Commitment to Diversity: The Impact of Diversity and Inclusiveness on Athletic Department Organizational Attractiveness and Job Pursuit Intentions

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The Impact of Diversity and Inclusiveness on Athletic Department Organizational Attractiveness and Job Pursuit Intentions

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Abstract

Given the lack of minorities in intercollegiate athletics, it is important for athletic departments to enhance inclusion and diversity practices to better manage diversity. These efforts will ultimately make the organization more attractive for potential applicants. Research suggests a strong relationship between applicant perceptions of organizational attractiveness and job choice decisions. However, little work has been devoted to understanding whether an organization's commitment to diversity enhances these perceptions. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of an athletic department's commitment to diversity on its perceived attractiveness and the job pursuit intentions of potential applicants. Participants (N = 160) were presented with recruitment brochures detailing an athletic department internship program. Each brochure contained identical information regarding the internship opportunity, but varied with regards to the references made to diversity and inclusion. Findings revealed significant differences between the brochures on organizational attractiveness as well as gender on job pursuit intentions, but not for other specific demographic factors. These results indicate the manner in which a commitment to diversity is framed will lead to enhanced perceptions of the organization and the greater likelihood of attracting potential applicants, regardless of race and gender.

Keywords: *diversity; organizational attractiveness; job pursuit intentions*

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Introduction

Positions of power, leadership, and decision making in intercollegiate athletics are dominated by White, heterosexual males (Fink, Pastore, & Riemer, 2001). Data on this topic show that in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), 89%, 90.9%, and 95.9% of athletic directors at non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) at the Division I, II, and III levels (respectively) were White during the 2011–2012 academic year (Irick, 2013). Similarly, during the 2011–2012 academic year, 90.5%, 81.6%, and 71.8% of athletic directors at all Division I, II, and III levels (respectively) were male (Irick, 2013). Furthermore, this underrepresentation of racial minorities and women permeates the coaching side of intercollegiate athletics. For the 2011–2012 academic year, and across all three divisions, 82.4% of all NCAA men's teams and 51.1% of all NCAA women's teams were coached by White males (Irick, 2013). This representation in top leadership positions has been found to negatively and disproportionly impact racial minority and women head coaching intentions (Cunningham & Fink, 2006; Cunningham, Doherty, & Gregg, 2007; Sagas, Cunningham, & Pastore, 2006), occupational tenure (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002), career satisfaction and advancement (Sagas & Cunningham, 2005; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007), social networking (Day & McDonald, 2010), and mentor-mentee relationships (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008). Thus, athletics department management must first be aware of this issue and second, seek to address concerns that yield potentially pejorative outcomes resulting from access and treatment discrimination (Cunningham & Sagas, 2005; Sagas & Cunningham, 2004).

Diversity management can be an effective organizational practice to ensure positive outcomes from diversification investments (Cunningham, 2009). However, such a bottom-line perspective of, and more importantly approach to, diversity management in sport could potentially marginalize employee differences, treating the administrative act as an initiative to deal with dissimilar employees (Fink & Pastore, 1999). Diversity management is more than just an organizational initiative. It considers diversity to be an asset, managed in order to maximize benefits, gain a competitive edge, and create a more inclusive environment (Rau & Hyland, 2003). In addition, managing diversity can be viewed as an attempt to minimize possible drawbacks that may occur from general employee differences. Thus, productive organizational diversity must center on a "… strategic, long-term commitment of resources" (p.101) from upper management (Kreitz, 2008). In addition, it must be proactive and synergistically attempt to capitalize on potential advantages of employee differences (Cunningham, 2007).

"… The most important step, however, a manager can take to bring about employee commitment to gender diversity is to integrate diversity efforts into the broader organizational landscape" (Cunningham, 2008, p. 142). However, diversification cannot be recklessly forced upon an organization and its employees. Rather, it must be cautiously imbedded with organizational culture. In intercol-

legiate athletics, an industry dominated by White males, this can pose a number of managerial concerns. The most important of which is determining the most effective means to incorporate and manage diversity. Kossek and Zonia (1993) suggested it should be easier to hire racial and gender minorities for entry- and mid-level positions rather than attempting to integrate diverse employees into upper management and other leadership roles. As such, recruitment and hiring are critical components of diversification. Based on this commentary, we sought to determine the impact of an athletic department's commitment to diversity, via diversity statements and promotional materials, on organizational attractiveness and subsequent job pursuit intentions of potential applicants.

