Are We Satisfied? A Look at Student Satisfaction with Diversity at Traditionally White Institutions

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, colleges and universities have defended diversity as a compelling educational interest in higher education (Brief of Carnegie Mellon University et al., 2003; Brief of Columbia University et al., 2003; Brief of Harvard University et al., 2003). To support their assertion that diversity matters in higher education, they point to the educational benefits of a racially diverse student body on learning and democracy outcomes (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002), cross-racial interaction (Chang, 1999; Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2006; Pike & Kuh, 2006; Pike, Kuh, & Gonyea, 2007), and complex thinking (Antonio, Chang, Hakuta, Kenny, Levin, & Milem, 2004) for all students (Milem, 2003). Since the well-publicized court cases, additional research has supported the idea that nurturing a diverse student body can...
play a role in breaking the pre-college cycle of segregation (Milem, Umbach, & Liang, 2004; Sáenz, 2006).

Despite the Supreme Court’s affirmation of race-conscious admissions policies in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the future of affirmative action remains uncertain. Following the decision, voters in Michigan passed Proposal 2, joining other states that have barred race-conscious admissions policies. Implicit within these rejections of affirmative action is a rejection of the concept that universities should take race into account in assembling a diverse student body. While a considerable body of research supports the finding that students benefit educationally from engaging in a diverse student body (Gurin et al., 2002; Chang, 1999; Milem, 2003), at least one study (Rothman, Lipset, & Nevitte, 2003) argues that a racially diverse student body is actually detrimental to student satisfaction. A relatively unexplored question is how students evaluate and perceive campus diversity. Specifically, how satisfied are students with the racial and ethnic diversity of their campuses and in what settings are they more likely to find it satisfactory?

Given the uncertain future of affirmative action and other campus diversity policies, it is imperative to better understand levels of student satisfaction with diversity and the factors that contribute to such satisfaction. As campuses seek to diversify, such efforts may be limited in their effectiveness if students are actually dissatisfied with diversity at more heterogeneous campuses, or if students are highly satisfied with the state of diversity at more homogeneous campuses. However, the relationship between components of the campus racial climate (such as structural diversity) or personal experiences (such as cross-racial interaction) with student satisfaction has not been fully explored in the literature. Thus, this study aims to identify and examine predictors of student satisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty for White, Black, Latino/a, and Asian American students at traditionally White institutions (TWIs).

**Background and Framework**

Little research exists on student perceptions of diversity and their satisfaction with it. Some studies have examined factors that contribute to students’ “openness” to diversity during their first, second, and third years of college (Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996). Such studies suggest campuses’ potential in reaching students but do not capture their reactions to diversity toward the end of college. Guided by literature on student satisfaction and campus climate, this study posits that student satisfaction with the ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty is an important part of their perceptions about campus racial dynamics, a key component of the greater campus racial
climate (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998). In turn, other components of campus climate, such as the racial/ethnic composition and institutional dynamics influence student satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the diversity of the student body and faculty.

**Student Satisfaction and Diversity**

The effect of student satisfaction on persistence and academic achievement (Astin, 1993; Bennett & Okinaka, 1991; Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1993) suggests that a focus on promoting student satisfaction is critical to creating a climate that is more conducive to student development and retention. Milem (2003) labels student satisfaction measures related to diversity as “process outcomes,” a particular type of diversity outcome that “reflects the ways in which students perceive that diversity has enriched their college experience” (p. 136). Examining satisfaction with the diversity of the student body and faculty as an outcome can provide clearer information on how students perceive and evaluate the campus environment.

Several studies have examined overall satisfaction with college in relation to campus demographics and dynamics. For instance, Bonous-Hammarth and Boatsman (1996) discovered that having a higher percentage of Black students in the student body was a positive predictor of overall satisfaction for Black students at TWIs. In their research on the relationship between student involvement, interaction, and satisfaction for Black students at HBCUs and TWIs, Outcalt and Skewes-Cox (2002) found that Black students reported higher overall satisfaction at HBCUs than at TWIs. Even though Black students at TWIs reported greater satisfaction with measures such as student-faculty interaction, quality of instruction, and campus facilities, when environments were controlled for using logistic regression analysis, attending an HBCU almost doubled the odds that a Black student was satisfied with his or her overall college experience. The authors attribute much of this satisfaction to a unique environment of “reciprocal engagement” at HBCUs. It is not only important that students become involved on campus but also that “campus communities must embrace their students in their diversity, particularity, and uniqueness” (p. 334). The study points to the significance of the college environment in shaping student satisfaction.

Other studies focus on satisfaction with diversity or with the racial climate. In Einarson and Matier’s (2005) study, college seniors who were Asian American and Black reported significantly lower overall satisfaction than their White and Latino/a counterparts. They also noted that satisfaction with campus diversity was a significant positive predictor of overall satisfaction for Black students. While Black and Latino students were significantly less satisfied with the specific element of campus diversity, these researchers focused on identifying predictors of overall satisfaction, not predictors of satisfaction with diversity.
Using a sample of academically talented Latino students, Hurtado (1994) identified elements that predicted student perceptions of racial/ethnic tension on their campuses. Latino students who attributed societal inequalities for Hispanics to greater systematic inequalities, discussed racial issues, and were involved in Latino student groups were more likely to perceive racial tension on campus. Students on larger campuses and campuses with higher Latino student enrollments were less likely to perceive racial tension. Although Hurtado’s study examines a different outcome than students’ satisfaction with the student body’s diversity, it covers similar territory by identifying multiple factors that shape student perceptions of diversity and the campus climate.

