. WM55 realizes it might impact someone, but hasn't noticed any impact on him. WM86 expressed, a little differently:

I am willing to stand up against anybody and compare skills. If we all have equal opportunity I am all for that. So AA; so if AA puts me at a disadvantage I would not like that. That wouldn't be right. But if I'm equally, if I'm given all equal opportunities that to me is what the goal is meant to be and I support that goal.

(WM86)

According to this participant,

In traditional terms there's the White majority versus minorities that's potentially going to be changing soon here where the White population won't necessarily be the majority anymore; where there will be other races that are considered the majority as far as population and so you have to adjust some of those terms, but I mean that the general laws of AA of making sure of, what I believe the original goal was, to make sure the most qualified person got the job, I think that should still apply whether or not you an immigrant, or a minority, or a majority race. I think the most qualified and best fit for the job should be the one that gets the job.

(WM3)

That's a hard one because I think somebody coming to this country deserves a little bit of help getting started, but it goes back to here's help getting started but if

you're going to start competing against me for business contracts, I want to be on a level playing. So now with AA I've lost that level playing field. (WM49)

Survey Question 23

How do you believe your view regarding preferential treatment for women and minorities relates to the company you work for? Twenty-four of the respondents said that their company's views regarding treatment of women and minorities correlated with their own, however most of those have little association with AA per se, but they do work in a diverse environment and feel that everybody is treated equally.

While the views were the same, 1 participant did express that women and minorities were allowed to have affinity groups and there was always some ethnic employee of the month award. Additionally mentoring programs are developed specifically for women and minority groups and White men had nothing. He concluded that conversation by saying that he didn't need those programs anyway.

For the 6 participants who did not believe their views matched that of the company they worked for, it was because they believed the company has to ignore a lot of good candidates in order to meet their AA goals (WM11), or to win government contracts (WM84).

Survey Question 27

Question 27 asked what respondents think would happen to AA with our first African American president. Almost all respondents suggested that his race did not matter. What did matter was what he stood for as a Democrat, as a person. Twenty-seven of the respondents suggested that the administration would, at a minimum, keep AA. "Keeping it means making sure that the rules continue to be fair, that there's not a level

of, I guess discrimination, is not the right word, you know, that people are taking into account equality” (WM 35). Only 1 respondent suggested that it may be removed and viewed as no longer needed, seeing that an African American made it to the highest post in the United States of America. Two respondents did not venture a guess as to what might happen.

Given that most thought that at least the current form of AA would remain, 12 participants suggested that it would have no impact on them. No one indicated that it would affect them personally, and 33% suggested AA might change. As some participants reflected

I definitely think president Obama will promote as much as he can, given his background and his progressive thinking. I think he’s going to challenge the administration and be supportive as possible and put positive support behind whatever comes across his desk. (WM58)

Several participants also suggested that AA should be removed and replaced with the philosophy that the most qualified person gets the job, eschewing an entitlement mentality (WM81). As 1 participant put it “I have a son and I’d like to see him follow in my footsteps. I think I would rather see him judged on his ability and common sense and everything else versus the color of his skin” (WM46).

For those who suggested it might change, they indicated that it might expand to include all people, not just the protected groups (WM23). One participant suggested it would be strengthened to favor minorities and highly backed by African Americans because Obama was one (WM11). Another participant said it might expand to include

gays (WM95). Although 1 individual suggested AA might go away, given its perceived success, no one suspected it would really ever end.

Survey Question 28

How has your work experience, in regards to diversity or AA, meshed with your political and philosophical views? Explain if you had any change of mind or heart because of this. Twenty participants said that their work experience coincided with their political views. Nine indicated there was a difference in their personal belief and that of their company. Five participants, for various reasons, have had a change of mind or heart about AA. Table 12 shows who did and who did not report an incident of discrimination and how they believe their political views coincide with their place of employment.

Table 12

Political Views Associated With Participants who Have and Have Not Experienced Discrimination

Political views & work experience	Discriminated against	Not discriminated against
They mesh	5 participants	15 participants
They don't mesh	5 participants	4 participants

Making opportunities available for minority groups are a top priority for these individuals. WM62 also worked with a diverse group of people and used everybody's strengths to make the team work and he used this philosophy in the work place to promote AA and diversity.

Another participant believed that AA is the right thing to do, even if it discriminates against the White man,

because the Black man has been discriminated against for 100 years and we have a cultural change we're dealing with here. So philosophically I've always erred on the side of let's do what's right even if it means I've got to eat a little pain of my own as a White man. (WM86)

For 1 individual, although the business model and his political beliefs currently mesh, he wonders when enough is enough and AA is either no longer necessary or the rules of engagement are going to change, "Because eventually it could become, I think an issue for White males" (WM95).

Dissonance between the workplace and political views regarding AA. As 1 participant put it, "I've certainly become more empathetic and understand their plight a little bit more. I don't always agree with their behavior, I don't always agree with some of the things they do" (WM56). Another comment was "I'm a firm believer that politics needs to stay out of the fire house" (WM42).

When it came to diversity one of the participants suggested it's only being done because "I think their main premise is that a diverse workforce is a superior workforce and a better workforce. I don't agree with that. I think that doesn't guarantee anything" (WM11).

Another example of dissonance between personal beliefs and what was happening in the workplace when it came to AA was supplied by WM84. An individual he worked for purchased a minority-owned business just to "lap up government contracts left and right" (WM84). He remembers thinking, that's just not right. Although WM84 has no issues with diversity or AA, he believes other people abuse the system.

Lastly, WM81 used to work for a governmental agency where he did not agree with the methods or agendas used to enhance diversity and promote AA. Thus, he found another vocation, vowing never to work for a governmental agency again.

Change of mind or heart. Participants defined having a change of mind or heart both for and against AA. Most often it came from working with and around a very diverse group of people. One participant shared that being involved in the military changed the way he thought about people for the better, because he experienced greater diversity than where he grew up (WM23).