Literature Review

While increases in racial, ethnic, and gender diversity are gaining momentum in intercollegiate athletics, some concerns still remain (Lapchick, Hoff, & Kaiser, 2011) regarding a homogenous workforce. Fifteen years ago, Fink and Pastore (1999) posited that discrimination and oppression were rampant in Division I intercollegiate athletics, perhaps more so than in any other industry. Yet, while administrative dilemmas involving diversity and inclusiveness continue to persist, efforts to facilitate, maintain, and manage change are transpiring. For example, the NCAA strives for diversity and gender equity among all constituents, offering workshops and educational programs to develop and sustain a diverse and inclusive culture for student athletes, coaches, and administrators (NCAA, 2011). NCAA diversity and inclusion programs include (but are not limited to): The Ethnic Minority Enhancement Postgraduate Scholarship for Careers in Athletics Programs, the NCAA's Men's and Women's Coaches Academies, The NCAA Fellows Leadership Development Program, and the NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee.

Despite these efforts, recruiting, hiring, and retaining racial and gender minorities in leadership positions can be difficult (Wilson & Meyer, 2013). This can prove particularly problematic in sport where changes in the workforce, legal issues, social pressures, and beliefs in the value of diversity contribute to an increased interest in diversity management (Cunningham & Fink, 2006). Whereas surface-level characteristics (e.g., race, sex, physical attributes) amongst athletic department employees may show organizational diversity, real change has been inhibited, in part, by the commonality of values and priorities possessed by established leaders and newly hired employees (Fink & Pastore, 1999). Therefore, concerted efforts must be made to diversify both surface- and deep-level characteristics of the employee workforce, as non-visual, psychological factors may be just as impactful on the effectiveness of diversity management (Woehr, Arciniega, & Poling, 2013).

As organizations continue to adopt and embrace the "value in diversity" viewpoint (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991), differing demographic variables have be-

come more appreciated in work environments. Likewise, the management, attraction, development, and retaining of dissimilar employees with varying cultures, values, and beliefs have become critical organizational resources (Avery, 2011). This "human capital," which is the "… stock of experience, judgment, intelligence, relationships, and insights of individual managers and workers" (p. 202), can provide a competitive organizational advantage (Slater, Weigand, & Zwirlein, 2008). As a result, human resource departments are focusing more attention on recruiting employees from diverse backgrounds while concurrently enhancing internal morale and promoting positive affect toward the company's culture (Thaler-Carter, 2001).

Historical coaching data indicates that for any given sport, coaching candidate pools are likely to consist primarily of former student-athletes (cf., Cunningham, 2010; Everhart & Chelladurai, 1998). Thus, it is fair to assume the composition of upper management in intercollegiate coaching and administration would mirror the potential workforce. This is not the case in college sport, in which 30% of NCAA student athletes are racial minorities and 43% are females (Irick, 2013). These percentages demonstrate an even greater disparity when examining only Division I representation as the percentages increase to 37% and 46%, respectively. This can be attributed, in part, to recent hiring practices as "selecting candidates who offer the 'best fit,' unclear job qualifications, institutional waivers of the search and screen process, and lack of commitment to the 'spirit' of affirmative action and equal opportunity continue to exist on campuses" (Brooks, Althouse, & Tucker, 2007, p. 123). In order for an athletic department to significantly change its personnel and culture, a focus should be placed on the recruitment of a diverse and inclusive applicant pool. Several productive means by which to attract a more diverse pool of candidates include an organization's diversity statement and recruitment materials (Rau & Hyland, 2003).

Diversity Statements and Recruiting Materials

Diversity statements allow an organization to specifically target potential applicants that meet the organization's needs, such as certain qualifications and demographic characteristics (Kreitz, 2008; Rau & Hyland, 2003). It is often of utmost importance that when filling vacancies, organizations recruit and hire individuals that are not only competent to carry out job responsibilities, but also possess the skills, qualities, demeanor, and attitudes needed to "… succeed in the specific cultural environment of the job and the organization" (Bravo, Won, & Shonk, 2012, p. 65). It has been found that such skills and attributes perceived to be important to college athletics administrators include, but are not limited to, career-related work experience, leadership experience, education level, work ethic, professionalism, academic achievement, and people, technical, communication and conceptual skills (Won, Bravo, & Lee, 2013).

Recruiting is the process of attracting and encouraging qualified and interested candidates to apply for an available position (Lussier & Kimball, 2009), via

personal communications, the Internet, brochures, or agencies. Campus recruiting can be particularly beneficial as it is one of the best sources to network with young professionals considering entry-level positions (Chelladurai, 2006). However, given the potential for students and other applicants to be unfamiliar with a particular athletic department, it is important for recruitment materials, when appropriate, to highlight the potential for job opportunities and career advancement in order to generate student interest (Barfield, Cobler, Lam, Zhang, & Chitiyo, 2012). Therefore, recruitment tools are especially important for athletic departments and collegiate sport where the majority of coaching and administrative leadership positions are filled by White males (Irick 2013; Lapchick et al., 2011).