Campus Climate

The framework guiding the selection of variables for this study is Hurtado, Milem, et al.’s (1998) conception of the campus climate as consisting of four interrelated components: structural diversity (the number of minority students, faculty, and administrators), historical legacy (history of racial discrimination), psychological dimensions (student perceptions and attitudes toward diversity), and behavioral interactions (relationships and encounters between groups and individuals over diversity issues).

The importance of demographic diversity stems from Kanter’s (1977) research on the “critical mass” of underrepresented groups. First used to describe the presence (or lack) of women in legislative bodies, the term has since been applied to other environments affected by diversity. Without a certain threshold of representation, minority group members will likely experience a token, marginalized status within the group. Chang (1999) argues against defining diversity in terms of numbers exclusively, because a student body can have an actual majority of students of color but still lack opportunities for cross-racial interaction. Still, the presence of a diverse student body, if well-fostered and supported, is linked to multiple positive outcomes such as increases in critical thinking and cross-racial interaction (Antonio et al., 2004; Chang, 1999; Chang, Denson, et al., 2006; Gurin et al., 2002).

The historical track record of how an institution handles diverse populations also influences the climate for diversity. Hurtado, Milem, et al. (1998) point to how minority-serving institutions such as HBCUs have a historic commitment to educating underserved populations (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Many TWIs have to deal with the residual legacy of segregation and the exclusion of students of color (Braddock, 1980; Hardin, 1997). Institutional characteristics such as the university’s geographical location may also influence the racial climate’s historical component.

The interactions that students do or do not have across race/ethnicity also influence campus climate. Even though White students and students of color may attend the same institutions, they may have different experiences based
on the tendency to self-segregate or participate in activities dominated by one racial group (Sâenz, 2006). D’Souza (1991) decries the self-segregation and balkanization that students of color supposedly perpetuate, but White students also may intentionally or unintentionally self-segregate by race (Sidanius, Van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2004), thus affecting their college experiences and perceptions of the racial climate. For example, Pascarella et al. (1996) found that participation in (predominantly White) Greek life had a significant negative effect on the development of openness to diversity for White students.

Student perceptions of campus racial dynamics may frame how they perceive cross-racial interaction and other racial dynamics. Antonio (2001) discovered that students at a highly racially diverse campus perceived self-segregation as pervasive at their institution, even though they actually reported high levels of interethnic friendships. His findings reflect the significance of perception in shaping students’ attitudes toward diversity. Also, different populations may experience and perceive diversity differently (Hurtado et al., 1998). In general, students of color tend to have less favorable perceptions of campus race relations and support for diversity than White students (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Rankin & Reason, 2005). These two groups frequently have differing opinions on race-related issues as well (Sax & Arredondo, 1999).

Hurtado, Milem, et al.’s (1998) framework for the campus racial climate suggests that structural diversity, the component that generally receives the most attention, depends on other factors to produce a positive campus racial climate. For instance, an institution can have a high minority student enrollment, but many students may still be dissatisfied if they experience negative intergroup relations or if the institution is still characterized by a historical legacy of discrimination. In the context of this study, I hypothesize that student assessments about the diversity of the student body and faculty depend on multiple factors of climate, demographic makeup, attitudes about racial issues, and student participation in diversity-related activities. While satisfaction with the diversity of the student body and faculty is just one of many opinions that students may hold of campus racial dynamics, that dynamic includes multiple facets of campus climate.

**Objectives**

This study asks first, what differences, if any, exist of the satisfaction identified by students in various racial/ethnic groups with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty at their TWIs. This satisfaction is measured by a composite variable, “Demographic Diversity Satisfaction” (DDS). The study focused on TWIs students because preliminary analysis showed that Black students at HBCUs were so much more likely to be satis-
fied with student body diversity that comparison of the two groups was not likely to be illuminating. This preliminary finding echoes research showing that students may perceive drastically different campus racial climates at the two types of institutions (Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002).

A second study question is: What are the pre-college, institutional, experiential, and attitudinal predictors of DDS for students of different racial/ethnic groups? Based on previous findings that White students are more likely than students of color to perceive the campus racial climate as accepting and are less likely to view it as hostile (Rankin & Reason, 2005), I hypothesize White students will report higher levels of DDS. Furthermore, Whites and students of color will likely share certain predictors of DDS (e.g., structural diversity will be positively related to increased satisfaction across groups), but will likely differ in other aspects, such as how DDS is affected by diversity experiences during college.

**Methodology**

**Data Source**

Data for the study came from two national surveys: the Fall 1994 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey and the Spring 1998 follow-up survey, the College Student Survey (CSS). Both surveys were administered by the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute. The 1994 Freshman Survey includes information about the student’s personal and academic background, pre-college characteristics, attitudes, expectations, and values. The 1998 CSS is the post-test for the 1994 Freshman Survey; it also requests information regarding the college experience such as academic performance, student-faculty interaction, extracurricular activities, and perceptions. I chose this particular dataset because 1998 is the latest year that questions about satisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty were included on the CSS. Although the CSS is a national survey, it tends to attract higher participation rates from women’s and liberal arts colleges.

