Chapter 2
Theories and Thinking About Diversity

Chapter Outline

I. Introduction and Overview
II. What is a "Minority"?
III. Categorization and Identity
IV. Aversive Racism, Ambivalent Sexism, and Other New Isms
V. Recommendations for Individuals and Organizations
VI. Summary
VII. Key Terms
VIII. Questions to Consider
IX. Actions and Exercises

Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, readers should have a firm understanding of what constitutes minority groups and the processes surrounding people's thinking about and treatment of those who are dissimilar to them. Readers can expect to:

1. discuss the meaning of the terms minority and non-dominant group
2. explain characteristics used to identify non-dominant groups and be able to use these characteristics to identify the non-dominant groups in one's particular environment.
3. discuss thought processes related to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination and theories related to diversity in organizations.
4. examine in-group favoritism and out-group bias.
5. explain what organizations can do to promote diversity and inclusion, given knowledge about reasons for differential treatment, experience, and outcomes for different demographic groups.
6. have a foundation for synthesizing the material in the remaining chapters.

Lecture Notes and Teaching Suggestions

This chapter introduces some of the theories and thinking about diversity concepts to provide readers with some foundation for understanding stereotyping, differential treatment, discrimination, categorization and other processes related to diversity. An understanding of these processes will help students as they learn about the experiences of the groups to be studied in subsequent chapters.

Dworkin and Dworkin's characterizations of minority and non-dominant groups present the view that not all non-dominant groups are fewer in number than the dominant group, and increases ability to see the other factors that make groups dominant and non-

dominant or "minority" groups. This characterization can also extend to other groups not listed, and will vary depending on the historical and current diversity contexts of an area.

Although everyone is aware of stereotypes, this chapter exposes students to formal thinking about stereotyping and its negative effects on people's employment opportunities. Stereotyping and categorization are often unconscious processes, and left unchecked may lead to discrimination against others. In-group favoritism and out-group bias are discussed as automatic processes that serve to disadvantage non-dominant groups in organizations. Research on this process, as it relates to diversity in organizations, and on how stereotyping may be reduced is presented. Aversive racism and neosexism are presented as ways in which people who express egalitarian beliefs may behave differently than their espoused beliefs. The instructor may also wish to discuss similarities of ambivalent sexism, benevolent sexism, aversive racism, and neosexism (and other isms) with students.

Key Facts *(and Associated Questions)*

Questions following each "Key Fact" are helpful in stimulating class discussion. (Selected key facts include discussion points in this Instructors' Manual. Instructors may choose different ones to emphasize depending on the needs/interests of students and instructors). Instructors may wish to have students formulate questions of their own relevant to the key facts and use them for class discussion.

- Characteristics of minority or non-dominant groups often include identifiability, differential power, discrimination, and group awareness.

  Question: What are some cases in which a group is non-dominant, but these characteristics do not all apply?

An example of this would be White women, who are non-dominant in sex, but dominant in race. Men of color are dominant in sex, but non-dominant in race. Instructors should emphasize that people have multiple group memberships.

- Minority, or non-dominant, groups are not necessarily fewer in number than majority, or dominant, groups.

  Question: Why are groups that are more numerous in number able to be dominated?

Students may suggest differences in resources, for example, when the minority in number have more money, weapons, access to technology, or other resources that can be used to dominant those who are more numerous in number. Non-dominant but more numerous groups may be dominated as a result of socialization as well.

- Categorization and stereotyping are often unconscious processes, which alone are not necessarily negative.

Question: How can the propensity to automatically stereotype be reduced?

Suggest that purposeful attention, education, and beginning to view out-groups as members of the in-group through organizational interventions may be helpful in stereotype reduction.

- People tend to attribute positive characteristics to members of their in-groups, and negative characteristics to members of groups to which they do not belong.

- In-group favoritism and out-group bias disadvantage non-dominant groups and impede diversity.

Questions: Why does this happen? Why are non-dominant groups disadvantaged? What can be done to reduce this propensity?

Emphasize that because the in-groups are more likely to be in power, their propensity to characterize people like them favorably and dissimilar others unfavorably disadvantages non-dominant group members. Individual awareness and organizational controls are measures than can reduce the propensity to favor similar others when this results in discrimination against dissimilar others and impediments to diversity efforts.