Organizational Attractiveness

Breaugh and Starke (2000) note that it is becoming increasingly more critical for organizations to focus on how to attract the best possible candidates, those who are highly skilled, knowledgeable, and possess the requisite job performing abilities, for position openings. A meta-analytic review of applicant attraction to an organization centers on the recruiting predictors consisting of job and organizational characteristics, recruiter characteristics, perceptions of the recruitment process, perceived fit, perceived job alternatives, and hiring expectancies. The outcomes of these predictors dictate the potential job seeker's feeling towards organizational attraction, job pursuit intentions, acceptance intentions, and job choice (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005).

Research suggests a strong relationship between applicant perceptions of organizational attractiveness and job choice decisions, in that perceptions of organizational attractiveness predict job acceptance and job pursuit intentions (Gomes & Neves, 2011). Chapman et al. (2005) state that organizational attractiveness is formed by an applicant's evaluations of job attributes specific to the position (e.g., pay, benefits, type of work) and those that reflect the organization (e.g., image, company size, work environment, location). Furthermore, "organizational attractiveness fully mediates the relations between the job characteristics and the organizational attributes with intention to apply for a job vacancy" (Gomes & Neves, 2011, p. 684).

Given the paucity of gender and racial minorities in intercollegiate athletics upper management positions (Irick, 2013; Lapchick et al., 2011), the ability to hire and integrate racial and gender minorities for entry- and mid-level positions (Kossek & Zonia, 1993) with diversity statements and other recruiting materials, and the relatively recent interest in diversity management (Cunningham, 2009) it becomes apparent why the self-promotion of an organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion is critical to its organizational attractiveness. Based on this literature, the following research questions were put forth:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): To what extent does an athletic department's commitment to diversity impact its organizational attractiveness?

Research Question 2(RQ2): Will race serve as a moderator on the potential relationship between an athletic department's commitment to diversity and its organizational attractiveness?

Research Question 3(RQ3): Will gender serve as a moderator on the potential relationship between an athletic department's commitment to diversity and its organizational attractiveness?

Job-Pursuit Intentions

Chapman et al. (2005) define organizational attractiveness as "... an applicant's intention to pursue a job or to remain in the applicant pool" (p. 929). It is also noted that intention to pursue a job is usually measured early by the applicant, demonstrating the need for an organization to make a positive impression at the outset of the recruitment process. Chapman et al.'s (2005) *Fully Mediated Path Model* explains how a recruiting predictor (job and organizational characteristics, recruiter characteristics, perceptions of the recruitment process, perceived fit, perceived alternatives, and hiring expectancies) leads to the formation of an applicant's attitude towards organizational attraction. Thus, organizational attraction essentially acts as an antecedent to acceptance intentions (or job pursuit intentions). Ultimately, the acceptance intentions, and the subsequent pursuit of the job, should then result in job choice by the applicant.

Type of work and an organization's image are two subcategories of characteristics within job pursuit intentions that act as strong predictors for a potential applicant (Chapman et al., 2005). The initial awareness of a typical, potential applicant to know whether or not they are qualified for a position, or desire the particular line of work within said position, helps them determine their initial level of job pursuit intentions. This is a positive for both the applicant and the organization as it should keep unqualified applicants from applying for the position. However, an organization has plenty of control on whether or not to promote race and gender, which in turn could help improve the organization's image, acting as a moderating effect to impact diversity statement effectiveness (Chapman et al., 2005). Again, the self-promotion of an organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion is critical to its organizational image, making it more attractive to the potential applicant. Based on the literature we put forth the following research questions:

Research Question 4 (RQ4): To what extent does an athletic department's commitment to diversity impact intentions to pursue a job with the athletic department?

Research Question 5 (RQ5): Will race serve as a moderator on the potential relationship between an athletic department's commitment to diversity and job pursuit intentions?

Research Question 6 (RQ6): Will gender serve as a moderator on the potential relationship between an athletic department's commitment to diversity and job pursuit intentions?

Methods

Participants

Participants (N = 160) were undergraduate students enrolled in an Introduction to Sport Management class at a large public university. This particular class varied in age, class standing, and major. The racial make-up of the participants was 63% White (n = 101) and 37% racial minority (n = 59), of which 62% (n = 100) were male and 38% (n = 60) were female.

Materials

The materials used in this study were two different brochures depicting an internship program with a fictitious university athletic department. The internship program was chosen to appeal to the students who (potentially) had an interest in a career in sport. Each brochure described the athletic and academic success of the institution's athletic department, as well as the values of the institution. The internship program was also described as a successful operation in an attempt to make the opportunity appealing to potential applicants. Both brochures contained identical information except for differences in references made to the athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The manipulated brochure referenced the athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusion, while all mentions of diversity and inclusion were stricken from the control brochure. Specific differences between the two brochures are as follows.