The sample was drawn from the 21,651 students who completed both surveys. Students from two-year institutions were not included. I conducted missing value analysis on the sample using the expectation-maximization algorithm to compensate for missing data. Maximum likelihood estimates were generated and the resulting values were used in place of the non-responses on continuous independent variables (McLachlan & Krishnan, 1997).

Because of the major difference in sample size between White and non-White students, I randomly selected a sample of White students approxi-
mately equal to the non-White sample. Thus, the sample for descriptive analyses consisted of 3,973 students from 255 TWIs: 1,960 White students, 474 Black students, 489 Latino/a students, 798 Asian American students, and 252 American Indian students. The sample for the multivariate analysis consisted of 1,882 White students, 465 Black students, 462 Latino/a students, and 767 Asian American students. American Indian students were not included in the multivariate analysis due to the small sample size.

**Variables**

The dependent variable for the study is a composite variable combining student responses to two items: “satisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body” and “satisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the faculty,” with the reporting options of “dissatisfied,” “neutral,” “somewhat satisfied,” and “very satisfied.” The Cronbach’s alpha for these two items is .839. Thus DDS ranged from a minimum value of 2 (dissatisfaction with both the ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty) to 8 (very satisfied with both). Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for independent variables.

I blocked independent variables into four groups that were entered into the equation in the order that I hypothesized they influenced the dependent variable. (See Appendix A for coding schemes.) To control for previous experiences (Astin, 1991), the first block included background characteristics: mother’s education, parental income, gender (male as omitted group) and pre-college characteristics (freshman values, political orientation, and attitudes toward race and diversity issues). The second, third, and fourth blocks of independent variables were each selected to represent facets of Hurtado, Milem, et al. (1998)’s conception of campus climate being made up of various components.

The second block included a measure of structural diversity as represented by a “Diversity Index” originated by Meyer and McIntosh (cited in Chang & Yamamura, 2006). The Diversity Index shows the probability that two randomly chosen students from an institution will be of different racial groups. In this study, the Diversity Index ranged from 1.98 to 69.80. The second block also included variables that were thought to reflect characteristics of the institution that might influence the historical climate for diversity, such as region, selectivity, percentage of women faculty, and institutional control. The third block represented college experiences pertaining to diversity (cross-racial interaction, activities, and experiences having to do with race and diversity). Variables in the fourth block were related to attitudes and perceptions of the climate including senior year political orientation, attitudes about diversity issues, and satisfaction measures related to peers and a sense of community.
### Table 1

**Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White Mean</th>
<th>White SD</th>
<th>Black Mean</th>
<th>Black SD</th>
<th>Latino/a Mean</th>
<th>Latino/a SD</th>
<th>Asian American Mean</th>
<th>Asian American SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 1. Background Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental income</td>
<td>9.23</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (female)</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, commitment to promoting racial understanding</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, racial discrimination is not a problem</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, political orientation</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 2. Structural Diversity/Institutional Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity index</td>
<td>18.47</td>
<td>10.36</td>
<td>25.98</td>
<td>13.03</td>
<td>29.46</td>
<td>15.24</td>
<td>30.01</td>
<td>14.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional control (private)</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student to faculty ratio</td>
<td>18.06</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>18.80</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>18.92</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>18.22</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women faculty</td>
<td>33.55</td>
<td>9.91</td>
<td>34.94</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>33.81</td>
<td>11.61</td>
<td>33.02</td>
<td>12.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selectivity</td>
<td>1019.37</td>
<td>106.21</td>
<td>1011.69</td>
<td>119.44</td>
<td>1038.82</td>
<td>124.36</td>
<td>1061.54</td>
<td>127.94</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Block 3. Diversity Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>White Mean</th>
<th>White SD</th>
<th>Black Mean</th>
<th>Black SD</th>
<th>Latino/a Mean</th>
<th>Latino/a SD</th>
<th>Asian American Mean</th>
<th>Asian American SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-racial interaction</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>7.99</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, attended a racial/cultural workshop</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, had a roommate of another race</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, enrolled in ethnic studies</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, participated in racial/ethnic student organization</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Block 4. Perceptions and Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>White Mean</th>
<th>White SD</th>
<th>Black Mean</th>
<th>Black SD</th>
<th>Latino/a Mean</th>
<th>Latino/a SD</th>
<th>Asian American Mean</th>
<th>Asian American SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998, growth in knowledge/acceptance of other races or cultures</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, political orientation</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, self-rated critical thinking ability</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, support for affirmative action</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, commitment to promoting racial understanding</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, racial discrimination is not a problem</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with community and peer interactions</td>
<td>11.16</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>10.47</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyses

I used cross-tabulations to answer the question of whether different racial/ethnic groups differ in their DDS. To compare different populations, I used a comparative group approach, running separate regressions for each racial/ethnic group (Carter & Hurtado, 2007). This procedure can help identify possible distinctions or similarities between the four groups. I also performed T-tests to compare unstandardized regression coefficients between groups (Sax, Bryant, & Harper, 2005; Sáenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007). I set a minimum tolerance level at .50. Tolerance levels indicate the linear relationships between independent variables; higher tolerances are indicative of low multi-collinearity.

