Hispanic Women in the Military: Rank, Discrimination, and Equal Opportunity Climate

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Dr. Richard Oliver Hope Human Relations Research Center
Directed by Dr. Daniel P. McDonald, Executive Director
366 Tuskegee Airmen Drive Patrick AFB, FL 32925
321-494-2747

Prepared by
Kizzy M. Parks, Ph.D

DEOMI PRESS

Hispanic Women in the Military: Rank, Discrimination, and Equal Opportunity Climate

Kizzy M. Parks, Ph.D.

Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute

(DEOMI)

APA Work, Stress, and Health Conference, 2008, Washington, D.C.

Introduction

- As of September 2007:
  - 1.4 Million active duty members
  - **Over 200,000 are Women**

<u>11% are Hispanic</u>

  - Year 2050 minorities: ~50 % of U.S. population

Background

- Equal opportunity climate (EOC) stresses inclusion, positive human relationships, and the opportunity for all to have a voice

Background

- 1993 Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Survey (NEOSH)
  - Hispanic women held low perceptions of EOC (Moore & Webb, 1998; Rosenfeld, Newell, Le, 1998)

Background

- Army women held lower perceptions of EOC than men, but…
  - **Women officers = ↑ EOC than enlisted women (Moore, 2001).**

Hypothesis

(1) Female officers will report a more positive EO climate than enlisted women.

Hypothesis

(2) Female Hispanic officers who experienced discrimination (racial, sexual, sexual harassment, age, disability, religion, national origin, or color) in the past twelve months will possess higher levels of EOC than Hispanic enlisted women who experienced discrimination.

Method

- Subjects: 55,040 active duty women
- Collected between 2005 and 2007

Measure

- DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) www.deomi.org
  - 63 items
    - 5 point Likert-Scale (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree
    - Yes/No for experiencing discrimination
  - 14 Scales measureing Equal Opportunity and Organizational Effectiveness

Means

Group	Mean	Standard Dev
Hispanics	3.5	1.06
Blacks	3.3	1.07
Whites	3.7	1.06
Asians	3.5	1.03
Amer. Indians	3.3	1.10
Enlisted	3.4	1.05
Officers	**4.0**	**0.96**

Hypotheses

- H (1) supported (F= 974.8, p=.00)
  - Officers held more favorable perceptions of EOC.
- H (2) Not supported
  - Experience of sexual harassment didn't emerge as a moderator.

Exploratory Analysis

- Hispanic officers had a higher perception of EOC than enlisted women ($F=96.887$, $p=.01$).
- Experiences of Discrimination
  - **32% enlisted**
  - **27% officers**
    - Reported that they had experienced an incident of discrimination (racial, sexual, sexual harassment, age, disability, religion, national origin, or color) in the past 12 months.

Discussion

- Need to explore methods to improve the perceptions of EOC for Hispanic enlisted women.
- Continued need to combat discrimination.

Moving Forward..

- Working to cultivate a more inclusive environment.
- Currently revising Equal Opportunity Advisors and Officers curriculum

Questions

Kizzy.parks@patrick.af.mil