

Promoting Faculty Diversity in U.S. Higher Education Institutions: The Case of Faculty of Color

ABSTRACT

The current landscape of higher education has seen efforts by universities and colleges to promote a sense of belonging and inclusion for students, faculty, and staff. In this study, I investigated faculty diversity in U.S. higher education institutions focusing on faculty of color. Critical Race Theory and Affirmative Action served as the conceptual frameworks for this study. For data collection, I utilized journal articles on Ohio University's library website, Google Scholar, and the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC); and this lasted between March 2023 and June 2023. I analyzed the data using thematic analysis. The findings of the research revealed a lack of mentorship for faculty of color. Additionally, faculty from underrepresented groups had to navigate their educational institutions on their own without any assistance. Faculty of color also experienced feelings of isolation due to the absence of faculty who shared their background. At the end of the study, I recommended that diversity, equity, and inclusion should not be viewed as merely a checkbox for funding or accreditation purposes. The findings of this study can provide valuable insights for higher education institutions as they strive for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Keywords: Faculty Diversity, Higher Education Institutions, Critical Race Theory, Affirmative Action, Faculty of Color

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in the fall of 2018, three percent of full-time professors in the United States were Black and Hispanic (males and females each). American Indian/Alaska Native and full-time professors who were mixed races made up one percent or less of the total percentage. Asian/Pacific Islander full-time professors were seven percent and five percent male and female respectively. Additionally, 40 percent and 35 percent of full-time faculty were White males and White females respectively. As seen from the above, faculty of color are inadequately represented in higher education institutions. There have been calls for postsecondary institutions to diversify their institutions by hiring more faculty of color. Also, the increase in enrollment of students from underrepresented backgrounds to universities and colleges has precipitated the need for a diversified faculty to cater to the needs of the students [1].

1.1 History of Diversity in U.S. Higher Education

One cannot talk about U.S. higher education without diversity. Higher education in the U.S. was modeled after the British universities: Oxford and Cambridge [2]. The individuals from England who migrated to the U.S. sought to "re-create a little bit of old England in America" [3]. Based on this premise, the first higher education institution to be established in the U.S. was Harvard College in 1636 [3]. I should highlight that U.S. higher education had the goal of educating White men for religious purposes – for a "learned clergy, and a lettered people" [3]; meaning people of color and women were left out of the equation. This myopic view of

37 educating only White males served as the foundation for inequality and inequity in higher
38 education. Wilder [4] documented the role and impact of African Americans and Native
39 Americans in the establishment of the early universities and colleges, which has been sadly
40 left out in the narration of higher education development. Diversity in U.S. higher education
41 began with the establishment of a college by the then Harvard president, Henry Dunster for
42 Native Americans. The institution, dubbed Indian College, provided free education to the
43 Natives. This Indian College existed for a few years as it ceased to exist after 1693 due to
44 wars and diseases.

45 After the period of establishing colleges and universities for religious purposes, it became
46 subject of research in universities. The research model of education was adopted from
47 Germany. Shortly after research institutions came in, the land-grant and Historically Black
48 colleges and universities were formed from the Morrill Acts of 1863 and 1869. The Morrill
49 Acts served as precursors to the inclusion of minoritized individuals in higher education.
50 Again, after the World Wars came in, a sea of veterans entering higher education institutions
51 across the country was observed. This accounted for more diversity in enrollment, financial
52 aid, and the creation of more programs and electives [5]. As seen from above, there have
53 been efforts to include marginalized populations in higher education over the years,
54 however, the problem of underrepresentation persists.

55 1.2 Faculty of Color and Tenure

56 Tenure comes with academic freedom. The tenure of minority faculty allows faculty the
57 freedom to represent and support diversity in their institutions [1]. According to the AAUP [6],
58 "College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers
59 of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from
60 institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes
61 special obligations". However, Hansen [7] mentions the fact that faculty remain tight-lipped
62 on issues because they do not want to offend the corporate board members who control the
63 institution. Having tenure protects faculty from these external influences.