The manipulated, or predictor, brochure specified that the athletic department was a multiple winner of the NCAA's Diversity in Athletics Award, an award given by the NCAA and the Laboratory for Diversity in Sport at Texas A&M University for NCAA member institutions that display exemplary diversity efforts in athletics (e.g., strategy, gender and racial diversity, attitudinal diversity, and equality). No mention of this award was made in the control brochure. To further demonstrate the athletic department's commitment to diversity, the manipulated brochure included words and phrases such as "open-mindedness," "inclusive," "all backgrounds, races, genders, and cultures," "women and minorities," and "promote diversity and inclusion." Again, these words and phrases were removed from the control brochure. The content of the predictor brochure was also presented as a trifold brochure, in accordance with the cover story. The content of the control brochure was presented in a bifold style.

Manipulation check. In accordance with Rau and Hyland's (2003) study on diversity statements in college recruiting brochures, the manipulation was designed to implicitly communicate the athletic department's commitment to diversity and open-mindedness to applicants and employees of all backgrounds, races, genders, and cultures. Information regarding diversity was absent from the control brochure while the predictor brochure continually mentioned the athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusion. A 7-point Likert-type scale

ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) was used for the manipulation check items.

The first manipulation check item read, "*This athletic department values diversity in its staff.*" Participant scores from those reading the control brochure ranged from two to six ($M = 4.62$, $SD = .41$), while scores from participants with the predictor brochure ranged from five to seven ($M = 6.11$, $SD = .93$). These data revealed significant differences between the brochures in regards to the athletic department's commitment to diversity $F(1, 15) = 6.76$, $p < .05$.

The second manipulation check item read, "*This athletic department is inclusive of all employees, regardless of race, gender, or culture.*" Participant scores from the control brochure ranged from three to six ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.07$), while scores from participants who read the predictor brochure ranged from four to seven ($M = 6.00$, $SD = 1.12$). These data revealed slight, non-significant, differences between the brochures in regards to the athletic department's inclusiveness of diverse employees $F(1, 15) = 3.53$, $p = .08$.

Instruments

Questionnaires included measures pertaining to organizational attractiveness and the intentions of the participants to pursue a position in the athletic department's internship program. Organizational attractiveness questions focused on the image, appeal, care towards employees, and working conditions/environment of the athletic department (i.e., "the athletic department has a positive image," "this would be a good athletic department to work for," "this athletic department likely cares about its employees," and "this athletic department appeals to me"). The aggregate organizational attractiveness scale demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .86$) and the inter-item correlations appropriately ranged from .39 to .64 (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980; Briggs, 1992). Job pursuit intentions addressed the participants' attitudes toward applying, interviewing, and recruitment for a position in the athletic department's internship program (i.e., "I would apply for an internship with this athletic department," "I would accept an interview with this athletic department," "I would want this athletic department to recruit on campus). The job pursuit intentions scale demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$) and the inter-item correlations appropriately ranged from .28 to .59 (Briggs et al., 1980; Briggs, 1992). All items were adapted from Turban (2001), who examined organizational attractiveness and recruitment activities on college campuses. The wording was slightly modified to fit this particular study. Participants were also asked to provide their gender, race, and current collegiate standing.

Procedure

To minimize bias, an attempt was made to mask the true purpose of the study. Participants were told they were taking part in a study on the content and design layout of a brochure for an internship program with a fictitious athletic depart-

ment. At the beginning of the study, participants were randomly handed a folder containing one of the brochures and a questionnaire. Participants were reminded they were taking part in a study concerning the content and design layout of the brochure. Participants were instructed to read the brochure thoroughly. After reading the brochure, participants were to place it back in the folder and complete the questionnaire. Participants were not allowed to go back and look over the brochure once they had completed reading it and placed it back in the folder.

Data Analysis

A 2 (treatment: diverse or non-diverse brochure) x 2 (race: White or Racial Minority) x 2 (gender: male or female) multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to assess differences between organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions. The experimental design allowed for researchers to draw inferences concerning the interaction effects between the participants' race and gender, race and the type of brochure, and gender and the type of brochure on organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions. Lastly, the MANOVA design allowed for researchers to assess any the practical effects that race, gender, and the brochure had on organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions. Hierarchical regressions were then run to determine the potential moderating effects of race, controlling for gender and type of brochure, and gender, controlling for race and type of brochure, on organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions.

