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Citation	Apfelbaum, E. P., K. W. Phillips, and J. A. Richeson. "Rethinking the Baseline in Diversity Research: Should We Be Explaining the Effects of Homogeneity?" <i>Perspectives on Psychological Science</i> 9, no. 3 (May 1, 2014): 235–244.
As Published	http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1745691614527466
Publisher	Sage Publications
Version	Author's final manuscript
Accessed	Wed Oct 05 15:21:07 EDT 2016
Citable Link	http://hdl.handle.net/1721.1/87730
Terms of Use	Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike
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**Rethinking the Baseline in Diversity Research:
Should We Be Explaining the Effects of Homogeneity?**

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IN PRESS – *Perspectives on Psychological Science*

Abstract

It is often surprisingly difficult to make definitive scientific statements about the functional value of group diversity. We suggest that one clear pattern in the group diversity literature is the prevailing convention with which outcomes are interpreted—as the effect of diversity alone. While work in this arena typically compares diverse groups to homogeneous ones, we most often conceive of homogeneous groups as a baseline; a reference point from which we can understand how diversity has changed behavior or what type of response is “normal.” Here, we offer a new perspective through a focus on two propositions. The first proposition is that homogeneity has independent effects of its own—effects that, in some cases, are robust in comparison to the effects of diversity. The second proposition is that even though subjective responses in homogeneous groups are often treated as a neutral indicator of how people would ideally respond in a group setting, evidence suggests that these responses are often *less* objective or accurate than responses in diverse groups. Overall, we believe that diversity research may unwittingly reveal important insights regarding the effects of homogeneity.

Word Count (Abstract and Main Text): 4,774

Keywords: *diversity, homogeneity, groups, baseline*

The influence of diversity—the degree to which group members differ with respect to race, gender, attitudes, or other characteristics—has been examined over a wide range of contexts, from student learning (Hu & Kuh, 2003) and jury deliberations (Sommers, 2006) to organizational performance (Kochan et al., 2003) and economic development (Ashraf & Galor, 2013). Issues of diversity not only demand the attention of the U.S. Supreme Court, but have become the source of big business too: the focus of marketing efforts, the topic of trade magazine rankings, and the proclaimed forte of throngs of consultants. Despite this growing interest, questions regarding the *functional* value of diversity—whether group diversity benefits information processing, decision making, problem-solving, creativity, and cohesion, among other topics—remain fertile ground for debate and controversy. As researchers in this domain, we acknowledge that it is often surprisingly difficult to make definitive scientific statements about the value of diversity. More than half a century of research evidence has produced few straightforward or consistent characterizations of diversity’s effects on group process and performance, with some studies revealing beneficial effects and others documenting downsides (for reviews, see Mannix & Neale, 2005; Van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Scholars have sought to reconcile the mixed nature of these findings by examining moderators, differentiating types of diversity, and sorting based on the type of mechanism (Jackson & Joshi, 2010; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). These efforts have generated a number of important advances, yet in many respects, the effects of diversity—be they positive or negative—remain elusive. Here, we offer a new theoretical perspective. In short, we consider the possibility that the independent effects of *homogeneity* actually play an active role in the diversity literature, one that defies conventional wisdom that homogeneity represents

an inert and objective baseline for comparison. We review evidence that speaks to this perspective and consider theoretical and practical insight it may impart.

Interpreting Diversity as *The Causal Force*

We believe that there is at least one simple and clear pattern in the literature on group diversity; however, it does not involve the valence of outcomes or the strength of a particular moderator. Rather, we suggest this pattern pertains to the convention with which outcomes tend to be interpreted—as the effects of *diversity* alone. To explore this, we sampled 240 research articles on group diversity capturing the wide range of social, educational, and organizational contexts in which it is examined.² Coders evaluated the language used to interpret the main result featured in each of these articles. Work in this arena typically compares diverse dyads or groups to homogeneous ones. Accordingly, we coded whether the primary result reported was attributed to the influence of diversity, homogeneity, or both. As Figure 1 displays, this analysis revealed a striking pattern: 205 of the 240 articles interpreted their result as the effect of diversity alone.

We believe this pattern is revealing of how we tend to approach diversity research. Consider that when we—present authors included—formulate research questions, we tend to ask whether *diversity* will influence perception, decision-making, and performance; when we digest results, we tend to focus on whether *diversity* helped or hurt, strengthened or weakened, increased or decreased a given outcome. On the other hand, we tend to conceive of the homogeneous condition as a baseline: a reference point from which we can understand how diversity has changed behavior or what type of response is “normal.”