64 We see the first case of academic freedom in the U.S. when Dorn [8] writes about Edward
65 Ross, a professor at Stanford University who was dismissed by Jane Stanford (founder of
66 Stanford University). Ross had conflicting political views (democratic) with Jane (republican).
67 Ross was in favor of checking Asian immigration as opposed to Jane who was in favor of
68 Asian immigration because of the "Chinese labor's role in constructing the railroads" [8].
69 Jane prevented faculty members from taking a political stance; something Ross flouted.
70 George Howard, another faculty was also dismissed because he commented on Ross's
71 dismissal and was on Ross's side. David Starr Jordan, the president at the time, was not on
72 the same page as Jane Stanford for the dismissal of Ross; however, Jordan had no choice
73 since the order for dismissal came from above. The point to be made here is that tenure
74 grants faculty members certain privileges and without it, faculty members are left to the
75 mercy of their institutional leadership.

76 Here are some examples of the challenges faculty members face during the tenure process.
77 Using an autobiographic study, Huang [9] documented her journey as a minority faculty to be a
78 tenured professor. She walked readers through the marginalization she faced during the
79 process. Huang [9] discussed the diversity at their department – the existence of only two
80 Asian faculty members at the School of Education department. According to Huang [9], "My
81 tenure process was a fiasco and showed the face of a dysfunctional higher educational
82 institution under austerity". Huang [9], before starting her job as a faculty member at the City
83 College of New York, was told that her previous faculty job would be included in her current
84 to fast-track her tenure process. Unfortunately, the chairperson who hired her died and she

85 had lost years of research that would have assisted her in getting tenure. Huang [9] was
86 denied tenure despite her previous work history. Huang [9] mentioned that the tenure denial
87 served as a learning opportunity. Huang [9] also saw the need for an Asian/Asian American
88 mentor and the knowledge of conducting proper research.

89 Similarly, Lynch-Alexander [10] pointed out the changing landscape of publishing in higher
90 education where younger faculty belonging to underrepresented groups are publishing
91 online than in “major academic publishing houses of the 20th century”. So that online
92 published works are regarded as inferior to hardcopy books. This affects tenure processes
93 as institutions have been slow to adapt to this change. Lynch-Alexander [10] provided
94 findings of the experiences of 25 Black faculty members and tenure. The lack of information
95 about tenure and faculty mentors from minoritized groups was reported by the participants.
96 The participants also indicated the lack of time to conduct research and publish. Publishing
97 was a major determinant during the tenure process. Most minority faculty were also faced
98 with spending their time mentoring underrepresented students. This student affairs role was
99 usually not a part of their duties. Minority faculty ended up working additional hours without
100 the extra income and sometimes without tenure.

101 A study by Sue et al. [11] showed that professors mentioned negative class evaluations that
102 stemmed from racial conflicts and discussions in their classes that affected faculty’s tenure.
103 The authors wrote, “Professors endorsed the belief that dealing with racial issues in class
104 was potentially explosive and that student conflicts could affect their feelings about the class
105 and specifically the professor”. Class evaluations affected the tenure of faculty, as such,
106 some faculty members would shy away from addressing racial issues in their class.
107 Engaging students in racial discussions could potentially affect a faculty member’s tenure.
108

109 Studies on promotion of Faculty Diversity in U.S. Higher Education Institutions with the Case
110 of Faculty of Color is still very limited. This was critically examined in this study using Critical
111 Race Theory and Affirmative Action as the conceptual framework.
112

113 **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

114 Critical Race Theory and Affirmative Action would serve as the conceptual frameworks in
115 studying faculty of color in higher education institutions in the U.S.

