Is There Overrepresentation of Students of Color in Christian Higher Education Advertising and Do Students Care?

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ABSTRACT: **In an effort to portray a welcoming environment for students of color, some Christian colleges and universities may be tempted to overrepresent their racial diversity in their promotional materials. Through a two-phase empirical analysis, this study explored three factors that are central to this potential ethical issue: the prevalence of racial overrepresentation at Christian colleges, the relative attraction of promotional materials that depict higher versus lower percentages of students of color, and prospective college students' evaluation of racial overrepresentation. Although relatively few Christian schools were found to overrepresent their student population's actual racial diversity, some did so substantially, and others even underrepresented their diversity. Furthermore, while prospective college students expressed only moderate concern about racial overrepresentation, their attraction to various brochures differed along racial lines. Students of color exhibited little variation in their preferences, but Caucasian students tended to favor brochures that depicted medium to low levels of racial diversity. These findings present unique ethical considerations for institutions of Christian higher education, which often emphasize integrity, reconciliation, and concern for those who are disadvantaged.**

INTRODUCTION

Christian colleges and universities, like many institutions in higher education, would like to see their student populations become more racially diverse (Reisberg, 1999; Schmidt, 2005). Besides fostering a richer learning environment, such diversity helps college and university campuses look more like the workplaces that students enter after graduating ("An Evidentiary Framework," 1996; Misra & McMahon, 2006; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000). Racial diversity is often difficult to attain, however, particularly for schools that are geographically separated from large minority populations and for schools that have long histories of attracting primarily Caucasian students (Reisberg, 1999; Schmidt, 2005). Many colleges and universities, therefore, implement special approaches for supporting recruitment of students of color (i.e., students who are *not* non-Hispanic white), such as drafting philosophy statements that support cultural diversity and utilizing more faculty, administrators, and trustees of color (Dumas-Hines, Cochran, & Williams, 2001; Opp, 2001).

In an effort to present their campuses as welcoming places for minority students, colleges also may choose to create promotional materials (e.g., brochures, websites, and magazine ads) that depict relatively high proportions of students of color on their campuses (Butterman, 2007). Such tactics can be effective as individuals are often drawn to ads that contain people who are like them (Hoy & Wong, 2000; Treise & Wagner, 1999). What happens, however, if the proportion of students depicted in a college promotional piece is significantly higher than the school's actual percentage of students of color? Imagine, for instance, that a student of color makes an enrollment decision that is influenced by such an advertisement. After

moving to campus, she finds the college to be much less diverse than she expected. Would the student feel that the advertisement was misleading?

In other words, does overrepresentation of racial diversity in Christian colleges' promotional materials represent deceptive communication? Likewise, do such practices propagate discriminatory attitudes toward people groups that have been disadvantaged historically, thereby hindering racial reconciliation? The preceding questions certainly should be of concern to individuals in Christian higher education, and they should be of special interest to business faculty whose own industry may be failing to model the integrity those faculty members strive to instill in their students.

The preceding questions also have represented ethical issues for higher education in general. Some, for instance, doubt whether minority candidates get "an accurate feel for the reality of the campus" when recruitment programs specifically targeting these students suggest a larger percentage of students of color than the college actually has (Greene & Greene, 2002, p. 19). In a widely publicized national case, the University of Wisconsin drew great criticism when one of its graphic artists digitally added the face of an African American student into a photograph within a prominent university publication in order to depict greater diversity ("Doctored Photo," 2000). Similarly, after his school was rebuffed for overrepresenting its racial diversity, the president of Drake University resolved to personally approve each ad (Butterman, 2007).

In addition to discussing the potential ethical issues identified above, this paper attempts to clarify several underlying assumptions, which are key to analyzing the issues. More specifically, this paper presents the results of a twofold empirical study, which investigated three foundational questions:

1) How prevalent is overrepresentation of racial diversity among Christian colleges and universities?
2) Are prospective college students more attracted to promotional materials that depict higher percentages of students of color?
3) How do prospective college students judge overrepresentation of diversity in college advertising?

Before presenting the two empirical analyses and discussing their results, this paper will explore the research's broader context through a review of the literature. Much has been written about racial diversity in higher education, and considerable attention has been paid to recruiting students of color. Apparently no study, however, has sought to empirically investigate the aforementioned issues

involving the percentages of students of color depicted in collegiate advertising in general, or in Christian college advertising specifically.

RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS OF COLOR

Enrollment of students who are racial minorities is an important topic on college and university campuses largely because of the perceived benefits of diversity, as mentioned above. This recruitment takes on even greater urgency, however, given that students of color are underrepresented in much of higher education. For instance, as shown in Table 1, on six of America's fifteen largest public university campuses, racial minorities represent 20 percent or less of the student population. Furthermore, nine of the schools have less than 30 percent students of color. As the first part of the current study's empirical research will show, this underrepresentation is even more pronounced for many smaller, private institutions, including Christian colleges (College Board, 2009).

The desire to enroll higher numbers of students of color has led many colleges and universities to expand their efforts aimed at attracting and retaining racial minorities. In terms of the schools' marketing mixes (product, place, price, and promotion), a great number of the approaches have involved the first three variables. For instance, some institutions have sought to enhance their "product" by drafting philosophy statements that support cultural diversity (Dumas et al., 2001); hiring chief student affairs officers of color; involving minority high schools in curriculum design and dual enrollment programs; utilizing more faculty, administrators, and trustees of color (Opp, 2001); opening ethnic cultural centres; inviting more minority speakers to campus; including courses and majors that are attractive to students of color (Reisberg, 1999); and implementing programs aimed at increasing retention of minority students (Schmidt, 2005). Colleges and universities have improved their "place" factors by maintaining an urban presence as well as by transporting prospective minority students to campus (Opp, 2001; Reisberg 1999; Schmidt, 2005). Likewise, schools have enhanced their "price" offerings by providing more scholarships for minority students and by giving them special guidance in securing financial aid (Schmidt, 2005).