Rethinking the Baseline

Is it sensible to conceive of homogeneity as the baseline when interpreting the effects of diversity? Certainly, defined in terms of prototypicality, homogeneity *is* an appropriate baseline:

homogeneous groups are highly common in institutions and society as people tend to seek out similar others on salient dimensions when possible (e.g., Gruenfeld & Tiedens, 2010; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). We suggest, however, that prototypicality may be the only dimension on which homogeneity represents a baseline, even though we often treat homogeneous groups as a baseline in two other important respects: (1) as a control group that has no effects of its own, but can be used to gauge the corresponding effects of diversity and (2) as an objective indicator revealing how people would ideally respond or behave in a given group setting.

Through a focus on two propositions, we call into question the notion that homogeneity represents a baseline in these respects. The first proposition is that homogeneity and diversity have distinct psychological effects. The second proposition is that even though individuals' subjective responses in homogeneous groups are often regarded as a neutral indicator of the ideal response in a group setting, our review of available evidence suggests that these responses actually tend to be less objective or accurate as compared to responses in diverse groups. Taken together, we believe these propositions raise the possibility that homogeneity plays an active, albeit largely unappreciated, role in diversity research. Insight imparted from this perspective may be particularly constructive for reconciling mixed results in the extant literature and for future efforts to advance theory and practice in the arena of diversity.

Proposition 1: Distinct and Robust Effects of Homogeneity

We begin by synthesizing evidence from a number of diversity-relevant research literatures that speaks to our first proposition: homogeneity has independent effects of its own. Indeed, despite the potential for cross-pollination, group diversity research and classic social psychological work on intergroup processes and relations have too infrequently been used to

inform one another. Here, we draw on converging evidence from the psychology of prejudice and discrimination, intergroup conflict, as well as sociological work on homophily—the idea that individuals associate with people who are similar to them at higher rates than people who are different from them—to shed light on the potential role of homogeneity in group diversity research. Despite the fact that group diversity and group homogeneity are often conceptualized as two sides of the same coin, a number of findings from these diversity-relevant research literatures demonstrate that how people behave toward similar others is often independent of how they behave toward different others. These findings further indicate that the differential responses people have to similar and different others—whether they be in the form of attitudes, distribution of resources, friendship, or hiring—are often driven more so by a robust preference for similarity than by a distaste for difference.

Prejudice and Discrimination. Allport's (1954) landmark social psychological theorizing on prejudice contains, perhaps, the earliest indication that how individuals behave toward similar others (or ingroups) is not reciprocally related to how they behave toward different others (or outgroups). As Brewer (1999) succinctly notes, "...Allport recognized that preferential positivity toward ingroups does not necessarily imply negativity or hostility toward outgroups" (p. 439). Brewer's own empirical work in the domain of intergroup relations has been instrumental in developing this perspective. In sum, a variety of investigations in the lab and in the field have indicated that there is no systematic correlation between the negativity of individuals' attitudes toward members of social outgroups and the positivity of their attitudes toward members of their own group (Brewer, 1976; 1979; Feshbach, 1994; Struch & Schwartz, 1989); rather, these processes appear to be distinct from one another. Beyond evidence of their independence, ingroup preference has long been theorized to be a more fundamental motive than outgroup

derogation (Allport, 1954; Correll & Park, 2005; Hogg, 2003) and frequently has been found to be the more reliable and powerful contributor to discrimination (Brewer, 1999; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999). While group diversity research is typically more concerned with outcome measures directly related to performance, the more general notion that the “pull” toward similar others is more potent than the “push” away from different others seems quite relevant—and at odds—with the tendency to view homogeneous groups as an inert baseline to which the effects of diversity should be compared.