WM97 and WM4 say that they have softened over the years. One of them having come from the south believes that Washington is one of the most racist, arrogant states he has ever lived in.

The hospitality industry also brought out those same feelings from WM46. He too deals with people from “all walks of life. ... It’s just a huge broad spectrum ... and everybody deserves a chance” (WM46). He too has had a change of heart from his previous beliefs. He too moved to the West coast, however he found this area to be more accepting of people.

One of the youngest participants revealed,

Yea, oh yea, oh no, I used to be so against anybody not ... essentially, I was against AA. I didn’t like the idea that because you could get the job over me just because of the color of your skin. I was so against it. But, I did move down south and I did see the differences that it does make and unfortunately, it’s so sad that it did. So it is good. It changed my mind. And hearing stories from people, oh my dad, because of this he got a job. Because of AA started, my grandfather got to do

this and that. And hearing these stories from the heart of the south where a lot of it was going down, a lot of this nasty stuff, real nasty stuff. And hearing stories from these people's families and saying hey, you know if it weren't for these ideas, things would not have gotten better. Yea, I changed. I changed big time. Before I moved, and before I got out on my own I had a very set conservative republicanized ideas because my dad had very White man Christian ideas. And that's how I was raised and that's how I believed. And I believed that women had their roles in life and men had their roles and that they didn't cross. You know if you decided to get married and have a wife, that she was meant to stay home and take care of the kids and stuff. That's how I was raised, yea! And then I moved, and then I saw, and then I met girls who took care of themselves. Then I met people who lived in gay marriages, lived as a gay couple and were happy and just fine and things didn't have to be a certain way and things just worked out. And so you question, you find one brick in your foundation that wasn't right, that was set shoddy. Then you start finding that most of the bricks were kinda set a little shoddy. So yea. Yea, I was raised very interesting. My mom was a hippie but my dad was very like Republican White man. My mom, she got her degree in naturopathic history and she says "it doesn't matter as long as you're happy, it doesn't matter as long as you're happy." (WM70)

Survey Question 29

It has generally been assumed in this country that each individual is responsible for his or her own success or failure. How would you agree or disagree with this statement?

Eleven of the respondents agreed, 7 disagreed, and the rest agreed with one or the other and believe that it's circumstantial.

Responsible for one's own success and failure. Most of the participants that believe everyone is responsible for their own success or failure, believe that it is the responsibility of the individual to do a good job (WM51, WM30), and shouldn't rely on others for help (WM30). Everybody has determination, will, and drive (WM46). Additionally there are many stories of people's success who rose from difficult situations (WM56). Furthermore, opportunity exists. Even immigrants see this as a place of opportunity, sometimes more than do native born Americans (WM23). And finally, WM86 said he did not expect special treatment, but instead, an equal chance and that is all he wants. One respondent reflected on his own personal experience saying "I work 7 days a week day and night, so for me, what I've gotten for myself I've earned. No one has given me anything" (WM30).

Responsible for neither success or failure. According to 7 respondents, there are things outside of one's control so one is not solely responsible for their own success or failure. Also, people take care of each other. This includes friends bringing friends into a business, regardless of qualification. As 1 participant stated,

I've seen people propel in business in the business world that is absolutely so unqualified to polish someone's shoes but they are high level executives simply because they were brought in because their friend either owns the company, runs the company, and it's that kinda thing. (WM84)

Furthermore there are so many government programs for those who need help. In fact one respondent indicated that with the socialist agenda of today's government, welfare,

and unemployment, that Americans go too far to help people, especially when programs are abused (WM98).

Another point that a respondent brought forward was the potential for personal bias or prejudice, which preclude individuals from being responsible for their own success or failure (WM93). Additionally “being a different race or ethnicity you may not be afforded those positions or opportunities for advancement of your career or selection of what you did and didn’t want to do or your schooling” (WM99).

Almost everyone agreed you make your own choices, but there is always someone willing to help obtain success or mitigate the risk of failure. However, according to 1 respondent,

No that’s bull because if that was the truth then we wouldn’t have as many people around as we do because they’d all be dead of all sorts of different things but we tend to take care of one another. And this is what makes humans humans.

(WM70)

Another point of view was expressed as

most people want to believe that their lack of success in life is not their own lack of effort or luck; it’s more that they are in the state that they are because of their race or gender or some excuse for where they are instead of did they actually do something to advance themselves so I would disagree with that statement.

(WM81)

Responsible for failure only. Because there are many programs and people around to help someone succeed, “if you fail, the perception is that it’s because of something you did or a choice you made” (WM79). Furthermore, “if you are in a job and

it's not the right fit for you, failure is eminent. Proper vetting is necessary to avoid this type of situation" (WM92).

Responsible for success only. Because success comes from an individual's own motivation and work ethic, an individual will be responsible for their own success, and although one may take responsibility for their own failure, they are not in control of it (WM55). In today's economy where companies lay people off or fire them, the individual has no control.

It's circumstantial. Respondents indicated that the statement sounds good, however it doesn't take into account an individual's starting point or whether equal opportunity is actually available (WM4).

WM4 reflects on how even as a White man, living in poverty, losing his father at a young age, other people told him he had just as much opportunity as someone from Beverly Hills. He responded "Yea, right!" However, WM4 also believes that people need to be accountable for making the best of whatever start they had. "No one is an innocent bystander in their own career" (WM27).

Survey Question 30

Based on Item 29, how does AA contribute or distract from that?

When asked how AA contributes or distracts from personal success or failure, 15.5 participants said that AA contributes to either the success or failure, 8.5 indicated it distracted and 6 respondents said they didn't know. No one said that it had no effect.