116 **2.1 Critical Race Theory**

117 Critical race theory (CRT), rooted in law, is “a collection of activists and scholars engaged in
118 studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power” [12]. Caldwell
119 [13] posited that CRT began as an intellectual movement in the mid-1970s in the writings of
120 scholars such as Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, Alan Freeman. Texts from these scholars
121 sought to contend the liberal race discourse. Other proponents of the theory included
122 Kimberlé Crenshaw, Mari Matsuda, Charles Lawrence, Neil Gotanda, and Robert Williams.
123 The delay of the civil rights movements in successfully implementing policies to tackle
124 racism and discrimination bolstered the efforts of critical race theorists [12]. It is important to
125 note that proponents of CRT organized their first workshop in 1989 in Wisconsin.
126 Furthermore, the Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and radical feminism movements were the
127 foundations upon which CRT was established. The Critical Legal Studies movement (CLS)
128 aimed to bring light to structural racism within the social fabric of American society. However,
129 CLS was unsuccessful because it criticized the legal system without providing remedies for
130 fixing it [14]. CRT proponents took the concept of legal indeterminacy which was “the idea
131 that not every legal case has one correct outcome” from CLS [15]. The group also studied
132 patriarchy and power in American society as well as injustices committed against the

133 oppressed. It is worth noting that CRT seeks not to only examine structural racism and
134 oppression but to change these structures of inequalities.

135 At its core, CRT posits that racism is embedded in the fabric of society so that recognizing
136 racism is challenging. In the same vein, it has been difficult to eradicate racism because of
137 the benefits individuals belonging to the dominant group enjoy. The theory also argues that
138 race is a socially constructed concept to bring division amongst the human population.
139 Delgado and Stefancic[15] discussed that some individuals would contend that racism did
140 not exist because of the absence of some racist attacks such as lynching and the creation of
141 intercultural/interracial friendships. The authors strongly stated that racism was deeply
142 entrenched in American society. We see the issue of racism in recent times during the
143 murders of Abdullahi Omar Mohamed, George Floyd, and AhmaudArbery; the attack on
144 Asian/Asian Americans at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021; and the treatment
145 of Mexican immigrants at the U.S.-Mexican border.

146 According to Yosso et al. [14], CRT entered the realm of education through the works of
147 Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate. CRT in education questions racism and
148 discrimination in educational systems. CRT has also developed to include intersectionality,
149 especially in women's studies. Recently, CRT has been criticized by state lawmakers and
150 other individuals for diverting American students from acquiring education and creating
151 division [16]. Bill Request 60 was a bill to forbid K-12 teachers from discussing racism and
152 sexism in schools. The bill has been aligned with CRT. In a news article published by
153 Bohanon[16], Dr. Gregory Vincent, a faculty member at the University of Kentucky asserted
154 that the use of the term, CRT was wrong because CRT involved high cognitive processes for
155 graduate and law students. Consequently, CRT could not be taught in K-12 schools because
156 K-12 students did not have the high cognitive skills of college and graduate students.

157 **2.2 Affirmative Action**

158 CRT sets the tone for affirmative action. Efforts by the U.S. to end discrimination and to
159 create equality in the U.S. through the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments;
160 and the civil rights laws in 1866 and 1875 have been somewhat successful throughout the
161 years [17]. Affirmative action first gained ground in the Wagner Act of 1935; however,
162 Executive Order 8802 signed by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1941 was the
163 groundbreaking event that popularized the movement. The order protected Mexican-
164 Americans, Blacks, and Jewish employees and "forbade discrimination in employment in
165 defense industries and government on the basis of "race, creed, color or national origin""
166 (p.3). Rai and Critzer[17] argued that the order was political because most of the White
167 workers at the time were fighting in the war and there was a demand for workers.
168 Consequently, the hiring of people of color to work in the defense industries. The order also
169 sought to create an unblemished image of the U.S. heralding democracy and equality.

170 The Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) was created in line with Executive Order
171 8802 to tackle discrimination. Unfortunately, the committee did not wield significant power
172 and was abolished in 1946. Executive Order 9346 was endorsed after Executive Order 8802
173 in 1943 and it continued the efforts for nondiscrimination. These orders were, however,
174 unsuccessful. Moreover, Rai and Critzer[17] revealed that "during President John F.
175 Kennedy's term of office that progress toward affirmative action and civil rights began to
176 accelerate". It was during his office that affirmative action aligned with the nondiscrimination
177 of people of color employees.