I entered the four blocks of variables using blocked entry regression analysis, using ANOVAs to compare changes in the $R^2$ between each block. I considered hierarchical linear modeling (Raudenbusch & Bryk, 2002) to account for possibly underestimated standard errors, due to clustering in data; however, a preliminary analysis using HLM indicated very similar results to using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Following the advice of Astin and Denson (in press), to account for possible clustering, I used significance levels of .01 and .001 to interpret the results of variables related to institutional characteristics. I used a less stringent p-value of .05 as a cut-off for statistical significance with individual-level variables. Using OLS regression also permitted following individual changes in beta coefficients. Besides entering the variables in four discrete blocks, I also force-entered variables one at a time to observe individual changes in beta coefficients when other variables entered the equation; such instances are noted in the text. Observing step-by-step beta changes can provide understanding of how the strength of certain variables changes when other variables are controlled (Astin, 1991).

Limitations and Considerations

A limitation in this study is the difference in sample sizes between White students and the other racial/ethnic groups even with the use of a reduced White student sample. Although I included American Indian students in the cross-tabulation that examines the variance of student satisfaction with diversity by race, their small numbers precluded their inclusion as a group in the regression analyses.

A limitation of using secondary data was the unavailability of variables that might affect satisfaction with student body diversity, such as a student’s pre-college neighborhood composition or attitudes toward other diversity issues.
An additional consideration is the possible variance in student interpretations of the dependent variable. Some students may rate themselves as satisfied with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty because the campus is exceptionally diverse, while some other students may be satisfied because their campus is relatively homogeneous in composition. I do not have a way of solving this dilemma with the current data, so I assumed that, in the context of TWIs, satisfaction indicated that students saw their campuses as adequately diverse, while dissatisfaction meant they perceived their campus as insufficiently diverse.

However, numerous complexities lie behind the concept of diversity in the student body and faculty. This study examines how DDS varies in relation to one context of structural diversity: the heterogeneity of the student body, examined in the multivariate analysis. Baez (2004) critiques quantitative research on diversity for easily falling into reductionism or essentialism in its claims about large groups of individuals. It is tempting to use the scientific authority of numbers to come up with an easy definition of what constitutes “good” or desirable diversity. Even though this article reports a quantitative analysis of student assessments of student body and faculty diversity, the intent is not to advocate for a particular numerical level as assuring adequate diversity. Furthermore, definitions of diversity can vary in different contexts. Some HBCUs may score low on the heterogeneity index being used in this study to examine TWIs, but such institutions attract an array of students ranging from African immigrants to students who can trace their lineage back to slavery. Although heterogeneity is a particularly relevant construct to study in TWIs, which have historically lacked it, the phenomena of diversity are inherently multifaceted and complex. There is no one-size-fits-all model.

Thus, quantitative analysis is limited in its ability to capture the complexity and nuances behind attitudes and experiences. For instance, this analysis uses variables measuring the frequency of cross-racial interactions but it does not measure the quality of such interactions. While quantitative diversity research is beginning to tap into the quality of diversity-related experiences for students (Hurtado, Han, Sáenz, Espinosa, Cabrera, & Cerna, 2007; Tanaka, 2002), qualitative research is better suited to capture the depth of lived experiences and meaning-making processes.

Finally, because these data were collected in the 1990s, they may not adequately reflect how current college students perceive the diversity of the student body and faculty at their institutions. However, while many things have changed on college campuses in the last decade in regard to diversity, many have not. Affirmative action is still being challenged in the courts and in state elections, and Black, Latino/a, Native American, Southeast Asian American, and Pacific Islander students remain disturbingly underrep-
resented in higher education. While the professoriate has diversified over the past decade, much progress is still needed in terms of recruiting and retaining faculty of color (Gose, 2007). Thus, this study has the possibility of providing important insights to help researchers, policymakers, and campus leaders better understand the complexities of how different groups of students perceive demographic diversity at TWIs.

**Findings**

Tables 2 and 3 show the distribution of the two variables that make up the composite dependent variable DDS. Table 2 displays the differences in the distribution of different racial/ethnic groups by level of satisfaction with student body diversity at TWIs.

Black students were the most likely to be dissatisfied (51.5%) and least likely to be neutral in their satisfaction with diversity. White and Asian American students were least likely to be dissatisfied; White students were also most likely to be neutral on the issue.

Table 3 shows the distribution of different racial/ethnic groups by level of satisfaction with faculty diversity at TWIs.

For all groups, students were more likely to be either satisfied or very satisfied with student body diversity than faculty diversity. Black students were 13.5 percentage points more likely to be dissatisfied with faculty diversity than student body diversity. As in the case of student body diversity, Black students were least likely to mark “neutral” when asked their level of satisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the faculty. With the exception of Black students, all groups were more likely to mark “neutral” in their assessment of faculty diversity versus student body diversity.

**Regression Analyses**

Table 4 displays changes in $R^2$ with the addition of each block of variables. The background characteristics block made the smallest contribution to the variance across groups and was not significant for Black and Latino/a students. This finding suggests that student experiences during college and encounters with the college environment have a greater impact on shaping perceptions of student body diversity than students’ previous experiences or backgrounds. Thus, this finding is consistent with previous research on satisfaction measures in which pre-college characteristics played a small role (Astin, 1993).