AA contributes to an individual's success or failure. Even though 11 respondents indicated that everyone is responsible for their own success or failure, more participants contended that AA contributes to an individual's success, leveling the s the

playing field (WM75). AA provides opportunities and support that otherwise would not be available. “People aren’t beaten down from the get go” (WM95). Although AA does not guarantee individual success, it does require that a broader range of candidates be interviewed (WM79, WM92). The contribution of AA to success was also stated using an old proverb. “You know, you give them a fish and you feed them, you teach them how to fish and they feed themselves for life” (WM75).

Participant WM97 reflected on how a good friend of his, a Black gentleman, received a full scholarship to an all-Black university and because of AA got into Harvard medical school to become a doctor. He has a very successful practice. “So I think AA absolutely contributes to success when used appropriately” (WM97).

Another school of thought is that a minority candidate succeeds just because of AA, instead of qualifications. They do not need to do a good job, they do not need drive, they only need to be registered as a minority (WM99). To further that thought, although these minorities experience success, it could be that AA is creating the opposite effect when qualified people are displaced in order for an organization to meet a quota (WM27).

AA distracts from being a success or failure. Participants who believe that AA, as an external governmental force, distracts an individual from being responsible for their own success or failure, viewed AA creates an environment that forces actions and mandates on employers, not allowing them to hire people best suited for the job.

Another participant believed AA hinders people from going farther than they are able to go without AA (WM46). His example was having someone offer an individual a

nice office job. “Well what if this nice office job makes you settle and you have the potential to own your own office and give other people the office job” (WM46).

Finally, a participant viewed AA as a crutch rather than an opportunity, as it does not provide the incentive for individuals to work harder (WM11) or take the extra steps to be fully qualified (WM62). “It’s bad for minorities and it’s bad for the people not classified as a minority” (WM11). Essentially, AA is unnecessary (WM98, WM3), and should be abolished (WM81).

Survey Question 31

How would you say that AA, as we know it today, has affected the confidence and self-esteem of the White male?

Twenty-nine of the participants said that AA has not affected their confidence or self-esteem and 1 participant reflected that it may have bolstered his confidence and self-esteem. None of the participants, not even the individuals who experienced being discriminated against, said AA has affected their confidence and self-esteem. When reflecting on how it may have impacted other White men, 15 respondents said it probably had an impact, 9 participants said it didn’t impact other White men, and 4 said it should not.

AA does not affect my confidence and self-esteem. For participants who believe AA has not impacted their confidence and self-esteem, they are indifferent to it, they don’t focus on it, and AA hasn’t helped or hurt most of them (WM58). Additionally, if one is a White man with a driving force, AA won’t affect them (WM79). Even individuals who claim to have experienced discrimination maintained their confidence and self-esteem in part because they knew it wasn’t the quality of their work that led to

an issue (WM56, WM52). And “I think that if a White male let’s AA affect him then it’s his problem. What he needs to do is he needs to learn to work with that to get what he wants” (WM62).

AA does affect the confidence and self-esteem of other White men. When participants speculated that AA affects the confidence and self-esteem of other White men, it is because of something they have seen in the news media, or they are hypothesizing what it would be like to lose an opportunity as a result of AA.

It was suggested that if you are just an “average White male” (WM79), you will blame a lost opportunity on AA, which will affect confidence and self-esteem. And for those White men with marginal test scores that didn’t attend the college of their choice, subconsciously they are blaming AA (WM81, WM42, and WM4). Also because people are being valued as a minority and provided special privileges and treatment and the White man is not valued because he is not a minority, that could erode some self-esteem (WM11).

Participants WM52 and WM70 did suggest that it makes certain White men afraid and results in behavior manifested by “walking on egg shells” or working harder, and it “probably scares a lot of White males” (WM35). Although several participants have heard stories about minorities being hired because of their race or gender, none of them knew for sure that AA was the reason. None of the participants have personally witnessed hiring due to AA.

Survey Question 32

Based on your views on society, Has your experience with AA made you “lose faith” in society overall or in any of its key institutions (such as business, Congress, the courts, government bureaucracies, the military, the police, etc.)? And why or why not?

The responses were grouped into, *no it did not* (77%) and *yes, it did* (23%). Only 2 individuals who experienced discrimination reported losing faith and 5 participants who have not experienced discrimination reported losing faith in some aspect of society.

AA has not made me lose faith in society. For some participants, this was a brief answer: “I have not” (WM58, WM42). Others compared the United States to Canada, which has a much more diverse workforce, a level the United States needs to achieve, at a quicker pace (WM79). WM27 believes we are moving in a positive direction, so has not lost faith. Several other participants believe AA is an opportunity, a tool, so there is no reason to lose faith. And yet others indicate it has done the opposite, it has increased their faith in society (WM27).

One participant in particular stated he has not lost faith in society due to AA because as long as companies make a good faith effort, and the law is applied fairly, there are no issues. “I think AA’s one of the things where given another 25 years people are going to look back and say this is probably one of the most heroic things we have done as a country” (WM4).

AA has made me lose faith in society. Participant WM56 made an overarching statement that there are many things about the government in which he has no faith. Additionally, when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People makes statements, he likens them to ambulance chasers. WM84 has lost faith in Congress

because they have awarded judgments or passed laws to give jobs to individuals who are less qualified.

Participant WM81 suggested AA has gone too far in our military, fire department, and police departments. In his opinion, those organizations are less proficient than they should be because they have “lowered the bar” (WM81) and lowered physical requirements to accommodate AA. His example was “if I’m going to be in a building that’s catching on fire I don’t want a 90lb female trying to carry myself or my children out of the fire if they can’t physically do it” (WM81). Additionally in bidding on government contracts, taxpayers are paying more because the government overlooks the lowest bid in order to accommodate a minority-owned business.