Results

Organizational Attractiveness

Results for RQ1 revealed that a commitment to diversity significantly influenced organizational attractiveness, $F(1,159) = 6.07$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Participants who received the predictor brochure reported higher perceived organizational attractiveness ($M = 6.06$, $SD = .79$) than those receiving the control brochure ($M = 5.75$, $SD = .75$). Results for RQ2 did not reveal any significant differences between minorities and Whites regarding organizational attractiveness. Likewise, data for RQ3 did not reveal any significant gender differences regarding organizational attractiveness.

Regarding all four items measuring the organizational attractiveness of the athletic department's internship program, Whites provided higher mean ratings than racial minorities on perceptions of the athletic department having a positive image, as well as the athletic department being a good organization to work for. Conversely, racial minorities provided higher mean ratings on perceptions of the athletic department being an appealing organization, as well as one that cares about its employees. When focusing on sex, findings revealed that females provided higher means ratings than their male counterparts on perceptions of the athletic department having a positive image, being a good organization to work

for, and caring about its employees. Itemized scores for organizational attractiveness can be found on Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Table 1

Mean Scores for "This athletic department has a positive image" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure		Control Brochure	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
	White	6.39	0.76	6.11	0.75
Male	Minority	6.32	0.67	6.15	0.55
	All	6.36	0.72	6.12	0.70
	White	6.67	0.58	6.15	1.21
Female	Minority	6.20	0.63	5.86	0.77
	All	6.52	0.63	6.00	1.00
	White	6.50	0.70	6.12	0.88
All Participants	Minority	6.28	0.65	6.00	0.68
	Total	6.42	0.69	6.08	0.81

Table 2

Mean Scores for "This would be a good athletic department to work for" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure		Control Brochure	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
	White	5.94	1.09	5.97	0.94
Male	Minority	6.21	0.92	5.31	1.44
	All	6.04	1.03	5.80	1.12
	White	6.43	0.68	5.92	1.04
Female	Minority	5.80	1.32	5.29	1.27
	All	6.23	0.96	5.59	1.19
	White	6.13	0.97	5.96	0.96
All Participants	Minority	6.07	1.07	5.30	1.32
	Total	6.11	1.00	5.72	1.14

Table 3

Mean Scores for "This athletic department likely cares about its employees" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure		Control Brochure	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
	White	5.65	1.40	5.44	1.11
Male	Minority	5.84	1.71	5.23	0.93
	All	5.72	1.51	5.39	1.06
	White	5.86	1.56	5.46	1.13
Female	Minority	5.60	1.07	5.93	1.07
	All	5.77	1.41	5.70	1.10
	White	5.73	1.46	5.45	1.10
All Participants	Minority	5.76	1.50	5.59	1.05
	Total	5.74	1.46	5.50	1.08

Table 4

Mean Scores for "This athletic department appeals to me" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure		Control Brochure	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
	White	5.77	0.88	5.78	0.90
Male	Minority	6.26	1.05	5.38	1.50
	All	5.96	0.97	5.67	1.09
	White	5.90	0.83	5.62	1.26
Female	Minority	6.00	1.33	5.64	0.84
	All	5.94	1.00	5.63	1.04
	White	5.83	0.86	5.73	1.00
All Participants	Minority	6.17	1.14	5.52	1.19
	Total	5.95	0.97	5.66	1.07

Job Pursuit Intentions

The results for RQ4 revealed a significant main effect for sex $F(1,159) = .897$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Females ($M = 6.13$, $SD = .90$), regardless of race and brochure, demonstrated higher job pursuit intentions than their male counterparts ($M = 5.83$, $SD = .90$). No significant results were found regarding RQ5 even though the job application intentions of White participants with the control brochure were higher than those of the White participants who read the predictor brochure. Conversely, the job application intentions of racial minorities with the control brochure were far lower than those of the racial minorities who read the predictor brochure. Similarly, there were no significant findings for RQ6, although females had higher job pursuit intentions towards an athletic department that demonstrated a commitment to diversity than their male counterparts. Itemized scores for job pursuit intentions can be found on Tables 5, 6 and 7.