178 The Civil Rights Act of 1964 brought about Title VII which sought to prevent discrimination
179 on the basis of one's race, gender, religion, or national origin. Within this was affirmative

180 action. Affirmative action has been revised throughout the years till now to keep up with the
181 changing social, economic, and political environments. Examples of court cases that used
182 affirmative action as a basis include the Griggs v. Duke Power Company case in 1971, the
183 Regents of the University of California v. Bakke case in 1978, and the United Steel Workers
184 of America v. Weber case in 1979.

185 Although affirmative action has been used in the recruitment of qualified faculty of color,
186 there has been stiff opposition to it. Rai and Critzer[17] discussed that some individuals
187 argue that affirmative action benefits upper and middle-class people of color to the detriment
188 of individuals belonging to the lower socio-economic class. Similarly, some individuals
189 believe affirmative action has created division amongst Americans. Some also argue that “it
190 is demeaning to minorities and women” [17]. Affirmative action has been used in the hiring or
191 ‘not hiring’ of faculty of color.

192 **3. METHODOLOGY**

193

194 This study seeks to examine the recruitment of retention of faculty of color in higher
195 education institutions in the U.S. The research questions are: 1) What challenges do faculty
196 of color face in higher education? 2) What ways can higher education institutions increase
197 and retain faculty of color? In collecting data, document analysis of literature concerning
198 faculty of color diversity was employed. Using keywords such as “faculty diversity”, “faculty
199 diversity in the U.S., “affirmative action”, “Critical Race Theory”, and “faculty diversity and
200 tenure”, “recommendations for faculty diversity in higher education”, journal articles on the
201 Ohio University library website, google scholar, and Education Resources Information
202 Center (ERIC) were searched and found. Article journals that did not address diversity or
203 faculty of color were rejected. zlibrary, a free website to download eBooks, was also utilized.
204 In analyzing my data, seven articles from these sources were used. Data analysis was
205 executed by using thematic analysis to bring out similar patterns across the journal articles.
206 From the analysis, two themes were created: ‘Challenges of Faculty of Color’ and
207 ‘Recommendations for Minority Faculty Diversity’; and these themes served as the basis for
208 the findings.

209 **4. FINDINGS**

210

211 **4.1. Challenges of Faculty of Color**

212 Dittmer [18] studied faculty of color at a private predominantly White institution (PWI). Most
213 of the participants in the study revealed that they were hired through personal referrals. The
214 study showed that the university was welcoming to the participants and that heavily informed
215 their decision to stay in the institution. One interviewee asserted, “...because you want to go
216 to an environment where you are welcomed. And everything they did was just that. Also, the
217 main thing was the people that I was going to call my colleagues, how the faculty members
218 were getting along”. Another participant, who was an international faculty, said he chose the
219 university because their colleagues were nice individuals and that they enjoyed working in
220 that environment. Some informants indicated that they took up roles in the PWI to serve as
221 role models for students of color. One interviewee hinted, “Because they have this huge
222 increase in the number of students of color in the schools, but...they’re having a problem of
223 recruiting minority teachers and all”. Interestingly, this participant had rejected the offer to
224 work in this institution initially. The participant attributed the rejection to the lack of diversity
225 in faculty members, staff, as well as students. All the participants pointed out the collegial
226 atmosphere within which they worked. The participants commented on the support from
227 other colleagues. One interviewee opined,

228 Supportive department. There's no question about that and it is a very egalitarian
229 department so we all have opinions, and we can all voice them without any real
230 repercussions of, you know, disagreement. I mean not that everybody agrees with
231 everybody, but we can all voice it, we tend to work it out.

232 Another participant mentioned the presence of senior faculty they could go to in case they
233 had any questions or needed assistance. The university created a conducive atmosphere for
234 minority faculty to feel mattered. A challenge from one participant was the difficulty in
235 recruiting minority faculty because of the low levels of minority student enrollment and
236 graduation.