We just don’t need AA. WM98 has not lost faith in society. He wants AA to go away and instead, hire someone based on their ability to perform. WM93 is also disappointed that AA needs to exist and it does so because prejudice still exists. Lastly, WM46 believes that AA can be replaced with diversity workshops that help people understand how to get along, rather than just giving someone a job.

Survey Question 33

What do you think would happen without AA planning? Thirteen participants said discrimination would continue. Eleven respondents said nothing would change. Four indicated that the right person for the job would get the job. Two participants suggested that it would be replaced with something else.

Discrimination would continue. “Obviously we’re not equal across this country so I believe that AA programs are still required” (WM92). Most participants echoed the same concern and suggested that certain groups would continue to be precluded from

succeeding in the workplace and the organizations' ability to garner new ideas would diminish (WM58; WM79; WM97; WM4). The discriminatory hiring practices, the "good ole boy" network, would gain momentum because there would be no checks and balances (WM55) and it would be a disaster (WM75).

WM23 indicated that the workplace would resort back to an all male dominated, rich persons, culture that replicates our current government structure. Opportunities for anyone other than the White man would be lost (WM99; WM4). It was suggested that rioting may even occur (WM52) and "predators would come out of the woodwork" (WM97).

While some admitted that having the first African American president is a good descriptor of how far we have come, they also suggested that the south still has much prejudice, racism, chauvinism, and bigotry (WM95, WM84). However, AA should be eliminated "over the next 20 to 40 years" (WM95).

Nothing would change. WM93 and WM84 suggested that people are decent by nature and would continue to do the right thing, specifically because more individuals have better educations. Additionally WM56 and WM 86 believe there is enough of a public outcry to keep organizations diverse; government intervention, AA, is no longer required. However, people are still protected from discrimination under the current law without AA (WM84).

"We don't need AA anymore" (WM3) because racism is not as prevalent as it was when AA was instituted. Additionally the current forms of technology make for a more cohesive, more connected society (WM70). People will still hire individuals like themselves and still hire their friends, but that happens today, too (WM84). No one

would lose their job and diversified hiring would continue. If anything were to change it would be that minorities would gain more confidence and self-esteem, knowing they were hired because they were the best qualified (WM3, WM62, WM11). These participants believed, AA should be ended and results would be universally positive.

The right person would get the job. Four participants specifically suggested that without AA, the most qualified person would get the job without looking at “other factors.” Where test scores are used to make hiring decisions,

I think it would validate tests. Number one person got hired that’s great. The top 20 candidates in the job are the top 20 candidates who got the job. Not Number 1 through 10 in this race. Not Number 1 through 5 in this race. Not Number 1 through 5 in this race” (WM42).

When it comes to bidding for government contracts, the removal of AA would put everybody on a level playing field and the best company would win the contract (WM49). People hired without AA would strive to achieve more (WM46).

AA would be replaced with something else. WM98 suggested that if AA ended, it would be replaced with training and assistance, building skills and tolerance, which would be better than placing potentially lesser-skilled personnel in certain jobs, where they might produce less but get paid the same as more qualified employees. WM27 stated that once the government mandate is gone, companies, associations, or industries would institute their own form of hiring control again, ensuring the right person is hired.

Survey Question 34

Do you believe that race and sex AA goals or any other types of AA programs remain necessary in some form in various areas of our society? And if so, what would that look like?

The initial responses to this were *yes*, *no*, and *I don't know*. Nineteen participants said yes, 10 said no, and 1 participant said they did not know.

Yes AA remains necessary. As the statistics indicate, 19 respondents believe that some form of AA is still necessary. There is still additional work that needs to be done (WM92). However a program that is over 40 years old “could use some re-vamping” (WM92).

AA programs need to be flexible and adjustable (WM58). They should be operated similar to the way they are governed today, but with greater enforcement (WM79; WM93) and higher expectations (WM4). The program needs more diversity (WM69; WM46) and to apply to everybody (WM23; WM9; WM70). It should be required in medium and small businesses (WM51) but needs to be more cost effective and less litigious (WM55). The program should also be less statistical and more “humanly decided” (WM97).

The program should provide more skills-based training (WM98). The analogy this individual used is a child in school who keeps getting passed along until graduation but has gained no real competitive skills (WM98). Even though participants believe that an AA program is still necessary today; they also believe it should eventually “go away” (WM79, WM75).

No, AA is no longer necessary.

I keep going back to this analogy how come you have to have AA in every other place but a Chinese restaurant? And I'm being a little facetious but how come every Chinese restaurant is run one hundred percent run by Chinese people? I mean, that's where I go and I feel more confident that a Chinese person is serving me Chinese food so it's kind of an interesting dichotomy. However if we went to Bob's barbeque and we didn't have a diversity plan in place and we had all white guys from the south they'd scream foul (WM56).

Although companies should be diverse, workers need to be qualified and not just fulfilling a quota with bodies (WM56). Furthermore, times have changed and there is a lot more understanding (WM30). A participant suggested that AA should end but be replaced with focused recruiting (WM62). However a majority of the nay-sayers don't believe AA is necessary any longer. One participant hoped we have gotten past the need for AA because success is illustrated by several ethnicities (WM49).

Survey Question 35

Do you believe White males should be added to AA plans; why or why not?

The participants were split 47% *yes* and 53% *no* on this one.

Table 13

Responses, Grouped by Age, to Add or Not to Add White Men to AA Planning.

Age	Yes add White men to AA	No do not add White men to AA
20–29	2	1
30–39	3	4
40–49	6	6
50–55	2	6

Table 14

Responses, Grouped by Political Affiliation and Discrimination Experience.

Question	Answer	Cons	Lib	Mod	Dem	Rep	?
7	Discriminated against	3	2	4	0	1	1
7	Not discriminated against	7	3	5	2	0	2
35	Yes include White men in AA	5	3	3	0	0	2
35	No do not include White men in AA	3.5	1.5	4.5	1	0	3

Note. Cons = conservative; Lib = liberal; Mod = moderate; Dem = Democrat; Rep = Republican; ? = undecided.