- Structured interviews can reduce the effects of similarity bias in selection.

Question: How can structured interviews reduce similarity bias in selection?

Discuss the research by McCarthy and her colleagues in Research Summary 2.1 that involved using behaviorally anchored rating scales and interviewer training among other techniques critical to successful structured interviews to eliminate similarity bias. The training included how to conduct and score the interview, as well as emphasizing the importance of taking notes and how to avoid rater errors.

The research involved a very large field sample that included significant proportions of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian applicants and interviewers. Findings showed that applicant race and sex were not associated with their ratings by the interviewers and applicant/interviewer similarity in race and sex was not related to applicant ratings. The researchers noted that by implementing carefully structured and administered interviews, organizations can minimize concerns about discrimination on the basis of race and sex. Using these techniques should help facilitate selection of a diverse workforce and reduce organizational concerns about litigation.

Questions to Consider *(End of Chapter)*

1. The chapter discusses many identities and multiple group memberships that people have. If you were to describe the important parts of your identity, what

would be on your list? Make a list, then rank order the most to least important aspects of your identity. Which are immediately apparent to others?

Instructors may wish to use this exercise for class discussion, noting potential differences in the parts of identity emphasized by different people, the ranking of identities, and the visibility and invisibility of aspects of identities. Encourage students to think about why they rank ordered the areas of their identities as they did.

Depending on the nature of the class and comfort level of students with this exercise, instructors may teach generally with this question or allow students to discuss their specific identities if they wish. If students are uncomfortable discussing their identities, the instructor may wish to talk about her or his different identities and their effects.

2. As a powerful group, elected officials affect the life chances of the populace. How are elected officials in the area where you live similar to or different demographically from the population in that area?

Encourage students to complete this exercise as a way of understanding the impact of the political process on people's lives. Ask them to describe why they think elected officials are similar or different from the population where they live. Are members of the dominant group most frequently elected as officials?

3. Researchers have found that people are less willing to express "traditionally" prejudiced beliefs than in the past, but their behavior does not agree with espoused beliefs. How can such disparities in expressed beliefs and actions undermine diversity in organizations? What organizational measures can be implemented to investigate whether there are inconsistencies in expressed beliefs, behaviors, and outcomes related to diversity in organizations?

Such disparities can undermine diversity by covert actions, such as steering different groups to jobs deemed appropriate for them (for example, women to support or secretarial jobs, minorities to warehousing or invisible jobs—tell students that examples of these kinds of occurrences are provided in individual chapters to come). To investigate inconsistencies in espoused beliefs, behaviors, and outcomes organizations can undertake a variety of "policing" measures. Are different groups represented in different job categories and levels of the organization? Is there evidence of the glass ceiling and walls? Do certain groups have higher turnover levels? Are there differences in expressed satisfaction, confidence in management, intent to turnover (and other outcomes) between dominant and non-dominant groups? Students will develop a variety of ideas for investigating inconsistencies.

4. Choose an aspect of your identity in which you are a member of the dominant racial, ethnic, sex, or religious group. Have you experienced being the minority in a situation (for example, White among many Blacks, Asians, or Latinos; Christian in the United States among many Jews)? If you are a racial minority, have you experienced being a minority among others of color (for example, Asian among

many Blacks; Latino among many Asians) rather than among Whites? If you are a man, have you experienced being the minority at work in a meeting or at school in a class? If you are a woman, have you experienced being the minority in a meeting at work or at school in a class? What were these experiences of being a "minority" like?

Tell students that Jack Dovidio (whose research on stereotype reduction was cited in the chapter) experienced being the minority when he was a college student on an exchange program from Colgate University and Wellesley College, a women's school. That experience motivated him to study diversity.[1]

Emphasize to students that minority group members will often have more experience in being the minority because of the larger numbers of majority group members. From 2008 Census figures, Whites make up 75% of the U.S. population, Blacks 12.4%, and Asians 3.6%. It is more likely that Blacks and Asians will have experienced being in the minority than Whites, so their level of comfort or discomfort with it may be different than those of Whites, who are far less likely to have experienced this. Women in engineering, science, or math professions or classes may have frequently experienced being in the minority. Point out that when men are in the minority in female-dominated fields, they are often managers or supervisors, and discuss how having a powerful status will affect being in the minority. As the discussion enfolds, encourage students to consider how their identifiability and power affected their experience, and to ask whether they felt differential treatment (or discrimination).