237 In another study, Heggins' [19] researched eleven minority faculty to document their
238 experiences and challenges they faced in higher education. Some participants mentioned
239 the relevance of mentors to guide them in their personal and professional development.
240 Some participants complained of the expectation to conduct research and teach. The
241 majority of the interviewees also discussed their negative experiences as "second class
242 citizens" [19]. One participant described her experience,

243 I have found many challenges and they were not overtly negative like, you know, it
244 always on the surface, people have been very supportive of my work and what I am
245 doing and articulate they feel like they like me. And I feel that they really mean that.
246 But it is just this cultural dissonance. Just the way in which they talk, the things that
247 they value, the things that they push related back to, you know, you should go to a
248 research one institution. If find it interesting that, I don't have a professor that has
249 really asked, you know, who I am and where I really want to be and why I chose to
250 be part of this culture [19]

251 Again, most participants lamented on the burden of working more as compared to their
252 White counterparts. The participants also commented on the feeling of loneliness within
253 educational settings which have been caused by the lack of minority faculty.

254 Moreover, Isaac and Boyer [20] in studying rural and urban community colleges found major
255 similarities between minority faculty from these geographical communities. One of such
256 similarities is the unfair treatment of minority faculty. The findings revealed the displeasure of
257 participants' remunerations and benefits.

258 Sue et al. [11] reported the unwillingness of the educational institutions to recognize
259 microaggressions within the university. This further deepens mistrust among faculty of color
260 as their institution implicitly and/or explicitly supports discrimination and racism.

261 Using critical content analysis, Chambers [21] studied the experiences of Black women
262 faculty and the challenges they faced in higher education. Chambers [21] did this by using
263 comments in a blog. The blog comments were in response to the National Association for
264 Equal Employment in Higher Education (NAFEO) draft report. A comment made by one of
265 the informants posited,

266 This finding is easy to explain. Academia is more of a meritocracy until the postdoc
267 level. You can write your own fellowship and scholarship proposals and an unfair
268 examiner is one of the few obstacles. The hiring and promotion process is where
269 social factors can be used against you – not collegial, poor student evaluations
270 (based on race), work not up to standard and on and on. It becomes more of a
271 personality contest. I recently found out that the word "bitter" is now being used to
272 dismiss female competitors [21].

273 Some participants' comments focused on the unfair use of students' evaluations in
274 determining faculty tenure. However, the author documented a counter-narrative by a
275 participant. This participant wrote about minority faculty and affirmative action,

276 No one seems to be invoking the obvious explanation. Black women get into Ph.D.
277 programs on the basis of affirmative action preferences, not merit, at a higher rate
278 than anyone else. They get jobs well above their ability on the same basis. After all,
279 in affirmative action quota terms, a Black woman is a "two-fer," and a highly
280 desirable hire. Then, when held to something close to the same standards as
281 everyone else for tenure, they can't meet the standards. I've seen it happen. Pretty
282 simple, and obvious explanation, really [21].

283 There have been opponents of affirmative action, like the commenter above, who strongly
284 believe minority individuals get into a position only through their minoritized identities.
285 However, Chambers [21] stated that affirmative action is used in the hiring process for
286 candidates on equal footing as their counterparts. Consequently, qualified minority
287 candidates compete with other qualified individuals. Although race and gender are used,
288 qualification trumps all these requirements. Pointing to the above comment, another
289 comment indicated that racism and discrimination still exists in higher education and the
290 world.

291 **4.2 Recommendations for Minority Faculty Diversity**

292 Abdul-Raheem [1] offered recommendations for recruiting and retaining faculty of color. The
293 first was coaching doctoral students and candidates and providing mentoring opportunities
294 for faculty of color. The author posited that providing mentoring to minority faculty would
295 create a sense of belonging and hence, faculty would be willing to remain in their institutions.
296 This would also lure other faculty of color to the institution as they see the support for faculty
297 of color. New faculty of color should also be educated on the tenure processes. Additionally,
298 Abdul-Raheem [1] suggested organizing welcome/recruitment events and creating safe
299 spaces for minority faculty to discuss their experiences as well as measures to solve issues
300 they have. When faculty of color feel heard and mattered, it is likely they would stay in their
301 institution because they believe the institution cares. The final suggestion Abdul-Raheem [1]
302 outlined was educating faculty of color on the organization or institution's culture. Minority
303 faculty could be faced with cultural dissonance as their culture and beliefs clash with that of
304 the organization. The author strongly advised universities and colleges to be flexible and
305 tolerant with faculty of color as they take the time to adapt to the institution's culture.