Yes, White men should be added to AA. White men should be included in AA in order to be included in certain opportunities that are now only available to women and minorities (WM58). It would also bring about the total equality and fairness that AA is supposed to represent (WM55; WM23; WM69). Although participant WM3 is not sure how or where White men would be added, he also doesn't feel they should be deliberately excluded because the exclusion is racist. AA needs to include the "whole spectrum of color" (WM23), and represent the entire population (WM95; WM27; WM42).

Understanding that the demographics are changing and there are more Hispanics than prior years, some White men indicated they are becoming the minority (WM99; WM52; WM46; WM53). America is not all White anymore (WM46).

Being a White male I can almost see the need to add ourselves to the group because it seems like we have become a minority and we're affected because we are being, again this is a gross assumption, I feel like we are possibly being forced to be the minority at this point because everyone is being afforded these opportunities thereby taking away from us and it should be more about people's

level, and their desire to succeed rather than race and religion dictating that these people have the opportunity (WM99).

Even though the response was yes, White men should be included in AA, the participants struggled with what it would look like (WM55). One suggestion was to base inclusiveness on financial need because “there are poor White males out there that haven’t had the opportunity to go to college” (WM62; WM97) and everybody desires a fair chance.

No, White men should not be added to AA. Participants responding that White men should not be included in AA, suggested that the workforce was not diverse enough (WM79). WM92 said his business already had too many White men and that AA did not negate looking for White men; it just provided opportunity for other groups. WM98 indicated that there were already enough opportunities available to White men. Thus, it is necessary to continue creating opportunities for women and minorities (WM93). Finally, adding White men to AA, “That’s just silly” (WM70). Additionally WM93 said that White males are still in the majority. However, when the Hispanic population is in the majority, does that mean they are no longer a part of AA (WM49)? At that time will it be necessary to break through the “Old Hispanic Man’s” club (WM49)? Several felt no one should be added; AA should just end (WM86; WM84; WM11; WM49; WM30). When suggesting White men should not be included, it wasn’t so much because they were White men; it was because AA probably shouldn’t exist in the first place.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I examined the data showing the demographics of the participants and their responses to the research questions. The data show that participants are divided

on what they think about AA, how they feel about it, and what should be done going forward.

In Chapter 5, I summarize the data and provide conclusions and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The research presented in this study was designed to determine the effects of the existing AA practices on White males between the ages of 25 and 55 in Washington State and what courses of action they took if dissonance occurred. In this chapter, the following topics are covered: how and why the study was conducted, how the results relate to the study conducted by F. R. Lynch (1991), the process from the researcher's perspective, how the results address the research questions, conclusions related to the findings, social impacts, and recommendations for additional research.

Conclusions of the Study

Two-thirds of the participants of this study—diverse in politics, occupations, and age,—did not possess a great awareness of AA. Twenty-three of the 30 knew nothing about AA planning requirements. Very few of the participants had encountered discrimination that they would attribute to their race or gender. Furthermore, they indicated that any AA planning would probably not have any impact on them. However, when asked if White men should be included in AA planning, slightly less than half said yes. Those who said yes indicated that with the rise in the Hispanic population, the White male was becoming the minority, and it made sense to include the White male in AA to avoid reverse discrimination. Most of those who said no indicated that AA should just be eliminated.

Although the study did correlate with Festinger's (1957) theory of dissonance and Adams's (1963) theory of equity, the results varied considerably from F. R. Lynch's study published in 1991. Prior to this study there was very little empirical data on the

effects of AA on the White man, viewed from the perspective of a White man. The present study was an attempt to add empirical data to the body of knowledge on the perception of the White male himself as it relates to AA.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 1

What do White men know about AA? The participants were asked a series of questions to understand what they actually knew about AA and AA plans. Most guessed at what AA and AA planning was, since most had never known of or been involved in it. In fact, the highest percentage of participants, 40%, had only known about AA for less than a year; one had never heard about it before the interview. Because most did not know what AA was, they also did not know who was responsible for conducting AA planning. Most participants guessed it was their human resource department or the government. Although this was a fairly accurate guess, it was still a guess.

When asked to distinguish AA from diversity, the expectations were that the participants knew that AA was mandated by the federal government and that diversity programs, for the most part, were voluntary, unless also mandated by a court in a discrimination suit. However, it was surprising to learn that over half started the conversation with either “I don’t know” or “Let me think.” The rest were able to define some level of difference and recognized that their company had some diversity-training programs. Again, when making comparisons, many were still guessing at what an AA plan was. Ultimately, most guessed that AA was the opportunity to bring minorities into the workplace, whereas diversity—which is broader than just gender and race—was the way to understand everyone once they were hired.

The reason for having AA, along with their overall perception, was divided among being good for business, to get government contracts, or to remain compliant with the law. The benefits and detriments were described as (a) beneficial and not beneficial, with a majority indicating it was not beneficial, (b) AA is good for diversity, (c) it promotes equal opportunities as well as promoting unequal opportunities, with a majority suggesting it promoted equal opportunities. Additionally, a very small percentage of participants viewed AA as being forced on companies, still a requirement to meeting quotas, and a approached being reverse discrimination.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 2

Have you ever been discriminated against as a White male? Only 11 participants of the 30 claimed to have experienced discrimination specifically because they were White males. This differed from F. R. Lynch's (1991) study in that Lynch sought men who considered themselves to be victims of discrimination.

The participants described their form of discrimination as either not being hired or promoted, being held to higher standards than women or minorities, being asked to complete work that women don't have the strength to finish, and not getting government contracts. Seven of 10 of the men saw a pattern of discrimination against themselves rather than a single instance.