Approaching the focus of the current study, colleges and universities also have sought to improve the ways in which they promote themselves to students of color. In terms of in-person communication, some schools have focused their recruiting efforts on larger cities and

Table 1: Percentage of First-Year Students by Race for 15 of America's Largest Public Campuses[1]

University	Campus Location	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black/Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White/ Non-Hispanic	Non-Resident Alien	Race/ Ethnicity Unreported	Total Students of Color[2]
Ohio State	Columbus	<0.01	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.8	0.04	0.00	0.15
Arizona State	Tempe	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.18	0.62	0.02	0.05	0.31
Florida	Gainesville	0.01	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.60	0.01	0.03	0.36
Minnesota	Minneapolis/St. Paul	0.01	0.12	0.05	0.02	0.73	0.05	0.01	0.20
Central Florida	Orlando	<0.01	0.06	0.10	0.15	0.67	0.01	0.01	0.31
Texas	Austin	<0.01	0.19	0.06	0.20	0.52	0.03	0.01	0.45
Texas A & M	College Station	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.16	0.73	0.01	<0.01	0.26
Michigan State	East Lansing	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.74	0.08	0.02	0.17
South Florida	Tampa	<0.01	0.07	0.10	0.16	0.64	0.01	0.02	0.33
Penn State	University Park	<0.01	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.81	0.06	0.00	0.14
Washington	Seattle	0.01	0.28	0.03	0.06	0.51	0.06	0.04	0.38
Wisconsin	Madison	0.01	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.78	0.06	0.03	0.14
Illinois	Urbana-Champaign	<0.01	0.14	0.07	0.07	0.62	0.00	0.03	0.28
Michigan	Ann Arbor	0.01	0.12	0.06	0.03	0.66	0.04	0.08	0.22
Purdue	West Lafayette	0.01	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.80	0.07	0.00	0.13

[1] Statistics retrieved 8-4-09 from http://www.collegeboard.com/

[2] Sum of first four columns

urban high schools and have employed minority recruiters and ambassadors (Reisberg, 1999; Schmidt, 2005). Institutions of higher education also have promoted themselves to this target market through mass media such as the Internet, brochures, and television (Harris & Bourke, 2008; Willis & Kennedy, 2004). Although some have questioned the persuasiveness of such advertising, citing its potential to undermine the independence of candidates' decision making (Gibbs, 2007), others have argued that higher education ads help prospective students understand schools' relative advantages, which may lead to more informed college selections (Lauer, 2007).

Notwithstanding the preceding debate, anecdotal evidence as well as the promotional materials collected for the first phase of the current study suggest that virtually all colleges and universities advertise. Furthermore, since higher education is primarily about educating students, it is natural for students to be included in the promotions. When such advertising employs visual media (e.g., billboards, television, print ads, the Internet), a key decision becomes the representation of minority students. More specifically, colleges must consider how many students of color to include in a given ad relative to the total number of subjects in the piece. For instance, in a study of 30-second television commercials from 43 universities that aired during college football games, Harris & Bourke (2008) found that many of the ads depicted only or almost exclu-

sively white students. This analysis led to the troubling conclusions that "Whiteness is presented as the norm of collegiate experience" (p. 22) and that "token inclusion of people of color in advertisements communicates to prospective students of color that their experiences will be marked by tokenism" (p. 24). In contrast, as described above, others are equally concerned that by including a large percentage of students of color in a given ad, minority candidates will be led to conclude that a college is much more racially diverse than it actually is (Butterman, 2007; Greene & Greene, 2002). The result of such overrepresentation may be unmet expectations and considerable dissatisfaction. Together these two opposing viewpoints create a very real tension that is represented by the dichotomy in Figure 1.

Unfortunately there is no easy resolution to these countervailing pressures, nor does this paper try to identify a point of equilibrium. What the current study does attempt, however, is to illuminate several of the key issues that underlie the right portion of the continuum. The issues, represented by the three questions outlined earlier in this paper, are now treated through a presentation and discussion of the current study's two empirical analyses.

Figure 1: Tension Surrounding Percentage of Students of Color Presented in an Ad

Too few students of color in ad

Tokenism

Students of color feel marginalized and/or used

Too many students of color in ad

Over-representation

Students of color feel misinformed and/or deceived

FIRST EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: TALLY OF CHRISTIAN COLLEGE BROCHURES

In speaking with Christian college students there is often a suggestion that some schools' ads include a higher percentage of minority students than are actually found on their campuses. The first empirical analysis of this study was designed to test the accuracy of this assertion.

Methodology for Christian College Brochure Tally

For an appropriate sample of institutions in Christian higher education, the researchers decided to focus on schools belonging to the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), which is "an international association of intentionally Christian colleges and universities" comprised of 111 North American member institutions as well as 70 affiliates in 24 countries (Council for Christian Colleges & Universities, 2009). Besides representing a readily identifiable and discrete sample, the CCCU seemed to offer a good research fit because its schools tend to be small and predominantly white. This demography would seem to make most of the schools highly motivated to recruit more students of color. In order to maintain a clear focus for the analysis, sampling was limited to the 111 North American schools.