306 In the same vein, Dumas-Hines et al. [23] provided suggestions for recruiting and
307 retaining minorities in higher education institutions. Although Dumas-Hines et al. [23]
308 recommendations are for minority individuals in higher education in general, we can use
309 these recommendations for minority faculty. First, the author pointed out the importance of
310 cultural diversity infused in universities and colleges' mission statements. The mission
311 statements should be made public and "entombed in governance charters or on file for
312 accreditation reports". Second, Dumas-Hines et al. [23] advised educational institutions to
313 research diversity in their student and faculty population by collecting cultural diversity data
314 such as the number of Black, Latinx, Asian/Asian American, and Native American faculty
315 members. The data should be compared to White faculty data. After collecting the data, the
316 university or college should examine if the percentage of faculty of color corresponds to their
317 cultural diversity mission statement. If not, there should be an implementation of recruitment
318 efforts to target faculty of color. Third, researching the best recruitment and retention
319 strategies could assist in faculty diversity. Higher education institutions need to find ways in
320 enticing minority faculty. The author gave the example of salary and benefits, cultural

321 diversity training for all faculty, and formal mentoring for faculty of color. Also, assessments
322 could be conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of these programs. Fourth, academic
323 institutions need to create a comprehensive cultural diversity plan. The plan should be
324 written clearly to include action goals, individuals or offices responsible for the goals, as well
325 as how the goals would be accomplished. Also, Dumas-Hines et al. [23] shared,

326 The process for carrying out this plan should be thorough and continuous. The plan should
327 be endorsed and supported by everyone it includes at all levels of the institutions. Activity in
328 administering this plan should be ongoing. There should be periodic meetings to
329 communicate assignments, delegate responsibilities and discuss anticipated costs and
330 materials. And again, there should be constant evaluations done to revise the plan [24].

331 **4.2 Discussion**

332 We cannot discuss the diversity of faculty of color without touching on CRT and affirmative
333 action. As seen from the above, faculty of color go through many challenges, and findings
334 from these articles relate to each other. There is a lack of mentorship for them, and minority
335 faculty need to figure their educational organizations on their own without any help. Minority
336 faculty also stated the microaggressions they faced and their treatment as though they do
337 not matter. The high expectation and work burden on faculty of color make their jobs difficult.
338 They are usually required to research, provide services (serve on committees and as faculty
339 advisors), as well as to teach. This can affect their tenure as they struggle to balance every
340 aspect of their lives and stay on track for tenure. Furthermore, faculty of color are faced with
341 loneliness as a result of the absence of faculty of color. The same organization that stifles
342 faculty of color's development would discourage other minority faculty members from joining
343 the institution. Thereby, deepening the lack of diversity. Educational organizations' not
344 addressing racism and discrimination was another challenge documented. Faculty of color
345 usually do not trust higher education leadership especially ones that have a majority of
346 Whites at the top of the hierarchy. The university or college not recognizing racism and
347 discrimination creates retention concerns as minority faculty leave due to safety concerns.

348 These findings are consistent with Bennett et al.'s [22] study of Black and Latinx faculty
349 experiences in a university. The study also utilized CRT as a framework for the research.

350 There was also the students' evaluations problem. Higher education institutions use
351 students' evaluations to determine tenure when students have their own biases towards
352 certain races. So, let us say a class has a majority of students who are racists, and a faculty
353 of color is assigned that class. The students are likely to complete negative student
354 evaluations which would evidently affect this faculty's tenure. Similarly, we have individuals
355 who are opposed to affirmative action. These individuals, like the commenter in Chambers'
356 [21] study believe unqualified people of color are taking spaces meant for White people.