There was no pattern in the demographics of those who experienced discrimination. Politically, more conservatives and Democrats claimed no discrimination than did those who identified themselves as liberals, moderates, or Republicans. However, those that identified themselves as conservatives or Democrats were the

highest percentage of overall participants. Additionally, age and location were not dominant factors.

Working for tribal-run businesses, attempting to obtain government contracts, and working for a woman- or minority-owned business is where most of the employment-based discrimination occurred. Two participants considered it gender discrimination when asked to take on more their share of work when it required heavy lifting. I did not ask if it would have been the same for any man, regardless of race.

For the participants who answered no to this question, it was a very firm, reflective, or positive no, or they don't "really think so." Two of the responses that are representative of the participants are included below:

No because I've always, as a White male going into a job, and every job I have ever had I have never felt discriminated against anything. No one has ever told me I can't be in an area, no one has ever not accepted me for the person I am but I do come into an environment understanding different ethnicities and different people have different ways of behaving and if you act in a way that would be seen as aggressive or odd to those people you might not be accepted into that group, so I go into each environment as trying to understand those people and why they are that way. (WM23)

And,

I honestly can't say that I ever have. I've been lucky enough that most things I have tried for or applied to get I get because I'm overly qualified. But I definitely do know that it does exist. Conditions where people that are not the most qualified

are given certain programs, contracts, acceptances to colleges. So I do believe that discrimination exists I just don't think it's ever affected my personal life. (WM81)

For the individuals who have experienced discrimination, they also experienced dissonance. Research Question 3 addresses that portion of the study.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 3

What levels of dissonance, if any, do White men in Washington experience if discrimination is perceived? This question provided the strongest basis to make comparisons with F. R. Lynch's (1991) study. All of the respondents in F. R. Lynch's (1991) study were selected because they were victims of reverse discrimination.

However, I still expected to find a larger percentage of participants in this study that had experienced discrimination, whereas only a third of the participants in this study claimed discrimination.

This study did parallel F. R. Lynch's (1991) study in that the participants who did encounter discrimination also experienced some of the same feelings and associated dissonance as the participants in F. R. Lynch's (1991) study. Every participant, perceiving to have experienced discrimination, in this study experienced acquiescence. A very small number said they were angry and they were experienced more frustration than other emotions. Unlike the study F. R. Lynch (1991) conducted, none of the participants in this study said they were hurt, depressed, demoralized, or felt cheated and helpless.

Where F. R. Lynch (1991) also reported a high number of participants who lost self-confidence and lost faith in society, this study found that no one lost their self-confidence and only 7 reported losing faith in society. However, of the 7 that reported losing faith in society, only 2 of those participants reported being discriminated against.

Additionally, of the participants who experienced discrimination, 5 of them still believe there is a need for some form of AA.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 4

If White men perceive discrimination and associated dissonance, what actions do they take to resolve the situation? Half the men that participated in this study said they left that job for another one; the other half said they didn't respond directly to the organization or parties associated with the discrimination. There was some circumvention and some expressing of emotions, however no discrimination lawsuits ensued.

The nonresponders ignored the situation (WM69), because they felt it was out of their control (WM98). The individuals attempting to gain government contracts circumvented the situation by bringing women- and minority-owned businesses into their fold so they could vie for government contracts under the aegis of those individuals.

Of the individuals who left and went to another job, only 2 participants said anything to a manager. WM52 didn't expect anything to change and had another job lined up prior to raising the issue. One man did protest, but it changed nothing.

Venting doesn't necessarily resolve the situation. In this study, participants shared their feelings with friends, 2 expressed their feelings to coworkers, 1 spoke to a family member, 1 to a manager, and 1 to the human-resource department. When the participants spoke out to their friends, the responses included shock, unhappiness, feeling uncomfortable, thinking it was inappropriate, and not being surprised. One of them commented about working for a tribal business: "yea, I hear that's the native way" (WM56). Another comment about the fire department was "that's kind of an on-going joke that if you get hired or get high enough on Seattle's list, you are on the White guy

list” (WM42). One participant spoke related, “I didn’t speak out about it except to my wife and she’s no help” (WM27).

For those who did not speak out, reasons provided included (a) it didn’t matter, (b) no one would understand, (c) 1 participant didn’t know he could, (d) another was afraid of backlash, and (e) yet another didn’t understand his rights.

The perceptions of others in the work setting did not elicit change. Most participants indicated that coworkers were familiar with the situation and that minorities had the advantage. Most said it didn’t matter. Additionally, during this time, most of the participants did not know who else was being hired or promoted at the time.

When the results of this study are compared to that of F. R. Lynch’s (1991), only 3 of his 32 participants remained at the job they held when the discrimination occurred, where as only 5 of the 10 individuals claiming discrimination in this study remained. Seventeen of the F. R. Lynch (1991) participants protested and 15 did not. Only 2 participants in this study protested.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 5

What do White men feel about AA? The overall response to this is their feelings were diverse. Feelings brought about a rather in-depth conversation with the participants. They were asked to respond to how they felt about AA in regard to immigrants, preferential treatment in their company, in the Obama administration, in their own work experience, and the individual’s contribution to their own success or failure, self-esteem, and faith in society. Additionally, they were asked to describe what would happen without AA, if there is still a need for AA, and should White men be added to current day AA planning.

In regard to AA and immigrants, the group was evenly split. Just slightly over half thought that immigrants, as long as they were legal, should be afforded the benefits of AA. The participants who thought immigrants shouldn't be given preference suggested it was because they probably didn't need it. Immigrants come here to make their own opportunities, not to be handed opportunities (WM90).

Whether White men were proponents or opponents of AA, most believed their place of employment supported their views; however a few were self-employed, and some worked in very small firms. Regardless of the work environment, most participants believed that everyone is being treated equally, that opportunities are open to everyone, and that their company works hard to prevent any type of discrimination. There were a few participants who reflected that their company views did not coincide with their own views, indicating it was because they believe their company considers hiring to fill goals rather than based on employee qualifications. Regardless of whether participants liked or disliked AA or thought it helps or hurts, they knew it had not affected their self-esteem. However, half of them speculated that it could affect the self-esteem of a White man who has lost an opportunity because of AA.