Although colleges and universities increasingly use a wide array of promotional tools to reach their target audiences, printed brochures continue to be an advertising mainstay, as their abundant use suggests. Many prospective students apparently still like to receive hardcopies of brochures that they can peruse at their leisure. Given this phenomenon as well as the methodological benefits of using a static medium, versus websites where pictures may continually change, the researchers determined to use printed

brochures as the focal promotional piece. A team of student research assistants contacted all of the schools in the sample frame and asked them to mail their general recruitment brochure, the one that they send to most prospective students. Sixty-seven of the 111 schools complied, yielding a response rate of 60 percent. Once received, the researchers performed a content analysis of each brochure, which consisted of a tally of all students in the brochure and a count of those who appeared to be students of color. Each brochure was independently checked by two team members. If there was any difference between their counts, the team members would compare their analyses and resolve the discrepancy. As a rule, brochure analyses excluded all non-students (e.g., faculty members) as well as students whose racial identities were impossible to determine or who did not belong to the focal school (e.g., athletic team opponents).

Table 2: CCCU Brochure Frequencies

Brochure % SOC	Schools	
Minus Actual % SOC	Count	%
-10% or less	7	10.4%*
-9.99% to -5%	15	22.4%
-4.99% to 0%	12	17.9%
0% to 4.99%	18	26.9%
5% to 9.99%	7	10.4%
10% or more	8	11.9%**

CCCU = Council of Christian Colleges and Universities
SOC = Students of Color
*Below 10% threshold; underrepresented SOC
**Above 10% threshold; overrepresented SOC

The same research team also secured actual student population figures for each school through CollegeBoard.com. This website, which prospective college students are known to frequent, contains a variety of factual information about virtually every U.S. college and university. For the current study, the researchers recorded each institution's number of first-year students as well as percentages that indicated the class' racial diversity. The use of statistics pertaining to the first-year class was deemed appropriate given that these students would be closest in tenure to the incoming class. For most schools, CollegeBoard.com provided five categories of race/ethnicity percentages: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and White Non-Hispanic. The total percentage of students of color (SOC) for each school's first-year class was calculated by summing the percentages of the first four categories that were reported as one percent or higher. This percentage did not include non-resident aliens or individuals who chose not to report their race/ethnicity.

Results for Actual Brochure Tally

As Table 2 shows, the sample schools were rather evenly divided in terms of underrepresenting or overrepresenting their institution's actual percentage of students of color. While 51 percent of the schools utilized brochures that depicted a lower proportion of minority students than actually attended the schools, 49 percent of the colleges' brochures overrepresented the institution's actual percentage of students of color. Given this paper's focus on overrepresentation, the latter statistic is particularly noteworthy.

An analysis of these results, however, should take into account realistic constraints associated with brochure creation and the relative sensitivity of prospective students' interpretations. For instance, it is probably not realistic to expect designers to always incorporate exactly the same proportion of minority students in their brochures as attend their colleges, which was why the study's statistical analysis allowed a buffer of plus or minus 10 percent in interpreting over- and underrepresentation. Enrollment and racial composition vary from semester to semester, while printed promotional materials are often used for a year or more. Similarly, it seems unlikely that most prospective students would expect a college to have exactly the same percentage of minority students as shown in its brochure. Consequently, some margin of error, or range of acceptable representation, seemed to be in order. Although such a determination is largely a subjective one, this study's researchers felt that a 10 percent range was fitting, given both the dynamics of brochure creation and the likely level of scrutiny of prospective college students.

Using this threshold, then, the data can be reinterpreted to reveal that only eight schools (11.9 percent) overrepresented their minority percentages beyond a reasonable range, meaning the percentage of students of color shown in their brochures minus the percentage in their actual student population equalled 10 percent or more. It can also be noted that nearly the same number of colleges (seven, or 10.4 percent) produced brochures that underrepresented the sizes of their actual student-of-color populations. A relevant related question, then, is how this over- and underrepresentation, beyond a reasonable range, may have occurred. For instance, how likely was it that a 10 percent or greater difference simply happened by chance? Or, might statistical analysis support that the discrepancies could have been intentional?

In seeking to answer these questions, the researchers employed statistical analysis that involved the comparison of population proportions, which is shown in Table 3. For each school with a difference below or above 10 percent, the institution's actual proportion of minority students ($p1$) was compared statistically to the percentage depicted in the school's brochure ($p2$), resulting in a z statistic. More specifically, this approach modelled each proportion as the number of students of color (the successes, x) divided by the total number of minority and non-minority students (the overall sample size, n). As such, the research sought to identify cases in which the .10 or more difference between a school's actual proportion of minority students and its brochure proportion was statistically significant. This design produced the following alternative hypotheses for over- and underrepresentation, respectively:

HA1: p1 – p2 <= -.10   HA2: p1 – p2 >= .10

Of the eight schools whose brochures overrepresented their actual minority proportions, none of the differences were statistically significant (α = .05) using the 10 percent threshold. In other words, there was no statistical evidence to support that anything other than random selection determined their brochure composition. For the seven schools whose brochures underrepresented their actual minority proportions, however, two of the differences were statistically significant (α= .05) at the 10 percent threshold. It was highly likely (95 percent probability), therefore, that these schools did not randomly select the students who appeared in their brochures. In summary, after taking all 67 colleges and universities into account, only two schools could be suspected of intentionally creating brochures that depicted a substantially lower proportion of students

