The Relationship Between Workplace Diversity Climate, Turnover Intention, and Thriving in College Counseling Centers

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The Relationship Between Workplace Diversity Climate, Turnover Intention, and Thriving in College Counseling Centers

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Introduction

Hypothesis 1: Positive workplace diversity climate will be negatively correlated with turnover intention (intention to leave).

- Thriving is a positive psychological state composed of the joint experience of feeling energized at work (vitality) and enjoying learning and improving one’s work (Sim et al., 1970).
- Thriving matters because it enhances the health and personal development of college counseling staff (Sim et al., 1970).

Hypothesis 2: Positive workplace diversity climate will be positively correlated with thriving at work.

- College counselors who report more thriving also report more intentions to stay in the workplace (Sim et al., 1970).

Hypothesis 3: Thriving at work will be negatively correlated with turnover intention.

Participants

- Online, anonymous survey distributed via email to professional college counseling list serves.
- Counseling staff working at private and public college counseling centers across the U.S. & Canada (N = 488).
- Gender-expansive individuals (4%), Men (18%), and Women (72%).
- American Indian/Native American (0.4%), Arab/Middle Eastern (1%), Asian/Asian American (8%), Black/African American (7%), Latinx/Latino/Latina (5%), White/European American (64%), Multiracial (9%).

Measures

Workplace Diversity Climate (Mor Barak et al., 1998)
- 16 items, 1-strongly agree to 6-strongly disagree.
  - E.g., “Leadership here gives feedback and evaluates employees fairly, regardless of employees’ race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, or social background.”

Hypothesis 3: Thriving at work will be negatively correlated with turnover intention.

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References available upon request. Correspondence: Dr. Majel Baker, mbaker001@csbsju.edu

Results

Pearson’s Correlations Among Thriving, Workplace Diversity Climate, and Turnover Intention (N = 488)

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<thead>
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<th>Workplace Diversity Climate</th>
<th>Thriving</th>
<th>Turnover Intention</th>
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<td>Thriving</td>
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<td>Turnover Intention</td>
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Note: All correlations p’s < .001.

Bold are correlations for counselors of color
Italics are correlations for White counselors

Conclusions

All hypotheses were supported

- When counseling staff at college counseling centers have more positive perceptions of workplace diversity climate, they have higher levels of thriving and less intention to leave their positions.
- This is true for both counselors of color and White counselors.
- This sample was ethnically/racially diverse, and it matched national demographics of college counselors (Gorman et al., 2022), increasing the generalizability of these results.

Limitations/Future Directions

- The variable turnover intention measured participants’ intention to leave, not their actual leaving behavior, so we are unable to know how these findings relate to actual leaving.
- There are many factors that influence why people stay at their jobs that we did not measure. An example is one’s relationship with their coworkers.
- Future experimental research should examine whether efforts to increase a positive and welcoming diversity climate and employees’ sense of thriving and learning in the workplace could lead to employees wanting to stay at their workplace.

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