Intergroup Conflict. A second basic set of situations in which previous research has found differences in the way individuals behave toward members of their own group versus members of another group is when there is conflict over limited resources (e.g., money, land, power; Levine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). This work reveals that people are considerably more likely to allocate resources to ingroup as compared to outgroup members. Early studies examining the basis for this effect revealed that resource distribution was considerably more inequitable when positive resources were being distributed than when negative resources or costs were being applied (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament, 1971; Mummendey et al, 1992; Brewer, 1979), suggesting that preferential behavior toward the ingroup is distinct from, and more prominent than, animosity toward the outgroup. In one compelling recent experiment, Halevy and his colleagues (2008) modified a version of the Prisoner’s Dilemma game used to simulate intergroup conflict such that, in contrast to its original design, participants were able to benefit their ingroup without necessarily applying a cost to an outgroup. This modification allows researchers to experimentally dissociate ingroup cooperation from outgroup opposition. Results from a number of studies using this paradigm have shown that ingroup cooperation is not only separate, but a *stronger* motive driving

participants' conflict behavior than is outgroup opposition (Halevy, Bornstein, & Sagiv, 2008; Halevy, Weisel, & Bornstein, 2011). Such findings in the domain of intergroup conflict may be particularly relevant for the group diversity literature. For example, in the context of a collaborative project, the different expectations people may have upon learning they will join a homogeneous or diverse team may be driven more so by the expectation of working cooperatively with similar others than the anticipation of conflict with different others. This example and the literature reviewed above offer additional reason to question the conventional image of homogeneity as an inert group setting.

Homophily and Networks. Finally, as a third diversity-relevant domain, consider sociological work on homophily (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; McPherson et al., 2001). This literature is noteworthy in that agency—as the name “homophily” suggests—is ascribed to similarity, not difference. Specifically, this work asserts that similarity with respect to race, gender, age, religion, and other characteristics, draws people to one another, producing increasingly homogeneous social, organizational, and residential networks (e.g., Reagans, 2011; Ruef, Aldrich, & Carter, 2003; Shrum, Cheek, & Hunter, 1988). This literature too suggests that the effect of homogeneity tends to be more reliable than that of diversity. Take, as one recent example, Currarini, Jackson, and Pin's (2009) examination of ethnic segregation in the formation of friendship networks in a set of 84 American high schools. While there was substantial variability in the frequency with which students formed inter-ethnic friendships, *all* ethnic groups formed friendships at higher rates with students of their own ethnic background—even at higher rates than would be expected based on their own group's representation in the school. Other work investigating the role of homophily in labor market practices has argued that the significantly higher rate of unemployment among Black versus White individuals in the U.S.

stems more so from employers' partiality to White candidates within their social network than from overt exclusion of Black candidates (DiTomaso, 2012). Through the lens of diversity research, this work may indicate that, although the relatively greater sense of comfort and cohesion reported in homogeneous groups may *feel* akin to a neutral group setting (e.g., De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), it may more accurately be characterized as the tendency for homogeneity to heighten individuals' subjective perceptions of comfort, not the tendency for diversity to dampen them.

Taken together, previous work in several diversity-relevant domains, across disciplines and methodologies, is consistent with our first proposition. The effects of homogeneity are distinct from the effects of diversity. Moreover, the research reviewed above suggests that the independent effects of homogeneity are, at least in some cases, relatively *more* consistent and robust in comparison to the effects of diversity. To be clear, our argument is not that diversity is unimportant or incapable of driving intergroup effects: rather, that—as demonstrated by the work reviewed above—diversity *and* homogeneity can each independently contribute to these outcomes. As such, it seems imbalanced, if not theoretically limited, to treat homogeneity as an inert baseline against which one can gauge the effects of diversity.

Proposition 2: Homogeneity is also an Effect in Need of Explanation

The fact that homogeneous groups are more common and are often treated as the default from which we can understand the effects of diversity can make it seem as though the behavior in homogeneous groups is relatively normal whereas the behavior in diverse groups needs to be explained. Indeed, studies across a number of domains have shown that people are less mindful of more prototypical social groups, and particularly so when such groups are of high-status (Hegarty, Lemieux, & McQueen, 2010). For instance, research in social cognition has

demonstrated that individuals asked to categorize others by race are slower to do so for White targets—the more prototypical group—than they are for Black targets (Richeson & Trawalter, 2005; Stroessner, 1996). Other work examining individuals' explanations of intergroup differences has shown that, when asked to consider contexts in which there are gender differences, people's explanations tend to focus on how women are different from men, not the reverse (Miller, Taylor, & Buck, 1991). When asked to consider differences relating to sexual orientation, people's explanations tend to focus on how gay men are different from straight men, not the reverse (Hegarty & Pratto, 2001). Here, we suggest that because actions and explanations are infrequently directed at prototypical high-status targets (e.g., all-White or all-male homogeneous groups), we may be less sensitive to the possibility that the effects of homogeneity are the anomaly in need of explanation.