The greatest changes in explained variance occurred with the addition of the fourth block, made up of student perceptions and attitudes, and the second block, which contained variables pertaining to structural diversity.
**Table 2**

**Satisfaction with Racial Diversity of Student Body by Student’s Race/Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Indian</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3**

**Satisfaction with Racial Diversity of Faculty by Student’s Race/Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Indian</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and institutional characteristics. The change in the $R^2$ coefficient with the addition of these two blocks was larger for students of color than for White students.

Table 5 exhibits the predictive power of the variables after all four blocks were entered into the regression equation. As noted, the institutional variables of the second block are marked as significant only if they have a p-value of .01 or lower, while I used $p < .05$ or lower for individual level variables. Both standardized (beta, B) and unstandardized (b) regression weights for all four population groups are shown. Also, t-tests between samples were conducted, and significant differences between b coefficients at the p-level of .05 or lower are shown in the table.

**Background Characteristics**

Only one pre-college characteristic was significant for any racial/ethnic group. Identifying racial discrimination as “no longer a major problem” was a positive predictor of DDS for Latino/a students. The lack of significant pre-college attributes reflects previous research that found pre-college attributes play only a minor role in shaping satisfaction (Astin, 1993), but this finding may also stem from the limitations of the dataset, which had few pre-college measures addressing diversity-related experiences (Sáenz, 2006). Examining step-by-step beta changes shows that first-year White
### Table 5

**Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Significant Predictors of Satisfaction with DDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White n=1,882</td>
<td>Black n=465</td>
<td>Latino/a n=462</td>
<td>Asian n=767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>-.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>.059(D)</td>
<td>-.018(C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental income</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.053</td>
<td>-.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: female</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td>-.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.064</td>
<td>-.193</td>
<td>-.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, racial discrimination not a problem</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.096*</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.235(D)</td>
<td>.010(C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, commitment to promoting racial understanding</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>-.134</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>-.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, political orientation: liberal</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>-.080</td>
<td>-.048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Block 1. Background Characteristics**

**Block 2. Structural Diversity/Institutional Characteristics**

| Diversity index                                   | .212***   | .208***   | .282***   | .287***   |
|                                                    | .020      | .026      | .031      | .019      |
| Institutional control: private                     | -.065**   | -.153**   | -.017     | .033      |
|                                                    | -.157(B,D)| -.645(A,D)| -.104     | .192(A,B) |
| Percent women faculty                              | .110***   | -.027     | .100      | .107**    |
|                                                    | .009      | -.004     | .014      | .008      |
| Student-faculty ratio: larger                      | -.003     | -.002     | .085      | .072      |
|                                                    | -.001(D)  | -.001     | .025      | .025(A)   |
| Selectivity: higher selectivity                    | -.088**   | -.064     | .042      | .061      |
|                                                    | -.001(D)  | -.001(D)  | .001      | .001(A,B) |
| Size of city: smaller                              | -.035     | .003      | -.130**   | -.143***  |
|                                                    | -.015(C,D)| .003(C,D) | -.135(A,B)| -.089(A,B)|
| Region: West                                       | -.151***  | -.065     | -.180**   | -.122**   |
|                                                    | -.408     | -.439     | -.645(D)  | -.201(C)  |
### Regression Weights—Standardized Beta-weights, Unstandardized Beta-weights, (t tests, unstandardized by weights)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region: Midwest</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region: South</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>-.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3. Diversity Experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-racial interaction</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-.073</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>-.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended racial/cultural workshop</td>
<td>-.075**</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>-.107*</td>
<td>-.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took ethnic studies</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>-.046</td>
<td>-.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommate of different race</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.095**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in racial/ethnic student organization</td>
<td>-.074**</td>
<td>-.100*</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>-.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 4. Perceptions and Attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, commitment to promoting racial understanding</td>
<td>-.107***</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>-.095*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, support for affirmative action</td>
<td>-.140</td>
<td>-.070</td>
<td>-.112</td>
<td>-.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, growth in knowledge/acceptance of other races/cultures</td>
<td>-.095***</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>-.130**</td>
<td>-.125***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, political orientation: liberal</td>
<td>-.099</td>
<td>-.111</td>
<td>-.203</td>
<td>-.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-rated critical thinking ability</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998, racial discrimination not a problem</td>
<td>.141***</td>
<td>.104*</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with community and peer interactions</td>
<td>.168***</td>
<td>.355***</td>
<td>.259***</td>
<td>.323***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final R²</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td>.328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Results of t tests shown by letters in parenthesis, e.g., (A) indicates an effect that differs significantly from the unstandardized beta-weight for group A (White students)

*p < .01, **p < .005, ***p < .001
students who marked that they had a commitment to promoting racial understanding and also that they saw racial discrimination as “no longer a major problem” was significant in regression equation until the equivalent post-test variables entered the equation. Thus, it appears that student attitudes on these issues as fourth-year college students have a stronger impact on student satisfaction with diversity of the student body than attitudes held at the beginning of college.