Table 3: Test of Difference in Proportions for Schools with Ten Percent or Greater Discrepancy between Actual Student Diversity and Brochure Diversity

Actual First-Year Students (p_1)			Students in Brochure (p_2)			Test Statistic		H_{O1}: $p_1-p_2 \geq -.10$	H_{O2}: $p_1-p_2 \leq .10$	Signif.
All Students	Students of Color	Proportion p-hat	All Students	Students of Color	Proportion p-hat	z	p_1-p_2	p-value	p-value	α
203	122	0.600	6	5	0.833	-0.849	-0.233	0.198		--
272	14	0.050	27	7	0.259	-1.262	-0.209	0.103		--
191	6	0.030	26	5	0.192	-0.778	-0.162	0.218		--
642	45	0.070	33	7	0.212	-0.585	-0.142	0.279		--
341	31	0.090	26	6	0.231	-0.474	-0.141	0.318		--
313	25	0.080	60	12	0.200	-0.374	-0.120	0.354		--
396	12	0.030	7	1	0.143	-0.095	-0.113	0.462		--
82	11	0.140	32	8	0.250	-0.186	-0.110	0.426		--
455	100	0.220	220	24	0.109	0.374	0.111		0.354	--
533	107	0.200	133	9	0.068	1.188	0.132		0.117	--
184	74	0.400	134	35	0.261	0.782	0.139		0.217	--
205	74	0.360	24	5	0.208	0.589	0.152		0.278	--
562	90	0.160	22	0	0.000	3.888	0.160		0.000	.01
446	152	0.340	28	5	0.179	0.821	0.161		0.206	--
295	91	0.310	35	2	0.057	3.182	0.253		0.001	.01

of color than actually represented in their student bodies. Regardless of intentions, however, the evidence remains that 22 percent of the colleges and universities created brochures with racial compositions that differed markedly (10 percent or more) from those of their institutions. Several of the differences even exceeded 20 percent.

SECOND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: HYPOTHETICAL BROCHURE PREFERENCES

The first empirical analysis investigated the extent to which Christian colleges' printed brochures accurately represented their real racial compositions. This investigation led naturally to a related question: "Does that depicted diversity matter?" In other words, do prospective students prefer colleges that portray higher levels of diversity, and do these candidates care if colleges depict more minority students than they actually have? The second empirical analysis was designed to explore these questions, which should be relevant to all colleges and universities and perhaps should be of special interest to schools in Christian higher education, given their common emphasis of principles such as integrity, social justice, and reconciliation.

Methodology for Hypothetical Brochure Preferences

In order to determine prospective college students'

diversity preferences, it was first necessary to secure a group of willing participants. To do so the researchers chose a racially diverse city, with a population of approximately 49,000, located in the northeastern United States, within a few hours driving distance of several different Christian colleges. The researchers then contacted major high schools within the city, as well as others located in the greater metropolitan area. Most of the schools agreed to support the research and allowed an invitation to participate to be extended to their current seniors, 18 years or older. The end result was that 103 students started the online survey, and 100 completed all of it. The participants came from seven different high schools, representing both inner-city and suburban areas.

Several factors prohibited the calculation of a response rate. First, although a couple of the schools provided the researchers with students' e-mail addresses, most of the schools chose to send the survey invitation themselves, making it difficult for the researchers to know how many invitations were actually sent and received. This process was further complicated by the fact that some of the schools did not have institutional e-mail addresses for their students, so they used students' personal e-mail addresses, if they were available. A couple of the schools did not have access to any e-mail addresses, so they requested students' participation through hard-copy invitations and/or verbal announcements. In addition, the schools often did not

know exactly how many of their students were 18 years old at the time the survey was administered.

Despite these sampling limitations, it seems unlikely that response bias would have affected the study's primary focus. The main reason for this assertion is that before taking the survey, participants were simply told that the research was about college advertising. Only after they completed the survey's first two sections and ranked a series of hypothetical brochures did the students receive indication that the specific focus of the advertising was its racial composition. Consequently, it is improbable that participants took, or did not take, the survey because of their feelings about diversity. Furthermore, the sampling method yielded a group of participants that was well-balanced in terms of race and other demographic factors.

The survey instrument consisted of four main sections. As mentioned above, the first two sections consisted of sets of hypothetical brochures that a team of student research assistants created. Each brochure represented a different college and consisted of a single full-color page comprised almost entirely of pictures of people who appeared to be college students. The researchers selected the photos from a variety of royalty-free online sources, primarily based on each picture's racial composition. This criterion was paramount because each of the four brochures within a set needed to portray a different level of diversity. One brochure had no diversity (i.e., zero students of color), while the other three brochures depicted 20 percent, 40 percent, and 60 percent students of color, randomly ordered in the brochure sets. For both brochure sets, respondents were asked to rate and rank each brochure according to the following instructions:

Imagine that you are looking for a college to attend and that each of the four schools represented below offers a program that matches your educational and extracurricular (non-academic) interests, at an affordable cost. Based on just the brochures below, which colleges are most appealing to you?