Perhaps, the most direct and telling way to discern whether it is the effect of homogeneity or diversity that is the anomaly is to consider research that features both objective outcome measures (e.g., speed, accuracy, quality of decision, performance) and subjective process measures (e.g., perceptions of conflict, confidence, cohesion, communication). By examining research of this type, one can evaluate the degree to which individuals' subjective perceptions in homogeneous versus diverse groups deviate from indicators of an objective or accurate response. While such comparisons are not possible in many cases, a review of available group diversity research offers little, if any, evidence that responses in homogeneous groups are more objective or accurate than those in diverse groups—if anything, it seems that they are less so.

Consider, for instance, research by Phillips, Liljenquist, and Neale (2009). They provided case information—potential clues to solve a murder mystery—to individuals who were assigned to either a homogeneous or diverse group. As detailed in Phillips and Apfelbaum (2012), an

unreported relationship emerged between individuals' confidence that their group identified the correct murder suspect and their group's actual accuracy in doing so. In diverse groups, the confidence levels individuals reported regarding their group's performance corresponded with how well their group actually performed (i.e., diverse groups that identified the correct murder suspect reported higher levels of confidence than diverse groups who did not). Individuals in homogeneous groups, by contrast, tended to report high levels of confidence *irrespective* of how their group performed. In short, homogeneous groups were actually further, not closer, than diverse groups to an objective index of accuracy.

As another example, take Sommers' (2006) investigation of juror decision-making. Participants were randomly assigned to all-White or racially diverse juries and asked to deliberate over the same trial. Results revealed that homogeneous juries made more factually inaccurate statements and considered a narrower range of information when discussing a trial than did racially diverse juries. This too is consistent with our second proposition as the result may have been at least partially due to an avoidance of disagreement by the homogeneous groups such that they failed to engage in the adaptive jury behaviors of information sharing and consideration of relevant characteristics. Moreover, evidence from other domains offers one reason why these effects may occur. When people are prompted to think about social category differences, as they are in diverse groups, they are more likely to step outside their own perspective and less likely to instinctively impute their own knowledge onto others (Robbins & Krueger, 2005; Todd, Hanko, Galinsky, & Mussweiler, 2011). The lack of this social prompt in homogeneous groups, by comparison, may thus help explain why individuals' subjective responses in these settings tend to be less objective and more narrowly construed (for a related discussion regarding minority influence in groups, see Moscovici, 1980; Nemeth, 1986).

It is also noteworthy that the outcomes that appear to be associated with group homogeneity—lack of accuracy in processing information and objectivity in making decisions—hark back to one of the most widely-popularized phenomena in the psychology of groups: groupthink (Janis, 1972; 1982). Groupthink scenarios traditionally are characterized as ones in which a group's consensus-seeking tendencies ultimately detract from the quality or morality of their decisions. What is clear is that groupthink has often been associated with selective information processing, incomplete survey of alternatives, and poorer decision-making, more generally; less clear, however, is whether—or to what extent—the homogeneity of the group may contribute to such effects. Nearly all of the classic foreign-policy cases Janis drew on to formulate his initial groupthink model described groups of similar others. Homogeneity was even noted as an antecedent condition to groupthink in Janis' (1982) case study of Watergate and later suggested as a recurring theme across multiple cases featuring this phenomenon (McCauley, 1989). Yet homogeneity is rarely highlighted in conjunction with groupthink more generally, and, to our knowledge, has never been directly tested as a moderator. The possibility that homogeneity plays an underappreciated role in producing some effects typically ascribed to groupthink remains an open question; however, it suggests one reason why subsequent attempts to obtain clear-cut empirical evidence for groupthink—without consideration of this factor—have proven challenging (for reviews, see Turner & Pratkanis, 1998; Esser, 1998).

Additional support for the notion that the subjective responses generated in homogeneous groups, not diverse ones, are often in need of explanation is even consistent with classic psychological work outside the realm of groups. Take, for instance, seminal research on aversive racism by Dovidio and Gaertner (2000). Participants evaluated the qualifications of a White or Black job applicant with objectively weak, moderate, or strong credentials. Whereas Black

candidates with moderate qualifications were considered less qualified than Black candidates with strong qualifications, White candidates were considered highly qualified regardless of whether their qualifications were moderate or strong. While not the primary insight researchers have taken from this work, it is reasonable to view this pattern as one in which participants evaluate Black applicants in a more objective manner than they do White applicants.