**Structural Diversity/Institutional Characteristics**

The strongest predictor of DDS for White and Latino/a students was the Diversity Index; it was also the second strongest predictor for Black and Asian American students. When variables were force-entered into the equation one at a time, the standardized beta coefficient for this variable rose steadily after background characteristic variables were controlled. This change suggests that, regardless of a student’s background and prior attitudes, the heterogeneity of an institution’s enrollment influences student satisfaction with student/faculty diversity. In another model that tested the percentage of students of color instead of the Diversity Index, the percentage of students of color was similarly a strong positive predictor of satisfaction with student body diversity for all racial/ethnic groups.

Only one regional variable was significant: the West Coast variable for White, Latino/a, and Asian American students. Examining step-by-step changes in beta coefficients showed an interesting effect on this variable. For White students, the beta coefficient for being on the West Coast was slightly negative at around -.048 until the Diversity Index entered the equation, after which the West Coast coefficient jumped to -.128. Similarly for Latino/a students, the West Coast beta coefficient was slightly negative and non-significant until the Diversity Index was controlled for; then the coefficient jumped to -.240 (p < .001). For all groups, the West Coast beta coefficient increased substantially in magnitude after the Diversity Index was controlled in the equation. Although none of the other regional variables was significant, t-tests between unstandardized beta coefficients show that attending college in the South had a significantly different effect for Latino/a students in comparison to Black and Asian American students, with DDS being positively related to being in the South for Latino/a students but negatively related for Black and Asian American students.

White and Asian American students who attended institutions with higher percentages of women faculty had greater DDS. Asian American and Latino/a students who attended college in smaller cities had less DDS. Interestingly, attending a more selective institution was a significantly negative predictor of satisfaction for White students. White and Black students were less likely to be satisfied at private institutions.
Diversity Experiences

Actual engagement in cross-racial interaction activities was non-significant for all groups. For White students, engaging in cross-racial interaction was significant in the model until the Diversity Index entered the equation; the index measures the probability that two randomly chosen students are of different races, entered the equation. Although the cross-racial interaction and Diversity Index variables are not highly correlated for students of color ($r_W = -.085$, $r_L = .046$, $r_A = -.051$), the stronger relationship for White students ($r_W = .278$, $p < .001$) suggests that opportunities to engage in cross-racial interaction and actual cross-racial interaction are more closely related constructs for these students. For instance, interacting frequently across race may not be a choice for many minority students at TWIs, versus White students, whose likelihood of interacting across race may be more contingent on the campus’s racial composition (Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004).

White and Latino/a students who attended a racial or cultural workshop had significantly lower levels of DDS, as did White and Black students who participated in a racial/ethnic student organization.

Perceptions and Attitudes

White and Asian American college seniors who self-reported a stronger commitment to promoting racial understanding had lower levels of DDS, while White and Black students who believed that racial discrimination is no longer a problem report significantly higher DDS. Perhaps students who want to promote racial understanding feel that campuses need to be more diverse or have more interaction between the races, while those who feel that racial discrimination is not a problem think that campuses are sufficiently diverse racially.

White, Latino/a, and Asian American students who reported support for affirmative action policies as college seniors were less likely to be satisfied with student body and faculty diversity. Notably, there is less variance among Black student respondents on the item, consistent with Sax and Arredondo (1999), who found that Black students were much more likely to oppose abolishing affirmative action than other groups. Also, White, Latino/a, and Asian American students who reported that they had grown in knowledge and acceptance of other races and cultures during college were significantly more likely to report satisfaction with their student body’s diversity. Lastly, students from all racial/ethnic groups who reported higher satisfaction with a sense of campus community, interactions with other students, and their overall college experiences were significantly more likely to score higher on DDS. This composite variable was the strongest significant predictor for Black and Asian American students and was also highly significant for White and Latino/a students.
The primary finding of this study—that satisfaction with community, peers, and college itself and the racial heterogeneity of the student body were the two strongest predictors of DDS for students of all races—points to the need to foster the multiple components that influence the campus climate for diversity. This study not only asked “Who is satisfied with student body diversity and why” but also asked “What does it mean to be satisfied?” The wording of the variables that made up the dependent variable—which asked students to rate their satisfaction with the “racial/ethnic diversity” of the student body and faculty—would suggest that such satisfaction is primarily caused by the campus’s demographic diversity. However, the findings of this analysis show that racial heterogeneity is not only a strong positive predictor of DDS but also that satisfaction is influenced by institutional context, attitudes on issues like affirmative action, and satisfaction with the sense of community on campus.

Several findings merit further discussion. Asian American and Latino/a students attending colleges in smaller cities or towns were less likely to be satisfied with student body and faculty diversity. Asian American and Latino populations tend to be highly concentrated in metropolitan centers (Asian Pacific American Legal Center, 2006; Davis, 2000). Thus, attending college in a smaller city or rural area that lacks a local ethnic community and the resources they can provide may result in decreased satisfaction among Asian American and Latino/a students with student body diversity. Attending college in a smaller city or rural area that lacks a local ethnic community and the resources that they can provide may lead some students to be less satisfied with campus diversity. Perhaps campuses in locations without such communities should make a special effort to provide opportunities for students to explore different cultures. Institutions in places with high concentrations of racial/ethnic minorities should also make an effort to create university-community partnerships that will give all students an opportunity for off-campus involvement.

Also, attending a private institution was a negative predictor of DDS for White and Black students. In the case of Black students, perhaps the generally larger size of public institutions fosters more niche communities. For example, even if a school has a small percentage of Black students, the absolute number of Black students may be larger than at a small college with a higher percentage of Black students.