Table 5

Mean Scores for "I would apply for an internship with this athletic department" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure		Control Brochure	
Sex	*Race*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Male	White	5.26	1.44	5.67	1.07
	Minority	6.16	1.07	5.08	1.32
	All	5.60	1.37	5.51	1.16
Female	White	6.24	0.70	6.08	1.66
	Minority	6.00	1.41	5.64	1.40
	All	6.16	0.97	5.85	1.51
All Participants	White	5.65	1.28	5.78	1.25
	Minority	6.10	1.18	5.37	1.36
	Total	5.81	1.26	5.63	1.29

Table 6

Mean Scores for "I would accept an interview with this athletic department" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure M	Predictor Brochure SD	Control Brochure M	Control Brochure SD
	White	6.03	1.25	6.14	0.93
Male	Minority	6.42	0.84	5.85	1.07
	All	6.18	1.12	6.06	0.97
	White	6.67	0.58	6.31	1.18
Female	Minority	6.20	0.92	6.29	0.73
	All	6.52	0.72	6.30	0.95
	White	6.29	1.07	6.18	0.99
All Participants	Minority	6.34	0.86	6.07	0.92
	Total	6.31	1.00	6.14	0.96

Table 7

Mean Scores for "I would accept an internship with this athletic department" Item

Sex	Race	Predictor Brochure M	Predictor Brochure SD	Control Brochure M	Control Brochure SD
	White	5.84	0.86	5.92	1.00
Male	Minority	6.11	1.10	5.15	1.07
	All	5.94	0.96	5.71	1.06
	White	5.81	0.98	5.77	1.36
Female	Minority	6.10	1.29	6.29	0.83
	All	5.90	1.08	6.04	1.13
	White	5.83	0.90	5.88	1.09
All Participants	Minority	6.10	1.14	5.74	1.10
	Total	5.93	1.00	5.83	1.09

Discussion

In this study, we sought to determine what would be the impact, if any, of an athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness on its organizational attractiveness (RQ1) as well as on the job pursuit intentions of potential job applicants (RQ4). In response to RQ1, results revealed significant differences between the two recruitment brochures with regard to organizational attractiveness, suggesting that the advertising of an athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness impacts their attractiveness to potential internship applicants. Despite only a main effect for sex regarding RQ4, this reveals that internship pursuit intentions of potential candidates can be and were impacted by the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusive organizational culture. This is an important finding for athletic departments given that diversity among upper management and leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics is scant (Irick, 2013; Lapchick et al., 2011). That the variable was a recruitment brochure further demonstrates the value of such means to help convey an athletic department's philosophy and dedication to diversity. Recall that recruiting brochures can shape employee perceptions of an organization and directly influence current and future workforce demographics (Kossek & Zonia, 1993). Given this influence, and in accordance with the findings, it is recommended that recruitment materials communicate an organization's commitment to diversity to potential and current employees, as well as demonstrate a concern to facilitate an inclusive working environment and provide opportunities to maximize everyone's potential, regardless of race or gender (Williams & Bauer, 1994).

Kossek and Zonia (1993) suggest it should be easier to hire racial and gender minorities for entry- and mid-level positions rather than attempting to integrate members with differing values and cultures into upper management and other leadership roles. Thus, consideration toward certain racial groups and genders when advertising and promoting one's commitment to, and desire for, diversity might be a plausibly effective practice for athletic departments. It is critical that athletic department leaders convey that their diversity and inclusive desires are not simply a result of wanting to adhere to current societal demands, but rather a long-term organizational commitment (Cunningham, 2007), a commitment to attract employees from diverse backgrounds. Findings from this study lend support for the self-promotion of diversity and inclusiveness to help reach said organizational aims, as well as potential implications for job recruitment brochures.

While only two of the six research questions revealed significant differences among participants regarding the overall organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions constructs, analysis of each of the constructs' items revealed support for previous literature as well as for postulations in this particular study. When speaking to specific actions or attitudes regarding organizational attractiveness (i.e., positive image, good to work for, caring, and appealing), the brochure expressing the athletic department's commitment to diversity had a clearly posi-

tive, though not significant, effect on participant perceptions, regardless of race or gender. Thus, it would seem that the promotion of an organization's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness should be employed when an organization's desired outcome is increased attractiveness to potential job applicants. However, simply being attractive to outsiders and prospective applicants may not always be the end goal.

The items measuring precise attitudes regarding job pursuit intentions (i.e., application to the job, interviewing for the job, and wanting more recruitment on campus) reveal how an organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion can lead interested candidates to follow through, the manifestation of attractiveness and interest into tangible pursuit of and application to the job. For each of the three items, participants who received the predictor brochure were more likely to act on their attractiveness to the athletic department internship by getting more involved with the hiring process. Such revelations point to the potential importance applicants place on organizational culture and their desire to work in a diverse and inclusive environment. Hence, the findings from this study demonstrate support for the potential of recruitment materials to not only attract prospective applicants, but to transfer their interest and appeal into active job pursuit. Yet, there still lies more to these findings than simply attracting job applicants and converting their interests into pursuits.