Objectively, applicants with moderate credentials *should* be evaluated as less qualified than applicants with strong credentials, as are Black applicants (by non-Black evaluators). It is Whites' tendency to evaluate other White applicants as highly qualified when they only possess moderate credentials that would appear to be the anomaly in need of explanation—an insight the authors themselves raise when discussing these results (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; p. 318), but is rarely noted in broader discussion of this work.

Finally, we suggest that even for the many studies of group diversity for which it is not possible to compare individuals' subjective perceptions within homogeneous and diverse groups to indicators of a true baseline, our perspective offers a novel and potentially informative lens through which researchers can re-digest past work in this domain. Consider, as one example, reinterpreting one oft-cited downside of group diversity—the tendency to increase conflict and undermine the quality of relationships among group members (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999; Zenger & Lawrence, 1989; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Given the absence of an objective baseline to which responses in homogeneous and diverse groups can be compared, it is also plausible that results like these indicate, not that diversity fuels conflict, but that homogeneity makes people less mindful of differences in opinion that actually exist (see Lount, Sheldon, Rink, & Phillips, 2012; Phillips et al., 2009). Indeed, because diversity researchers rely heavily on group members' self-

reported assessments and feelings to draw conclusions about conflict (and many other group processes), there is often no way of discerning whether individuals' subjective responses are objectively accurate.

Is Homogeneity a Baseline? A Preliminary Test

We believe the literature reviewed offers reason to question whether homogeneity represents an inert or objective baseline. Yet there is little, if any, previous work that has directly tested our propositions. Here, we report a preliminary test in a context of central importance to collaborative group work: responses to performance feedback. Drawing on work suggesting that homogeneity is linked to egocentric tendencies (Robbins & Krueger, 2005; Todd et al., 2012), we conducted an experiment to test the hypothesis that membership in a homogeneous group encourages egocentric perceptions of performance feedback. Specifically, we expected homogeneity to exacerbate individuals' tendency to overestimate their own role when the group performs well, but their fellow group members' role when the group performs poorly (for a review of self-serving biases, see Sheppard, Malone, & Sweeny, 2008). Critically, to test this hypothesis, we were faced with the challenge of employing a design that—consistent with our two propositions—could (1) isolate the independent effect of homogeneity on subjective perceptions of responsibility for group performance and (2) evaluate the degree to which these perceptions in homogeneous and diverse groups deviate from participants' *actual* contributions to group performance.

To gauge the independent effect of homogeneity, we included two “control groups” for comparison. Without empirical precedent for a control group in diversity research, our efforts were guided by theoretical assertions that, in intergroup relations “...the baseline should be conceptualized as a state in which the self is perceived as distinct from an undifferentiated group

of others” (Brewer, 1979; p. 322). White participants recruited for a three-person online team task first answered several questions about themselves, including their racial background, and then learned how their team members ostensibly responded. We used this procedure to create four group conditions: (1) a homogeneous group comprised of two other White individuals, (2) a diverse group comprised of a Black and an Asian individual, (3) a control group in which the race question was never asked, and (4) a second control group in which participants reported their racial background, thus making race salient more generally, but upon advancing to the next screen, a computer error message (`RangeError, type: stack_overflow`) appeared in place of group members’ responses to the “race” item. We employed these control groups because they correspond to two distinct ways to conceptualize the baseline. The control group in which race was never mentioned was designed to reveal how participants behave in groups in which racial composition is unknown and not salient, whereas the error message control group was designed to reveal how participants behave in groups in which racial composition is unknown, but is globally salient.

To assess the objectivity of participants’ take on who was responsible for their group’s performance, we devised a collaborative online trivia task in which group performance hinged on equally weighted contributions from each of three team members. Participants were *always* equally responsible for their group’s performance. Thus perceiving any difference in one’s own versus the other group members’ responsibility for their group’s performance would be objectively inaccurate.

We found that participants assigned to a homogeneous group were indeed more likely to display a self-serving bias for their group’s performance—overemphasizing their fellow group members’ role in negative group performance and their personal role in positive performance—

than participants assigned to a racially diverse group. While additional work is required to pin down the mechanisms underlying this particular relationship, it is clear that the difference between homogeneous and diverse conditions was driven primarily by the effect of homogeneity (Figure 2). This finding is consistent with our first proposition regarding the independent effects of homogeneity. Moreover, that this particular effect of homogeneity represents a *biased* response is consistent with our second proposition that homogeneity encourages subjective responses that, if anything, are often further from an objective baseline than in diverse groups.