In the area of college experiences, White and Latino/a students engaging in racial/cultural awareness workshops, as well as White and Black students participating in racial/ethnic student organizations were less likely to be satisfied with student body and faculty diversity, but such dissatisfaction may not necessarily be a bad thing for some students to experience. Perhaps students
who frequent these activities are more critical of the composition of the university, developing an awareness of how certain groups are underrepresented in higher education or on their specific campus. If anything, dissatisfaction can represent a critique of the inaccessibility of higher education to many potential students. Participation in activities like workshops or racial/ethnic student organizations may lead students to critique the university rather than wholeheartedly embrace it, but such voices also serve as a barometer of the more nuanced components of the campus racial climate.

Having a roommate of a different race was a significant positive predictor of satisfaction with student body diversity for Asian American students. Interestingly, another study found that students who lived with a roommate of another race reported lowered levels on various measures of prejudice with the exception of those who had Asian Americans roommates; in that case, they tended to score higher on certain prejudice indicators, particularly toward Latinos and Blacks (Van Laar, Levin, Sinclair, & Sidanius, 2005). However, Asian American students living with a roommate of another race reported lower rates of prejudice indicators. This area needs more research; however, it appears that some distinctive phenomenon is at work in the residential experiences of Asian American students and race-related outcomes.

A likely explanation for why students who support affirmative action are less likely to be satisfied with campus diversity is that they feel that the current level of student diversity is insufficient; thus, they see a need to be able to take race into account in admissions policies. Notably, students across races located on the West Coast were less satisfied with diversity on campus once the racial composition of the student body was controlled for. Two key examinations of college students and cross-racial interaction on highly diverse West Coast institutions (Duster, 1991; Antonio, 2001) highlight student perceptions of racial self-segregation and balkanization on campus, a possible source of discontent for students. However, the data in this paper were collected in 1994 and 1998 during the controversial passage of Proposition 209 in California 1996 and Proposition 200 in Washington. The lower rate of satisfaction could result from the drastic drop in the number of underrepresented minorities in the University of California system after Proposition 209 (Solórzano, Allen, & Carroll, 2002). Thus, it would be interesting to analyze data from different time points to see if and how the broader political climate shapes students’ attitudes toward the diversity of the student body, considering the broader role of the socio-political context in shaping student attitudes (Dey, 1997).
CONCLUSION

Overall, this study affirms past work that points to the different rates of satisfaction that students of different racial/ethnic groups from different institutional contexts have with student body and faculty diversity. It also charts new territory by investigating which student attributes, institutional characteristics, and college experiences predict satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty. Although it may not be surprising that institutional heterogeneity was the strongest predictor of satisfaction for White and Latino/a students and the second strongest predictor for Blacks and Asian Americans, this finding refutes arguments that a more racially diverse student body is detrimental to student satisfaction as argued by Rothman, Lipset, and Nevitte (2003). They suggested that a negative byproduct of diversity is a greater likelihood of encountering racial discrimination, an unsurprising pattern considering that an increase of students of color could lead to a rise in the number of students who would potentially experience discrimination and conflict.

However, the findings support the hypothesis that a racially diverse student body is an essential component of student satisfaction with student body and faculty diversity at TWIs. Ending affirmative action and outreach programs to underrepresented minority students would likely lead to a decrease in the racial heterogeneity of campuses, as occurred in the University of California (UC) system after Proposition 209 (Solorzano, Allen, & Carroll, 2002). Ward Connerly, former UC regent and opponent of affirmative action, has been quoted as saying that he would be “quite comfortable with only white and Asian students at UC” (qtd. in Rockwell, 1997), but it appears that students would be less satisfied with student and faculty diversity were such a situation develop. Not only is a more racially heterogeneous student body linked to positive outcomes for all students (Milem, 2003), but students are more likely to be satisfied with the diversity of the student body in such environments. To maximize the benefits of diversity, institutions should understand that the composition of the student body not only affects student perceptions of campus diversity but that these same perceptions and attitudes also affect the very effectiveness of the campus racial climate (Hurtado, Milem, et al., 1998).

Structural diversity is a necessary, but insufficient condition for a healthy campus racial climate. As numerous sources document (Duster, 1991; Hurtado, Milem, et al., 1998), universities must critically examine how diversity is at work in the classroom, co-curricular spaces, and institutional policies and practices. Racial conflict needs to be acknowledged and addressed in meaningful and honest ways as universities seek to create more inclusive environments for all. The strong relationship between student satisfaction with community and peers and DDS points to how student perceptions
of campus demography are intertwined with their greater experience with campus community. This finding reflects previous research pointing to the specific importance of peer support and a sense of inclusion for underrepresented minority students in particular (Hurtado, Han, et al., 2007; Loo & Rolison, 1986).

One finding that merits exceptional attention and further research is the low rate of satisfaction with the diversity of the student body for Black students, with 58.0% overall indicating the lowest level of DDS (Table 2). Supporters of affirmative action point to the need for a minimum “critical mass” of students of color to provide support networks for students of color and avoid tokenism (Allen & Solórzano, 2001). For Black students, satisfaction with campus diversity is a positive predictor of overall satisfaction with college (Einarson & Matier, 2005). It is evident that demography matters in fostering an environment where Black students, like all students, will express satisfaction with campus diversity. However, while affirmative action and increased recruitment efforts by campuses have resulted in an increase of Black students enrolled at TWIs, it is essential for higher education to work toward retaining and nurturing underrepresented student populations.