A potentially disconcerting finding in this study leads credence to the notion that individuals might prefer working with (Kreitz, 2008) and demonstrate more trust and support (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008) to racially similar and/or in-group members. An interaction effect between race and the type of brochure was found on the job application intentions item, such that White participants who read the predictor brochure demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness had less job application intentions than their minority counterparts, while the converse occurred for White and minority participants who received the control brochure. A negative interpretation of this finding would suggest that White participants were "turned off" by the notion of a more diverse and inclusive working environment. Similarly, racial minorities seemed to be "turned off" by the idea of applying to a position in an organization that was not as openly supportive of a diverse and inclusive work environment. This finding reveals potential difficulties with diversity-focused recruiting tactics (Kossek, Markel, & McHugh, 2003). Furthermore, this finding can be interpreted as providing continued support for the perception that diversity is a "minority issue," and that only the underrepresented groups are concerned with diverse and multicultural working environments (Cox, 1990).

However, diversity statements have also been found to have negative effects on employees and potential job candidates. Diversity statements and an organization's commitment to diversity can impact post-hire outcomes such as attitudes, beliefs, expectations, and behaviors (Rau & Hyland, 2003). Organizations must

be careful when implementing diversity-focused recruiting tactics, as this change may not always result in desired diversity outcomes, improve work group dynamics, or positively increase attitudes and perceptions toward the more inclusive environment (Kossek et al., 2003). Without the understanding and support of all employees and upper management, an organization's commitment to diversity may lead to and facilitate deeper racial and gender divides among employees, rather than foster an inclusive, multicultural environment. Thus, not only must organizations have support from upper management, but also the population to whom they serve.

This can prove to be a more difficult task than may seem for the reason that as an organization diversifies its employees, ideally it will be diversifying its culture and values. Historically, the dominant culture in intercollegiate athletics was dictated by, and to an extent still remains, White males (Irick, 2013; Lapchick et al., 2011). Changing the culture of intercollegiate athletics could potentially have negative effects on the "current dominant group (White males) by altering the distribution of power and resources, and the dominant goals and values" (p. 62) of the athletic department (Kossek & Zonia, 1993) and intercollegiate athletics in general. Coakley (2011) furthers this by stating that sports serves to preserve the status-quo, which typically involves White males as the dominant group. Therefore, athletic departments must be attentive to the values of both the dominant and the underrepresented groups if they wish to effectively integrate and manage diversity (Fink & Pastore, 1999). Successful diversity programs are indispensable organizational components and must account for all employees' attitudes and perceptions to be considered effective (Cundiff, Nadler, & Swan, 2009). However, recall that it is crucial that a commitment to diversity not be considered a program, but rather, a component of organizational culture (Slater et al., 2008).

Past research has found that diversity statements and other promotional tactics can positively influence post-hire perceptions of diversity (Rau & Hyland, 2003). As the findings from this study reveal the extent to which the promotion of an organization's commitment to diversity can lead to positive affect towards, and interest in an organization, so too should endorsements lead to the facilitation and maintenance of such attitudes for current employees. When introduced and/or forced upon an organization not open to change or ready for a cultural shift, diversification can lead to negative outcomes such as labeling and categorization, stereotyping, negative relationships, and harmful perceptions of peers (Kossek & Zonia, 1993; Rau & Hyland, 2003; Richard, Fubara, & Castillo, 2000). Thus, use of inclusive vocabulary in departmental communication (e.g., memos, newsletters, signage, etc.), as utilized in the predictor brochure, may help to increase affect towards employee differences and help the organization to build and embrace a diverse culture.

One practical example of how an athletic department's commitment to diversity can impact both current and future employees is with the current state

of head football coaches. There has been recent and continual criticism as to the lack of minority head football coaches in the NCAA. While institutional hiring practices may be the primary cause of such underrepresentation, another possible factor could be the lack of inclusiveness of the head coaching football fraternity in all three divisions of the NCAA, which at the end of the 2012 regular season was about 92% White (Irick, 2013). An outcome of this discrepancy could burden the racial and gender minority student-athletes that eventually choose whether or not to attend an institution. Floyd Keith of the Black Coaches and Administrators (BCA) suggests racial minority student athletes and their families give strong consideration to an athletic department's racial makeup:

> as a people of color, we need to start 'shopping and buying' at the stores (institutions) that reflect a high concern for inclusion and diversity. When student-athletes of color start making decisions to 'play where they can eventually coach'; we will start to see a difference (Harrison, 2005, p. 10).

Support of this proposition can be witnessed in business research where it has been found that consumer buying habits and organizational hiring habits are linked in that racial minorities are more likely to purchase from organizations that hire them (Thaler-Carter, 2001). While this may seem like more of an upper management hiring problem, consider that head coaches have been found to be very influential in the career intentions of current assistant and potential coaches (Sagas et al., 2006). Therefore, as more racial coaches are hired, more potential role models and mentors are created for racially similar employees and student-athletes, helping create a more multicultural working environment. Similarly, this may possibly attract a more diverse candidate pool for athletic departments as racial minorities may come to view coaching and other leadership positions as a more viable career path. Given the aforementioned paltry numbers of gender equality in college sport (Irick, 2013), this same concept can be further applied to females in both coaching positions and in the administration.