Surely, these results are preliminary, but we believe that this study offers a glimpse of the theoretical value of rethinking the meaning of group differences in diversity research. The results of this study, in tandem with the range of research reviewed above, suggest that homogeneity may play an active role in at least some of the broader findings documented in the diversity literature, and perhaps one that should more often be the focus of our attention. These results also raise a number of important questions for future work. Are the effects of homogeneity limited to high-status groups that comprise the numerical majority, or do they generalize to any homogeneous group (e.g., an all-Black group) in any culture? As the demographic composition of a group systematically varies, what is the “tipping point” at which processes associated with diversity flip to processes associated with homogeneity? Are the effects of homogeneity moderated by the type of group process activated or the type of group task employed?

Implications for How We Study Diversity

If one accepts the possibility that both the effects of diversity and homogeneity can drive the results we observe in diversity research, we are then faced with the theoretical and methodological challenge of adapting our scientific approach to account for this. We believe there are a number of potentially useful ways to parse the effects of diversity and homogeneity,

depending on the nature of the study. For studies in which participants are led to believe that they will interact or are interacting virtually in a group, researchers can introduce a control group to which both diversity and homogeneity can be compared, as in the experiment described above. In other contexts, it may be more feasible to establish a baseline by comparing responses in diverse and homogeneous groups to those in individual settings (e.g., Kugler, Kausel, & Kocher, 2012).

Beyond efforts to establish a control condition, researchers may consider employing (or even developing) individual difference measures that tap preference for or comfort with homogeneity than can be paired with traditional indices of anxiety with or aversion to diversity. Consider, for instance, that not every woman may experience an all-female group in the same way and this variability in one's sense of similarity, comfort, or connection with others may be predictive of the influence of homogeneity. Moreover, some measures of implicit bias—in particular, those in which liking of similar others is distinguishable from disliking of different others—could further elucidate the factors that moderate differences between diverse and homogeneous groups.

Finally, another approach to parsing the effects of diversity and homogeneity is to examine how between-group differences unfold over time. While longitudinal designs do not help explain the basis for initial differences between diverse and homogeneous groups, they do allow researchers to determine whether such differences increase or decrease over time, and, whether such divergence or convergence of outcomes is driven by homogeneity, diversity, or both. Longitudinal roommate studies have become an increasingly popular technique to chart intergroup contact and friendship formation (Gaither & Sommers, 2013; Shook & Fazio, 2008;

West, Pearson, Dovidio, Shelton, & Trail, 2009), yet longitudinal studies remain rare in the group diversity literature (but see Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993).

Implications for Managing Diversity

We hope that our theoretical perspective not only fosters constructive scholarly debate regarding issues of diversity, but may also help edify efforts to manage diversity in the real world. What is clear is that the vast majority of organizational programs, policies, and interventions are geared toward helping people navigate the complexities and hazards of working with people who are different from them—not increasing their awareness of the effects of similarity or homogeneity. That these real world efforts to manage diversity often prove to be ineffective and sometimes are even counterproductive (Kalev, Dobbins, & Kelly, 2006), perhaps suggests that issues of diversity can be more effectively tackled with a balanced focus on the challenges of working both in groups of different and similar others.

Conclusion

We introduce a new perspective on issues of diversity by turning the spotlight on the independent effects of homogeneity. We believe that doing so may help disentangle some mixed results in this literature and offer promising directions for advancing theory and practice. The possibility that homogeneity detracts from the objectivity of individuals' responses or the accuracy of their judgments may be a particularly important avenue for future research. While the potential implications of our perspective for broader discourse on the "value of diversity" are not yet clear, rather than exclusively focus on what diversity *adds* to group functioning, it may also be informative to consider what homogeneity takes away or, even, what biases diversity disrupts. We hope this perspective can stimulate—perhaps, even, redefine the scope of—debate among the numerous educators, policy-makers, and businesspeople who regularly wrestle with issues of diversity.