Actions and Exercises

1. Discuss stereotypes with a trusted friend or family member. What kinds of job-related stereotypes is he or she aware of? (Note that awareness of stereotypes does not mean belief in the veracity of the stereotype). Discuss how these stereotypes can negatively affect individuals' job opportunities and advancement. Can you think of a person who is *not* a member of the stereotyped group who fits the stereotypical characteristic? Can you think of a person who is a member of the stereotyped group who doesn't fit the stereotype?

This exercise helps students see the pervasiveness of stereotypes among people from various walks of life, education levels, and from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Older students report having this conversation with their children, and even children are aware of stereotypes and can offer suggestions of how these stereotypes can disadvantage people in job-related contexts, simply because of their group memberships.

2. Using a local newspaper (*San Francisco Chronicle*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Dallas Morning News*, etc.), a campus or university newspaper, and a community or city

[1] Crosby, F. (2004). *Affirmative Action is Dead: Long Live Affirmative Action.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

newspaper, locate stories that include photos of people in the story. Make a table of the type of story (human interest, business news, crime, etc.), race, ethnicity, sex, and estimated age of the subject. What diversity-related observations can be made from the table?

Engage students in thinking about which groups appear to be well-represented, under-represented, or invisible. [Are minorities more likely to be represented in crime stories? How are women shown? How are older people shown—as the frail and elderly or as people still employed? Are any people with disabilities or gays or lesbians represented? How would one know?]. Point out that with invisible group statuses, such as many disabilities, sexual orientation, and religion, often the stories (in which people belonging to such categories appear) focus on something related to the group membership, such as a story about disabilities at work or partner benefits. Instructors may wish to begin compiling a file of newspapers that are particularly interesting to use in classes.

Be sure to emphasize that this analysis of a few newspapers or media items is limited and may or may not support what large scale studies and more data show. Anecdotal evidence versus data can also be pointed out in any individual stories one may have that seem to conflict with data.

3. Locate a newspaper that has an executive or business section that includes "promotions," "executive changes," or other career moves. If there are photos of the people involved, list their race, ethnicity, and sex. If names only are provided, determine the sex of the person, where possible. What observations can you make from your list?

Engage students in thinking about which groups appear to be well-represented, under-represented, or invisible in this section of the paper. [Are minorities more likely to be represented in line or staff positions? How many of the stories involve women? Mention that minorities and women often occupy human resources or community relations positions, which are less likely to result in promotions to executive jobs—"glass walls".] When non-dominant group members are represented, discussion may focus on the companies involved. In what companies does there appear to be more diversity? Instructors may wish to begin compiling a file of newspapers that are particularly interesting to use in classes.

Suggested Readings

The instructor should preview books for appropriateness to the specific levels, classes, and students.

Crosby, F. (2004). *Affirmative Action is Dead: Long Live Affirmative Action.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dipboye, R. L., & Colella, A. (Eds.) (2005). *Discrimination at Work: The Psychological and Organizational Bases.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dworkin, A. G., & Dworkin, R. J. (Eds.) (1999). *The Minority Report*, 3rd ed. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Publishers.

Hartman, C. (Ed). (1997). *Double Exposure: Poverty and Race in America*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Nelson, T. (2002). *The Psychology of Prejudice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sampson, E. E. (1999). *Dealing with Differences.* Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* New York: Basic Books.

Suggested Test Questions

1. Explain the difference between prejudice and discrimination. What can organizations do to prevent prejudice from resulting in discriminatory behavior?

2. Explain in-group favoritism and out-group bias and their consequences with respect to diversity in organizations.

3. According to Dworkin and Dworkin, what factors distinguish "minority" or "non-dominant groups"? What are some problems with these characterizations? In what ways are they helpful in determining non-dominant groups?

4. How can stereotyping negatively affect diversity in organizations? What can individuals and organizations do to reduce people's propensity to stereotype and to act on stereotypes?

Note: The instructor may wish to choose additional questions from the end of chapter or the cases in the book to use for exams.