Again, positions of power, leadership and decision making roles in intercollegiate athletics are dominated by white, heterosexual males (Fink et al., 2001; Lapchick et al., 2011), on both the coaching and administrative side. Such underrepresentation of racial minorities and females can have negative effects on a number of career related outcomes. To rectify this problem, athletic departments must focus on diversifying not only their current workforce, but also potential employees. It has been suggested that this is most easily done at the entry level and middle management positions (Kossek & Zonia, 1993). Thus, recruitment of diverse applicants should prove beneficial. Evidence to this fact was revealed in this study. Furthermore, to be effective, recruitment materials should communicate an organization's commitment to diversity to potential and current employees, as well as the concern to facilitate an inclusive working environment and provide opportunities to maximize everyone's potential, regardless of race or gender (Wil-

liams & Bauer, 1994). Despite the possible negative outcomes of a commitment to diversity, organizations should continue to focus on recruiting measures to attract employees from diverse backgrounds, while concomitantly enhancing internal organizational morale and promoting positive affect toward the company's culture (Thaler-Carter, 2001).

In this study, we sought to determine what would be the impact, if any, of an athletic department's commitment to diversity on its organizational attractiveness as well as on the job pursuit intentions of potential job applicants; with a specific focus on racial minorities and females. Results support previous research, confirming that athletic departments would be wise to publicize their commitment to diversity and utilize their inclusive organizational culture in recruiting materials. However, keeping in mind that there are potential drawbacks, it is suggested that athletic departments demonstrate their commitment to diversity as a strategic plan to promote and facilitate an inclusive, multicultural work environment, rather than as a response to societal ideals. Successful implementation of this should lead to a more organizationally attractive athletic department as well as increase potential candidates' intentions to pursue employment with the athletic department. As this occurs, it is hoped that diversity and equality will spread throughout athletic departments and all of intercollegiate athletics.

Future Research and Limitations

A limitation of this study exists in the presentation of information in the brochures, such that all variance in organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions cannot be explained by the presence or absence of information regarding the athletic department's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. While a concern with any study, we feel this could be addressed in future research with the addition of a priming component. The nature of discrimination allows it to exist on many levels, sometimes implicitly or institutionalized. That is, discrimination may take place in the sub-consciousness of an individual or may have become ingrained in the norms of an organization or industry. Thus, the addition of a priming component would include implicit measures that are suggested to be "less susceptible to self-presentation biases and more successful at assessing prejudices" (Ziegert & Hanges, 2005, p. 553).

With the current study supporting an athletic department's promotion of its commitment to diversity, we hope similar studies can reveal the extent to which both written and visual aids increase positive affect towards the inclusiveness of an organization. For instance, pictures that include more or less racial and gender minorities could be utilized to implicitly exhibit manipulations to the level of diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace environment. Or perhaps a welcome letter from the athletic director, whom could be of varying races and/or gender, could be presented prior to participants reading the brochure.

A second limitation was the use of students from one course, despite their variations in majors and years of schooling. While it would be important to conduct such a study with students from a multiplicity of majors, as many students from other disciplines can apply their learned skills to the intercollegiate athletics industry, future research may want to consider focusing more attention on upper-level students. The reason being that these students might be more likely to have a better idea of their future plans and the experiences (e.g., practicum and internships) needed to help lead them there. As such, they might be better able to understand and assess the true value of the study's portrayed internship.

The instrument itself could also be considered a limitation. Future research could delve more deeply into not only the attitude and intentions of participants, but also the primary aspects of the brochure that are truly pertinent to potential applicants. This could be incorporated into the priming component. Additionally, the items used to measure organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions could be more distinct and specific. In accordance, the manipulation check offers a slight concern regarding perceptions of the athletic department's commitment to diversity. Valuing diversity can be manifested in variety of manners. It is believed two of these manners were evident in the brochures: diversity among staff members and support for inclusiveness. Thus, perceiving an athletic department to be inclusive, regardless of race, gender, or culture is only one dimension of diversity and remained in the study. Lastly, it would be of value to the literature to examine how the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals to the manipulations in the study might impact organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions.

The current study demonstrated the effectiveness of recruiting materials in exhibiting and promoting an organization's commitment to diversity and an inclusive organizational culture. It is hoped that future studies can utilize these findings to produce research that helps determine the most effective form of communicating diversity and inclusiveness to prospective recruits via visual and written aids.

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