When discussing the Obama administration and AA, only a few participants reflected on Obama's race in regard to whether it would make a difference. Again, the group was split but differences were based on Obama's beliefs rather than his race. In either case, they viewed that the Obama administration would definitely help AA and that was viewed as beneficial. Regardless of what the administration would do, no one suggested that by keeping and changing AA, it would have any negative impact on them.

A majority of participants indicated that their work experience with AA supported their political and philosophical views, and for those who had a change of mind or heart about AA, it was to change in favor of AA rather than to oppose it. Those participants, whose work experience was opposite to that of their political or philosophical views firmly believed that AA has forced companies to make bad hiring decisions.

All participants believed that everyone is responsible for some aspect of their own success or failure, but that AA is available to minorities and women could help or detract from that. Most participants felt that AA is an opportunity and individuals have the ability to accept or reject that opportunity and to succeed or fail from that point forward. Only 5 participants believed that AA encourages individuals to not work as hard as their nonprotected counterpart, which is seen as an unfair advantage.

If AA were to end today, most participants believed that some form of discrimination would continue because all the checks and balances will have been removed. Also, the opportunity to harness diverse opinions and ideas would diminish. Others felt nothing would change because being a diverse EEO company is good for business. And with the onset of the Internet and other technology, the United States has become a community that is far more accepting of diversity. A small percentage said without AA, the most appropriate person would be hired for the job and contracting with the government would be fair. The fact that some of the participants had experienced discrimination had a very small impact on the overall impression that AA needed to remain.

White-Male Inclusivity

The final question, should White men be added to AA planning, provided responses that equally split the group and rendered the answer inconclusive. Even some of the participants who experienced discrimination believed that White men should not be added to AA planning. Those who believed AA needed to continue also believe White men should be included, and almost all who said AA should end said White men should not be included. The main concern provided by those who believe White men should be included was the dramatic increase in the Hispanic population, rapidly making White men the minority.

Relationship to the Theoretical Base

A key impetus of this study was to expand on F. R. Lynch's (1991) study of White men and the crisis of AA, while incorporating Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, Adams's (1963) equity theory, and Pincus's (2003a) exploratory and empirical study on reverse discrimination.

Festingers' Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

Festinger's (1957) first hypothesis indicated that the existence of dissonance creates discomfort, and will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance. This proved to be true in this study as well, as individuals either left their jobs or vocalized unhappiness or frustration to coworkers, friends, or family. Even participants who suggested they did nothing did speak about their situation to someone. The second part of the hypothesis suggested that individuals will also avoid situations and information that would increase their dissonance. This was clear especially for individuals who did not

leave the job. They remained focused on their own work, over which they sensed they had control. Additionally, one individual said

Then it kind of led me to say, “You know what? Let’s go the opposite way and at work, don’t talk about any of those things.” When you are asked “How are you?” “Fine, thank you,” whatever it is, “Fine thank you.” It’s great, you know, just bland vanilla conversation. (WM75)

Adams’s Equity Theory

Adams’s (1963) equity theory focused on two fundamental questions: The first is the perception of what is fair and equitable; the second is how someone responds to a perceived inequity. As mentioned in chapter 1, Adams claimed that concerns over inequities continue to constrain industry, labor, and government, particularly because matters of equity involve perceptions of fairness between the employee and employer. For those employees who experienced discrimination, there was a sense of inequity in hiring, retaining, and promotion.

Those individuals who experienced discrimination did exhibit the same methods that Adams described to restore a sense of equity. Participants reported experiencing behaviors such as altering expected outcomes, rationalizing the inequity, and leaving the situation. Of the inputs Adams described, hard work, personal sacrifice, and tolerance played an important role in achieving a sense of equity, in addition to outputs such as self-esteem and responsibility.

Lynch

This study partially replicated the study conducted by F. R. Lynch (1991). F. R. Lynch (1991) indicated that many of the White men who perceive displacement because

of AA rationalize the inequity and doubt they were victims of discrimination. In contrast to the participants in F. R. Lynch's (1991) study, most participants in this study who experienced discrimination knew they were the target of discrimination and perceived they were victims, specifically when working in minority-owned businesses and attempting to get government contracts. Although the participants of this study exhibited similar behaviors to those in the study F. R. Lynch (1991) conducted, there were many fewer victims and less aggressive behavior.

One additional question this study looked to address was, does the "spiral of silence" (F. R. Lynch, 1991) still exist? I would say yes it does, for two basic reasons. The first is that almost none of the participants in this study spoke out to anyone. They indicated that speaking out would not change the situation. Secondly there were many individuals who refused to participate in this study. One individual actually said he did not feel comfortable talking about AA because he holds a management position. Several others gave excuses or ignored the request all together. Other individuals outside of the scope of this study said that it is still a topic that White men just don't talk about (unknown). That being said, those individuals who did participate in this study were not shy about the subject.

Pincus

This study also supported what Pincus found in 2003. Some of the participants in this study who supported AA also suggested that little harm results to White men as a group, as a result of AA. Some men may be affected, but

It's ok to error a little bit on the side of ok, so it discriminates against the White man and that's ok because the Black man has been discriminated against for 100 years and we have a cultural change we're dealing with here. (WM86)

Additionally, this study, like that of Pincus (2003a, p. 120) indicated that the data did not show a "large" negative impact on White men, at least in Washington State.

Social Impact of This Study

Given the fact that the 2010 census shows the minority population on the rise, it may be time to consider including White men in AA planning. The Hispanic population alone increased at a rate of 71.2%. Furthermore, other minority populations, although still relatively small, increased at a rate that exceeded that of the White population (U. S. Census Bureau (2008). At best, including the White male in AA planning, and reporting underutilization for them as for any other group would provide the opportunity for equality across the board.