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Acknowledgments and Endnotes

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² We aggregated our sample of articles by obtaining every non-redundant research article referenced in five recent meta-analyses and review papers on group diversity (Bell et al., 2011; Mannix & Neale, 2005; Miliken & Martins, 1996; Van Knippenberg & Shippers, 2007; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). We excluded theory papers, meta-analyses, books, and articles on topics other than diversity. Coders—blind to hypotheses—coded each the language used to describe the main result in each article (Cohen's kappa = .89). Discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

³ We thank Bob Lount, Roberto Fernandez, and Ray Reagans for their comments; we are grateful to Becky Lieberman, Kelly West, and Jenn Kim for their assistance.

Figure 1. *Coding of language used to interpret the difference between diverse and homogeneous groups in research articles*

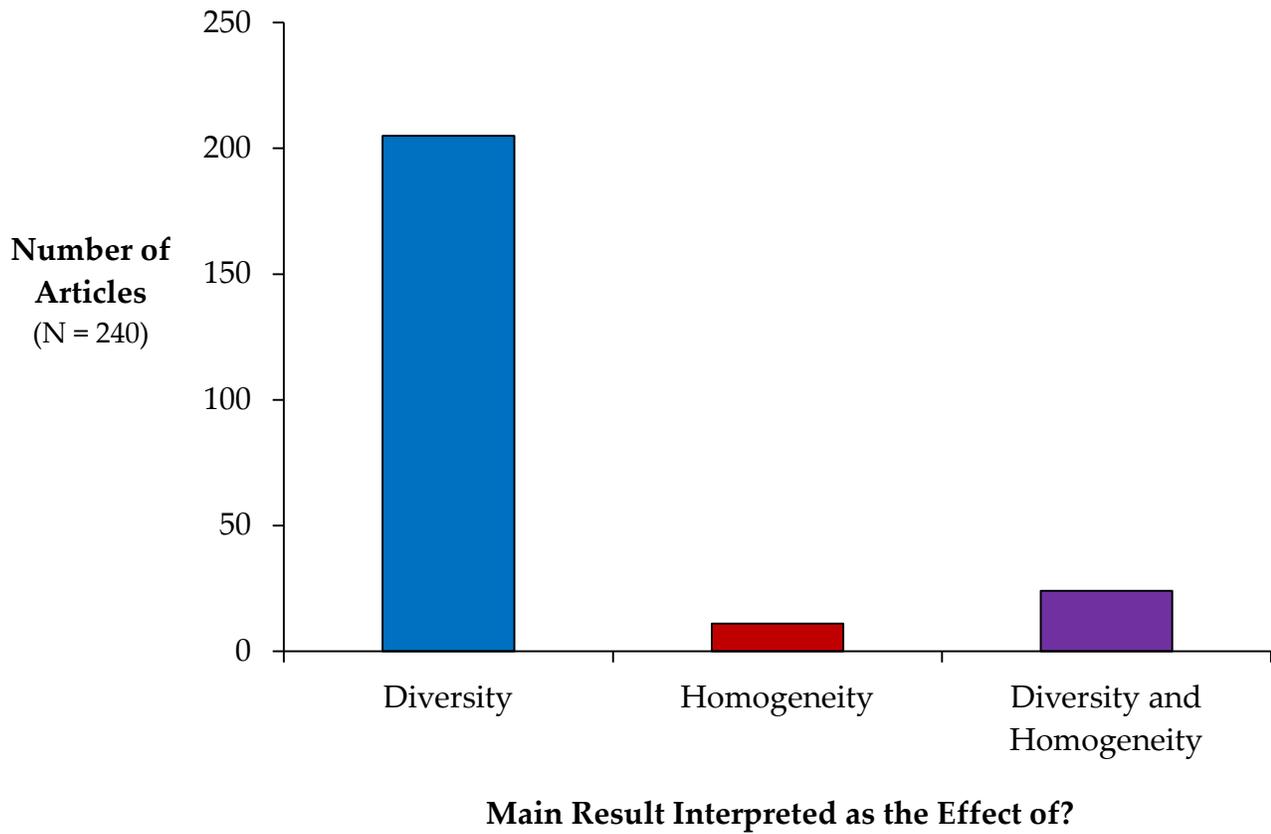


Figure 2. Degree to which participants exhibit a self-serving bias when making attributions for their group's performance in diverse, homogeneous, and control group conditions. Self-serving bias was computed based on participants' tendency to overestimate their personal role in positive group performance or their fellow group members' role in negative performance. Higher values reflect greater self-serving bias; a value of zero designates no bias. Error bars designate standard error of the mean.