As reflected in these instructions and mentioned above, it was critical at this stage of the survey that respondents were not alerted to the study's interest in the advertisements' racial composition. At the same time, it was also important that respondents were not led to make selections based solely on incidental factors. For this reason the researchers took great care to control for other potential influences. For instance, besides pictures, the brochures only contained the college's logos, which came from real schools. The colleges were small and geographically distant ones, however, in

order to ensure that they were unfamiliar to participants and to avoid response bias. For the same reason, the brochures contained no text, and picture content tended to be rather nondescript —students in basic academic and social settings. The researchers wanted to avoid, for example, having a brochure chosen because it described an interesting major or showed a popular sport. The study also controlled for background color preference by giving all of the brochures in the first set a blue background, and all those in the second set a red background. In short, it appeared that the brochures were well-developed for isolating the racial composition factor without drawing explicit attention to it. Examples of two of the brochures used in the study are shown in this paper's appendix.

After the two sections of hypothetical brochures came a series of "related questions." Here the survey instructions gave respondents their first indication of the study's main purpose:

In designing their brochures, colleges and universities often need to determine the proportion of students of color (students who are not Caucasian/white) to include in the brochures' pictures. The following questions ask for your opinion related to a brochure's racial composition.

While the first empirical analysis was designed to determine the extent to which overrepresentation of racial diversity exists, and the first part of the second analysis investigated the influence of racial composition in promotional materials, this part sought to reveal whether prospective college students believed overrepresentation was acceptable. To do so, participants were asked to indicate how strongly they disagreed or agreed with five statements:

1) A college's brochure should show the same percentage of students of color as the school's actual student population.
2) The racial composition of a college brochure is not important.
3) A college brochure should not depict a higher percentage of students of color than the college actually has.
4) If 10 percent of a college's population is students of color, it is okay for the college's brochure to contain 20 percent students of color.
5) The racial composition of students shown in a college's brochure should be the same as the racial composition of the college's actual student population.

The survey's final section presented a series of respondent profile items that consisted mainly of demographic

Table 4:
Independent Sample T-Tests: Students of Color (SOC) vs. Non-Students of Color (NSOC)

Item/Part	SOC (n = 37)		Non-SOC (n = 63)		All (n =100)		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std Err Diff	α
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD						
Please indicate how appealing each college is to you as a prospective student. (1-very unappealing; 9-very appealing)												
a Brochure 1 (20 percent SOC)	6.08	2.28	6.62	1.80	6.42	2.00	-1.31	98	0.195	-0.54	0.41	--
b Brochure 2 (60 percent SOC)	5.78	2.15	4.63	2.08	5.06	2.17	2.63	98	0.010	1.15	0.44	0.01
c Brochure 3 (0 percent SOC)	6.05	2.11	5.67	2.10	5.81	2.10	0.89	98	0.375	0.39	0.44	--
d Brochure 4 (40 percent SOC)	6.19	2.04	5.90	2.12	6.01	2.08	0.66	98	0.512	0.28	0.43	--
Please indicate how appealing each college is to you as a prospective student. (1-very unappealing; 9-very appealing)												
a Brochure 5 (40 percent SOC)	6.16	1.83	4.89	2.29	5.36	2.21	3.05	89	0.003	1.27	0.42	0.01
b Brochure 6 (0 percent SOC)	5.86	1.99	5.86	2.29	5.86	2.17	0.02	98	0.986	0.01	0.45	--
c Brochure 7 (60 percent SOC)	6.19	1.85	5.13	1.91	5.52	1.95	2.71	98	0.008	1.06	0.39	0.01
d Brochure 8 (20 percent SOC)	5.70	2.58	6.46	2.05	6.18	2.28	-1.53	63	0.132	-0.76	0.50	--
Brochure Preferences - Composite Scores (average of same racial compositions from previous two sections)												
0 percent SOC (brochures 3 & 6)	5.96	1.77	5.76	1.64	5.84	1.68	0.57	98	0.573	0.20	0.35	--
20 percent SOC (brochures 1 & 8)	5.89	2.18	6.54	1.60	6.30	1.85	-1.58	59	0.121	-0.65	0.41	--
40 percent SOC (brochures 4 & 5)	6.18	1.50	5.40	1.69	5.69	1.66	2.32	98	0.023	0.78	0.34	0.05
60 percent SOC (brochures 2 & 7)	5.99	1.61	4.88	1.69	5.29	1.74	3.22	98	0.002	1.11	0.34	0.01
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. (1-strongly disagree; 7-strongly agree)												
a A college's brochure should show the same percentage of students of color as the school's actual student population.	5.22	1.53	4.56	1.86	4.80	1.76	1.83	98	0.070	0.66	0.36	--
b The racial composition of a college brochure is not important.[1]	4.11	2.07	3.71	2.09	3.86	2.08	0.91	98	0.363	0.39	0.43	--
c A college brochure should not depict a higher percentage of students of color than the college actually has.	5.14	1.72	4.41	1.96	4.68	1.90	1.86	98	0.065	0.72	0.39	--
d If 10 percent of a college's population is students of color, it is okay for the college's brochure to contain 20 percent student of color.[1]	3.73	1.84	4.05	1.76	3.93	1.78	-0.86	98	0.392	-0.32	0.37	--
e The racial composition of students shown in a college's brochure should be the same as the racial composition of the college's actual student population.	5.41	1.36	4.56	1.77	4.87	1.67	2.52	98	0.013	0.85	0.34	0.05
Beliefs about Racial Composition - Composites (average of five parts of previous item)	4.72	0.99	4.26	1.39	4.43	1.27	1.94	94	0.056	0.46	0.24	--
How likely is it that you will attend a four-year college or university? (1-very unlikely; 7-very likely)	6.49	0.84	6.57	1.34	6.54	1.18	-0.35	98	0.729	-0.09	0.25	--
What is your cumulative or overall grade-point -average (GPA)?	2.94	0.60	3.54	0.46	3.32	0.59	-5.59	98	0.000	-0.60	0.11	0.01

