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What are Diversity 'Best Practices'? Exploring Diversity Management Bundles and Organizational Performance

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10:30am - 12:00pm

Janice H. Levin Building, Room 004
94 Rockefeller Road, Piscataway, NJ

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ABSTRACT

Although organizations have increasingly invested in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives (Newkirk, 2019), the business case for such initiatives remains elusive. DEI practices have been shown to influence the representation of women and minorities at different levels of organizations (Kalev & Dobbin, 2006; Richards et al., 2013), although we have a more limited understanding of whether that influence translates into a performance impact. Across two field studies, we explore whether and how DEI practices impact firm performance. Drawing from the strategic human resource management (SHRM) literature, we adopt a bundled approach to diversity management to examine the complementary nature of certain practices and how such reinforcing practices may create a competitive advantage for firms.

We also investigate whether clusters of firms based on the number and type of diversity management practices implemented experience different levels of operating performance. Using survey data from two national samples of U.S. credit unions and of managers across a variety of industries, our findings suggest that firms with more extensive strategic diversity management practices have higher financial performance, and that these relationships operate through climates for inclusion, climates for innovation, and information exchange. We consider the theoretical and practical implications of these results as well as directions for future research in this area.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Quinetta Roberson is the John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor of Management and Psychology at Michigan State University. Prior to her current position, she was an endowed chair at Villanova University and a tenured professor at Cornell University. She has also been a visiting scholar at universities on every continent, except for Antarctica, and served an appointment as Program Director of the Science of Organizations at the National Science Foundation (NSF). She served as President of the Academy of Management (AOM) for 2020-2021.

Professor Roberson's research interests focus on developing organizational capability and enhancing effectiveness through the strategic management of people, particularly diverse work teams. Her research has appeared in such journals as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Annals*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Organizational Research Methods* and *Personnel Psychology*. Professor Roberson was an Associate Editor at the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (2008-2014), and edited a *Handbook of Diversity in the Workplace* (Oxford Press).