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Inequality in the Workplace

On July 4, 1919, Women gained the fundamental but necessary right to vote in the United States of America. Before this time, women did not share the same rights as men, including the right basic right to vote. In late 1865, slavery was abolished and African American's finally gained the ability to be viewed as equal. On June 26, 2015, the US Supreme Court ruled that same-sex marriage was legal in all 50 states. Today, hundreds of Syrian refugees are leaving their homes and are flooding into the United States in search of a better, more safe lifestyle with ample opportunity for not just them but for their children. Still, these people are being treated unjustly based on their gender, skin color, religion, or sexual orientation. Every day, people work tirelessly to prevent inequality of any sort to occur, but yet it still is a prominent issue, especially in the workplace.

The Federal Housing Finance Agency has issued a notice to promote public interaction and conversation concerning the minority inequality in the work place. Yes, this is on a small scale but with public involvement the hope is that this will be recognized on a broader spectrum. While the promotion of minority inclusion has been a hot topic in current events, the issue is still at hand. Now, this is not to say that minorities are not being hired, the point is that vast majorities of minorities are being hired for entry level jobs. Minorities are on the rise, but still there is still a tremendous inequality gap between the standard working male and the minorities of today. Change is very slow, but it is optimistic to see change is occurring.

Large companies have made extreme efforts to put minorities in positions of authority. The most well-known and widespread company who promotes equality for all in the work place would be Coca-Cola. “[Coca-Cola has] two minority executives as of August 2012 and two minority women on 17-member board plus two minority men” (Adams 10). This company has worked to face inequality and solve the issue of inequality in their own workplace. Such a well-known company could very well set a great example for other companies to follow. Another great example would be JP Morgan Chase. “[JP Morgan Chase has] two women executives, Mary Callahan Erdoes, Chief Executive Officer Asset and Wealth Management and Chief Financial Officer Marianne Lake, and two women and one minority male on 11-member board” (Adams 11). Now these two companies may be great examples of what equality in the workplace may look like, but there are still companies who refuse to except this as an actuality, instead they ignore the issue in its entirety.

Companies such as EBay on the opposite side of the spectrum do not try to benefit from the individuality and uniqueness minority groups can bring to their company. Although they do not have many minorities working for them, they still are trying to help close the inequality gap slowly buy offering benefits to certain employees. “[EBay has] no women or minority top executives, two women on board of 12. The company offers domestic partner benefits to LGBT

employees” (Adams 17). Another company that does not completely address this issue is National Oilwell Varco. “[National Oilwell Varco has] no women or minorities on the board or in the C-suite, but the company addresses sexual orientation in its equal employment policy. Its director selection criteria say it seeks women and minorities” (Adams 16). Again, progress is being made but at a very slow rate. Minorities are climbing in importance in large companies. Opportunities are being given fairly and justly.

There are not only less minorities in higher level positions, equal pay is also an issue. “The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports in 2011, white people made up 81percent of the work force” (Bosworth 3). Not only are minorities not being put in positions to make a decent earning, the Caucasian race holds nearly 4/5 of the jobs in the workforce. Now, the wage discrimination has gotten better, yet many minority groups are still getting underpaid. “Asians led the median usual weekly earnings at &866, followed by whites at \$755 and \$615 for Blacks. Hispanics had the lowest median weekly earnings at \$549” (Bosworth 3). The glass ceiling is beginning to crack not only for women, but for people of all minority groups. The sky is the limit and changes are being made to make anything possible for anyone living in this great country.

The idea of equality is something every American strives for, but the liberal Americans fight for equality for the minorities in a more rigorous fashion. The democratic party fights for equality of all citizens no matter their race, religion, or sexual orientation. Discrimination under the law can be harassment of any type. The democratic party will be in favor of the FHFA expanding their workplaces to include minorities in higher level job positions. Now, this is not saying conservatives are not for equality. Conservatives believe in the most qualified individual should get the job. There is so much separation between each party that each party is blind to the fact that they are fighting for a common goal.

The most prevalent issue in current events is the issue of discrimination in the workplace because of sexual orientation. On June 12, 2016, 49 people were killed at Pulse night club in Orlando Florida. This may not be an example of discrimination within the workplace, but this is a great example of discrimination towards a minority group. Just five months ago this took place showing that discrimination towards races is still a huge issue. This was the worst mass shooting in United States history, and it shook this country to its core. Whether you are of a minority group or not, this hate crime woke America up and brought its citizens together. The FHFA is trying to in a sense wake up the American citizens and create a sense of unity.

Diversity in the workplace has proven to be beneficial to the success of the business as a whole. Research shows that the more diversity within a work place the more unique and creative. The organizations that fail to recognize the individuality of diverse work fields tend to be less successful. Equality in the workplace starts with the CEO’s and with higher level workers. With minorities in positions of power, equality in the workplace will be easier to accomplish. Also, companies can make sure that their suppliers incorporate their own diversity values. This new rule will help companies be more successful and much more well-rounded.

The original rule became effective on January 17, 2011 under President Obama. “[The rule] implemented policies, procedures, and programs to improve human recourse processes for recruiting, hiring, and promoting minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities...These

efforts have resulted in improvements in workforce diversity and utilization of diverse vendors” (Regulations.gov). This rule initially tried to include minorities in every aspect of business, but progress takes time. Minorities have gained more opportunities but yet they are still not equal. The proposed amendments revise the original rule to make it even better. Minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities would have contracting opportunities, which they did not have before. These new amendments will open up a pathway for minorities, women, and people with disabilities to feel like they have a sense of solidarity within themselves.

My personal opinion of this idea of equality in the workplace is rather complicated. I do believe that diversity is a positive thing. I do believe that everyone should have an equal chance at success no matter what field of work it may pertain to. Originally, the idea sparked my attention because I do believe in fairness. The idea of women getting more opportunities sounds great, but if they aren't the most qualified for the job then I do not believe that they should be awarded with the position. This is not to say that women are less qualified, this is merely a point that companies will be successful when they have the most qualified people working for them.

When applying for a job, I personally do not think race, gender, sexuality, or disability should effect whether or not the job is given. The most qualified person should get the job. This is an issue within the workplace. An even bigger issue will arise if highly qualified people are being denied a job because a person of different ethnicity applied as well. Honestly, a job application should not require you to state your ethnicity, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation. The main priority should be if you are qualified for the job. Nothing else should factor in. If we as Americans get to a place where race doesn't matter, where gender does not matter, where sexual orientation doesn't matter, and where disability doesn't matter, then we will as a whole be a more complete nation.

The United States of America was founded on hard work and determination. The people of this great nation work hard to achieve the things they do. In order to be successful in this great nation there cannot be any restrictions to prevent people to reach their full potential. This is the land of the free, the land of great opportunity, and I feel as if now is the time for that to be taken more literally and much more seriously. There needs to be ample opportunity for anyone to thrive no matter what level you are in the workplace. I do believe that it is time for America to welcome new ideas. It is time for America to adopt the idea of inclusion and welcome everyone with open arms. We are so close, and I know we can make it! One step at a time, starting with the passing of these amendments.

Work Cited

Adams, Susan. "The Best and Worst Companies for Women and Minorities." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, n.d. Web. 30 Nov. 2016.

Bosworth, Kay. "Minority Discrimination in the Workplace." *Minority Discrimination in the Workplace* / *Chron.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Nov. 2016.