[1] reverse coded

Table 5: Paired Sample T-Tests for Brochure Preference Composites

Sample Group	Brochure Composite 1	Brochure Composite 2	Brochure Composite 1 M	SD	Brochure Composite 2 M	SD	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std Err Diff	α	Diversity Preference
Students of color (n = 37)	0% SOC	20% SOC	5.96	1.77	5.89	2.18	0.19	36	0.852	0.07	0.36	--	none
	0% SOC	40% SOC	5.96	1.77	6.18	1.50	-0.76	36	0.450	-0.22	0.28	--	none
	0% SOC	60% SOC	5.96	1.77	5.99	1.61	-0.08	36	0.934	-0.03	0.33	--	none
	20% SOC	40% SOC	5.89	2.18	6.18	1.50	-0.81	36	0.423	-0.28	0.35	--	none
	20% SOC	60% SOC	5.89	2.18	5.99	1.61	-0.29	36	0.772	-0.09	0.32	--	none
	40% SOC	60% SOC	6.18	1.50	5.99	1.61	0.72	36	0.475	0.19	0.26	--	none
Non-Students of color (n = 63)	0% SOC	20% SOC	5.76	1.64	6.54	1.60	-2.69	62	0.009	-0.78	0.29	0.01	More
	0% SOC	40% SOC	5.76	1.64	5.40	1.69	1.28	62	0.206	0.37	0.29	--	none
	0% SOC	60% SOC	5.76	1.64	4.88	1.69	3.26	62	0.002	0.88	0.27	0.01	Less
	20% SOC	40% SOC	6.54	1.60	5.40	1.69	3.80	62	0.000	1.14	0.30	0.01	Less
	20% SOC	60% SOC	6.54	1.60	4.88	1.69	5.50	62	0.000	1.66	0.30	0.01	Less
	40% SOC	60% SOC	5.40	1.69	4.88	1.69	1.92	62	0.059	0.52	0.27	--	none
All Students (n = 100)	0% SOC	20% SOC	5.84	1.68	6.30	1.85	-2.04	99	0.045	-0.47	0.23	0.05	More
	0% SOC	40% SOC	5.84	1.68	5.69	1.66	0.72	99	0.475	0.15	0.21	--	none
	0% SOC	60% SOC	5.84	1.68	5.29	1.74	2.57	99	0.012	0.55	0.21	0.05	Less
	20% SOC	40% SOC	6.30	1.85	5.69	1.66	2.58	99	0.012	0.62	0.24	0.05	Less
	20% SOC	60% SOC	6.30	1.85	5.29	1.74	4.22	99	0.000	1.01	0.24	0.01	Less
	40% SOC	60% SOC	5.69	1.66	5.29	1.74	2.03	99	0.045	0.40	0.19	0.05	Less

items: gender, age, and race. Participants were also asked to report their cumulative GPAs and to indicate how likely it was that they would attend a four-year college or university. This information was collected in order to verify a representative sample and to see if respondents' answers varied based on the profile variables.

Results for Hypothetical Brochure Preferences

As mentioned above, the survey for the second empirical analysis garnered 100 usable responses. Of these individuals who completed the entire survey, there were 51 women and 49 men. The respondents' racial composition included 63 white/Caucasian students and 37 students of color, representing the following groups: 25 African American or black, six Asian, four Hispanic, two other. Participants' average age was 18.03, and they had a mean GPA of 3.32. The sample also indicated a very high likelihood of attending a four-year college or university (M = 6.54, 7-point scale). In addition to presenting these last two respondent profile statistics, Table 4 provides t-test comparisons of the two sample groups. One notable demographic difference involved average GPA, which was significantly higher (α = 0.01) for non-students of color (M = 3.54) than for students of color (2.94).

Again, for the second phase of empirical analysis, the first main survey section sought to measure respondents'

preferences for eight different hypothetical college brochures that depicted four unique levels of racial diversity: 0 percent, 20 percent, 40 percent, and 60 percent. Table 4 provides some basic descriptive statistics for these eight items for the entire sample (n = 100) as well as for the two sample subgroups: students of color (SOC) and non-students of color (NSOC). This table also presents the results of independent sample t-tests that compared the subgroups' mean responses to the eight brochures. Of the eight ads, three produced statistically significant differences (α = .01): both of the brochures that contained 60 percent diversity and the 40 percent brochure from the second set. It is notable that SOC found these brochures, which contained the highest levels of diversity, to be significantly more appealing than did NSOC.

Although comparing the two subgroups' responses was of interest, the primary focus of this part of the study was to see how respondents would rate and rank different levels of brochure diversity. In order to accomplish these comparisons, "composite" brochure scores were calculated by averaging the mean responses of the two brochures that contained the same racial compositions. For instance, for the entire sample, the 20 percent diversity brochures from the first and second brochure sets had mean responses of 6.42 and 6.18 respectively, which combined produced a composite score of 6.30.

