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“Migrants’ Inclusion in the Workplace”

Abstract
This study examines treatment differentials that occur in a culturally highly diverse workforce and presents rich cross-national evidence on systematic, group-based inequalities in the workplace experience of migrant employees from more than 180 different home countries. The traditional social identity perspective on employee discrimination has difficulty in accommodating large-scale workforce diversity that does not fit neatly into a simple ingroup/outgroup dichotomy. Drawing on theories of statistical discrimination and social distance, this paper is able to move forward on this count and analyze unequal treatment of a large number of distinct social groups simultaneously, not just an ingroup and an outgroup. Theoretically, I predicted, first, that migrant employees have different workplace experiences than native employees have. I further predicted that the level of economic development of migrants’ home countries and home-host country shared language can explain inequalities in workplace experience between different migrant groups. Empirically, I found strong empirical support for these predictions. The study provides insight on the mechanisms and factors underlying employers’ biases and the suboptimal use of human resources and the societal inequalities that result from these biases. Practical recommendation is for organizations to monitor their employees’ workplace experience as part of a diversity accountability system for managers.