357 In discussing recommendations for higher education institutions in the U.S., Abdul-Raheem
358 [1] and Dumas-Hines et al. [23] made solid points. Amongst them was a establishing
359 mentoring relationship between minority faculty, education on tenure processes as well as
360 the institution's organizational culture, organizing welcome programs, and creating safe
361 spaces. Other recommendations were the infusion of cultural diversity in universities and
362 colleges' mission statements, collecting demographic data on faculty, researching best
363 recruitment and retention practices, and establishing a comprehensive plan.

364 Interestingly, faculty of color mentioned that students were their greatest motivation to stay in
365 academia [18]. Consequently, using CRT as a basis, the U.S. education system should
366 create and infuse critical studies and racial discourse. Having culturally aware students

367 would go a long way in ensuring the recruitment and retainment of faculty of color. The
368 retention of minority faculty would also lead to minority student retention.

369 Additionally, affirmative action is necessary especially in this part of the world where
370 inequality and inequity have been normalized. Affirmative action ensures that individuals
371 belonging to the minority have a place at the top of their organization's hierarchy. Racism
372 and discrimination are ubiquitous, and it is unfortunate after all these years, the issue
373 continues to persist even to this day. Rai and Critzer[17] pointed out that while minority
374 groups are gradually getting employed, "their entry is generally into the lower rungs of the
375 economic ladder, and the top positions continue to be controlled by whites, especially males"
376 (p. 16). We see this in higher education where minority faculty are denied tenure and
377 promotion and remain at their faculty positions for years.

378

379 **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

380

381 Faculty diversity is necessary for higher education to survive. Using CRT and affirmative
382 action as a basis for understanding the recruitment and retention of faculty of color would be
383 beneficial to the university as a whole, as well as the students and other faculty members.
384 The present landscape of higher education has seen efforts by universities and colleges in
385 diversity and inclusion. Higher education need not be home for only students; faculty
386 members should be considered. Higher education must pay attention to their faculty
387 recruitment and retention efforts because faculty diversity can be a determinant of student
388 enrollment. Using Ohio University as an example although Ohio University is a PWI, the
389 university has been proactive in its diversity and inclusion efforts. For instance, the
390 university's mission:

391 holds as its central purpose the intellectual and personal development of its
392 students. Distinguished by its rich history, diverse campus, international community,
393 and beautiful Appalachian setting, Ohio University is known as well for its
394 outstanding faculty of accomplished teachers whose research and creative activity
395 advance knowledge across many disciplines”

396 We can see tenets of diversity and inclusion in this mission statement. This statement is
397 made public on the university's website. Additionally, the university has a comprehensive
398 and strategic plan for diversity and inclusion with actionable steps which again can be found
399 on the university's website.

400 Educational organizations must infuse diversity and inclusion into their structures. Diversity
401 and inclusion should not be seen as a check box for funding or accreditation purposes.
402 Recruitment and retention of faculty of color go a long way in determining an organization's
403 climate and culture. People from dominant groups need to do away with perceiving people of
404 color using deficit approaches such as people of color being unintelligent and poor.
405 Educational organizations can achieve this by providing training to students, faculty, and
406 staff. Again, higher education institutions should include free counseling as part of the
407 benefits for minority faculty. Universities and colleges can also encourage feedback from
408 minority students, faculty, and staff to ensure an inclusive environment. There should be
409 advisory boards or committees established to cater to the needs of minority faculty to ensure
410 they feel mattered.

411 Further studies can examine the relevance of students' evaluations in faculty tenure
412 processes and if affirmative action has led to an increase or decrease in minority faculty
413 hiring and promotion.

414 The findings of this study can form the basis for higher education institutions in their quest
415 for diversity and inclusion. Educational institutions need to prioritize diversity as the U.S. is
416 becoming more diverse every minute. Recruitment and retention of faculty of color would
417 increase student enrollment and graduation, which would increase funding for universities
418 and colleges. The more money an institution has, the more comfortable it is on the national
419 and global scene.

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422 **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

423

424 **Doreen Tutera** designed the study, wrote the first draft of the manuscript, managed the
425 analyses of the study, read and approved the final manuscript.

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