As shown in Table 5, paired comparison t-tests of these brochure preference composites generated several noteworthy results. First, it was surprising to find no statistically significant differences among any of the brochure categories for SOC. This sample group, whose mean responses ranged from just 5.89 to 6.18, appeared to like all of the racial compositions about the same. In contrast, responses for NSOC ranged from 4.88 to 6.54, producing statistically significant differences (α = .01) for four of the six composite comparisons. NSOC expressed a preference for more diversity in only one of the four cases, rating the brochures with 20 percent minority composition as more appealing than those with no students of color. In the three other significant cases, however, NSOC preferred 20 percent diversity over 40 percent and 60 percent diversity, and 0 percent diversity over 60 percent diversity. In short, while SOC appeared to be attracted to colleges irrespective of the level of diversity represented, NSOC seemed most comfortable with a moderate level of diversity (20 percent), and even preferred no diversity at all to very high diversity (60 percent).

Unlike the preceding objectively based sections of the study's empirical analysis, the second part of the second phase was intentionally normative. Here respondents were asked, in several different ways, whether they thought it was acceptable for colleges' and universities' brochures to overrepresent the schools' actual racial compositions. Table 4 presents the results of this analysis, which centered on a comparison of the two sample subgroups' mean responses to the five racial composition items previously described. First, it should be noted that data for the second and fourth items were reverse coded so that a higher score would represent affirmation for accurate racial depiction across all five items. Second, the researchers conducted two forms of reliability analysis on the five racial composition items, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.723 and a Spearman-Brown split-half reliability score of 0.790, which taken together seemed to indicate adequate scale reliability (Garson, 2009).

Overall, respondents failed to express a strong aversion to overrepresentation. For the entire sample, the mean responses to the five items ranged from 3.86 to 4.87. Furthermore, the composite score, or average of the five items, was just 4.43. All of these items were based on seven-point scales for which seven represented a strong preference for compatibility between the racial composition of a college's brochure and that of its actual student population. The only statistically significant difference (α = .05) between the two sample subgroups came for the fifth item, to which SOC (mean = 5.41) agreed significantly more

than did NSOC (mean = 4.56). Again, however, the overall analysis suggested that both groups were only moderately concerned about brochures overrepresenting colleges' and universities' racial compositions.

LIMITATIONS

As described at the onset of this paper, the main purpose of the current study was not to resolve the potential ethical issue of Christian college brochures overrepresenting racial diversity. Instead, the study aimed to investigate several important questions that seem to underlie the issue, for instance: How common is overrepresentation in Christian higher education promotional materials? Do prospective college students find certain levels of diversity more attractive than others? How do prospective students feel about a school depicting a higher proportion of students of color in its brochure than actually attend the college?

The first phase of the empirical study, which was designed to elucidate the frequency with which overrepresentation occurs, was not without limitations. The CCCU sample is admittedly one that precludes generalization of the results to all of U.S. higher education; however, the sample is very relevant and meaningful given the study's focus on Christian higher education. Similarly, the restriction of the analysis to printed brochures makes it difficult to project the findings to schools' other promotional tactics. For instance, it is possible that while a given college may depict an accurate proportion of students of color in its printed materials, its website may misrepresent the school's real racial composition. This limitation notwithstanding, this study's own ease-of-collection of printed materials has supported that these brochures continue to be a key component in institutions' communication with prospective students, worthy of consideration in their own right. It is also likely that in many cases the same college administrative unit is tasked with overseeing creation of brochures and development of other promotional tools, making brochure composition a reasonable indicator of a school's general approach to racial representation.

The second phase of the empirical study, which investigated prospective college students' reactions to racial composition of collegiate brochures, also contained certain limitations. First, while the high school students who comprised the sample indicated a high likelihood of attending a four-year college or university (6.54 mean on seven-point scale), it is not known how many respondents were considering Christian colleges. Still, the researchers had no prior hypotheses or reasons to believe that prospective Christian

college students would differ significantly in their reactions versus those of other prospective students, so a general sample seemed to be appropriate. In addition, in terms of the brochures' content, it is possible that respondents may have found certain creative elements more appealing than others, for instance, layouts or colors. However, as a described above, considerable effort was taken to maintain uniformity among the brochures and to control for unintended effects through means such as using two brochures for each of the four distinct racial compositions.

The second phase also was limited by a relatively small sample (n = 100), as well as the inability to accurately estimate a rate of response, both of which were described above. Still, given the way in which the survey questions unfolded, there was little reason to expect that response bias may have occurred. Likewise, the sample enjoyed broad demographic and socio-economic representation, as it drew respondents from a wide range of city and suburban high schools located in and around a medium-size, northeastern metropolitan area.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Again, although Christian colleges and universities are not unique in their desire to recruit and retain students of color, these faith-based schools may face unique challenges in doing so given their historic racial compositions, as well as current market and competitive factors. As a result, these schools would appear to be particularly motivated to take steps to boost levels of racial diversity.

Despite this added incentive, however, most CCCU schools in the current study did not practice overrepresentation. In fact, as mentioned above, 51 percent of the sample brochures actually underrepresented their schools' minority populations. Also, of the institutions that did overrepresent their racial diversity, only eight schools, or 12 percent of the sample, depicted a proportion of minority students that was 10 percent or higher than that of the school's actual student population. It would be hard to claim, therefore, that overrepresentation of racial diversity is a rampant practice among Christian colleges and universities, at least in terms of print brochures.

Perhaps the biblically based values to which these institutions subscribe serve to restrain certain promotional tactics. For instance, organizations' inaccurate and misleading portrayals of their products are generally seen as deceptive. Colleges and universities that misrepresent the racial compositions of their student populations, therefore, also might be charged with deceiving prospective students. The

Bible, however, denounces deception, for example:
- "'Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another" (Leviticus 19:11).
- "For, whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech" (1 Peter 3:10).
- "The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception" (Proverbs 14:8).