A healthy campus racial climate is not limited to having a high number of students of color. A healthy campus also fosters healthy intergroup relations and support services for all students (Hurtado, Milem, et al., 1998). For students of color, such support can include fostering ethnic-specific peer communities simultaneously with numerous opportunities for healthy cross-racial interaction (Duster, 1991).

It may also be important to further probe the experiences of Black students at private TWIs since the multivariate analysis indicates that they tend to be less satisfied with student body and faculty diversity (Table 5). Liberal arts institutions may be particularly adept at promoting diversity (Umbach & Kuh, 2006), but little is known about the experiences of Black students at such institutions. Public institutions may be large enough that students of color can establish niche communities even if the campus as a whole is not very heterogeneous. Private institutions tend to be smaller, so this option may be less available to Black students at these schools. Such campuses should be particularly conscious of how they work to promote a positive campus racial climate for all students.

The outcomes of this study confirm previous work on the multiple components of the campus racial climate (Hurtado, Milem, et al., 1998). Satisfaction with the ethnic diversity of the student body and faculty, a psychological dimension of climate, was predicted by compositional diversity (Diversity Index), historical components (institutional characteristics), behavioral diversity (participation in racial/ethnic student organizations and attending a racial/cultural awareness workshop), and other student attitudes
about diversity, reflecting the multifaceted nature of campus racial climate. Future research should investigate different variables that may contribute to satisfaction with student body and faculty diversity and investigate the dynamics of student satisfaction with diversity in minority-serving institutions and community colleges. We also need to know more about how satisfied students are with other components of the campus racial climate, such as intergroup relations and institutional support for diversity. This study suggests that satisfaction with student body and faculty diversity is a complicated phenomenon, incorporating, but not limited to, the campus’s structural diversity. To truly capture its complexity, researchers need a better understanding of how different populations of students perceive and experience the campus racial climate.

**APPENDIX A**

**VARIABLE DEFINITIONS AND CODING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th><strong>Demographic Diversity Satisfaction (DDS)</strong></th>
<th>Eight-point scale: 2= “Very dissatisfied with both to 8= “Very satisfied with both” (see Appendix B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 1: Background characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education</td>
<td>Eight-point scale: 1= “mother has less than grammar school” to 8 “mother has graduate degrees”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental income</td>
<td>Fourteen-point scale: 1= “less than 6,000” to 14 “200,000 or more”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1= “male,” 2= “female”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, “Racial discrimination is not a problem”</td>
<td>Four-point scale: 1= “disagree strongly” to 4= “agree strongly”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, “Goals and Values: Promoting racial understanding”</td>
<td>Four-point scale: 1= “not important” to 4= “essential”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994, Political orientation</td>
<td>Five-point scale: 1= “far right” to 5 “far left”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 2: Structural Diversity/Institutional Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Diversity Index | Shows probability that two randomly selected students will be of different races

\[
\%({\text{DIFFERENT}}) = 1 - \%({\text{SAME RACIAL GROUP}}) = \%({\text{White}})^2 + \%({\text{Asian}})^2 + \%({\text{Latino/a}})^2 + \%({\text{Black}})^2 + \%({\text{American Indian}})^2
\] |
Percent women faculty
Student-faculty ratio
Institutional control
Selectivity
Size of city
Region: West Coast
Region: Midwest
Region: South
Region: East Coast

**Block 3: Diversity Experiences**

Cross-racial interaction
Attended a racial/cultural workshop
Took an ethnic studies course
Had roommate of different race/ethnicity

**Block 4: Perceptions and Attitudes**

1998, “Goals and Values: Promoting racial understanding”
1998, Race should be a criteria in admissions
1998, “Racial discrimination no longer a problem”
1998, Political orientation

Know Accept scale
Satisfaction with college, community, and peer interactions
APPENDIX B
ITEMS CONSTITUTING FACTOR SCALES

Demographic Diversity Satisfaction, Cronbach’s alpha=.839
How satisfied are you with the racial/ethnic diversity of the faculty
How satisfied are you with the racial/ethnic diversity of the student body
Cross-racial interaction, Cronbach’s alpha=.720
How often you studied with different racial/ethnic group
How often you dined with different racial/ethnic group
How often you dated with different racial/ethnic group
How often you interacted with different racial/ethnic group
How often you socialized with different ethnic group
Know accept, Cronbach’s alpha=.795
Changes in self-rating: knowledge of different races/cultures
Changes in self-rating: acceptance of different races/cultures
Satisfaction with community and peer interactions
Cronbach’s alpha=.740
Satisfaction with sense of campus community
Satisfaction with peer interactions
Satisfaction with overall college experience

2= “very dissatisfied with both” to 8 “very satisfied with both”
1=“dissatisfied” to 4=“very satisfied”
5=“never” to 15=“most frequently”
1=“not at all” to 3=“frequently”
2=“most weak” to 10=“strongest”
1=“much weaker” to 5=“much stronger”
3=“dissatisfied with all” to 12 “very satisfied with all”
1=“dissatisfied” to 4=”very satisfied”
REFERENCES