Furthermore, as indicated by some of the participants of this study, there are many underprivileged White men in this country who should not be ignored based solely on their race. The ultimate message participants provided was that everyone, regardless of race, gender, or religious background, should be hired based on qualifications only. I recommend that the OFCCP and the EEOC further examine the trend of the rising minority population, along with the multiple-race selection, and alter AA to address the current needs for total equality.

Recommendations for Additional Research

Because this research only included White men in the state of Washington from two of its most populous counties, I recommend the study be conducted for a longer

period of time across the 50 states, open to all groups, and focus on the following questions: (a) Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your race or gender? (b) Do you believe that AA is still necessary? (c) Who should be included in or excluded from AA planning and why?

Researcher's Reflections

The question about AA and immigrants brought about an unexpected conversation about legal immigrants versus illegal immigrants. Although that was not the intent of the study, almost all participants favored immigration because, as 1 participant put it, we are all immigrants. That too was an unintended response. However, almost all participants were passionate about ensuring illegal immigrants did not access government benefits of any kind, including AA.

Of particular interest were the stories of participants who were the target of discrimination. The individuals perceived as responsible for the discrimination were the very groups of people AA works to protect against discrimination. Tribal businesses, for example, are exempt from government-mandated AA practices. This researcher was surprised to find that a large number of White men knew very little about AA.

When participants discussed the current government and asked if they lost faith in any key institutions, they almost all reflected that they were unhappy with the government as it exists today. This was not the expected result; participants used the survey question to pronounce their discontent with the political process as a whole, and only a short portion of the discussion focused on AA.

Native American businesses and their hiring practices was another interesting topic of discussion. The White men who worked for a tribal-run business knew their

position in the business was precarious; the hiring of White men ranked seven on a scale of one to seven with one being the most likely candidate for the job. Even if discrimination was felt, they dealt with it because they knew initially that hiring was preferential and they enjoyed their jobs. There was also empathy, still today, for the way the government treats tribal nations.

The most difficult part of the study was the unresponsiveness of people who did not want to participate in the study, even when recommended by a participant of the study. At least as many people declined participation in the study as those who participated. Although thinking the spiral of silence was extant, it was hard to empirically prove.

Summary

Discrimination exists today in the United States, not only between White and Black or White and Asian or White and the “other,” but also between and among all races. Furthermore, the ability to designate oneself as of a mixed race is growing as the country becomes more diversified. U.S. residents can be identified as White plus, or Asian plus, or cross gendered. Does it make sense in today’s society to continue to protect only specific groups? If so, do they continue to remain the same groups? And if so, on what is that decision based? Is it 100% Black, or 50% Asian or 30% Indian?

If AA is going to continue to be the avenue of equality, it should transform to answer the changing needs of society and ensure true equality exists, even if it means redefining equality. The OFCCP and the EEOC may want to reevaluate what they currently require, compare that to the current census data, and make changes to ensure the work force obtains and maintains the appropriate balance of diversity and equality.

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Appendix A: Letter of Permission From Frederick R. Lynch

Printable Format

Page 1 of 1

Subject : RE: Permission to modify initial survey**Date :** Sun, Sep 26, 2010 07:17 PM CDT**From :** "Lynch, Frederick" <Frederick.Lynch@ClaremontMcKenna.edu>**To :** [Linda Hansken](mailto:linda.hansken@waldenu.edu) <linda.hansken@waldenu.edu>

Good to hear from you! You have my permission for the modifications to the survey.

How are things going?

Fred

Frederick R. Lynch, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Government
Claremont McKenna College
850 Columbia Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711
909-607-3799

Curriculum Vitae

Linda Lee Hansken
(206) 949-1034
linda@snap-decisions.com

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Walden University - 2011

Applied Management and Decision Sciences

University of Phoenix - 2003

MBA in Technology Management

WIDENER UNIVERSITY - 1990

Bachelor of Science in Business / HR Management

Masters Certificate - 2004

Project Management

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior project manager

- Information Technology, leading and directing enterprise, cross-functional teams in the implementation of internal security features.
- Engage in risk and issue management.
- Track earned value.
- Conduct opportunity workshops.

Mentoring / Teaching:

- Program Management Best Practices.
- Chairman's Innovation Initiative for developing entrepreneurial ideas.
- Global Diversity AA Organization.

Manager: Boeing Calibration Lab:

- Member of Enterprise Metrology Lab Steering Committee.
- Provided coaching, mentoring, performance management, salary management activities, and CII (continuous individual improvement) for the hourly workforce.
- Developed project or operational plans aligned to department's objectives.
- Established auditing process and other lean processes, forecasted resource needs.

- Established partnerships with other supporting organizations across Boeing.

Quality Administrator

- Shareholder Value, Economic Profit - Provided leadership for multiple projects and activities that support the Quality System.
- Lean Manufacturing - Planned, organized and directed company resources to achieve organizational goals and objectives revolving around Quality, Cost, Delivery, Safety, Morale, and Lean Manufacturing.
- Point of Use, Just in Time and Supply Chain Management support resolving program, project and procedural issues.
- Standardization metrology methods of tracking and reporting issues.

Organizational Development Consultant

- 5S administration.
- Monitored cost commitments.
- Coordinated safety efforts for the office safety program.

Business Planning & Financial Analyst

- Developed methods for business managers to establish yearly budgets, develop templates, monitor performance, report variances, determine corrective action and develop trend analysis.
- Establish and coordinate Long range business plans, Estimates at Completion, Interorganizational Work Authorizations, Computing Work Authorizations, and Memorandum of Agreements.
- Implemented process improvements.
- Ensured proper accounting for international support.
- Administered the Financial Planning Data Base.