Furthermore, the Bible demands truthful communication:
- "'These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,' declares the Lord" (Zechariah 8:16-17).
- "I speak the truth in Christ — I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 9:1).

Consequently, Christian colleges and universities that strive to accurately portray their actual racial compositions may be doing so based on scriptural mandate. One cannot overlook the fact, however, that 12 percent of the schools in the current study were not so constrained. How do these schools justify their overrepresentation? Likewise, how can their marketing faculty and other business instructors reconcile their institutions' seemingly inconsistent promotional behavior for observant and reflective students? Can these future market leaders be expected to uphold integrity in their careers with degrees earned from schools that did not care to do the same?

As mentioned above, the second phase of empirical research produced several notable findings, some of which were quite surprising. The fact that students of color (SOC) found the two brochures that contained the most racial diversity (40 percent and 60 percent) to be significantly more appealing than did non-students of color (NSOC; Table 4) did not seem unusual. Perhaps prospective college students are drawn more to individuals who appear similar to themselves. These findings took on added meaning, however, when interpreted in light of the next results.

The comparison of brochure preference composites (e.g., 20 percent diversity vs. 40 percent diversity; 40 percent diversity vs. 60 percent diversity) produced no significant differences for SOC, who rated all racial compositions relatively equally. These results stood in stark contrast, however, to those of NSOC, who registered significant differences for four of the six composite comparisons. Other than preferring 20 percent diversity over

no diversity, NSOC's three other preferences sided against 40 percent and 60 percent diversity. It is hard to understand why the two sample subgroups' preferences were so different. Perhaps SOC have been socialized to accept being in the minority in many situations, which has helped them to become more comfortable in social settings that comprise a wider variety of racial compositions. The socialization of NSOC, however, may be different. These students might be used to being in the majority, so situations that appear to shift that balance may be less appealing or even unsettling to them. At the same time, NSOC also likely receive the messages that no diversity is undesirable and some diversity is good, which might explain why these students preferred 20 percent diversity over complete racial homogeneity.

The results of the final phase of the empirical study, which asked respondents normative questions related to overrepresentation, were surprising because of the non-findings. One might have expected the sample to be greatly concerned that some colleges' and universities' brochures depict a considerably larger percentage of students of color than actually attend the schools. Respondents were not overly concerned, however, as suggested by their mean composite score of 4.43. Why weren't prospective students more troubled by this potential misrepresentation? One reason may be that at this point in their lives, college itself is a big unknown. While important, a school's actual racial composition might be overshadowed by a myriad of other critical questions like: "Will I be accepted by a school I'd like to attend? How will I pay for my education? Will I be able to succeed academically? How will I fare socially?" It is also possible that some other forms of advertising have desensitized prospective students to issues of truth in advertising. Exposure to certain promotion, ranging from exaggerated claims to borderline lies, may lead prospective students to believe and accept that college advertising is no different — it also will stretch the truth when convenient.

A key question, then, is what are the implications of these latter findings for Christian colleges and their business faculty? While it may be encouraging that SOC generally liked all the brochures equally, it can be troubling that NSCO tended to prefer brochures with less diversity. Such preferences might suggest racial bias, or the favoritism the Bible often denounces, for example:

- "Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly" (Leviticus 19:15).
- "I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism" (1 Timothy 5:21).

- "My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism" (James 2:1).

How, then, should Christian colleges respond to these consumer preferences? In terms of promotional materials, accurate representation of racial composition should be the primary goal since, again, the Bible denounces deception and demands truthful communication. As such, NSOC preferences for less diversity in brochures may appear to be a nonissue for many Christian colleges, which are not very diverse. Beyond promotional decisions, however, Christian colleges and their business faculty must address their students' underlying beliefs and feelings that give rise to such preferences. Besides being condemned in Scripture, discriminatory attitudes also are increasingly discouraged in the workplace where if they are not in violation of the law, they will likely limit an organization's ability to reach underserved target markets or to work effectively with other key stakeholders who may belong to historically disadvantaged people groups. Christian business faculty, therefore, must help these students transcend inappropriate preferences and bring their attitudes about race into better alignment with what both the market rewards and God demands.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Given the nature and scope of the research, including the limitations described above, this study should be regarded as exploratory. Still, it is hoped that this preliminary investigation has served to illuminate the issue of racial representation in Christian higher education advertising and to lay a foundation for related research. Along those lines, future studies might consider:

- Broadening the first sample to include other sectors of higher education
- Investigating the racial composition depicted in other promotional tools, e.g., schools' websites
- Replicating the second phase with a larger and more geographically dispersed sample of prospective college students
- Incorporating the impact of the perceptions of parents or of other key social referents
- Investigating why some schools misrepresent their racial compositions and why some students do not seem to care

CONCLUSION

As demographic trends, evolving attitudes, and other factors transform higher education, more schools are increasing their emphasis on racial diversity. Christian colleges and universities, meanwhile, are feeling a corresponding need to expand their enrollment of students of color. As a result, more schools stand to encounter challenges related to minority student recruitment. As this paper has described, one of those issues will likely involve institution's proportional representation of students of color in their advertising materials. Christian colleges and their business faculty are uniquely positioned not just to determine the nature of this communication but to influence their students' underlying attitudes about race and reconciliation.

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Appendix: Brochure Examples from Second Empirical Study